

New Zealand Wool Classers Association Inc.



Registrars Report NZWCA AGM May 6th 2014

Quite a lonely job this is – sometimes I wonder if we are like the rest of the wool industry and are staring at our navels rather than looking 12- 18 months out. I know that it is depressing , but I also know that the commodity industry is cyclical – our time will come again – we have just got to have people in place that still understand OUR product, That is my biggest worry. Few people understand the magic of wool, the fact that it is a living fibre that goes on ‘living ‘after it is removed from the sheep. Some types relax and curl up whilst others lay out flat and stay that way. I liken the person in charge of the blend at the mill to chefs in a kitchen – you can give them exactly the same ingredients and ask them to bake something using exactly the same recipe and the end product will be different.

Worse still you throw all the ingredients in together and make a pot purée.

Anyway, because I am aware of the problems we face I became involved with the Wool Industry Partnership Group (IPG) that meets on a regular basis in Wellington. This group takes a broad cross-section of the wool harvesting industry and throws their problems into the middle and tries to come up with some answers. Farmers through to Wool Merchants and everyone in between are represented. This has lead directly or indirectly to me sitting on the Industry Stakeholder Council as the wool industry representative. This Industry Stakeholder Council is made up of representatives of all land based industries that have now all come together under one training umbrella. Instead of individual ITO's we have now come under the Primary ITO model. This has lead to different representation and training strategies mainly brought about by Government directive. As I have said many times I am a great believer in our industry, I have no axe to grind and I will do my best to make sure that you all get any chance going of the best way to improve your lot.

Back to the same old, same old – more classers missing out on Merit Awards because they have not paid their subs. One brokers list had more unregistered than registered classers on it, some of which have not been on the database in the time that I have been your Registrar (6 years). We have also had an issue this year with classers using other classer's numbers – how would you feel getting a rev up over your classing and then find out that someone else had used your number? Farmers have got to take some of the flak here, because it seems that they only want to have one stencil number on their clip. Do they pay the same for the second classer or did the first not come back for a reason?

I do do some real work on your behalf at times- hope someone does some real work on fine wool prices very soon otherwise there will be no fine wool sheep left. I know of 35000 18-19 micron merinos up one gully that went to a Romney ram this year – who said the industry isn't cyclical?

I would like to thank Craig Adams for his contribution and help to me personally and to the Association over the past 3 years. Craig is one of the very few wool reps that I have seen over the last few years actually get in and get their hands dirty – the worst thing about his ‘other’ life is that it's hard to believe that he has ever been in a woolshed.



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The other biggie of the year was being asked to go to a careers type evening at Lincoln University to try and sell our industry – hard going when the likes of Dairy NZ and Ravensdown have the stands, flags and giveaways that they strut around the various field days. Still I met quite a few good people who were quite content just to talk through things. Surprising amount of enthusiasm there and also it surprised me the number of overseas students (relatively) who took the time to talk about wool. I still had a bloody lot of fliers for Laurie's courses left at the end of the night, but we had some great discussions. Bill(old Billy), our Chairman made sure that his son kept coming back with savouries etc and that at least made me look partly busy. Thanks young Billy.

I can't sign off without reference to the work that Graeme Bell has done for wool classers, first with CRAIG and then as inaugural chairman of NZWCA – you will be missed around the table Graeme, but I am sure that you will continue to impart your industry knowledge to anyone that asks.

Annette also has made life a little bit more bearable, shes the one that you most probably talk to on the phone and any words that she mutters most probably should only be muttered anyway. All the proof reading and financial issues have now become her domain and she is bloody good at it – with the vocabulary that Annette has she should be! Thanks for everything Annette.