



Aug 2024 update/mini newsletter from NZWCA Registrar

Four pages including contents:

Why skirt yellow wool; 2024 North Island Industry Day confirmation; Classer prize in fleece competition; Wool recycling knowledge sought; Classers remind your clients of how they can support NZWCA to maintain a classer register by NZWCA Associate membership; Stencil validity check on the NZWCA website

2024 NZWCA North Island Industry Day venue and date set

North Islanders make a note in your diary for October 18 2024, the venue is the PGG Wrightson building beside the saleyards in Feilding. More details to come.

New wool tutors announced by Southern Institute of Technology

All the best and congratulations on your appointment as wool tutors to NZWCA members Becks Braddick-Tohiariki M2103 and Emma O'Sullivan P2187. New Zealand's only tertiary wool education currently is the NZ Certificate in Wool Technology and Classing which is delivered as a two year distance learning course (with block course attendance). SIT recently published this article about their new wool tutors: <https://sit.ac.nz/News/ArtMID/6435/ArticleID/1635/Tutors-appointed-for-wool-programme>

Wool recycling knowledge sought by Lincoln University student

NZWCA has received this request, can anyone help please?

I am a Lincoln uni lecturer. An MS student of mine studies wool recycling. Could we have an initial discussion about that? Your organisation seems knowledgeable about the topic. Contact robert.radics@lincoln.ac.nz

Classer prize in fleece competition at Wanaka Show – now's the time to pick out top fleeces for entry in the flock fleece section

This reminder from the organisers of the Supreme Fine Wool Fleece competition at the Wanaka Show:

Hi to all Fleece Exhibitors,

Just a reminder, as we head into Shearing season, for you all too look out for, and put aside, fleeces that can be entered into the Wanaka A & P Show to be held 7th and 8th March 2025.

It has been a challenging year on a lot of fronts for the Sheep Farming community, but hopefully you are all still enthused by the great display of Fine wool in this year's Supreme Fine Wool Fleece Competition, that you can see fit to exhibit at next years show.

Remember that for Registered Classers there is a prize for the highest scoring Flock Fleece at the show, so, if employing a classer, please let them know so they can set aside fleeces.

We are looking at reintroducing an Ultra Fine Class into the Flock section, as well as readjusting the tensile Strength measurements on Ram Classes to reflect their working status for next years show.

We thank you all for supporting us in the past and look forward to seeing you all again next year for another outstanding exhibition of NZ's Supreme Fine Wools.

Kind Regards,

Ian Bagley (for the Fleece Committee)

2023 season NZWCA Classer Awards announced at our AGM in May 2024

Here is the link for the list of recipients <https://woolclassers.org.nz/members-area/news/2023-season-nzwca-classer-awards/>

Here is the link for our June newsletter which contains the full list of recipients and the citations for the Merit award winners on pages 20-24 <https://woolclassers.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/June-2024-Newsletter-1.pdf>

Congratulations to all recipients; gentle reminder, have you thanked your category sponsors? Links to sponsors are on the home page of the NZWCA website: Merino – NZ Merino Company; Mid Micron – Wools of New Zealand; Owner Classer – PGG Wrightson Wool; Provisional – Peter Lyon Shearing; Crossbred – WoolWorks; North Island – BJ Mahony Shearing.

Thank you Kelly Paku-Taylor for your email acknowledging NZWCA for the Discretionary Merit Award you received.

Skirting yellow crossbred fleeces – an answer and explanation

After the last NZWCA newsletter was published in June, an astute Grader stencil holder asked these valid questions:

“Just reading the newsletter about the preparation of the yellow wool, I’m just wanting to know that if yellow fleeces are prepared the same as the white wool wouldn’t the yellow oddments downgrade the white wool or does all the yellow oddments have to be separate? If so that will be very difficult as most sheds won’t have the space to do this and when thrown over the table the yellow lox would end up with the white wool. What would be the best way to prepare this?”

Thank you PGG Wrightson Wool and Wools of NZ for your responses as follows:

From Mark Greenlaw, National Wool Sales Manager, Wools of New Zealand: “For XBD preparation, the yellow odds can still go with other odds, the reason for skirting white fleeces is to remove the skirtings that can contain yellow anyway. Because the yellow fleeces are usually a smaller percentage of the clip, odds from these fleeces being mixed with the other odds will not make a big difference to the style.”

Kevin Waldron, PGG Wrightson Wool Rep and NZWCA Board member replied to the questioner with this:

Hi

In reference to your enquiry about, why do you need to skirt yellow fleece wool. The answer to this question lies in the many processes that wool has before it reaches the retailer. Make no mistake wool preparation at harvesting lays the foundation for all other processes in the manufacturing line. To answer your question first I need to give you a better understanding of how wool is processed and what problems manufacturers have processing wool if it is not prepared at harvesting to a high standard. Scouring is the first process after the sale of wool. Before scouring (washing) the wool has to be opened. The definition of opening wool is the separation of fibres so water and detergents can wash the fibres from all angles.

There are three different processes wool can go through to be opened. Each process is designed for different wool types, before being conveyor to the triple drum opener which is the final open of the wool before scouring. An explanation of three processes is listed.

A Short Wool Processer

Is designed for short wools, full length bellies and 1st pcs. The wool goes into a drum shaped chamber, which has a spinning drum inside with vertical bars about 100mm long.

The time that wool stays in this chamber is regulated depending on wool type. Longer oddments bellies, 1st Pcs stay in the chamber less time (1-2 seconds). This is enough time to open wool (greasy tussles and small matted bits) before travelling on conveyor for a final wool open at the triple drum. Bellies/ 1st Pcs rope/tangle if they tumble too long in the short wool processer drum.

Full fleece wools cannot be processed in a short wool processer as the wool ropes.

Fleece Hopper

A fleece hopper does not open wool. The fleece hopper function is to tear the fleece apart in preparation for opening at the triple drum opener. Although tearing apart the fleece does cause a little opening of the wool to occur.

The fleece wool hopper is only useful for full fleece wool & second shear fleece wool.

Triple Drum

Has three spinning drums in a row. Working on similar method to the short wool processer, except the wool travels through the triple drum to an open end and then onto conveyor for scouring. Not like the short processer where the time the wool spends in the chamber can be regulated. The triple drum is the finishing wool opener. It completes opening for oddment type wools and opens the fibres for fleece wools before scouring.

Cott Machine

Wool is spread out and travels along a small belt to two nip rollers with spikes on them. The spikes hold the fleece in place while another roller in front of the spikes rotates with hooks on it, tears the fleece apart. The cot machine is designed to tear cotted wool apart. The cot machine is used also for necks/Backs as it smashes a percentage of seed from the wool. Wool from the cot machine then travels through the triple drum.

Manufacturing problems caused by wool processed through the incorrect machinery.

Please Note: all wool types need to go through the correct processes to get a high standard of scourment.

1st Pcs attached to fleece wool processed through a fleece hopper will not open before entering the triple drum. The triple drum being a finishing opener will not open these wools enough, therefore these wools will not scour. All 1st Pcs where grease hides the fibres or is matted will not scour or dry if it has not been opened properly in the short processer.

Scours do provide picking belts at the end of the scour. Pickers remove wet clumps of greasy wool and little clumps of yellow wool. This is the result of 1st Pcs being left on fleece wool. Pickers at the end of a scour are an added cost to the exporter. Any wool that does not scour and escapes the pickers continues to cause problems further down the manufacturing line. It blocks needles at combing, it makes a variation in the yarn and will not take dye.

Backs and Necks attached to yellow fleeces processed through the fleece hopper do not lose the seed content anywhere as much as they would, had they had gone through the cot machine.

1st Pcs from yellow fleeces do not need to be separated from white fleece 1st Pcs. 1st Pcs consistently test at a higher colour than a coloured fleece line from the same clip. 1st Pcs carry colour in greasy tassels due to slow drying. In most cases only 5% of any clip goes into the colour line, therefore coloured 1st Pcs do not affect the colour of the Pcs line.

The best way of describing what colour does to a line of wool that is prepared well at harvesting and is processed correctly at scouring is: Imagine you have a bucket of water and add a drop of orange cordial. Give it a stir you won't see a colour change, add a table spoon give it stir and you probably still won't see colour change. But add a jug of cordial and stir, then you will see a change in colour. Colour fibres are spread far and wide during the manufacturing process. Clumps of wool do not spread as much.

Summary

All fleece wool needs to be skirted except cotted wools that open sufficiently in the cot machine. For reasons explained above. Yellow oddments are fine to be mixed white oddments they both carry colour. Yellow lox has no effect on the colour of lox lines and is far better to keep out of fleece wool lines.

Thanks for your queries.

Regards

Kevin

Spread the word about Associate membership as you go about your season

Classers and Graders, if your wool grower client appreciates your work, your valid stencil on their bales and the value of an enduring New Zealand wool classer registration system, have a think about drawing NZWCA Associate membership to their attention.

Associate membership is in most cases tax deductible for a farmer. Joining is easy, just give them our website link, there's a "Join" tab on the homepage <https://woolclassers.org.nz/>

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 free all activities and events run by NZWCA. 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.

Anyone can make a Classer validity check on the NZWCA website

The use of a classing or grading stencil on bales and in wool specifications if it is not valid reflects poorly on the offending classer/grader, the farmer's wool clip and our NZ wool industry. With the evolution of quality assurance programmes (such as ZQ and NZFAP) there are clear values and expectations around such things as Content Claim Standard, Chain of Custody, Credibility, Purchase Assurance, Traceability and Origin.

Putting invalid classer/grader stencils on bales and in bale specifications undermines the integrity of the NZ registration system and, we believe, the quality assurance programmes. Your association is working hard to raise this issue but as always a collective response is strongest. If you see it call it! Anyone can check if a stencil is valid by using the search facility we now have the NZWCA website home page <https://woolclassers.org.nz/>

Keeping your NZWCA membership current is considered a professional obligation for NZ classers and graders. The letter prefix and number which together make the one-off combination that is a registered "Kiwi stencil" is unique and may be used only by the person it was issued to.

Noho ora mai, nā Marg Forde - NZWCA Registrar

14.08.24