



Hamilton Region Report July 2011

Following a very good spring the Hamilton region experienced the wettest summer in living memory, with no drying off. Exceptional pasture growth occurred all summer, continuing throughout autumn thus we entered winter with very good feed; cherished as the above average rainfall waterlogged the soil. A green summer expected to push micron tests higher than normal.

The regions wool growers have all reported the best wool prices for a number of years, prices similar to those received in the 1980's, however find the money well needed as the cost of production is four times as high as in the 1980's.

The improved wool prices for paddock producers along with exceptional mutton prices may have halted the regions swing to prime lambs. All the superfine studs have reported increased number of rams sold at higher prices than the previous year.

Shedded wool producers have not been so fortunate with prices received well below the cost of production. Their consensus of opinion is that no one can remain in the industry on present wool prices.

The downside of the wet, humid summer conditions was a massive fly wave with thousands of sheep deaths caused by fly strike. Body strike was horrendous something most superfine woolgrowers have not experienced before. Some early shearing took place. Breech strike was particularly bad in unmulsed sheep with growers undertaking additional crutching and jetting of sheep. A simple fact has been noted, "Fly's kill sheep, mulsing doesn't", discomfort for a short period, and then protection for life.

Breeding bare breeched sheep appears to not be an option for superfine woolgrowers who wish to preserve the purity of their bloodlines. The trait presently doesn't exist in superfine flocks.

Congratulations to Hamilton Region ASWGA members Everard Linke and his family for winning the Victorian regional clip of the Year Award, at the recent New England ultimate Clip awards held in Sydney. A fitting reward for their meticulous wool preparation.

The Hamilton branch is undertaking a membership drive and is hopeful that our stand in the AWI tent at the Hamilton Sheepvention will help promote the Australian Superfine Woolgrowers Association.



Heather McIntyre at Sheepvention – helping promote ASWGA.