



SustainaWOOL Integrity Scheme  
**SustainaW<sup>∞</sup>OL™** Standard | 8.0

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# Purpose & Vision

The **SustainaWOOL Integrity Scheme** exists to link Australian and international wool brokers, buyers, processors, brands and retailers who share a common vision - of a global wool industry which, at any stage from farm to final product, can celebrate and specify the highest standards of sustainability, traceability, and clip preparation.

Owned by the Australian wool industry through the Australian Wool Exchange Limited (AWEX), **SustainaWOOL** provides guaranteed traceability from farm to fabric, and means best practices have been adopted and independently verified for:

- ✓ responsible environmental stewardship of the land
- ✓ best welfare and husbandry practices of the sheep
- ✓ superior quality of the wool and wool preparation standards.

**SustainaWOOL** differs from other certification standards, by recognizing that sustainability is not just about what happens to the breeches of sheep, by offering a pathway and recognition to growers who practice welfare enhanced breech modification where their circumstances still require it.

These two certification options are clearly segregated for the benefit of buyer and seller.

## SustainaWOOL Integrity Scheme



In operating **SustainaWOOL**, AWEX understands that it has an important role in promoting highly professional and ethical wool production systems of our wool growers. It also has the important role of advising growers of those production aspects that can be improved or enhanced for the benefit of the sheep, the product, and the production system.

**SustainaWOOL** is a tool which AWEX seeks to share with all growers to help us work and grow together in an increasingly competitive landscape – to help our growers to stand out from the crowd, in the very best way.

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# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

The **SustainaWOOL** Integrity Scheme was established in 2015 to provide benchmark sustainability standards within the wool production systems of Australia and provides integrity and traceability from the individual grower farm – for the benefit of wool growers, processors, brands, retailers, and ultimately consumers.

Created through collaboration of some of the world's leading wool processors and specialist wool growers and buyers, **SustainaWOOL**:

- **encourages** the close communication between wool growers and those who purchase and process their product, which must always be built on foundations of transparency, trust, mutual benefit, and a shared commitment to grow demand for our products.
- **recognizes** the need for the Australian industry to move away from painful practices such as mulesing and provides encouragement and support for growers moving toward that goal. Importantly, we recognize that sustainability is not just about breech modification practices – and that the best possible welfare outcome for the animal is paramount.
- **requires** provision of effective pain relief where breech modification procedures still need to be applied to any individual sheep in the interests of its health and welfare – the wool from these sheep must be separately identified and certified.

## 1.2 Scope

**SustainaWOOL** covers 6 key pillars of certifiably sustainable wool production systems:

1. Sheep Health & wellbeing - **SustainaWOOL** defines internationally acceptable standards for sheep welfare, based on the 5-Freedoms of Animal Welfare, defining 23 separate health & welfare contributors.
2. Environmental management - **SustainaWOOL** defines internationally acceptable standards for farm stewardship practices, including land & chemical management, work, health & safety, & the standards of facilities through which sheep & wool pass.
3. Competence and record keeping - **SustainaWOOL** requires growers to evidence competence & effective record keeping, across stock management & movement, health & veterinary treatments, use & storage of farm chemicals, & clip preparation.
4. Wool quality & clip preparation - **SustainaWOOL** defines standards for wool harvesting, clip preparation & wool packaging, to ensure minimal risk of harm to sheep, & to ensure high standards of wool quality. Only those wool lots prepared & packed to standard are permitted to be identified as **SustainaWOOL**-certified.
5. Social responsibility - **SustainaWOOL** requires growers to ensure staff are adequately trained & instructed, & fully compliant with all applicable Workplace Health, Safety & Employment legislation.
6. Traceability - **SustainaWOOL** requires traceability of the individual bales back to the farm & the mob of sheep shorn. Certified growers must complete the national wool vendor declaration, & sheep must be securely tagged to permit individual identification to the national standard & routinely monitored.

## 1.3 Definitions

**Requirements** – practices which must be complied with to achieve SustainaWOOL certification

**Recommendations** – practices which are encouraged, but not mandatory to achieve SustainaWOOL certification.

**Independence** – as an independent, not-for-profit wool integrity systems service provider, AWEX has no financial interest in wool production or sales proceeds.

**Integrity** - AWEX has achieved ISO9001-2015 certification for **SustainaWOOL**. Our farm inspection system is conducted through our ISO9001-2015-certified farm conformity assessment body, the National Wool Declaration Integrity Program, which conducts up to 400 physical farm inspections each year.

**Sustainability** – the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources in a way which enables people and communities to provide for their own social, economic, and cultural wellbeing, and for their health, safety, and prosperity and those of future generations.

## 1.4 Certification tiers

There are 2 tiers of certification under the **SustainaWOOL** (non-mulesed) standard, in addition to **Sustainablue** (breach modifications permitted, with mandatory pain relief).

These tiers comprise:



This structure caters for the wide diversity of farm production contexts in Australia and internationally, and the evolution of best sustainability practice know-how over time.

## 1.5 Scheme management

The **SustainaWOOL** Integrity Scheme is operated by the Australian Wool Exchange Limited (AWEX), an industry-owned not-for-profit, wool integrity systems company. AWEX is responsible for maintains Australia's wool classer Code of Practice and classer registration system, the ISO9001-2015-certified National Wool Declaration (NWD) Integrity Program, wool auction standards, and wool pack standards.

**SustainaWOOL** is voluntary for growers and supply chain partners and is monitored closely for ongoing compliance.

The 3 key elements of **SustainaWOOL** are:

1. **Farm compliance** - the Scheme requires certified growers to meet the requirements of this Standard, to renew their certification on a regular basis through self-declaration, and subjects them to mandatory desktop audit, and random on-farm audit by specialist farm inspectors engaged as part of AWEX's NWD farm inspection service.
2. **Quality compliance** - every sale lot of wool offered for sale at public auction by our growers is subject to prior inspection by expert AWEX wool appraisers, and only those lots which meet AWEX 'P-certification' standards are eligible to be identified to prospective buyers as **SustainaWOOL**-certified. Certified lots are identified in auction catalogues using the 'SW' Quality Scheme Code(s). All auction catalogues are audited pre-sale, and prospective buyers advised of compliance issues.
3. **Post-farm compliance** - all **SustainaWOOL** Supply Chain Partners must demonstrate compliance with our product certification requirements to utilize our trademarked logos, and to receive **SustainaWOOL** Consignment Certifications.

On a case-by-case basis, **SustainaWOOL** may authorize derogations to this Standard where conflict arises between this Standard and local laws or best practices.



## 1.6 Compliance levels

Compliance with the **SustainaWOOL** standard is determined through an integrated 5-component system:

1. Annual or biennial re-certification procedures, depending on certification tier.
2. Mandatory NWD completion and desktop audit.
3. Physical farm inspection by NWD Farm Inspectors, at frequencies depending on certification tier. For GOLD growers, farm inspections are annual.  
Inspected growers must:
  - Provide NWD Farm Inspectors with complete access to the farm.
  - Provide all such necessary detail as to permit determination of compliance and commit to remedial actions where identified.
  - Ensure employees are available for interview, sheep for inspection
4. Clip inspection – every sale lot of wool offered by **SustainaWOOL** growers at auction is inspected presale by AWEX Appraisers to determine compliance with the **SustainaWOOL** standard. Only compliant (P-certificate) sale lots from current certified growers are eligible to be sold as SustainaWOOL-certified.
5. Catalogue auditing – AWEX audits public wool sale catalogues to ensure that only certified wool growers describe their compliant lots with the 'SW' Quality Scheme Code.

Following completion of the Desktop and Farm Inspection process, the farm compliance level is determined and advised in writing, according to a 4-level scale.

### 1. Compliant

- All items comply – certification maintained

### 2. Conditional Compliant

- Minor issues detected relating to recommended practices, which must be addressed within a 3-month time frame

### 3. Non-compliant Level 1

- Significant issues detected relating to required practices, and must be addressed. Certification placed on-hold and wool cannot be sold as SustainaWOOL-certified. Re-inspection required.

### 4. Non-compliant Level 2

- Serious issues detected relating to required practices, including false declaration. De-registration occurs and certification removed. Further action may be warranted

## 1.7 Review cycle

The **SustainaWOOL** Standard and all associated documentation is subject to annual review, as part of the defined ISO9001-2015 certified Quality Management System. The review process includes consideration of aggregated farm inspection and catalogue compliance statistics, and engagement with the **SustainaWOOL** Consultative Committee, comprising member growers, partners, and industry stakeholders.

## 1.8 Certification synergies

As an industry-owned certification scheme, **SustainaWOOL** seeks to minimise costs imposed on growers or partners. This includes the burdens associated with parallel, overlapping auditing processes – such as can occur when growers or processors participate in multiple integrity schemes.

AWEX actively encourages efficiencies through exploring synergies with other schemes within the wool sector and across meat and wool sectors, on individual case-by-case level, but also on wool sector-wide basis through the International Wool Textile Organisation (IWTO).

## 2.0 Animal Health & Welfare

### 2.1 Introduction

The responsible operation of a profitable wool farm is built on a foundation of sheep health and welfare.

For farm animals to thrive amid the diversity of farm and seasonal environments requires skillful, proactive management by stock owners - preventing health challenges from parasites, disease, and predation, while ensuring adequate nutrition, shelter, humane handling (to reduce injury and stress), and if need be, humane euthanasia.

### 2.2 Principles

The **SustainaWOOL** Integrity Scheme accepts the internationally recognised “Five Freedoms” developed by the World Organisation for Animal Health as representing the “ideal” health state:

1. Freedom from hunger, thirst, and malnutrition,
2. Freedom from discomfort, through adequate shelter,
3. Freedom from pain, injury, and disease/parasites – based on prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment,
4. Freedom to express normal patterns of behaviour, and
5. Freedom from fear and distress.

Building on these, **SustainaWOOL** requirements for animal health and welfare are based on 2 key principles:

- 2.2.1 All procedures involving stock must be carried out, or directly supervised by competent operators.
- 2.2.2 Practices and procedures which might cause pain or discomfort are only be used if effective pain free alternatives are not available, and then must be accompanied by effective anesthesia and/or analgesia.

While minimum standards for the treatment of animals are covered by the various Acts already in place in every State of Australia, **SustainaWOOL** goes further in relation to mulesing or its alternatives.

While we absolutely support the cessation of mulesing, the best possible welfare outcome for the animal must always remain paramount - which may require some form of breech modification.

In these situations, such as occurs in flocks in transition toward a non-mulesed operation, growers must provide effective pain relief to all stock undergoing breech modification procedure, using registered products.

### 2.3 Requirements

2.3.1 Compliance with applicable animal health and welfare codes and legislation applicable to the state, territory, or jurisdiction where the farm is located.

- All **SustainaWOOL** growers are required to comply with all relevant laws and codes applying to the treatment of their animals, wherever they are located. These include the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Sheep.
- Growers who have been successfully prosecuted for offences under the relevant Acts applicable to their location are not eligible to participate in the **SustainaWOOL** Integrity Scheme.

2.3.2 Stock monitoring and predation control

- All stock must be regularly monitored for injury, health, and general well-being.
- Monitoring must be by competent stock persons.

- All stock must be protected from the risk and stress of predation, and predation control must be humane and conducted by competent operators.

Mortality records should be maintained, and a template is available from the **SustainaWOOL** website for this purpose.

### 2.3.3 Proactive animal health treatment

- Corrective actions must be taken when sheep require treatment for, or relief from disease (including parasites), pain and suffering.
- Only registered veterinary animal health products can be used.
- Stock persons must be adequately trained and competent to carry out stock health procedures.

### 2.3.4 Animal health treatment records

- Records must be kept of all animal health treatments and kept available for audit.

A suitable template is available from the **SustainaWOOL** website for this purpose.

### 2.3.5 Body Condition Score

- Sheep Body Condition Score of sheep must be able to be competently assessed on the property.
- The average Body Condition Score for the flock must be maintained above Score 2.
- If the Body Condition Score of an individual sheep falls below Score 2, remedial action must occur.

### 2.3.6 Tail docking

- Tail docking, if conducted, must be occur in the first 12 weeks of life of the lambs.
- The residual docked tail length must be sufficient to cover the vulva in ewe lambs (the 3rd palpable joint), and an equivalent length in males.

- Tail docking must only occur using a hot, cauterizing iron or rubber elastrator ring methods, by competent operators.

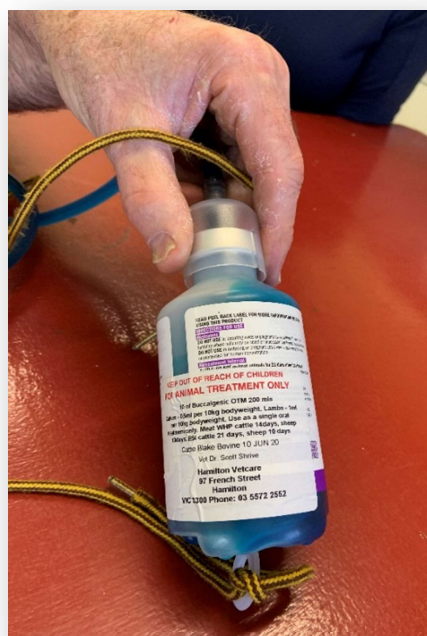
### 2.3.7 Castration

- Castration, if conducted, must occur in the first 12 weeks of life of the lamb.
- Castration must occur using the rubber ring method only and should be accompanied by effective registered pain relief (analgesia and/or anesthesia) treatments.

### 2.3.8 Breech modification

**SustainaWOOL** recognizes the need for the Australian industry to move away from painful practices such as mulesing and provides encouragement and support for growers moving toward that goal.

- Breech modifications for the purpose of breech flystrike or stain control are only permitted where the lifetime health and welfare purposes of the individual sheep require it.
- Any breech modification procedure (e.g., mulesing or alternatives) must occur in the first 12 months of life and must be accompanied by provision of effective registered pain relief (analgesia and/or anesthesia) treatment.





### 2.3.9 On-farm slaughter and euthanasia

- Given occasional slaughter or euthanasia of stock is a necessary part of life where livestock are responsibly farmed, on-farm slaughter of sheep (for domestic use, or euthanasia) must be carried out humanely, minimizing pain or distress.

### 2.3.10 Artificial breeding procedures

- Artificial breeding procedures such as artificial insemination or embryo transfer must only be carried out by competent operators.

### 2.3.11 Disbudding or de-horning

- Dehorning, disbudding and substantial horn trimming must only be conducted for animal welfare purposes, by competent operators, and accompanied by effective pain relief.

### 2.3.12 Stock movement and handling

- Staff must be provided adequate instruction and training for the responsible and humane handling of stock.
- Working farm dogs must be adequately trained by competent stock persons and muzzled where necessary to ensure the wellbeing of stock.
- Transport service organizations or individuals must meet applicable transport safety and compliance standards for the humane loading, unloading and transport of stock.

## 2.4 Recommendations

### 2.4.1 Flock health plan

It is good practice to develop and periodically review a written flock health plan. The plan should:

- identify the timing of key management events during the year, such as joining, lambing, and shearing,

- identify significant health and welfare challenges, including periods of heightened risk of physiological stress (e.g., due to dietary change, nutritional requirement, fly risk etc.)
- identifies practices which mitigate risks to stock health and welfare from these defined challenges, including the timing of positive practices such as body condition scoring, feed supplementation, and pregnancy scanning for breeding ewes.
- Outline monitoring and recording procedures.

A template is available from the **SustainaWOOL** website.

### 2.4.2 Provide sheep with adequate shelter

Adverse weather events can occur at any time of the year and if coinciding with stock vulnerability (such as lambing), can lead to stress and mortality.

- Sheep should be provided with adequate shelter such as trees and/or structures to ensure wellbeing and to mitigate mortality rates during extreme weather events.

Pregnancy scanning is an effective technology for identifying ewes bearing multiple lambs, allowing the grower to provide multiple bearers access to higher levels of shelter for the lambing period, to minimise risk of lamb mortality.

### 2.4.3 Fire, flood or other catastrophic event

Due to natural climatic variation, Australian growers periodically deal with drought, fire, and flood, which can have catastrophic impacts on livestock. Preparation is the key to mitigating risks associated with these events.

- SustainaWOOL growers should take all reasonable steps to minimise the effects of fire or flood on the property and its livestock.

## 2.5 GOLD practices

While all **SustainaWOOL** growers are leaders in sustainable wool production, **SustainaWOOL** GOLD members are willing to go further.

**SustainaWOOL** GOLD growers act as positive role models who apply the highest possible standards for sheep health and welfare, environmental management, clip preparation, and traceability.

In addition to not practicing any form of breech modification for flystrike or stain control purposes, **SustainaWOOL** GOLD growers must provide:

- effective registered pain relief (analgesia and/or anesthesia) treatments when docking tails.
- effective registered pain relief (analgesia and/or anesthesia) treatments when castrating lambs.



## 3.0 Traceability

### 3.1 Introduction

The ability for wool purchased under the **SustainaWOOL** Integrity Scheme to be traced back to its' farm and mob of origin is critical to the Scheme's success.

Such traceability gives brands and retailers confidence in the integrity of fibre delivered to them under this Scheme, but also provides a platform for individual "stories" to be told from properties or wool producing areas.

Many systems are already in place to trace a bale back to the producer such as the National Wool Declaration, the registered Farm Brand and Stencil, the Classers Specification provided by the grower to their respective broker, and the regulations already in place including the testing/sampling and displaying (showing) of wool for sale.

The countermarking, documentation, and various systems in place in the transport, dumping, packing, and exporting of the bales allows the integrity of purchased wool to be upheld.

**SustainaWOOL** promotes best practice in traceability, since it is synonymous with minimising biosecurity risks and maximizing scheme integrity.

### 3.2 Principles

- 3.2.1 *Individual identification is paramount* – for all sheep residing on a grower farm or wool bales thereby produced.
- 3.2.2 *Movement of stock or wool bales must be documented* - vendor declarations, including any associated with livestock or wool movement need be completed in an accurate and timely manner.
- 3.2.3 *The property itself must be uniquely identified and registered* - using a registered property identification code in accordance with the relevant standards.
- 3.2.4 *Records must be maintained for audit purposes.*

### 3.3 Requirements

#### 3.3.1 Sheep Identification

- All sheep on the property must be identified with a secure form of identification, compliant with the relevant industry standard (e.g., the National Livestock Identification Scheme in Australia).
- The property must be registered with the competent state or national authority and have a unique property identification number or code.

#### 3.3.2 Stock and fodder movement

- The location and composition of all mobs of sheep on the property must be known at all times.
- The property must comply with all Animal Health treatment withholding periods
- All relevant stock movement declarations relating to movement of stock to or from the property, such as the LPA National Vendor Declaration in Australia, must be completed in a timely and accurate manner, and records kept for audit.
- All fodder and supplements brought onto the farm must be documented and kept available for audit.

#### 3.3.3 Wool bale identification & movement

- All wool bales must be clearly branded/marked to correctly identify ownership and content.
- All movements of wool from the property for the purposes of sale must be accurately documented in the relevant wool movement vendor declaration, such as the AWEX National Wool Declaration.

### 3.3.4 Wool Book

- A current Wool Book (or similar) should be kept as a record of all bales for every shearing.

## 3.4 Recommendations

### 3.4.2 Electronic vendor declarations

Paper-based movement recording systems on farm are convenient, but have limitations, including legibility of handwriting, and timeliness of submission.

- Growers should consider utilization of electronic vendor declarations such as the AWEX WoolClip® App, for wool bale movement declaration.

## 3.5 GOLD practices

Additional traceability practices required for GOLD members are that:

- Electronic wool classer specification technologies, such as AWEX WoolClip®, are utilized and readily evidenced.
- Individual electronic wool bale tags complying with AWEX standards are used and readily evidenced

AWEX provides relevant training materials for growers implementing these advanced practices and supplies individual bale e-tags to GOLD growers where required.



## 4.0 Environment

### 4.1 Introduction

Sheep kept for apparel wool production generally graze in extensive grassland ecosystems, typically sensitive to overgrazing and consequential loss of pasture, soil, and water resources. It is critical that landholders demonstrate care and prudence in all livestock operations, implementing practices which avoid or address degradation risks.

The SustainaWOOL Integrity Scheme requires certified growers to evidence practices maintaining or improving farm fertility, productivity, and environmental health, and to mitigate risks to the land or its inhabitants.

### 4.2 Principles

- 4.2.1 *Each property is unique* - and typically contains a diversity of landform, vegetation, and biodiversity – necessitating an individual and prudent approach to managing the farm ecosystem.
- 4.2.2 *Environmental damage can have generational impacts* – for this reason, management emphasis should be on *successful land stewardship*, where the farm is managed in such a way as to leave it in a healthier, more productive, resilient, and biodiverse state for the next steward or generation.
- 4.2.3 *There are known best practices which avoid or mitigate risks of environmental damage* – growers should have awareness and competence in order to apply these in an intelligent and successful manner.

### 4.3 Requirements

#### 4.3.1 Compliance with applicable animal health and welfare codes and legislation applicable to the state, territory, or jurisdiction where the farm is located.

- All SustainaWOOL growers are required to comply with all relevant laws and codes applying to natural resource management applicable to their geographic location and legal jurisdiction. Development activities, including clearing, should only proceed with relevant legal consents from local and/or regional authorities.
- Growers who have been successfully prosecuted for offences under the relevant Acts applicable to their location are not eligible to participate in the SustainaWOOL Integrity Scheme.

#### 4.3.2 Total grazing pressure

- Total grazing pressure shall be managed on the property to support sustainable land use (e.g., control of vermin, pest and weed management, drought down-stocking etc.).

#### 4.3.3 Ground cover

- Ground cover shall be routinely monitored, and remedial actions undertaken to avoid overgrazing and soil erosion.

#### 4.3.4 Avoidance of adverse impacts

- Reasonable care has been taken to avoid, remedy or mitigate any adverse effects on the environment, and biodiversity.



#### 4.3.5 Responsible waste management

- All stock must be excluded from any rubbish facilities or disused dips on the property.

#### 4.3.6 Responsible chemical use

- A Farm Chemical Users course must have been completed by at least one person on this farm within the past five years and course completion records are available. The specific Australian national competencies required are AHCCHM307 (Prepare and Apply Chemicals to Control Pests, Weeds and Diseases) or AHCCHM304 (Transport and Store Chemicals), with the detail and course availability accessible by this [link](#).
- An inventory of chemicals must be kept and made available for audit. If not, a template is available upon request.
- All chemicals used for pasture and livestock treatments are safely stored in a lockable, bunded, and well-ventilated storage area.
- Hazardous substances must be disposed of as required by law (e.g., Drum Muster recycling program).

### 4.4 Recommendations

#### 4.4.1 Monitor soil properties

- Soil tests should be taken on property to monitor soil fertility and/or potential contamination, where appropriate.

#### 4.4.2 Engage with community environmental groups

- The property should be engaged in a local, state, or national environmental group (e.g., Landcare, Grazing for Profit, RCS, Lifetime Ewe Management), and ideally have a certified management systems in place for environmental management (e.g., ISO14000 Series).

### 4.5 GOLD practices

- 4.5.1 Grower shall evidence planning and investment in paddock subdivision over time, for purposes of timing controlled rotational grazing.
- 4.5.2 Grower shall evidence a rising trend in tree, shrub, or perennial grass cover on the property, and that planned environmental plantings have occurred.
- 4.5.3 Grower shall evidence a rising trend in year-round pasture ground cover on grazed country, and identify current and target levels
- 4.5.4 Grower shall evidence knowledge of the diversity in tree and pasture species, and key native animals and plants.
- 4.5.5 Grower shall evidence implementation of strategies to control stock access to riparian areas (creeks, waterlines etc.) and reduce flow rates.
- 4.5.6 Grower shall evidence implementation of strategies to maximize water retention and use efficiency and minimise soil erosion by water.



## 4.6 Harvesting & Quality

### 5.1 Introduction

Just as a holistic approach to stewardship of the land and its communities seeks to avoid harm and to maximize productive potential, the same should extend to the stewardship of the wool resources produced on the farm – including consideration for the needs of the downstream custodians of the fiber.

Poor clip preparation practices can degrade the processing potential of wool lots, increase risks to purchasers, and ultimately reduce buyer competition and valuations placed on the wool.

It is also true that no amount of preparation and classing can improve a poor quality/poorly bred raw product. Having the best possible genetics for your specific environment, sound management and healthy and resilient stock is the solid base from which can add value to the wool producer, the processor, and the final consumer.

For these reasons, the highest standard of quality is required for all involved in **SustainaWOOL**, consistent with a collective responsibility to ensure confident, comfortable, and connected consumers.

### 5.2 Principles

5.2.1 *A balanced and holistic definition of sustainability includes wool harvesting and quality - wool is a valuable and renewable form of protein produced using scarce natural resources and so should be bred, harvested, and prepared with care to minimise downstream waste and contamination, and maximize the economic value generated.*

5.2.2 *All involved in wool harvesting and preparation operations should be competent and capable of compliance with highest standards.*

5.2.3 *All classed lines should be internally uniform and differ in processing potential to fabric stage, to maximize buyer confidence and competition on each lot.*

### 5.3 Requirements

#### 5.3.1 Facilities are fit for purpose

- The shearing shed environment must be safe and healthy, with adequate amenities, lighting, and ventilation, and with well-maintained shearing machinery.
- Shearers have their own counting-out pens to encourage individual accountability for the quality of the shearing process.

#### 5.3.2 Animal welfare is protected

- Shearers must be made aware of their responsibilities under the Animal Welfare Act applicable to the particular State or Territory by the contractor, classer, or owner/manager.
- All shearers attained an effective standard of competence and be competent to treat animals for severe cuts, and resources and process required to treat injury to sheep or staff must be present.
- The period of time stock are shedded (without feed and water) prior to shearing shall be appropriate for the class of stock (e.g. pregnant ewes).

#### 5.3.3 Contamination risks are minimized

Consistent with minimising risk of dark, medullated, and non-wool fibre contamination in wool lots:

- The grower must complete the National Wool Declaration or equivalent for each harvesting operation.
- All shorn wool must be packaged in nylon wool packs in good condition that have been authorised for use by AWEX or an equivalent authority.
- All animal markers and raddles must be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and brands removed from fleece lines.
- The grower must ensure minimal risk of cross contamination of the wool clip by shedding sheep breeds.
- A registered professional wool classer or owner classer must prepare and oversees the wool clip, and their stencil must be applied to all wool bales.

#### 5.3.4 High clip preparation standards

- The wool clip must be prepared according to the AWEX Code of Practice for the preparation of the Australian Wool clip, or international equivalent.
- A shearing Tally Book (or similar) shall be used to document relevant information from every shearing.

### 5.4 Recommendations

- Shed hands should be briefed before shearing begins by classer/owner/ manager on preparation levels.
- All shorn sheep should be crutched and/or dagged before shearing.



# 6.0 Social responsibility

## 6.1 Introduction

The sustainability of farming communities requires the existence of a strong economic and social framework.

The **SustainaWOOL** Integrity Scheme champions the nurturing of strong employer - employee relationships built on mutual trust and respect. These bonds have the added benefit of strengthening the local communities through social integration and economic activity.

The provision of adequate facilities and amenities for workers and their families on-farm is an important pillar on which this mutual respect can be built. This could include, but is not limited to, reasonable accommodation (when required), access to first aid, and provision of clean and functional meal and toilet facilities.

Another important pillar is provision of a safe workplace, which is a requirement of **SustainaWOOL**. This includes general health and safety issues covering employers, employees, and their children.

## 6.2 Principles

6.2.1 *Landholders have a civic duty of care - to balance economic outcomes and the health and welfare of the farm and wider community – in so balance economic, environmental, ethical, and philanthropic responsibilities.*

6.2.2 *Building from 6.2.1, a balanced and holistic definition of sustainability includes ensuring a healthy and safe workplace where the rights of workers are respected.*

## 6.3 Requirements

### 6.3.1 Compliance

- The owner and/or manager must be fully compliant with all National and State workplace health and safety / occupational health and safety legislation and guidelines for all staff and family members.
- The owner and/or manager must be fully compliant with all National and State Employment legislation (award wages and conditions) in relation to all staff.
- All staff must receive adequate instruction and training for the responsible use of agricultural machinery and animal handling equipment.





# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Australian Wool Exchange Limited (AWEX)** - AWEX is a member services organisation representing the majority of first-hand wool traded in Australia each year and includes wool brokers, exporters, private treaty merchants, processor, wool producers and associates. AWEX provides integrity services to the Australian wool trade, including maintenance and promulgation of standards including the Australian Wool Classing Code of Practice, wool pack standards, auction data integrity standards, the National Wool Declaration Integrity Program, and the **SustainaWOOL** Integrity Scheme.

**Authorised Auditor** - Auditor(s) chosen by AWEX for the **SustainaWOOL** Integrity Scheme.

**Alternative Procedures** = An alternative procedure for modifying the breech of sheep for the purposes of reducing blow fly strike risk or stain and contamination, comprising Sheep Freeze Branding (cryosurgery), or application of constrictive mechanical clips.

**Artificial Breeding** = The practices of artificial insemination (by laparoscopic or cervical methods) or embryo transfer, which should be conducted by competent operators on ewes provided with effective pain and discomfort relief, and antiseptics.

**Body Condition Score** = The practice of hand assessment of the cover of fat and muscle tissue along the backbone and ends of the short ribs. It is scored on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being emaciated and 5 obese. Sheep in the flock should range from 2 – 4, and breeding ewe BCS should be BCS of 3 or above for joining, mid-pregnancy, and at lambing.

**Buccalgesic® or Metacam 20®** - registered analgesic products, containing Meloxicam as the active ingredient. While having beneficial impact for 24-48 hours, both need to be delivered 20-30 minutes pre-operatively for pharmacological effect at the time of the lamb marking procedure.

**Castration** = The removal or disruption of the function of the testes by use of a rubber ring or excision. Tail docking must occur before the lamb reaches 12 weeks of age, occur using the least painful method, and it should be accompanied by provision of effective pain relief. Practitioners must be adequately trained and proficient.

**Contact with Shedding Breeds** = Mated to, or run in the same paddock, as shedding sheep/lambs or their crosses.

**Corrective actions** may include (but are not limited to):

- treatment for internal parasites (e.g., worms) and external parasites (e.g., lice)
- treatment for infections (e.g., footrot), and for flystrike
- treatment of injuries, including removal of grass-seeds from the eyes of animals
- humane slaughter of suffering animals

**Crutching** – the practice of removing wool from the hindquarters and tail of sheep. The crutching history for each mob is recorded in the NWD.

**Declared practices** – The **SustainaWOOL** Integrity Scheme requires growers to truthfully declare current or intended farm practices, using the SustainaWOOL Grower Declaration. This declaration of practices must be renewed on an annual or biennial basis, where:

- **current** farm practices are those that have been in operation for at least 12 months at the time of declaration, such that when a grower ticks 'YES' in response to any question in the grower declaration, the grower is declaring that the practice the question refers to does currently occur on the farm and has been place for at least 12 months. This ensures alignment with the National Wool Declaration where grower declare mulesing and stock purchase practices over the preceding 12 months. By extension, the declaration can only apply to fresh shorn wool grown during the period of currency of the Declaration, where the date of harvesting can be no earlier than 60 days of the date of the declaration.



- **intended** farm practices are those which are not yet in full application on the farm (so fall outside the definition of **current** practice) but which are desired practices which the responsible grower is 'working toward', through assimilating the needed awareness, skills, or facilities.

**Livestock Production Assurance (LPA)** - LPA is the on-farm assurance program that underpins market access for Australian red meat. LPA National Vendor Declarations (NVDs) provide evidence of livestock history and on-farm practices when transferring livestock through the value chain. Each time livestock are moved off a property they must be accompanied by some form of movement documentation, linked to the unique identity of the property (see **Property Identification Code**)

**Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA)** - MLA is an independent company which regulates standards for meat and livestock management in Australian and international markets. Headquartered in North Sydney, Australia; MLA works closely with the Australian government, and the meat and livestock industries. for more information visit [www.mla.com.au](http://www.mla.com.au)

**Mulesing** = The removal of skin from the breech and/or tail of a sheep using mulesing shears. Practitioners must be adequately trained and proficient.

**Numnuts®** - Numnuts provides targeted pain relief for ring-based tail docking and castration of sheep, combining a ring applicator with an injector that dispenses NumOcaine® anaesthetic.

**Others, including Clips** – Methods for removing excess wool-bearing skin from the breech of sheep. While Clips are the recognised method, others may be developed. Any new method may only be applied if accompanied by effective pain relief and based on veterinary advice, such as part of a scientific trial with ethics approval from a registered research institution.

**Other prescribed pain relief** - a registered veterinary chemical analgesic or anaesthetic, used with veterinary approval (an example occasionally used is Flunixin®).

**Pain relief product** = Anaesthetic or Analgesic registered for use by APVMA for the relief of pain in sheep.

**Property Identification Code** - A Property Identification Code (PIC) is an eight-character code allocated by the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) or an equivalent authority in each state or territory to identify a livestock-producing property. Producers must have a PIC to move livestock on and off a property – it forms the basis of Australia's food safety and traceability programs.

**Quality Assurance Codes** – SustainaWOOL growers are eligible to identify their property certification status in wool sale catalogues using the 'SW' Quality Scheme code, which can be entered in the Quality Scheme field for any individual sale lot arising from a certified property, where the line has been classed to 'P Certificate' standard. All auction catalogues are by AWEX audited pre-sale, with sellers and prospective buyers advised of compliance issues.

**Registered Animal Health Products** = Product must be registered in Australia by the Australian Pesticides & Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) Registration means that the product can be supplied or sold and used safely according to the label directions.

**Shearer competence** = recognised competencies include AHC21316 (Certificate II in Shearing), AHC32916 (Certificate III in Shearing), and AHCSHG304 (Shear sheep to professional level).

**Shedding Breeds** = Breeds that shed fibre (e.g., Afrikaner, Australian White, Awassi, Damara, Dorper, Karakul, Meatmaster, Persian, Van Rooy, Wiltipoll, Wiltshire Horn).

**Tail Docking** – Removal of the excess tail section by means of hot knife tail docking or use of an elastrator ring. The tail should only be docked through the joint space between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> palpable joint, before lambs are 12 weeks of age, and should be accompanied by provision of effective pain relief. Practitioners must be adequately trained and proficient.

**Topical Spray Pain Relief** - Trisolfen® is the registered topical spray anaesthetic and antiseptic solution for lamb marking.

**WH&S** = Work, Health & Safety.

# RELEVANT AUSTRALIAN ACTS and CODES

## Animal Welfare

- NSW *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979 No 200, Animal Research Act 1985 No 123*
- VIC *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986*
- QLD *Animal Care and Protection Act 2001*
- SA *Animal Welfare Act 1985; Occupational Health and Safety (SA / TAS) Welfare Regulations 2012*
- ACT *Animal Welfare Act 1992*
- WA *Animal Welfare Act 2002*
- NT *Animal Welfare Act (currently under review)*
- TAS *Animal Welfare Act 1993 (No. 63 of 1993)*

## Codes of Practice and Standards and Guidelines.

- AHA Australian Animal Welfare Standards & Guidelines Edition One, Version 1, 2016
- International Specifications for Wool Sheep Welfare 2016

## Environmental Care Acts

- Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
- ACT *Environment Protection Act 1997; Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991; Nature Conservation Act 1980.*
- NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (the Act)*
- NT *The Environment Assessment Act 1994 and the Territory Parks; Wildlife Conservation Act 1996.*
- QLD *Environmental Protection Act 1994 and the Nature Conservation Act 1992.*
- SA *Natural Resources Management Act 2004; Environment Protection Act 1993; Water Resources Act 1997.*
- TAS *Environmental Management & Pollution Control Act 1994; Pollution of Waters by Oil & Noxious Substances Act 1987.*
- VIC *Environmental Protection Act 1978; Planning and Environment Act 1987.*
- WA *Environmental Protection Act 1986; Soil and Land Conservation Act 1945.*

## Farm Chemical Users Course

There is a mandatory requirement for buyers and users of Agricultural Chemical to undergo a registered Chemicals Users Course in most States. This requirement exists under State Government Acts such as the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000* (the OHS Act) and the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation* (OHS Regulation) in NSW and the

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 and the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations* 2007 in Victoria. For a helpful state-by-state breakdown of the relevant legislation, see: <https://www.chemcert.com.au/resources/state-legislation/>).

## Chemical Use/Handling/ Labelling Legislation

The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicine Authority (APVMA) – administration of the following acts:

- Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Administration) Act 1992 (Admin Act)
- Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Act 1994 (Agvet Act)
- Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Code, which is a schedule to the Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Code Act 1994 (Code Act). See: <https://apvma.gov.au/node/4131>

## Social Responsibility

### Workplace Health and Safety

- Work Health & Safety Act 2011 (Commonwealth)
- NSW: Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017
- QLD: Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011
- VIC: Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004, and Occupational Health & Safety Regulations 2017
- SA: Work Health & Safety Act 2012 (SA), and Work Health & Safety Regulations 2012 (SA)
- WA: Occupational Safety & Health Act 1984, and Occupational Health & Safety Regulations 1996
- TAS: Work Health & Safety Act 2012, and Work Health & Safety Regulations (Transitional) 2012
- NT: Work Health & Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011, and Work Health & Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Regulations 2011.

### Employment

- The Fair Work Act 2009, and The Fair Work Regulations 2009

### Wool Preparation and Shearing

- AWEX Code of Practice (Latest Version)
- AHC21316 (Certificate II in Shearing), AHC32916 (Certificate III in Shearing), and AHCSHG304 (Shear sheep to professional level)

### Handling & Transport

- AHA Australian Animal Welfare Standards & Guidelines; Land Transport of Livestock. Edition One, Version 1.1 2015

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