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Woolmark declares promotion hand

Fresh from a tour of wool facilities in Europe, Woolmark chief executive Peter Wilkinson is more convinced than ever that wool needs more promotion.

"I am keen to start to do some systematic work on the marketing debate to find just what is in the best interests of this industry," he said.

Whilst overseas, Mr Wilkinson gathered the wool marketing views of spinners, weavers, designers and retailers.

"I have come back with a very strong view that the industry needs to do some more very focused target marketing of wool and I believe The Woolmark Company is in the best position to do it," he said.

Interestingly Mr Wilkinson said the industry had to think about how to sell more wool to the world, not necessarily with the Woolmark.

"The first question is how do we go about selling wool and then we need to ask whether it is best to do it through Woolmark," he said.

The next development is a cost benefit analysis to outline to growers just what the overall benefit to the wool industry would be from giving wool a helping hand through the processing chain.

Clearly the notion of generic marketing is off the list.

"I don't think anyone I spoke to along the chain wanted to see a return to the macro-campaigns that we have seen for wool in the past that have really only worked to position the Woolmark," Mr Wilkinson said.

Almost all those involved in wool that he spoke to recognised the dominance of brands in the global marketplace these days, rather than a focus on the raw fibre used for that brand.

The analogy used was that when selling cars, manufacturers do not applaud the qualities of steel.

"Those I spoke to saw wool simply as just one of the choices of fabric they could make in the decision of putting together a garment," he said, meaning that there was little loyalty to any particular fibre, whether it be wool, cotton or synthetic. Top stories

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