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Rebuild Australian sheep flock to 120 million

AWGA rejects claims in Rural Press weekly newspapers that the Australian flock should fall to 80 million. AWGA Chairman Martin Oppenheimer is adamant that if Australia creates a new wool industry vision & sustainable strategy, that employs recently proven retail sales programs, then industry decline can be reversed.

“The Australian sheep flock may need to increase to at least 120 million head if we get the vision & strategy right,” says Oppenheimer.

Recent positive results from Woolmark’s Test Marketing Program showed that even a relatively modest investment of A\$5 million can result in significant changes in sales volume and value.

For example, the big winner at US retailer Saks was women’s wear, with dress sales up 141%, suits 89% & knits 29%. Women’s wear is one of the major market segments that wool once dominated but has recently lost. Of course, females also make the majority of clothing purchase decisions.

Men’s high-end dress clothing also improved with suits up 49%, sports coats 39%, outerwear 30%.

Overall retail sales volumes were increased by up to 13% & values were increased by up to 12%. At Saks \$1.5 million spent was matched by the retailer with \$7 million marketing value.

“We know how to build sales volumes & sales value for merino wool products. The Test Marketing Program has shown us how,” says Oppenheimer.

“At last AWI shareholders can see a real return for their hard earned levy. The challenge now is to convince our industry that we can reverse the decline in sheep numbers & wool production.”

“This will happen with better leadership, a clear vision & strategic planning that is focused on the retail consumer with targeted programs.”

“We have wasted too much time & money already on endless wool production & “innovation” projects, but have ignored the consumer. It is time for the Australian wool industry leaders to create a new vision & rebuild the flock.”

ENDS

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