



NZWCA

DECEMBER 2025

NEWSLETTER

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Red Sky at Danseys Pass Station

By Cassie Johnston – Board Member & Classer H2182



Kiwi Christmas by Deb Hinde Illustration and Design

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NZWCA Chair's Report

Tracy Paterson
M2154



As the end of 2025 draws near, I have had the time to think about what we have achieved this year – the good and the not so good. We had an amazing Industry Day at Lincoln and are really looking forward to 2026 where we are going to build on some of the topics. Keep your eye out for more information. Big thanks to Marg and Terrence for “flying the flag” at the Wanaka A&P Show. We encourage as many of you to get your farmers to show a fleece or two with your name attached as the classer. There is a trophy, cash and a one-year NZWCA membership up for grabs! To those who have been studying, thank you for your commitment to the industry. To those of you out there doing the mahi – thank you. As a farmer I know how important it is to have your clip classed right, it is a skill that few possess so please give yourselves a pat on your back

and know that you are appreciated. Big thanks go to the dedicated committee who do a lot of work behind the scenes. The NZWCA voice is heard at both a national and local level and we work to maintain the high level of professionalism attached to the stencil. To Annette, our fantastic secretary, thank you for keeping everything together for us, you are appreciated! Last but definitely not least to Marg our registrar, thank you for being the glue that coordinates the huge amount of work that gets done every year. I wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and relaxing start to the 2026 year.

NZWCA COMMITMENT TO ANIMAL WELFARE

The NZWCA Board has adopted the following statement, which is published on the NZWCA website <https://woolclassers.org.nz/members-area/animal-welfare/>

“Good animal welfare practices are critical for our industry. In addition to potential prosecution, any breach of the animal welfare regulations and the expectations of our markets and consumers puts our industry and all the people who work within it at risk. Accordingly, NZWCA maintains a zero-tolerance position to any mistreatment of animals by any person. We all have a responsibility to ensure the welfare of animals and people. The NZWCA encourages members to report any mistreatment of animals and people if it occurs.”

You can view the associated presentation (made at our 2025 Industry Day) by Ministry for Primary Industries representatives Lucy Newton/Peter Hyde: *“The law and your role in animal welfare”*

from this link on our website

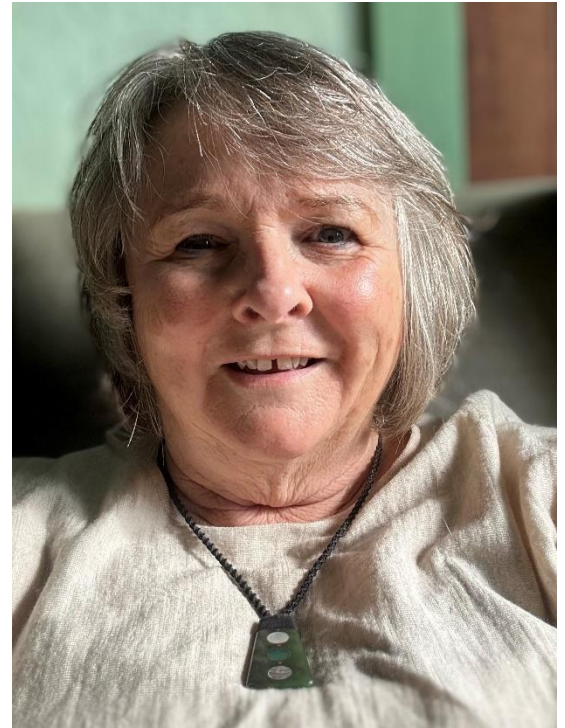
<https://woolclassers.org.nz/education/industry-day-speaker-videos/>

directly via our You Tube channel <https://www.youtube.com/@NZWoolClassersAssociation>

From the NZWCA Registrar

Meri Kirihimete me ngā mihi o te Tau Hou ki a koutou katoa

Marg Forde,
A1260



Welcome to all our members and supporters, thank you for taking the time to connect with this newsletter and the work of NZWCA.

This will be just a short note from me as we barrel towards another Christmas; the reality is at this time of year many don't have much time to read what I write, and as I write this late at night, I don't have much left in my tank to write it!

Three things have stood out to me as I have put this newsletter content together.

1. It's been a privilege this year to be an active member of the wool industry group that conducted the scheduled NZ Qualifications Authority NZQA review of New Zealand's only tertiary level wool education, the NZ Certificate in Wool Technology and Classing. This was a big body of work that took a lot of time, but it was time well spent, in my opinion. The result of our review and recommendations is with NZQA for consideration now. I'm particularly pleased we were able to also address the current gap in training available for wool clip grading and preparation management. Please read the piece in this newsletter from Muka Tangata which explains in more detail
1. Which leads into the topic of strong wool preparation which is particularly pertinent given the recent very welcome rise in Crossbred wool prices and the fact another mainshear is upon us. I commend to you the comments in article in this newsletter about this, and thank those who willingly contributed opinion when I asked.
2. I continue to be heartened by the drive and passion of new and younger classers. Take a look at how many are listed in this newsletter as having upgraded their registration prefixes, and there's more in the wings. In addition, another 20 students achieved their Certificate in Wool Technology and Classing this year. The NZ wool industry is not dying!

Gratitude & Acknowledgement

The NZ Wool Classers Association is a lean, independent industry-good organisation funded only by membership fees and these valued 2025 sponsors: WoolWorks; NZ Council of Wool Exporters; Federation of NZ Wool Merchants (Wool First); NZ Merino Company; Peter Lyon Shearing; Wools of New Zealand; PGG Wrightson Wool; NZ Wool Testing Authority (NZWTA); Bremworth; Wool Research Organisation of NZ (WRONZ).

Our secretary Annette Gamble constantly goes above and beyond her job description and pay. Our operation also relies on countless voluntary hours and resources donated by a great bunch of people – the NZWCA Board and others who are passionate about wool and the Association's stated purpose: "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."

THANK YOU TO ALL OF THE ABOVE, you are deeply appreciated.

The NZWCA Board and staff extend our warm wishes to all our members and supporters for a Merry Christmas, a Happy New Year, safe festive season and we hope everyone finds time for a relaxing summer break with those you love and whose company you enjoy.

Strong wool prices rise spotlighting clip preparation importance

“The need to retain skills such as grading is clear” – Jenny Harraway

“The mills are effectively saying they are not getting what it says on the tin” – Steve Parsons

“A higher wool price is starting to mean something new” – Harry Urquhart-Hay

Opinion from NZWCA Registrar Marg Forde

“Bring back the Q stencil, the NZWCA wool clip grading registration”

Mainshear 2025/26 is here and with it comes the bulk of the shearing of New Zealand’s Crossbred flock. The recent welcome rise in prices and demand for this strong wool adds another layer to the approach to clip preparation. Fair to say the extremely low returns farmers of sheep growing strong wool have experienced resulted in a rise in the “throw it all in, it’s not worth anything” attitude. Since I took on the Registrar role in 2021 I’ve heard some really disheartening stories from woolhandlers whose pride in their work has taken a real knock.

Like many, I’m excited about the price rise, but I’m also excited about the timely new microcredential that came out of the NZQA requested review of the NZ Certificate in Wool Technology and Classing. It’s a qualification allowing aspiring woolhandlers to gain skills in managing the quality of team output in a wool harvesting operation and in grading wool, encouraging confidence and leadership. It is sitting with NZQA for approval at present. There are details in the Muka Tangata article in this newsletter.

This wool rebirth, renaissance, call it what you want, is hopefully here to stay as consumers become more aware of the natural attributes of wool, and more wool products are developed. Harry Urquhart-Hay of Wisewool NZ laid it out well in a post on his LinkedIn account on Nov 4. It is copied and pasted below.

If NZ wants to maintain it’s reputation as the biggest producer of QUALITY strong wool, our approach to wool harvesting needs some attention. Steve Parsons of Wools of New Zealand and Jenny Harraway of NZ Merino Company both offered some excellent insight into this when I approached them. Their words are also copied and pasted below.

It is my hope, in my role as NZWCA Registrar advocating for quality wool preparation and presentation, that pulling together these strands in this article will raise awareness and keep the wool quality conversation rolling.



Crossbred wool – Guard NZ’s wool quality reputation, separate and put like with like

contd.

Strong wool prices rise spotlighting clip preparation importance, contd.

Harry Urquhart-Hay of Wisewool NZ wrote this post on his LinkedIn profile on 04.11.25

This is what a market waking up looks like.....

We're seeing something interesting in the market at the moment.

Strong wool prices are lifting....instead of demand slowing down it's speeding up.

Across the bedding and furniture sectors.... brands are locking in supply early. Some are even prepaying for containers months in advance.

Not because it's cheap.

They're watching synthetic prices but questioning what that really costs them..... off gassing, microplastics and brand credibility.

A higher wool price is starting to mean something new:

- ✓ Cleaner / traceable inputs
- ✓ Supply security
- ✓ Proof you're serious about natural materials

We've seen this before but the difference now is that brands aren't buying wool as an experiment anymore..... they're designing around it.

Not because wool got cheaper.

Because value finally means more than price.

Jenny Harraway of NZ Merino Company offered the following to me to share in our newsletter:

Recent and much-anticipated lifts in the strong wool market are really highlighting the need for care in using industry best-practice clip-preparation standards.

It has been great to see the industry engaging with training and keeping staff upskilled. Understanding how they add value by delivering a quality product to market—and how that opens up selling options—not only brings value back to growers through in-shed efficiencies but also reinforces that their hard work is recognised. This past pre-lamb season we saw significant added value when clips were prepared and delivered to contract specifications.

Interestingly, with the renewed price difference between the finer and coarser edge hoggets, and ongoing demand for combing types this season, **the need to retain skills such as grading is clear**. Growers will be looking for these skills as part of the service contractors provide. It therefore makes sense to train woolhandlers with a broad range of adaptable skills so they can meet market demands and deliver a consistent job from start to finish.

Steve Parsons of Wools of New Zealand recently visited woollen mills in India. He wrote on his LinkedIn about what he heard and saw. I followed this up with him. His summary to me is pasted below, followed by his full LinkedIn post

The mills were clear (I visited 23 across India with combined use of over 10% of NZ's strong wool). There has been a noticeable decline in the quality of New Zealand wool being delivered from various merchants. For the mills to use lower quality fibre, Beil colour, fibre length, or contamination, they must use extra processing to compensate so they lose yield, therefore getting less value from the wool.

This is primarily an issue with lack of traceability. The opportunity is to match mills to farms. Essentially understand the technical requirements of our customers and find the ultimate fibre for them, increasing their profitability and delivering full integrity. It's a win-win. The farmer gets the best possible value for his wool; the customer gets manufacturing efficiency and better performing products. Wool growers and mills working in harmony means maintaining the reputation of New Zealand wool and New Zealand Inc.

The mills are effectively saying they are not getting what it says on the tin. Lack of transparency means they lose trust. If you don't trust the supply, you have a risk to your business. Safest thing to do is to move to a more reliable and consistent material. So yes, poor preparation means less appeal of your wool, but poor trading is a bigger issue.

contd.

Strong wool prices rise spotlighting clip preparation importance, contd.

The scenario is. A merchant cannot find enough of the wool he has sold, so delivers by blending in some poorer wool, or uses bleach to get the colour. The mill does not know this is happening until they receive the wool. They no longer trust NZ wool. That's not a criticism of all merchants, some reportedly are providing an excellent service, some are not.

In short, there is nothing wrong with New Zealand wool, but there sure is something wrong with the way it's being sold. Working with people like the Wools of New Zealand team who understand how the international mills operate, understand manufacturing, and are connected right through to the retail sector can help growers get the best value for the clip.

[\(18\) Post | LinkedIn](#) by Steven Parsons

What I Learned in India: Trust Is the Business.

After two weeks on the ground and more than twenty mills visited across India—many of them major users of New Zealand wool—one message came through loud and clear: Trust is business. Business is trust. Across the industry, demand for true traceability is rising fast. But too often, it's being abused—at the expense of New Zealand wool's reputation.

As European and American brands ask for visibility but resist paying for the compliance required to deliver it—and as competition for quality wool intensifies—corners are being cut. And quality is paying the price.

A few uncomfortable truths:

- Mills need white wool. It's increasingly scarce.
- To compensate, bleaching is used.
- Bleaching weakens fibre, strips lustre, complicates dyeing, increases re-scouring, and shifts colour in the final product.
- When wool prices rise at auction, the temptation grows to blend in shorter or darker wool—or rely even more on bleaching.

That's a straight path to shedding and product failure.

Then there's the RWS. It's being oversold—badly.

About 90% of the mills I visited claim RWS content. Many also openly admit it's a façade. Comments I heard directly:

“Traceability drops off after scouring.”

“We can just buy a certificate—our customers don't question it.”

“The RWS has zero credibility. I'm dropping it.”

“Certificates are being sold.”

As someone who helped develop the world's first RWS blazer with M&S, it's disappointing, though not surprising. I've heard similar stories in the UK.

Here's the core issue: If traceability costs more, the cowboys cheat. New Zealand farmers are already audited for food and fibre. Their sustainability and animal-welfare standards are world-leading. We shouldn't need layers of costly compliance to prove what's already proven.

And brands are noticing. Several have reached out asking for alternatives. Fortunately, the [WOOLS OF NEW ZEALAND](#) brand has always stood for provenance and integrity. It's gaining momentum and helping global partners authenticate their products with confidence.

What I learned in India:

Commodity trading is failing brands, failing mills, and failing growers. Excessive compliance costs are fuelling corruption. Brands and mills want partners they trust.

These Indian mills alone consume around 10% of all NZ strong wool. They want stronger integrity, more reliable provenance, and assurance that their raw-material suppliers can thrive for the long term. And that's exactly what we intend to deliver.

DIARY DATES FOR 2026

Venue for the 2026 AGM/Industry Day is Alexandra

Put a ring around Friday May 15, that's the date for the NZWCA 2026 AGM/Industry Professional Development Day. The location is Peter Lyon Shearing's big cook shop complex, thanks Peter and Elsie for your loyal support of NZWCA. Members are encouraged to attend, it's free! Other interested people are welcome, for a fee to cover venue and catering costs. More details nearer the time.

Wanaka A & P Show

On Friday 13th and Saturday 14th March 2026, thanks to the generosity of the Upper Clutha (Wanaka) A & P Show wool committee, we'll be flying the NZWCA flag in the same spot as last year, on the edge of the sheep stewards tent, next to the building that houses the competition fleeces. Come and say giddyay!

As of 2026, the winner of the Classer Award in the annual NZ Fine Wool Supreme Fleece competition at the Wanaka Show will have a year's NZWCA registration as part of their prize.

The NZWCA Board decided after this year's show to make the gesture from 2026, in recognition and support of the only fleece competition in New Zealand that includes an award for classers. The Wanaka Classer Award goes to the currently registered shed classer whose name is included on the entry form for the highest scoring fleece in the competition. Explained NZWCA Registrar Marg Forde: "It's often the classer who picks out fleeces for entry in competitions, and goes the extra mile to do so. We wanted to show our appreciation to the Wanaka show wool committee for recognising this, and to the classer for their skill and time taken."

Speakers available to watch online

Couldn't make it to the NZWCA 2025 Industry Professional Development Day/AGM at Lincoln University in May?

OR

Attended, but would like to revisit what you heard?

For the first time, NZWCA has had Industry PD Day speakers filmed and the content is now available either via the links on our website

<https://woolclassers.org.nz/education/industry-day-speaker-videos/>

or directly via our newly-established You Tube channel

<https://www.youtube.com/@NZWoolClassersAssociation>

Four morning speakers were filmed:

- **Tracy Paterson chair NZWCA** Why NZWCA and what your membership does
- **Hon Mark Patterson MP aka "Minister of Wool"** Minister for Rural Communities, Associate Ministers of Agriculture and for Regional Development
- **Ministry for Primary Industries – Lucy Newton/Peter Hyde** "The law and your role in animal welfare"
- **Opsec Solutions South Island Director Marcus Fowler** <https://www.opsec.co.nz/> keeping safe in the workplace, de-escalating, managing and resolving conflict



MUKA TANGATA

People, Food and Fibre

Workforce Development Council

Muka Tangata develops new qualifications following industry consultation

Muka Tangata has recently engaged with members of the wool industry to develop educational pathways for leading wool handlers and wool classers.

This consultation has resulted in two new education products:

- A new Level 5 *NZ Certificate in Wool Technology and Classing*. This qualification is designed to provide the wool industry with people who have skills and knowledge to undertake and manage wool-related activities including classing - in the wool shed and elsewhere along the wool supply chain. It recognises the skills and knowledge of wool production, classification, processing, and technology to meet the supply chain, market, and customer requirements to maximise value.
- A new micro-credential: *Manage wool preparation in a wool harvesting operation*. This is a 20 credit/200-hour, hands-on qualification designed to be able to be completed in a season and offer a pathway to those wool handlers who have been, or aspire to be, appointed leading wool handlers. It will allow them to gain skills in managing the quality of team output in a wool harvesting operation and in grading wool.

These have now been submitted to NZQA and are pending approval.

A big thank you to those who generously shared their time and expertise as part of this consultation.

NOTE from NZWCA: We had a number of members who were part of the above NZQA wool qualification review group through the process. They included Board member Sonya Johansen, Registrar Marg Forde, Classers and Wool Tutors Becks Braddick-Tohiariki and Emma O'Sullivan, Associate member and former wool tutor Richard Gavigan and Associate member Prof Jon Hickford.

NZWCA Minutes and Newsletters available on website

At the November NZWCA Board meeting it was decided that in addition to the association's AGM minutes being accessible via our website, the minutes of Board meetings would be added going forward. Here is the link:

<https://woolclassers.org.nz/members-area/minutes/>

Newsletter archives dating from 2014 are also readily available on our website. Here is the link:

<https://woolclassers.org.nz/members-area/newsletters/>

CLASSER PROFILE - Katrise Saunders - D2232

I began my wool handling and classing journey in my parents' shearing gang in Tapawera, Nelson, helping during school holidays whenever an extra hand was needed.



Katrise Saunders D2232 with her son Keanu

During my teenage years, I also travelled around the top of the South Island, lending a hand to a variety of local shearing gangs whenever they were short, gaining valuable experience along the way.

My main wool handling job was with Gary Weaver's gang, travelling from Murchison and D'Urville Island down to Blenheim. Later, I moved to Rangiora, where I worked with a blade gang for the pre-lamb seasons, mostly around Rakaia Gorge with a few random sheds like Doone in Kaikōura and Mt White—which quickly became my favourite—and then in the summer with a Rangiora gang for the main shear, continuing to build my skills and experience.

After building our first home, my family and I packed up and moved to Middlemarch, ready to take on a new chapter together. I have now been classing and grading for around 10 years while raising my young family.

One of the most meaningful influences in my career has been Shelley Fairhall, the classer in the blade gang I once worked with. During the seasons we spent away from home—sometimes nearly three months at a time—she taught me about wool and classing. Her guidance shaped both my skills and my confidence in the industry.

My future goals include establishing my own fine-wool run and eventually mentoring upcoming classers, giving back to an industry that has shaped me. I would love to see more opportunities for workshops and skill-refresh programs, as knowledge is power, and the more we understand about wool—market trends, genetics, and environmental factors—the better we can support our growers to achieve optimal outcomes.

I'm proud of what I've achieved so far, including receiving the NZM Scholarship (2023) and a Commendation Award (2024). Receiving the NZM Scholarship was a privilege, especially having the chance to stand alongside Becks Braddick and learn from her wealth of knowledge—an experience I'll always be grateful for. A personal highlight was selecting my first show fleece for a grower, which went on to win 1st place and Reserve Champion.

While I haven't worked overseas yet, I hope to one day. For now, I love preparing show fleeces for local A&P shows and continuing to build my career here in New Zealand.

Outside of work, I enjoy being a mother and a wife, spending quality time with friends and family, and being outdoors—whether it's playing netball or helping out on the farm. I take it seriously to be a registered wool classer and enjoy the opportunity to learn from industry days, staying connected and up to date with what's going on in our industry, and catching up with other wool classing friends I've made along the way. I am passionate about supporting the industry in any way I can, knowing there are other classers out there who share the same dedication.

Wool classing is more than a job to me—it's a lifelong passion that challenges, inspires, and connects me to an industry I'm proud to be part of.

PRELAMB 2025 FINE WOOL CLASSING FEEDBACK



Preparation and classing of Merino and Mid Micron clips was generally of a very high standard this year with some outstanding results.

With a better growing season in most areas contract specs were generally met.

Quarterbred and Polwarth clips where transitioning is happening still present a problem for some classers (not owner classers).

Identifying fleeces that are visually Merino (coming back to a Merino) versus those that are still leaning towards a Halfbred type has been challenging for some.

It is not measurable or on handle it must be a visual assessment. It's a case of not pushing the boundaries, like wools with like wools. The value is there and must be extracted by good classing.

Lice has reared its ugly head in some areas again this season. Once again this is not measurable so any sign of rubbing where the fleece has been affected should be classed out. Most classers do a great job in this area, many making a separate line to show they have identified the issue. Don't lessen the value of the main lines with lice affected wool.

Seasons Greetings from all of us at NZ Merino Company

Blair Davies

Assistant Commercial Manager & Area Manager Marlborough



Blair Davies of NZ Merino Company, always hard at work. Pictured here in the Christchurch wool store under the new light-filled roof at the store

CAMPAIGN FOR WOOL NZ SUMMER NEWS AND VIEWS

A new Campaign for Wool newsletter has just been published. The link to read it is below.

The opening words read:

“Welcome to Summer News and Views 2025! In this edition you'll find news on the formation of the Wool Alliance, highlights from CFWNZ Chair Ryan Cosgrove's expert interview on RNZ and we celebrate our ambassador, Sir Sam Neill, who won the 2025 New Zealand Screen Legend Award. “

[Alliance, Awards and Momentum](#) 🐑 Campaign for Wool newsletter

New Wool Alliance Formed to Strengthen Future of Strong Wool Sector

A new cross-sector body aims to deliver better long-term outcomes for the New Zealand strong wool industry, generating greater demand, lifting value and avoiding costly duplication.

The Wool Alliance, a formal agreement between Campaign for Wool NZ, Wool Impact, the Wool Research Organisation of New Zealand (WRONZ) and Beef and Lamb NZ, is a first-of-its-kind industry model to enable wool's economic stability and growth, and safeguard lasting capability for the sector.

Former Fonterra chair, John Monaghan, has been appointed as the independent chair of the Wool Alliance, charged with leading the Wool Alliance roll-out. With a proven track record in facilitating sector transformation, John's tenure began in July, following an externally-led search and selection process.

John says he's realistic about what is required to lead the wool sector at such a critical time. "I see real opportunity for strong wool to lift its value and visibility globally. But it's not a straightforward pathway," he says. "Currently, we have a number of individual bodies competing for funding. Consolidation is the obvious solution, and it's what growers want. The Wool Alliance needs to show up differently, cooperate and collaborate to create a lean and sustainable structure."

The four organisations who sit under the Wool Alliance umbrella have formalised their commitment to working together by signing an agreement. Now, says John, the Wool Alliance enters an establishment phase, focusing on market enablement, pre-competitive support, and delivering a strong, united voice for New Zealand wool. "Wool is a cornerstone of our New Zealand identity, and it's important it remains so."

Members of Parliament including Ministers Nicola Willis, Todd McClay and Mark Patterson, along with representatives from the Ministry for Primary Industries, Federated Farmers and New Zealand Farm Assurance Incorporated (NZFAI), have already had a chance to meet with the Wool Alliance team. Now the focus turns to further sector and public engagement, with the establishment of a Wool Alliance website, and grower meetings scheduled to take place both online, and throughout the country, from early November.

"We are now in a position to share more information about how members of the Wool Alliance plan to work together, championing wool-based products and applications and supporting innovation, education and research, while reducing duplication. Our Steering Group comprises stakeholders from each Alliance member, and we'll be firmly focused on collaboration and transparency, working together towards outcomes that benefit the entire value chain."

Implementation of an enduring model for New Zealand strong wool is expected in 2026, following extensive consultation with industry partners, testing and refinement. The Wool Alliance says beneficiaries of this work will be broader than wool growers, with advantages felt far beyond the farm gate. Early-stage funding will come from existing resources, although other funding sources will need to be considered as the model evolves.

contd.

New Wool Alliance Formed to Strengthen Future of Strong Wool Sector, contd.

“There’s a big job ahead of us to build the industry up again and establish an enduring model for wool that really works. It’s a great challenge and one I’m pleased to bring my experience and enthusiasm to,” John says.

About the Wool Alliance

The Wool Alliance is a formal agreement between Campaign for Wool NZ (CFWNZ), Wool Impact, Wool Research Organisation of New Zealand (WRONZ) and Beef and Lamb NZ (BLNZ).

Members of the Wool Alliance are focused on the collective work required to develop and deliver an enduring model for strong wool - work that has been underway since early 2024.

The Wool Alliance agreement was signed by all four parties in September 2025. The alliance Steering Group comprises nine members: the chair and one executive from each organisation, alongside the newly appointed independent chair.


Campaign for Wool NZ (CFWNZ) is a charitable trust advancing education, promotion and advocacy of New Zealand strong wool.

Wool Impact Ltd is working to increase demand and value for strong wool through a market-led approach.

Wool Research Organisation of New Zealand (WRONZ) is an incorporated society supporting post-harvest wool research and development in New Zealand.

Beef and Lamb NZ (BLNZ) is the farmer-owned, industry organisation representing New Zealand's sheep and beef farmers.

Further information about the alliance, the model, and upcoming grower meetings can be found at www.woolalliance.co.nz

 <p>NZ WOOL CLASSERS ASSOCIATION</p>	<h2>RECENT NZWCA CLASSER AND GRADER REGISTRATIONS AND UPGRADES</h2> <h3>CONGRATULATIONS AND WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING</h3>
<p>Professional classer stencil prefix upgrades:</p> <p>Cassie Johnston H to D 2182 Katrise Saunders H to D 2232 Sarah Graham P to D 2230 Tegan Caves P to D 2177 Lucy Gee-Taylor P to H 2212 Tania Tisdall P to M 2189</p>	<p>Provisional classer stencil applications approved:</p> <p>Danielle Mahia P 2253 Lucy Black P 2254 Jane Scott P 2255 Tina-Marie Longman P 2256</p> <p>Owner classer stencils approved:</p> <p>Kate Hughes FM 2248 Susan Simpson FM 2247</p>
<p>Explanation of registration prefixes here:</p> <p>https://woolclassers.org.nz/members-area/registration-prefixes/</p>	

ONE OF THE OLDEST WORKING WOOLSHEDS IN THE MACKENZIE NZWCA OWNER CLASSER ENJOYS HISTORIC AND SCENIC BUILDING

A firm testament to NZ sheep farming history is Richmond Station's wool shed on the shores of Lake Tekapo, seen in this series of photos.

The big red two-bayed building with 12 portholes is one of the oldest working shearing sheds in the Mackenzie believes NZWCA owner classer Susan Simpson FM2247.

Sue and her husband John use the shed when they have their merino stud "Two Thumb" sheep blade shorn there. The couple lease part of the property on Lilybank Road, which is the home of the Round Hill ski field.

The Simpsons farmed Mount Hay, just down the road, for 34 years. When they downsized in 2019 they retained their stud and took up a lease on Richmond. John explains they breed for staple definition and open fleeces specifically to cope with high wind and extreme weather conditions common in the Mackenzie country.

Susan says she appreciates the atmosphere of the history of the building and the proximity to the lake when working there, despite there being no wool bins for her to put her lines in!

The oldest date she has found written inside the shed is 1905 (see photo). The building is two big bays, with one of them completely closed in yards (photo). The amount of cover for sheep had to have been considered very large when the shed was built. The existing sheep yards outside are clearly much smaller now, you can see the space where huge yards once existed.

Susan says the books, High Endeavor by William Vance and Early South Canterbury Runs by Robert Pinney both mention Richmond Station. The run was taken up in 1858 and covered 35,000 acres. In the 1890s it took nine musterers 10 days to get the flock in for shearing.





LATEST WRONZ SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED

Congratulations to the following NZ Certificate of Wool Technology and Classing (NZCWTC) students who are the most recent (Semester 2 2025) recipients of WRONZ Scholarships:

Laura Hancock of Pōrangahau and Sandy Austin Fraser of Christchurch

Both these students are in their first year of NZCWTC study in 2025, which is the requirement for applicants to be eligible.

NZ Wool Classers Assn administers the Wool Research Organisation of New Zealand (WRONZ) scholarship which is valued at \$1000 per recipient.

This is paid in four instalments as the recipient passes stages in their course. But it represents more than cash to help with study and living costs for the two-year distance learning course. NZWCA suggests to recipients that they can maximise the scholarship by using it as an opportunity to network and connect with wool industry organisations and people.

The presentation letter from NZWCA to the recipients reads: “One way you can do this is by communicating with WRONZ and NZWCA giving progress reports on your study, things you have enjoyed learning or aspects of the wool industry that particularly interest you. Additionally, you can share information about how you are using the money, and how it is helping you.”

There are typically two intakes each year for the Cert Wool Tech, with the Semester One intake being the largest. We announced recipients from those who applied for the WRONZ scholarship in Semester 1 at our AGM/Industry PD Day at Lincoln University in May this year. They were **Bonnie Fogarty – Roxburgh; Crystal Newton – Rotorua; Latisha McMurray – Te Anau**. Laura and Sandy were chosen from applicants who commenced their wool studies in both Semester 2 and Semester 1 2025.

Wool Research Organisation of New Zealand www.woolresearch.com

New Zealand Wool Classers Association www.woolclassers.org.nz



***Classer Hands
2026***

TOP WOOL STUDENTS AWARDED

Wool industry workforce and knowledge boosted by 20 graduates of
NZ Certificate in Wool Technology and Classing in 2025

Announcing the 2025 NZWCA SIT/Telford prizes:

Overall top student who completed in 2025, and recipient of
the NZWCA perpetual trophy is *Ngahuia Wilson*

Other awards: July 2025 Completion

Top Theory – *Hannah Webster*

November 2025 Completion

Top Theory – *Ngahuia Wilson*

Top students attending block courses in 2025

North Island – *Laura Hancock*

South Island – *Bonnie Fogarty*

Award certificates are to be posted to all of the above, however
recipients are encouraged to attend the NZWCA Industry
Professional Development Day/AGM in Alexandra on Friday May 15
2026 where they will be acknowledged and *Ngahuia Wilson* (if
attending) will be presented with the NZWCA cup, which resides
permanently at Telford.

Congratulations to all 20 students who completed the two-year
distance learning NZ Certificate in Wool Technology and Classing
course this year. We look forward to your contribution to the NZ
wool industry workforce. Holders of the Cert Wool Tech are able to
pursue a range of wool sector opportunities, including being able
to apply to NZWCA for their Provisional Wool Classing stencil
registration by going to our website <https://woolclassers.org.nz/>
and clicking on the “Join” tab.

Around the Sheds 2026



Emma Sloan

***“<TRY BANNING
THESE GUNS >”***

***happy in her
work in a
McSkimming
Shearing gang in
the Lake Hawea
area this
prelamb***



***“More wool!” Terence Mulcahy D1473 classing in the
Lake Hawea area this prelamb with McSkimming
Shearing woolhandlers Matatu Lewis (at left) and
Cheri Peterson, and visitor Edsel Forde who reckoned
he “prefers to watch shearing these days”***



Susan Simpson FM2247 enjoyed completing her NZ Certificate in Wool Technology and Classing last year. She opted for an Owner Classer stencil rather than the shed classer Provisional one, because “for now” she is only classing the wool of the “Two Thumbs” merino stud she and her husband John own

***Richmond Station blade shearers,
photo by Susan Simpson***



Terence Mulcahy D1473 has had another busy prelamb. He classes around 100,000 fleeces each year in the mid-South Island.

WOOL CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

*DISCOUNTED NZ WOOL
PRODUCTS FOR CHRISTMAS
ANYONE?*

Click this link [Christmas – Wool Integrity Store](https://woolintegrity.store)

NZWCA members who have attended our AGM/Industry PD Days in the past few years will be familiar with the much-admired embroidered throws presented to the recipients of NZWCA Classer/Grader Merit awards. These are from the Wool Integrity range by PGG Wrightson Wool/Bloch & Behrens.

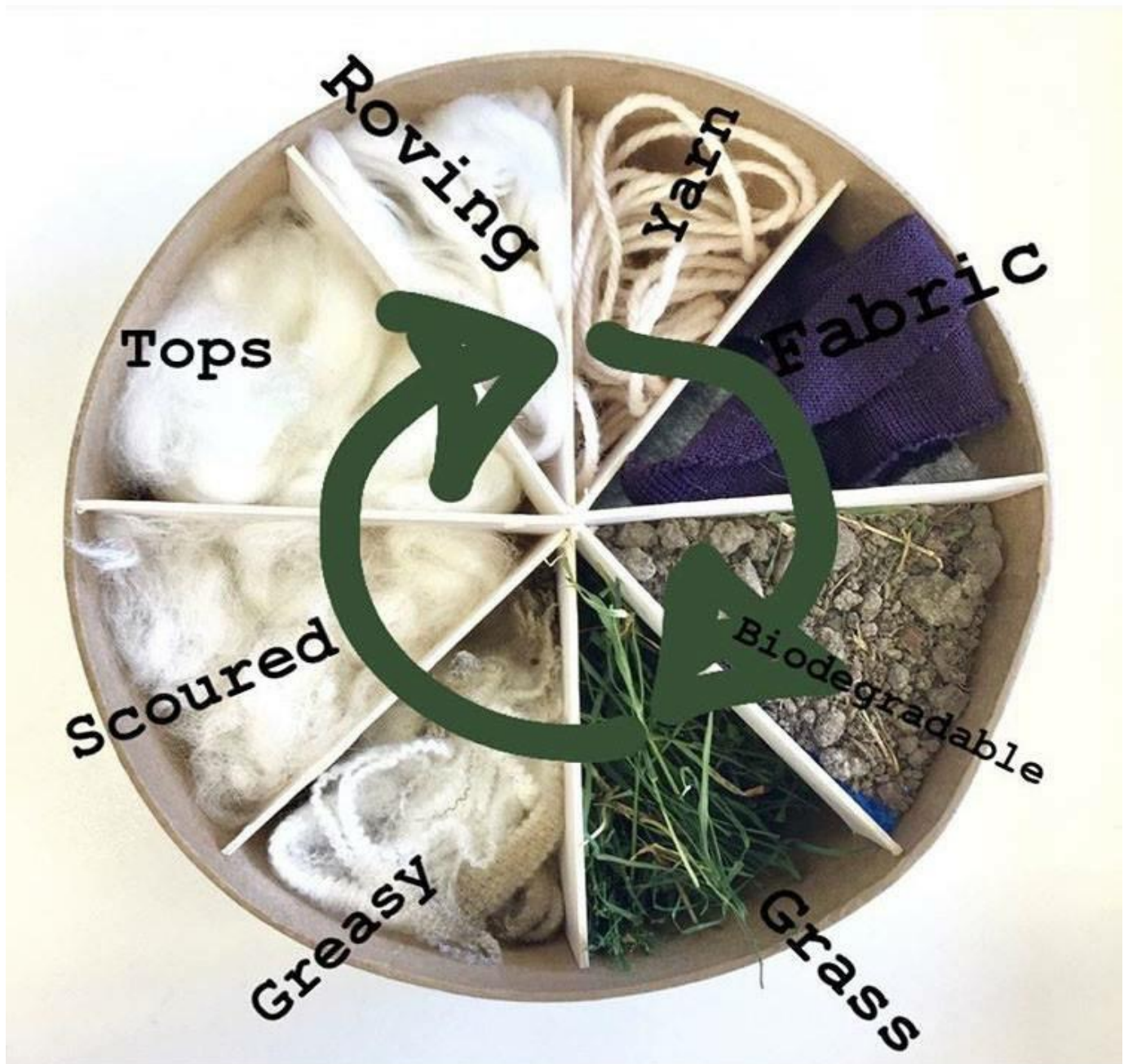
A discount of 10% has been negotiated for NZWCA members for all Wool Integrity products except for the Kaiwaka range on the website. The online store <https://woolintegrity.store/> offers a selection of premium wool products either produced locally and/or made with New Zealand wool. Their range includes throws, slippers, baskets and bowls, Christmas decorations, knitting yarn and much more. Shipping is free nationwide but to ensure delivery prior to Christmas this year orders must be made by Dec 19.



*To access the discount, NZWCA members only will need to apply the special discount code of **nzwoolclassers** at the checkout. NZWCA membership will be verified.*



THE WOOL CYCLE



Classers Available for Work

On the NZWCA website there's a search facility – Classers Available for Work

Wool growers, wool brokers, shearing contractors and others can use this search to find a range of classers who have opted into inclusion by a tick box within the “Full Members” tab. Appearance of a classer or grader's name in the Members part of the website confirms that classer's registration is current and valid. When you do your search, make sure to tick “Yes” under the heading “Show Members Available for Work”. The initial search gives a classer's name, registration details and a phone number. Clicking on the classer's name gives the area(s) that classer is available to work in (unless they opted in some time ago, before the addition of the preferred areas information, we are working on updating this, see Point 1 below).

All classers with valid registration can include themselves so their name shows up if a searcher ticks “Yes” to “Show Members Available for Work”. Two points to note here though:

1. If you have already done this, but it wasn't recently, please revisit your profile and you will find there has been an option added for you to indicate areas that you can work in.
2. If you haven't identified yourself as someone looking for clips to class or grade, but you would now like to, you can do so, and don't forget to list your preferred areas to work.

Regions

All Regions

Most Used

☐ North Island

☐ Nelson/Marlborough

☐ West Coast

☐ Canterbury

☐ North Canterbury

☐ Mid Canterbury

☐ South Canterbury

☐ MacKenzie

☐ Otago

☐ North Otago

☐ South Otago

☐ West Otago

☐ Central Otago

☐ Queenstown/Lakes

☐ Southland

☐ Te Anau

☐ Northern Southland

☐ Southern Southland

☐ Eastern Southland

☐ Western Southland

Available for Work

Choose “Yes” if the member is available for work. This will cause the Working Regions selector field to appear in the Edit Profile form on the Dashboard.

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

In both 1. and 2. above, all you need to do is log into your profile to make those changes. And if you can't recall or don't know how to log in, get in touch with our superwoman secretary Annette Gamble secretary@woolclassers.org.nz and she will help. Please be aware though, Annette has a full-on full-time job, in addition to helping out NZWCA. So yeah, Superwoman!



THINGS THAT AREN'T WOOL FOUND IN WOOL BALES!

These items supplied by WoolWorks were on display in the wool exercise room at the NZWCA Industry Day/AGM in May, a stark reminder of the serious and costly problem of contamination that all involved in wool harvesting need to be addressing every day in the wool shed.

- AVOIDING BALE CONTAMINATION -

Prior to shearing:

- Wool growers consider how they are using wool shed for storage – ensure wool room is clear prior to shearing and appropriate hooks and storage areas are provided including personal hook for Presser close to wool press
- Rubbish bins provided and easily accessible
- Shearing board and wool room is washed and cleared prior to shearing
- Classers, pressers and woolhandlers check all fadges before putting wool in them, especially those that may have been sitting partially full before shearing begins, confirm with grower on partial bales
- Count press bars at the beginning and end of each shearing – there should be four!

During shearing:

- Remove all rubber rings and lambs purses from wool
- Rubbish bins readily accessible, used and emptied when necessary
- Designated storage area (hooks, shelves or large containers) for personal belongings of shed staff are used, including personal hook for Presser close to press
- Only work equipment (eg: fadges, brooms) in the wool room
- No drink bottles, clothing or towels stored near oddment fadges
- Wool shed staff check all open fadges throughout the day for clothing and any items other than wool
- No smoking (including vaping) in woolshed
- Count press bars before pinning each bale, there should be four!
- No food consumed in wool area – separate eating area is the ideal
- Supply newspaper for Bin bales – don't use wool packs as bale dividers
- Refer to "Clip Preparation – Best Practice Guideline" on the NZWCA website Or scan the QR code below

Credit: Samantha Harmer - P2214

