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## **World wool production is falling, with Australia expected to be down by the largest percentage**

**THE world will produce less wool this season and more of it will go to interior textiles.**

They were two of the key messages from the International Wool Textile Organisation congress in South Africa last week, where the news was mixed for the wool industry.

IWTO marketing intelligence committee chairman Chris Wilcox, one of the presenters at the conference, said total world wool production would be down in the coming financial year.

Production would drop in Australia, China and New Zealand, three of the major wool-producing nations, where clip sizes would fall from 0.6 to 3.4 per cent.

The biggest fall would be in Australia, down 3.4 per cent.

Mr Wilcox said the biggest gains would be in smaller wool-producing countries.

This would include the UK and Mongolia, where the clip would rise 10.3 and 19.4 per cent respectively.

South Africa's wool production would also rise 2.2 per cent.

Mr Wilcox said world wool production would remain relatively stable for 2014-15 compared with this financial year.

"This is due to the poor seasonal conditions in Australia and the sell-off of sheep," he said.

"In New Zealand, dairy conversion is the major challenge, despite the bounce back from drought."

Other factors influencing worldwide production include the shift from fine wool to indigenous sheep in China, which is expected to slightly reduce that country's wool production.

But better seasons in the UK, combined with a shift back to wool sheep in South Africa, as well as a good season, meant those two countries, would lift production.

Meanwhile, the conference was also told there was a divergence in demand between apparel and textiles.

While demand for apparel wool was declining, there was increased demand for interior textile wool.



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Use of wool for textiles overtook apparel in 2008 and the gap has continued to widen.

Mr Wilcox said apparel wool was still in demand, and the key to any increase was down to China.

“Momentum in economic growth in the United States and Europe is building,” he said.

More than 200 people attended the congress in Cape Town last week.

<http://www.weeklytimesnow.com.au/commodities/sheep/world-wool-production-is-falling-with-australia-expected-to-be-down-by-the-largest-percentage/story-fnker8up-1226910294388>