



8 November 2004

Australian sheep and wool industry leaders

Australian sheep and wool industry leaders, at a meeting in Sydney today, expressed their commitment to the phasing out of the current practice of mulesing by 2010.

The Australian wool industry and major international clothing retailers, have been threatened by an international boycott by the animal rights group PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) because of mulesing and live sheep exports.

Robert Pietsch, President of WoolProducers and member of the Australian Sheep and Wool Industry Taskforce, said the industry was fast-tracking a number of research and development programs that would enable, firstly, an end to mulesing and secondly, interim measures to ensure animal welfare continues to be an absolute priority.

"Industry research programs, undertaken by Australian Wool Innovation Limited, are currently investigating alternatives to mulesing including the use of a protein which removes wool and tightens skin around the breech," Mr Pietsch said.

"A current accreditation scheme for mulesing contractors is being expanded nationally."

Mr Pietsch called for a united industry approach to meet the PETA threat.

"We need to remember that retailers in Australia and the northern hemisphere want to know that the Australian industry is producing the best wool in the world in a sustainable and socially responsible manner."

Ends

Media contact:

Peter Wilkinson

Wilkinson Media

Phone 02 8969 6255 / 0414 383 433

Related Links

<http://australianwoolgrowers.com.au/>