



9 February 2007

Letter to The Editor

AWI court case flyblown.

Dear Sir,

I was amazed to read Les Targ's (AWI deputy CEO) ambitious statement (Farm online 8.2.07) that "I hate to think where the demand for wool would be if we hadn't taken any action against them (animal rights) and you only have to see the current auctions to see how healthy demand for wool now is"

Is Mr Targ suggesting that the \$10 million legal action against animal rights groups has helped lift the price of wool? Is this the new type of marketing activity that we are to expect from AWI that will continue to help lift the price of wool? Is he then suggesting AWI keep spending millions on this legal action, giving publicity to extremists, in the belief that this "investment" will boost wool prices further? He insults all woolgrowers by such patronising statements.

Has he considered that better auction prices are a result of the thousands of honest and hardworking woolgrowers who have continued growing this magnificent fibre under harsh price and drought conditions, while keeping wool quality at a premium? Has Mr Targ thought about the thousands of woolgrowers who have left the industry over the past 5 years causing a wool supply shortage, in part, because of AWI's refusal to start marketing Australian wool until last year?

In 2005, Ian MacLachlan made the following statement in his excellent AGM Chairman's address: "The Australian Sheep and Wool Taskforce and our representatives in New York have directly contacted all the major retailers of apparel product in the US. Not one of them has reported any change in the demand for wool products as a result on PETA's campaign. Not one of them has cancelled an order for wool products for this year's northern winter....."

The Chairman of AWI has made it clear that no damage has occurred in the US. So why is AWI spending millions, with millions more to be spent on this illogical legal battle? Consider if AWI had spent these millions on more positive marketing campaigns for wool, such as the excellent US test marketing initiative. What a bright new day for wool it would be.

Consider some sensible advice Mr Targ. Drop this flyblown court case, ignore these extremists, stop giving them publicity, and concentrate all your efforts on marketing our wool and promoting the excellence of our farm management practices.

Chick Olsson

AWGA – Director – 0403045664 - 9.2.07

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