



AUSTRALIAN SUPERFINE WOOL GROWERS' ASSOCIATION INC

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ASWGA New England Region Report July 2010

Contrasting conditions across the New England

With continued poor returns in the market place for superfine wools, the activities in the New England region have also been somewhat subdued over the past year. As superfine members in the region struggle to hold their superfine wool enterprise together at a profitable level, we are seeing more and more changes in the enterprise mix. Therefore the production of superfine wool will risk further decline as growers continue to follow more profitable areas such as prime lamb production.

Providing growers hold a nucleus of superfine sheep in their breeding programs, they should be able to quickly adapt to the positive changes in the superfine wool market and quickly swing back to increased production in superfine wool.

Through these difficult economic times, we are very thankful that the mutton value of the surplus merino sheep has maintained a very profitable level. This is very much due to the low sheep numbers presently experienced in Australia, as a result of poor wool returns and poor seasonal conditions. Wethers have regularly made \$90-100 per head, a much better return than the wool proceeds.

Many of the superfine woolgrowers are still been experiencing dry or drought conditions across much of the New England region. From east to west the conditions over the last 12 months have been at opposites. The eastern side has had a wonderful season

throughout, with many growers complaining about conditions being too damp at times. The opposite has been experienced on the western side, with a very poor spring season. Mid-summer rain over a short period did produce some quick feed and some local flooding, which was great for water storages, but with no follow up rains for a few months, drought conditions have returned, thus a long hard winter with continued supplementary feeding will be experienced by many.

There have been few highlights in the market place this season with more growers having to suffer the poor returns to create continued cash flow. A few of the finer bales to command a better price included 27000 c/kg for the "Angel Fleece" bale at 12.3 microns, this being paddock grown wool. A bale of fleece wool produced by "Superior Ace" made 21,000 c/kg, and measured 12.0 microns.

With continued depressed economies around the world, we do not anticipate any marked increase for the coming season which will further erode enthusiasm for the future.

A pleasing return of the Zegna competition this year was a positive for the region, and under the new conditions of non mulesed wool, a reasonable number of fleeces were entered from the region.

Congratulations to the Munsie family who obtained 2nd and 3rd places in the Vellus Aureum with a 10.0 and a 10.6 micron fleeces

respectively. Other key placing's obtained included the Carter family of "Whyworry Park" Uralla with 2nd in the unprotected section and Ray and Claire Schnitzerling of "Kirralin" Warwick who received 2nd in the protected fleece section.

With the New England Wool "Ultimate Clip Competition" to be announced in early July it is pleasing to see many of our superfine members listed as finalists in that competition, the winner gaining the chance to visit the wool processing mills at Biella in Italy.

A very successful Christmas meeting and dinner was held at "Whyworry Wines" Cellar door and the region were delighted to welcome Elina Schneider who spent a few days visiting superfine properties during her brief stay in Australia.

In March this year the region put a submission to the National Auction Selling Committee, with a strong case for retaining the five sales in Newcastle. Members were jubilant with the outcome with all five sales to be retained for the coming season. With

future alterations to the national wool selling roster and resulting changes with Newcastle. New England members will be working closely with AWEX and other industry partners to ensure the best outcome for Newcastle as the premium centre for the sale of superfine wool in Australia.

Mid July will see the Federal President, Kevin Dunn and incoming President Helen Cathles make their annual visit to the region. This will coincide with the AGM of the region along with the annual dinner. With our top executive members attending and reporting, we hope to have some brighter news for a change.

Finally with a special thanks to those office bearers who have worked without reward to ensure the continued functioning of the region through such difficult times. The contribution from Janet Gall as Secretary / Treasurer along with Mark Waters and Steve Harvey is much appreciated. We wish our members a much brighter season and exciting wool market for the coming year.

Darryl Carter – New England Region Chairman



Former President Mr Kevin Dunn with Darryl Carter – New England President with Current President of ASWGA Mrs Helen Cathles at "WhyWorry Park" during shearing.
