



AUSTRALIAN SUPERFINE WOOL GROWERS' ASSOCIATION INC

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ASWGA Tasmania Region Report

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The continuing drought in Tasmania is becoming very serious with many properties continuing to destock. This will have long term effects on production. Wool production is down 20% overall and the clip is the finest ever produced in Tasmania. With record low rainfall and record high temperatures feed conditions have become very tight. The Midland area where all the superfine sheep are located is covered under Exceptional Circumstances drought relief conditions.

On the more positive side mutton prices and lamb prices have not collapsed and surplus stock has been able to be disposed through the market. Prices at the recent Launceston sale were good for the better style wools suitable for the Italian market but average wools suffered strong discounts particularly for strength.

This was the first year when the February Launceston sale has been reduced to two days with Melbourne selling on Thursday. The sale was well attended by the specialist superfine Exporters and Italian interests dominated for the better style lots.

Production under 14.5 microns was 93% higher than last season and under 15.5 microns up by 290%. All superfine wool produced in Tasmania is from sheep that are run on native or semi improved pastures. There are no housed sheep operations in Tasmania.

Congratulations are extended to Alan and Carole Phillips of Glen Stuart, Nile for achieving the top price of 26,000 cents/kg. for a 14.5 micron bale of 55 N/Kt and for receiving 10,000 cents/kg. for 3 other lots below 14.5 microns purchased by Michael Kiernan for his Italian clients.

Despite the drought the top quality superfine wool was of a high standard with, Trefusis, Connorville, Macquarie Hills and Font Hill achieving 1PP certification.

Over the past three seasons the average standard of the States superfine fleece wool has varied very little with VM well below 1% and average yields and strength varying minimally.

Roberts catalogue featured some unmulesed wool and they estimate that they were able to obtain a 3% premium. Next year many growers will start to consider phasing mulesing out where possible and are looking at how they will manage in the future.

During sale week the Tasmanian Fine Merino Breeders in conjunction with TFGA Wool Council held a function for Buyers and visitors at which the President Kevin Dunn attended. The President then spent several days visiting ASWGA members and prospective new members.