

NZWCA November Newsletter 2021



CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS BILL DOWLE D1076



By the time this hits your inbox there won't be much, if any fine wool to be classed and many will be flat out getting into the main shear. From all accounts the season has gone off OK and once we got growth in Canterbury it certainly took off.

We are all hoping for good wool growth for a good season and clip next year. Prices have been probably described as acceptable, for Fine wool but are still a bit suppressed for Crossbred, although there does appear to be light at the end of the tunnel, and as always properly prepared clips have a much better chance of giving the

grower a return that the "throw it in the bale as it comes off the sheep" approach. If the market really gets going doing the job right will pay off.

Hopefully we will not have to endure lockdowns and restrictions much more and next season can return to what we would consider "normal", it has been a trying time for everyone, whatever industry you are involved with.

As an association we have, through Marg (NZWCA Registrar), tried to keep you abreast of requirements and changes as they have happened. Being in Waikato, Marg has had more frustration from it all than we have had in the South Island.

On the thorny ongoing issue of attendance at Professional Development days we have a subcommittee looking at what we can do, it is very difficult to enforce the "rule" that we attend a day every three years. The article in this newsletter from Don Urquhart gives a perspective on the importance of keeping up, from a wool merchant's perspective. We do want to encourage classers to keep up with what is going on in the industry. It is classers keeping up with the industry and developments that is why Council of New Zealand Wool Interests Inc was happy to endorse our association, as seen in the letter included in this newsletter. It is all about keeping standards as high as possible.

This being the last newsletter for the year I will conclude by wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, and hopefully we will be able to return to what we used to think of as "Normal Life" soon. Christmas and New Year being the festive season, be careful and we don't want any disasters from over doing the festivities side of things.

Women in Wool are Women of Influence

Two of the four finalists in the "Primary Industries" category of the 2021 Women of Influence Awards are connected to the wool harvesting industry.

Congratulations from NZWCA to Carolyn Clegg (Vice-President, NZ Shearing Contractors Assn) and Tia Potae (Whānau Ora Navigator).

An Awards Celebration evening, at which the winners of each category will be announced, is scheduled for Thursday 10 February 2022.



From NZWCA Registrar

Tēnā tatou katoa

If you are reading this, chances are you are an NZWCA member, supporter, sponsor or someone connected to the wool industry who understands and values the many parts played in the chain that is the NZ wool industry, from sheep's back to wool export in various forms. Thank you for being here reading this newsletter, thank you for your acknowledgement of NZWCA.

These are the words chosen to explain what NZWCA does, why we exist: "Fostering and supporting quality education, harvesting and presentation standards in the wool industry. A home for all involved in wool growing, handling, grading and classing."

With the NZ Merino Company's established ZQ framework, and the addition of wool to the NZ Farm Assurance Programme (NZ FAP) in September this year, much of New Zealand's wool clip can now be sold with the backing of solid, standardised quality assurance covering all aspects of wool production, preparation and processing. I love being part of an industry that has so many people who are proud of this and work hard to keep standards high. And, importantly, we know this broad quality assurance is something wool customers the world over want.

Wool classing and grading, and the oversight of wool preparation that occurs when a registered classer or grader is present, is a vital link in that quality assurance chain. A classer registration system with integrity and continuity is an essential part of the big picture of NZ wool. Keeping your NZWCA registration current, attending industry professional development days and absorbing information sent signals that you are an engaged and informed wool classing professional, and that you recognise your value and the value of the NZWCA classer registration system. Thank you. To the small number of people who aren't respecting our stencil, please realise you are part of a proud heritage and industry that counts on integrity from all.

There are a number of pieces in this newsletter that are related to all of the above. Look for the letter from the Council of NZ Wool Interests Inc, Don Urquhart's refreshingly frank "I Am Grumpy" article, the historic record of the beginnings of the classer registration system in NZ and read the tribute to retired Registrar/Executive Officer Bruce Abbott which outlines the massive contribution he has made to cementing NZWCA as a credible, independent body within the NZ wool industry.

We are grateful to our sponsors for crucial ongoing support, NZWCA is proud to work alongside you all to maintain and ensure quality in the NZ wool industry. Thank you: *Wool First (Federation of NZ Wool Merchants); WoolWorks* (NZ Wool Scouring); NZ Shearing Contractors Assn; NZ Merino Company; PGG Wrightson; CP Wool; Peter Lyon Shearing; BJ Mahony Shearing; Wool Research Organisation of New Zealand; NZ Wool Testing Authority. As previously stated, the NZWCA Registrar role was not something I ever aspired to, however here I am. My place in this role is my proof that I place a huge value on the maintenance of a classer registration system of the highest integrity. I can't say I'll be in the role as long as Bruce, but I have put my hand up to do my bit, for now. Covid restrictions – I am based in the Waikato where, for example, we have just come out of six weeks at Alert Level 3 – have got in the way of my intentions to get out into circulation at sheds and shows this year. I am sorry about that and hope that next year I can do a whole lot better at face-to-face interaction. The selfie photo I have chosen to accompany this comment is one of the few shed visits I managed to make this year, to Sonya Johansen on the occasion of her 30th year classing at Timahanga in the central North Island. Read Sonya's contribution and thoughts in this newsletter.

I close with my thanks to all my fellow industry members reading this for your support of NZWCA in 2021. Special thanks to the NZWCA Board members, our chairman Bill Dowle and secretary Annette Gamble, it is an honour and a pleasure to work alongside you all in the name of wool quality.

Ngā mihi o te Kirihimete me te Tau Hou - Season's greetings for Christmas and the New Year Please be safe while you are enjoying the festive season and summer ahead, and always, **#choosewool**

Marg Forde A1260

Got a question? Check out our website

www.woolclassers.org.nz

The NZ Wool Classers Assn website was considerably upgraded last year. It contains a wealth of wool information including full explanation of the recently refreshed classer and grader registration process, and has an easy facility to look up members. For example, you can access the comprehensive Clip Preparation Best Practice Guidelines here:

https://woolclassers.org.nz/education/clip-preparation/

This document has been produced as a result of consultation between a range of industry groups, and describes the minimum practices necessary to ensure successful technical preparation of the wool clip through structured communication between the various parties involved in the process, as well as that necessary to ensure the welfare of both sheep and workforce.

Pro tip: You will find committed and credible businesses and organisations across all aspects of the NZ wool industry in one place and accessible with one click from our home page.

Scroll to the bottom for links to the NZWCA sponsors.

Thank you: Wool First (Federation of NZ Wool Merchants); WoolWorks (NZ Wool Scouring); NZ Shearing Contractors Assn; NZ Merino Company; PGG Wrightson; CP Wool; Peter Lyon Shearing; BJ Mahony Shearing; Wool Research Organisation of New Zealand; NZ Wool Testing Authority. We are grateful to our vital sponsors for ongoing support and we are proud to work alongside you all to maintain and ensure quality in the NZ wool industry.















BJ Mahony Shearing

Se WoolResearch



I AM FEELING A BIT GRUMPY! BY DON URQUHART M486



I have served on the Board of the NZ Wool Classers Association (NZWCA) for a fair number of years as the Federation of Wool Merchants representative. It's a job in itself that has had many challenges but in recent times I feel it is time to confront the elephant in the room.

Almost every Board meeting we have on the agenda a reference to wool classer registration numbers being used on wool clips with the user of the number not being a financial member of the association. Your Board has spent endless time in discussion on this problem; how to deal with it, do we have the power to do anything, who owns the number and how it may be used.

Here is how I see it. The number is issued by NZWCA to the recipient on reaching the qualifying standard with the proviso of being a financial member of the Association, and meeting some professional development upgrades, for example, attending an occasional refresher day or AGM with training attached and generally taking some interest in the ongoing health of our great industry. Your Board is well aware of the difficulty with time, travel and accommodation costs and try to make it all as easy and simple as possible to attend.

My thoughts are these: Wool classing and grading are vital requirements for presenting wools fit for purpose to world markets. In order to have a continuous flow of new entrants to the industry we need to have a recognized system of training and qualifications with a structure to do the administration. To do this requires funding. I am amazed at how much your Association achieves with such a tiny income. Without the support of members, associate members, merchants, brokers, exporters, WRONZ and so on, along with a lot of effort by your Board Chairman, Secretary, Registrar and Board Members, the training regime would not survive.

So, this is my argument: The system that trained our now skilled wool classers, giving them the ability to prepare our national clip, and earn an income, requires on-going support to train new and upcoming entrants to our recognised trade. Much of the cost of training and supervising in years gone by were paid for by wool grower levies administered by the NZ Wool Board. The Wool Board as we all know was disbanded some years ago.

I believe we should all be prepared to give back to the system that gave us the skills required to make an income from our industry. After all, most wool classers with several sheds to class would, I believe, cover the cost of annual NZWCA membership by morning smoko on their first day of the season.

What can and what is the board of NZWCA doing about this problem? Where possible we check catalogues with classer numbers attached against our list of financial classers. For any one non-registered, an attempt is made to contact and discuss reasons why etc. Not easy as historic records are inaccurate and there are out of date addresses and contact details. NZWCA has no legal power to fine or punish in any way other than delist the classer from the registration list. But this is done as a last resort as we want everyone "onboard" so would rather talk about it.

But in addition, we note that our industry is increasingly taking steps to uphold the integrity of the product through to the end user. Our Association strongly supports the National Council of NZ Wool Interests Inc recent initiative to support wool sector membership of the New Zealand Farm Assurance Incorporated. Already some 25 wool companies have so far joined NZFAP, including brokers, merchants, exporters, scours, test houses and retail brands.

In closing could I request all classers to think seriously about the above and take some action. If you have a reason for being non-compliant then talk to our Registrar, Chairman or write to our secretary. I can assure you of a good hearing. Another option is to become a Board member and facilitate any changes you might like to see from within.

I have written the above to provoke thought and hopefully some positive action. These are personal views and thoughts as a wool classer and not necessarily the views of Woolfirst Merchants whom I represent on the NZWCA Board. I would be happy to receive any comment, good or bad.

Don Urquhart M486

Kurow Wools Ltd



Skirting Merino

The National Council of New Zealand Wool Interests Incorporated NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NZ WOOL INTERESTS LETTER OF ENDORSEMENT OF NZWCA

The National Council of NZ Wool Interest acknowledges and supports NZWCA in the following:

1) In association with Southern Institute of Technology, NZWCA input and delivery into the Certificate in Wool Technology & Wool Classing and Wool Clip Grading Courses.

2) Recognises that NZWCA administer the Wool Classing and Grading registration on behalf of the NZ Wool Industry.

3) Support NZWCA that users of the NZWCA registration number must be current members of their association. The National Council reinforce the importance of correct wool preparation and having an organisation such as NZWCA to oversee the training and registration of qualified wool people which greatly assists the NZ wool industry in the correct preparation of our national clip.

Craig Smith CHAIRMAN

BRUCE ABBOTT A1457 A TRIBUTE WRITTEN BY NZWCA PATRON AND BOARD MEMBER ALLAN FRAZER

Bruce Abbott, who has worked in the wool industry for 59 years, has decided to hang up his woollen socks from what has perhaps been his most influential role in this long career.

As Registrar and Executive Officer for the NZWCA for six years up until the end of 2020 followed by a short stint as Education Officer, he has brought about significant change in the services offered by the organisation to its members and in the contribution that the Association has made to supporting the interests of the wider industry.

Commenting on this, NZWCA chairman Bill Dowle said Bruce had taken the organisation to "another level" through the relationships forged with other industry organisations and companies. Bruce stepped into the role after serving as board member for 4 years. Bill highlighted Bruce's drive, enthusiasm and perseverance. A broad-based career in the wool industry along with his ability to forge excellent working relationships with people at all levels has contributed to Bruce's achievements for the Association. Congratulating Bruce on giving a lifetime of service to the wool industry Bill also pointed out that service to others is in his blood.

In earlier years while living in Millers Flat he was appointed as Chairman and project manager for introducing a drinking water supply system to the township of 150 people (now over 100 connections) and raising \$780,000 for the project. This fund-raising ability has continued in his NZWCA role with Bruce both promoting Associate memberships to non-classers including industry organisations and wool growers but also bringing in sponsorships for a range of Association initiatives. Other community projects he has been involved in include building the Hockey clubroom at Maidstone Park in Lower Hutt, serving on the committee to develop the Leslie hockey ground in Timaru and as a member of the committee that put in the first hockey artificial turf in Dunedin.

Sport has played a big part in Bruce's busy life. He represented Otago, Southern Minors and South Canterbury in hockey and was picked for the NZ colts' side and represented NZ Country in their Australian tour in 1970. He now plays outdoor bowls and holds over 20 club titles. That competitiveness is reflected in his work ethic with all focus on delivering a top-class performance.



Bruce's 30 years classing Mulholland wool was marked in September with a presentation by Claire Mulholland to Bruce in the Auripo Enterprises Ltd shearing shed near Oturehua

Bruce has been living in Mosgiel in recent years with his very supportive wife, Pat. Without all that support from Pat over so many years Bruce says, "I would not have achieved anything". Bruce grew up inDunedin and,after leaving school in 1964 heworked for six months with his Waimate based brother-in-law Bryan Wright, who was a wool buyer. He then got a job with National Mortgage as a trainee classer followed by a year working in woolsheds in Australia. He was then accepted for the Diploma in Wool and Wool Classing at Massey University, a qualification held by many of today's industry leaders. Following this he returned to Dunedin to again work for National Mortgage.

Later he worked in wool scours in Timaru, Sawyers Bay and Wellington, before a rolein the New Zealand Wool TestingAuthority's head office for a year in Wellington.

He and his wife, Pat, and their two children, then returned to Dunedin where he spent 6 years running the Dunedin office for NZWTA. Duane Knowles, now CEO for NZWTA says "Bruce, your tireless efforts over many years are much appreciated. While the industry is a fraction of what it was when you started out in it, you have set

some wonderful platforms to ensure it can function appropriately for any further changes. You can be very proud of your achievements."

On leaving NZWTA Bruce and Pat took on a number of roles. Among them was managing the YMCA accommodation in Moray PI, Dunedin for a period before moving to Cromwell in Central Otago where they took on the role of running the chalet accommodation for the Otago Polytechnic. They then moved to their holiday home in Millers Flat. In their time there they took on the ownership of the Millers Flat 4 Square Store.

During this time after an approach from Willis Arbuckle (A650) in 1989 he became a self-employed wool classer managing 15 clips a year, including Halfway Bay,Cecil Peak, Walter Peak, The Branches and Motutapu. That included 100 days "on the trot" without a break.

Bruce joined the NZWCA board in 2010 and then took over the role of Executive Officer in 2014.Graeme Bell, a former chair of NZWCA, comments that "Bruce, you have made a very active and passionate contribution to the wool industry through your roles with NZWCA. Enjoy your retirement Bruce your contribution will not be forgotten."

Bruce continued to class a few sheds during his role with NZWCA and says this kept him in touch with whatwas going on and it helped him as far as the Association was concerned. He will continue as a classer as long as he is fit enough to do it, and will also continue to be a bit involved in aspects of wool education.

Bringing increased education opportunities to people working throughout the wool industry has been a highlight of the past 6 years. With strong support from NZWCA Chair, Bill Dowle, some other board members and industry leaders he drove the charge to ensure retention of the Level 4 Certificate in Wool Technology which for many years has been delivered by long term lecturer and tutor, Laurie Boniface based at the Massey University Wool Room.

For a while it looked as though this programme would die through lack of a training organisation to deliver what is the most comprehensive wool focused qualification that has been available over the past 20 years. First it looked as though Lincoln University would pick up the role of long-term host and Bruce played a significant role in adapting the course content to comply with the university procedures but after a short stint they pulled out. Next Taratahi Agricultural Training Centre in the Wairarapa were persuaded to pick up the role but it was not to last long with this organisation being forced to close down. Intensive negotiations lead to the Southern Institute of Technology/Telford (SIT) becoming the new host. Stability has now been achieved with a lot of support being provided by Bruce, both in bringing in industry professionals to provide a further revision of course content and also in working with industry to enrol employees in the programme. Over the past three years there had been about 30 students enrolling each year which had been a trebling in participation on that of earlier years

Bruce represented the Association on the Primary ITO Wool Advisory Group which is primarily focused on overseeing wool harvesting training and initially comprised shearing contractor and wool grower interests. A lack of industry funding for training means there have been big challenges in this area, but Bruce was instrumental in persuading the ITO to include industry participants working past the farm gate to join the group bringing a broader perspective to the groups endeavours.

One of these is Philippa Wright of Wright Wools Ltd. Philippa is Bruce's niece and says that "actively working alongside Bruce on both the Primary ITO Advisory Group and latterly working alongside him to ensure the continuity of the Wool Technology Certificate and its standards has been a real privilege. Bruce has a wonderful work ethic and with his very broad knowledge of the wool industry was able to ensure everyone in the pipeline was considered. We have attended many meetings together and it's been all fun and frustration but also incredibly satisfying. I think Bruce has well and truly earnt his retirement"

He also took a keen interest in promoting careers in the wool industry and has participated in events organised by the food and fibre collective career promotion organisation known as "Growing NZ", as well as nominating young people working in the industry to participate in regional and national school career promotion events.

Bruce worked with Primary ITO and SIT to establish a new wool grading qualification that would provide woolhandlers with the knowledge to prepare for sale crossbred and mid micron hogget wool that did not need such rigorous handling as wool required to be classed. Bruce has always been concerned about a lack of grading of crossbred clips and he believed that such a course was essential for the crossbred wool industry noting that low prices has resulted in many growers being unwilling to cover the cost of good preparation even though market returns indicate there is a reward for doing so. The first entry of 14 students took place in October.2020 and three more courses, at a range of locations, have been held since with Bruce being the principal tutor. Feedback from wool handlers, shearing contractors and wool brokers about the quality of the course has been very complementary.



Bruce is pictured here in May with Phil Holden of the NZ Shearing Contractors Assn. Bruce was one of the speakers at the 2021 NZSCA conference.

Over the past 15 years, NZWCA has been holding professional development days for members combined with open days for workers in the wool harvesting industry. Those days had grown under Bruce's leadership from one or two events a year, to an average of five. While they had a strong focus on reinforcing standards for both fine and crossbred wool preparation, they had been expanded to include wool pressing standards, wool recognition exercises, documentation, displays of contamination, health and safety and displays of wool products. Increasingly good attendance is being achieved with about 80 people, ranging from wool buyersand brokers to classers, farmers and representatives from scours attending a recent event in Ashburton. A feature of these events has been participation by a range of quality industry speakers.

Bruce and Pat have two children, Pauline and Gregory, and 5 grandchildren Summer, Cathleen (Pauline's children), Natasha, Shea and Dion (Gregory's children) and plan to spend more time with them.

But we are sure that we will continue to hear from Bruce from time to time in the future and that probably will be expressing a view about the future of this industry which he is so passionate about. As he said in a recent interview "Everybody is looking for the wool industry to turn the corner". "Everything goes in cycles, like fashion". Meanwhile we've got to go back to the breeders and say, you've done well breeding sheep for meat, what about the wool side?"



A compilation of contamination found in wool at CWS



Metal products found within greasy wool at CWS



WoolWorks tracks contamination by broker, location, and contamination type by island



YOU MAY NOT KNOW IT, BUT WHEN WOOL IS RECEIVED AT WOOLWORKS SITES, IT SOMETIMES COMES WITH SOME EXTRAS....

These 'extras' are in the form of contamination in the wool. Whether it be press bars, loose woolpacks used as dividers, articles of clothing, or even the odd bird, these items pose a threat to the finished quality of the wool.

Anything that is not sorted out goes over our conveyor belts and has the potential to damage our machinery or, if not found, end up in the finished clean wool product.

Contamination in scoured wool, especially of a shreddable type, like fabric, could ruin a scoured batch and result in significant claims from overseas buyers.

In efforts to combat contamination in wool, WoolWorks have made several inroads, firstly, by educating farmers, wool exporters, and the wool industry.

The second initiative has focused on rewarding those staff whose vigilance means that contamination is removed from wool, and the product, our reputation, and the reputation of New Zealand wool is preserved.

In place at both our North Island and South Island sites, WoolWorks is a "Contamination Removal" incentive, where staff who find contamination and complete the appropriate paperwork are rewarded with a Contamination allowance. This extends to the storemen and the pressers as well as the sorters, and we have recently increased some of these allowances to further motivate and reward our observant employees.

To be eligible for this allowance, the staff member must complete a form which identifies which bale the contamination was from, identifying the brand and sale if possible.

This allows WoolWorks to map out trends in contamination and to identify certain suppliers or locations which especially contribute to this ongoing problem. Reporting back to these suppliers is done on a monthly basis, with photos of the contamination and the wool bale it was received in, provided by email. These reports are also circulated within our management team, so that we can take extra care with any lots that are needed.

The battle against contamination in New Zealand greasy wool has been a problem for a long time and there is no easy fix, except for vigilance. WoolWorks' staff are doing their part to reduce contamination in wool, and we are now calling on other industry bodies to take up the challenge to reduce contamination and keep the reputation of New Zealand wool at the high level it should be.

***graphs on next page





NEW DATES FOR NORTH & SOUTH ISLAND INDUSTRY PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT DAYS

Please diary 16.03.2022 Napier and 05.05.2022 Mosgiel

The August 20th NZWCA North Island Industry PD Day in Napier had to be postponed at short notice because of NZ going into Covid Alert Level 4 a couple of days prior.

At the time of postponement, we advised of the possibility of rescheduling to October 6, however this couldn't happen because the wool store needed to be at Level 1 for the venue to be used. We have rescheduled the Napier event to Wednesday March 16, 2022.

The framework of the day will remain the same, (including wool exercises, tour of NZWTA facility and the wool store with a core sampling demo) however some speakers may be changed due to availability, to be confirmed.

We decided upon March and not any sooner because we didn't want to clash with mainshear and the busy time for wool harvesting in the North Island. We encourage our North Island members to attend.

We will be calling for registrations nearer the time, meantime, North Islanders please put a ring around March 16 on your calendars!

ALL NZWCA MEMBERS, ADVANCE NOTICE – the date for the next NZWCA AGM/Industry PD Day is 05.05.2022 and the location is the Taieri Bowling Club, 12 Wickcliffe St, Mosgiel.



WOOL PREPARATION – update by Roger Fuller

With pre lamb shearing completed wool preparation continues to be of a very high standard. Congratulations to you all, as maintaining these high standards has a flow on effect through the supply chain and gives confidence to those purchasing the wool and also to those at the processing end.

Quality of the pre-lamb clip has been exceptional this season and apart from the Merino clip where prices have been very strong, it has been disappointing to see the Mid Micron and Crossbred market not giving the returns to farmers for the quality and well-prepared wools produced.

With the main shearing for the summer period about to get underway normal classing and preparation principles should be carried out. As I have said in previous updates the price of wool should not determine what preparation is required, although this can be quite a debatable topic at times. It is important that short cuts are not taken.

Cotts, hard colour, vegetable matter and very tender wools should be removed from the main body wool. Skirting should be at a minimum level.

Second shear emphasis should be on the vegetable matter as these types are very specific and VM is a major issue in the final process.

We are certainly in very unusual times and the wool industry in particular has been hit hard by Covid. The best thing we can do is stick to what we know and what we are good at, which is doing the best for the farmer in the woolshed for them to get the best returns possible. If everything is done properly to the best of your ability that is the most we can ask for.

To everyone out there, keep safe and all the best for the upcoming summer shearing.

Regards Roger Fuller Supply Relationship Manager/Auctioneer Wools Of New Zealand

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A CLASSER TO BE A MEMBER OF NZWCA

Wool Harvester Membership This is a category for those working in wool harvesting who wish to support NZWCA and our roles and objectives. Wool harvester members pay an annual fee and are entitled to attend all activities and events run by NZWCA and may attend our AGMs or special meetings but may not vote. Wool harvester members receive our newsletters and other communications and as with other members have the choice of opting in or out of being visible as members on our website: https://woolclassers.org.nz/join/

Associate Membership Associate membership is a category that covers farmers, sponsors, shearing contractors, retired wool classers or anyone who wishes to support NZWCA and our roles and objectives. Associate members pay an annual fee and are entitled to attend all activities and events run by NZCA and may attend our AGMs or special meetings but may not vote. Associate members receive our newsletters and other communications and as with other members have the choice of opting in or out of being visible as members on our website: https://woolclassers.org.nz/join/

The Market and Influences

With shipping challenges affecting most goods pipelines both into and out of New Zealand, wool stores around the country have not been exempt as thousands of sold bales remain in storage. Under normal circumstances within a couple of weeks after the actual sale date, most wool exporters would send instructions to the selling broker to have purchases uplifted and transported to either a wool dump or a wool scour in readiness for shipping offshore. During the past two years "normal" has ceased to exist and many wool exporters have had to "join the queue" amongst frustration waiting for allocations from shipping companies to enable the physical shipping process to commence.

Congestion at ports around the world, a general shortage of container vessels and a huge lack of lorry drivers, all resulting from the Covid pandemic, have created the perfect storm. It should also be understood that when a container of wool is loaded onto a vessel docked at a New Zealand port, this is often only the first stage of its journey because the container will invariably be trans shipped through other ports enroute to its final port of destination. For example: a container load of wool destined for a European port will travel on three or four different vessels during its journey, before finally being delivered to a mill.

Generally, crossbred wools have remained reasonably firm this season, although prices received hardly cover wool growers' costs of shearing, preparation, and sale. Mid-micron types have see-sawed this season with exporters preferring the finer edge and stronger types (27microns and stronger) struggling to gain traction. Merino wool types have been in good demand across the board as some European mills appear short of stock amidst the shipping crisis, thus prices have been very good. High VM wools though, have been discounted. Some of the best prices achieved for several years in the Christchurch auction room, were recorded during October for super-fine hogget types.

Wool Specification Forms.

A constant issue for wool brokers is the inaccuracy of wool specifications arriving at the wool store causing disruption to the otherwise streamlined through-store bale handling systems. Whilst most wool handlers and wool classers pride themselves on doing a good job in the wool shed, if the source document for the bale handling and warehousing functions is not accurate, time delays and additional costs associated with correcting the mistakes become major issues for wool store staff and management.

Too often brokers find an extra bale, or more than one bale with the same number, within a consignment. Often the description written on the bale label does not match the description written on the wool specification. Several lines in the same consignment and on the same specification are often given identical descriptions despite intention for the lines to be kept separate.

These are all things which create confusion for wool store staff, delays receiving bale weights and test data information for growers, and additional handling costs for brokers. The wool specification MUST be accurate, every bale MUST have a separate number, the total number of bales recorded on the specification MUST match the total number of bales transported, each line MUST be described correctly and differently from other lines, there MUST be a clear instruction that the specification accompanying each load is either complete to handle or to be held for further bales to follow later to complete individual lines, every load MUST be accompanied by a specification showing the grower's NZFAP ID number if they have one.

PLEASE BE ACCURATE WHEN FILLING OUT WOOL SPECIFICATIONS. THERE CAN NEVER BE TOO MUCH INFORMATION RECORDED.

Rob Cochrane Wool Procurement Manager PGG Wrightson

A wool classing snapshot from 53 years ago - much has changed for women in wool since 1968, but the reason for classer registration endures, and remarkably similar research questions are still being asked



From the Lincoln College (University of Canterbury) Annual Review 1968:

Research projects currently in progress are:

2. Wool Price and Marketing Research.

Further work on short and long-term econometric models of wool prices. A study of the demand for wool textiles in New Zealand. The development of a simulation model of the world of wool textile industry. A study of operations of private wool merchants in the marketing system.

https://livingheritage.lincoln.ac.nz/nodes/view/14000#idx63429

From the archives of the Waikato Times, article printed 13 July 1968:

"A register of wool classers has been established by the Wool Handling Committee of the Department of Agriculture and the Wool Board in an effort to upgrade the classification of wool being offered for export.

Announcing the establishment of the register, the general manager of the Wool Board, Mr JD Fraser, said the scheme aimed at having only qualified classers grade wool in farmers' wool sheds. 'While protecting the qualified classer whose livelihood may be threatened by the actions of the incompetent, the scheme also provides woolgrowers with a method of checking on the ability of the men who are responsible for presenting their wool for sale,' said Mr. Fraser. The scheme, which does not make it compulsory to be on the register, is modelled on similar projects in South Africa and Australia.

The Wool Handling Committee is responsible for setting standards and establishing the qualifications of shed classers who wish to register. It will approve registrations after considering reports from the department, the Wool Brokers Association and the Wool Commission.

The department is to carry out the inspection of shed management, the wool brokers will advise the Commission on the presentation of entire clips including binned wool as classed by registered men, or those seeking registration, and the commission will inspect the clips.

Qualifications

The board will keep the register and issue to approved classers a stencil brand for use on bales. The qualifications required are any one of the following:

A diploma of wool classing from Massey University and two seasons classing experience in New Zealand. A certificate from Lincoln college and three seasons experience. Six seasons experience in New Zealand. A diploma or certificate, in wool classing from an overseas country and adequate classing experience in New Zealand.

These provisions make it possible for the man who has had no formal training, but has the experience, to be on the register just as a man with lesser experience but who has received instruction at Massey or Lincoln, is also eligible.

The Commission is required to report on three separate clips of not less than 50 bales each classed by the applicant. Each clip must include the main lots of ewe fleece, lambs and hogget wools, pieces, bellies and so on.

A Stencil

Once the applicant has been passed, he will receive a stencil consisting of the stylized Kiwi, created by the New Zealand Manufacturers' Association, bearing a registered number and a code letter indicating the classer's proficiency in classing various wools whether they be crossbred, half bred – Corriedale and merino – or any combination of these.

The stencil on the outside of bales will enable buyers to tell at a glance whether or not a particular bale has been classed by a registered man, while the classer's number and registered code will also appear against the clip in the broker's sale catalogue."

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Further proof wool classing was a man's world 53 years ago: This photo from page 52 of the 1968 Lincoln College Annual Review is captioned:

Diploma I students receiving instruction in wool-classing from Mr J. C. Simpson, Lecturer in Wool Science, Lincoln College, 1968.



https://lincoln.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/14973

TOP WOOL HANDLERS INSPIRING AND ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE AT HUGE NATIONAL FIELD DAYS



Back in June, NZWCA patron Allan Frazer was asked by Growing NZ if there were any wool industry people who could help out with the "Inspiring the Future Aotearoa" <u>http://www.inspiringthefuture.org.nz/</u> initiative at the National Agricultural Field days at Mystery Creek. The four day event broke attendance records.

King Country champion Wool handler Keryn Herbert stepped up, and got Rahera Kerr to help too. It's great to know wool harvesting had such able representation at Field days, thanks Keryn and Rahera.

Photo shows Keryn at Field days and here's what she wrote about the experience on 17 June:

Field Days 2021

So something new today. Was invited by GrowingNZ to their Inspiring the Future Aotearoa session at Field days. Children asked questions to a panel of 4 to guess their occupations. After their guesses us (panel) went out backstage and got changed into our work clothes and brought out props to our job. Kids were then broken up into groups to come and talk and learn about our jobs.

Was an awesome experience to see kids touch wool for the very first time and hopefully got them inspired and at the same time taught them the how and why I do my job, and the pathways and how to get into the industry.

A little bit more extension for them to know this job can also be a sport.

An enjoyable experience hopefully some new champions of the future – Keryn Herbert



Photo: Keryn took along some of her wool handling competition ribbons and wore her NZ team competition shirt



Sonya Johansen June 2021 Timahanga

30 YEARS CLASSING TIMAHANGA, GRATITUDE, AND VALUABLE WISDOM ON HOW TO GET AND KEEP A SHED BY SONYA JOHANSEN A1099

It was 1992, at the time I was establishing a wool classing run for myself in Marlborough and was contacted by Alan Jones of Wrightson's in Napier at short notice to come back and class Timahanga Station, a large Corriedale Sheep Station in the Rangitikei. There was a gap in my sheds, so I did.

I struggled with the shed layout, equipment and space to prepare the clip. The job was up for grabs and I was asked to take it on, but I felt there would need to be improvements before considering it. I came up with 13 recommendations, each with three reasons why. These included x2 new TPW presses (one for each shed) at \$17,000 each and wool floor extension.

I remember delivering the list to Jack (Roberts, the farm owner) over lunch and his forehead getting wrinklier as he began to frown. I left with my tail between my legs that day, not really expecting to hear from him again.

He rang me several months later and had agreed to and processed 12 of my recommendations, so I accepted.

My philosophy with wool classing has always been the KISS (keep it simple stupid) principle, both for myself and my team. I use the term EXTREME when relaying instructions for preparation of the wool clip. There is no in between, it has to stick out like dogs balls, otherwise it doesn't get separated. This way there is no confusion and good distinction.

I have always looked forward to going up to the big country and to camp out with the gang at Timahanga. During my 20-year career at Hawkes Bay Prison, it gave me a breath of fresh air. In retirement (from the prison) it gives me a cool camping holiday.

I so appreciate the skills of the Brendon Mahony Team and the association with my Employers, the Roberts Whanau.

My 30 years to date at Timahanga has been a journey of learning, life and love. I have enjoyed the company of three generations of shed staff, constantly laughing and living with real people.

*Sonya is vice-chair of NZ Wool Classers Association and a classer representative on the association's Board



RANGE OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE NEW ZEALAND CERTIFICATE IN WOOL TECHNOLOGY AND CLASSING GRADUATES

How is the programme run?

If you are looking to build a career within the Wool Industry, the New Zealand Certificate in Wool Technology and Classing offered via distance learning through the Southern Institute of Technology's SIT2LRN programme is worth looking into.

This level 4 two-year certificate comprising four courses and on-site Practical Block Courses, can be studied from the comfort of your own living room. The four courses include:

- Wool Value Chain
- Wool Classification
- Working in the Wool Industry
- Woolshed Management.

Why should you do the course?

Students learn a wide range of important aspects related to the wool industry including wool production, grading, and classing, wool terminology, breed recognition, staff supervision, professional ethical standards, health, and safety, and working with people of other cultures.

All students are expected to attend a practical block course over the two-year duration of the programme. These will be held in venues in both Christchurch (mid-May) and Napier (mid-August).

The practical block portion of the programme is run over one week and is part of the Wool Classification course. Topics covered on the block course include wool terminology, breed recognition, fleece, and oddment identification, along with grading and classing exercises and industry visits. Students will have the opportunity to listen to guest speakers from the industry and interact with their fellow students and tutors.

At the completion of the week, there will be an assessment of knowledge/skills learned throughout the practical block course.

Designed to enable students to gain a job or progress within the wool industry, the New Zealand Certificate in Wool Technology and Classing provides them with the knowledge and practical skills required to work within the wool industry. It also teaches them about the sheep farming systems that produce wool and helps increase their confidence.

Once students successfully complete the programme, they can apply to the New Zealand Wool Classers' Association for registration of a Provisional Stencil with the intention of moving onto their Professional Stencil.

How much does the course cost?

2022 are **Fees Free** for NZ citizens and residents through the Government's new Targeted Training and Apprenticeship Fund (TTAF).

How do you register for the course?

Applications for enrolment are now open so don't delay!

Enrol through Southern Institute of Technology, Telford Campus <u>www.sit.ac.nz</u> or for more information about this programme, please contact Senior Tutor in Wool Technology, Laurie Boniface at <u>laurie.boniface@sit.ac.nz</u> or Freephone 0800 200 009

TAHI NGATAHI ONLINE HEALTH & SAFETY



Tahi Ngatahi is an online platform that uses video clips to pass on skills and safety tips to all working in the wool harvesting industry. This is a joint initiative between the NZ Shearing Contractors Association, Federated Farmers, Work safe and ACC.

It is very important that you have some record of doing an H&S program. NZWCA have joined the Tahi Ngatahi program to give our members <u>FREE</u> access to this online training program. This course now replaces the previous option

The program is a great tool for our members to ensure their workplace is not only safe for them, but also the entire wool harvesting team. Guidance is provided through informative and instructional videos, skills and safety tips to run a safe and productive wool harvesting team, followed by multiple choice questions.

Topics covered include:

- Why H & S is so very important.
- Shearing shed preparation prior to shearing.
- Who is responsible?
- Handling of sheep and equipment.
- Personal health & fitness.

Ensuring you look after yourself and the people who you are working with.



ACCESSING THE COURSE

For your <u>FREE</u> access you need to go to the NZWCA web site: woolclassers.org.nz, click on Members
Area in the menu, then go to News, click on Health
& Safety Program- read more, learn more.

To get underway follow the procedure to connect and SIGN UP

Then once received and accepted your request, we will reply and let you access the program



MAKING THE CHOICE TO BE VACCINATED

NZ Shearing Contractors Association lays out what vaccination regulations mean for the primary sector NZSCA Facebook post – 27 October 2021

Covid-19 Mandatory Vaccinations

Kia ora everyone,

I hope you and your families remain safe and well at this time. As you know, the Government has announced a series of processes and requirements in relation to mandatory vaccinations for staff and businesses in close contact environments such as hospitality, hairdressers, and gyms.

Under the changes, vaccinations will be mandatory for staff at any business where vaccine passports are required for customers. A new law will be introduced to simplify the risk assessment process for employers to follow when deciding whether they can require vaccination of their staff. These changes will also see, non-vaccinated workers in roles requiring vaccination be given a four-week notice period to get vaccinated before their employment can be terminated.

What does this mean for the Primary Sector?

We have had advice from MPI yesterday that the "primary sector is also to require vaccinations within the primary sector workforce in situations where these are needed for market access purposes". The paper presented by Cabinet to MPI, proposes amending the primary sector legislation to facilitate this. MPI are now working on and developing the processes where vaccinations are needed to maintain market access.

What does this mean for us?

The key aspect of the MPI position is the term – market access. Given wool and lamb exports form a significant part of the country's GDP, and that we also operate in a close contact environment, it is fair to assume that as an industry we will come under the MPI requirement for mandatory vaccinations in order to protect New Zealand's market access. This will undoubtedly see farmer clients begin to request information and confirmation from shearing contractors about you and your team's vaccination position and records.

We think it would be prudent for you to begin to think about how you will protect your business, your farmer clients, and their business through vaccination of your people and teams. This will undoubtedly involve delicate conversations with those who are uncertain and concerned about vaccination.

As a starting point we would encourage you to direct people to the Covid-19 vaccination link

<u>https://covid19.govt.nz/.../covid-19-vaccination-your.../</u> to help increase understanding around the vaccination. There is a lot of information available, it can be overwhelming, so be patient and kind to those who are reluctant and unsure. We will look at developing some more communication material in an effort to educate and inform and push it out. In the meantime, take care.

Ngā mihi mahana, Phil Holden NZSCA Executive Officer

Helpful links:

Unite against COVID-19 (covid19.govt.nz)

COVID-19 support | Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment (mbie.govt.nz)

<u>COVID-19 (coronavirus) information and advice | COVID-19 (coronavirus) information and advice | NZ</u> <u>Government (mpi.govt.nz)</u>

Reaching out to our Classers

My name is Carla Tucker. Recently I was in hospital, and I met a woman that happened to be Wayne Bremner's wife. I told her I used to work with Wayne (A170) 30 years ago in the wool shed. He was one of my first wool classers and it was my pleasure to work with. She said that Wayne had always kept his classing life separate from his home life and now that he is home and his memory isn't very good these days, Wayne still thinks he is wool classing and worries about the shearers finishing the sheep on time. She said that she would like to of had some photos of him working in the shed's that she could show Wayne and their family. She told me that over the years he was recognised through the wool industry for the good work he did and had won awards. I was hoping that you might be able to help me in finding some photos of him that I could share them with them. I know this is a long shot, but I thought I'd give it a go.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

If anyone can help please let me know & I will pass your details onto Carla Thanks Annette <u>secretary@woolclassers.org.nz</u>



Merry Christmas and safe holidays from the NZWCA Board

