



01 August 2009

AWGA welcomes AWI's animal welfare policy

The Australian Wool Growers Association (AWGA) has welcomed the adoption by Australian Wool Innovation (AWI) of the 'new animal health and welfare flystrike prevention policy', as outlined in an AWI media release dated 27 July 2009.

AWGA Chairman Martin Oppenheimer says woolgrowers are pleased with the direction of the new Board at AWI. The recent endorsement by major farming groups, the Federal Minister for Agriculture, plus leading animal welfare groups is significant.

"At last we have Leadership at AWI that is prepared to tell woolgrowers the truth about research programs. They must tell it as it is."

"To be effective as a Research & Marketing company, AWI must have integrity and honesty in all it does. Integrity in Research is essential and honesty in marketing is also essential for success."

AWGA has been critical of promises made to woolgrowers, wool customers and the community of potential technologies, still in development. After spending approximately A\$20 million on research & development on several novel technologies, unfortunately most have failed.

"We are dealing with an animal living in a natural free-range environment, which does not always fit into a scientific time frame or agenda. But with persistence and patience, we can solve this problem."

AWGA claims survey results published in June by AWI show that there have been significant animal welfare advances; 24% of merino lambs not mulesed in 2009 (up from 2% in 2005), 31% of producers will not mules any lambs in 2009 (up from 23% in 2008), 52% of producers have a breeding strategy to source less wrinkled genetics, & according to Bayer 60% of lambs are treated with commercially available pain relief.

"There has been a fundamental shift in Australian woolgrowers outlook and positive change is real."

"Genetic selection appears to be the long term, natural solution. We will only continue to have a viable sheep and wool sector if we have integrity and honesty in all we do, and animal welfare is our first consideration."

Martin Oppenheimer
Chairman AWGA
02 6777 2124
0413 580 040

Related Links

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