



Press release – for immediate release

October 28th, 2019

VITALE BARBERIS CANONICO WOOL EXCELLENCE AWARD
27TH OCTOBER, 2019
WINNER ANNOUNCED

“A Recognition of Excellence in Wool”.

Last night the Barber family of Coliban Park, Victoria celebrated as winners of the annual *Vitale Barberis Canonico Wool Excellence Award* for 2019.

For four generations the Barber family have been the devoted custodian’s of Coliban Park, where they run over 27,000 saxon sheep with bloodlines linking directly back to John Aitken and Eliza Furlong’s flocks.

“This is our passion, growing saxon wool, as it was my father’s and his father before him. This is an amazing way to have that passion and dedication recognized.” Duncan Barber, Coliban Park

The Award was held at Melbourne’s iconic The Prince Deck where the prestigious event was attended by *Vitale Barberis Canonico* (VBC) representatives, *Wool Excellence Club* members from NSW, Victoria and Tasmania, industry representatives and media.

Mr. Alberto Barberis Canonico and Mr. Davide Fontaneto (Raw Procurement Manager), of *Vitale Barberis Canonico* presented Duncan, Jess and their son Jack with the award, which included a cash prize to the value of \$50K along with an all-expenses paid trip to the Biella region of Italy. The trip provides an opportunity for the winners to see firsthand the transformation of their fibre to luxurious fabrics, state of the art technology and meet with Vitale Barberis Canonico representatives.

Davide Fontaneto said of the winning clip, “The clip is among the biggest in terms of quantity and displays those characteristics typical of real saxon wool: high and frequent crimp, full bodied, elastic, reactive, and resistant when squeezed. It is what we’re expecting from a Wool Excellence Club saxon clip, with thick staple and in a certain way noisy, because when held to the ear while unravelling the wool staple, the sound mimics that of shoes walking over fresh snow. It is well classed and with perfect length.

The Barber family has been very enthusiastic about their membership in the WEC since their inclusion. They managed to improve the production of this type of wool, working hard on breeding and endeavouring to get their wool even closer to the high VBC Saxon standards. Not only in terms of quality but also in quantity: they recently purchased a new property (Spring Hill/Z) and seriously took into account the strong animal welfare message coming from the market by pursuing Non-Mulesed status on this new property, which is really important today.”



To be eligible for this significant award growers must be members of the *VBC Wool Excellence Club*. Members are specially selected by VBC using strict criteria, and must demonstrate sustainable wool production and notably the attributes of superfine saxon Merino wool which is most highly regarded by Vitale Barberis Canonico for their high-end fabric production.

The *VBC Wool Excellence Award* is just one of an array of initiatives created by the company to encourage saxon wool producers. All members of the *Vitale Barberis Canonico Wool Excellence Club* need to be accredited under the SustainaWOOL™ Integrity Scheme, managed by the Australian Wool Exchange. This is a scheme promoting ethical, environmental and high-quality wool production. *VBC Wool Excellence Club* members benefit from special “purchase contracts” at significant premiums to the physical market, and regular Club meetings where information can be shared between members and with Vitale Barberis Canonico.

2019 Winner:

The Barber family, “Coliban Park”, Elphinstone, VIC

Situated 46kms south of Bendigo in Victoria, Coliban Park is approximately 13,000 acres running up to 30,000 sheep and is currently operated by Duncan and Jess Barber, with the help of their four children when they’re home from school - Jack (16), Rosie (15), Maggie (9) and Polly (6).

Coliban Park boasts a long and very interesting history dating back 150 years. Acquired by Anthony Barber in 1917, Coliban Park already had a well-established saxon flock which he continued to manage. The sheep had been purchased in 1859 from John Aitken of Mount Aitken and can be directly traced back to Eliza Furlong and the Elector.

With granitic soils and scattered red gums on undulating hills, Coliban Park provides excellent breeding country for saxon merinos. Duncan is the fourth generation of his family to run the property, and believes strongly in the Saxon breed and maintaining their genetics and the land, “The sheep have been here since long before we arrived at Coliban Park. We are only custodians of their property”. Duncan Barber



About Vitale Barberis Canonico

For more than 355 years, the wool mill of Vitale Barberis Canonico has been creating prestigious textiles for the clothing industry in the historical factory in Pratrivero, Piedmont, Italy. Vitale Barberis Canonico employs more than 455 staff, has 40 agents throughout the world, and produces fabrics from two state-of-the-art factories in the Biella region. Vitale Barberis Canonico is among the top companies across the world in regards to technology and business management producing prestigious textiles completely Made in Italy and is the largest exporter on a global level in terms of both value and quantity.

Heritage, Innovation and Elegance are the key words of the company philosophy.

In 2018, production reached 11.7 million metres, and the turnover rose to €185 m (in contrast to €170 m in 2017). In October 2013 Vitale Barberis Canonico became a member of the international club Les Hénokiens, a Club reserved for family companies with at least two hundred years' history.
