



7 July 2009

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

Positive co-operation at IWTO

Thank you for mentioning in The Weekly Times that I was a guest speaker at the excellent International Wool Textile Organisation (IWTO) conference in Frankfurt (C&C 1.7.09). Indeed, my address "Breeding wool merinos for the future; Consumer requirements, Carbon & Climate" was well received as it raised some of the real challenges & opportunities for woolgrowers.

We need to be continually proactive in communicating the progress that we are making in "best practice" animal welfare, genetic advances & sustainability.

One example I spoke of was the new breech wrinkle scoring system, & now breeding values, which were of interest to IWTO delegates.

Another was the mooted Carbon emissions policy, which was recently quantified by ABARE to be a significant cost to sheep producers (up 17% by 2015). Unfortunately, the current rules do not include the massive carbon sequestration potential by pastures used in our grazing systems. We must change this & turn a costly problem into an opportunity.

Carbon & the environment are the next big issues confronting the sheep industry & will require a co-ordinated approach with our Governments & other influential bodies such as the EU. This is where a positive relationship with IWTO will help.

It was clear that many IWTO delegates appreciated the new approach by AWI & the Australian delegation. Professional co-operation is in, arrogance is out, as we concentrate now on opportunities to sell more wool at higher values.

For your information I paid to travel to & attend the IWTO conference.

Martin Oppenheimer
Chairman, Australian Wool Growers Association
Petali Walcha NSW
0413 580 040
02 6777 2124

Related Links

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