The New England Wool

SustainaWOOL™ Integrity Scheme
CONTENTS

Introduction 3

Important Information Related To
The SustainaWOOL™ Integrity Scheme
Grower Checklist. 4

1. Animal Welfare / Animal Health 4

2. Traceability 4

3. Environmental Care / 4
4. Chemical Handling And Storage 5

5. Wool Preparation 5

Conclusion 6
INTRODUCTION

New England Wool, in conjunction with its Italian shareholders wants the wool-consuming-world to understand that its raw material suppliers (wool producers) take the utmost care with their animals and the environment. Not enough focus or energy has been placed on promoting the sustainable nature of the wool production system in Australia – particularly high quality superfine wool production systems.

What do we mean by “Sustainability” and what are we trying to achieve with the SustainaWOOL™ Integrity Scheme?

In a general sense, this is the basic philosophy.

“To promote the production of the highest quality wool via the sustainable management of natural and physical resources.”

Sustainable management in the context of this scheme means managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources in a way, or at a rate, which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing and for their health and safety while:

(a) Sustaining the potential of natural and physical resources to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations;

(b) Safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil, and ecosystems;

(c) Avoiding, remediating, or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment; and

(d) Managing livestock production systems involving the highest possible ethical and animal welfare standards.

The wool consumer is increasingly demanding a higher level of traceability along the pipeline of the production system from which they buy. Not only does the product need to be of the highest quality, there also needs to be a compelling “story” behind the product clearly showing the highest level of environmental and social sustainability and animal welfare. New England Wool understands that it has a major role in promoting the highly professional and ethical wool production systems of its suppliers. It also has the important role of advising potential suppliers of areas that can be improved or enhanced in certain production systems. The SustainaWOOL™ Integrity Scheme is a tool which we want to share with our valued suppliers to help us work and grow together in an increasingly competitive landscape. New England Wool wants its suppliers to stand out from the crowd – in the very best way. We wish our suppliers to grow and prepare the highest quality wool with the highest quality production credentials.

The SustainaWOOL™ Integrity Scheme is available to all suppliers (current or future) of wool to New England Wool. The information provided via the SustainaWOOL™ documentation by each wool supplier will be forever linked with the wool produced from that particular property. The Document is a “self-assessment” document, but each declarant signs with the full understanding and knowledge that they can be subject to audit at any time by a registered audit company or authorised entity. The SustainaWOOL™ Integrity Scheme also works hand-in-hand with the Australian Wool Exchange National Wool Declaration (NWD) which is a highly respected industry based declaration and audit system covering Mulesing Status and Dark Fibre Contamination in wool clips sold throughout Australia by auction or other various means.
Important Information Related To The SustainaWOOL™ Integrity Scheme Grower Checklist.

1. ANIMAL WELFARE / ANIMAL HEALTH

An acceptable treatment of animals, and this the case for sheep, is covered by the various “Acts” already in place in every State of Australia. If a property/owner has been prosecuted under any of the applicable Animal Welfare Government Acts, then this would immediately indicate that compliance has been breached and such properties/owners would be ineligible to participate in the SustainaWOOL™ Integrity Scheme. A document prepared by Animal Health Australia (AHA) in 2014 is currently under review by the Government which draws from all State and Territory regulations. This document “Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines – Sheep, first edition, version 1.0 May 2014 (subject to Government endorsement), will, if endorsed, become the cornerstone of a sound and acceptable Animal Welfare regime in Australia, and New England Wool is supportive of this document’s contents. In reference to the Grower Checklist, responses to items under this heading displaying a high level of Animal Welfare are a requirement for accreditation.

New England Wool has been very clear in recent months of its desire for all suppliers, if ceasing to mules is not possible, to use a registered Pain Relief product. We truly believe this to be the best welfare outcome for the animal at this time. For accreditation under the SustainaWOOL™ Integrity Scheme, it is a requirement for growers to declare that they either do not mules their animals, or if continuing to mules, that a registered Pain Relief product is applied during the process.

New England Wool is well aware that professional wool producers will uphold the highest possible standards of care for their animals and care for the environment. This means that sheep are kept in the best possible health; that sheep have been given reasonable protection from the effects of disease, pests, predators and that appropriate corrective action is taken if sheep require treatment or relief from pain and suffering. The SustainaWOOL™ document allows professional suppliers the opportunity to advise the world of the very actions that take place on their properties on a normal day-to-day basis to allow them to produce a quality product from their valued stock. Declarants should, however, be well aware that an auditor would require that random mobs of sheep be inspected to verify their health and welfare. An auditor will also need to verify that the correct registered animal health products are being used and that label use is strictly adhered to. In the case of a Pain Relief product, “proof of purchase” would be a requirement for accreditation. A check of watering points (water troughs/creeks), general water storage facilities (dams/tanks), pastures and/or conserved fodder would assist an auditor to understand the level of maintenance of health and wellbeing of stock.

2. TRACEABILITY

The ability for wool purchased by New England Wool under the SustainaWOOL™ Integrity Scheme to be traced back to its source is paramount to the Scheme’s success. Not only does transparent traceability allow a solid conduit for individual “stories” to be told from properties or wool producing areas, but it also gives our clients confidence in the integrity of fibre delivered to them under this scheme. Many systems are already in place to trace a bale back to the producer such as the National Wool Declaration, the registered Farm Brand and Stencil, the Classers Specification provided by the grower to their respective broker, and the regulations already in place involved in testing/sampling and displaying (showing) of wool for sale. The countermarking, documentation and various systems in place in the transport, dumping, packing and exporting of the bales allows the integrity of purchased wool to be upheld.
The SustainaWOOL™ document also allows suppliers to nominate their ability to trace individual animals on their property. This shows an even deeper level of care and also a responsibility towards high quality management of their flocks. It is a requirement for accreditation that all sheep on the property be identified with a secure form of individual identification and that mobs are routinely monitored and their location on the farm known and documented.

New England Wool will require for accreditation under this scheme that a National Wool Declaration (NWD) be completed covering every bale of wool to be offered for sale. This verifies that there is full traceability under the AWEX NWD Scheme for “Mulesing Status” and “Dark and Medulated Fibre (DMFR)”

3. ENVIRONMENTAL CARE /
4. CHEMICAL HANDLING AND STORAGE

The general thrust of this section of the scheme it for declarants to successfully show that reasonable care has been taken to avoid, remedy or mitigate any adverse effects on the environment. Some of these items are covered by State/Territory “Government Acts” such as the requirement for a Farm Chemical Users course to be completed by at least one person working on the farm. It also covers the requirement for an inventory of all chemicals to be kept as well as compliance with safe handling and storage requirements. Compliance with the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act (applicable to your State) is a requirement for accreditation under the SustainaWOOL™ Integrity Scheme.

5. WOOL PREPARATION

Notwithstanding the importance of having a clean, green and ethical product, the quality of the wool and its preparation for sale is paramount to making this whole scheme a success. The highest standard of quality should be the target for all involved in this scheme and where this quality can then be augmented by the highest standards of animal welfare and environmental care, then the result is a comfortable, reassured and satisfied consumer. It is also true that no amount of preparation and classing can improve a poor quality / poorly bred raw product. Having the best possible genetics for the particular environment, sound management and healthy/strong stock is the solid base from which this whole scheme can add value to the wool producer, the processor and the final consumer. From that point, New England Wool requires that the wool is removed by trained and/or careful shearers, the wool is prepared using the basic guidelines of the most current Australian Wool Exchange (AWEX) “Code of Practice”, and that the wool is classed by a Registered Professional or Owner woolclasser. It is a requirement that all bales be packed to AWEX specified weights and specifications and that only AWEX authorised nylon packs in good condition (not repaired) are used. It is also a requirement that all bales be appropriately and clearly branded/marked, and that the “Description” used is truly representative of the contents of each particular bale. A fully completed National Wool Declaration (NWD) should be submitted covering every bale of wool being offered for sale. This Declaration should be made available to New England Wool on request.
CONCLUSION

New England Wool is looking forward to its current and future suppliers embracing the SustainaWOOL™ Integrity Scheme. It has been designed to augment the marketing of the highest quality superfine wool from Australia. It provides professional wool producers the opportunity to show the world just how well they look after their stock and the environment. It is clear that sustainable wool production including the highest levels of animal welfare is more than just a trend, but is fast becoming a necessity to satisfy the discerning consumer. New England Wool wants to protect its market and protect its suppliers. The SustainaWOOL™ Integrity Scheme is a major tool in ensuring a strong future together.

The completed, signed and dated SustainaWOOL™ Integrity Scheme Grower Checklist document will remain in force as the true and correct record from each declarant until such times as an updated signed and dated version is received by New England Wool as a replacement document due to changes in activities on the property that make the original document no longer true and correct.

The New England Wool SustainaWOOL™ Integrity Scheme Growers checklist is an evolving document. New England Wool reserves the right to add to, or alter, items on the checklist from time-to-time as it sees fit to allow it to best cover the changing requirements of our clients and the consumer. Any new version of the document will be made available to current and future suppliers to allow them to restate their declaration and update their accreditation.

Accredited suppliers will receive an accreditation number for their records. The contents of the SustainaWOOL™ Integrity Scheme Grower Checklist will be linked to this exclusive Accreditation “number”. It is suggested that this number be quoted on any completed NWD emanating from accredited properties.

For further details
Website: www.newenglandwool.com.au
Email: newenglandwool@tpg.com.au
Phone: +61 (02) 96816943

Acknowledgements
Australian Wool Innovation Ltd
Australian Wool Exchange Ltd
Design: Eye Visuals – Robyn Latimer
Photography: Cover and page 6 – Michael Taylor, Wool – Robyn Latimer