

## A Message from the CEO

### Welcome to the Autumn '23 SustainaWOOL News!

#### SWIS Growing Global

In July 2022 AWEX strategically appointed two new team members with experience in global marketing and key account management to grow the SWIS program in the China Region and increase global awareness and key supply chain partnerships (SCPs).

Jen Lau has refreshed the SWIS brand identity, trade marketing materials, and onboarded China Regional Representative, Ms Jenny Zhang. Together they built on materials to educate and encourage global wool top, yarn and fabric suppliers to partner with the SWIS program.

We proudly report relationships have been strengthened with existing China Region SCPs and new key partners. Momentum is building in the China Region, Northern Hemisphere, and Australia. Our supportive SCPs will ensure SustainaWOOL program presence as part of their upcoming exhibition spaces at SpinExpo (Shanghai), Outdoor Retailer (Salt Lake City, Utah) and ISPO (Munich). It's an exciting time to be part of the SWIS journey and we will update you on partnership progress and the global tradeshows.

Together, Jen Lau and Dr Paul Swan have been an effective team supporting our overseas and domestic regional developments and downstream partners.

SWIS global SCP's are increasingly interested in traceability and content verification of wool sourced from SustainaWOOL members. Paul actively continues to connect supply chain partners and processors to ensure the integrity of their purchases, documentation and content verification claims meet their CSR sourcing requirements.



*"Now that we have your attention" – Boloco Station*

Melissa White will continue to be the main Membership team contact and handle all your member communications and SustainaWOOL Team requests.

Please direct all other enquiries to Mark Grave via email [mgrave@awex.com.au](mailto:mgrave@awex.com.au)

Thank you for your ongoing membership and support of SustainaWOOL and be assured that we will continue to work hard to add value to your business.

#### AWEX Board Update

Andreas Clark was appointed AWEX Chair at the AGM on 25 November 2022. Andreas joined AWEX as a Director in August 2022 and replaces Robyn Clubb AM who served as AWEX Chair for 6 years.

Andreas is making himself known and will take every opportunity to engage with members over the coming year.



## From the farm gate:

### Did you know that SustainaWOOL sourced yarns are available for hand crafting?

Our SustainaWOOL members Millpost Merino from Bungendore NSW, have a range of Merino yarns that are available for purchase to create your own SustainaWOOL garments or homewares.

For more information or to place an order visit their website here: [www.millpostmerino.com](http://www.millpostmerino.com)



## Its not the size that matters!

Ros Ransome – possibly our smallest SustainaWOOL grower recently reported her maiden (and only) bale weighed in at 193 kg and fetched \$13.70 greasy.

Not bad for our smallest sustainable flock!

Ros is in the process of building the flock numbers, with this bale cut from the initial 70 Merinos. Numbers have since increased to 110 and she is looking forward to many more next season! Here are some of the “new recruits”.



And, a big shout out to Michael Blake who took up the torch for SustainaWOOL recently with his article featured on Sheep Central. You can read about this here:

[www.sheepcentral.com/bally-glunin-park-moves-to-promote-sustainawool-scheme](http://www.sheepcentral.com/bally-glunin-park-moves-to-promote-sustainawool-scheme)





## Social Media



### SustainaWOOL has joined the expansive world of Social Media!

Our follower uptake on Facebook and Instagram has been fantastic, as has domestic and international following from wool businesses and wool fibre “tragicists”.

We now have an extensive following that engages with us, often asking questions and complimenting our SustainaWOOL program.

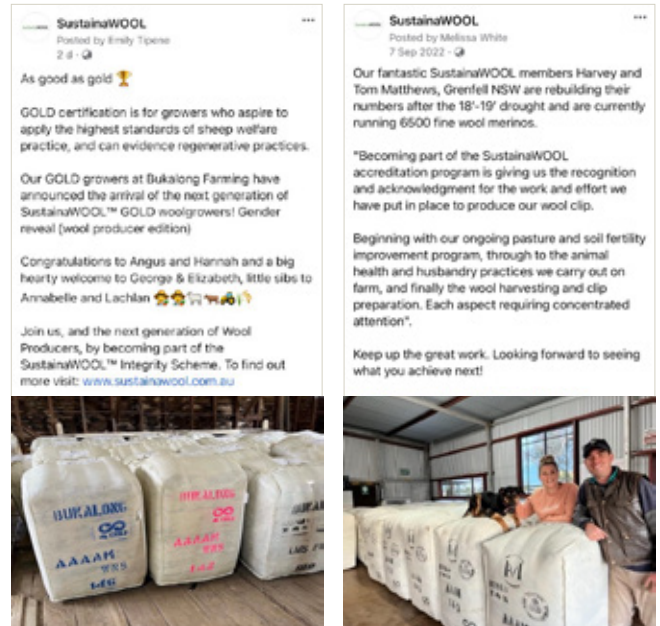
If you have some great news – or just some interesting photos or videos, please let us know. Or send them through to us and we can share them for you. Our followers love to see real images and videos of sheep in their natural environments.

Message us through our social media links below or email Mel at [mwhite@awex.com.au](mailto:mwhite@awex.com.au)

[www.instagram.com/sustainawool.au](http://www.instagram.com/sustainawool.au)

[www.facebook.com/sustainaWOOL](http://www.facebook.com/sustainaWOOL)

### Some of our Social Media Highlights



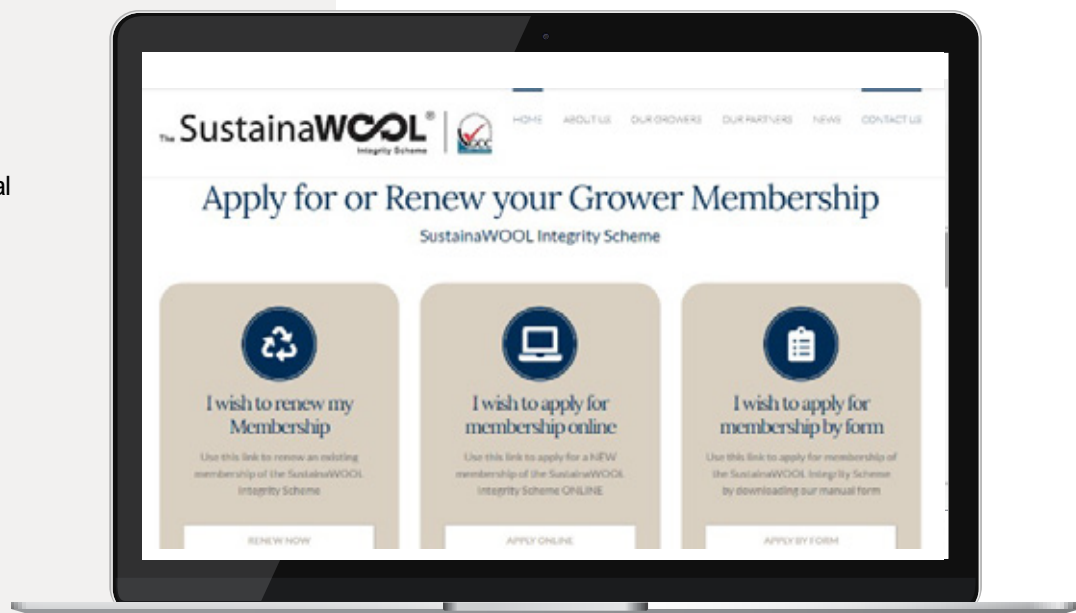
Please send us through any other membership reports that you would like us to share with our social media followers. **We would love to hear from you!**

## Updates to the SustainaWOOL website

We have been making a few changes to the SustainaWOOL website in the past few months.

We have updated the menu items to make the application and renewal process easier and smoother for our members. We have added some information and templates that we hope our members find useful for their reporting and management purposes.

Check out these updates at: [www.sustainawool.com.au](http://www.sustainawool.com.au)



## COVID-19 and our farm inspections

With the easing of COVID travel restrictions it's great to report that we are now once again back in the swing of conducting our grower farm inspections for accreditation sign off.

These inspections are a great opportunity for our growers to present the benefits of their production systems and highlight their procedures, environmental efforts and animal welfare programs. Make sure that you mention these highlights to our assessors when they visit you. Or, contact our team by phone or email with your story.



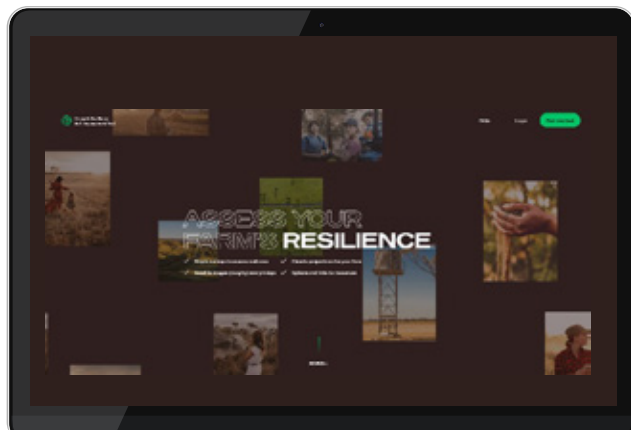
*You are never too young to join the SustainaWOOL team! Audit preparation is critical for success - Well, "Micro member" Hobson believes so!*

## Drought Resilience Self-Assessment Tool

**How drought resilient is your farm business? A free tool for primary producers aims to help you self-assess your situation and make informed on-farm decisions.**

The SustainaWOOL team has collaborated with the team from DR.SAT to help in the development of their Drought Resilience Self-Assessment Tool (DR.SAT).

The tool has been developed to promote and ensure sustainability of grazing practices now and into the future, by enabling producers to better understand their financial, environmental and social resilience.



A broad range of industry and R&D participants are providing guidance on the development of the tool to ensure its relevance and usefulness for uptake by industry.

We're encouraging our members to explore this free, new tool, where you'll have:

- The ability to input details about your farm and see satellite images of historic and current conditions (updated roughly every six days)
- Climate projections of rainfall and temperature for your property and region up to 2050
- Questions to assess your resilience – your land condition, financial, and personal wellbeing
- Options for the future with links to resources to support you to adapt and improve your resilience

It is hoped that the program will assist growers with planning and decision making for the overall wellness of their property and operational success into the future.

**We encourage you to take some time to navigate the tool and assess its suitability for you. You can access the tool here: [www.drseat.com.au](http://www.drseat.com.au)**

**If you would like to provide feedback on the DR.SAT tool, the team is always looking for primary producers to give their valued feedback. Please email [help@drseat.com.au](mailto:help@drseat.com.au) to get in touch.**

## In the news:

### Training:

Our AWEX Wool Classer WoolClip “Dynamic Duo” of Fiona Raleigh and John Cox are currently travelling the country running information and training Workshops for our woolgrower and wool classers.

The following dates are currently scheduled:

**NSW:** Hay: Riverina Field Day, 12/13 May 2023

Dubbo: Wool Forum, 17th June 2023

**TAS:** Campbell Town Show, 2/3 June 2023

North Tas Pop Up, 5th June 2023

South Tas Pop Up, 6th June 2023

Keep an eye out on our social media pages for more information and upcoming dates.



## National Wool Declaration Update

The new NWD version V9.3 (March 2022) has now been launched.

The 2022 review focused on the identification of wool from sheep treated with liquid nitrogen, and consideration was given to the Mob and Property Status of the NWD.

The approved key changes to the NWD V9.3 are:

- NM definition refers to the exclusion of liquid nitrogen,
- Introduction of Liquid Nitrogen (LN) for sheep treated with liquid nitrogen, LN mobs to be identified separately from NM, AA, M, ND mobs,
- CM has been retained,
- Both questions related to Ceased Mulesing (CM) Status now have a 12 month time frame, and
- NM & LN clips may be eligible for CM, where NM or LN is used on the youngest mobs.



The change to the treatment of liquid nitrogen provides greater transparency to the wool buying trade as to the method of breech modification applied.



### How will this affect SustainaWOOL members?

Firstly, **all** SustainaWOOL members are required to complete the NWD in an accurate manner, so we encourage your interest and awareness of the new version.

Secondly, for SustainaWOOL purposes, treatment of lambs with liquid nitrogen is a form of breech modification which while bloodless, is likely to result in substantial inflammation.

As the SustainaWOOL **BLUE** standard only accepts breech modifications where these are accompanied by effective pain and inflammation relief, liquid nitrogen must be accompanied by an APVMA-approved analgesic product (so, must be **LA**) to be eligible for SustainaWOOL.

The table below outlines the alignment of NWD mob status with SustainaWOOL brand tiers.

NWD mob status	Eligible SustainaWOOL brand tier
NM, CM	 (GREEN & GOLD members)
AA, LA	 (BLUE members)

For more information on the NWD and the review outcomes, visit the AWEX website at <https://www.awex.com.au/standards/national-wool-declaration-nwd/>

Or alternatively, contact Dr Kerry Hansford by:

**Email:** khansford@awex.com.au

**or telephone:** 03 9318 0277



## Some food for thought: Feedbase focus



**Wherever you produce wool in this amazing country, the last few years have seen some significant climatic events that have presented challenges for wool growers. From too much rainfall, to not enough and other significant climatic events that have occurred, its time to rethink and re-evaluate our feedbase practices.**

Undertaking a review – including conducting soil testing, will also assist in meeting some of the environmental considerations of your SustainaWOOL accreditation.

As we all know, consistent nutrition from well managed pasture systems delivers staple strength, and supports flock health and reproduction goals. It also helps to support environmental stewardship.

Take some time to review, re-assess and plan for changes in your overall climate, rainfall and seasonal patterns. Don't forget to soil test!

Discuss any changes that would see you protect and improve your property soil, pastures and landscape, and develop a plan with your local agronomist or advisor to execute these changes.

Your local grower group can also be a great resource for you, providing insights, hints and tips for ensuring success- and avoiding failures!

At this time of the year, many growers are contemplating legume sowing into their pastures. Traditional clovers, biserrula and serradella species are usually sown in Autumn. However, did you know that some of the newer mediterranean hard-seeded species perform better when summer sown?

There are significant projects currently underway in the sheep sector to develop new feedbase varieties that will meet regional climatic changes and introduce improved species for a new era.

One such project is the RRD4P project – Dryland Legume Pasture Systems. You can find out more about this collaborative industry project here:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=SM-zKtpTLwg&t=5s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SM-zKtpTLwg&t=5s)

Many of these pasture projects are being trialed in partnership with regional Grower Groups. Check in with yours to see if they are undertaking any trials, or encourage them to find out more- including if they can participate or contribute.

Several small grant opportunities exist through AWI and MLA that may assist your local grower group to conduct some trials that may benefit your region.

There is a significant amount of information on the AWI and MLA websites in regards to Pasture/ feedbase management and the many projects currently underway:

**AWI:** [www.wool.com/land/pastures/](http://www.wool.com/land/pastures/)

**MLA:** [www.mla.com.au/extension-training-and-tools/feedbase-hub/](http://www.mla.com.au/extension-training-and-tools/feedbase-hub/)

# AWEX WoolClip Update

## What is WoolClip?

WoolClip is an online internet and mobile app that allows the user to create wool Specifications, Consignments and National Wool Declarations (NWDs). It uses a simple, intuitive workflow designed to reduce workload and errors.

## Who can use it?

The primary users of WoolClip are Wool Classers and/or Wool Growers (owner/managers).

WoolClip allows these primary users to work on their own, together, or in collaboration with supporting users such as Marketing Reps, Wool Pressers, Shearing Contractors and Carriers.

## Benefits of WoolClip?

Using WoolClip benefits the wool grower, wool classer, wool broker and warehouse by:

- Allowing data capture of on farm data either online or off line,
- Reduced error rate (e.g. no duplicate bale numbers),
- Easy to build Specifications (no manual cross checking),
- Ability to set up multiple users working as a Team,
- Ability to complete the NWD electronically,
- Immediate transfer of Specification information/data to the broker/warehouse,
- E-bale ready (RFID), and
- Secure.

WoolClip is also eBale ready, allowing for greater traceability from farm through the supply chain. AWEX e-bale project. E-bale uniquely identifies each pack/ bale. Using WoolClip each identifier is then associated with the details of the product, its origin, its destination and location of the bale on the journey.

## Could WoolClip be for you?

### Q I am a wool grower. Should I be a registered user of WoolClip?

Highly recommended. Registration means you can do (any of) the following:

- Set up your Farm Account(s) with correct Trading and Location details
- Optionally set up your own Job
- Alternatively, access the Job set up by the Wool Classer
- Add/maintain mobs
- Declare the NWD on the website, rather than via the SMS phone link
- Finalise a Specification with selling instructions

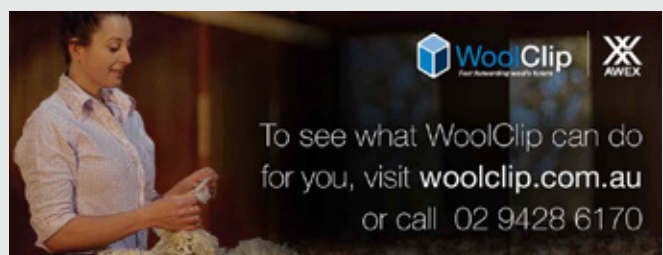
We welcomed John Cox to the WoolClip team. John has had a lifelong involvement in the wool industry as a Wool Grower and Wool Classer, with expertise as a specialist Superfine classer and in Training and Broking.

John and his family have an ongoing involvement in merino sheep breeding. John is available to assist with all aspects of WoolClip from getting started to ongoing technical support.

John is only too happy to be contacted, including after hours and weekends with any questions or issues that you may have. Or even to arrange a short training session.

You can reach John on 0468 533 529 or by email [jcox@awex.com.au](mailto:jcox@awex.com.au)

Or visit [www.woolclip.com.au](http://www.woolclip.com.au)



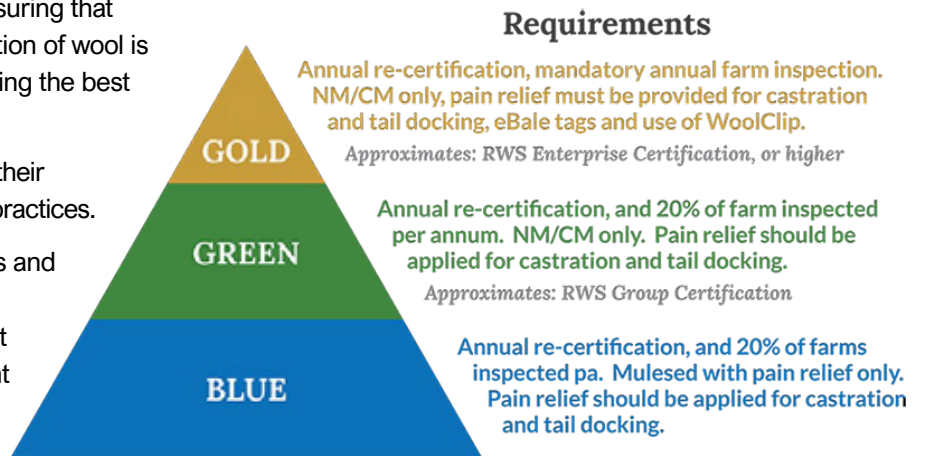


# What are your membership options?

The SustainaWOOL team are committed to ensuring that your commitment to quality and ethical production of wool is recognised and valued, and that you are receiving the best premiums for your wool in the marketplace.

It is also important that our growers ensure that their membership category reflects their production practices.

Your SustainaWOOL membership compliments and adds value to other accreditation schemes that currently operate. You don't have to choose just one – and often buyers are looking for the “right fit” and having all your bases covered puts you in the best space for success.



## SustainaWOOL GOLD

Our SustainaWOOL GOLD Membership has grown significantly again this year, with us welcoming aboard our 24th GOLD member! These growers aim for the highest production standards and are prepared to be role models for the industry. GOLD growers:

- ✓ Administer effective pain relief for tail docking and castration as part of a non-mulesing production systems.
- ✓ Move the wool traceability bar higher by using the AWEX Wool Clip app & eBale tags.
- ✓ Are committed to demonstrating the sound land stewardship practices now trendily termed 'regenerative'.
- ✓ Are passionate contributors to their local community and wider farming community.

We have been overjoyed with your support for this level of certification and we would like to thank and welcome on board our additional 7 new SustainaWOOL GOLD members who have recently taken up this opportunity:

- Buckalong Enterprises
- Scott McCole
- AF Sheridan and Partners
- Paraway Pastoral Company
- Tralee Grazing
- Moojepin
- Hambach Grazing

**Welcome aboard!** If you meet the criteria, and are interested in moving to GOLD membership, please contact us today.

## SustainaWOOL GREEN and BLUE

SustainaWOOL GREEN certification is the tier for growers who do not mules or who have ceased to mules, and who elect to not have an annual farm inspection.

Our GREEN growers are treated as a group for farm auditing purposes, with 20% of GREEN grower farms selected at random for audit each year.

Certification for GREEN growers is subject to annual renewal, and pain relief should be used at lamb marking for tail docking and castration operations.



SustainaWOOL BLUE certification is the GREEN-equivalent tier for growers who have not been able to phase out the practice of surgical breech modification, but who otherwise meet the SustainaWOOL standard for quality and sustainability.

Pain relief must be used for breech modification procedures at lamb marking, and should be use for tail docking and castration operations.



## Membership Benefits

SustainaWOOL provides 3 types of benefit to our grower members.

**Reputation:** for growers who take their stewardship and reputations responsibilities seriously, SustainaWOOL provides an effective platform to declare these good practices to the world's wool buyers, and to make clear your willingness to be audited.

**Practice improvement:** the SustainaWOOL Integrity Scheme allows growers to self-assess farm management practice against the SustainaWOOL stewardship benchmarks, allowing growers to identify areas for practice improvement.



**Financial Reward:** SustainaWOOL-certified sale lots are eligible to be included in buyer consignments for integrity-assured lots – attracting additional competition on these lots, and often demonstrably higher buyer limits.

Since 2015, SustainaWOOL GREEN growers have typically received 2-3% higher wool prices for their fleece lots at auction than received for equivalent non-member lots, and experience a lower passed-in rate at auction.

A similar pattern exists for our BLUE growers, who typically receive 1-2% higher price at auction for their fleece lots compared to non-members, and a lower passed-in rate.

These financial benefits and our lowest-in-class fees mean that SustainaWOOL membership generates an excellent return on investment.

SustainaWOOL growers also benefit from a 2% lower passed-in rate for their fleece wool.

Using a nominal \$2,000 value per bale of 18-micron fleece, a 2% premium received means our typical membership fee (\$150 incl. GST) is recouped with the sale of only 3 fleece bales.

## Weekly Lot Reviews:

**Did you know that the SustainaWOOL team conduct reviews of the weekly sales offerings to ensure that your SustainaWOOL accreditation is attached to your sale lots?**

Each week, we conduct an audit of each of the wool sale centres to ensure that your accreditation is attached to your sale offerings. This oversight ensures that you will be recognised as a SustainaWOOL member and that your sale lots receive the premium you are entitled to.

It is important to note that recognition accuracy begins at the entry of the lot on your NWD and with your broker. Make sure that your SustainaWOOL status is logged with your sale lots.

As this oversight continues, we are pleased to report that most of our brokers are happy to send through early sales listings for review and that non-compliance has substantially reduced.

However, we do still have a few that require ongoing review corrections, so chat with your broker to make sure that they are doing their best for you.

## Revised Grower Declaration & Manual

The revision of Grower Declaration (v8.0) and new Grower Manual has now been completed.

The revised Declaration features clearer language, some additional practices to consider, and an additional module which applies to our **GOLD** growers.

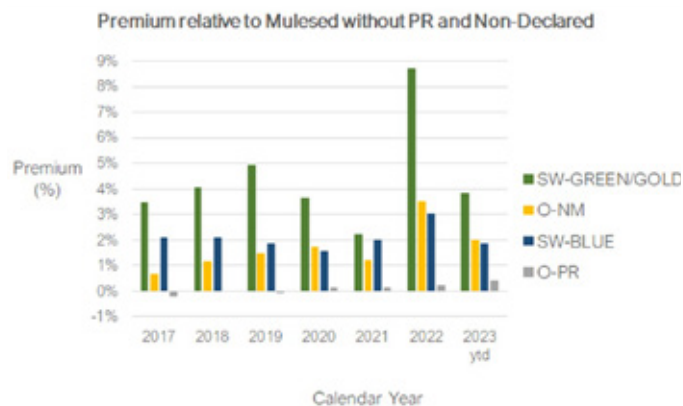
A copy of this updated version can be accessed on our website here: [v8.0.pdfhttps://sustainawool.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/SustainaWool-Standard-V8.0.pdf](https://sustainawool.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/SustainaWool-Standard-V8.0.pdf)

## Member financial benefits

The past 4 years has been a period of great change and challenge for all those involved in the business of wool – the global COVID pandemic and its enormous impact at home and abroad including on human health, supply chains, and consumer expenditure on discretionary items; the Ukraine conflict and its impact on energy prices; rapid rises in inflation rates and central bank-drive rises in official interest rates.

However, despite these challenges, SustainaWOOL members have continued to enjoy financial benefits from our Scheme.

The following figure shows the price premiums received at auction by Australian fine wool growers (15.6 – 20.5 microns) for their fleece wool over the 7 selling seasons since 1st January 2017, by mulesing status and SustainaWOOL membership tier.



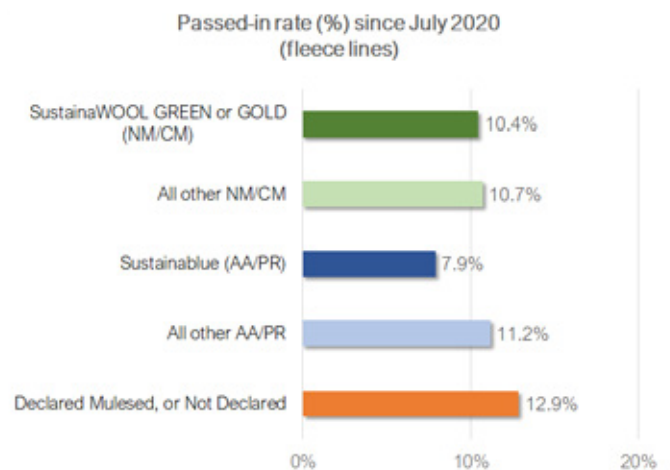
The data shows that:

1. Premiums have tended to fluctuate over time, with major reductions occurring in 2020 and 2021 (due to COVID impacts on the woven markets especially) and now again in 2023.
2. With the exception of 2021, SustainaWOOL Green and GOLD members have typically received 2 - 3% higher prices for their wool at auction than that received by growers for equivalent NM/CM wool outside our Scheme. Using a nominal \$2,000 non-member bale value, this equates to \$50 per fleece bale in added value over and above the benefit for achieving NM/CM status.
3. Sustainablue members have typically received 2 – 3% higher prices for their fleece lines at auction than that received by growers for equivalent AA/PR wools outside our Scheme or those who don't complete the

NWD or use pain relief when mulesing - indeed they typically achieve price premiums are similar to or greater than that for NM/CM wool outside our Scheme. Using a nominal \$2,000 non-member bale value, this equates to \$50 per fleece bale in added value.

Consistent with the evidence of higher prices achieved, SustainaWOOL growers also continue to benefit from lower passed-in rates when offering wool at auction.

The following chart shows the passed-in rates for our members compared to non-members and non-declarers.



The data shows that SustainaWOOL growers are much more likely to be offered an acceptable wool price at auction compared to those who do not use the NWD to declare your clip, or don't use pain relief when mulesing your sheep.

### Take home points:

- SustainaWOOL growers tend to receive higher prices for their fleece wools at auction than non-members, and lower passed in rates.
- The higher value received typically ranges from \$50 – 80 per fleece bale sold at auction.
- There is year-year variation in premiums, reflecting external factors on our markets and supply chains such as COVID, consumer uncertainty and rising inflation