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AWI gets cautious nod of approval...

AWGA calls for strong branding of Australian Wool.

The recent AWI board announcement of a \$20 million spending package over 4 years aimed at increasing consumer demand in the short term has been welcomed by the Australian Wool Growers Association.

The AWGA believe that Dr Len Stephens and his team have made a significant and positive step in utilising growers' funds in this commercial area. Many growers have been stressing the urgency of such spending in the short term in these areas, owing to the continual and worrying downward trend of farm gate wool prices. It appears that The AWI board have been listening, and have started to act on these matters.

The AWGA also strongly feels that it is time to focus on developing brand identification for Australian Wool, not just woollen apparel in general.

Chick Olsson, AWGA chairman has been inundated since the recent announcement by AWGA that it intends to prepare a marketing plan for wool with grassroots members, Studbreeders, and other affiliated woolgrowing bodies around Australia all expressing considerable interest.

It is clear that grower levies must be spent on projects that benefit Australian wool producers directly and indirectly, as soon as possible. In this regard, a strong effort must be made to let the world know about our woollen products and their benefits.

We need new markets for our wool in more English speaking countries such as The USA and Canada. There is a worrying trend of placing too many eggs in one basket with China now taking approx 60 % of our wool clip.

We need to educate our young fashion designers in City Schools, TAFES and Universities about wool there should be incentives for this next generation of excellent young people to also help promote Australian grown woollen apparel.

Support our local exporters of Australian woollen products. There is a thriving industry of small business people already existing in Australia, who are trying to break into new markets overseas, with little help from woolgrowers funds. AWGA believes strongly in supporting such small to medium enterprises with export R&D, and any other means necessary to get Australian wool into new markets."

Many of these issues will be addressed by the AWGA marketing Plan currently being compiled.

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