

# THE WOOLGROWER



**Australian wool is produced by farmers who are skilled at looking after their livestock, pastures, and the environment.**

Most Australian wool-producing properties are owned by families who have been growing wool for generations.

Australian woolgrowers are committed to:

- exceptionally high standards of **animal welfare**.
- **sustainable farming** for the benefit of future generations.
- adopting modern technology to improve productivity and sustainability.
- responsible use of land and water resources.

## Animal welfare

Woolgrowers work hard to make sure their sheep are healthy, safe and have plenty of food, water and shelter year-round.

Throughout the year woolgrowers monitor their livestock and paddocks to make sure there is enough food and water available.

Producers bring their sheep into the yards for regular **drenching**, vaccinating and fly and lice treatment to protect them from pests and diseases.

During lambing, producers provide ewes and lambs with paddocks that have plenty of feed and lots of shelter.

Producers try not to disturb ewes while they are lambing to ensure the ewes and lambs develop a strong bond.

Australian woolgrowers operate under strict **animal welfare** guidelines, which protect the wellbeing of their sheep.

## Sustainable farming

Because many wool-producing families have been farming for generations, it is important to them to make sure the land is protected and managed for future generations.

Producers in high-rainfall areas use **rotational grazing** to give **pastures** a break and move sheep onto fresh paddocks when more feed is required.

Producers in low-rainfall areas match **stocking rates** with seasonal conditions to prevent overgrazing.

## Fast facts

- Australian woolgrowers are experienced livestock managers who ensure their sheep are healthy and safe throughout the year.
- Sheep and pastures are monitored regularly to ensure the animals are healthy and the **pasture** isn't overgrazed.
- Woolgrowers look after their natural resources for future generations of producers.

## Did you know?

- Sheep producers often set aside areas of native vegetation that are not grazed by sheep.



**Skilled managers:** Australian woolgrowers are highly-skilled livestock and land managers who use the latest technology and modern production methods to manage their businesses sustainably.



**Biodiversity:** Wool-producing properties have more than just sheep and **pastures** — they provide a habitat for native wildlife.

## Responsible land use

Wool-producing properties in Australia often have rich and diverse populations

of plants and animals. Many producers fence off areas of natural vegetation and bush from livestock, to protect soil and water resources and to provide a habitat for native wildlife.

Grazing and **stocking rates** are managed carefully to protect the soil from erosion and ensure **pastures** last for many years.

## Education and training

Australian woolgrowers often combine practical experience, gained from a lifetime working on farms, with tertiary qualifications.

Many woolgrowers continue their professional development throughout their life by attending workshops and courses run by technical experts.

This professional training ensures Australian woolgrowers use cutting-edge technology and the most advanced management practices in the world.

## Glossary

**Animal welfare** — the humane treatment of animals to ensure their health and wellbeing.

**Drenching** — treating sheep with pesticides to prevent intestinal worms.

**Pasture** — plants that are managed by farmers for livestock production.

**Rotational grazing** — a system of grazing that moves stock from paddock to paddock as pasture gets low.

**Stocking rate** — the total number of sheep in a given area at any one time.

**Sustainable farming** — farming that protects natural resources while producing food and fibre for consumers.

## Technology and modern wool production

Australian woolgrowers use a wide range of modern technology to manage their businesses — in the office and on the farm.

Some sheep have electronic eartags, which allow producers to record information (such as wool production and growth rates) about individual animals during shearing and whenever they come into the yards for handling.

Automatic weighing and drafting (sorting) equipment helps producers manage sheep quickly and safely, keeping sheep in the yards for less time before returning them to their paddocks.

Woolgrowers use smartphone applications, laptops and tablets in the paddock to collect and record livestock and pasture information.

Computer programs help producers develop feed budgets to ensure both **pastures** and sheep stay healthy and grow well.

Woolgrowers use genomic technology to select the best rams to achieve their breeding objectives. Some producers might be trying to breed sheep that produce lots of very fine wool while others might prefer sheep that can survive on low-quality **pastures**, in hot, dry conditions.

Wool producers invest some of their income every year into research and development to find better ways to manage their businesses. Australian Wool Innovation (AWI) works with producers on research and development projects.

Wool producers use all the tools available to make the best management decisions for their businesses and environment.



**Better information:** Woolgrowers use the information they collect from individual animals to make decisions about their breeding programs.

### More information

For more information about woolgrowers, go to:

- [learnaboutwool.com](http://learnaboutwool.com)
- Beyond the Bale: [beyondthebale.wool.com](http://beyondthebale.wool.com)
- [makingmorefromsheep.com.au](http://makingmorefromsheep.com.au)
- Download the free Lifetime Ewe Management (LTEM) smartphone application
- [woolmarklearningcentre.com](http://woolmarklearningcentre.com)

