



Allan & Carol Phillips - Winner s of the New England Ultimate Fleece Competition with Andrew Blanch of New England Wool



*Trade Mark of Excellence*

## **TASMANIAN REGIONAL REPORT JULY 2011**

The 2010/11 year has provided superfine woolgrowers in Tasmania with renewed confidence and enthusiasm. The season has been one of the best right across the state. Rain seems to have fallen on cue throughout the year, ensuring excellent pasture growth.

With most farmers still down on stock numbers, the excellent season has enabled the native grassland and bush to regenerate after 4 very dry years. This native country is the backbone of the Tasmanian superfine wool clip.

Stock numbers are slowly building, however many farmers continue to take advantage of high livestock prices to keep cash flow positive. This has kept a lid on increased production, along with further diversification by some growers.

After Christmas the wool market rose to levels not seen for many years. This should provide a better incentive for growers to increase production again, albeit at a slower rate than in past price spikes.

Last year the Tasmanian wool clip was one of the best for many years, with wool cut and tensile strength up. The wools were well grown, and stylish with the micron slightly broader.

Many growers sold their clip before Christmas onto a rising market, but still below the current level. As such growers are very keen to shear and sell on this market.

The upcoming clip should be similar to last year, though with a higher V.M. and slightly broader micron, after the fantastic spring we have had.

There were no wool sales held in Tasmania this year, with the Launceston February catalogue, being sold by separation in Melbourne, on Tuesday of week 33. After some apprehension, most growers were pleased with their prices, and level of support from the buying trade. One thing we will have to work on is maintaining a relationship with the wool buyers, regarding clip preparation and external trends, as fewer growers will see their wool sold.

Hopefully superfine wool can hold at these levels, or even improve, for a number of years. This would give our members a much needed opportunity to catch up after many years of just "treading water", or going slowly backwards.

Tasmanian growers continue to support the Zegna fleece competition, with two in the placings for the Unprotected Fleece section. Congratulations to Tony & Joan Gee "Snowhill", and Allan & Carol Phillips "Glen Stuart" who came second & third respectively.

It was also pleasing to see so many Tasmanian finalists in the New England Wool Ultimate Clip Competition. Congratulations should go to Simon Cameron "Kingston", Rodney & Carol Westmore "Patterdale" Bruce Dunbabin "Mayfield", Jack & Gill Cotton "Kelvedon", and Allan & Carol Phillips "Glen Stuart", who were the overall winners.

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