



AUSTRALIAN SUPERFINE WOOL GROWERS' ASSOCIATION INC

ABN: 41 338 467 905

Victorian Wool Centre, 691 Geelong Road, Brooklyn Vic 3025

Telephone: 03 9318 0399

e-mail: aswga@woolindustries.org

Facsimile: 03 9318 0877

ASWGA Tasmania Region Report

March 2009

Unfortunately to date there has been no sign of a break in the 100 year plus Tasmanian drought that is particularly serious in the traditional superfine wool growing areas. Flock numbers continue to decline and recovery will now take several seasons. Wether numbers have significantly reduced and the challenge is now to preserve core breeding stock.

The changed format of the February Launceston wool sale proved to be a workable solution with the sale held on the Friday and restricted to 19 micron and finer fleece wool. Other types and skirtings and oddments were sold earlier in the week in Melbourne. There is strong support to retain and develop this special sale option. The sale this year was affected by the lower volume of high quality wool due to drought conditions. Unfortunately due to the global economic downturn prices were disappointing.

Of considerable concern is a move by the Tasmanian Government to repeal the hard won laws restricting the movement of Exotic Breeds on the grounds that it is anti competitive. This review, poorly conducted, by incompetent staff of the DPI has the potential to threaten the reputation of the Tasmanian wool clip.

The listing by the Commonwealth of the Lowland Ecological Communities of *Themeda spp.* and *Poa spp.* is of concern to some superfine growers. While continued use is permitted the identification of the areas involved is very unsatisfactory under the present standard of mapping. The identification of these areas is also difficult as they may have been partially cleared many years ago and now reverted largely back to original state.

The investment by The Merino Company in the iconic Waverly Woollen Mill in Launceston producing a new luxury blanket range using 18.5 micron wool is welcomed. The high quality special blankets, shawls and throwovers are proving very successful.

The visit by the Korean wool delegation was most successful with a Gourmet Barbeque Lunch held in the midst of some of our best and most picturesque superfine wool producing country Alan Phillips Glen Stuart property. Members of the delegation had the opportunity to meet Tasmanian superfine wool growers and see at first hand where the wool they purchase comes from.