



Speciality Fibres
wool2yarn
Global



BUYERS GUIDE TO WOOL 2023-2024



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from the editor's desk...

Dear Reader

Every year we highlight industry issues – and we never run out of interesting topics and people to talk to!

Our editorial is full of news, views and information updates.

We rely on input from individuals and companies and we are grateful for their ongoing support and involvement. Without their input we would not have such a range and diversity of ideas and information to share with you.

This year *wool2yarn global* looks at Poland, its historic links to wool and present day operations; features on British wool and new uses; European Union new rules and regulations for textiles; dye companies and their response to environmental realities; mergers and acquisitions in Italy's textile industry; textile machinery companies after ITMA Milan; wool testing in environmental compliance schemes; new players and participants and much more.

Speciality Fibres and the Mohair journey are also explored.

We also include the latest from Australia, NZ, Uruguay, UK, South Africa, Argentina, and Peru, and connect you with leading exporters from those countries and beyond.

We thank our loyal supporters without whom we could not publish and all those who have contributed to this issue.

Victor Chesky



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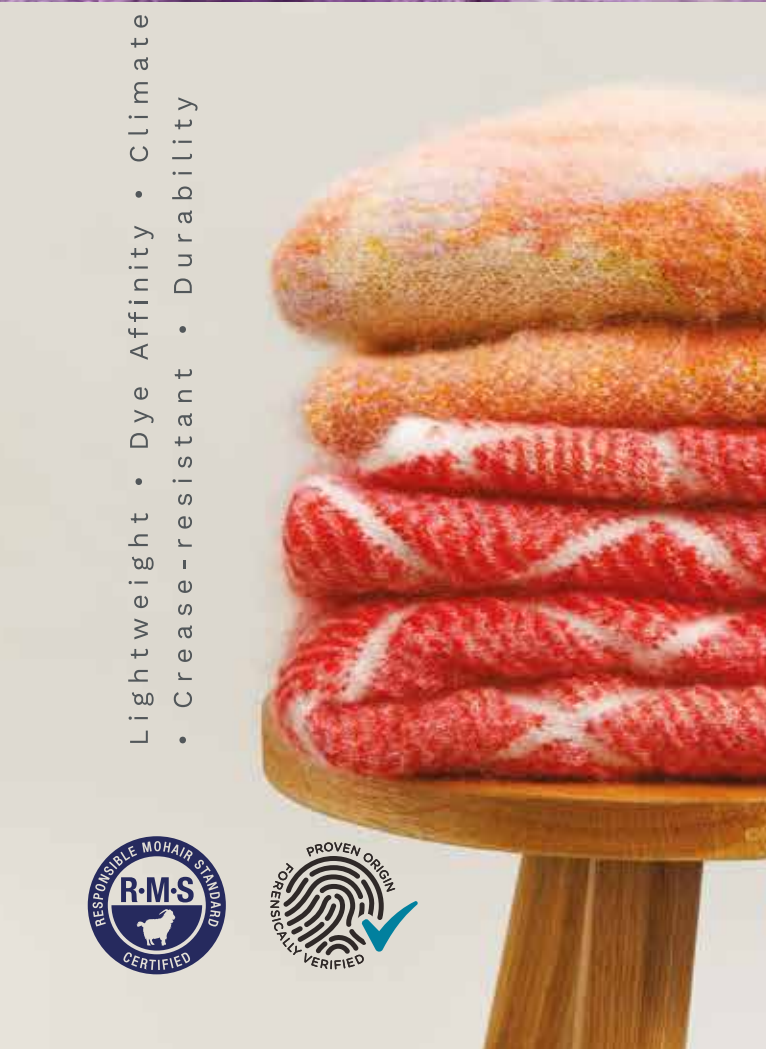
Front Cover Image

Courtesy Cape Wool SA
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To acknowledge the preferences of our contributors we use both UK and US spelling in our articles



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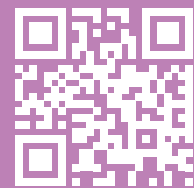


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A wide-angle photograph of a modern textile spinning mill. The room is filled with rows of industrial spinning machines, each featuring a prominent green cylindrical component and a grey control panel. The machines are arranged in long, parallel lines that recede into the distance. The ceiling is high with a grid of fluorescent lights, and the floor is a light-colored, polished concrete. The overall atmosphere is one of a clean, organized, and technologically advanced manufacturing environment.

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British Wool Bradford Depot

WOOL PRODUCTION IN SELECTED COUNTRIES

By Roberto Cardellino
and José Luis Trifoglio

This report analyzes world wool production, particularly in those countries that produce the biggest volume of wool used in garments and other products. There were plenty of unexpected events in the world economy with very strong social effects. One of the key issues is the evolution of world sheep numbers. These continued to rise in 2022 to a new record of 1.296 billion head, 25% more than the lowest value in 2002. China with 14%, Australia with 6% and India (6%) are the countries with most sheep worldwide.

However, world wool production (clean basis) from 1995 to 2022 has decreased 31% (see chart 2), due mainly to reductions in the number of sheep in the main wool producing countries.

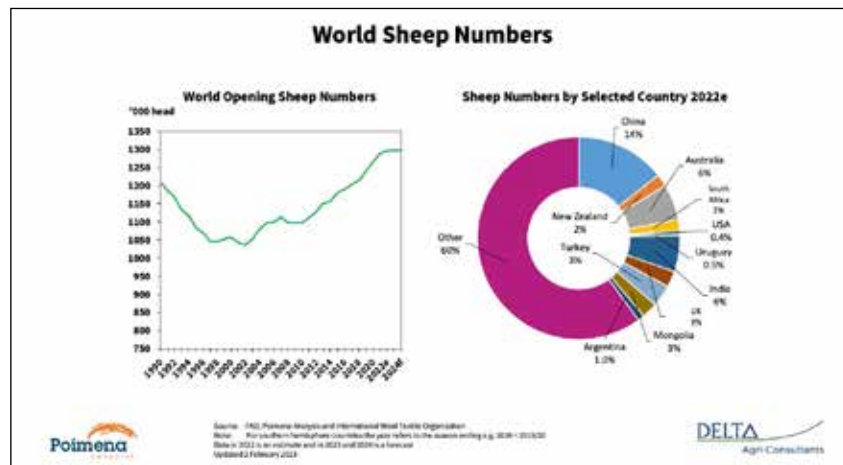


Chart 1

The relative prices for different types of wool (in terms of diameter), plus the prices for different categories of sheep meat, as well as other production alternatives (mainly beef cattle meat) are responsible in general for the decisions of farmers in terms of production objectives.

As a consequence of farmers decisions between 1990 and 2022, the production of fine wools (less than 24.5 microns) suffered the greatest reduction (see chart 3), much more than medium types (24.6 to 32.5 micron) and coarser wools (more than 32.5 microns).

Australia

Australia is the biggest wool producer in the world, and what happens over there has a great impact in the wool market in general as well as in the attitude of other producer countries.

According to the last Wool Production Forecast (AWI/AWPF), the Australian sheep flock is forecast to stabilize at 71.5 million sheep shorn during 2022/23, and 72.7 million in 2023/24.

The fourth forecast of Australian shorn wool production for 2022/23 is 328 Mkg greasy (218 Mkg clean), with an estimate average cut per head of 4.59 kg greasy, (due to favourable climatic conditions), a mean diameter of 20.8 microns, staple length of 89.6 mm, staple strength of 34.5 N/ktex, and 2.2 % of vegetable matter.

New Zealand

Total sheep numbers in New Zealand have continued to reduce to 25.5 million head approximately. The reduction in sheep numbers

has been continuous since the 90's, when it reached 58 million. Since 2021, figures are showing a continuous decrease in livestock numbers (sheep, beef and dairy cattle), due to increased farm sales, mainly for forestry.

For 2022-23, total wool production is estimated at 130 Mkg greasy, for this third biggest wool producing country, mostly coarse wool.

One of the problems facing the country today is the cost of shearing, which at present is 3.8 to 4.0 US dollars/ animal. On average shearing costs exceed wool revenue for most farm classers. The exceptions are those farms producing fine and very fine merino wools in the South Island (BLNZ economic services). The outlook for coarser wools in New Zealand remains uncertain. It is difficult to see demand from China improving for mid-micron and coarse crossbred wools in the medium term.

South Africa

South Africa's contribution to global wool volume is quite

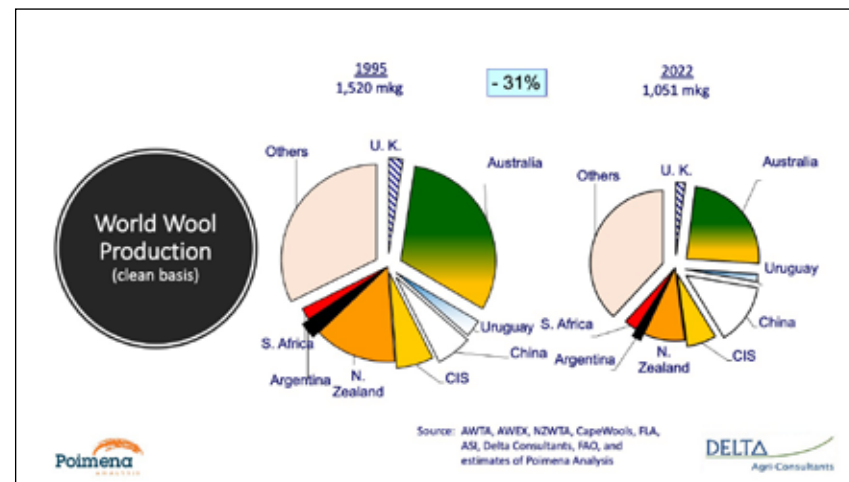


Chart 2

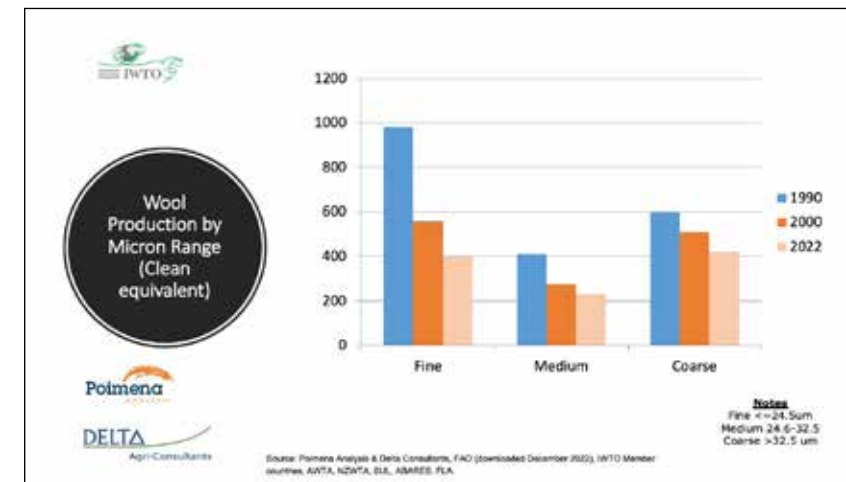


Chart 3

significant for the international wool trade, particularly in the production of merino wool. Production of wool in the last 3 seasons stands at volumes between 42.2 and 47.9 Mkg greasy.

Sheep numbers have been steady in recent years averaging 21.5 million head. It is forecast to increase slightly in 2023 with producers restocking again after the drought of recent years. Cross-bred sheep numbers are reducing.

The micron distribution of South African wools shows a wide dispersion in fibre diameter, with the largest volumes appearing in the 19 - 20 micron range, with insignificant volumes of wools coarser than 23 micron. A lot of effort is being invested by government and private organizations to assist producers to make more money from their sheep.

Argentina

Argentina is the biggest wool producing country in the Americas, and, as well as in Uruguay, there

are still several top-making plants in operation. The market has been extremely tough for medium and coarse wools in the last 3 years and as a consequence there are big quantities of these types of wools in stock.

According to data of Federacion Lanera Argentina (FLA), the Argentinean sheep flock has been slowly declining, with 13.3 million sheep in 2021/22, 12.4 million

in 2022/23, with a forecast for 2023/24 of 12.1 million.

The estimated total wool production for this year is 37.1 Mkg greasy, with 60% of fine wools (<24.5 mic.), 37% of medium wools (Corriedale type; 24.5 to 32.5 mic.), and 3%, coarse wools (more than 32.5).

A big proportion of the sheep population is located in the Patagonian region, in the southern part of the country, with very cold and dry climatic conditions, and where there are not many options to wool production systems, and where the production of sheep meat has not been properly established.

Uruguay

As in many other countries, sheep population and consequently wool production has declined severely in recent years. From 2020 to 2022 the sheep population has been a little over 6.1 million head. However, it is estimated that

WORLD WOOL PRODUCTION BY KEY COUNTRY (mkg clean)

| Country | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 | 2022 | Variation 1990 vs 2022 |
|--------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------------------------|
| Australia | 724 | 438 | 260 | 254 | -65% |
| China | 103 | 128 | 162 | 148 | +44% |
| N. Zealand | 231 | 193 | 131 | 94 | -59% |
| Turkey | 43 | 31 | 21 | 43 | - |
| South Africa | 59 | 29 | 27 | 26 | -56% |
| Russia | 102 | 18 | 27 | 24 | -74,5 |
| Argentina | 94 | 39 | 34 | 24 | -75% |
| Uruguay | 68 | 41 | 25 | 18 | -74% |
| Others | 583 | 426 | 412 | 418 | -28% |
| Total | 2.007 | 1.343 | 1.099 | 1.051 | -48% |

Chart 3



Australian wool industry is always working to promote wool as a sustainable fibre of choice. Consumers around the world are more attune to the many attributes wool fibre offers to so many product applications and this can only be seen as a positive going forward.

*Josh Lamb, President
Australian Council of Wool Exporters*



this year there will be a further reduction, down to 5.8 million. Consequently, wool production will be reduced to 22.5 Mkg greasy. Corriedale is still the main breed with approximately 40% of the national stock, but there has been a great increase in the proportion of the Merino breed led by very high prices now representing 35% of the total.

There have been very severe restrictions to exports of medium type wools (28-30 microns), particularly to China, in the last 3 years, resulting in a big stock of greasy wool in the hands of the producers.

United Kingdom

The British sheep industry is still

facing a period of uncertainty and change following the departure from the European Union in early 2021.

This event is resulting in a substantial change in farm support programs, departure from EU regulatory platforms and the development of new regulations related to farming, food and the environment, and changes in trade patterns (Phil Stocker, 2023)

The main income for most British sheep farmers is from lambs and sheep meat and these farmers have become resigned to low wool prices, hopeful that values cover the cost of shearing. Britain is seeing growth in wool shedding sheep, to reduce costs.

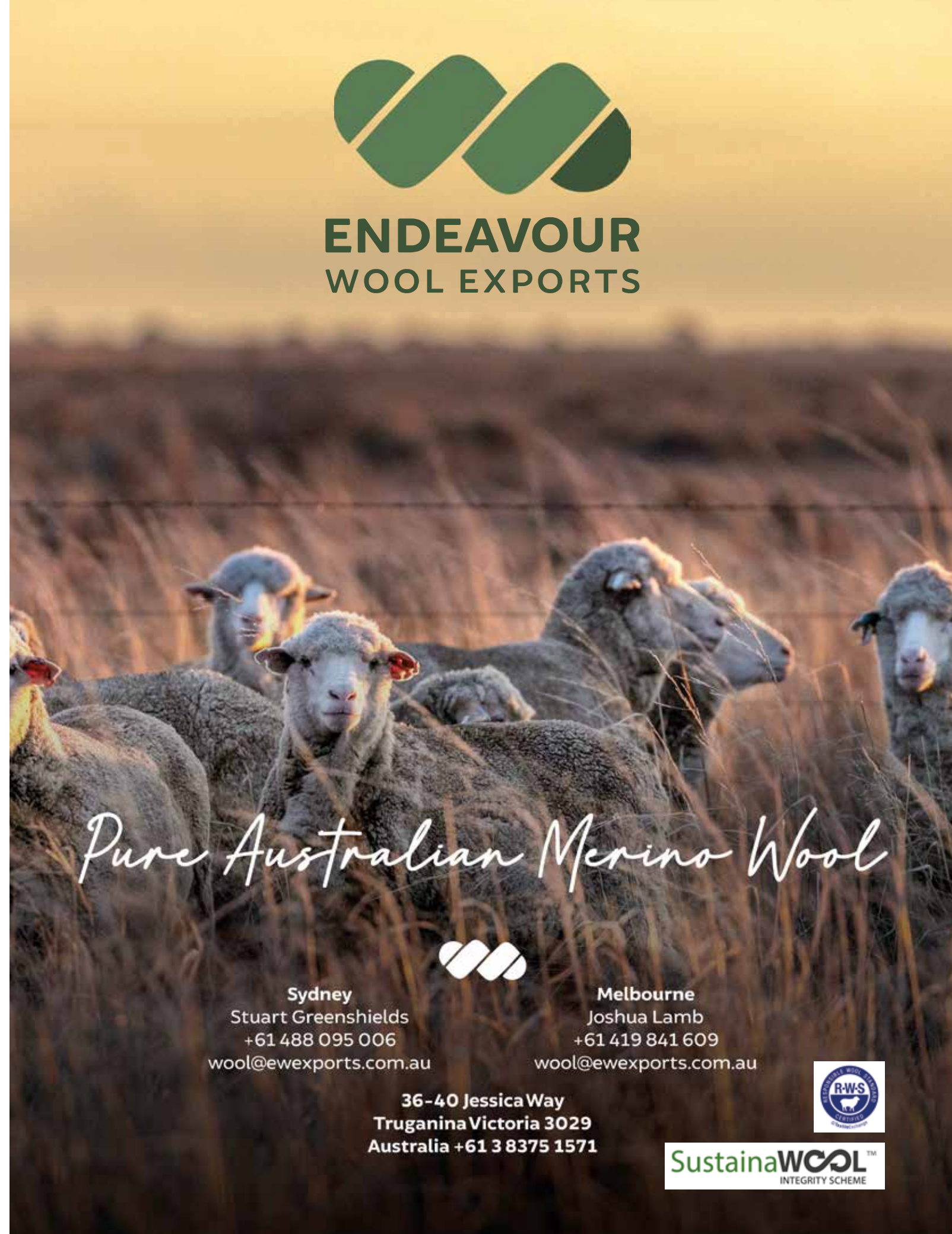
Sheep populations in UK have

remained in values between 32.6 and 33.5 million, while the production of wool remains in values between 29.9 and 30.7 Mkg. (mostly coarse wools for interior uses).

With the exception of China, wool growing countries reduced their production levels. Producers of fine wools (less than 24.5 mic) will probably maintain (or even increase) their volumes of production. For medium and coarse wools the situation is different. Even with favorable market conditions, such as a significant increase in demand, due to large quantities of these wools that are in stock it is hard to see that the situation will improve for the foreseeable future.



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AWI - THE TWISTS AND TURNS TOWARD THE NEXT CHAPTER FOR WOOL FIBRE



John Roberts CEO AWI
talks to Victor Chesky

Australian Wool Innovation (AWI) and its subsidiary company The Woolmark Company are responsible for delivering research, development and marketing for the Australian wool industry. AWI is owned by approximately 20,000 Australian woolgrower shareholders and represents more than 60,000 levy payers. The company is funded by a levy of 1.5% on woolgrowers' wool revenue.

AWI released its Woolgrower Consultation and Communications Plan in July this year, outlining its 2023/24 objectives and plans for the Australian wool industry. I caught up with John Roberts CEO AWI in Sydney to take us through some of these plans.



The Woolmark-certified interior of the Volvo XC90 - seat cover with Wool Blend Performance label, certified for quality according to The Woolmark Company's strict assessment criteria

Australian wool has a bright future. This will be very much driven by wool industry and the fibre's strong environmental credentials and the consumer accepting and embracing these credentials.

Although demand and prices can fluctuate in the short term, the long-term fundamentals for wool are strong because wool is a natural fibre with excellent properties, and a growing number of manufacturers around the world want to use it.

On Environmental Issues:

Major international textile brands are introducing environmental strategies and goals into their structures to grab the attention of consumers. It is our objective to make sure that wool is front and centre for them in achieving their goals.

To facilitate this AWI strategy, we have created a separate department within the company, Sustainability Solutions Service Group, which will take responsibility for forming our strategy for sustainability going forward. Emma Gittoes Bunting has been appointed to the key role of Global Sustainability Manager. She has great experience and was head of the Make the Label Count campaign in Europe.

Sustainability means many things to different people, groups, and industries. AWI is not in the business of setting targets in the sustainability space or defining what sustainability really means. That's up to the brands, the consumers, the policy bodies and the governments. It is our



NATURAL BORN INNOVATORS



Nissan's Formula E drivers Norman Nato (left) and Sacha Fenestraz (right) wearing the Merino wool kit during pre-season testing at Le Mans (France), with Nissan's new Gen3 racing car behind them

job to highlight the outstanding eco-credentials of wool and ensure that it is not overlooked or misrepresented.

Wool has a great story to tell and consumers are willing and interested to hear it. But we must be able to substantiate any claim we make to this story. For this reason data collection and free access to this data is very important. We work closely with

all industry bodies including wool grower bodies, wool exporters, wool brokers, wool processors, and Australian Wool Exchange (AWEX), to collect the appropriate data and make it freely available to everyone. The consumer needs to believe in the claims we make. The industry benefits from industry collaboration and we are investing in building up relationships with these groups.

On Emerging and Developing Markets:

We continue to work closely with our biggest customers in China, Europe, and India. I was recently in China and the good news is that Chinese brands are also using our natural fibre in their production. During Covid a number of small to medium sized processors closed in China but it seems that large

companies have picked up that extra capacity.

India is one of the largest and most important markets for Australian wool. It processes around 120 million kgs of wool every year. It has developed a very strong supply chain of quality spinners, weavers, knitters, and garment manufacturers and also has a strong base of handloom and handknitting manufacturing. Around 40-50% of wool processed in India is consumed domestically. AWI has been working with the wool industry in India for over 50 years and has multiple partners in the Indian supply chain.

Bangladesh and Vietnam are both keen to expand their processing capabilities and capacity and relationships with our processing partners continue to develop.

Bangladesh's potential as a wool processor — for both knitting and spinning — is a strong focus for us. The textile industry there is eager to innovate and up-skill to offer more technical garments and this presents a good opportunity for Australian wool.

The Vietnam textile industry is the fourth largest apparel exporter in the world, after China, the EU and Bangladesh, accounting for 5.8% of world apparel exports in 2021. AWI currently collaborates with partners including flatbed knitters, circular knitters and garment making companies. AWI also engaged with Vietnamese domestic brands to produce their first wool collections, successfully sold on the domestic market.

It is interesting to note that Portugal is emerging as a growing

manufacturing hub for supplying European brands, particularly those in France and the Nordic countries.

Many international brands are looking to diversify their manufacturing base, with renewed focus on 'near shoring' options in Australia, Asia, Europe and the Americas. Ensuring emerging manufacturing markets have supply chain access and the technical skills to use wool is critical to safeguard wool is the fibre of choice.

AWI continues to work with partners in Europe, Japan, and the USA to promote the use of wool in all applications. Our very successful Wear Wool, Not Fossil Fuel marketing campaign last year had 92 million video views. We also collaborated with Rakuten, the largest online retailer in Japan, to promote Merino wool apparel. This campaign saw Rakuten lift its wool garments sales by 12.9%.

Our promotional work with Nissan formula E racing team and the America's Cup Luna Rossa Prada Pirelli sailing team is ongoing. These promotions feature ground breaking technical Merino wool garments for extreme conditions.

On Europe:

Consumer interests in health and wellness is another trend that offers great opportunities for wool. A major issue for the wool industry in Europe is environmental accreditation and the ability to promote the benefits that wool fibre can offer. Our work with IWTO and leading brands in Europe to ensure a fair outcome from labelling systems,

and that European environmental regulations do not disadvantage wool fibre.

Australian wool production: of shorn wool for the 2023/24 season is 332 Mkg greasy, a 1.4% increase on the current season. Sheep numbers are expected to remain relatively stable at 72.7 million, up 1.7%.

We will continue to promote all wool types including broad wools and these are a big beneficiary of our promotions. Although they represent only 7% of value and 17% of volume they benefit as do any other wool types that we market. Our sustainability and Make the Label Count works for the benefit of all wool — so proportionally broad wools already receive good value for money from our promotional and marketing. We do a lot of work in the automotive industry and in hospitality settings including with hotel chains. Most of this work is in the upholstery sector, and of course this is beneficial to larger micron wool sales. Recently we collaborated with Volvo to introduce a Wool Blend Performance Label for their seat coverings. Developments in new technologies and machinery create many opportunities for wool.

The challenge and opportunity for wool is to see wool used in a variety of applications, including loungewear, sportswear, footwear, and automotive textiles. The way in which the world purchases its products has undergone a significant transformation, mixing physical stores with online retailing. Wool must be prominent in both.'

A VIEW FROM CHINA



Jeff Ma

After three years of strict COVID pandemic controls the international textile industry is looking to China to gage how demand will influence prices for raw and processed fibre. Jeff Ma AWI Country Manager for China outlines his perspective about how the wool industry in China is fairing post Covid and lockdowns, and what are the major issues facing the textile industry in China today.

Overall China's wool industry is stable. Affected by COVID, wool yarn production in 2020 dropped by 18.05% Year-on-Year, but recovered and continued its rise from 2021. Production of wool fabric declined in 2020 and 2021, and recovered to pre-pandemic level in 2022. Due to the geopolitical and trade tensions, the proportion of U.S

imports of Chinese wool textiles declined rapidly and ASEAN has become the largest export destination.

Although China's textile export volume is far ahead, it is facing challenges of innovation and branding from developed countries while facing increasing competition of low labour cost and tariff agreements from emerging markets. In addition, public awareness towards environmental issues and government regulations will continue to push the textile industry to improve overall competitiveness.

The Woolmark Company as the marketing arm of AWI has been actively involved in the Chinese market for two decades, and has established a strong presence in China through a range of activities and initiatives. One of the key ways that the Woolmark Company promotes the use of Australian Merino wool in China is through its marketing activities. The company works closely with Chinese fashion brands, designers, and retailers to promote the unique properties of Australian Merino wool and to raise awareness of the benefits of using wool in fashion and textiles. Another important aspect of the Woolmark Company's business in China is its collaborations with Chinese textile manufacturing companies. The company works with these mills to develop new

products and applications for wool, and to ensure that Australian Merino wool is being used in the most innovative and sustainable ways possible.

Our marketing is always geared toward consumers. We believe that the most effective marketing logic is to enable consumers to clearly understand the excellent characteristics of wool, so that they can make responsible consumption decisions independently.

China has been one of the fastest-growing consumer markets for several decades, and it is likely to continue growing in the future. For example, take China's menswear market. It has experienced steady growth in recent years, but the question remains whether this growth will continue in the future. There are several reasons why the menswear market in China will continue to grow. First, the Chinese economy is still expanding, albeit at a slower pace than in previous years. This means that more people have disposable income to spend on clothing, including menswear. Second, there is a growing interest in fashion and personal style among Chinese male consumers. This is especially true among younger generations who are increasingly exposed to Western fashion trends through social media and global travel. Another main factor driving growth in the menswear market is the rise of e-commerce. Online shopping has become increasingly popular in China, and this has

made it easier for consumers to purchase high-quality clothing from around the world. This has also led to increased competition among menswear brands, which has helped to drive innovation and improve the quality of products on offer.

The Chinese market has become increasingly discerning, with consumers seeking products that align with their values and promote environmental responsibility. By highlighting the eco-friendly and biodegradable nature of Australian wool, we have successfully captured the hearts of environmentally-conscious consumers in China, launching a couple of eco campaigns for the Chinese market on Earth Day, leading to a significant increase in demand for our wool products.

Environmental accreditation and traceability for wool fibre is getting more attention in China. Since China announced the dual-carbon goal, everyone is working towards this target, and the textile industry is no exception. As a traditional industry, textile industry starts from various aspects to accelerate sustainable upgrading and transformation. The application of natural fibers, environmental certification and traceability are important links. Since 2019, we have promoted the traceable wool project in China every year, having cooperated with brands including BAN XIAOXUE, UMA WANG, NEIWAI, Edition.

AWI works closely with licensee companies in China. Together

with Nanshan company they have jointly developed the Optim fabrics based on the Wool Development Center (WDC). Utilizing Optim fibre's stretching technology, Merino wool fibres are pre-stretched and then spun into yarn before being woven. The fabric made from these Merino wool fibers has enhanced water and wind resistant properties (while retaining all Merino wool's fine properties such as breathability) without any durable water repellent chemical treatment. This makes it an ideal fabric for use in garments for sports and outdoor pursuits.

More than 400k meters of Optim fabric have been produced by Nanshan since it was first launched in 2015. Customers include many famous brands, such as Icebreaker, ICICLE, Stone Island. Meanwhile, the development of this product continues to be upgraded, such as digital printed Optim fabric, which was successfully launched into the market by the well-known Chinese brand ICICLE and has been widely praised.

Since 2019 consumers in China have been actively embracing online shopping. Not only have we collaborated with Tmall, the largest e-commerce platform in China, to hold the Tmall Super Category Day (Wool Week) for four consecutive years, but we have also cooperated with luxury fashion platforms such as Net-A-Porter and Farfetch for a few times to promote the excellent characteristics of wool and drive sales of wool garments.

WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU WEARING?

by Jonathan Dyson

British Wool launched a campaign to highlight the importance of sustainable fashion. Fashion is an increasingly significant market for British Wool, and the organisation showcased the fibre's qualities for a range of clothing items through its 'What On Earth Are You Wearing?' campaign designed to raise awareness of British wool's sustainability benefits.

As part of the campaign new research was presented examining some of the wardrobe habits of UK consumers. The survey of 2,040 UK-based Brits, commissioned by British Wool and conducted in September 2022, found that they have an average of 76 garments hanging in their closets, and as many as 83% could not tell you where a single item originated from. A further 85% had no idea what materials their outfits are made from, despite 31% claiming they try to buy more sustainable items.

The report also showed that as many as 63% of Brits admit to throwing clothes away, which could easily have been mended or taken to a charity shop, with the average number of binned clothes amounting to six a month, or 72 a year ending up in landfill. Of those surveyed, 62% said it's simply too difficult to avoid fast fashion these days, while 81% said they



would like to change their shopping habits yet simply don't know where to start.

British Wool said that 74% had no idea that viscose was bad for the environment, while 62% were shocked to hear that nylon was a non-biodegradable synthetic, 54% were unaware

that polyester is made through a chemical reaction that requires more energy than most other materials – and through its manufacturing, can also cause pollution to the environment – and 56% were not aware that materials such as wool, recycled cotton and hemp were “much better for the environment.”

Aja Barber, sustainable fashion writer, stylist and consultant, said: “The climate crisis will mean we are going to need solutions closer to home. British wool was a key pillar of the British economy in the past and I think it will become increasingly important as we move towards a more sustainable future.”

To highlight some of the latest fashion products made from wool grown in the UK, British Wool picked out three new items made from 100% British Wool: the Countryman Jumper by Richmond Knitwear, the Hudson Aran jumper from Peregrine Clothing, and the Diana sleeveless jumper from Mars Knitwear.

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Q&A

Klaus Steger IWTO President
talks to Victor Chesky



Did you know that the International Wool Textile Organisation (IWTO) has a rich history dating back to 1924 when an arbitration agreement was signed between the British and French wool textile industries.

Soon after, Belgium, Italy, Germany and Czechoslovakia joined the agreement, and annual Wool Conferences were held to discuss industry-related issues. The French delegation proposed the creation of a permanent organization to coordinate national wool committees and represent their interests in international forums.

In 1925, the first IWTO conference was held. In 1964, the Woolmark logo was born. In 1998, CWTA, the China Wool Textile Association, joined. IWTO's newest members include Wool in School, a wool education initiative in Ireland, and Datini Fibres, who focus exclusively on recycled wool.

At the 2023 IWTO Kyoto Congress Klaus Steger was elected the 20th President. Klaus Steger is President of ERWO Holding AG Germany, head company of Südwolle Group, one of the largest yarn manufacturing companies in the world today.

Q. How relevant is IWTO today and what are its main objectives in representing the international wool trade?

Today, IWTO is more relevant than ever. To give one particularly important example, IWTO speaks for wool in the current EU legislative process, where we are the only global fibre organisation representing the full pipeline, from farm to fashion. It's crucial to

give legislators a strong, united voice and with 36 members representing 23 countries, IWTO can do this very effectively. The EU PEF has never compared mined fibres to farmed fibres before and we have a responsibility to ensure legislators understand the difference. We require a level playing field when all is said and done.

IWTO has successfully built a reputation for developing science based eco-credentials, substantiating and quantifying sustainability claims with peer-reviewed scientific publications. Our culture of only claiming what we can prove unequivocally distinguishes us from those representing hidden agendas.

Q. China is the largest processor of wool in the world. What role do you see it playing as a member of IWTO?

Our Chinese members, at one stage or another, process 70-75% of the raw wool for the global apparel and interior textile industries. Chinese members have a strong position in early-stage processing, and it is critical that they fulfill the needs of the later stage processing, by staying relevant in the global textile world.

In terms of global climate change, decarbonisation of the wool pipeline is taken very seriously by our Chinese members, who are leading a charge to change from black energy sources to green.

Additionally, is it paramount that members in China build their domestic market and support sustainable growth for the local wool industry through education and advocacy. This could unlock many important value propositions to the local Chinese wool textile market.

Q. What are the main challenges facing the wool industry going forward?

Our biggest concern remains the quantity of apparel wool produced around the world today. If we do not have enough raw material readily available, the rest of the industry cannot plan and execute expansion successfully.

The upcoming textile legislation should be something we all look forward to, as the EU promises to 'make fast fashion out of fashion'. Unfortunately, this move towards the circular economy could well be derailed by powerful players in the mass textile market.

Markets where wool textiles are sold and enjoyed, such as the United States, China, and Japan are watching this process play out. The EU aims to set the standards and other players might follow. Do we really believe that polyester fibre is the greenest option available and do we really all want to be wearing that for generations to come?

Q. IWTO represents several wool growing countries with different wool types and objectives. How does IWTO manage these sometimes-divergent interests?

IWTO has existed for 90+ years. The wool industry is stronger together than apart. We focus on gathering reliable, scientific evidence regarding the aspects that apply to all wool growers, traders, and manufacturers. We do everything in our power to find the best and most reliable solutions to consumer and industry questions, regardless of region of origin or micron of wool concerned.

Through The Woolmark Company and the Campaign for Wool, to name two of the most famous channels, we engage with brands and retailers globally, offering them the best possible innovation and support, empowering them to sell our beloved wool fibre with confidence.

IWTO offers a platform of wool information and through the dedication and commitment of our members, we facilitate research and development, wool textile education and wool advocacy. The wool fibre has been imitated many times before but will never be duplicated. We aim to ensure a sustainable future for wool, and I feel immensely privileged to be a part of it.

IWTO's annual Congress takes place in Adelaide, Australia in April 2024. Visit iwto.org to learn more about IWTO events and resources.

“
We aim to ensure a sustainable future for wool, and I feel immensely privileged to be a part of it
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WOOL IN THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Back in the 80s, the problem was called global warming. Later, the term switched to climate change. More recently, the focus is on what's called the circular economy: a set of solutions we hope will keep the world's annual temperature increase to below 2°C.

Today, in 2023, the dawn of the circular economy takes the form of market and legislative pressure to lower greenhouse gas emissions or otherwise reduce the impact of products. The latest trend is for brands to commit to becoming carbon neutral.

In order to maintain market access for wool, it's important that the wool industry takes strong steps to help brands meet their climate targets. This is a key part of IWTO's work today.

In the EU: textile ratings and legislation

One critical area of work for the



Dalena White, Secretary General of the International Wool Textile Organisation (IWTO)

wool industry is with textile ratings schemes. Different methods are being developed to aid brands in measuring their climate footprints, allowing them to benchmark and improve.

In this area is the method formerly known as Higg, Kering Group's EP&L, and the European Union's PEF.

The IWTO is an active member of the technical secretariat of the EU's Product Environmental Footprint.

Our representatives there tirelessly advocate for a level playing field for wool (and other natural fibres), as the systems are determined to compare natural, plant and animal-based fibres with those made from fossil fuels.

Legislatively, the EU is taking an active lead. The EU's Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles aims to reduce the impacts of fashion. The vision behind this strategy includes high-quality textiles, long-lived and recyclable clothing, widely available repair and re-use services.

Moreover the EU Strategy states that it will tackle the release of microplastics from synthetic textiles.

Keeping it clean: chemical residues in wool

Regulators in key consumer markets, including the EU, define the limits on chemicals in products such as organophosphate,

pyrethroid and other applications against parasites. Wool growers control lice, ticks and mites with various chemicals; and following a study commissioned by IWTO member AWI, we can confidently confirm that chemical residues in Australian and New Zealand raw wool is already low and getting lower.

Researchers analysed over 30 years of residues that could potentially remain in greasy wool if applied incorrectly. The results confirmed not only a low incidence of these residues, but also a decreasing trend whereby some residues have

now even reached an average of virtually zero.

Find a link to the Chemical in Wool Processing study on iwto.org/resources/wool-science.

Remember ...

Renewable, recyclable and biodegradable, wool fits perfectly into the new circular economy. Grown on a diet of sunlight, water and grass, wool delivers a supreme sustainability message. And because wool is made of protein, it does not contribute to microplastic pollution.

About IWTO

The IWTO's members represent all stages of the wool pipeline. Our 36 members can be found in 23 countries, growing and producing wool for clothing, interiors, handknitting yarns, industrial applications and more.

By facilitating research and development, wool textile education and knowledge sharing, IWTO ensures a sustainable future for wool.

Keep in touch with IWTO's activities on iwto.org.



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WoolWorks NZ

structural changes and new projects



Nigel Hales

After a three-year hiatus to my annual trip to visit wool industry companies in New Zealand it was good to finally touch the ground in Aotearoa (the land of the long white cloud), says Victor Chesky, Editor *wool2yarn* magazines. I met up with Nigel Hales, Tony Cunningham, and Rosstan Mazey in Napier to talk about the structural changes taking place at WoolWorks following the devastating flood in March, and their response to supply chain demand for sustainable practices.

Nigel Hales, Company President, says, 'Our mission is to elevate New Zealand wool as a natural, sustainable and ethical fibre of value to consumers who seek products with these attributes. Decarbonisation of our Timaru facility is a very important part of this process and we believe Timaru is only the second early-

stage textile processor to become decarbonised in the world. We have replaced a coal-fired boiler with a European 8 megawatt electric boiler, reducing 11,000 tonnes of CO² emissions per annum, or the equivalent of removing 3,000 cars off the roads.

'We believe that global moves to natural and sustainable fibres provide New Zealand strong wool a more meaningful place in a rapidly evolving and changing marketplace for interior textiles and emerging opportunities.

'Much work is going on in the background to ensure that this happens, and the structural changes that we are making at WoolWorks are all about realising these opportunities. Our new WoolWorks Ventures division will be headed by Rosstan Mazey and focus on new projects and

innovations that can deliver growth for the company, wool growers and the New Zealand wool sector'.

North Island Floods

WoolWorks' wool scouring operation in Napier was forced to shut down temporarily in mid-February due to extensive flooding. A significant amount of scoured and greasy wool at this site was contaminated by floodwaters, and subsequently disposed of. Fortunately, the backup site at Clive was unaffected and has been operating at full capacity since.

'More than 60% of our equipment in Napier had to be replaced and as some of it is unique in its design it needed to be bespoke built. We are very pleased that the new equipment is being progressively delivered into Napier. And we expect to be fully operational by the end of the year and with the same output capacity as before the floods, and with greater energy efficiency while maintaining the legendary quality', he said.

WoolWorks in New Zealand has the world's largest wool processing facility and processes over 82% of the New Zealand wool clip. 57% WoolWorks volume is processed at the North Island sites, Napier and the Clive site in Hastings, and 43% WoolWorks volume is processed at the South Island site in Timaru, Washdyke.

After scouring, every bale is tested for moisture content, residual

grease, colour and weight. All wool is fully traceable back to the farm. WoolWorks is an approved core testing supplier with both SGS New Zealand and the New Zealand Wool Testing Authority (NZWTA).

'Our scouring plants in both the North Island and the South Island are capable of washing every type of wool, from fine merino for apparel to strong wool for carpets', adds Tony Cunningham, who has assumed the role of CEO WoolWorks Operations. 'We provide the best computer controlled greasy blending systems that include multiple greasy wool openers, capable of distinguishing each style and length of wool.

'Individual blending orders are tailored for each customer and remain confidential. Our blending processes use the best technology, but accurate workable instruction from the wool exporter or topmaker is vital to ensure the best outcome', adds Tony.

Sustainability

'Our objective is to provide the most cost-effective delivery mechanism for all in the supply chain with end-to-end solutions for sustainability, from farm to scouring, and export. As well as decarbonisation this includes efficiencies in water utilisation, and working toward elimination of micro-plastics in the wool supply chain.'

Nigel explains, 'Our primary goal is to provide our customers with reliable, verifiable environmental accreditation, including environmental credits that they can integrate into their own production, and pass on

down through the pipeline. So decarbonisation of our Timaru plant is only the first step on this journey. We were one of the first textile companies in the world to achieve accreditation with internationally recognised EcoVadis.

'As a first step and across the entire business, WoolWorks has committed to a 46% reduction on CO² emissions by 2030. With our decarbonisation programme in Timaru, we will achieve this by 2024'.

The Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) is also an important aspect of the group's decarbonisation programme. SBTi has quickly become the global leader in providing an independent, credible, and transparent platform for organisations to pledge climate action commitments, in the form of CO² emissions reductions, and report publicly on their progress. It encourages members to align with other companies committed to taking positive climate action through SBTi public carbon reduction pledges.

We are already seeing pressure coming on global supply chains to align and commit to SBTi, largely being led by multi-national manufacturers and brands who are ultimately large users of New Zealand wool and related products.

Nigel Hales points out that 'not only is this the right thing to do, but this investment has also presented us with new commercial opportunities. For example, companies such as VF Corporation, the owner of Icebreaker, have made public

pledges to the SBTi of a 55% carbon reduction in their supply chain by 2030. This effectively means that companies wanting to supply to a SBTi-committed company will be dragged along by their pledges, and will also have to make changes to their discharge emissions to align with the targets of the user of the product.

'WoolWorks is positioned to meet the market needs now, and this is a significant advantage for New Zealand suppliers of woollen product that embrace a sustainable value chain. This achievement is an investment in the future that will lead to positive benefits for the New Zealand farmer as our wool exporters will be able to market the wool differently.

'International wool customers adapting their business to align with modern consumer eco-sourced products will view wool through this zero-carbon processing site as positive and preferred versus non-decarbonised wool or synthetic alternatives. WoolWorks believes that the best way to counter climate change is through reducing its carbon footprint, rather than forestry offsetting or greenwashing.

'We are committed to supporting new uses of New Zealand strong wool that will underpin price growth and sustainability for meat and wool growers. For New Zealand's wool industry to succeed, wool prices, at the farm gate, need to increase to make farming viable. To succeed, all parties in the wool industry, including Government, will need to work together to achieve this', he says.

STRONG DEMAND FOR SPECIALITY FIBRES



Luca Alvigini speaks to Victor Chesky in Biella

Late 2022 – early 2023 saw a greater demand for speciality fibres in both the knitting and weaving sectors. Order books were full for the 6 months going forward, a very positive sign, as noted by Luca Alvigini.

He emphasized that the knitting sector, particularly the hand-knitting sector has been performing strongly. In the past this was very much restricted to Norway and the USA but due to Covid, today it is extremely active all around the world.

The weaving sector also saw a strong recovery in 2022. Classic menswear was hit badly by Covid but we have seen this segment of textile production recover in 2023, and in particular new classic

fabrics woven today are in high demand. Consumers at retail now demand clothing that is made from natural fibres, are functional and sustainable, and speciality fibres such as Mohair, Cashmere, and Alpaca tick all the boxes.

Luca notes that ‘as far as speciality fibres are concerned, the clips are relatively small and these fibres are all grown in a limited number of countries around the world. So, even a small increase in demand will push prices higher’.

He further comments that, across industries and across continents many issues are having negative impacts, from high energy costs, the war in Ukraine, high interest rates, high inflation, and the fluctuation in the US dollar and in the Euro. The industry is also experiencing difficulties in finding workers with knowledge in textiles – this is a problem common to many industries today’.

While there was a slight dip in demand and price for speciality fibres during Covid, it was short-lived and demand recovered very quickly. ‘There are of course still many variables to consider when looking forward. But to make a prediction, I believe that at this stage all sectors of the speciality fibre industry look very positive’.

ALPACA

Most of the Alpaca clip comes from Peru. The season for shearing is from November to April and the

Alpaca is farmed by small family units rather than larger farming units or operations. In general there is around 6 million kg greasy of Alpaca annually. Around 4 million is used for processing into tops and yarn for export. The remainder is consumed on the domestic market in Peru.

However, Luca observes that there has been a recent change in the way Alpaca growers in Peru have sold their fibre. ‘They are becoming increasingly commercially organized. Previously the clip was sold straight after shearing, as the growers needed the immediate income. Today the growers are better organized and the selling of the clip is more centralized and controlled – with growers collectively withholding sale of their clip until they can achieve a better price.

‘In addition, the younger generation in Alpaca growing regions are now able to get more lucrative jobs beyond the Alpaca industry so finding workers is becoming a major issue in shearing and processing divisions of the industry’.

Alpaca is the least expensive of the speciality fibres with the largest clip and is used in a variety of applications, in particular for knitwear and it is not unusual for it to be blended with wool as it gives the finished product an excellent bulk. Alpaca can also be replaced with other fibres such as wool, a good back-up for processors and manufacturers that need to pivot

their products as market demand, price, and availability change and fluctuate’.

MOHAIR

Mohair is lustrous, resilient and has exceptional colour reflection. It is mostly grown in South Africa and Texas, USA. The majority of the Mohair clip is processed in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. The total clip is small relative to the wool and Alpaca clips – generally some 2 million kg per year is the norm.

Based on this limited clip and its excellent natural characteristics it is always in demand.

CASHMERE

As with many other commodities Cashmere product sales were impacted by the war in Ukraine. ‘But prices have recovered quickly. The Cashmere fibre clip includes approximately 4 million kg from Outer Mongolia and 4 million kg from all China, on a total 8 million dehaired basis’, says Luca. ‘Cashmere is a classic fibre and popular for the knitting market, and unlike Alpaca and Mohair it cannot be replaced by any other fibre, resulting in demand being steady and constant. The entire clip sells every year’.

Cashmere is often referred to as “soft gold” for its costly production process. A single Cashmere goat yields only 300/500g of fine hair – barely enough to knit one sweater. The luxurious feel of Cashmere makes it especially suited for the production of premium-quality garments, even in a world of fast fashion.



VICUÑA

Vicuña has always been considered a luxury fibre with limited stock available. The main grower countries are Peru, Argentina and Bolivia. The clip is taken only once every two years. Around 5/6 tons per year is available and as a consequence it is indeed the most expensive natural fibre available. As such, it is a very controlled market and much government documentation (CITES) by grower countries is required before any export is achieved.

It is interesting to note that as growers of Alpaca in Peru have become more entrepreneurial and more organized in their marketing efforts this also increases interest in Vicuña. As prices for both fibres

grow in Peru this encourages growers to increase their flocks. However, in Luca’s view this could create a problem. Prices could decrease as volumes increase in the availability of the clip. ‘At some point we may reach a level where the market cannot absorb this bigger clip’.

In addition Vicuña has been increasing in volume in Bolivia and this could create an additional 2 tons of fibre to the overall clip. It should also be noted that the Bolivian Vicuña is a different colour to Peruvian Vicuña and this could also lead to complications for buyers seeking specific colour shades. Luca points out that there are only a few specialized companies in the world that process Vicuña.

AWTA appoints new GM for Raw Wool



Brendon with one of several automated systems using robotics, developed in-house

Brendon van Rensburg, previously responsible for managing Australian Wool Testing Authority (AWTA) Western Australian operations, has been appointed General Manager - Raw Wool, a position previously held for many years by Ian Ashman. Ian has transferred to the new position of General Manager - Strategic Projects based in AWTA Head Office, and is well positioned to help ensure the transition of leadership to Brendon is smooth.

Brendon will remain based at the Bibra Lake laboratory in Western Australia but will regularly spend time in Melbourne. 'We have a very experienced and capable management team in

the Melbourne AWTA laboratory. Our clients will continue to receive the same good service they are accustomed to', he says.

Brendon van Rensburg started his career in South Africa as a laboratory controller at Wool Testing Bureau S.A. in 1995. He then joined New Zealand Wool Testing Authority in 2002 as Technology Development Manager, followed by time as a Sampling Operations Manager in New South Wales and Queensland in Australia between 2006 and 2009, before taking up the role as Senior Manager Western Australia from 2013, until his appointment as GM Raw Wool this year.

'Our sampling supervision provides buyers of Australian wool confidence in the integrity of the certificates on which they purchase that wool. AWTA is independent and impartial in providing the objectively measured result that the trade use at auction, which is also critical to maintaining confidence', says Brendon.

AWTA provides test results in a timely manner, based on the service selected by our customers. Clients can take advantage of our Express service whereby 95 % of test Certificates are available the morning after sampling and the remaining 5% available within 24 hours. The Fast service makes 95% of test Certificates available within 3 days after sampling and the remaining 5% available within a further 24 hours. Normal service provides customers all test Certificates within 5 days after sampling.

'Objective Measurement was introduced some 60 years ago, transforming the way the industry operates. The entire industry now relies on these measurements', Brendon comments. 'Objective Measurements enable the market to better determine the value of individual farm lots, and for the trade to determine the value', he comments.

'And of course Staple Measurements, and the use of the TEAM formulas, provide wool buyers and

processors with a means to predict processing performance, thereby reducing risk. In turn, the price signals that are consequently generated better inform wool growers of the characteristics of their wool that determine the price they achieve, while also allowing them to refine farm management systems to maximise their returns'.

The AWTA website provides information for users of Australian wool to assist them in understanding testing methods and technical aspects of Australian wool. The website includes information on testing raw wool, scoured and carbonised wool and speciality fibres such as Mohair, Alpaca and

Cashmere. It also provides information on sampling, testing and certifying the yield, fibre diameter, and vegetable matter content, staple length and staple strength of greasy wool.

'The fully automatic AWTA online Certificate Verification system allows holders of AWTA Test Certificates to check, via email, that the certification they have received is genuine. This is done simply by entering the certificate number and some security information, along with an email address, into an online form. The nominated e-mail address will then receive a PDF copy of the certificate within seconds', Brendon van Rensburg concludes.

The National Woolgrower Declaration (NWD) enables woolgrowers in Australia to promote their animal welfare practices (e.g. Mulesing Status) and the Dark and Medullated Fibre Risk (DMFR) of their wool to wool exporters, processors and retailers. This data is then published on AWTA Test Certificates and stored in its central database. This information is available for wool where the information was declared by the wool grower.

nsc Schlumberger announces new appointment

nsc Schlumberger, is a world leader in textile machinery for TowToTop, carding and combing, and defelting machines, has expanded to incorporate Cognetex into its group of companies that includes Sant Andrea Novara, and joint partnership with Tecnomeccanica. Etienne Leroi, group managing director, said, 'I am pleased to announce the appointment of Eric Ottmann as general director at nsc Schlumberger. Eric is a newcomer to the textile industry but has extensive experience in engineering and management roles.



Eric Ottmann

This appointment comes following the appointment of Eric Fessler, previously Asia sales manager,

to the position of commercial director. Patrick Strehle now heads the special projects team.



Tone Tobiasson

“The new wolf in sheep’s clothing is ESPR – Ecodesign for Sustainable Products – which was just approved by the EU and has put textiles up front as one of the first sectors to be scrutinized”

EU TURNS TOUGH ON TEXTILES: How does this affect wool?

By Tone Tobiasson

Last year the wool sector was up in arms. PEFCR (Product Environmental Footprint Category Rules) was the name of the game, and wool scored badly against silk, cotton and alpaca. This year it could potentially go from bad to worse for wool.

In many ways the textile sector can thank itself for the deluge of policy coming their way. Years of pretending to be on-track to solving the pressing problems of carbon - emissions, hazardous chemicals, social issues and

waste have proven to fall short of anything resembling housecleaning.

The problem is finding policy instruments that can achieve all that is needed. As policy in countries such as Australia, some states in the US, and France are taking small steps in the similar direction with ‘circular economy’ as the mantra. The EU is struggling to translate its very vocal ambition to put fast fashion out of fashion, and turn it into a functioning policy.

At a United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) event in Helsinki,

Finland at the end of May, Emmanuelle Maire, Head of Unit, Circular economy EU commission, listed the priorities for the textile strategy and gave a sketch of the time-line.

So what is the main take?

In a democratic system where over 600 country delegates must approve frameworks, directives and strategies, that then have to be adopted by the member-states as actual legislation, it makes for a time-consuming process that demands patience. Also, next year’s EU Parliamentary elections,

to be held in early June, could mean just about anything.

At the same time, 600 EU country delegates approved the Textile Strategy Plan (17 voted against and 16 abstained), a plan that is part of the Circular Economy Action Plan (CEAP), which is the main push under the EU’s New Green Deal.

Concurrently, the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive, will only effect EU companies larger than 250 employees and around \$43 million in revenue – or those with parent companies of more than 500 employees that have a global

revenue of at least \$161 million – responsible for infringements in their value-chain, was approved. Non-EU companies with revenue of \$43 million within the EU will also be included. Luckily for wool, many of the enterprises are SMEs below this limit.

There are many pieces of legislation on the horizon for those wanting to sell goods in the EU, including textiles, clothing and footwear. Exactly how many directives and legislative actions that need to be taken into account for those who want access to EU’s interior market (and thereby

the EEA states Norway, Iceland, Lichtenstein, Switzerland and also the UK) depends on who you talk to, but somewhere between 10 and 20 is in the ballpark. It all depends on how wide you cast the net, as some legislation more indirectly or even inadvertently effects textiles and interior materials, and thereby wool.

The main critique from industry, and organizations such as The Policy Hub (which includes the Sustainable Apparel Coalition, Textile Exchange, Global Fashion Agenda and Federation of European Industry Sporting

Goods), has been the lack of coordination - which would potentially mean countries, or even (in the US) state-specific laws would make for confusion.

Further, non-government organizations (NGOs) fear weak minimal and voluntary standards from the EU, with little or no effect on environmental and social issues. This has also been an issue within the EU, as social conditions in recycling facilities, in scouring, as well as other textile industries has been questionable.

“Focus should be on promoting the use of other low-impact materials rather than the implementation of unreasonable requirements”

The wording from the EU Commission and the textiles strategy is ambitious. It aims to create a coherent framework for the green transition of the ecosystem and present a vision for the transition, “whereby by 2030, textile products placed on the EU market are long-lived and recyclable, to a great extent made of recycled fibers, free of hazardous substances and produced in respect of social rights and the environment”.

As mentioned, last year the discussions centered around the lack of a level playing field for fibers in the Product Environmental Footprint Category Rules (PEFCR), which, with the 16 impact categories, currently favors synthetics over natural fibers.

When the proposal for the Green Claims Directive was opened for public consultation, it became clear that criticism from AWI, IWTO, Make the Label Count, and others in relation to a lack of factoring in of microplastics, had resonated with the EU Commission.

However, the big new wolf puffing at the cottage door, is Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR). In a lengthy background paper for the public hearing, EU’s Joint Research Centre had clearly concluded that

textiles and footwear should be the priority area for ecodesign regulation, based partly on faulty and outdated data, and on the assumption that ecodesign is an effective lever for large environmental gains.

But how does this actually help or is it a detrimental for wool? Well, as the HIGG Index MSI seems to lurk in the background, we can assume trouble in paradise...

The proposal for a Regulation on Ecodesign for Sustainable Products, including the introduction of a Digital Product Passport (DPP), aims to establish a framework for setting ecodesign requirements for specific product categories in order to improve their “circularity, energy performance and other

environmental sustainability aspects”. This framework is meant to enable the introduction of product performance and information requirements for almost all categories of physical goods placed on the EU market.

Up until now these requirements have related only to energy efficiency, and the plan is to include more parameters, which may or may not align with PEFCR. The European Fashion Council recently came forward, saying that the durability requirements also pose a challenge for luxury labels whose clothes are often not designed to withstand the rigorous wash tests typically used to measure how long clothes might last. New metrics that take into account concerns such as quality, reusability and reparability are needed to measure durability in a more “holistic way,” according to the European Fashion Alliance.

The European Commission will look into design requirements for specific products in the foreseen implementation of the ESPR (through the adoption of delegated acts). Textiles is one of the priority areas, however, the exact scope of products is still to be determined after consultation with relevant stakeholders and conducting the necessary impact assessments. In parallel to this, work is ongoing on the DPP outlining its technical specifications, as a key implementing tool of the proposed ESPR. The DPP seeks to provide information about products’ environmental sustainability. “It will help consumers and businesses make informed choices when purchasing products, facilitate

repairs and recycling and improve transparency about products’ life cycle impacts on the environment.”

The information to be included in the proposed DPP will be identified when developing the ESPR delegated acts at product group level. Slightly vaguer, at this point in time, the Commission writes: “The DPP may contain information related to the circularity and sustainability characteristics of products, including information necessary to improve track and tracing, as well as information related to the technical performance of the product.”

The question still remains, whether the criteria, the data, and all that underpins it, is based on sources that actually compare natural and synthetic fibers within a fair ecosystem. So far, the vote is out. Ironically, the ESPR measures impact based on weight and we all know how much lighter synthetics are than natural fibers.

Furthermore, using the ecodesign criteria can also become the basis for eco-modulation of fees for Extended Producer Responsibility, which is another reason for being very alert to how these unfold. Included in the criteria is also mandating recycled content, and on this the EFA has qualms: “Mandatory minimums for recycled content would restrict creative freedom and result in lower quality products. The focus should be on promoting the use of other low-impact materials rather than the implementation of unreasonable requirements”. How one defines “low-impact materials” is still up for grabs.

Related to this, the European Commission is also planning to review the Textile Labelling Regulation (TLR). At present only fiber content and non-textile parts of animal origin are regulated at EU level as harmonized (and compulsory) elements on the label. As part of the review of the TLR, and subject to public consultation, followed by an impact assessment, as well as harmonized rules on voluntary or mandatory disclosure of several other types of information, including DPP. This information could include sustainability and circularity parameters of products.

“The initiative shall ensure full consistency and complementarity

“The question still remains, whether the criteria, the data, and all that underpins it, is based on sources that actually compare natural and synthetic fibers within a fair ecosystem”

of labelling information with the foreseen information in the DPP to be introduced under the proposed Ecodesign Regulation and should make use of the DPP infrastructure, protocols and other technical specifications to the extent possible.” Not to mention that EU’s Ecolabel also stands to have its criteria revised, and chances are high they will, as the Nordic Swan did, include microplastics in their evaluation. Also, for wool, be aware that the Nordic Swan does not allow for mulesed wool.

“As announced in the EU Textiles Strategy, the European

Commission will review the EU Ecolabel criteria for textiles and footwear to support its uptake among producers and to offer consumers an easily recognizable and reliable way to choose eco-friendly products.” There has been talk that the EU would prefer a system with more global data (as used in LCA assessments) than product-specific evaluations (EU Ecolabel and Nordic Swan), but under the above statement, this seems to have been averted.

The Empowering Consumers Directive (ECD) proposal aims to ensure that consumers get adequate information on products’ “durability and reparability before purchasing a product”. As

mentioned, the EU focuses an awful lot on durability, reparability and recyclability, something that clearly can potentially hurt natural fibers, especially if the parameter is related to physical durability, as the EFA also pointed out. To complement the ECD, the Green Claims Directive proposal will play a key role in setting more specific rules on the substantiation, verification and communication of voluntary environmental claims and environmental labelling schemes on the EU market.

The discussion last year, was whether green claims had to be

based on PEFCR, but if one reads the background document that was made available for the public hearing, it states several things that make it clear that PEFCR are not fit for purpose.

They been heavily criticized, by The Policy Hub and the Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC), who have argued all along that the methodology needs to be aligned, which would mean that synthetics would come out as the most environmentally friendly, based on the data that the SAC has systematically fed into the PEFCR process for textile and footwear.

“Consumer protection authorities in some countries are starting to question product specific environmental claims if no primary data has been used in the substantiation”

It is therefore a relief to read: “The proposal does not prescribe a single method and does not require conducting a full life-cycle analysis for each type of a claim. The assessment used to substantiate explicit environmental claims need to consider the life-cycle of the product or of the overall activities of the trader in order to identify the relevant impacts which are subject to the claims, and to enable the trader to avoid omissions of any relevant aspects. This is also necessary to check if the benefits claimed result in a transfer of impacts to other stages of the life cycle or to significant increase of other environmental impacts.”

Also in case the Product Environmental Footprint method does not yet cover an impact category, which is relevant for a product group, the adoption of PEFCR may take place only once these new relevant environmental impact categories have been added. As regards textiles, the PEFCR should for example reflect the microplastics release, before the adoption of PEFCR could be considered.

It is also clear that both the Norwegian and Dutch Consumer Protection authorities have been heard when the draft was written: “Consumer protection

authorities in some countries are starting to question product specific environmental claims if no primary data has been used in the substantiation.”

Regarding waste, the Waste Framework Directive (WFD) sets the basic concepts and definitions related to waste management, including definitions of waste recycling and recovery, and as required by it, Member States will need to set up separate collection for textile waste as of January 2025. The European Commission is currently carrying out preparatory work for a targeted revision of the Waste Framework Directive. As part of this, a range

of measures to harmonize the definitions, collection and sorting practices to reduce waste generation and create the conditions for economies of scale needed to develop the necessary sorting and recycling capacities and the investment security for the economic operators. The creation of the extended producer responsibility (and fees) for textiles is being considered as a means of financing this.

The compulsory separate collection of post-consumer textile waste in Member States as of January 1st 2025 under the WFD, means that a physical infrastructure capable of collecting and sorting of 4.2–5.5 million tons of textiles waste a year is needed. For wool, there are already European facilities set up for this, but as we all know wool is a minor part of the fiber content in today’s collected textiles.

The proposal for a new Waste Shipments Regulation (WSR) aims at easing shipments of waste for reuse and recycling in the EU, to support the transition to a circular economy; ensuring that waste exported from the EU is managed in an environmentally sound manner in the destination countries; and stepping up enforcement to counteract illegal shipments of waste. This would provide opportunities for further waste treatment capacities in the EU and source of recycled feedstock in the EU. What is not talked about, is the problem surrounding waste colonialism and the call from the Global South to stop the export of textiles to already saturated markets. Wool is

an issue here, as the Global South do not wish for thick and heavy wool and what they assume are winter-related textiles. That burkas originally were wool and not, as now, synthetics, seems to have fallen by the wayside.

One important – and contentious – element in ESPR already embraced by the EU is the ban on the destruction of unsold and returned goods. How this will play out in relation to the EU Toolbox against counterfeiting, the WSR and minimal capacity for fiber-to-fiber recycling, will be interesting to follow. Who will be mandated to wear the clothes no-one actually wants, is being questioned in social media debates. According to the EFA the proposed ban on the destruction of unsold products touches a nerve as high-end labels have historically preferred to burn unsold and damaged items rather than expose their exclusive image to the risks that come with heavy discounts, grey market sales and counterfeiters. “Any ban should only apply to products that are fit for sale and include carve outs for counterfeit goods, prototypes and samples,” the EFA said.

The European Commission has launched the EU Pact for Skills initiative, a central element of the European Skills Agenda. Under this EU initiative, the European Commission, together with EURATEX, CEC and COTANCE supported the establishment of a large-scale skills partnership for the textile ecosystem. Launched in December 2021, the EU Pact for Skills for the textiles ecosystem aims to promote the up/re-skilling and the transfer of green and

digital skills. EU has large-scaled plans for more local production and “uptake of new bio-based and recycled and renewable fibres”. However, when one brings up the lack of utilization of local EU wool with the same policy-makers, they go very silent. And especially if one ties this to EU’s Farm to Fork initiative and even more when discussing the completely new EU Mission: A Soil Deal for Europe with a €126 million budget. An increased focus on biodiversity

“Who will be mandated to wear the clothes no-one actually wants, is being questioned in social media debates”

is also something, where wool yet has to be taken seriously as a potential contributor to EU’s ambition to become “nature-positive”.

The Nature Restoration Law, which has been well received by environmental organizations with legally binding targets, was adopted by the EU in July, after facing many rounds and problems in being passed. The law had triggered a significant backlash from farmers, fishers and foresters, who saw their livelihoods and their traditional practices threatened. How this will affect sheep farmers across Europe is not obvious, but probably more industrialized farming is what will be targeted.

Another issue that crops up, is the New European Bauhaus (which aims to combine sustainability with aesthetics and inclusion),

especially related to anything to do with design and ecological issues; and specifically related to Indigenous culture and their hunting and herding practices. If EU bureaucrats go silent when one points to their lack of seeing agriculture as fiber production, they go tomato red if one points out that they are ignoring Indigenous rights with their Global North colonialist approach.

Product safety and chemicals are another large area where the EU

is putting forward regulations. Consumer products sold in the EU must comply with the General Product Safety Directive (GPSD). Additionally, there are European standards that apply to specific products, such as children’s clothing.

REACH is another horizontal EU legislation ensuring a high level of protection of human health and the environment from chemicals. As such, it covers chemicals relevant for the textile ecosystem. Via a number of restrictions, REACH is addressing hazardous substances in textiles, footwear and leather products. Several chemicals used in apparel production are restricted or subject to authorization under REACH. This applies to chemicals found in fabric dyes and finishing products. Also, several countries

have introduced a suggested ban on PFAS (which will mainly affect synthetics) in the EU.

A skin sensitizer proposal from Sweden and France put forward to the European Chemical Agency in 2019 is causing headaches for textile brands, but also for the future of textile recycling. The issue is that it assumed that all disperse dyes behave in the same way, and cause allergies in final products. As disperse dyes are used on synthetic fibers, not natural fibers, this will necessarily negatively impact only the former. Unless, of course, one is able to tie any

rather than tweaking products for example, through ESPR. One of the few measures that has a set-up to actually reach the aim of drastically slowing down the overproduction, is EPR, if it makes the polluter pay based on how much waste and pollution is created.

Currently, only France has implemented EPR, while Sweden and the Netherlands have legislation underway. These three countries seem to be keeping the EPR fees low. How to set a fair fee modulation is being widely debated, and interestingly enough a suggestion from a Norwegian

“*This methodology would give robust data that should help wool and other natural fibers considerably*”

finishing processes – for example, superwash – to allergic reactions. Concerns from the textile recycling sector are mainly that the new proposal will make it prohibitive to recycle at all, as testing costs, both of the materials to be recycled and the finished recycled yarns, will be too high. This may also put an effective end to EU’s ambition of taking a lead on circularity.

Much of the criticism that has been leveled against the deluge of legislation and policy related to textiles and footwear, is that in order for the EU to actually reach the goal of making fast fashion out of fashion, one needs policy measures that actually reduces the overproduction that the fast fashion system has brought about (based on cheap fossil fuel fibers),

research project, Wasted Textiles, named Targeted Producer Responsibility, which analyses the actual waste fractions to make this the basis of fee modulation, has been discussed in several forums in the EU.

This methodology would give robust data that should help wool and other natural fibers considerably, as even though synthetics are much more durable at fiber level, they are also the main feedstock for the fast fashion system and are more likely to turn up faster in waste streams. For PEFCR this could also help natural fibers come across as more sustainable, as “functional unit” (how long items stay in use) is the very linchpin of Lifecycle Assessments, hitherto largely ignored by the technical experts

working on LCAs for textiles and footwear.

In this regard, France also wants to be different and is in a hurry, as the Green Claims Directive will not allow for new “national or regional publicly owned (labeling) schemes” after it comes into effect, unless they have been green-lighted by the EU and only if “they demonstrate added value in terms of their environmental ambition, their coverage of environmental impacts and their ability to support the green transition of SMEs as compared to the existing Union, national or regional schemes”.

When it comes to environmental impact categories, France has chosen water consumption, physical durability, production conditions, use of pesticides and chemicals, release of microplastics, recovery of recycled materials, value of reconditioned textiles and the very cryptic ‘impact of fast fashion’ as their 8 criteria.

Being in a hurry to be “different” before the EU launches their Product Environmental Footprint label, it is interesting to note that land use and Greenhouse gas emissions, two parameters that severely hurt wool and that play a significant role in PEF, are not on the French menu.

So, if alignment is at the forefront, it is perhaps the first one out of the starting gate that wins? By a sheep’s head?

This link tracks several of the legislation proposals and updates and other relevant information: <https://www.heyfashion.org/legislation-tracker>



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Preparing for the Sustainability Demands of Tomorrow

In an era where sustainability has become a vital concern across industries, Südwolle Group stands out as leader in combining quality, performance, and the long-lasting feeling that wool provides within sustainability commitments. The company ensures that their products meet the highest sustainability standards by fulfilling all animal welfare requirements, addressing chemical and environmental concerns, and focusing on social aspects.

As a yarn spinner, Südwolle Group plays a crucial role in the textile supply chain, acting as a moderator and connector between stakeholders. While its product may be defined as "only a yarn cone" the company connects the raw material from farms to the end-user including brands and their garments. This process involves understanding the specific requirements and performance needs of the final garments, including factors such as blend, hand feel, tenacity, and softness. Südwolle Group translates these requirements into suitable yarn constructions, selecting the right raw materials, treatments, and technologies.

Südwolle Group has pioneered efforts to drive positive change throughout the production chain and the industry as a whole. However, as the industry and end consumers increasingly demand sustainability, the company faces challenges in this rapidly changing landscape. There are an increasing number of sustainability factors to consider, and Südwolle Group must ensure transparency in the textile supply chain while maintaining the trust of customers.

Balancing raw material supply, certified standards and data transparency, all without compromising on quality, performance, or pricing for end consumers, adds complexity to their operations.

The company addresses these challenges and caters to diverse customer demands by developing hundreds of new yarns each year. With an eye to the future it focuses on several key areas.

Transparency and carbon footprint

Südwolle Group has been implementing specific supply chain approaches with selected customers since the 1990s. The company offers ZQ Merino, NATIVA™, Authentico® certified products, and standards including the Responsible Wool/Mohair Standard (RWS/RMS), GOTS, IVN Best and GRS. Working closely with different partners Südwolle Group also aims to establish a common format for data transparency and consistency throughout all production steps. Additionally, Südwolle Group has been monitoring its carbon footprint since 2020, partnering with suppliers and customers to track the company's environmental impact.

Wool as a great natural fiber

Despite ongoing discussions within the textile industry regarding the measurement of environmental effects, Südwolle Group firmly believes in the qualities of wool as a natural fibre. It collaborates with partners to develop fair guidelines that consider wool's unique performance attributes. When combining wool with other fibres to meet specific customer requests, Südwolle Group focuses on natural and man-made fibres that are biodegradable, reused, and recycled, like RENU™, COOLMAX® EcoMade, and SEAQUAL™ polyester.

Slow fashion and circularity

Südwolle Group strives to create quality garments with an improved environmental impact. It develops new technologies including Omega Twist (OTW®),

a patented worsted yarn spinning technology that enhances yarn parameters, resulting in a cleaner surface, maximized durability and abrasion resistance for an extended lifecycle of the wool garment. Additionally, it initiates projects with specific customers fostering circularity and minimizing waste. One example is "Karma", a project that aims to reuse production leftovers and even final garments by spinning them into new woolen yarn.

Digitization as key driver and challenge

Südwolle Group recognizes the importance of digitization to provide transparency along the supply chain. It has implemented various digital solutions to enhance processes and customer experience,

including an eCommerce platform for stock-supported products and smaller ordering quantities. Moreover, it is investing in virtual solutions for sampling to improve the digital experience of stitches and designs as well as in digital colour systems to facilitate lab testing and reduce lead times.

Südwolle Group embraces the ever-changing nature of its business and views the sustainable future as a great opportunity for its wool-based yarns, when all parties work together. It actively shares best practices and connects with industry stakeholders through its "Innovation Hub" platform.

Get connected and visit the Innovation Hub at www.suedwebs.com.



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Our mission is to inspire designers and producers in a B2B environment and present new ideas, new technologies, collaboration possibilities and products.

Join the world of the Südwolls Innovation Hub and grow into a...

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Explore the creation of our innovative products and understand how to use our yarns and technologies before crafting independently.

...Supply Chain Developer
Leverage our industry experience and our textile engineers' expertise to navigate your business's initial stages, from sourcing raw materials to networking within the industry.

...Think Tank
Stay informed with our knowledge centre's wealth of articles and information, learning from our experiences to know what works and what to avoid in your venture.

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südwollgroup

PROCESSING AUXILIARIES FOR THE ENTIRE WOOL TEXTILE INDUSTRY CHAIN



Wool&cashmere washing

Eco-wool Detergent



Wool carding

Carding Oil / Antistatic agent



Chemical treatment

Penetrating Agent / Resin / Softener



Wool dyeing

Detergent / Penetrating Agent / Levelling Agent / Softener



Wool spinning

Carding Oil / Antistatic agent



Wool weaving

Soaping agent / Degreaser / Smoothing agent / Softener



Post finishing

Bio-detergent / Softener / Smoothing agent



Clothing washing&care

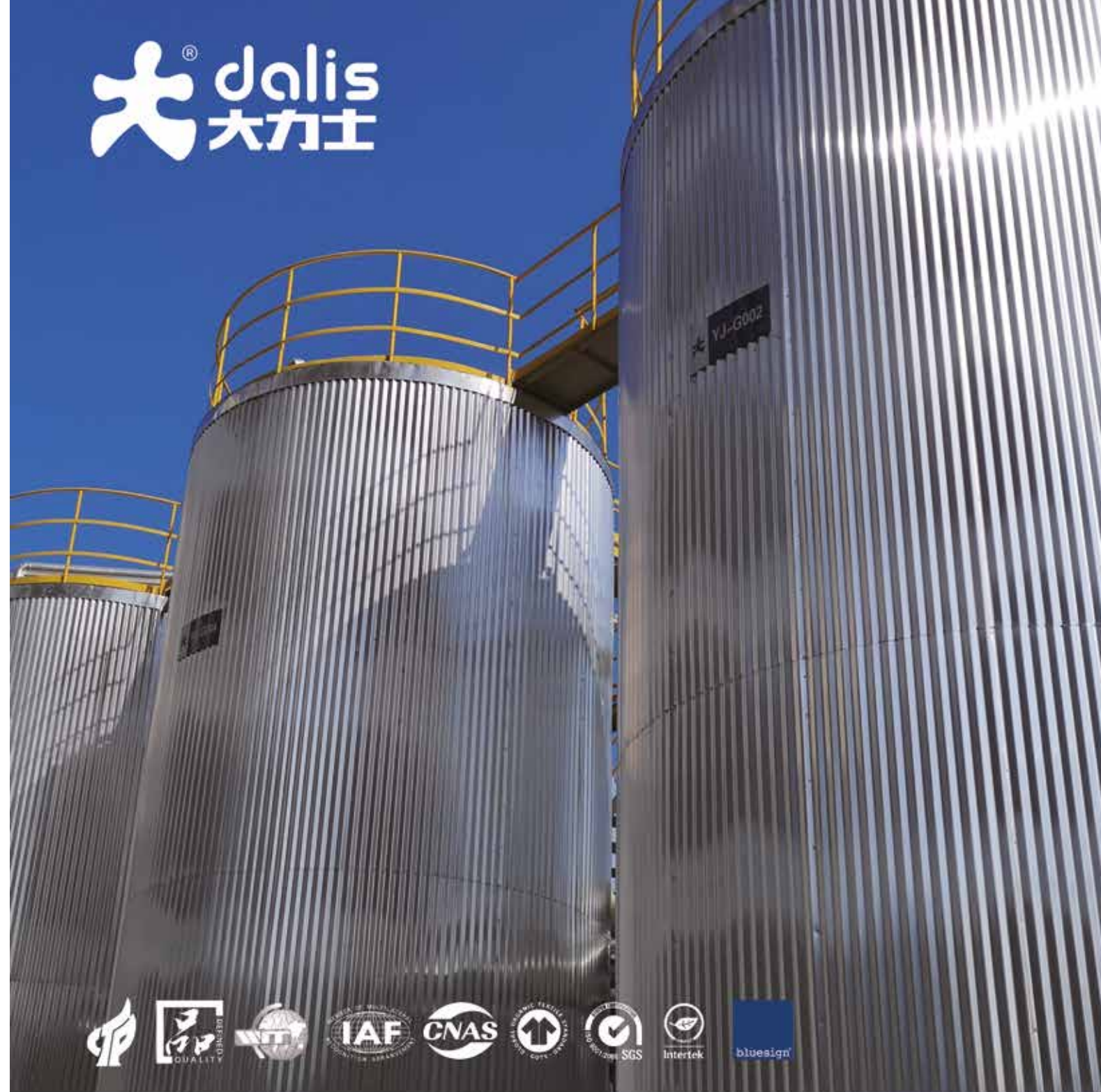
Enzyme Cashmere Laundry Detergent
Enzyme Clothing Care Liquid

Zhejiang Yongjin Biotechnology Co., Ltd. is a national high-tech enterprise specializing in wool textile auxiliaries for more than 20 years. The main products are detergent, carding oil, anti-static agent, softener, etc, which are applied in the whole process of washing, carding and top making, chemical treatment, dyeing, spinning, weaving, post finishing, garment washing, etc. The company has two automation production bases and a provincial research and development center, more than 20 patents, and lead the drafting of multiple industry standards; The company has passed the quality, environment, occupational health and safety management system certification, got Zhejiang Made "Defined Quality" and was identified as Zhejiang special fine special new enterprise. The company takes the concept of green environmental protection, and its products have passed the international environmental protection certification such as EU REACH, GOTS and INTERTEK, and the blue-sign certification has been launched in 2022. The company has been recognized by the majority of customers with high and stable quality. Based on domestic market, our products are exported to more than 10 countries. Zhejiang Yongjin Biotechnology Co., Ltd. will continue to work hard and innovate, and strive to become the leader of the whole industry chain of special auxiliaries for wool from sheep to humans!

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PROFESSIONAL SUPPLIER OF WOOL TEXTILE AUXILIARIES



ZHEJIANG YONGJIN BIOTECHNOLOGY CO.,LTD

WOOL PLAYS ITS PART IN THE SUSTAINABILITY STORY

IWTODTM59 for environmental compliance schemes



Wool is part of the sustainability story and it must be seen to pay more than lip service to environmental compliance. In an increasingly ecologically aware world, mere claims of environmental compliance are not enough.

The era of greenwashing is just about over. EU and UK governments are introducing tough new environmental legislation to govern the way in which companies justify their 'green' claims. To avoid hefty penalties textile companies, including major brands, will need to substantiate their green claims.

The International Wool Textile Organisation (IWTO) is playing its part to ensure that wool and other natural fibres are treated fairly when measuring its impact on the environment. It works to advocate for a level playing field, particularly around the EU's Product Environmental Footprint (PEF).

'Demonstrating environmental credentials in solar energy and wind turbine use, water treatment and effluent disposal, and adherence to labour laws are laudable. But if the wool used in manufacturing contains restricted chemicals introduced on-farm or at processing or treatment, all of these efforts will be undermined', says David Alexander of New

Zealand Wool Testing Authority (NZWTA). 'We can help customers meet their environmental compliance and prove their supply chain authenticity with IWTODTM59.

International markets may require a test to understand if any residual level of treatment chemicals in greasy wool, semi processed wool and wool grease exist. Specific requests for heavy metals and some additional compounds are also available to customers. NZWTA offer a service quantifying the presence or absence (below detectable levels) of the chemicals listed in the IWTO-59 draft test method.

'This is the best way to substantiate any claims around the wool used, as natural without banned chemicals. This test maximises the value of wool through a scientific approach to environmental compliance schemes. We conduct these tests in conjunction with Australian Wool Testing Authority (AWTA) and wool samples can be sent to us from anywhere in the world.'

'We can also include the New Zealand Farm Assurance Program (NZFAP) certification number to all certified wool lots. This certification provides a single multi-sector assurance standard to drive consistency in grower standards and provide a platform for the standardisation of New Zealand wool. NZFAP certification adds a further level of assurance to consumers that the New Zealand wool they buy is authentic and ethically produced', further comments David Alexander.

At IWTO Congress in Kyoto in May a number of topmakers expressed their concern that spinners and weavers are now asking for signed statutory declarations stating that no restricted chemicals had been used in their processes and in all the fibre they use. The IWTODTM59 test could ease some of these concerns currently being expressed by companies along the supply chain.



DYE COMPANIES RESPOND TO ENVIRONMENTAL REALITIES

By Debora Ferrero

The inescapable demand for sustainability in clothing and textiles is forcing dyeing and finishing companies to find and offer effective and high-performance responses to environmental manufacturing. The processes of dyeing and finishing fibres, yarns and fabrics have always been among the most polluting in the entire textile production process. In Europe, stringent environmental laws made great strides, from a position of little environmental awareness over the last century, where residual water from these processes was quietly discharged into streams and rivers without first undergoing any decontamination treatment.

In addition, water treatment is still not enough. Today textile manufacturers are required to reduce water usage and re-examine the use of dyes that are damaging to the environment. New strategies include the increasing use of natural dyes and new colour fixing systems with a drastic reduction in water usage.

In this space the Biella wool textile district, is moving decisively in the right direction. Local companies are being accredited with international certifications in environmental sustainability including reuse of water, installation of photovoltaic systems, adoption of microplastic filtering systems, and more. Some

companies have also joined the Zero Discharge of Hazardous Chemicals (ZDHC) programme. Biella based companies awarded by ZDHC at the Filo exhibition held in Milan, including Iride and Tintoria Finissaggio 2000 Tintoria Mancini for completing the first level of the ZDHC programme.



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The Iride dyehouse in Biella was recognised by ZDHC for its dyes for fabrics in pure wool, noble fibres such as cashmere and others, as well as blends with cotton, linen, silk, viscose, nylon, polyester and others. It also has GOTS certification. Iride director Adolfo Marchetti says, “the number of customers choosing natural dyes has steadily increased. This testifies to the growing interest in environmental sustainability”.

Tintoria di Quaregna, also based in Biella, uses around 200 herbs to achieve dye colours as required. “Sixty per cent of the herbs used by the company comes from Italy and Europe,” explains Anna Mello Rella of this company, “while the rest come from America, Africa or the Orient. We have a colour chart with 60 basic colours for wool and cashmere. Today we also produce our own yarns. We have developed our own yarn collection with Woolmark recognition”.

The Tintoria di Quaregna also participated in the FITNAT research project that was financed by the European Union and involved Maglificio Po - Oscalito, Italfil and the Associazione Tessile e Salute (Textile & Health Association). The research aimed to find out whether the natural dyes used in yarns for underwear still retain the basic active ingredients of the molecules used to dye the fibres (polyphenols) after the production process, as these have positive effects on the body.

“The plants selected for resistance, colour fastness, and reproducibility, as well as for market availability, were walnut hulls, and vine and blueberry cuttings”, explains Barbara Cravello, scientific advisor at Tessile & Salute. The dye ‘recipe’ was applied to merino wool fibres. Toxicological tests proved negative and, in addition, the polyphenols contained in the blueberry proved to give the garment a 40% free

radical inhibiting power, a striking result. It means that wearing a garment dyed this way reduces physical ageing’.

Assia Filati, a spinoff of the Dyeberg farm, together with its parent company specialising in the dyeing and winding of yarns for third parties, launched a collection of top-of-the-range yarns in wool, cotton, silk, and linen that are continuously dyed using a technology with a very low environmental impact. It uses only 1 litre of water per kilogram of yarn. This is a great result considering that in the past water used 6 times more water for the same quantity of fibre.

“In collaboration with the start-up Fili Pari we have just patented a natural cold dyeing system that uses pigments of mineral origin, including marble powder obtained from the waste from the processing of these precious stones”, says Mattia Crippa of Dyeberg. The result is a melange effect directly onto the yarn. “The colours have a very high fastness and rise very quickly on the fibre, requiring very little water. Currently we only offer six colours, but we are already working on expanding this number”.

During 2023 Pitti Uomo, Bemberg™ by Asahi Kasei presented a Pure Denim fabrics range, “Blue di Cupro” (made of 100% Bemberg™ or in blend with cotton or wool) dyed with “Smart Indigo”. The process uses only indigo pigment, caustic soda, water, and electricity passing through the dye containers, and through an electrochemical process that directly creates the



Mello Rella of Tintoria di Quaregna with the company's natural dyes

dye bath. The concentration of this powder is 30%, while that of traditional dyes is up to 8%, carbon dioxide emissions are reduced by 90% compared to the traditional dyeing process, and the water required can be reused several times.

“Eco Sonic” ultrasound finishing technology has also significantly reduced water use, increasing aesthetic features and controlling discolouration.

One of the finalists for ITMA Sustainable Innovation Award was Limonta, the vertically-integrated textile group in Costa Masnaga, Italy. Its new dying system, Bio-FREED was developed with New

Jersey-based protein biochemicals company Modern Meadow and TubeTex using its Bio-Alloy™ technology. Bio-FREED eliminates a number of the process steps in traditional dyeing. It is a foam and protein-based dyeing and coating process that reduces water by 90% and energy consumption by 67%, in addition to achieving an 80% reduction in the dyes used through precision delivery.

“Bio-FREED textiles can be pre-dyed or post-dyed after garment construction, enabling unique design efficiencies and additional environmental and supply chain benefits,” explains Jeff Dixon, senior sales director at Navis TubeTex.



Dye companies awarded – Filo Feb 2023. Left to right: Elisa Gavazza (Quality Management and Assurance Director, The ZDHC Foundation), Adolfo Marchetti (director, Tintoria Iride); Dino Masso (Tintoria Finissaggio 2000), Maurizio and Mario Mancini (Tintoria Mancini)

ALPACA & CASHMERE FIBRE TESTING

Products made using noble fibres such as Alpaca and Cashmere are growing in popularity with consumers around the world. These fibres have traditionally been used in the fashion industry, but are now being recognised by other sectors, including car manufacturers, as a superior fibre for interior upholstery.

The increased demand for these special fibres and the increasing commercialization by growers makes it imperative that fibre is tested according to IWTO international testing rules.

Spinners and weavers need to know how the fibre will perform during their processing cycle, and growers and exporters will receive higher prices when the fibre is tested by an IWTO-accredited testing house. New Zealand Wool Testing Authority (NZWTA) tests Alpaca fleece around the world and has Spanish speaking personnel on the ground in South America.

NZWTA plays a critical role in animal selection and flock management for Alpaca growers. It can provide information for on-farm decision making for Alpaca

growers globally. Alpaca fibre testing generally consists of micron testing, however, NZWTA can provide other tests such as yield, length, and strength.

'Cashmere growers may also benefit from our fleece test services as growers develop their flocks and look for specialized testing and cashmere specific yield calculation comments David Alexander Customer Service Manager.

Using a unique identifier for each animal, NZWTA can provide flock insights from birth to mature animal, allowing greater understanding of each animal's genetic information, monitoring change over multiple years.

This information in-turn helps breeders and commercial farmers to improve their selective breeding programs and fibre quality.

'Growers in New Zealand have been using NZWTA fleece services as part of an overall strategy to unlock genetic gains and accelerate flock transitions for several years now, enabling growers to target certain contract specifications much quicker than older methods', says David Alexander.

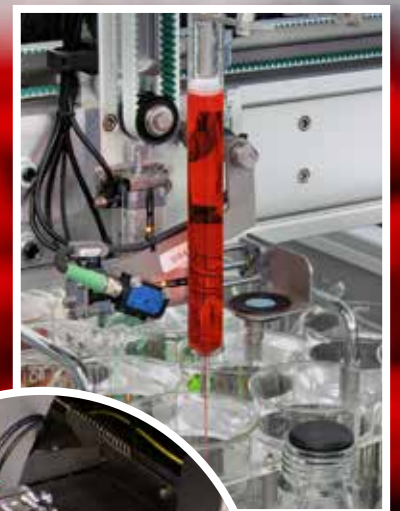


Alpaca - used in a variety of applications and can be blended with wool providing excellent bulk



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Filippo Lanaro

LATEST PRECISION & AUTOMATION FOR TEXTILE DYEING

Lawer supplies automated and semi-automated systems for the preparation of dyestuffs and chemical products, from laboratory processing, to finishing process. The company has been a major supplier of dosing and dispensing equipment for powder and liquid dyes for leading textile manufacturers around the world.

'Textile dyeing processes have always been seen as a big polluter. But it does not need to be so any longer. Environmental laws are tightening for textile processors,

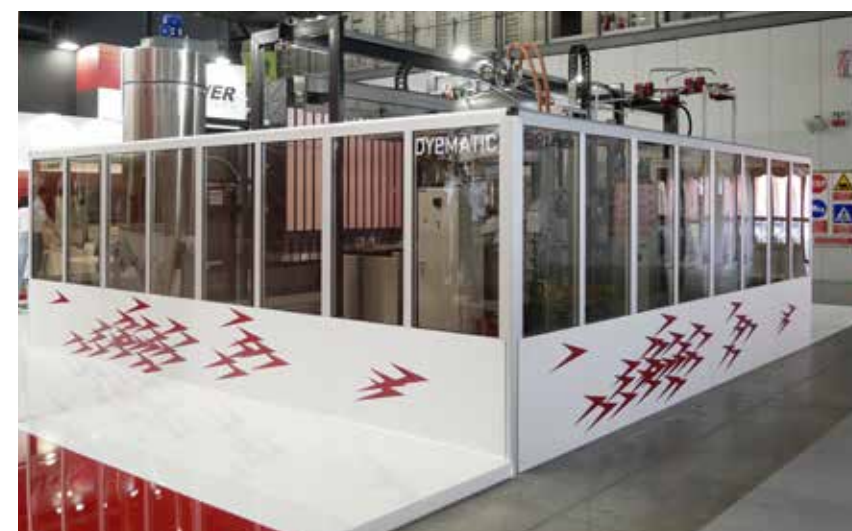
and companies are implementing new and innovative ways to comply. Textile manufacturers that do not comply will simply be left behind', says Filippo Lanaro LAWER CEO, from the company head office in Italy. 'The latest innovations in our automated systems balance efficiency with sustainability. We have built our reputation on the highest levels of precision and automation'.

Lawer's automated dyeing systems can help textile manufacturers to comply with environmental laws', says Massimo Graziano, company sales manager. He adds that

'companies that do not embrace new technology will simply be left behind'.

'Our dyeing systems also offer speed, safety, and high quality output and ITMA Milan was a great opportunity for us to exhibit some of our latest dosing and dispensing systems Massimo continues.

Lawer has been servicing textile companies around the world for over 50 years and was one of the first companies in Italy to join "Sustainable Technologies, a project promoted by ACIMIT (Association of Italian Machinery



The fully automatic DYEMATIC system uses robotic bucket handling, automatic dispensing, rinsing, and an isolated working area for environmental and safety conditions. It can service a large number of dyeing machines with maximum efficiency, and eliminate pollution risks through special valves and joints

Manufacturers). The associated companies supply equipment and technologies that target the reduction of power, water and chemical materials for a more responsible production process and to more environmentally friendly processes.

'Our engagement does not stop with "Sustainable Technologies. Energy and environmental performances are guaranteed by a 'green plate' fitted to our systems, enabling constant monitoring of energy consumption'.

'Our automatic and semi-automatic systems use a small quantity of water, and even this water is re-used to clean the pipes. The single-pipe line integrated into our automatic systems guarantees that it is free from contamination, flexible, and water consumption is reduced', comments Filippo Lanaro.

'Of course there are a number of further advantages that our automated systems provide the manufacturer', he says. 'There is consistent quality from one batch

to the next, with no variation in colour from one year to the next'.

'Our fully automated systems also provide a safe work environment, eliminating the need for on-site workers, eliminating mistakes and accidents. All our systems are modular and can be bought separately. The level of automation can be tailored to each customer as needed'.

'Every chain in the wool industry is working hard to be more eco-friendly and wool dyeing processes are no exception. Traditional, manual dyeing techniques are no longer acceptable in most developed countries'. The new generation automated colour kitchen creates dyeing processes that are safer and more environmentally sustainable', Filippo Lanaro concludes.

Mr. Massimo Graziano
sales@lawer.com www.lawer.com



TD-MATIC - the automatic powder dyestuff weighing and dissolving system automatically weighs and dissolves small quantities of powder dyestuff, preparing liquid solutions to be dispensed into laboratory, sampling, and production dyeing machines



Lanificio dell'Olivo yarn



The Italian spinning industry posted 24.7% growth in 2022, with a turnover of EUR 3.2 billion. The sector thus surpassed pre-Covid levels, with an increase of 16.9% compared to 2019. Woollen spinning retained its position as the predominant sector in the textile industry, accounting for 81.3% of total turnover, while cotton yarn accounted for 14.9%, followed by linen yarn with 3.9%.

But beyond the numbers, how are individual companies performing?

YARN WRAP ITALY

by Debora Ferrero

The yarn division of Tollegno 1900 was sold last year to Indorama Ventures (IVL) and listed on the stock exchange. '2022 was a complex year for us', says Lincoln Germanetti, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Filatura Tollegno 1900. 'But the first six months of 2023 saw strong demand from our customers for knitwear. To meet this demand we have increased our stock service of yarn and streamlined our processing to be more efficient'.

Wool remains the main fibre for Filatura Tollegno 1900's production. 'Our company has partnered with Art Nova, In-Es ArtDesign, Artigiani del Cashmere, Alessandro Simoni cashmere, Pool Trend and Casalegno Tendaggi to create the 'TOLLEGNO 1900 BLANKET DRESSING' project.

'Our Harmony 4.0 pure wool yarn has been very popular with manufacturers of furniture and accessories, including sofas, lamps, rugs, throws, blankets, pillows, ponchos and shawls, due to its stain-resistant properties, non-creasability, softness, and three-dimensionality. We thank these companies for collaborating to achieve this result and confirming the quality of 'Made in Italy'.

'We also thank The Woolmark Company for including these unique and striking pieces in its The Wool Lab, the world's most important collection of the best and most innovative fabrics, yarns and production processes dedicated to wool', says Lincoln Germanetti.

'Sustainability is one of the cornerstones of our company. Our spinning mill has already obtained Tessile e Salute, Oeko-Tex, RWS (Responsible Wool Standard) and Nativa® Precious Fiber environmental certifications. In addition, the company has implemented a water purifier that treats 2,300 to 2,500 cubic metres of water daily, returning it clean to the Cervo stream.



Lorenzo Piacentini

ZEGNA BARUFFA LANE BORGOSESIA

'There is a climate of market uncertainty linked to the slowdown in retail demand downstream of the supply chain and inflationary tensions', commented Lorenzo Piacentini, CEO of Zegna Baruffa Lane Borgosesia. 'Nevertheless we have seen a positive trend in the first half of 2023, with drivers mainly focused on high-end fashion knitwear brands. The outlook is reassuring for the high-end fashion segment and the recovery of the Asian markets in late 2023'.

'We are positive about the future. Our innovative catalogue featured at the February FILO 2023, highlighted the creative use of wool, carded, combed and fancy yarns, for fabrics for fineness and performance.'

The concept of a 'seasonless' collections is making a comeback. Piacentini emphasises that this creates 'a versatility that is synonymous with sustainability because the garments made from our yarns are made to last, and can be worn at any time of the year. Our Orchestra autumn-winter 2024/2025 season collection was presented in June at Pitti Immagine Filati in Florence.

LANECARDATE

Lanecardate produces high-end woollen yarns, 'a classic product,' explains the President, Chiara Bianchi Maiocchi. 'We are convinced that everyone must concentrate on what they do best, which in our case means spinning wool and the most precious animal fibres'.

New products for the 2024-2025 winter collection include a yarn called South Africa that mixes wool and mohair. Karù, on the other hand, is a precious blend of wool, mohair and cashmere. Oakland is inspired by Shetland, a yarn made from New Zealand wool. 'We offer in stock service for all yarns with more than 500 colours'.

'On the sustainability front we have chosen not to use recycled fibres,' adds Bianchi Maiocchi, 'because the quality is very different. Our products are made to last, not to be thrown away after just one season. We use mulesing-free and SustainaWOOL certified wool, which ensures ethical supply and animal welfare', she says.



Massimo Montanaro, CEO, and Chiara Bianchi Maiocchi, President of Lanecardate

BOTTO GIUSEPPE

'The first half of 2023 went well,' says Silvio Botto Poala, CEO of Botto Giuseppe, 'slightly up on 2022. The prospects of maintaining good turnover levels will depend on how the markets react to the recession already occurring in some areas, but which have fortunately been much reduced in others. The new European textile legislation focusing on sustainability, design, and end-of-life products will be a significant challenge. Textile companies will have to ensure customers are supportive in this respect.'

According to Silvio Botto Poala, 'the most positive markets in the last two years have been Korea, France, Italy and the USA, while markets such as Germany, Japan and China have struggled much more.'

Natural yarns are at the heart of all Botto Giuseppe e Figli production, active in the Biella district since 1876. 'For the 2024-2025 winter season we will see the return of knitwear as a category in its own right, not only as an accessory but as a complete classification. That will influence all clothing categories that will follow the example of knitwear'.

'We see tweeds, striped wools, and jacquards become iconic fabrics. There will be alpaca mixed with wool, cashmere and silk for an increasingly mild climate and natural whites mixed alongside natural fibre tones. Cashmere, alpaca and bison transform activewear into a more sophisticated and elegant streetwear style, more glamorous in style'.



Natural yarns are at the heart of all Botto Giuseppe e Figli production

'Warm neutral shades combine with all other shades. Tweed is consolidated and self-made moulinés are transformed, becoming more lively. The colour is enough to make them exclusive. Reminiscent of the 1970s, furry yarns return in varying degrees of lightness, with cashmere air and alpaca being the most important. Regarding needlework, wool, cashmere, and RWS certified yarns are trendy and presented in many different colours and weights.'

'All the yarns in our collection are produced with low environmental impact. Our manufacturing process is entirely in-house. The energy for processing comes from renewable sources, the dyes used are certified by Cradle2Cradle™, which assesses the sustainability

of the process along the entire supply chain. We always look for reliable and credible partners in terms of sustainable supply. This year two farms from Uruguay have been added to our long list of established fibre partners from Australia (Congi, Benangaroo, Woodside, Cavan Station): Py-Aguazù, located in Paysandù, and La Chuchilla, located in Tacuarembò. Our wool is RWS and Land to Market certified.'

'Sustainability is not just a slogan for BOTTO GIUSEPPE,' says Silvio Botto Poala. 'It is a fundamental value. We invest in producing excellent yarn that lasts, using renewable energy and biodegradable raw materials. I believe this is the essence of consuming less but better'.



Alberto Enoch of Servizi e Seta

SERVIZI E SETA

Servizi e Seta is a relatively new company in the Biella district, established in 2008 by G. Schneider Group and Alberto Enoch. It specialises in producing 100% silk yarns and silk blends with noble fibres and 100% linen and linen mixtures with natural fibres, and 100% wool and wool blend spun on the superfine semi-worsted spinning process.

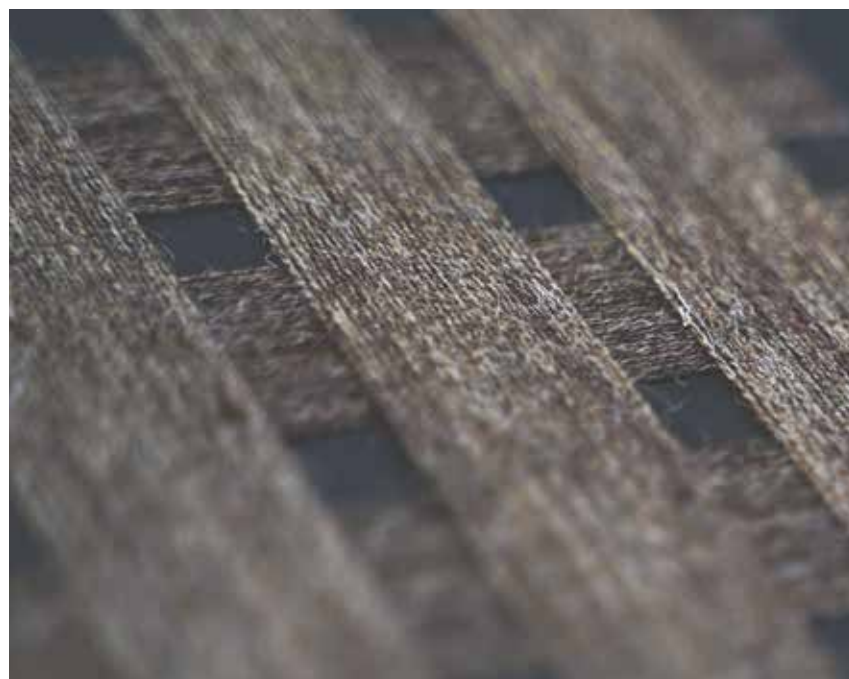
In 2013, following the joint venture with Jiaying Huayi Silk & Spun, the company started to offer a wide range of threads in different blends and different spinning processes, from the worsted silk to the semi-worsted 100% fine wool, as 100% silk open end or 100% linen wet spun. Jiaying Huayi is a company founded in 1987 in Tongxiang, the city of silk, a leader in China and the world for the production of 100% silk yarns and silk blended with natural and noble fibres.

'As far as yarns are concerned there is a strong focus on new uses for wool, produced with the Superfine Semiworsted System, which we have adopted and modified for our quality requirements', says Alberto Enoch. The spinning that mirrors the technical characteristics of combed yarn but maintains the roundness, puffiness and lightness of carded yarn. The new Air Brushed yarns, obtained by volumising the yarn gives additional softness and lightness to the garments.

DAVIFIL

Davifil produces yarns for apparel and furnishing fabrics. These have experienced a slowdown in consumption compared to 2022. 'There are signs of a further slowdown in the coming months', says Vincenzo Caneparo, owner of Davifil.

'In our summer collections the yarns consist of linen, hemp, jute, ramie and nettle. In the winter collections we use wool, cashmere, and alpaca. We use naturally dyed fibres (black and grey sheep, cashmere goats and alpaca with coloured fleeces). For years, synthetic fibres have been almost eliminated from our collections,' adds Caneparo. 'We offer yarns in natural and animal fibres that are renewable, regenerable and biodegradable. In addition, a large part of the winter



Davifil - coarse and moretta wool

collection is made up of yarns that mix fibres in their natural colours, eliminating the dyeing operation with considerable savings in water, energy and polluting chemicals', Caneparo concludes.

COMISTRA

The Prato district was at the forefront for recycling and sustainability. Over time, companies in Prato have developed expertise and manufacturing capabilities to recover and recycle fibre. This has added additional raw materials for its manufacturing of yarn and fabric.

Comistra is one such company. Founded in 1920 and still run by the Tesi family it is now in its fourth generation. 'We produce carded wool yarns,' says Alice Tesi, 'with recycled and virgin wools for yarns for fabrics in men's and women's clothing, as well as orthogonal yarns used to produce coats and jackets'.

'This year we are moving towards yarns for knitwear with special twists, and the response is outstanding, and so we are expanding the sample collection.'

'We have made a chenille from recycled wool, and this has been very popular with our customers. One of our top sellers is used in interior furnishings, because wool has great resistance to pilling and abrasion, while at the same time guaranteeing fire resistance, which are important characteristics for this sector'.

Comistra yarns use raw and recycled materials and sustainability certifications are required by almost all customers. 'Eighty per cent of our products,' explains Tesi, 'are GRS (Global Recycling Standard) certified, with different variations depending on the blends.'



Comistra yarns

Recycled wool often needs to be reinforced, and we use nylon and polyester, which are also recycled. Recycled nylon is more expensive, but our customers appreciate that we have chosen this option. The viscose we use is also FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) certified'.

'Environmental awareness is increasing, and reinforced by existing and forthcoming European Union laws. Being sustainable will be less and less a choice and more and more an obligation, and it is right that it should be so', she says.



Lanificio dell'Olivo CEO Fabio Campana

LANIFICIO DELL'OLIVO

Lanificio dell'Olivo, founded in 1947 and based in Campi Bisenzio, near Florence, is a leading manufacturer of fancy yarns for the knitwear and hand-knitting industry. In 2022 the company posted a record turnover of 22 million euro, and the first quarter of 2023 is continuing with good results despite a still slowing market.

CEO Fabio Campana says, 'The knitting sector achieved very positive results in 2022. 2023 remains at good levels, but the momentum seems to be fading, with signs of a slowdown in orders, particularly in carding and weaving. It is expected that prices will also weaken'.

'Our autumn and winter yarn collection includes 12 new products in which wool is a number one fibre due to its versatility



and biodegradability. Extra-fine merino wool is soft,' comments Campana, 'it plays on volume, elegance and comfort for consumers that appreciate timelessness and quality. It is blended with silk in gauzy yarns, round cords in solid tones, and vegetable colours and chanteclair in blends with bleached and coloured linen. Alpaca and mohair are also widely used in all counts, from knitwear to coats and outerwear'.

'Lanificio dell'Olivo initiated the sustainability Going Green protocol and signed an agreement with the Detox programme in 2014, well in advance of the advent of this issue. Every yarn in the collection has at least one certification to which Nativa is added, a certification created to provide first-quality wool and product traceability along the supply chain. This wool is sourced from South America from certified and traceable farms.'

PINORI FILATI

'The rampant inflation driven by the energy crisis and sharp rise in interest rates has created a slowdown in consumer consumption. This has resulted in a strong contraction of the lower middle market, but the luxury market has substantially held its own', explains the owner of Pinori Filati, Raffaella Pinori.

'Our company targets premium brands that have been less affected by this downturn. The sudden growth generated by consumer demand past Covid and in early 2022 faded in 2023. We are confident that our market will be substantially resilient to this slowdown due to our flexibility, ability to work in small batches, high level of service, and in-house production capacity'.

'Pinori Filati was founded in 1970 and is based in Prato. The main



Raffaella Pinori

fibre used by this company is Australian wool and animal fibres, and especially alpaca from Peru and Argentina. We have always paid great attention to the origin of raw materials, their traceability, and the guarantees of no mulesing. Recently our suppliers, in addition to producing animal welfare and

traceability certifications, have been working on regenerative certifications that measure the impact of farming on the soil (low carbon footprint)'.

The company pioneered the production and certification of recycled jeans, and 'today almost the entire collection is made from sustainable yarns. We evaluate what we buy thanks to the 4Sustainability project in which we have been participating for several years, as well as the BCI project. We are RF-RCS-OCS certified.

'In addition to our structure, we use certified and qualified manufacturers within the Prato district. We believe that the road to perfection is long, and we will have to do a lot of work in the future to reduce consumption as much as possible and, above all, reduce waste. These are the important challenges of our time'.



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SUSTAINNO

new level of sustainability

To achieve recyclability, biodegradability, and a high level of performance Schoeller Group has created its new Sustainno yarn.

‘Sustainno significantly reduces environmental impact and brings sustainability and function into a natural balance’, says Marco Zaffalon, CEO Schoeller Spinning Group. ‘This new yarn product is a synergy of Merino wool and sustainable biophilic polyester fiber, resulting in a biodegradable performance yarn’.

Merino wool used in this yarn is renewable and provides perfect thermoregulation and moisture management. It degrades naturally after disposal. Wool can even be used for soil improvement and fertilization under certain circumstances.

The degradable and recycled polyester fibers in this yarn improve a number of technical properties of the Sustainno blend, such as abrasion resistance and



Marco Zaffalon
CEO of Schoeller Spinning Group

bursting stability. The fiber is particularly sustainable because it is made from GRS certified recycled polyester and degrades independently in the environment.

For improved biodegradation in different environments, special points of attack are integrated into the polyester. These provide natural microorganisms with significantly improved natural degradation. The polyester fiber degrades over time to carbon dioxide, methane, water and biomass.



Schoeller offers Sustainno CMP – 65% Super Fine Merino and 35% recycled polyester (rPES) GRS certified and Sustainno 50% Fine Merino Wool and 50% recycled polyester (rPES) GRS certified.

Schoeller Group offers customers choice sustainability levels

‘At Schoeller we have developed an Organic Tool Box. Our online portal enables our customers the opportunity to choose the level of environmental accreditation

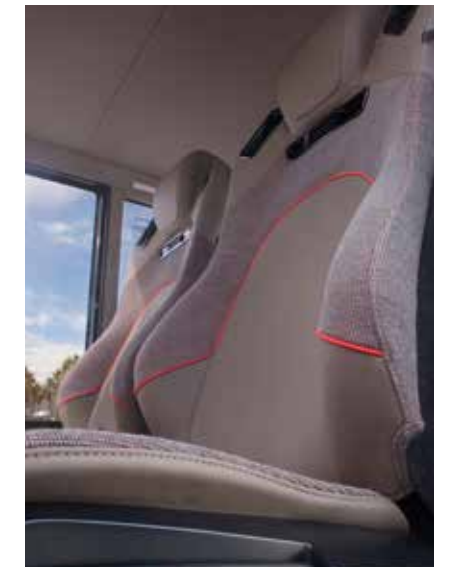
best suited to their needs. They can create their own level of sustainability from GOTS and BlueSign level to less rigorous options’, says Marco Zaffalon.

‘Through this process our customers have the flexibility to control costs and the level of environmental accreditation. Not every fabric requires the highest level of accreditation. This is why we extend the choice to the customers to determine for themselves the level appropriate for their production’ he says.

Undyed Wool and Alpaca - colored by nature

‘We are experiencing an increase in demand for yarn made from undyed wool and Alpaca’, says Marco Zaffalon. These particular fibers can be blended and because the range of natural colors is wide, such choice precludes the need for dyestuffs water and therefore auxiliaries as well.

‘At Schoeller we blend the different shades. This can be a complex process as the range of limited



Alpaca fiber using flat knit technology – sustainability in the automotive sector

naturally occurring colors become available. As water or chemicals are not necessary for dyeing, the name for our yarn is appropriately - Zero/100.’

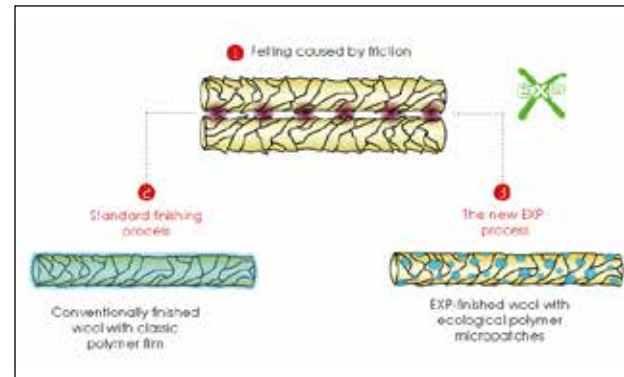
Color selection without the need to dye saves energy and time in production and is a huge advantage for sustainability, or as Schoeller calls it: ‘a New Level of Sustainability (NLS)’. This fiber also has zero micro plastics and is fully degradable. We only use 100% non mulesed wool.

Due to the growing demand Schoeller now offers Alpaca NLS yarns in various natural shades, such as white, beige and anthracite. Alpaca NLS yarn is natural and robust. It can be blended with recycled or other sustainable fibers and is a further step in sustainability for the automotive sector.

‘Fabric manufacturers in Europe are increasingly using undyed fiber in high-end fashion. Interest is also growing from the automotive sector that is using fiber to create fabric for interior upholstery.

Sustainable wooltop treatment

water nearly clean enough to drink



Marco Zaffalon, CEO, points out that 'the old conventional process previously used involves smoothing scales and coating the chlorinated wool fibres with a wash-resistant film. A substantial amount of AOX pollutant is released during this process. The result is environmental pollution and is directly attributable to the wool fibres.'

'The EXP treatment does not change wool surface significantly', he adds. 'It preserves the inherent characteristics of wool that provide such excellent fibre functionality. It also provides better opportunity to color wool in new brilliant shades particularly brilliant white.'

'As a treatment process, EXP receives Bluesign and GOTS certification. It also conforms to the EU-Eco Flower and Oeko-Tex standard. 'Fibre performance including anti-felting, machine washability TM31 (1x7A / 5x5A), or tumble drying (TEC) is comparable other similar treatments and is sustainable and cost competitive.'

'As companies that treat wool around the world are required to provide declarations about their use of chemicals they will see that our EXP treatment is an excellent option to move away from outdated polluting chemicals'. EXP is patented in many countries around the world and a brand of the Schoeller Spinning Group.'

Textile companies are demanding assurance from companies specialising in wool treatment that they do not use harmful chemicals in their production. Legislation for environmental accreditations and stringent European Union labeling laws will add a greater level of compliance in this space.

Schoeller the Spinning Group's patented EXP wool treatment has been developed to produce washable wool without chlorine, using natural salts as an oxidization agent. The water used in this treatment is nearly clean enough for drinking and the performance results are on par with Easycare.



MOHAIR

sustainable fashion

VICTOR CHESKY talks Mohair with **MIKE BROSNAHAN**
CEO of SAMIL Natural Fibres

Mohair is one of the most prized of natural fibres. It is used to create everything from high-end fashion and accessories to carpets and upholstery. Made from the coats of Angora goats, Mohair is soft and durable. It is one of the oldest textile fibres and is still sought after today, as a natural and sustainable fibre. Mohair has been made into cloth since before the Bible, around 1500BC. The Angora goat is thought to have originated from the mountains of Tibet, reaching Turkey in the 16th century.

Today Mohair is mostly grown in South Africa, Texas USA, and to a lesser extent Australia. The majority of the Mohair clip is processed by two companies in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. Each year South Africa produces 2.1 million kg, thus representing 65% of the world total production. The total clip is relatively small in comparison to the Wool and Alpaca clips; therefore, it makes this limited clip with its excellent natural characteristics always in demand. I asked Mike about the future for Mohair and its position in the textile industry.

The future is very bright. Mohair is an extremely versatile fibre when compared



“
At Samil we are proud to be RMS certified and adhere to the assurance that our fibre is ethically and sustainably produced
”



with other natural fibres. It is much softer than sheep's wool and is differentiated by its sheen and luster. Mohair is also more elastic than most types of wool, is crease-resistant, and less flammable. It is also highly compatible with most dye types and blends well with other natural fibres.

Most wool types contain scales that create felting from wearing and washing whilst Mohair's resistance to felting is another positive attribute further differentiating it from other fibres.

How are manufacturers using your tops and yarns in their production?

The unique attributes of Mohair that I mentioned already lend themselves to many different types of clothing, as well as home furnishings. Mohair works well in fashion wear and its insulating qualities make it suitable for fabric in sweaters, coats, hats, scarves, and gloves. It is also good for suiting and is used extensively in seasonal collections by high-end brands.

At Samil we have the capacity to process 1.5 million kg of Mohair Tops and most is exported to international markets primarily in Europe, and particularly to Italy where these high-end fashion houses are based. We buy and process 50% of the Cape Mohair clip and we also process Mohair from Lesotho, Texas, and Australia.

I must add that at Samil our combing division is dedicated exclusively to processing Mohair. 20% of our Top is used in our own



yarn production and 80% is for export. We produce a standard commercial range of Tops and can also supply speciality lots to client specification.

We also welcome commission work both big and small and process lots as small as 250kg.

How diverse is the Samil product range in tops and yarn?

At Samil Spinning we supply yarns for the most demanding brands in the high-end fashion industry. We produce 100% Mohair yarns, and can blend with most natural fibre including wool, silk, alpaca, and bamboo. We can also produce blends with man-made fibres such as nylon and acrylic but the majority of our yarn production is focused on yarn combinations with noble fibres.

Samil Spinning manufactures hand-knitted and machine-knitted yarn. We create perfectly blended fancy and worsted yarns in both all-natural as well as natural and synthetic fibre combinations to create soft hand-knitting yarns in a diverse range of rich colours. We invest in developing trend-inspired ranges while still manufacturing established favourites

trusted by our clients, and retained as part of their own staple collections.

Our range of yarns for machine knitting is based on current trends and is available in different counts suited to various knitting machine gauges. Counts vary from 1/40NM ringspun yarn to finely brushed fancy Mohair yarn containing Super Kid Mohair, wool, silks and other fibre combinations.

How does Mohair fibre lend itself to the dyeing process?

The dyeing of both our hand and machine-knitting yarns are done at our own dye house, where we test, create and perfect our extensive colour ranges. We can custom dye to any shade.

Is traceability and ethical practice a central feature of Samil's business model?

Like other animal-derived fibres, Mohair doesn't have a notably negative impact on the environment. Unlike synthetic textiles, no carcinogenic, hormone-disrupting, or organ-damaging chemicals are used and the production of this type does not introduce any toxins into the environment.

South African Mohair growers are committed to sustainable farming practices and animal welfare. So, the fact that over 80% of South African Mohair is Responsible Mohair Standards (RMS) certified is not surprising. Sustainability is also one of the most important issues for the fashion industry today and we are very proud to support and be a part of this ethical and responsible practice.

'At Samil we are proud to be RMS certified and adhere to the assurance that our fibre is ethically and sustainably produced.'

Samil is also OEKE-TEX certified; this certification is one of the world's best-known labels for textiles tested for harmful substances. It stands for customer confidence and high product safety.

'We are certified in both raw processed Mohair fibre and dyed yarns, and take great care in creating products for the safety and well-being of people and environment'.



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Photo: Lanificio dell'Olivio

HAND KNITTING

A Steady Reversal of Misfortune

Even after nearly forty years of attending Pitti events, it is still difficult to think autumn/winter at the June edition of Pitti Filati, as Florence swelters in a 35 degree heatwave.

According to both visitors and exhibitors, this recent edition of Filati (28 to 30 June) was considered to be the 'return to normal' the trade has been awaiting since the Covid onslaught started to retreat in early 2022.

Much of the European yarn supply side was once again present, with huge stands taken by the market leaders, all reportedly happy with the current state of trade. Ormo from Türkiye and Floreal from Mauritius were the only non-European spinners allowed to exhibit, leaving a number of Chinese yarn producers pacing the corridors or setting up shop in adjacent hotels. Italian trade fairs are particularly protective of local



By R. Peter Ackroyd

industries and a number of non-European suppliers are excluded from increasingly important textile events in Milan and Florence. There seems little chance of a change of policy in the current protectionist environment, post-pandemic.

Not that the pandemic seriously impacted the knitwear business. Far from it, and one sector that truly thrived during enforced confinement was hand knitting. During those dark months in 2020

and 2021, the Campaign for Wool produced a series of educational videos teaching beginners how to knit during lockdown, an initiative with the UK Hand Knitting Association (UKHKA) that met with considerable success.

Often seen as the Cinderella of the textile industry, hand knitting and crocheting, once declared near defunct, is now enjoying a revival that has defied all the Cassandras who predicted its demise in the latter part of the twentieth century.

In the 1950s and 1960s much of the spun hand knitting yarn leaving the mills of Bradford, Leeds and Wakefield in the UK and the Lille-Roubaix-Tourcoing conurbation in Northern France was in wool produced on the worsted and semi-worsted system. The advent of twin-tub washing machines saw the fibre content of yarn quickly morph from wool to much more machine-wash friendly acrylic. Acrylic continues to dominate

the industry, even with the arrival of product safe 40°C wool hand wash cycles invented by the likes of Electrolux and AEG and branded with Woolmark to ensure consumer confidence. Retail prices play a major role as a 100gm ball of acrylic yarn by Stylecraft is currently priced at around US\$2.70. A merino 100gm ball by Rowan Yarns is significantly more expensive at US\$15.24.

The hand knitting reversal of misfortune began slowly, helped in many ways by several celebrities seen casting on and off and some very high profile models and musicians knitting behind the catwalk during Fashion Weeks. Cara Delevingne, Sarah Jessica Parker, Julia Roberts, Meryl Streep, Russell Crowe, Ryan Gosling (who learned to knit while making the film *Lars and the Real Girl* in 2007), and Olympic diver Tom Daley, join Michelle Obama and Catherine, Princess of Wales who clearly enjoy the therapeutic, almost yoga like pleasures of a craft that is not all about the result, but about the calming effect of the activity itself. Tom Daley's hand knitting line 'Made With Love' is spun in merino wool in West Yorkshire, UK.

The global hand knitting market is estimated to be in excess of 60 million kilos of fibre annually, the bulk of which, estimated to be around 80%, is in acrylic. For much of the latter part of the last century, yarns were spun locally in UK, France and Germany. Today, whilst the leading British brands such as King Cole, James C Brett, Sirdar and Stylecraft continue to thrive, yarn is primarily sourced in Türkiye, particularly from Ormo, in

Orhangazi across the Bosphorus from Istanbul where the company was first established some 50 years ago. Ormo now employs over 1500 people in Orhangazi and opened a subsidiary manufacturing unit in Serbia in 2017. Other key supply side players are UPW Ltd, established in Hong Kong in 1984, now spinning in Dongguan in mainland China, HYX near Shanghai, and a number of yarn specialist factories in the Jiangsu area of Eastern China.

There are around 7 million registered hand knitters in the UK, a similar number in Germany and over 30 million in the United States, where market leader Lion Brand, founded by the Blumenthal family in 1878, distributes a very comprehensive range of mainly imported yarns. The US market for hand knitting tends to be very acrylic-oriented, in the way polyester and nylon loom large in other areas of apparel.

Whilst the big brands in the key markets rely on acrylic imports from Türkiye and China, a sizeable craft industry, which prides itself on proximity sourcing, is flourishing in the UK and France, working closely with the Campaign for Wool.

In the post World War II years, every town and village in the UK had its own knitting wool shop that specialised in a full range of branded yarns sold by the ounce (now 100gm) ball, together with a collection of knitting patterns produced by famous fashion brands and occasionally, couture houses. Mail order catalogue B2C sales began to eclipse yarn shop sales in the 1960s when large concerns such as the Grattan

Catalogue (a forerunner to NEXT) in Bradford UK, Littlewoods in Liverpool UK, and the giant French mail order companies, La Redoute and Trois Suisses in the Lille-Roubaix-Tourcoing area began to feature full ranges of their own branded yarns, often produced locally. In another reversal of misfortune for the industry, craft hand knitting stores are returning to the high streets in the more up-market parts of town.

Local specialty spinning is flourishing in UK and France. British Wool features local wools from a number of British sheep breeds spun in Yorkshire by West Yorkshire Spinners, Laxton Speciality Yarns and Spectrum Yarns. There are a further 25 craft spinners in UK, specialising in local sheep breeds in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. In France, Campaign for Wool partner, Bergère de France, established in 1946 in Bar-le-Duc in Lorraine, Eastern France, claims to be the last knitting yarn factory to remain in France, producing an impressive range of yarns in natural fibres, mainly wool quantities.

Merino is said to account for around 5% of the total hand-knitting market.

Knitting wool has been the term used to describe collectively an industry that is dominated by acrylic where natural fibres only make around 20% of global production. But times are slowly changing, as consumers, content to embrace the therapeutic, carbon neutral attributes of home knitting, seek to add to their craft the considerable environmental benefits of working with sustainable fibres.



Marco Coetzee

Mohair is an ancient natural fibre that is the most versatile, with its long and silky ringlets derived from Angora goats. Note that this fibre is hair, not wool. Producing

Mohair ethically and sustainably is non-negotiable for the South African Mohair industry, and implementing the Responsible Mohair Standards (RMS) has been a priority since its launch in March 2020.

Mohair South Africa is focused on advancing the Mohair industry through international partnerships and alliances to enhance the production and consumption of Mohair products. 'We aim to create sustainable demand and profitability for all role players including farmers to processors, and spinner to retailer', says Marco Coetzee, GM at Mohair SA in Port Elizabeth.

Today brands are working to demonstrate their supply chain transparency. Mohair South Africa has been working with manufacturers, brands, and retail consumers to de-bunk misinformation around animal



MOHAIR LUXURY *at its best*

welfare issues. Any retailer that stocks Mohair products that are RMS certified can be confident that ethical practices are followed by growers that carry the certification.

Marco adds: 'RMS provides the industry with the tools to recognise farmers' best practices and to ensure that Mohair comes from

farms with an advanced approach to land management, animal welfare and social responsibility.

'It starts with regenerative agriculture, and this is a hot topic with many brands and retailers across the globe looking to source fibre from farms that use a progressive approach to

regenerative farm management practices. Such practices are essential as they help revive the soil, capture carbon emissions, and increase food security while storing water. Most of our South African Mohair farmers apply regenerative management practices as they know that the future generation will have no viable land to farm if they do not manage their lands efficiently.'

'The RMS continues to see widespread adoption among South Africa's growers, international manufacturers,

and brands. It is exciting to see many manufacturers and brands embracing the RMS and registering with this standard. Many companies worldwide have been RMS/RWS/RAS-certified post-farmgate, including companies throughout the mohair value chain that enable RMS mohair to reach the end consumer.

'Mohair South Africa is always looking for innovative ways to use Mohair in products. The recent Pitti Imagine Filati was a wonderful opportunity for us to meet with like-minded textile producers,



MOHAIR

designers, manufacturers, and brands to talk about the exciting opportunities Mohair Fibre can offer all the way along the supply chain.

Mohair South Africa partners with Oritain, a world leader in using forensic science and technology to analyse Mohair fibre and verify its origin. This gives manufacturers, brands and consumers assurance about traceability and helps to underpin wider product claims relating to the sustainable and ethical production of Mohair fibre. We have a 100% fit-for-purpose database, which allows brands to test the Mohair in an item to determine if it is South African. The next project is to identify which Mohair comes from which farm; hence we are collecting Mohair samples directly from a group of farmers to pilot this. We believe this level of traceability is the future for the value chain and meets the end consumers demands.

Mohair SA has embarked on a project to identify what impact our industry has on the environment, as we believe it is essential that we have all the facts. We have opted to work with Integrity Ag & Environment (an Australian company) to start the first phase of a Life Cycle Assessment for the South African Mohair industry in September 2023. We intend to take the LCA to the end of the product's life.

The best-kept secret...

Mohair suits, knitwear, blankets, coats and knitting yarns may be the first products to come to mind when thinking about Mohair. However, did you know that a product called MOHAIR VELVET is technically referred to as Mohair velour? It is used in various applications in the marketplace, says Jackie Gant, Marketing Manager Mohair, South Africa.

Mohair's unique characteristics offer a variety of opportunities, namely that it is one of the most durable natural fibres, which is why it is well placed for the mohair velvet products.

Mohair fibre has several natural qualities, including its affinity to dyeing – retaining brilliant colours over time; climate control characteristics; crease resistance and innate elasticity allowing it to retain its shape; lightweight – cool in summer and warm in winter; lustre that provides a luxurious silky sheen; and it is non-flammable.

Stucken Yarns and Südwole Group are the two spinners that offer mohair velour yarns, and they supply weaving mills in Europe, which in turn supply the various market segments.

These include:

- Sports industry - Skiing
- Automotive – floor mats
- Public transport – trains and busses
- Aeronautical – private jets
- Hospitality – wall covering, couches, chairs, floor mats.
- Home interiors
- Crafts- Teddy bear making
- Industrial – hand-held paint rollers

Mohair Fibre inspires interior designers and manufacturers, primarily in the hospitality, healthcare, retail, and office sectors. Mohair Velour fabric is versatile and durable, with a high rub count that lends itself to use in upmarket hotels, restaurants, and theatres.

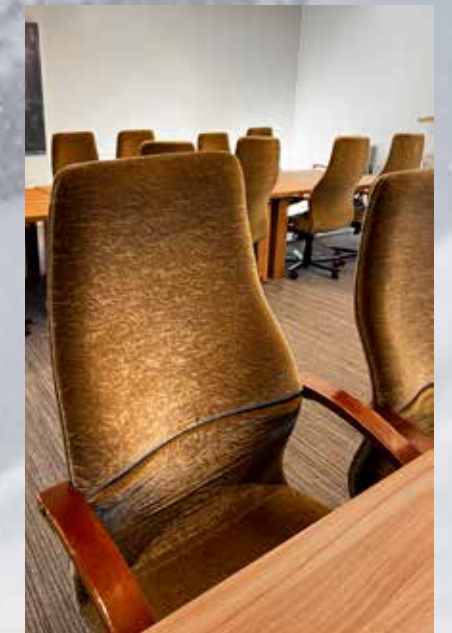
Pomoco Mohair Skins,
Skier Matt Schaer uses Pink Skins
Photo Credit: Matt Schaer



Mohair tweed fabric



Mohair velour upholstery



Function meets beauty in this Mohair upholstery velour un-patterned mohair upholstery fabric, with a horizontal pile, is making its presence felt on the international stage, as is evident in the lobbies of the Waldorf Astoria in Amsterdam, The Raeburn Hotel in Edinburgh, and Blå Station Stockholm, to name just a few.

Mohair South Africa has worked with Vescom, a big player in high-quality interior products. Its worldwide operating companies specialise in developing, producing, and distributing high-quality interior products, and its sustainable production process exclusively uses green electricity and gas. It is ISO 14001 and ISO 9001 certified.

Pomoca, a Swiss ski-wear manufacturer, owned by Oberlap



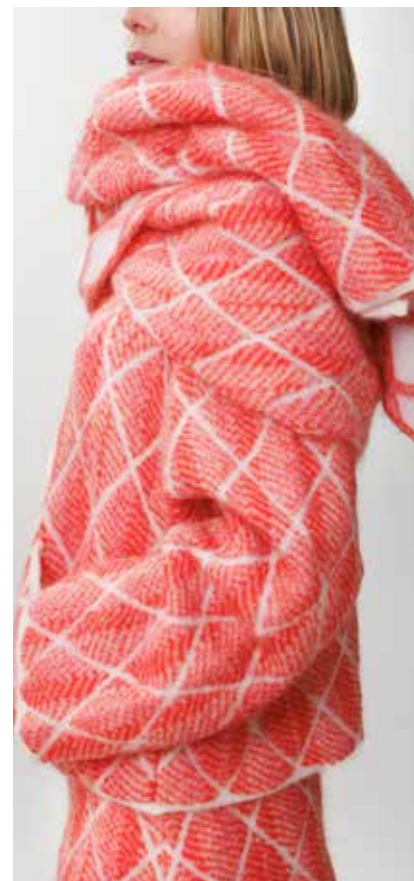
Jackie Gant

“
We encourage spinners and weavers of other yarns to consider adding Mohair into their production and to achieve a more comprehensive product range
”

Group, uses Mohair in its climbing skins. Traditionally seal skins were used, but industry innovations have demonstrated that Mohair offers the best performance in terms of glide and grip. Pomoca says it conducted many tests with natural and synthetic fibres, and Mohair was the best. The Climb 2.0s blends 70% mohair with a 30% touch of nylon for easy glide and grip.

The National Kaohsiung Centre for the Arts in Taiwan is a great example where Mohair upholstery complements architecture and interior elements. The Mohair fabric in theatre seats uses patterns by weaving the piles in different directions to create a shadow effect that works well in this space.

Jackie adds that at the recent Pitti Filati, they learnt of the launching of an exceptional knitwear product



made from under 20-micron Mohair. This positions Mohair in new and exclusive yarn collections for the future.

The long-lasting, easy-care characteristics of Mohair are also very well received, particularly in the Middle East and China, where the 'velvet' feel is so popular.

The fantastic properties of Mohair fibre also include high durability and natural elasticity, with the ability to stretch up to 30% of its length and blend remarkably well with dye. It has excellent moisture-wicking, flame-resistant and crease-resistant qualities.

Mohair is prized for other consumer applications, including

knitted garments and high-end suiting. And with creativity and innovative developments, who says Mohair can't be used in luggage and handbags?

As with other animal-derived fibres, Mohair does not have a notably negative impact on the environment. Unlike synthetic textiles, no carcinogenic, hormone-disrupting, or organ-damaging chemicals are used in the production of Mohair, and this type of hair does not introduce any toxins into the environment aside from certain types of dyes. It is entirely biodegradable, enabling Mohair textiles to break down relatively quickly without inherent pollution.

Mohair production in South Africa can be Responsible Mohair Standard (RMS) certified, addressing any ethical concerns consumers make about animal wellbeing.

'It makes economic sense for manufactures to introduce Mohair to their product list because demand from high end consumers is growing. Mohair South Africa welcomes inquiries from companies interested in developing and marketing Mohair products', Jackie concludes.

For more information, don't hesitate to get in touch with Jackie Gant at jackie@mohair.co.za

ITALIAN WOOL TEXTILE ASSOCIATION

By Victor Chesky



Claudio Lacchio
President Associazione Nazionale del Commercio Laniero

The Associazione Nazionale del Commercio Laniero (Italian Wool Textile Association – IWTA) has always played an important role within the textile industry in Italy. It was established in 1920 and remains an important working component to the industry that feeds into Italy's position as a leader in world fashion, class, and style. Currently there are 55 members including topmakers, spinners, weavers, and many associated industries.

The major objective of the IWTA has always been to represent the interests of its members at local and federal government, as well as to international organisations including International Wool

Textile Organisation (IWTO), and provides a coherent voice to wool communities worldwide.

I sat down with Claudio Lacchio, current President of IWTA in Biella to catch up after a three year interruption in face-to-face conversation.

'We are one of the oldest wool associations in Europe. In 2022 we were finally able to celebrate our 100th anniversary', he says. 'Today our membership includes not only Italian companies, but companies from other European countries. This makes us unique as a European textile association, not just an Italian one'.

The IWTA has always been ready to tackle wool industry challenges.

'A main challenge we face is attracting sufficient labour force to work in the textile industry', says Claudio. 'We must encourage the next generation to make the textile industry their career choice. Industry members are encouraged to provide mentoring to younger people and support them toward a career path in textiles. At present IWTA is also running a special promotional campaign with education providers in Italy. A master's degree in textiles is now available, as well as special arrangements with textile manufacturers for employment prospects for school leavers interested in pursuing textiles as a career path.

'And of course Environmental accreditation for wool fibre is now one of the most important topics of discussion for all sectors of the wool industry from wool grower to retail brands, and consumers', Claudio comments. 'Streamlining and simplifying the number of environmental accreditations available today would benefit the industry. Such a large number of certification options make it confusing and complicated for the industry to work within. We would like to see one overall accreditation for wool fibre – this would make a more cost effective and industry transparent system to use'.

PANTEX WELCOMES NEXT GENERATION

This year Pantex welcomes the third generation of the Zedda family into the company. Pietro Zedda is the son of Giovanni, joint managing director with his brother Piercarlo Zedda. 'I look forward to working with my father and uncle. They have been working in the wool trade for a long time and I know I can count on them to be excellent teachers and pass on their extensive knowledge', says Pietro Zedda, who is currently studying economics.



Giovanni, Pietro, and Piercarlo Zedda

Pantex has been supplying Italian and European knitting and weaving companies with wool products for more than 50 years. It offers an extensive stock range of wool to topmakers and spinners, including standard types from Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, South America, and Europe, including tops, open tops, wool blends, and carbonized wools.

Piercarlo Zedda comments that, 'at Pantex we are more than just an Italian company. We service customers beyond Italy, and operate throughout Europe. We are outward-focused and our

business ethics incorporate the environmental considerations of all our customers'.

'Traceability of fibre is the most important issue for European fashion manufacturers, and that includes the high-end luxury brands. We are a leading supplier of certified wool and non-mulesed wool. Environmental responsibility and sustainability is very important to our company and it is part of our business philosophy. So too is our commitment to using renewable energy in our everyday operations'.

'When wool supply is tight, and

global events can cause disruption at any time, it is very important to our customers that we are able to source the right wool when it is needed', comments Giovanni Zedda, joint company director. 'We have well established relationships in all major wool growing countries, and our warehouse in Biella is well stocked to deliver without delay'.

Pantex sorts, cleans, and blends wool within its own premises. 'We can deliver to any specification and any blend. Our Interwoollab accredited textile testing laboratory has been installed to provide an extra layer of protection and security to customers receiving wool that flows through our plant. Long-term contracts are available as well as one off buying', says Piercarlo Zedda.

'We are a one-stop-shop with warehouse facilities in the heart of Biella. Quality, service, fast delivery and a big range of products in stock is a priority for us. We are very particular about quality and that is why our clients are happy to come and do business with us year after year', he says.

Piercarlo Zedda and Giovanni Zedda can be contacted by email at info@pantex-spa.it

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MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS IN ITALY'S TEXTILE INDUSTRY

There have been a number of mergers and acquisitions of textile companies in Italy and Debora Ferrero looks at some of these takeovers. In 2020 Piacenza Group Spa, fabric and clothing manufacturer, acquired Lanificio Piemontese, and Lanificio Fratelli Cerruti Spa in 2022. Also in 2022 the Bangkok-headquartered Indorama Ventures acquired the wool spinning businesses of Tollegno 1900, a leading Italian manufacturer of fabrics and yarns. The acquisition covers a spinning and top-dyeing operation in Poland and a yarn-dyeing operation in Italy.

by Debora Ferrero

When the competition becomes global, the strategy must too. Fashion brands with an international reach, particularly those in the luxury sector, are well aware that prestige can no longer be based

solely on excellence in design but must include traceability and sustainability of the raw material they use. This is why, in recent times, many brands have sought to secure their raw material supply by acquiring major stakes or entire

ownership of supplier companies throughout the textile supply chain.

This trend had increased in Italy and accelerated during the Covid pandemic. If the big names in fashion have somehow managed to absorb the abrupt slowdown in world consumption, this has not been the case for the small and medium-sized Italian textile companies, which have suffered greatly with some permanently closing their doors. In some cases the entry of new partners meant the salvation of a production tradition. In others, it was a way of ensuring the continuity of supplies of yarns, fabrics and finished garments, especially knitwear.

Among the most active brands in this space is Zegna which began 'shopping' in the supply chain quite some time ago. The acquisition of Tessibaldi Tessitura in Novara, which specialises in producing fabrics in pure silk or cashmere blends, superfine wools and other natural fibres, dates back to 2009. In 2012, the Ermenegildo Zegna Group, Loro Piana, Marzotto, and the Schneider Group took ownership of Pettinatura di Verrone. The three brands have acquired equal shares of 15% and justify their decision by explaining that combing represents the first stage in processing the raw fibre, a fundamental step in producing high-quality fabrics. The objective is to maintain this level of quality, preserving a critical heritage of knowledge and human resources. Pettinatura di Verrone specialises in processing superfine wools, cashmere, vicuña and other special fibres.

Zegna took a majority stake in Bonotto, a textile manufacturing company in Molvena, in 2016 and standard-bearer of the Slow Factory motto against low-cost mass production. It has focussed instead on the culture of craftsmanship and traditional techniques. In 2019 the group became the majority shareholder of Dondi, a leading Made in Italy manufacturer of high-quality jersey fabrics for men and women. In 2021 Zegna consolidated its Luxury Textile Laboratory Platform with the acquisition of a majority stake in Tessitura Ubertino, a boutique wool mill founded in 1981 specialising in premium quality fabrics, such as tweed and jacquard. Today it includes

a research laboratory and a hub for textile innovation. In the same year Zegna and the Prada Group acquired the majority shares of Filati Biagioli Modesto S.p.A. This Tuscan company excels in producing cashmere and other noble yarns and offers a superior fibre processing process, guaranteeing high standards throughout the production process. The partnership with Prada was renewed in June 2023 when the two conglomerates acquired a minority stake in Luigi Fedeli e Figlio, a luxury knitwear player using fine yarns.

Chanel also made several deals in relation to its supply chain, with 40 acquisitions in 2023, compared to just 12 a decade ago. In 2020 the French fashion giant acquired Vimar 1991, a manufacturer of fancy yarns for outerwear and weaving located on the edge of the Biella wool district. In 2021, it took over the majority of Paima in the Marche region, a contract manufacturer of women's and men's knitwear in wool, cashmere, and cotton yarns. Then, in 2022 it acquired 60% of the denim FashionArt, while in May 2023 Chanel joined Brunello Cucinelli in sharing ownership of the Cariaggi wool mill (with a 24.5% stake each) producing top-quality yarns in wool, cashmere, vicuña, silk and linen.

Other fashion conglomerates that have acquired companies in the textile production chain over time are Pattern Group (listed on the Milan Stock Exchange), Minerva Hub, and the Florence Group. Critically, except in a few cases, the acquisition processes have not terminated supplies to third parties, so despite the change in ownership structure, companies normally continue their activities and, indeed, can make new investments in innovation.

The changing company landscape and redesign of the economic geography of the textile-fashion sector has advantages: protecting supply chains by maintaining valuable know-how, and guaranteeing brand quality and continuity of supply. They allow small and medium-sized Italian companies to continue to develop their businesses by retaining knowledge, experience and the excellence of Made in Italy. A good outcome for everyone.

Q&A

Matteo De Luca of De Luca Lane sat down with Victor Chesky



Northern Italy is famous for high-end fashion and its relationship with wool. But if you are a wool exporter or wool processor how do you sell your product to these brands and how do you navigate this crowded and very competitive market? I sat down with Matteo De Luca and his wife Marcella of De Luca Lane Biella. This Italian company has been connecting wool merchants, processors, and major Italian textile brands for over 40 years.

Covid exposed the fragility of the global textile supply system. Prior to Covid stocks in Europe had been kept to a minimum, so the significant shipping delays experienced during Covid impacted supply, particularly first-stage processing from greasy wool to top', says Matteo De Luca.

'The smaller spinning mills that carry small stocks were hit the hardest. In some cases the larger manufacturers have had to step in with commission work to ensure a constant flow of material for spinning. Also, the Ukraine war has proven that unexpected changes can happen and we must be flexible and look beyond traditional supply lines. We cannot continue to put all our eggs in one basket.

To shorten delivery times and to ensure security of supply Italian companies are choosing to process their wool closer to home'.

Q. Wool has traditionally been important for Italian brands, do you see this continuing?

'We are confident that wool fibre will continue to be very much in demand, particularly for high-end Italian brands. Wool growers everywhere are constantly working to grow and develop higher performance fibre and the continuous flow of information from grower to manufacturer plays an important role toward growing the demand for wool fibre. The future looks promising, brands are asking for natural, sustainable; and traceable fibres and wool is at the top of this list.'

'Over the years we have built strong relationships with wool companies around the world. Through them we can supply a variety of wool types ranging from greasy wool, scoured wools, carbonised, open tops and tops. Cost competitiveness and a variety of wool types cannot always be supplied from one company to satisfy the requirements of our clients. Our knowledge and experience, and working hand-in-hand with both manufacturers and suppliers, ensures that we can provide an essential link, advising clients about not only Australian and New Zealand wool, but also about wools from South America, South Africa, and Europe.

'At De Luca Lane we can also supply various natural fibres including cashmere, camel hair, mohair, angora, alpaca, yak hair, and silk, and occasionally we supply less common fibres such as horse hair, kapok, and nettle.

Q. How important is environmental certification to your customer base?

'We mainly supply to the market in northern Italy and from our position we see ever-increasing interest from our customers for wool with certifications in traceability and sustainability. Environmental accreditation is one of the most important issues in the wool industry today, and this demand will only grow. Responsible Wool Standards (RWS) is the certification most in demand by manufacturers using our wool.'

Marcella comments that 'in addition to environmental accreditation we are following developments in Global Recycle Standard (GRS). This is now very popular with a number of manufacturers in Italy and we believe it will become integral to the sustainability journey for the fashion industry worldwide. This line of business is new for us but we are engaging with companies operating in this space to learn more about this new and exciting market.'

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Tel +39 015 29039
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Südwolle Group: A sustainable Vietnamese success story

Südwolle Group, a prominent worsted yarn spinner, expanded its global presence with the establishment of Da Lat Worsted Spinning (DWS) in Vietnam. This joint venture between Südwolle Group and Lien Phuong Textile and Garment Corporation has marked the introduction of the first worsted yarn spinning mill in Vietnam and it stands out as one of the most modern facilities in the world, adhering to the highest qualitative and environmental standards.

DWS commenced production in a fully functional spinning facility in June 2019. With a current capacity of 21,600 spindles, the mill can produce an impressive 70 tons of worsted yarn per week. DWS specializes in manufacturing dyed and natural worsted yarns, including 100% Merino wool and wool blends, ranging from Nm 17 to Nm 120 (Siro, Compact, Elastic, Core- and Betaspun). These versatile yarns find applications in various sectors such as weaving, circular and flat knitting, hosiery, and even technical yarns.



DWS stands out for its exceptional production capabilities but also for its commitment to sustainability. By installing photovoltaic panels, the mill saves approximately 2500 tons of carbon dioxide per year, covering approximately 20% of its electricity consumption. In line with other members of Südwolle Group, DWS prioritizes sustainable solutions and transparency in the industry.

The company holds ecological standards certifications, including ZDHC, bluesign®, OEKO-TEX, and traceability certifications

including GOTS, IVN Best, GRS, and RWS. DWS also offers specific supply chain models to enhance transparency throughout the industry.

The success of DWS has paved the way for another ambitious project by Südwolle Group: the establishment of a new dyehouse in Ninh Thuận province, known for its abundant renewable energy sources. The Ninh Thuan Dyeing Textile Co. Ltd. aims to create an integrated supply chain, providing competitive advantages such as reduced delivery times. "Currently,

DWS imports dyed tops from their dyehouses in China or Germany, resulting in longer lead times and higher shipping costs.

"The new dyehouse in Ninh Thuận province will eliminate these challenges and significantly shorten the production cycle", says Karol Sieradzki, who took over as General Director of DWS from Alessandro Di Palma in July this year.

The Ninh Thuan dyehouse project will be implemented in two phases. The first phase, expected to be completed soon, will have a

production capacity of 2,000 tons per year, while the second phase will add an additional capacity of 1,500 tons per year.

Leveraging advanced technologies, the dyehouse will adopt the Pulsar technology from Loris Bellini, one of the most advanced dyeing technologies available. This state-of-the-art machinery ensures high-speed and accurate processing, resulting in improved production capacity and product quality.

The dyeing cycle can be processed saving 30% water and 20% power compared to the traditional new generation vessels because of a different concept of water flow using smaller pumps. The vessels will be handled manually at the beginning and then will be developed automatically later.

Choosing Vietnam as the location for these expansions was a strategic move for Südwolle Group. The country's stable social, economic, and political environment, coupled with its clear strategy to restructure and invest in the textile industry, made it an ideal choice.

Vietnam's membership in ASEAN and its participation in numerous free trade agreements, including RCEP, CPTPP, and EVFTA, provide advantageous customs and logistics benefits. This positions Südwolle Group to cater effectively to its primary markets in Europe, the United States, and Japan, with downstream customers in those countries benefiting from reduced custom duties and tariffs.



Measure comfort in wool fabric

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Wool ComfortMeter™ offers advantages to yarn and garment manufacturers:

- test pilot samples before mass production
- specify the quality of yarn required from a supplier
- test in innovation and development stage or test existing products
- specify comfort score to its supply chain so to comply with one specific standard
- monitor the consistency of each batch to ensure consistent quality between shipments
 - target a level of comfort of consumer base
- specify the level of comfort to control production costs
 - recognising the contribution of the Sheep CRC



KNOW THE SKIN COMFORT OF YOUR GARMENTS

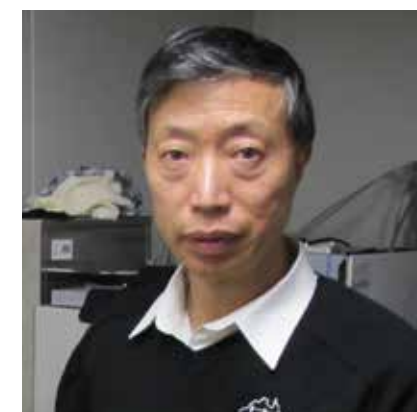
No matter what your skin type, next-to-skin comfort of your clothing is always important. A prickly or itchy sensation is definitely not something you want, particularly when you participate in a sport or outdoor activity.

Australian Wool Testing Authority Ltd (AWTA Ltd) has released an updated version of the original Wool ComfortMeter which was developed based on extensive

research and wearer trials by the Sheep CRC. The updated version of the Wool ComfortMeter has a refined mechanical design, and is equipped with a fully redesigned test head, which allows the setup and testing to be more accurate. The electronic control and data processing system have also been extensively improved. Finally, an embedded PC and touch screen improves the user experience and greatly enhances the easy-of-use.

The upgraded instrument can test the comfort level in yarn, fabric and garments. It is the only commercially available testing instrument for rapid and objectively measurement for the comfort level of garments worn next-to-skin. The instrument meets the test standards of both the International Wool Textile Organisation standard IWTO-66-2017, as well as the Chinese standard FZ/T 01158-2022.

'It is a milestone in evaluating the comfort level of garments worn next-to-skin. Before the Wool ComfortMeter became available, the industry was unable to objectively measure comfort throughout the wool supply chain. Prior to this, the assessment was highly subjective and prone to variability based on numerous environmental and wearer-specific factors, and naturally also, costly and time consuming. Because of the subjective nature of those assessments, results were rarely agreed by all parties in the supply chain', says Dr Henry Wang, Research Scientist at AWTA, who was involved in the development



Dr Henry Wang

and upgrades of the current Wool ComfortMeter.

The AWTA Wool ComfortMeter analyses a fabric surface for the presence of fibres known to cause prickle. The instrument calibration was developed using extensive consumer wearer trials, where samples are assigned a single numerical score; the lower the score the higher the consumer comfort. A higher score means that the fabric risks some irritation to the skin. With a smart test head, a whole test takes only a few minutes. As human skin sensitivity commonly varies in different environments, three levels of comfort have been established for fashion and active wear as a guideline for users.

The Wool ComfortMeter offers the following advantages:

- Rapidly and objectively test and grade comfort level of purchased products,
- Quality control of a product's comfort level from design to manufacturing,
- Assessment of test pilot samples before mass production to control production costs,
- Establish a comfort specification

in a supply chain, which all parties can measure,

- Label and score next-to-skin products on shelves in the market.

'The test is non-destructive and highly accurate, and will provide the supply chain with a simple, fast and reliable common tool in removing guesswork about the products next-to-skin comfort.'

'The wool industry has a long production chain from raw wool to garment, and as the wool moves through each part of this chain the fibre properties can be affected. Stakeholders can now use the Wool ComfortMeter as a common tool, at different stages along the chain, for their QC work, particularly in producing or sourcing yarns and fabrics for garments with a targeted skin comfort level,' says Dr Henry Wang.

'The Wool ComfortMeter will allow organizations to quickly determine the comfort level of yarns, fabrics and garments according to established standards or specifications. Certainly retailers can use the Wool ComfortMeter confidently to buy or market their garments, based on a result from a scientifically proven measure, to offer a more comfortable wearer experience. We hope this objective test will become the norm for all kinds of next-to-skin garments', he says.

The Wool ComfortMeter can test products made from other fibres, such as flax, hemp, ramie and bamboo. It can also test the hairiness or smoothness in paper products, utilising a different testing configuration.

POLAND AND WOOL UNRAVELED

by: Tone Tobiasson

In each issue of *wool2yarn global* we take a look at a country with historic links to wool and their present day operations - this year Tone Tobiasson takes us to Poland...

Tone Tobiasson is currently involved in a Polish-Norwegian bilateral project called WOOLUME – about wool from Polish mountain sheep and sound-absorbing wool panels. Tone visited Poland’s former textile capital, Bielsko-Biala, and a local educational center for transhumance and wool in the Carpathian Mountains south-east in Poland.

Tone points out that ‘Interest from the university in Bielsko-Biala has made a great contribution into research of wool properties in relation to sound absorption and as a vital ingredient in fertilizing pellets. This research is not directly related to yarn, and so lies somewhat outside the main themes of *wool2yarn global*, but it does lead us to thinking about other ways to maximize the use of the resources our sheep gift us. An estimated 80% of EU’s wool is treated as waste, so reviving a wool-industry based on Polish wool is the basis of WOOLUME and its textile engineering sector.’

Although Poland is partially stuck in its Soviet-heritage, Iron Curtain past, it has taken a step into the new world of gourmet yarns and luxury knits. This dichotomy makes for a country that is slowly waking up to a new wool world.

So, before we take a closer look at wool in Poland today, an historic backdrop is in order.

The earliest records of sheep farming on Polish territory date back to the 13th century, when Wallachians, settlers from the Balkans, populated areas in the Carpathian Mountains, and introduced pastoral management to these areas. These changes had a profound effect, as shepherds adopted the traditions and economic system of the Wallachians, including transhumant pastoralism, where the sheep are moved between pastures in an annual system relating to seasonal changes.



Polish mountain sheep

The Wallachians quickly assimilated into the local population, and introduced this new way of farming. They grazed sheep that produced wool and cheese, which allowed for economic development based on these mountain resources.

Today, similar grazing methods are prevalent in the entire Carpathians and we can still see the remnants of the strong cultural rituals common to Carpathian shepherds, such as leading the sheep to the mountain pastures on April 23rd, St. Wojciech Day, after mass. But the sheep population has dropped considerably.

At the beginning of the 19th century, the sheep population was over 12 million. During this time, the Habsburgs, who ruled the area, decided that pastoralism was hindering effective harvest of wood from the forest, and banned transhumant sheep grazing and activity, depriving highlanders of the right to use meadows, pastures, and forests. Following this push, sheep herding lost its importance.

For a long time, wool was the most precious sheep product and generated the most income for farmers. The production of wool significantly contributed to the development of the Polish textile industry, which had been one of the most important industries in the Polish economy. However, the wool textile industry and traditional sustainable wool processing connected with farming activities in mountain regions were two different stories.

In mountain areas, in the period of subsistence farming before industrialization, wool was used for knitting of socks and sweaters and to produce uniform fabrics or blankets, all woven in plain weave and all in the natural colors of the white or pigmented wool; different shades were obtained by mixing wool. The typical woven fabrics for outer coats were fulled or felted, making them wear-resistant, heat-insulating, and impermeable.

Today, traces of the tradition of both weaving and knitting, and manufacturing clothes, is still partially present in Polish folk costumes. The industrial processing of wool developed in parallel. The application of local Polish wool was possible only in lower quality woolen fabrics and in technical fabrics. For the production of high-quality worsted fabrics, wool imported from England and Australia was used.



The WOOLUME team inspecting sheep in the Carpathian Mountains

This is also the basis for today's remaining industry: imported wool.

In conjunction with the political and economic upheaval at the end of the 20th century, the wool industry collapsed, and the demand for wool in Poland dramatically decreased. Consequently, the hitherto well-organized wool market disappeared. After the Second World War, the number of sheep had reached its highest level in the middle of the 1980s. Later the sheep population decreased dramatically, from 5 million in 1986 to less than 1 million in 1994. By the beginning of the new millennium, sheep numbers dropped to approximately 0.2 million and today remain at this level.

The decline in sheep population also hit the native breeds, Świniarka and Wrzosówka (which were almost extinct), bred in Poland for centuries, as well as Olkuska, Pomorska, Coloured Merino, Uhruska,

Wielkopolska, Corriedale, Żelaźnieńska, Kamieniecka and pigmented mountain sheep that originate from Zackel, along with Polish foothill sheep and the Black-headed sheep. National Research Institute of Animal Production (NRIAP), alongside farm and environment programs encouraged sheep farming with the Rural Development plan. As of 2022, there are seventeen breeds included in the sheep genetic resources conservation program.

With the war in Ukraine, the Polish textile industry, which had Russia as a market as well as Germany and Austria, is even more precarious. On the one hand the industry has been able to recruit Ukrainian refugees for their work force, however, a substantial market is now off the table. A situation we also see in the Baltics.

Carpets and furniture textiles are two things Poland has been good at producing. In the town of Czechowice-Dziedzice, which is the neighboring town to Bielsko-Biala, is the carpet factory Sztuka Beskidzka, which the current owner took over in 1999, when it was bankrupted by the Polish authorities. Today, father and son run the factory, which also produces throws and textiles for local heritage costumes. The factory uses some local Polish wool, but their main wool source has been New Zealand. They have chosen NZ wool for the same reason we have heard from others: the whiteness makes it easy to dye. Their main export market is Germany.

A niche product, but enormously successful for the company, is a loden material for traditional men's pants for the nearby mountain area and Bayern in Germany, a white material that is gifted to young men when they are confirmed. Local designers have become interested in the material as well, and the father and son see a bright future for this material, more so than for carpets. They have ended up producing it in three thicknesses and in several colors. The thinnest are traditional canvas weave, the thickest in a twill. As part of product development, they have experimented with stiffening this loden material so that it can be used in wall-panels or as floor covering. Working with a three-dimensional structure, they hope to see a new market for sound-absorbing panels. Besides wool and wool-silk mixes, they also produce synthetic carpets and some rugs made from

old jeans-materials. The many inhouse (and rather old) machines are run by solar-panels on the roof of the factory. www.sztuka-beskidzka.pl/

There are carpet and rug factories spread around Poland, the most modern and wool-focused is Agnella which is in Białystok, in the east of Poland. It is part of the British Britons group and much of their website is devoted to singing the praises of wool. They are also one of the younger companies, having started up 45 years ago. www.agnella.pl/

Two companies rivaling for "oldest", are Dywilan in Łódź, in the central part of Poland, with its 130 years of tradition, and Weltom which was founded in 1846 in Tomaszów Mazowiecki, which is pretty much in the middle of the country. At the height of its history, the government-owned Dywilan boasted 2500 employees, while the modern 8-color carpet loom factory has also managed to garner EU funding to invest in new machinery. Weltom also 'shrunk' after the fall of the Iron Curtain, and is now a joint stock company. Both factories have a wide range of products and a range of fibers in production. www.dywany.dywilan.pl/ www.weltom.pl/

A company with a wide assortment of carpets, blankets and textiles is Apotessile, which lies in Zary, close to Dresden, so the company works a lot with the German and Austrian markets. They also use a wide variety of fibers, while the company Kowary Carpets in Kamienna Góra, southwest Poland, which is associated with the aforementioned Dywilan under the same umbrella, specializes in carpets for cruise ships, hotels and works with international architectural offices. The carpets are produced with electronic jacquard looms, and with wool as their fiber of choice. apotessile.com.pl/ www.kowarydywan.pl/

It is, however, time to move back to Bielsko-Biala, which once rivalled Biella when it came to producing fine worsted materials. To understand this history, the museum in the town, which is housed in an old mill from 1869, is worth a visit. Bielsko-Biala also produced materials for army and navy uniforms. The hat factory Polkap, located in Skoczów, near Bielsko-Biala, was founded in 1924, and 30 years ago employed 800, today 140 people work in its production and it is privately owned. Another division,



Local wool at the center for pastoral culture in Koniakow

delivering knitted caps, operates as a separate company. The hat production includes everything from army and religious head wear to designer hats for design companies. When visiting, we saw Pierre Cardin and Stetson. They use two materials from Australian fine Merino (18-22 micron) and also shavings from rabbits.

Another hat and cap company, Sterkowski, can trace its history back to 1926, when a widow decided to work as a milliner in order to feed her four children. The story of the company is closely tied to the history of Poland, World War II and communism. Surviving all hardships, today the third and fourth generation run the company, father Zygmunt Sterkowski, with his two sons Marek and Jerzy, producing Harris Tweed caps that have found a growing hipster market (hipsters are the saviors of men's head-gear for sure!) and they also produce Merino wool knitted caps both for men and women. sterkowski.com/

Knitted wool hats are the main product of Loman, also located in Bielsko-Biala. During Covid they upgraded and started knitting more luxurious

products, including elegant sweaters. Another active and modern knit brand is Piumo, for hats, scarves, shawls and sweaters, marketing themselves as a Polish brand. However, how much they actually do knit in Poland is a little uncertain. Their products are for women, men and kids. www.loman.pl/ piumo.pl/

The best known knit-brand is Olympia, a rather conservative fashion brand with cardigans and sweaters mimicking elegance of the past, and just as Piumo, uses many fibers, including wool. As the Russian market for these brands has disappeared, a design-upgrade for a more European style-sense, makes style-sense. Though there will always be a market for those cardigans with a certain Chanel- flair. online.olimpia.com.pl/pl/

Poland has many small and nimble knitting-operations that can process wool as well as other yarns, acrylic and cotton being two of the fibers that compete with wool for these perhaps 100 companies spread throughout Poland. A lot of small-scale knitting operations do serve both local designers and European fashion brands. They are small and aim to stay small and nimble. The same goes for cut-and-sew- operations. This is a landscape that is hard to map. Old-fashioned attitudes towards the work-force and conditions that are not fit for scrutiny are the reasons we've been told to stay away from these.

One worth exploring, though, is 9 Maja, a wool mill that spins wool and weaves textiles. It is a vertically integrated mill, which can also spin yarns for independent customers. The company dates back to 1884, when Barciński i S-ka started its activity in Łódź. At that time, Łódź was located in Russia and was known for the production of mainly cotton products. Nevertheless, the factory made a good name for itself in the production of woolen fabrics, competing with the better-known Bielsko wools on the market.

From the beginning of its existence, Fabryka Wyrobów Wełnianych S. Barciński i S-ka was fully integrated with a spinning mill, weaving mill, dyeing and finishing. It produced fabrics from its own carded yarns, as well as from purchased worsted yarn. After World War I, when Poland regained independence, Barciński i S-ka gained a reputation on the domestic and international market for producing high-quality woolen fabrics. After World War II the company

was nationalized, and from then on it was known as Zakłady Przemysłu Wołnianego 9 Maja, named for the day WWII ended in Eastern Europe. In 1992, the company became Woolen Industry Plant 9 Maja, a joint-stock company. 9maja.com.pl/

Poland has one major hand-knitting yarn mill, Arelan, however, the main focus is acrylic, with the production of some wool yarns. As in many European countries, hand-knitting yarns are mainly acrylic, based on price – and when visiting Poland, we were told that wool was traditionally associated with poverty (we assume this was in regard to local wool), and acrylic is still seen as an improvement. However, more gourmet yarn sellers are marketing wool to a younger generation of knitters via online promotion. This is, of course, a global trend. Arelan spin both knitting and weaving yarns, and have their own dye-house. www.arelan.pl/

This brings us to scouring and tops mills in Poland. Südwole Group has a tops mill in Poland, for worsted yarns, not woolen, called East West Spinning (EWS), in Łódź, which they bought about 25-30 years ago. Südwole has invested in a modern textile machinery and uses Australian and New Zealand Merino wool in its production. Apart from 100% wool yarns, it manufactures yarns that are a mixture of wool and other fibers such as polyester, polyamide, silk, linen and cashmere. Most of the product range is exported, so the mill is not intimately tied to local industry. www.suedwollegroup.com/ews/pl/

There are three scouring mills in different parts of Poland, the largest being Poltops, in Żagań, in the western part of the country, close to Dresden. The mill scours for German, Austrian, and Baltics markets, and uses some Polish wool in its production. The mill currently works at full capacity. In addition, they produce non-woven and felted textiles, but perhaps the most surprising offering is fertilizing pellets based on wool, which is made with the wool they cannot use for other purposes. www.poltops.pl/

The two other scouring mills are smaller. Welnomark is modern, and they also make use of the lanolin, which the other two mills do not. They are situated close to Warsaw and scour mainly Polish, finer wool, such as Merino.

Fic-Pol scour for clients in southern Europe, and are located in the southern part of the mountains. They also do skin preparation, and seem to combine this with an abattoir. www.welnomark.pl/ www.ficpol.pl/

As part of the WOOLUME project we also visited the village of Koniaków, near the Carpathian Mountains, which is almost in Slovakia, and where a center for local pastoral culture has been established. Due to the interest from the technical university in Bielsko-Biala and local authority funding, interest is growing for the blackish, grey and white wool and this might pivot a change to more demand and better use of local Polish wools.

NZWTA Fleece Testing

Fleece Testing can play a critical role in animal selection and flock management. Farmers and stock managers can select specific animals to assess their fibre characteristics – typically micron, length, strength and yield, as well as colour, and bulk.

'Fleece Testing information helps on-farm decision making and is relevant to all sheep breeds both in New Zealand and across the

world. At New Zealand Wool Testing Authority (NZWTA) we are proud to have partnered with the farming and wool industry sectors for over 50 years. We deliver consistent testing services and capabilities that benefit the entire industry', says David Alexander Customer Services Manager.

For more information - nzwta.co.nz



Madam Yang Xiaoxiong (centre) with Nanjing Wool Market team

Nanjing Wool Market strengthens business connections

Nanjing Wool Market Conference, China's leading and longest-running wool conference, was very happy to welcome local and international delegates back after a 3 year hiatus. NWMC draws people from all sectors of the wool textile industry worldwide, facilitating the sharing of ideas and information, and providing networking opportunities.

'China continues to be a major hub for wool processing and a major domestic consumer market for wool products', says Madam Yang Xiaoxiong, Chairwoman at Nanjing Wool Market (NWM). 'NWM will

continue to be the first port of call for advice and assistance to foreign companies when doing business with the wool industry in China'.

The wool industry in China continued to operate throughout Covid and lockdowns and continues to buy large quantities of wool from around the world. 70% of world wool processing capacity for scoured wool and tops is based in China.

NWM membership includes woolgrower cooperatives, traders, primary processors, and spinners of wool, and allied fibres all over China. It also welcomes membership from outside China.

NWM also chairs the Joint China Australia Wool Working Group, Joint New Zealand China Wool Working Group and Joint South Africa China Wool Working Group. It is involved in arbitration and trade dispute settlements and offers financial services, including Bills of Exchange and Letters of Credit.

It works closely with AWI, AWEX, and AWTA in training wool classers, wool shearers, and providing educational resources to local wool growers and provides training to the early wool processing industry in China. (www.woolmarket.com.cn/en/)

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UNIQUE TECHNOLOGY FOR WOOL IN BEDDING



Peter Crone
CEO John Marshall & Co.

Joma Wool was originally developed by New Zealand wool export company - John Marshall & Co in the 1980s for the Japanese futon market, but quickly found a niche with premium mattress manufacturers around the world, including Europe and USA. It is the only New Zealand crossbred wool mechanically engineered for use in the mattress and bedding industry.

'Wool in general is an extremely flexible and durable fiber. Wool can be bent more than 20,000 times without breaking and still return to its original shape', says Peter Crone, CEO John Marshall & Co. It is also known for its fast bounce-back and bulk-to-weight ratio that makes it such an attractive option for many applications.

JOMA wool can be used as a loose, high bulk fill for bedding, or blended with other fiber as a component in comfort layers. 'It is extremely soft and comfortable and still highly resilient and durable. Wool is naturally thermoregulating, absorbs vapour, repels liquid and controls odour,' says Peter Crone. 'It is non-allergenic and has superior flame-resistant properties'.

JOMA crimped wool gains 40%-50% in volume, without adding any weight and is springier and more resilient, allowing a mattress to bounce back to its original shape even after constant pressure is applied. It typically has 12-15 crimps per inch, which make the fiber highly resilient, an important factor in the appearance and performance of wool products.

In addition to sleep products, other key markets for John Marshall's wool include the outerwear and apparel, carpet, home textile and furniture industries. The company uses a range of wools and microns from ultrafine Merino wool for use in apparel to coarse, crossbred wool used for products such as insulation.

Joma Wool also fits into a sustainable, circular model. 'All our wool is sourced from certified farms across New Zealand, where mulesing is illegal', he points out. The wool is free from APEO, NPEO, pesticides, carcinogenic colourant and heavy metals. It meets OEKO-TEX® Standard 100. Joma Wool meets extremely strict limit values for hundreds of harmful substances and is New Zealand Farm Assured certified.

To support customers in the USA the company has warehouses in

Ladson, South Carolina, and in the Los Angeles area. 'Both are strategic sites for us and are located perfectly to serve our customers on the east and west coasts,' Crone says. 'Customers who cannot store big orders can rely on our warehouses for storage'.

John Marshall also has an affiliate office in Scottsdale, Arizona, that handles marketing and business development activities in the United States. It plans to expand the team in Arizona to be closer to customers.

We also see a trend from brands and manufacturers in the European market towards natural solutions in both mattress and home furnishings. Leading companies are working to replace non-natural components with natural materials in response to growing demand for sustainable products. JOMA wool is a perfect fit for these applications.

- **Joma Wool Pearls** loose fill, with more bulkiness, for interior furnishings and sleep products, is made of pure, crimped New Zealand wool.
- **Joma Wool Batting** a nonwoven, layered, 100% wool batt for use in the top layer of a mattress and/or quilt, and in futons and sofas. This soft, fluffy material can be of different thicknesses and densities. Exotic natural fibers, such as cashmere and silk, can be added to enhance performance in as much as 10% of total product weight.
- **Joma Memory Wool™** is a needle-punch product of a higher-density layer. It can be used below wool batting to provide a natural FR barrier in the top layer of a mattress and can easily replace a foam layer in a mattress. It is steadily gaining interest with mattress and furniture manufacturers as the awareness of sustainability grows. More companies use natural components for comfort layers, and Memory Wool is an appealing option.
- For the apparel and home textile industries, John Marshall's Halo Wool Knit consists of pure New Zealand wool knitted through a mesh made of recycled polyester yarn. It delivers the unparalleled performance of wool in the form of a free-hanging fabric insulation. Halo Wool Knit is popular for products such as sleeping bags. It also provides a comfortable filling for comforters.

It is important for manufacturers and end users to understand the many benefits that wool fiber offers and John Marshall's new marketing initiative - the "Wonders of Wool" blog- focuses on explaining why we should choose natural fabrics in our daily lives. This includes four key messages: putting nature first; promoting health and well-being; pursuing innovation and performance; and staying true to their word and protecting their brand.

Peter Crone can be contacted at info@joma.co.nz JOMA Wool is represented in Europe by Evi Brilleman - contactus@jomawoolnz.com and UK by KoFibres - genady@kofibres.com



Joma Wool®



Joma Wool® Pearls – loose fill for use in interior furnishings



Joma Wool® Batting – 250/300/350/500gsm 2.2m wide in 20m rolls



Joma Memory Wool™ Needed wool – 250/300/350/500gsm 2.2m wide in 20m rolls



strong wool fibers knitted through mesh of CICLO polyester yarn to create a stable low profile insulation layer for warmth without bulk



CONSUMER RESEARCH ILLUSTRATES POTENTIAL OF SLEEP MARKET

By Jonathan Dyson

The growing importance of the sleep market for British Wool has been highlighted over the past year through three separate pieces of research commissioned by the organisation.

A survey of 1,500 UK-based Britons, carried out in July 2022, provided a deep dive into the nation's sleeping habits and found, for instance, that on average Brits wake up at least three times a night.

One in ten admit they find their bedding to be so uncomfortable it stops them falling asleep, while 10% of women are kept awake by menopausal symptoms. Of those polled, 14% had down in their duvets, 13% feathers, 11% wool, and 33% were unsure of what their

bedding consists of. In addition, 81% had no idea that using wool duvets, pillows, toppers, mattresses and blankets can help regulate the body's changing temperature, and therefore help with sleep.

Similar findings emerged from separate research commissioned by British Wool to mark its 'In Bed With The Menopause' campaign. The survey of 1,000 UK-based women aged 50 and over conducted in May 2022 found that 64% of women didn't know the menopause could affect sleep until going through it.

Then in September 2022, a survey of 2,040 UK-based Brits commissioned by British Wool found that around 2 million people are affected by seasonal affective

disorder (SAD), and accompanied with the January blues this sees Brits sleeping for two hours longer per night in the winter months compared to summer.

The research also found that most Brits (39%) opt to sleep on a memory foam mattress but a third (33%) don't know what their bedding is made of. Only 37% said their bedding was made from natural materials (wool, down or feathers).

Julia Robinson, head of Sleep at British Wool, said: "From the research we can see that Brits are creatures of habit when it comes to sleeping, meaning that sleepless nights and hourly wake ups seem to be commonplace for a lot of us – especially right sided sleepers.

"Making small changes, like using wool bedding, can help to aid night sweats, as wool helps regulate your body temperature. The wool fibres breathe naturally, absorbing moisture from the atmosphere and then releasing it when it's drier, resulting in better and longer sleep.

"Wool bedding has proven to be life changing for bad sleepers and particularly for those going through changes like the menopause which can result in hot flushes, night sweats and a lack of sleep, making them feel exhausted all the time.

"It's shocking that a third of people aren't even aware of what they're bedding is made of, when such a simple change could result in a much better night's sleep no matter what side of the bed you sleep on."

British wool is being used in a growing range of bedding and mattresses. In January, one of the latest partnerships was showcased, with iron bed makers Wrought Iron and Brass Bed Co. launching a new Natural Comfort collection of luxury British wool mattresses.

The five mattresses in the collection are hand crafted to order using traditional techniques and all feature more than 400gsm per side of certified British wool, with the signatures of the range being awarded a 30-year guarantee.

Wrought Iron and Brass Bed Co. holds a Royal Warrant of Appointment to the late Queen Elizabeth II and is the only metal bed maker certified by the Made in Britain NGO.



TESTING ACHIEVES BETTER OUTCOMES FOR ALPACA GROWERS AND PROCESSORS

The majority of Alpaca is grown in Peru, but there is a trend in other South American countries, including Bolivia, for growers to commercialise their flocks. 'For consistent fleece quality, independent testing will become essential', says Jeremy of SGS Wool Testing Services.

Fleece testing also benefits breeders by giving them the ability to monitor the outcomes of their breeding decisions. The result is better prices for their cria, and the fibre, and objective fibre assessment is a crucial path to achieving that.

Jeremy adds: 'understanding the different characteristics of Alpaca fibre is essential for breeding strategies. Fiber testing is a tool that helps validate the content of a graded bale of fibre and can guide decisions on how to transform the quality of fleeces that a herd is producing. Tracking average fibre diameter can be used to identify the best end use for the fibre and provides key information for purchasing decisions. Colour and medullation measurement can also make grading more objective.'

Governments in some South American and African countries recognise that testing Alpaca fibre will increase returns to Alpaca growers and they are supporting farm cooperatives to test their fibre. Alpaca breeders in North and South America, Europe, Scandinavia and Australasia are using SGS testing services in increasing numbers.

The SGS 'EPD' testing protocol is designed to measure the genetic potential of the animals, independent of environmental and growth effects, and is used by the members of the largest Alpaca animal registry in the USA.

'We can be contacted in New Zealand and will liaise with the SGS office closest to you. For Spanish speaking assistance, customers can contact Mariela Llaja, who manages sampling services throughout Central and South America.

For SGS on-line wool testing services - webshop-nz.sgs.com and Jeremy's team please contact woolonline@sgs.com and Mariela in Peru at mariela.llaja@sgs.com or +511 5171900.



loose wool for high-end bedding

By Victor Chesky

Speciality Processors Bradford (SPB) is one of the few remaining independent commission wool processors left in Europe and it continues to provide uninterrupted service to major bedding manufacturers in Japan, South Korea, UK, and Europe. SPB offers treatment options including Superwash, Ultra Fresh, and Backwash for both tops and loose wool in both large and small quantities.

I sat down with Albert Chippendale, director of SPB, to talk about how his special treatment of loose wool and tops has made it a fibre of choice for bedding products.

'To stay competitive manufacturers of bedding products must include wool fibre as part of their production mix and the right treatment of this wool is fundamental to ensure that the finished product is functional and preferred by the consumer'.

'Wool has been a popular material for mattresses, pillows, comforters and other bedding products for centuries, and demand today continues to grow. When you consider all of the advantages of this fibre it is clear to see why this is the case', he says. 'As a natural fibre, wool in bedding offers many advantages, including temperature regulation, hypoallergenic and dust mite resistant properties and is sustainable and eco-friendly, as well as comfortable and soft to touch'.

'We have been working with bedding manufacturers

around the world for over 20 years. Our wool tops are predominantly used for apparel wear. In fact it is our loose wool that is used for high end bedding products'.

SPB treatment complies with Total Easy Care (TEC), Oeko-Tex accredited, and operates to ISO 9001 quality standards. As a large number of SPB customers are manufacturers of bedding products in Japan and South Korea it also offers a green label certification.

'We are based in Britain, and working with British and European wools is central to our business, by geography and availability. We have extensive knowledge around the treatment of these fibres, and what is best for each customer'.

SPB's Ultra Fresh wool treatment provides a highly effective anti-microbial agent, controlling the growth of odour and stain that cause bacteria, mould, and mildew in the fibre. 'This creates a cleaner, hygienic product, while maintaining the quality of the wool and improving its life span', he says.

'Our Backwash process re-washes the wool to make it a much softer and cleaner fibre. At request we can also add bleach to the fibre to improve the colour of the wool', he concludes.

For further information please contact callum@specialityprocessors.co.uk or visit www.specialityprocessors.co.uk



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Treatments

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Tops</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Superwash ● Backwash ● Ultra Fresh ● Blending & Gilling | <p>Loose Wool</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Superwash ● Backwash ● Ultra Fresh |
|---|---|



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Andrew Hogley

12 months and very much mirrors the situation in New Zealand, the largest producer of cross-bred wool that is comparable to British wool.

Andrew, said: "It is reassuring that the vast majority of the 2022 British Wool clip has been sold. The 2022 British wool clip was 95% sold ahead of moving into the 2023 wool selling season. This is not the case in other cross-bred wool markets – significant volumes of similar wools in Europe and South America remain unsold.

"British Wool's unique system of grading, and the quality, remains a differentiator in the global market allowing British Wool to monetise the clip even in a downturn.

"We are confident with the work we are doing with our licensee partners that once global economies start to recover, we are in an excellent position to benefit and start returning real value to our farmer members."

As with the global economy, British wool prices have faced a challenging 12 months, mainly fueled by Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the subsequent increase in energy costs which has driven inflation rates.

Increased inflation and interest rates have meant that consumers have significantly less disposable income than 12-18 months ago.

Many of the products that use cross-bred wool, be that a carpets, mattresses or sofas, are high value discretionary purchases.

Many home interiors brands have reported a significant downturn in consumer demand which, in turn, translated into weaker demand for wool as a raw material.

Andrew Hogley, CEO at British Wool, said: "Increasing energy costs have led to significant cost increases in the supply chain; from wool scouring to spinning and dyeing, some as much as 30%. This has led to increased retail prices to the consumer for wool based products."

This has resulted in a drop in British wool prices over the past

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Harrison Spinks



Traceable wool farm

TRACEABLE WOOL PENETRATES NEW PRODUCT SECTORS



Graham Clark

British Wool's traceable wool scheme has gone from strength to strength over the past 12 months, with the addition of several new brands to the scheme.

Following a successful trial with national consumer brands Harrison Spinks, Woolroom, Devon Duvets and Luna Textiles, this enabled British Wool to implement a new warehouse management system that traces all the wool graded and packed via QR codes.

Graham Clark, Marketing Director at British Wool, said: "In the space of a year we handle over 11 million fleeces across eight depots in the UK. Farms on average produce 500KG of wool of varying different grades."



John Arbon

"The fact that all the wool we grade through our depots can now be offered as traceable is a sizeable achievement and one that we are all very proud of. The system we have in place is the most comprehensive in the UK and comparable to any system globally."

Brands that have joined British Wool's traceable scheme over the past 12 months include John Arbon and Laxtons (yarns), Millbrook and Dreams (mattresses), Floks and Cowberry (bedding) and Avena Carpets.

Graham continued: "It's great to see that we are still growing our traceable ranges in the sleep sector, and I am delighted that we are now starting to penetrate other product categories, such as yarns and carpets. We have several other brands in the pipeline who are looking at joining the scheme, which is exciting news."

"As part of our traceability programme we have created some really interesting and compelling hero farmer stories for the brands. Such stories help communicate the fact that the wool in the products is all traceable to specific farms, something consumers are keen to hear more and more."

Laurence Borrows, National Sales Manager at Harrison Spinks, said: "The traceability system used at British Wool is excellent - we have had tours with several national retailers who have all been very impressed with the operation. We are very proud to be one of the first to come on board with the scheme and are delighted to be able to contribute a bit extra to the hard-working sheep farmers."

HOW TO CREATE THE BEST SHRINKPROOF TOPS



SPB treats tops and loose fibre at its purpose-built plant and has been doing so for customers all around the world over the last 20 years. 'We have been perfecting our Superwash treatment to create a service that is 100% reliable', says Albert Chippendale. 'And this is why our customers keep coming back to us'.

'Retail consumers increasingly favour products that are made from natural fibres, with an emphasis on animal welfare, worker wellbeing, and environmental accreditations. Consumers also demand performance and durability. To achieve all this wool fibre must be treated appropriately. There are a number of new shrinkproof treatments that have come on to the market lately but the jury is still out regarding the level of their efficacy', says Albert Chippendale.

'Not all wool is created equal and not all wool types will require the same treatment. At request we can also bleach the fibre to improve the colour of the wool', he says.

'Our unique process enables us to blend fibres to a very accurate percentage. In addition to this we can blend wool and other fibres after the treatment process in our state-of-the-art gilling equipment, designed to give a superior, more level sliver. Due to our high level of gilling equipment and experience we are very efficient when it comes to turn around times'.



'Wool tops with Oeko-Tex certification is the largest part of our business. Our Superwash, Ultra Fresh, and Backwash treatments provide a unique process to ensure that our customers tops receive the best treatments available, and yarn and fabric manufacturers further down the chain are assured of excellent performance when making a finished product'.

SPB treatment complies with Total Easy Care (TEC), and operates to ISO 9001 quality standards. As a large number of SPB customers are manufacturers of bedding products in Japan and South Korea the company also offers green label certification.

'We process quantities big and small, from 5kg to 100 tons. Our customers always receive the right colour and the washable properties required to their needs. We have a quick turn-around time and customers usually receive their wool back within days', he concludes.

For more information please contact callum@specialityprocessors.co.uk www.specialityprocessors.co.uk

The UK departure from the European Union and the impact of the Covid pandemic on businesses has been far-reaching for textile companies on both sides of the English Channel. Speciality Processors Bradford (SPB) is one of the few remaining independent commission wool processors left in Europe and continues to provide uninterrupted services in Superwash, Ultra Fresh, and Backwash treatments for loose wool and tops.

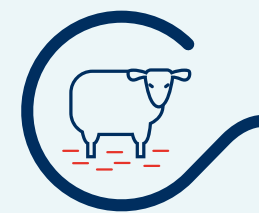
'We are one of the few remaining independent commission wool processors left in Europe and our customers can be confident that when they send their wool to us it will be processed to their exact specification', says Albert Chippendale, SPB.



Sustainable, ethical and responsible.

Our six pillars

Setting the standard in wool production.



KIND TO ANIMALS



ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY



QUALITY ASSURED



TRACEABILITY



SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE



NON-MULESED WOOL



There are six key principles to British Wool that not only make it unique, they offer buyers peace of mind that the product they are purchasing is truly the right choice.

To find out more, contact the British Wool marketing team – marketing@britishwool.org.uk or call 01274 688666.

britishwool.org.uk



REDUCING CARBON FOOTPRINT WITH ENERGY SELF-SUFFICIENCY



Tim Holgate (left) and Daniel Isbecque at Haworth Scouring and Combing

Sustainability in wool is generally perceived to be centred on Merino wool', comments Daniel Isbecque and Tim Holgate, joint managing directors at Curtis Wool Direct (CWD) in the UK, 'But it is important to point out that both New Zealand and the UK, the largest producing countries of crossbred wools, have been implementing far-reaching environmental and sustainability programs of their own'.

'Consumers buying products made from crossbred wools for carpets, upholstery, knitwear and handknitting yarns also demand

evidence of sustainability practices, as well as traceability and animal welfare. Sustainability is both a commercial imperative as well as an ethical position, and at CWD we have been following good practices for many years', adds Daniel Isbecque.

CWD had been working toward energy self-sufficiency well before the current global energy crisis hit, culminating with a new Combined Heat and Power plant (CHP) coming on line in February this year, vastly improving energy security whilst gaining a significant reduction in carbon footprint. 'Our scouring facility at Haworth

Scouring Company (HSC) is one of the most environmentally responsible wool processors worldwide, with a significant list of accreditations including GOTS, Nordic Swan and Oeko-Tex. Crossbred wool tops supplied by CWD are processed at Haworth Combing Co (HCC) on the latest NSC Schlumberger ERA combing machines, installed as part of our long-term environmental investment policy'.

CWD supplies greasy and scoured wool and tops to all parts of the textile industry worldwide, for carpet, hosiery, cloth, hand and machine knit, bedding and



Curtis power plant reduces carbon footprint

the nonwoven sectors. It is a registered buyer of British wool and continues to be the largest buyer, purchasing in excess of 50% of Britain's annual clip. In addition to British wool it sells and processes a wide range of other origin wools, including Norwegian, New Zealand, Real Shetland, Irish and other European wool.

Daniel remarks that 'as the largest wool merchant in the UK our customers expect us to deliver the wool they need, all year round, quickly, at very competitive prices, and with consistent high quality. Owning and operating our own scouring and combing facility is a key element to providing control over quality and logistics. It enables us to source and process a very diverse range of wool types on time, even at short notice, to customers worldwide, and achieve this in an environmentally acceptable way.'

Richard Norris, newly appointed managing director at HSC says,

'We operate at the highest level of environmental compliance to ensure that our impact on the local and wider environment is kept to a minimum'.

'At Haworth Scouring we are always striving to reduce our environmental impact, always looking at technology to help improve efficiency. In early 2022 we invested a multi-million sum in a CHP which was commissioned earlier this year. This technology fits our business perfectly, as we need hot water, steam and electricity to scour wool efficiently, all of which the CHP supplies'.

'The CHP uses a Rolls Royce V12 gas engine to generate the electricity we need. We use complex heat recovery devices to capture the heat generated from the engine and convert it into steam, which is required for heating water for the scouring process. Nothing is wasted from the engine and any waste heat will

be used to heat all the offices on site at Haworth Scouring'.

'All this leads to an impressive 26% per year reduction in our carbon footprint. We are very pleased with the plant's performance so far and there are more opportunities to develop further efficiency gains and significant further reductions in our carbon footprint', Richard further comments. 'We also achieve industry best practice for water consumption, only using 4.5 litres of water per kilogram of greasy wool processed and our rinse water is 95% recycled.'

Wool grease is recovered as a useful by-product of the scouring process. All metal, plastic packaging materials, cardboard and other packaging are collected for recycling and re-use. Dust and other dry solid wastes from the wool fibre are captured and recycled for use in agricultural soil improvement. 100% of the sludge produced by the effluent treatment system is collected and recycled to agricultural land for soil improvement.



Richard Norris next to touch panel interface controlling and regulating power output

BRITISH WOOL'S NEW INITIATIVE SETS THE STANDARD FOR YARN IN EUROPE

British Wool has launched a new initiative to showcase the best in British wool yarn, working with eight of the leading yarn spinners across Europe.

The Yarn Collection provides a comprehensive sourcing guide, simplifying the process for buyers and designers interested in incorporating British wool into their projects.

The range includes yarns from Z Hinchcliffe & Sons, Laxtons, Shepley Yarns, The Wool Library, Knoll Yarns, E.Miroglio, Hilados Egarfil and Transilana, and offers a diverse selection of yarns.

Haldi Kranich-Wood, Business Development Manager at British Wool, said: "We are delighted to bring this collection to market and offer what is the most comprehensive range of British yarns that have been available for many years. All the ranges have been through our licensing scheme and are fully certified meaning they can use the iconic Shepherds Crook mark."

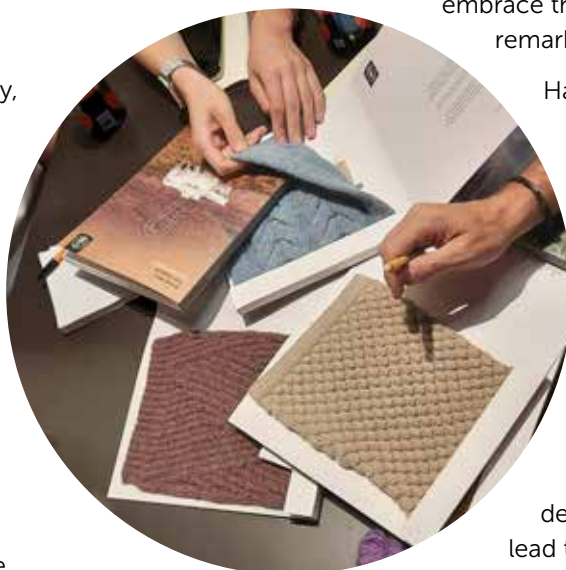
As well as existing yarns, the collection also includes five innovative yarns that exemplify the versatility and potential of British wool in the knitwear industry.

Haldi, continued: "We wanted to show what could be achieved with British wool if you think outside the box. The yarns include blends with other premium natural fibres including silk, mohair and alpaca, all giving a unique handle and appearance to the yarn. As a further trial we have also used air spun technology to create a new British wool yarn - this gives an exceptionally soft handle and something that would suit 'next-to-the-skin' applications."

These distinctive yarns serve as tangible

demonstrations for buyers and designers, illustrating the remarkable breadth of possibilities that local wool offers when crafting new apparel collections for the AW 24/25 season.

Through The Yarn Collection initiative, British Wool is not only urging the fashion industry to reconsider the possibilities of British wool fibre, but also inspiring industry professionals to push boundaries and embrace the limitless potential that this remarkable local material holds.



Haldi said: "We have had numerous positive conversations with leading British and European brands about the collection. Many of the brands did not realise the breadth of the current British wool yarn offering that were available and were also extremely interested in the more innovative yarns we have developed. We hope this will lead to many new British wool-rich apparel ranges in the retail arena over the coming seasons."

The Yarn Collection incorporates the Shepherd's Crook mark logo, a symbol of quality and integrity. This logo guarantees that the yarns included in the collection are exclusively made from British wool sourced from local sheep farmers. It acts as a trusted seal of approval, providing assurance to buyers and designers that they are working with authentic British wool.

For brands, the Shepherd's Crook mark logo offers peace of mind, ensuring that the yarns they select are not only of superior quality, but also ethically and sustainably sourced. It enables them to make informed choices and support local British wool growers while contributing to a more transparent and responsible supply chain.



Supplying over 1 million kgs of textile raw materials to the world every year



www.europawools.com

T +44(0)1484 846878 | info@europawools.com



Richard Morsley



Europa Wool warehouse West Yorkshire – supplying over 1 million kgs of textile fibre to customers worldwide

COMPREHENSIVE STOCK BANK OF FIBRE FROM THE UK

COVID has shown us that it can be a risky business for wool processors to hold large stocks for their manufacturing needs. 'It makes more sense to buy short-term as needed, in particular when the cost of natural fibre can be quite volatile', says Richard Morsley of Europa Wool in the UK.

Europa Wool currently holds the largest stock of New Zealand and Australian wool and tops in its UK

warehouse. Speaking to Victor Chesky, Editor *wool2yarn global* earlier this year, Richard Morsley commented that 'we supply over 1 million kgs of textile raw materials to the worldwide wool trade every year, making us a leading UK stockist. Many of our customers buy smaller quantities of fibre week-to-week as needed, and use us as their stock bank facility'.

Europa Wool supplies wools of many origins from 17.5 to 38 microns, specialising in New

Zealand, Australian, British, and Falkland wool, and sources and stocks scoured wools from many other origins including South Africa, South America, and various European origins.

'We provide a very prompt service, so many companies use us as a matter of choice', he said. 'Our customers appreciate the security of knowing we can deliver quickly, and if we don't have a specific type and quantity in stock we will find it for them'.

In stock is a large variety of scoured New Zealand lambs, slipes and shorn wool in 22-38 micron, Pieces and Fleeces 28-38 micron, scoured and carbonised Australian lamb's wool in 18-28 micron, and South American lamb's wool.

Europa Wool also stocks quality tops for many applications in the worsted spinning sector, specialising in South American tops 'Monte Video' from 18.5 - 29.5 microns and a wide range of British tops from rare breeds to

mainstream crossbred types.

The company also stocks many different types of broken and open tops, tops from South Africa 'Cape' from 18 - 22.5 microns and Australian tops 17.5 - 22.5 microns and European tops 24 - 30 microns.

Richard comments that 'in addition, we stock various types of fibres for effect in knitting, weaving and carpet yarns. Our range includes Wool Burrs, Wool

Nepps, and Wool Slubs in scoured and carbonised form. We offer a wide range of speciality fibres in combed tops, scoured and noils in Silk, Alpaca, Mohair, Cashmere and many other types. Our knowledge and expertise enables us to source and supply many different types at competitive prices and unbeatable quality'.

'We can comb most natural fibres and we can create blends from all natural fibres and synthetic fibres. If a customer is looking for something unique we can bespoke gill blend combed tops to create blends of many fibres, starting from as little as 10kgs up to large runs'.

'The company can spin on the semi-worsted system, creating unique yarns and blends from weaving yarns up to knitting yarns in our own mill. Our count range is 2NM - 16NM. We can supply these cone ready for dyeing or reeling and hank all types of yarns from 50g skeins up to 5kg skeins using a measured length system, as well as provide a balling service, balling hand-knitting yarns in minimum ball weights of 50g'.

Other processes include combing, garneting, carding, precision cutting, random cutting and opening and pulling.

Richard Morsley can be contacted at info@europawools.com



NEW APPLICATIONS FOR BRITISH WOOL

The past 12 months have seen the emergence of several new end uses for British wool, including trainers, insoles for shoes, rope and face coverings, while the use of the fibre in the sleep, fashion and transport sectors has also continued to expand.

The developments promise to help reduce the reliance on the carpet sector for the majority of the sales of British wool.

As the applications for wool fibres grown in the UK continue to broaden, Graham Clark, director of marketing at British Wool, believes a number of factors are at play.

"Companies are increasingly looking closer to home for raw

materials plus the environmental benefits of wool are well documented," he tells *wool2yarn*. "I think many companies in today's climate are looking at manufacturing more environmentally friendly products and we expect this innovation to continue moving forward, which is a great thing for British Wool and our members."

British Wool estimates that among the various end uses for wool licenced by the organisation, carpets account for 52%, with knitwear taking 25%, cloth 14%, sleep 7% and other products 2%.

Clark notes that among these product categories, "sleep is a fast-growing segment for our wool and



By Jonathan Dyson



we have many brand partners in this space."

"Fashion has always been an important sector for British wool and continues to be so. We work with many brands such as Harris Tweed Hebrides but what has been great is a big increase in the number of UK-based brands using or are looking at using British wool in their garments, so this bodes well for the future."

Clark says the growing variety of applications for British wool highlights the fibre's diverse qualities.

"We have over 60 breeds of sheep in the UK so there is pretty much a wool for all applications. This is a big benefit we have over many other wool growing nations. Our grading at British Wool is crucial to this."

He adds "We work very close with all companies looking at innovative new uses for wool, helping on things such as specifying the correct types of wool, which is crucial for any product."

Grenson launches British wool sneaker

Wool has been appearing in a growing range of footwear over recent years, and the British wool industry is beginning to capitalise on this shift. In May 2023, UK shoemaker Grenson collaborated with the wool felt specialists Doppelhaus to launch its first shoe made using British wool.

The fabric used is the Cloudwool nonwoven felt from Doppelhaus. Grenson said it worked closely with the company, which creates materials for both fashion and homeware, to develop the circular British wool felt to a point where it can be used in shoemaking too.

Grenson pointed out that because the felt goes straight from wool fibre to fabric, "the need for multiple processes and the energy required for spinning and weaving is reduced, making British wool much more sustainable and efficient, with the material remaining pure, natural and fully compostable at the end of life."

Glencroft develops first British wool insoles

British wool's use in footwear also expanded in 2023 when the Yorkshire brand Glencroft launched the first and so far only insoles to be licensed by British Wool.

Made from 100% British wool, the new insoles, which retail at £9.95, were launched following over a year of product development by Glencroft, which said it ensured that only the very best British wool from local sheep farmers was used throughout the supply chain, helping it pass British Wool's rigorous grading system.

At 10mm wool pile thickness, the company claimed that "these luxurious insoles are over 250% thicker than their budget counterparts and can be cut to fit any size – perfect to keep feet warm amid the recent cold snap."

Edward Sexton of Glencroft said: "As part of the product development process for our traceable insole, we connected the



British Wool supply chain with material manufacturing that attaches the latex sole, as well as UK cutting and printing facilities. Even the box has been printed locally in Yorkshire.”

Sustainable Rope aims to tackle microplastics in our waterways

A new example of how wool can be used as an alternative to synthetics emerged from the West Yorkshire firm Sustainable Rope.

The company was a joint winner of the 2022 Innovation in Wool Awards, organised by The Worshipful Company of Woolmen and The Company of Merchants of The Staple of England.

Kate Drury, founder of Sustainable Rope, was also one of 50 winners, selected from more than 900 applications, in the annual Women in Innovation Awards, run by Innovate UK and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

Her business has developed a natural fibre alternative to synthetic ropes for the aqua-culture and mari-culture industries in order to reduce microplastics polluting our waterways. It is made from 100% wool, no plastic, and it is biodegradable, renewable and sustainable with natural antibacterial properties.

The rope is manufactured in a range of diameters, from small lengths to full coils, all using traceable

British wool. The manufacturing process supports local producers and craftspeople.

Marine rope pollution is believed to be a significant ecological problem, and Sustainable Rope is now being used for growing seaweed as a replacement to plastic rope.

“I came to understand the essential transition we must make to natural products to assist ecosystem renewal as quickly as possible. Wool is a biogenic resource that can be deployed to assist with this.”

Face coverings developed using British wool

A new application for British wool has also emerged from the Face Coverings project, with British Wool and Future Fashion Factory (FFF) collaborating to design and manufacture personalised, reusable face coverings.

The wool coverings have been developed amid the huge demand for cheap, synthetic, single use facemasks, prompted by the Covid-19 pandemic, which has already caused major fibre repurposing issues worldwide.

British Wool and FFF are working together to find new uses for coarser British wool types within the fashion industry, and in doing so have also helped to develop new manufacturing supply chains in the UK. The Face Coverings project is one such example.

By exploring the prototyping of new fabrics, academic lead Professor Parikshit Goswami, alongside a team of researchers at the University of Huddersfield, and the University of Leeds Professor Stephen Russell, have worked to produce a nonwoven variant of British wool that is said to possess the required porosity needed for fashion applications.

Lochcarron of Scotland switches to British wool for Scottish kilt fabric

The growing desire for sustainable and locally-sourced products has led tartan manufacturer Lochcarron of Scotland to create a 100% British wool Strome Kilt fabric.

The fibre for Lochcarron’s previous kilt cloth, woven using wool from New Zealand, covered approximately



15,000 miles before reaching the company’s HQ in Scotland. By sourcing wool more locally, within the UK, the firm said it is reducing the carbon footprint of its fabric. Now, this cloth only travels under 400 road miles.

Lochcarron said it is converting between 20-25% of the wool yarn that it purchases to British sources, which are mostly Scottish.

“As we move forward in improving our environmental and sustainable credentials, we want to be transparent with our customers and invite them to learn more about our sustainability aims,” Lochcarron said.

“As the world’s leading manufacturer of tartan, we feel it is important to adapt and develop with what is becoming one of the most important influencing factors of modern times, environmental sustainability. Our new 100% British Wool Strome Kilt quality does just that.

“Our traditional 16oz cloth is the perfect handle for creating authentic Scottish kilts, so it was only natural for its next step to becoming 100% British, and in fact, mostly Scottish!”

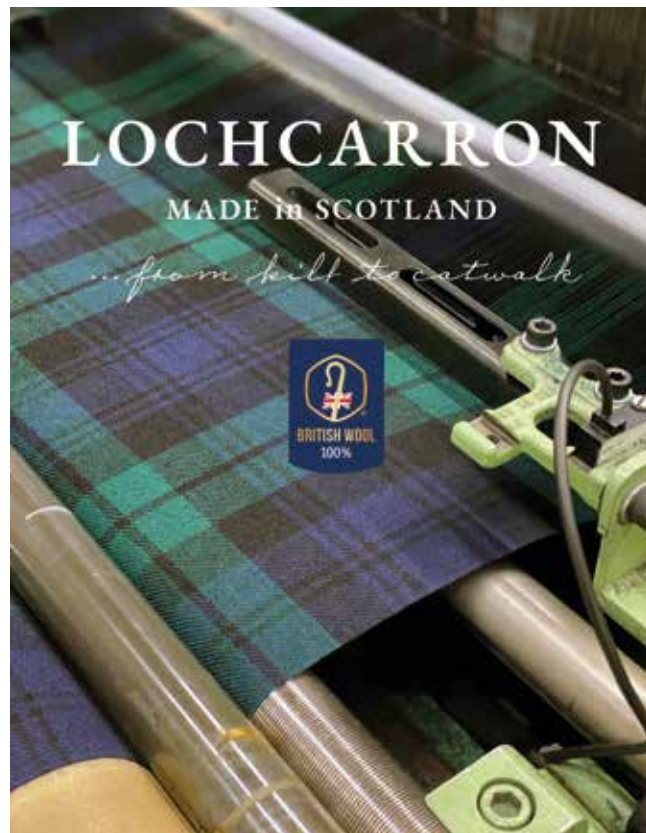
Johnstons of Elgin and Prickly Thistle explore new treatment for coarse Scottish wool

Efforts are underway to develop additional new applications for Scottish wool. The project is led by UK textile manufacturers: Johnstons of Elgin and Prickly Thistle.

Johnstons of Elgin is a well-known clothing and accessories brand, while Prickly Thistle is a weaving company based in the Scottish Highlands. The aim of their collaboration is for Scottish wool fibres to be used more widely in the Scottish textile industry. The majority of the yarn used in luxury clothing made in Scotland, such as cashmere and Merino wool, is imported from overseas.

Inspired by the advancements in softening treatments for human hair, the first-of-its-kind project is looking at ways to make typically thick, coarse Scottish sheep fleece more suitable for use in clothing and other textile products.

The research project is being supported by the Industrial Biotechnology Innovation Centre (IBioIC) and the University of Edinburgh.



As part of the feasibility study, chemistry researchers aim to use enzymes that naturally decompose wool to treat the fibres in a controlled way to achieve a thinner, softer material. Variables such as the temperature, quantity of the enzyme and length of time the fibres are treated for will be tested to deliver the best outcome.

Initial results from the study are expected later this year, which will determine whether a suitable yarn quality can be achieved and used in future products designed by both Prickly Thistle and Johnstons of Elgin. The project team also hope to share their findings with the wider wool industry, in the hope of opening up a new Scottish supply chain and contributing to the sector's regeneration.

The Isle Mill launches new interior fabric collection made from British wool

The increased value placed on local sourcing could also be seen in the latest interior fabric collection from The Isle Mill, part of the Scottish Macnaughton group.

The collection, named Hermitage Castle, features 22 fabrics for both the domestic and contract market, which are all 100% undyed, made from British wool and manufactured from natural colours.

The collection is said to be suitable for any interior setting, and the versatile fabrics can be used for upholstery and drapes. To complement the range of fabrics, The Isle Mill also created its Hermitage throws, woven using a finer yarn from the same fleece, which is said to result in a cosy throw with a natural handle.

"The Isle Mill wants to support British wool farmers by using locally sourced wool, scoured and spun in Yorkshire, woven and finished in Scotland," the company said.

"Wool is a natural choice for our company – renewable, biodegradable, easy to care for safe, naturally flame retardant and dust repellent.

"By manufacturing all the product line in the United Kingdom, we have a low carbon footprint manufacturing route and we believe that this product



has longevity of life and is a sustainable choice for our customers."

British wool fabric from Camira used in trains on London's new Elizabeth Line

Transport is another valuable market sector for British Wool, highlighted last year when it partnered with West Yorkshire-based firm Camira to create the fabric used on the new trains operating on London's new Elizabeth Line high speed railway service.

Opened in May 2022, the line was named in honour of the late Queen Elizabeth II and runs for more than 60 miles, from west to east. It features 70 new 200-yard long trains, each able to carry up to 1,500 people.

In keeping with the royal name of the line, regal purple is the dominant colour on the Elizabeth Line branding, which is carried right through to the new fabric design from British design studio Wallace Sewell, featuring a purple, pinstripe pattern.

The regal purple colourway used on the new line is

Pantone 3515 C and was one of the official colours of the Platinum Jubilee, which celebrated the late Queen's 70th year as monarch in June 2022.

The fabric was woven by Camira on wire looms to create a moquette with both cut and loop textured pile. The company has been designing and creating fabrics for transport systems across the world using British wool for several decades.

Sarah Mallinson, senior transport designer at Camira, said: "When creating the fabric, it was important to us to use a material that is not only sustainable, but durable.

"The natural elasticity of wool fibres means that products made of wool can endure a lot of compression – perfect for something like a London Underground tube that is used by thousands of people every day.

"Wool also has great self-cleaning properties, meaning that fabric made from wool is more hygienic than many other material alternatives."

UPS AND DOWNS FOR BRITISH WOOL IN CARPET SECTOR

by Jonathan Dyson

we continue to work very closely with their global sales teams to help drive growth. During the past 12 months we have also launched new 100% British wool residential ranges with Crucial Trading and Kingsmead Carpets (both part of the Headlam Group) and we hope to develop additional ranges with the group moving forward."

Assessing the main opportunities for British Wool in the carpet sector, Clark says: "Working with our current licensee partners is the main opportunity in this area – delivering sales training and selling aids to help them drive sales. We are also targeting other carpet companies who currently don't use British wool."

Asked what the main challenge is for UK-grown wool in the carpet industry at present, he responds: "Believe it or not price. Although British wool is cheap at the moment other carpet wools are cheaper (mainly because their countries don't have an equivalent to British Wool as an organisation) and many brands opt for these lower value (and lower quality) wools in their products."

He adds: "Processing costs have risen substantially over the past 12-18 months (energy costs mainly) which has also provided a challenge for all involved."

The carpet sector remains the most important product category for British Wool, with the organisation estimating that just over half of its wool goes into carpets, with the two main markets being the UK and China. Reflecting on the past 12 months, Graham Clark, director of marketing at British Wool, says the carpet industry has

presented a range of challenges and opportunities for UK wool producers.

"The retail carpet sector, like retail in general, has been challenging due to the cost-of-living crisis," he says. "However, on a more positive note, contract carpet business has picked up.

"Our largest carpet customer and indeed the biggest user of British wool globally are Brintons and

WOOL TESTING AUTHORITY EUROPE

New & Improved Website Launched in 2022

Wool Testing Authority Europe (WTAE) is the only accredited fibre testing laboratory in the Northern Hemisphere. WTAE

test greasy wool, scoured wool and wool sliver, covering almost all commercial requirements for all wool types. In order to provide IWTO Certification, samples are obtained independently by WTAE approved sampling agents who rigorously test according to IWTO Regulations. WTAE offers sampling services across all of Europe including the Baltics, and Euro Asia. Dr Courtney Pye talked with *wool2yarn* about the last 12 months at WTAE and the challenges the business has faced.

"We can't speak about 2022 without discussing Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February. The subsequent economic shock it sent though the world's economies affected every industry, including the wool industry. On the back of the pandemic, and just as the world was beginning to come through the other side, this was a real blow. Add to this China's zero Covid policy, and the wool industry has really suffered over the last 3 years. In some ways, 2022 was tougher than the pandemic itself, certainly in terms of the world's economy – energy and chemical prices saw staggering increases. We use caustic solution for our VM



Dr Courtney Pye

determination which quadrupled in price in mid-2022 along with increasing energy and other running costs.

"Despite all of these challenges we are still here supporting the wool industry with our testing services and will continue to do so. We took the opportunity in 2022 to update and improve our website. It had not been updated since the business opened in 2004 so we thought it was time for a change. The website has been given a makeover and is now more modern and user-friendly. We have also added a feature to book and pre-pay for fleece testing to make the service more streamlined for our fleece testing customers. Our website provides a wealth of information on the services we offer, including details on sending samples to the laboratory for our European customers post Brexit; www.wtaeurope.com

'As the world gets back to some form of normality, I am hopeful that the challenges we have faced will begin to ease. I was able to travel to Kyoto, Japan in May for the first IWTO Congress since 2019. It was wonderful to see everyone again and to freely travel without the worry of restrictions or the threat of quarantine.'

WTAE is fully licensed by the IWTO and accredited to ISO 17025 by UKAS and is a member of the ILRT Group (including AWTA, NZWTA and WTB) as well as Interwoollabs. 'Being in control of the entire testing process, from sampling through to the issue of a test certificate, is fundamental to the integrity of the service we provide', says Dr Pye. 'Wool buyers and sellers can be completely confident that this impartial service, coupled with WTAE's technical ability and excellent round trial performance, ensures that certified results can be relied upon time and time again.

'We offer a test report service, and all samples are tested in accordance with the IWTO testing regulations. The service is very popular, especially so during the pandemic. It has allowed sellers to continue to gain valuable knowledge about their commodity without the additional costs of acquiring IWTO certification during a very difficult time commercially.'

WTAE also offers an online portal to all clients as part of its service. Clients can access test results as they complete in the laboratory through this portal and can also access and download test certificates, test reports and invoices. Clients can also request document amendments and check tests. This feature is still available on the new website.

'We also operate a document verification service. Buyers can authenticate the certificate that accompanies their purchase by submitting a verification check via our website. Simply submit the test number of the certificate and the verification code at the bottom of the document and WTAE will send back the document held in our secure records. A quick comparison will confirm the validity of your certificate', she concludes.



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An additional benefit of using OFDA 2000 is the generation of micron profiles. When testing the staple, the OFDA tracks the micron along the length of the staple showing you how the micron has varied throughout the growing season. Peaks and dips in the micron can show how the animal has responded to different factors throughout the season. Dips in micron may indicate stress and peaks in micron may indicate a positive response to increased nutrition or medical intervention. It gives the breeder an idea of the demands on the animal for nutrition and where these demands increase and fall throughout the year.

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2680

EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION

Techwool has over 40 years of experience and knowledge in trading Australian wool. So how to pass this experience and knowledge on to the next generation is a question I put to Rod Franklyn of Techwool Trading, the largest exporter of Australian wool.

'Employing and educating the next generation of woollies has



Rod Franklyn

always been an important part of our company ethos. Knowledge is a powerful tool and we believe that sharing knowledge benefits all in the wool industry', says Rod Franklyn. 'There are Australian wool companies today whose CEOs started their careers at Techwool, and we are proud of their achievements'.

'We have a particular emphasis on bringing the next generation into



Evan Croake (centre) with next generation Techwool team – left to right: Sarah Druce, Aaron Shaw, Brendon Miller, Ruby Meston, Ken Welsh, Michael Jury.



Wool Buyers - Brokers - Exporters

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Techwool Trading



the business and training them for the future. Our current team is young and energetic and we nurture this energy for them to use and build on', he says.

Rod Franklyn further comments, 'In the early days of Australian wool trading we forged strong and long-lasting relationships with mills around the world. Nothing has changed. We continue to build on and cement these relationships. I am very proud that our young team continues to expand these relationships'.

Techwool Trading exports greasy wool in 13.5 - 40 microns. This includes Merino fleece, skirtings, crossbreds, cardings and oddment types. It buys 50% from auction and 50% private buying.

Techwool was one of the first

companies in Australia to receive Australian Trusted Trader status by the Australian Government. 'Our Australian Trusted Trader (TT) status is of great value to our customers around the world. It reduces red tape at customs and speeds up the flow of our deliveries', says Evan Croake, Techwool Export Trade Manager.

'Demand for Australian wool in India and Europe grew during the last 18 months. Exports to India lifted by 100% on the previous year, and exports to Europe lifted by 60%. However, China continues to import over 80% of the Australian clip and the largest proportion of our exports are destined for topmakers in China. Last season we exported more than 300,000 bales of Australian wool.'

'Traceability and environmental

accreditation also matter', says Evan Croake. 'Our strong direct buying ability ensures that we can deliver fully traceable wool, whilst ticking the boxes for non-mulesed, ethically produced premium wool and Responsible Wool Standards (RWS) certification if required'.

'The cost for RWS certified wool has come down significantly since its peak', says Evan Croake. 'This is partly due to increased availability of RWS wool in Australia. We still see RWS as an important addition to wool trading in Australia, particularly for buyers in Europe. RWS certification has opened up new markets for wool fibre. Textile manufacturers that have not previously used wool because of mulesing and other environmental issues are now using RWS wool in their production', he comments.



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David Ritchie and Myungjin (Jim) Kim

Constantly changing climatic conditions in Australia, from drought to wet, affect the yield, fibre length, and tencel strength of wool, says David Ritchie of Victoria Wool Processors (VWP) in Australia. 'Knowing how to carbonise these wools is fundamental to delivering wool to the correct specification, providing best performance fibre required by spinners and knitters around the world.'

David Ritchie adds that 'in particular, when customers need specific wool types it makes better sense to carbonise these types with us. In today's market where

wool prices continue to rise, mistakes can be costly. Our expert technicians can work directly with spinners to develop specific types most suited to their needs'.

'We work with wool exporters, spinners, and knitters, providing a one-stop-shop service to source greasy wool to their specification, carbonise it, and deliver it anywhere in the world'.

VWP's carbonising plant is located in Melbourne. Established in 1990 by Myungjin (Jim) Kim, the company has been trading and processing carbonised wool for almost 40 years. VWP offers a full

commission carbonising service tailored to meet the needs of each customer.

It also offers a comprehensive greasy fleece buying service for both firm offer and indent buying. It has buyers throughout all wool growing regions of Australia sourcing any wool types for its customers, including lambs' wool, full fleece merino, crossbreds, and downs wool.

Australian carbonised wool is exported to Europe, South Korea, and Japan, where consistent quality, traceability, and environmental accreditation are paramount. 'Processing in Asia has become less competitive as labour and energy costs increase in these countries. Buying carbonised wool rather than greasy wool from Australia is also more cost effective and when the wool arrives it is ready for use', comments David Ritchie.

VWP is RWS (Responsible Wool Standard) certified and can also provide non-mulesing certificates when required.

'When our customers receive wool carbonised by us, they receive wool that is clean, processed with the environment in mind, and ready to use', he says. 'Most importantly our customers can be confident that they will receive 100% Australian wool. Australian quarantine laws prevent the importing of foreign wools onto its shores so blending with inferior types from other countries is not possible'.



EXPERIENCE WOOL AUSTRALIAN CARBONISED

- Wool buyers throughout Australia
- Forward and prompt efficient shipment
- Offering the highest quality Australian wool
- Guaranteed customer satisfaction

VWP VICTORIA WOOL PROCESSORS
 38 Doherty's Road, Laverton North, Australia 3026
 Email: vwp@vwp.com.au • Tel: +61 (3) 9369 0499
 Fax: +61 (3) 9369 0599 • www.vwp.com.au



NON-MULESED, RWS, AND GOTS WOOLS FROM ARGENTINA



Lempriere Argentina is one of Argentina's leading wool exporters. It's experienced and committed team source wool direct from growers, sorting at its facilities in Trelew, Patagonia, and exporting to customers around the world. Patagonia wool is 100% mulesing free and is available as Organic and RWS certified.

Headquartered in Buenos Aires, Lempriere Argentina is the largest greasy wool exporter from Argentina. 'We service clients in China, Europe, North America, India and several other countries in Asia', says Claudio Ulrich. 'We offer the best Patagonian merino wool and fine XB types and Argentine wooldtops.'

The wool season in Argentina runs from August – December and most wool growers shear once a year. 'It is a short wool growing

season and the best wool sells out quickly', says Mariano Guerra. 'We encourage our customers to place their orders early in the season. At present the biggest demand is for 19.5 micron wool and tops. Customers also want low VM and good colour, and we can provide that as well'.

Argentina is the fifth largest wool producing country in the world, with an annual production of around 38,000 tons of greasy wool. Some 21,000 tons of greasy wool is exported every year. 'There is strong demand for our wool. We can provide non mulesed wool that is GOTS and RWS certified. Initially demand for RWS certified wool was from Europe, today there is demand from India and China as well.

'To ensure that our clients receive the quality of wool they have ordered we always take care to



Claudio Ulrich (left) and Mariano Guerra

re-sort and re-bale at our own warehouse, with our own people, in order to be completely sure about the quality we deliver to our clients. This is why our reputation is so valued by our customers in China and around the world', Claudio comments.

'We have been buying wool from the same farmers for decades, and have access to the best wool in Argentina, so we can provide the back stories that customers are so interested in today. Patagonian wool growers embraced ethical farming practices well before these certifications were established'.

Claudio Ulrich & Mariano Guerra can be contacted at trading@lflsa.com.ar

DIVERSITY IN WOOL SUPPLY

Lempriere has been a global supplier of wool since 1857. It supplies greasy wool and tops to textile mills and spinners for fashion houses in Europe, England, Japan, and North America. Its topmaking plant in Sliven, Bulgaria has been operating since 2016 and processes 16.5 – 27.5 micron wool from Australia, South Africa, and South America.

Lempriere Group exports all types, from superfine merino wool to coarse crossbred types. 'We can supply greasy wool on a firm offer basis and an indent buying service through our comprehensive global network. Our offices in Argentina and South Africa make us one of the largest suppliers of Responsible Wool Standard (RWS) and non-mulesed wools,' says Wayne Materne, CEO Lempriere Group, from the Melbourne Head Office.

Lempriere Bulgaria has the capacity to process 6 million kg of tops per year. It uses the latest SCHLUMBERGER ERA combs and runs 24 hours per day, 340 days a year. It employs around 160 people from the local region and has a fully accredited Interwoollabs laboratory. The company offers around 10% of its production capacity for commission processing.

'European spinners and weavers increasingly prefer to source their tops from Europe', says Philippe Chabbert of Lempriere Bulgaria. 'Covid exposed many European



companies to risks in sourcing tops from Asia. Labour costs in Bulgaria are among the lowest in Europe, and our proximity to customers throughout Europe enables quick delivery times when needed'.

'In addition we can offer the widest variety of environmental certifications including OEKO-TEX®, EU Eco Flower, GOTS, and RWS certifications. We have recently been awarded Kering Group and ZDHC (Zero Discharge of Hazardous Chemicals) certification, and been approved as Inditex preferred supplier.'

'For spinners and weavers in Europe that require traceability and certification we can source the right wool from our offices in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and South America and process these wools to their specification here in Bulgaria,

in the heart of Europe', Philippe Chabbert continues.

Lempriere Group interests in New Zealand include New Zealand Wool Services International (NZWSI) and JS Brooksbank. The New Zealand division exports New Zealand wool (greasy and scoured) to clients around the world.

Lempriere office in South Africa is an integral part of the Lempriere global supply chain network, and exports around the world. It offers a full range of combing and carding types to processors in China, Europe, and India. For more on Lempriere South Africa see South Africa Report.

Lempriere Argentina exports greasy wool and tops. Its Patagonia wool is 100% Mulesing Free and is available as Organic and RWS certified. For more on Lempriere Argentina see Argentina Report.



Koycho and Milen Bachvarov

Offering you more

- Cost competitive supply of all European wools from carpet grade to fine Merino
 - Offering greasy scoured and tops
- More than 60 years experience in processing European wools



COST-EFFECTIVE SOURCING *of* EUROPEAN WOOLS

Kolhida is a Bulgarian wool company offering textile companies a cost-effective option to source European greasy and scoured wool from 24 – 34 microns. It specialises in wools from Bulgaria, Russia, Romania, the Caucus regions.

There are some very good Merino wools and crossbred wools available from these countries. The key is to ensure that the wool has been correctly sorted', says Mr Milen Bachvarov. 'We are one of the few companies in Europe that still retains the knowledge in sorting European wools. This makes us an attractive partner to supply greasy or scoured wool and tops'.

'Our company is small, competitive, and provides a quality-driven wool scouring operation from Sliven, a wool industry hub in Bulgaria. We have been processing wool for 60 years'.

Bulgaria is a member state of the European Union but still enjoys the cheapest labour and processing costs in Europe. It is recognised as a wool-growing and manufacturing region since the early 1800s, when Bulgaria was

still part of the Ottoman Empire. Although wool is no longer grown in large volume the expertise in sorting and processing wool fibre is still deeply rooted.

The benefits of being in Europe include quick logistics and compliance with EU laws, while providing customers competitive processing costs.

'We have a lifetime of experience in sorting wool. We sort by hand, into micron, colour, and length.



SLIVEN, BULGARIA

Contact: Koycho Bachvarov • Tel: +359 87 8879 568 • Email: koycho.bachvarov@gmail.com

Around 15% of it is very white, 45% is white, 20% is grey and 20% is dark, and these dark wools are sorted into different types. It has a very good affinity for dyeing and spinning, particularly for carpet producers and for spinners that blend crossbred wool.'

'Any textile company that blends or works with European wools will benefit from our ability to source the most appropriate wool for their production', comments Mr Koycho Bachvarov, a third generation

family member to work in this privately owned and operated company.

Kolhida has the capacity to process 48 tons of greasy or around 24 tons of scoured per day and can process around 10 tons of tops per day. It exports wool in 300kg bales and its top bumps are 12kg. It operates a testing laboratory on its premises and offers OEKO-TEX STANDARD 100 certification.

'We have facilities for washing, carding and combing, and

processing into tops. We export to the Middle East, Turkey, and Eastern and Western Europe. But we are keen to develop working relationships with companies around the world to share our knowledge. We can supply wool to you or we can process your European, New Zealand or Australian wool for your customers in Europe.'

For more information please contact Koycho Bachvarov - koychobachvarov@gmail.com



SUSTAINABLE • TRACEABLE • ETHICAL

The South African Wool Industry provides a high-quality, environmentally sound product which meets the needs of the textile industry.

The Sustainable Cape Wool Standard provides assurance of sustainable, traceable wool by means of independent on-farm assessments.



www.capewools.co.za
capewool@capewools.co.za

SOUTH AFRICAN SUSTAINABLE FASHION

By Deon Saayman
CEO Cape Wools



South Africa's rich heritage of artisanal skill and exceptional craftsmanship has set it apart in the global fashion landscape. While the world pursued mass production at lower costs, African designers embraced traditional textile-making methods and community-based approaches, positioning themselves at the forefront of sustainable fashion. In recent years, the South African wool industry has achieved remarkable milestones, earning international recognition for its innovative designs, collaborative efforts, and commitment to sustainability.

The Rise of South African Designers

South African designers have made significant strides in the global fashion arena, showcasing their creativity and talent. Thebe Magugu, Lukhanyo Mdingi, Sindiso Khumalo, and Mmusomaxwell have collectively won three LVMH prizes and the Karl Lagerfeld Award for Innovation at the International Woolmark Prize.

What sets these designers apart is their ability to create unique garments using natural fibers and a mix of traditional and modern methods, including handwoven and felted wool fabrics. Their success highlights the versatility and potential of merino wool, showcasing the endless possibilities achievable in some cases with minimal intervention.

Collective Responsibility and Collaboration

The South African wool industry prides itself on fostering a sense of community and collective responsibility. Earlier this year, Cape Wools hosted a wool workshop and roundtable event that brought together stakeholders from across the value chain, including spinners, retailers, manufacturers, and vertical brands. The overwhelming participation and willingness of individuals to contribute their time and skills demonstrated a shared commitment to finding solutions to challenges faced by the industry.

This collaborative spirit has paved the way for increased cooperation between brands and retailers, creating opportunities for sustainable partnerships.

Design by MmusoMaxwell



A notable example of collaboration within the industry is Polo South Africa's recent partnership with Gerber & Co, a local sheep-to-shop brand, to create their first-ever 100% locally produced menswear knitwear collection crafted from South African merino wool. This partnership holds immense importance as it establishes an integrated value chain that spans from wool production to finished garments, highlighting the true essence of sustainability. By sourcing, spinning, and knitting within the country, they have established a unique farm-to-closet supply chain that showcases the beauty and potential of South Africa's homegrown resources.

Karoo Winter Wool Festival

The second Karoo Winter Wool Festival was held in June of this year and serves as a celebration



Design by MmusoMaxwell



of wool and natural fibers, fostering sustainable growth and development within local communities. The festival aims to unite all stakeholders along the wool value chain, including farmers, wool buyers, processors, manufacturers, designers, and consumers. One of the festival's highlights is a captivating fashion component, brought to life through a collaboration with Merchants on Long, a contemporary retailer promoting African brands and sustainable design.

The festival showcases a capsule collection by acclaimed South African designers, celebrating the abundance and sustainability of wool. Set in the heart of the Karoo, South Africa's largest wool producing region, the immersive fashion experience allows consumers to connect with both ends of the value chain, emphasizing the importance of understanding the origin of our clothing.

In conclusion, the South African Wool industry continues to make significant strides, propelled by a commitment to

craftsmanship, sustainability, and collaboration. Through the remarkable achievements of South African designers, such as their international accolades, and the establishment of integrated value chains, the industry is shaping a future where fashion and sustainability go hand in hand. The Karoo Winter Wool Festival further reinforces this vision, providing a platform for showcasing local talent and raising awareness about the world-class resources South Africa produces, by encouraging consumers to appreciate the story behind their clothing.



Karoo Winter Wool Festival

To further enhance the capabilities and uniqueness of South African designers utilizing wool, several initiatives are currently underway to try and re-establish early-stage wool processing in South Africa.

These initiatives include projects driven through private enterprise, as well as an industry-driven feasibility study to determine the possibility to re-establish a commission based scouring and



Alia Peer of POLO South Africa and Stefan Gerber of Gerber & Co

top making plant. Both these initiatives are based on demand, driven from the designers and manufacturers in South Africa and will focus on a specific niche sectors to meet this demand.

SUPPLY OF SUSTAINABLY PRODUCED WOOL IN SOUTH AFRICA CONTINUES TO CLIMB

Since the introduction of the Responsible Wool Standard (RWS) in South Africa a number of years ago, the supply of sustainably certified wool has continued to grow.



The Sustainable Cape Wool Standard (SCWS), a sustainability standard owned by Cape Wools SA, on behalf of the SA wool industry, was introduced in July 2020 and has undergone a number of revisions in the past three years.

One of the key differentiating factors between the SCWS and other standards is the focus placed on the shearing process, including both the animal and social welfare aspects of the wool harvesting process. The shearing assessment therefore forms a critical part of the SCWS certification and to minimize the risk of duplication and audit fatigue, the shearing questionnaire has been adapted to be able to function independently of the SCWS assessment.

This enabled Cape Wools to give equivalence to other certification schemes, like RWS, where the SCWS shearing module is done in addition to the normal certification scheme assessment. The additional model is done at the same time, therefore not duplicating time and effort by the farmer undergoing the assessment. Farmers are then issued with a SCWSe tag in the catalogue, which indicates equivalence achieved with the SCWS.

As Cape Wools holds the Statutory Measure on behalf of the South African wool industry, sustainability tags are recorded against each registered producer, so multiple sustainability tags can be carried for one farmer. This enables Cape Wools to further enhance the traceability and sustainability status of the South African clip, which resulted in the formation of a Blockchain platform to make the relevant data available to the value chain.

CWSA will act as the trust anchor on behalf of the farmer, broker and the buyer, ensuring that further financial burdens are not imposed on the value chain.

During the 2022/23 season, sustainably certified wools made up 39% of the total clip, while 58% of the merino offering was certified as sustainable. These figures speak to the tremendous effort by South African wool farmers to adapt to the needs from brands and to ensure they can deliver what the market demands.

Cape Wools has also embarked on a project to expand the SCWS to around 45 000 communal farmers, mostly within the Eastern

Cape region of South Africa. Most of the communal farmers fit into a shearing shed structure, with each shearing shed allocated a producer number. The SCWSe was created to cater for the specific farming environment of the communal farmers, with the first 60 sheds completed in the first pilot phase of the project. These sheds will also be subject to 3rd party verification, in line with the process conducted amongst the commercial farmers.

CWSA is also proud to have obtained its ISO certification and is now ISO 9001 certified.



LEMPRIERE SOUTH AFRICA



Peter Carey

Africa. 'We are a unique selling centre in that more than 95% of the wool traded is sold in the auction system in a very well-managed supply chain from a single storage location' says Peter Carey.

'The South African wool clip has stabilised in the post-Covid era, and we have production around 275,000 farm bales which are sold in 34 auctions over the selling season. The market could be described as a "top makers paradise", as it provides exceptional opportunities for component-based buying with most of the merino fleece on offer in the 19.0 – 21.0- micron category, with high yield, low vegetable matter and

very high tensile strength, which are all characteristics contributing to improved top yield and very low CVH. South Africa has been at the forefront of sustainable and traceable production and has the highest volume globally of Responsible Wool Standard (RWS) wool.

Lempriere South Africa can provide purchasing solutions for all types covering merino fleece, merino knitting, Lesotho and wools for carbonising, we look forward to developing long-term supply arrangements with the basis on integrity and quality'.

Peter Carey can be contacted at peter.carey@lemprieremerino.com

CONSISTENCY AND EFFICIENCY IN WOOL TESTING



Wian Heath
Managing Director
Wool Testing Bureau S.A.



South Africa is one of the major producers of greasy wool in the world. Its wool is used in a variety of applications from fashion to interiors. Wian Heath, managing director of Wool Testing Bureau S.A. (WTB) remarks that “we maintain a high level of technical competence and are committed to providing world-class testing services to all our clients.” Test results provide producers and processors of South African wool with valuable objective information. Buyers and processors can use the objective information to predict the processing performance of the product they purchase. Predictions enable mills to optimise raw wool inputs to meet the required specifications in the top.

WTB is the only independent IWTO Licensed Test House in Africa and is committed to servicing customers in South Africa and beyond. IWTO licensed Laboratories play a key role in the wool industry and are essential to

the certification of wool sale lots. “We work together with IWTO in the application of testing methods, sponsoring and participating in round trials, and developing and implementing international standards. We adhere to all IWTO regulations and test methods, ensuring the integrity and accuracy of results”, comments Wian Heath.

The company is also a member of the ILRT group, which allows WTB to benchmark test results with the other four major wool testing laboratories in the world. This ensures consistency and accuracy of test results certified by the company. The authenticity of certificates can be confirmed by using the online verification service available at: <http://verify.wtbsa.co.za>

“In addition to price determining aspects of certified testing, objective results also provide a

basis for the continuous research of the South African wool clip”, he says. “It allows wool growers to make key management and strategic decisions regarding their farming enterprises. With our Fleece Testing Service, tests results from individual animals provide additional information to sheep breeders for improving flock genetics and the economic value of animals”.

“We have expanded our testing range into other testing sectors, such as automotive and industrial goods. A comprehensive range of specialised product testing services is available, including mechanical, abrasion, light exposure, weathering, climatic ageing and flammability testing. Continuous investments in equipment are made to expand the range of tests offered to clients”, Wian Heath says.

ACCURACY EFFICIENCY INTEGRITY IN WOOL TESTING

Providing the South African industry with impartial certification services

- Greasy Wool Core Testing – Yield | Mean Fibre Diameter
- Staple Length and Strength | Scoured Wool | Carbonised Wool and Wool Top Testing
- Product Testing – Textile Automotive | Comprehensive Grower Services



Wool Testing Bureau SA

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Telephone: +27 41 503 6600 | Facsimile: +041 583 2195

E-Mail: wtb@wtbsa.co.za | Website: www.wtbsa.co.za

- Accredited to ISO 17025 | I.W.T.O. Licensed laboratory
- Member of Interwoollabs • Member of the Independent Laboratory Round Trials Group (ILRT)

Premium prices for tested wool



Duane Knowles (left) and David Alexander

Cyclone Gabrielle severely damaged the Hawkes Bay region of the North Island of New Zealand earlier this year. Many wool growing farms were impacted, particularly by interruptions to logistics and by damage to infrastructure.

'Of course, this setback has also impacted wool testing, however, we were able to be up and running 4 days later. Our team from the South Island organised wool to be flown into Napier on the domestic airline, due to the regular courier network being unable to deliver when roads were destroyed or unsafe, and then our Napier team, once safe, worked longer hours to clear back log. NZWTA worked closely with customers to ensure prioritisation in testing to help ensure wool was able to be tested and shipped in the months that followed, particularly for scoured wool that suffered significant disruptions with the Napier Scour out of commission. As an integral part of the New Zealand wool industry we continue to provide wool and product testing to international standards', adds David Alexander, customer services manager. 'We test in accordance

with IWTO guidelines. With a strong international reputation as New Zealand's trusted wool testing laboratory, we assist international top makers with medullation tests, all customers with greasy and scoured testing and increasingly with IWTO-59-DTM for environmental compliance requirements, always providing prompt service times.

'Testing wool and other animal fibres from around the globe adds real value to wool growers and the international wool processing industry. Animal-specific testing provides growers with insights into their wool genetics and enables flock selection, while wool testing certificates provide processors clear specifications to help them understand how each bale of wool will perform during scouring and topmaking. Wool sellers that offer tested wool minimise risk down the pipeline and processors receive better prices for their wool. In today's market, buying untested wool is a fool's game'.

Wool and other animal fibre can be sampled in the country of origin through NZWTA partners operating as accredited representatives. The samples are imported into New Zealand and tested at NZWTA's laboratory, providing IWTO Certificates or Reports as required.

IWTO Test Certificates and Reports are available on greasy wool, scoured wool, slipe wool, sliver and tops, from both New Zealand and international sources. NZWTA also provides Pesticide Residue Tests, Insect Resistance tests and Chemical Tests.

NZWTA regularly tests wool from North and South America, and Australasia. When a shipment arrives the test is loaded into the system and the customer can see the testing progress through the MyWTA online portal. When the test completes, the Certificate or Report automatically emails to the customer.

'Sending international wool samples to NZWTA involves three easy steps – packaging, documentation and courier notification', says David Alexander. Each step is detailed at www.nzwta.co.nz



Peruvian Wool from 24-26 Microns
Greasy • Scoured • Tops



Passion for wool

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Jose Iturriaga

Peruvian wool gains international footing

Past Covid many wool users are looking for alternative or additional wool supplies. Tirzay has been offering Peruvian wool to international markets for some years. 'In the last couple of years the sale of Peruvian wool has been gaining

traction with buyers in the Europe, and China', says Jose Iturriaga of Tirzay, a leading exporter of Peruvian wool based in Lima, Peru.

Many wool users have long-established wool supply channels from traditional sources, such as Australia, New Zealand, and South

Africa, 'so adding Peruvian wool into their supply mix is proving a very cost effective option', says Jose Iturriaga.

'We offer competitive prices and the delivery of quality wool that meets international standards,' he says.

He adds that 'we have recently shipped a particular consignment of specifically coloured wool to a customer in Europe. Our Junin and Corriedale sheep provide high quality greasy wool from 24 to 26 microns with 7.00/7.50 cm length. It has a 62% average yield after washing'.

Peru is well-known for its Alpaca fibre, but it also grows good wool from small but dedicated wool growers. Peru is home to 12 million sheep, producing more than 10 million kilos of wool per year. Peruvian sheep are a cross between Corriedale and Merino breeds. The combination of these

breeds produces a strong fibre with an excellent softness for a wide variety of uses. The highlands of Peru have been farmed for sheep for thousands of years. The dry environment and natural pasturelands results in wool that has good colour, is soft to touch, but strong, with excellent crimp.

Jose comments that 'Peruvian wool is an ideal fibre for use on its own, or blended for a variety of finished products'.

'The socio-economic dependence of wool growers in Peru to sell their wool is significant. The production and harvesting of wool provides a very important source of work for many small family units. In the high altitude of the Andes, these peasant communities have maintained their ancestral knowledge to breed sheep and use the Tally-Hi method of shearing, a fast method of sheep shearing that allows a higher number of sheep to be processed in a given time. Our company has been working

with some of these families for two generations and we take this social responsibility seriously'.

Tirzay sources wool from a large number of these small farms and brings it to a central warehouse where it is sorted and tested. It operates under IWTO guidelines and all wool is tested by IWTO accredited testing houses. 'Our staff is well trained and experienced in sorting. The wool is sorted by micron and colour and can be selected to customer specification'.

'We understand that the relationship with customers is built on trust. We value this trust and look to develop long-term relationships that are beneficial to our clients, and this sets us apart from other Peruvian companies. Repeat orders from our customers speak to this satisfaction', comments Jose Iturriaga.

Jose Iturriaga can be contacted at sales@tirzaycompany.com



RWS Wool Direct from Wool Grower

Natural conditions in Uruguay include a temperate climate, natural pastures, and rivers with healthy watering. 'The result is better animal welfare, biodiversity, soil characteristics,

as well as social conditions for farm workers, and this has made the road to organic wool certification (GOTS) and Responsible Wool Standards certification (RWS) a natural progression', says D'jalma Puppo, the largest

exporter of fine greasy wool from Uruguay.'

'According to IWTO Uruguay is the second country in the world, after South Africa, with the highest percentage of certified wool under RWS.'

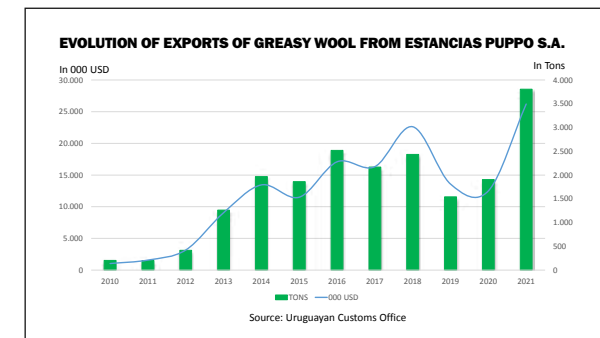
'These certifications reflect sustainable and ethical practices throughout the entire wool supply chain. RWS certification ensures that the wool is sourced from farms that meet strict animal welfare and environmental standards, while the GOTS certification guarantees that the wool is produced in an environmentally friendly and socially responsible way, and we are pleased to offer our RWS and GOTS clip to European brands that value these certifications', says D'jalma Puppo.

'In addition we were the first company to be awarded the "green

label" by SUL (Uruguayan Wool Secretariat) for our excellence in shearing and classification of wool and that is the reason why our wool is favoured by topmakers for fashion brands'.

'Traceability of wool origin and the environmental accreditation attached to this has become one of the most important factors in our ability to satisfy our customers in Europe. We control the quality of the wool to ensure that no contamination or dark fibre is present in packed orders. The result is an excellent wool selection'.

Uruguay is the third largest wool producing country in the world. In 2022/23 production was around 25 million kg greasy. The demand for finer microns has encouraged finer wool growing, and today the majority of the clip measures between 17 to 21 microns with an average diameter of 21.7 micron and an average scoured yield of 77.4%. Although there is a variety of sheep breed in Uruguay the three main breeds are Corriedale (42%), Merino (29%) and Polwarth (9%).

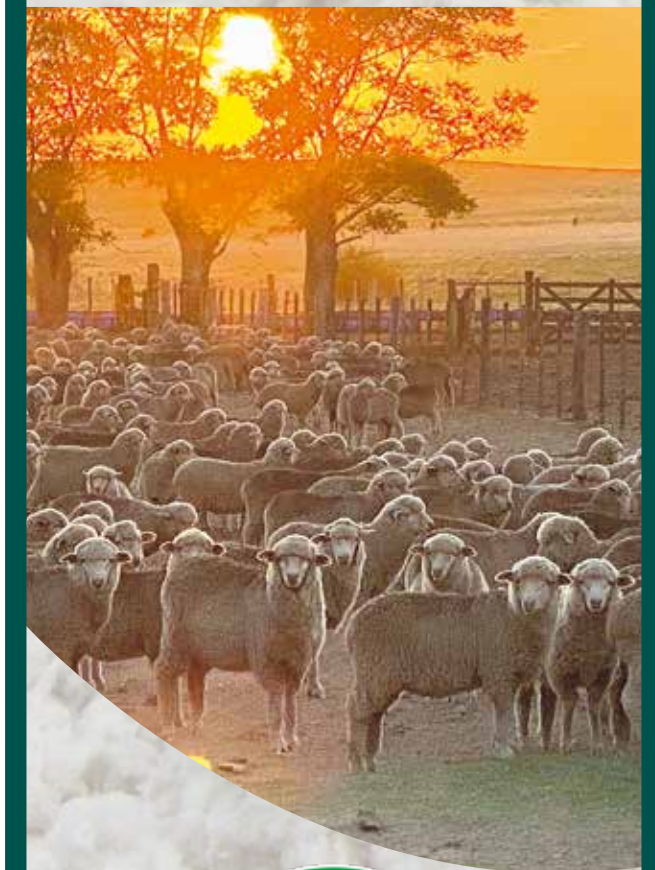


Estancias Puppo mainly exports wool types between 17 and 28 microns. 'The main characteristics of our wool include low VM (under 0.3%), good length, SCH yield average of approximately 75%, and no coloured or dark fibres. We also offer fine wool of excellent quality and very good color from the south of Brazil and Chilean Patagonia'.

D'jalma Puppo adds 'Uruguayan wool is known for its softness, strength, and durability, and it is a popular choice for high-end fashion brands and luxury clothing manufacturers. On average we export 2.5 million kg clean and around 47% of this wool is exported to Europe'.

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CARBON NEUTRALITY ONLY PART OF THE STORY

W

e think that the most important challenge for the wool textile manufacturers today is to adopt sustainable practices. In the wool industry one must trace the impact to the origin, to the growers. In Engraw we have begun restlessly walking this road since 2008, reflects Federico Raquet, Managing Director at Engraw S. A., the oldest wool top manufacturing company in South America.

"Consumers will always reward an honest sustainability story. We recognised this early on", says Federico Raquet. "Our family has been in the wool business for four generations and today we remain 100% a family owned company".

In 2011 the company decided to invest in 1.8 MW wind turbines to process their wool production. This made Engraw the first private company of the country to self-supply with renewable energy and also the first one to process a renewable fibre with renewable energy.

Today Engraw processes its entire production using 98% of renewable energy.

"We have a genuine story to tell regarding



Origen

by Engraw



[weareengraw](#)

engraw.com.uy

animal welfare, traceability, regenerative practices, circularity, and quality fibre. Our sustainability is enhanced by recognised certifications, essential in today's world", affirms Federico Raquet.

"Our latest environmental efforts were aimed to measure our impact towards global warming. We calculated our carbon emissions and took actions to diminish our carbon footprint and became carbon neutral certified. We are also in the process of measuring our growers, carbon emissions".

"Furthermore, we decided to take into account other crucial environmental aspects, such as waste management and water

managements amongst others, and obtained the Cradle to Cradle certification' continues Federico. Cradle to Cradle Certified® is the global standard for products that are safe, circular and responsibly made. The program assesses the safety, circularity and responsibility of materials and products across five categories of sustainability performance: material health, product circularity, clean air and climate protection, water and soil stewardships and social fairness.

"We are proud to have become part of the Land to Market Program®, the world's first outcomes-based verified regenerative sourcing solution."

The company has opted for this regenerative program because it uses the soil measurements to guarantee the sequestration of carbon dioxide, which reflects a higher biodiversity of the soil.

Regarding quality, Federico states that "our tops are widely used by spinners and weavers around the world. We have been selling our Blanco Real type for more than 20 years. It is a low black and coloured fibre content, appreciated for its overall high quality". The company is a boutique wool top supplier that specializes in offering each client customized products. The wools they process are mostly Uruguayan as well as from other regions of South America, such as Peru and Argentina, and from Australia.

Origen by Engraw® is the company's label for certified wool top harvested from a careful selection of farms. It offers a fully traceable route with a sound animal welfare and sustainable practices program, including regenerative practices, carbon neutrality and circularity.

"It is a story about our passion for wool fibre and our partnership with over 500 wool growers that share our vision and values. We know that we must be more than just responsive to change, we must anticipate and create change."

Engraw offers wool from 16.5 - 34.0 micron and is one of only a very few companies in South America to produce Hercosett treated wool tops.



Frank Raquet Director (left) and Federico Raquet Managing Director.

COMPREHENSIVE RANGE OF TESTS COVERING FIBRES, FABRICS, CARPETS, FLAMMABILITY AND WOOL GREASE



SETTING THE STANDARD IN WOOL AND TEXTILE TESTING

- ✓ Fibre length measurement on scoured wool
- ✓ Core testing of greasy and scoured wool
- ✓ Staple measurement on greasy wool
- ✓ Fleece measurement on individual animals
- ✓ Internationally recognised and accredited to ISO 17025
- ✓ Member of Interwoollabs
- ✓ Licensed IWTO laboratory



NZWTA include NZFAP certification



Rosstan Mazey

of the National Council of New Zealand Wool Interests says, 'This is all about integrity, traceability, biosecurity, environmental sustainability, and animal health and welfare of New Zealand sheep. This standard has been established under the existing New Zealand Farm Assurance Program (NZFAP).'

New Zealand Wool Testing Authority (NZWTA) can include NZFAP certification on all certified wool lots. This certification provides a single multi-sector assurance standard to drive consistency in grower standards and provide a platform for the standardisation of New Zealand wool. NZFAP certification adds a further level of assurance to consumers that the New Zealand wool they buy is authentic and ethically produced.



'Buyers can verify their certificates through the newly redeveloped NZWTA website that now includes Mandarin and Spanish translations', says David Alexander, customer service manager. Any wool sold on an NZWTA certificate that may have been emailed or faxed can be verified at the click of a button from the site, to ensure they are genuine certificates.

This process can be accessed on the website by entering the test number and the verification code from the copy of the certificate. A secure copy of the certificate will be emailed back to the purchaser.

The introduction of a New Zealand National Standard for Wool is a clear industry commitment to ensure that consumers of New Zealand wool will receive the environmental certification they expect. Rosstan Mazey, Chairman

NZWTA Ltd Wool Trade Diary

The 2023/24 edition of the NZWTA Ltd Wool Trade Diary is now available. This easy to use diary is the go-to source of contacts for connecting with the various sectors of the New Zealand industry.

The Trade Diary includes:

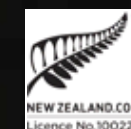
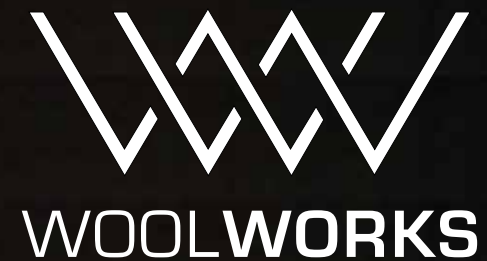
- Dates and rostered volumes of national wool auctions



- A comprehensive list of NZWTA and wool industry contacts to assist local and international communications
- Staff contacts
- Great photography

A copy of the NZWTA diary can be obtained by emailing testing@nzwta.co.nz or via the website www.nzwta.co.nz

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For more information please contact Tony Cunningham - tonyc@hbws.co.nz
www.woolworks.co.nz • Tel: +64 6 834 1421

RELIABLE WOOL TESTING FROM SGS



Mariela Llaja

Jeremy Wear



the wool you wish to buy or sell to arrange for that wool to be tested with us. This service is quick and cost effective, particularly when a number of samples are provided. Verifiable reporting is provided electronically', says Jeremy Wear.

It doesn't matter where you grow wool or buy wool from, there should be an SGS office nearby, says Jeremy Wear at SGS Wool Testing Services New Zealand. 'We have offices in almost every place that grows wool and alpaca and other animal and natural fibres, so that independent sampling or guidance is always available'.

SGS online services complement local offices and laboratories. SGS has strong links to textile buyers through 42 accredited textile testing laboratories in 26 countries, and is recognised by all major

wool and natural fibre users as a trusted fibre and textile testing and inspection authority.

SGS has been independently testing greasy wool, scoured wool, tops, and sliver to verify quality and quantity across different criteria for over 50 years. It is accredited to ISO 17025, and is licensed by the IWTO to produce IWTO certificates.

'Wool exporters or wool growers in countries with no internationally recognised wool testing services can contact us here in New Zealand and we will liaise with the SGS office closest to the origin of

'Fibre testing and certification provides a layer of assurance for greasy wool buyers who are more likely to pay a premium price when information about processing performance can be provided', he says. 'To be sure about the characteristics of wool or any other natural fibre you are buying or selling we can provide inspection, verification, testing and certification services – anywhere in the world'.

'Our testing services include Yield (woolbase and vegetable matter), Mean fiber diameter, and Color, as well as Staple length and strength, bulk, fibre curvature, fibre diameter distribution, diameter-length profile, and medullation'.

'We also test greasy wool samples using a variety of low-cost fleece testing methods that are specifically designed for animal selection purposes. Fleece tests are carried out on samples from individual animals for breeding selection purposes. This is very popular with animal owners to help them improve their fibre quality', outlines Jeremy Wear.



Mini wool scouring line specially built for SGS to test wool performance through the scouring process



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WOOL

MAKING THE DIFFERENCE

DELIVERING HIGH QUALITY

Recognized as the global benchmark for quality and integrity. With more than 97,000 employees, SGS operates a network of over 2,600 offices and laboratories around the world. Our solutions include:

- Sampling, supervision and audit
- Fibers testing from animals, pre-sale and post sale greasy shipment
- Comprehensive yarn fabric and product testing via the SGS network

NOW ONLINE

Online access to testing services via the SGS Online Shop or onlineservices.sgs.com/nz 24/7
SGS Wool Testing Services is an IWTO licensed laboratory.

CONTACT US

SGS Wool Testing Services
46-48 Kemp Street, Kilbirnie
P.O. Box 15062
Miramar, Wellington,
New Zealand

+ 64 4 387 8565
Mariela Llaja in Peru can be contacted at mariela.llaja@sgs.com or +511 5171900

SGS Online Shop
www.wooltesting.sgs.com
nz.wool@sgs.com
SGS Agriculture & Food



SGS laboratory in Wellington NZ using state of the art robotics for wool testing

SGS runs one of the most sophisticated wool testing laboratories at its wool testing hub in Wellington New Zealand. It uses robotics for sample testing and has built a mini scouring line to test how wool will perform through the process.

The recently introduced New Zealand National Standard for Wool is linked to New Zealand Farm

Assurance Program (NZFAP) for companies that require animal welfare and traceability certification for their production. SGS can now include this NZFAP on their testing certificate.

Spanish-speaking Commercial Executive, Mariela Llaja, manages sampling services throughout Central and South America and says 'we have an extensive service operating for wool exports from Peru and I can arrange independent sampling and testing in other parts of the continent via our offices in South America.

'We urge wool grower cooperatives, and individual wool growers everywhere, to take advantage of our testing services to achieve better sales results. Our independent wool testing certification is simple and straightforward', concludes Mariela Llaja.

For SGS on-line wool testing services - webshop-nz.sgs.com and Jeremy's team please contact woolonline@sgs.com and Mariela in Peru at mariela.llaja@sgs.com or +511 5171900.

WOOL TESTING AND VERIFICATION IN INDIA

SGS Wool Testing Services now offers an advanced certification from strategically located testing laboratories in India, including Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Chennai, Gurgaon, Kolkata, Ludhiana, Mumbai and Tirupur.

Shailesh Sharma, Director, Connectivity & Products, Softlines at SGS said: "We are delighted to have gained IOAS (International Organic and Sustainable Accreditation) approval to expand our global textile and footwear certification services to give us maximum local presence across India. We are now even better placed to provide organizations across the region with the tools

and expertise to achieve their sustainable sourcing goals and demonstrate the accurate recycled and organic content of their products."

SGS has been independently measuring greasy wool, scoured wool, and wooldtops for over 50 years. "Our local offices in India make the process accessible, easy and straightforward. Our services are cost-competitive and results are recognised by the textile industry worldwide', says Jeremy Wear, business manager of SGS Wool Testing Services in New Zealand.

SGS Wool Testing Services is an ISO-17025 accredited laboratory and is fully licensed to

provide IWTO Test Certificates. Independent sampling is available globally via an extensive SGS network of offices.

To complement this widespread service in India, SGS operates an online testing service. "Our online wool testing service makes it even easier and cheaper for exporters of wool and wool products. This service provides an easy to use step by step process for both buyers and sellers of wool and other animal fibres', says Jeremy Wear.

For SGS on-line wool testing services - webshop-nz.sgs.com and Jeremy's team can be contacted at woolonline@sgs.com

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Fully customizable twisting & winding machinery for coarser yarns

by Victor Chesky



Xavier Galan

For over 80 years Galan in Terrassa (Barcelona), Spain has specialized in the design, development, and manufacture of spinning, twisting and winding machinery for all types of natural and synthetic fibers, but particularly for production of yarn using coarser fibre, such as carpet

yarn, rope, twine, and technical yarns.

So when Xavier Galan mentioned to me that the company is set to re-engage with wool spinners around the world to design tailor-made machines I arranged to meet up with him.

We met up in his home town of Terrassa, where there is a strong

historical background and current relationship with the textile industry. The city became an important textile centre in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. During that period, Terrassa specialized in the production of cotton and wool fabrics. The textile industry in this area has been in large part responsible for the significant growth and economic development.

Today, Terrassa is home to educational and research institutions related to the textile sector, as well as companies specializing in textile design, technology, research and development of new materials, sustainable fashion, and other innovative aspects of the textile industry. This reflects the city's ability to adapt and pursue new opportunities in the textile field.

'While the wool sector has not been central to the design and manufacture of our machinery most recently our company does have years of experience working with wool fibre sectors. In the past we have been a leading supplier of textile machinery for the wool



Galan machines are known for their compact design. The new range of ring doubling and twisting machines (PRX models) are suitable for a wide range of yarn counts and applications with rings from 100mm up to 400mm. Automatic or manual individual spindles stop for yarn breakage. There is gear driven spindle transmission as well as direct-moto, according to each customer need and application. These machines also offer perfect twist without slipping, huge capacity bobbins, variable spindle speed control, and low electrical consumption'.



sector. So, as textile sectors change we change with them. We have done this before and we are doing it again.

'Recently we start receiving enquiries from customers working with wool, asking us to design specific machines for their specific needs. Our designs can be easily adapted to tailor-made machines for individual requirements of each manufacturer and we are keen to talk to them about the solutions that we can provide'.

Xavier adds that Galan has recently installed a bespoke designed spinning frame for a yarn manufacturing company in New Zealand.

Xavier adds 'all our machines provide a high degree of customization. All machines are Industry 4.0 and have the latest Industry Standard Monitoring Solutions. We can monitor our machines from anywhere in the world and the data that is collected through this fully integrated system can be used by both us and our customers to fine tune the production process'.

'We have developed a number of patents and technological innovations and we are always interested to design and develop new machines. We welcome enquiries from manufacturers looking to develop new twisted yarns and firmly believe that sitting down and talking about options is a worthwhile way to make ideas into reality', Xavier Galan concludes.

Xavier Galan can be contacted at galan@galan.es



Visitors at ITMA view Saurer worsted compact spinning machine

TOP TECHNOLOGY FOR WORSTED YARN COMPACT SPINNING

The Saurer Group, founded in 1853, is a leading, globally active technology company with a focus on machines and components for yarn production. As a company with a long tradition, Saurer has always been an innovation leader. Its Spinning Solutions offers high quality, technologically advanced and customer-specific automation solutions for processing staple

fibre from bale to yarn.

The Saurer ring spinning machines for worsted yarns offer flexibility and cost-effectiveness. They produce wool, cashmere and silk yarns as well as their blends, and acrylic yarns for the carpet industry. While the areas of application for wool used to be limited to suit fabrics, the focus today goes beyond this classic application to also include

functional clothing for sports and outdoor activities in particular, as well as interiors for the automotive and aviation industries.

The Saurer ZI 451 worsted compact spinning machine was presented at ITMA Milan in June. Its attractive new design and colour scheme fits well into the ring spinning range that provide customers a modern contemporary look.

Pioneering compact spinning technology

The self-cleaning system, flexibly adjustable tension draft and separate constant vacuum supply enable its use in wool processing. The vacuum unit always guarantees full compacting power, ensuring that the desired yarn character is maintained at a constant level at all times. Impact FX is the only self-cleaning compact system in the world, guaranteeing perfect, uniform compact yarn without labour-intensive monitoring. The system is resistant to wool grease,

textile lubricants and finishing agents. The flexible compacting apron is of crucial importance in this. The flexing effect at the deflection point of the apron prevents trash particles and fibre fragments from becoming lodged. Linear air flowpaths with optimal aerodynamics also prevent accumulations of trash and blockages.

Low staff requirement, reliable operation

The ZI 451 has an electronic overdelivery gear drive. Wool fineness and crimp can be adjusted precisely on the Easyspin. Significantly better yarn values and running properties are achieved. Variations in the raw material can be corrected in a matter of seconds. Easyspin is so easy and secure to operate that the number of staff required and downtimes can be reduced significantly. All lot data is automatically transferred to the lot data memory and is always available for a new spinning operation. It can also be transferred to any worsted

spinning machine by USB stick, guaranteeing identical yarn quality at all times.

Always keeping up with energy consumption

Sustainable production is becoming increasingly important in today's world. The Saurer worsted spinning machines can be equipped with an energy monitoring programme. Energy consumption is displayed on the Easyspin and is always visible to the staff. The integrated online measurement saves time, resources, and personnel.

Intelligent speed maximisation

The intelligent Optispeed speed maximisation system automatically and independently determines the optimum speed at the technological spinning limit together with the integrated individual spindle monitoring (ISM) according to a specified yarn break limit, thus ensuring maximum efficiency.



The Orthomax at Lanificio Ermenegildo Zegna and fili SPA removes web distortions before the stenter



Mahlo fabric straightener operating at Zegna

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CORRECTING DISTORTIONS IN FABRIC



Thomas Höpfl

The new Mahlo RFMB fabric straightener combines technology for both pin wheel weft straighteners and active roller weft straighteners. This technology allows straightening of bow and residual skew distortions in two ways.

'One of the most challenging aspects of manufacturing wool fabric, for example, is making sure there are no distortions in the fabric. While a common roller straightener is able to fix most

distortions that can be detected by the sensor, it cannot fix them all. Our patented wheel straightener technology will fix all kinds of fabric distortions', says Thomas Höpfl, Head of Sales at Mahlo in Saal, Germany.

The pin wheel works without any detection system for the weft position in the fabric and straightens the thread in a purely mechanical process.

In comparison, the active roller weft straightener reacts to the weft distortion in the fabric that the detection system identifies.

'Manufacturers in over 100 countries use our wool finishing machines, including fabric manufacturers in Italy such as Reda, Loro Piana, Zegna, Barberis, Zignone and Saturno', continues Thomas Höpfl. 'In the past the rolled and felted wool was optically undetectable, so the use

of our wheel straightener is very important. Active straightening requires human intervention to correct the distortions. Using the needle wheel, the machine can simply pull the fabric sideways. In this way, asymmetrical distortions can be eliminated.'

Thomas Höpfl points out that such straightening without detection, ease of handling, and sophisticated data management are great advantages for manufacturers. In addition, manufacturers of very fine fabric also experience issues, such as surface stress caused by contact with the rubberised bow rollers - especially in conjunction with the pulls that occur.

'Our straightening wheel allows higher production speeds with quality straightening. There is less downtime, less fabric loss, and an overall better fabric output,' he concludes.

OCTIR. Woollen. Worsted. Semi worsted.

The AUTEFA Solutions range of OCTIR cards can process the finest to the coarsest fiber, deliver excellent quality for end products in wool, alpaca, cashmere, synthetic fibers and their blends. OCTIR cards can guarantee the best consistency and evenness in tops and yarn production, meeting requirements for all customers.



STRAHM



AUTEFA Solutions step up for Cashmere



CARD for tops by AUTEFA Solutions

There was a marked increase in demand for wool spinning machinery at the end of 2022, says Giacomo Meucci of AUTEFA in Italy. 'We continue to receive enquiries from many parts of the world, including the UK. And as China re-enters the international market post Covid we expect this will add additional demand'.

Giacomo Meucci further commented that 'most European and Chinese wool manufacturing is now concentrating on high- end production for the luxury market – and of course, this ideally requires the best machinery to achieve quality yarn outcomes'.

AUTEFA Solutions manufacturers OCTIR woollen carding sets for processing fine and extra fine wool, cashmere and silk, for high-quality weaving and knitting yarns. Its product range includes carding sets for processing standard wool

and synthetic fibers for carpet and blanket yarns, as well as worsted cards for processing wool, mohair, angora, cashmere, synthetic fibers, and silk for high quality weaving and knitting yarns.

AUTEFA Solutions woollen carding sets enable excellent fiber control, producing a yarn with greater evenness and better CV and Uster values. These cards provide a more simplified opening of the card cover and increased throughput and blending action. A control panel with touchscreen allows easy management of all functions, including fault messages. Side doors without rails on the floor create quick and easy access to card parts for cleaning and maintenance.

'Our machines deliver excellent quality outcomes in wool, alpaca, and cashmere. Our machinery is gentler on finer micron wool, cashmere, and mohair, and that

is why they are favoured by manufacturers that work with very fine microns. They also can run at a precise speed, guaranteeing consistency and evenness in top and yarn production. Tops will be some 2-3mm longer than the best yarn quality achievable', says Giacomo Meucci. 'And of course each part is produced in Italy and tested to ensure the best reliability and longevity, under the toughest working conditions'.

AUTEFA Solutions is the only company to manufacture large dimension parts, including main and side frames, in cast iron, guaranteeing long dimensional stability and less vibration, to produce the most even yarn.

Fiber material can be new or reclaimed, pure or blended in wool, cashmere, synthetic fibers, and other natural fibers including camel hair, mohair, alpaca, yak, and more.

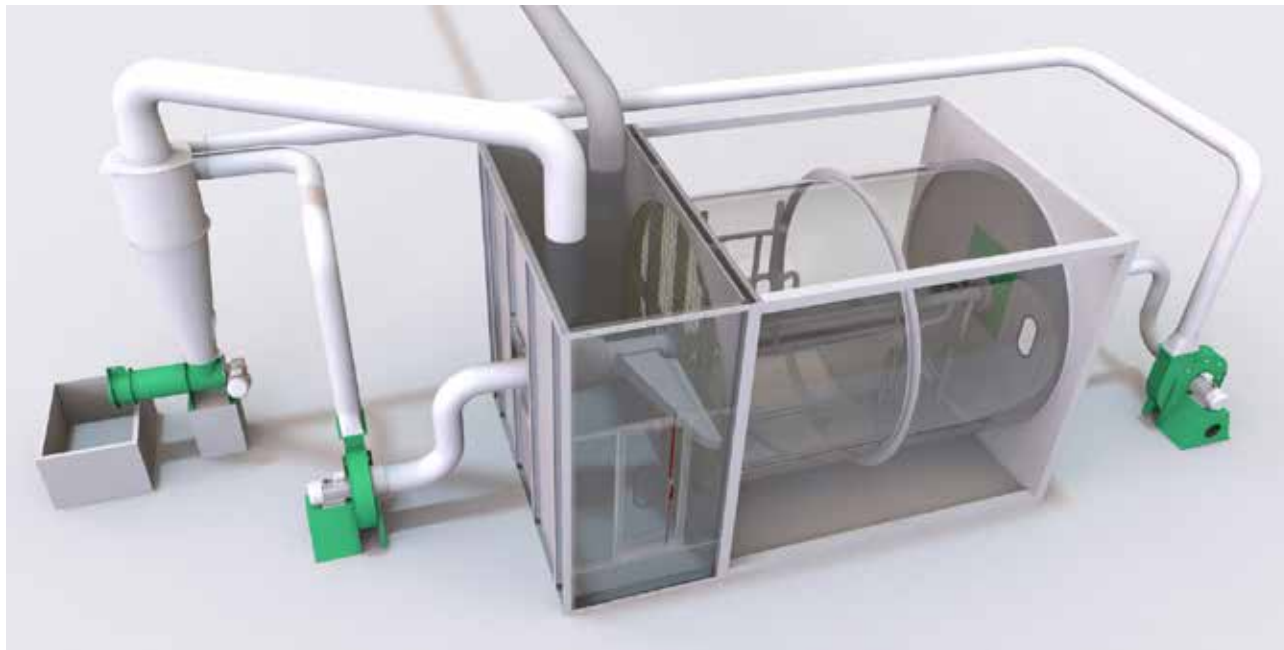


Giacomo Meucci with new cast iron frame used to assemble new cards – achieving stable setting between cylinders and drums.

Giacomo Meucci can be contacted on Giacomo.Meucci@autefa.com

Octir-Dragon Multitrave Cards for worsted and semi- worsted cards - new features include:

- feeding cylinders Ø 108 mm instead of Ø 140 mm enable better fiber control and produces a yarn with less thin/thick places and with better CV and Uster values
- AC drives with inverters for main drives and for eccentric column to have a fine set up of the speeds and reach the best performance of the carding set
- control panel with touch screen and management of the main parameters of the machine functions to allow the control and supervision of the carding set including operational and fault messages
- new side doors for an easy and quick access to the card parts for cleaning and maintenance



Schematic filtering station

ENGINEERING SOLUTIONS FOR ALL FIBRE PREPARATION

We received many inquiries from companies that visited our stand at the recent ITMA Milan exhibition. There is expanding interest in fibre recycling across the industry and this is now becoming apparent in the textile machinery sector. Turning fabric back into fibre is a breakthrough in tackling the huge problem of textile waste. However, re-use and regeneration in wool is not a new concept, previously it was driven by economic issues, today it is environmental issues that dominate this space', says Mario Ploner, CEO of Tecnomeccanica Biellese.

'European Union textile regulations are encouraging clothing and other textile sectors to consider regenerating fibre as part of their business models today rather than tomorrow, and a large number of textile manufacturers are introducing this into their operating models. If anything, the ITMA

exhibition showed us that companies want to explore opportunities for recycling machinery', he says.

'We recently installed a new large cutting machine for a customer here in Biella, that needed to pre-cut huge pieces of fabrics (such as denim) into smaller pieces in order to feed a rotary cutting machine and a tearing machine for recycling. This was a unique requirement and he was able to find a partner in Tecnomeccanica Biellese to create a machine expressly for his needs'.

Tecnomeccanica Biellese has been designing, building, and installing complete plants for fibre preparation, from Biella, the heart of Italy's wool district since 1969. 'We are very experienced in creating fibre blending systems, automated blending bins, automated card feeding systems, bale breakers, and centralised filtering stations'.

'If you have an idea, we probably have an engineering solution for you. Accuracy in separating different fibres and colours is important, effective plucking and blending systems can separate and blend fibres of the same colour, time after time. Re-dyeing is unnecessary and this is also good for the environment.

'We have expertise in designing carding lines and we manufacture these for all market sectors including woollen, worsted, semi-worsted, and non-worsted lines.

'We also received a lot of interest at ITMA for our Fibre Blending machine. Our Automatic Bale Plucker is used to mechanically strip fibres from pressed bales and automatically drop the fibre on to the feed table of the opening machinery at the beginning of spinning lines. This system is a good first step to blending fibres. The different functions of taking, discharging and weighing are controlled by a computerized digital panel with touch-screen. Photoelectric sensor beams provide complete protection against accident in line with European legislation relating to health and safety.

'We also designs and manufacture machines for suction removal of dust from rooms, machines and fibres with systems for automatic filtering and dust packing. We base our designs on the available space of each client and the specific requirements that their production needs. These systems have been very popular with topmakers around the world.'



Bale plucker

These complete systems are ideal for OPEN TOPS with continuous suction from the combing machine at the exit end, storage into bins and automatic baling press. All dusty air can be conveyed to our centralized filter station. The systems provide continuous suction from combing machines, dust removal with the possibility of going directly to the baling press'.

COMBS FOR ALL MACHINES

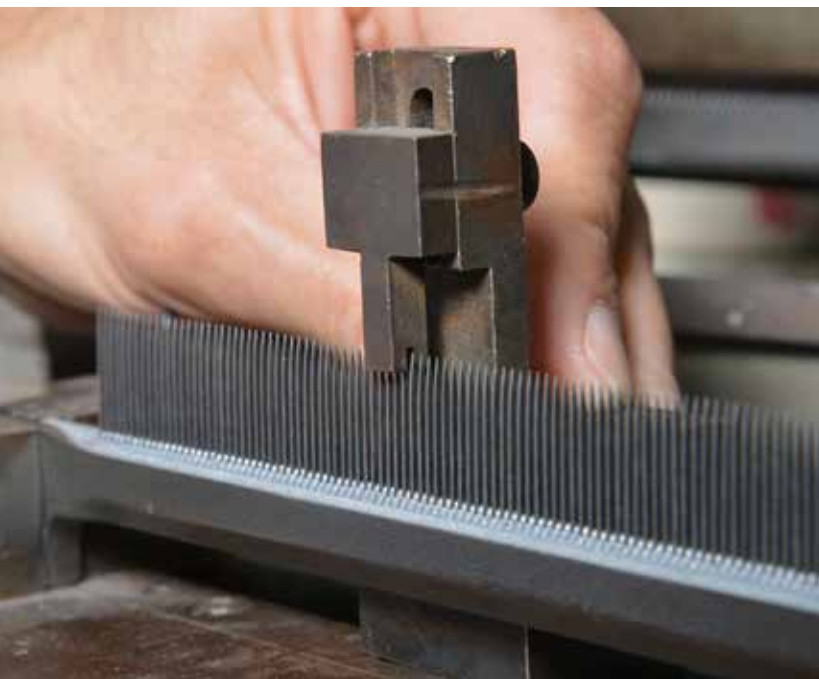
Greater accuracy and safer installation are important features of our combs. Topmakers around the world have invested heavily in new textile machinery that offers greater speed, accuracy, and savings in energy consumption. But when it comes to combs manufacturers sometimes opt for



The insert grip can be adapted to any length of comb for chain gills

cheaper alternatives. Even small components, such as combs, can sometimes stop the entire production', says Mario Ploner of Coppa. 'There are a variety of cheap combs on the market today but our combs have been recognised for their superior quality'.

Coppa combs are manufactured



in Italy and have been a preferred brand for topmakers for more than 50 years.

'Just as a Ferrari could not run on a Lada engine, the newest, most sophisticated machinery must use quality components. We can make combs to specific order for individual machines', says Mario Ploner. 'Our combs are manufactured from the highest quality steel, using highly accurate processes and the most modern machines, and deliveries are made to any part of the world.'

Changing combs can be complicated and time consuming, and if not correctly installed they can affect the quality and speed of the entire topmaking process. Coppa has developed a new insert grip machine that ensures accurate and quick installation providing greater accuracy than the manual method of insertion, that eliminates damage that can occur during manual insertion.

ELVO - AN EYE TO THE FUTURE



Mario Ploner

For almost 100 years the Sant'Andrea Novara brand of textile machinery has been recognised for the quality machines it manufactures for combing and preparation for spinning all wool-cut fibres.

'Our continuous technological innovations and thousands of machines installed all over the world have contributed greatly to the very evolution of the wool sector', says Mario Ploner, company director.

'Our ELVO smart new generation drawing frame monitors the quality of the entire production. This new generation machine collects and organises production data performance in accordance with Industry 4.0.

'We hear from some topmakers that our machines are so reliable they see no reason to shift to more modern machines. Even the most reliable old machines cannot be compared to the technological leap we have taken to move away from mechanical operation to full electronic functions. The new machines are faster and more accurate than ever before and cannot be compared to old technology.

'The ELVO ensures that manufacturing processes run at full speed, controlling all machines through one centralised computer point. Monitoring adjustment of the outgoing sliver during the whole process ensures that the entire production complies with the desired regularity in weight standard.'

The drawing system has been mechatronically redesigned, while the machine layout has been

designed with intuitive and coordinated user interfaces to mimic the anthropometry and gestures of the machine operator, so there is minimal human intervention.

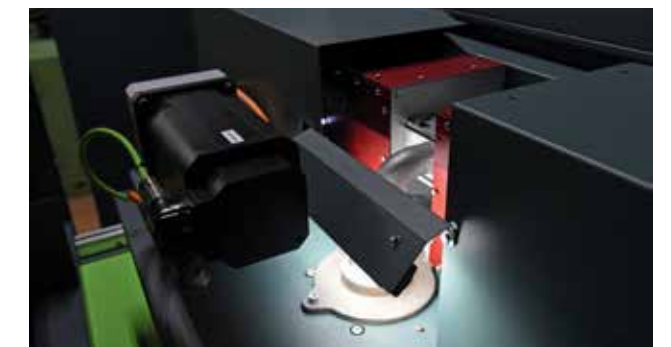
ELVO's innovative core is the quality control system RiverX, a technological device that controls and manages the quality of the entire production during fibre processing. This technology is important for the users, who still manually control the delivery weight through spot checks. A "controlling eye" on the whole processed batch analyses data, stores it, and makes it remotely available.

'And of course, with an eye to the future, the mechanical parts that have been replaced with electronics also minimise maintenance and spare parts replacement'.

Its proprietary control panel (SanProMo: Sant'Andrea Production Monitor) is able to create an ideal "dashboard" to manage the machine efficiency and to control quality. The "embedded" SanProMo software will help the operator/supervisor optimise production and keep fibre quality under control, even remotely.

In addition to this it received the Italian digital ready certificate, a new standard way to store production data created by Italian Textile Machinery Association (ACIMIT).

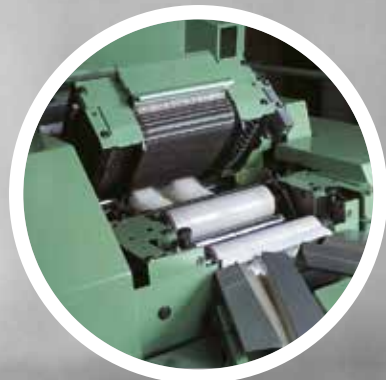
In 2021 Sant'Andrea Novara plant commenced production of COGNETEX spinning frames. 'We can now offer our customers a complete package from the whole fibre processing line from an IoT perspective, in order to support them to enhance the quality and speed of their production', concludes Mario Ploner.



Weight and quality sliver control sensor at the output

COPPA

COMBING WITH CARE SINCE 1952



We produce accessories for textile machines, in particular for combing, preparation and twisting of wool-like and synthetic fibers.



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Latest technology from OFDA



Thomas Hegerty (left) and Mark Brims with the new OFDA2000 at IWTO Kyoto 2023

The latest models of OFDA2000 and OFDA4000 for fibre diameter and length measurement were displayed at IWTO 2023 in Kyoto and ITMA 2023 in Milan. OFDA fibre testing equipment is widely used around the world. It is used for any animal fibre including wool, alpaca, mohair, cashmere, camel hair and more.

The new OFDA2000 is 1/3 the size of the original portable and bench top models. It will automatically measure up to 10000 fibres in 30 seconds with extreme repeatability, and is the only testing instrument that measures fibre diameter along the staple. Diameter can vary up to 50% along a staple and in extreme cases an animal can be producing 20um fibre at one time of the year, and 30um at another time, usually due to diet. Tests are internationally recognised in snippet mode by test method IWTO-47.

The new OFDA2000 can be used at farm, from the

back of a truck on any terrain, or at the processing mill. A number of countries in South America have been introducing this equipment to their wool growers to increase testing at the farm level. In particular, Peru has encouraged alpaca growers to use OFDA measuring instruments to better sort alpaca fibre. Mongolian wool and cashmere growers are also using OFDA instruments in their everyday farming practices for better production outcomes.

OFDA4000 is a laboratory instrument that is user-friendly and specifically designed to be used in topmaking mills and for research institutes and arbitrators. It is the only instrument to directly measure diameter, length, hauteur

and barbe of fibres in one single operation - in real time. The OFDA4000 measures the main wool top parameters of diameter, length and hauteur in a single measurement. Testing is recognised by test method IWTO-62.

'Processors know that choosing the right micron is at the heart of quality for top, yarn, and fabric production. The need to test is more important than ever', Mark Brims, the developer of this technology, comments. 'Today the wool grower will receive much better prices for finer microns even with a small micron variation and this is particularly evident in the 17 - 21 microns range.'

'It was great meeting so many new and existing clients at IWTO and ITMA. I am excited for the future of OFDA and I am always available to talk about your company needs, and the advantages of our technology,' says Thomas Hegerty. Thomas has been working with Mark for the last 10 years and is the next generation to run the OFDA business.

To find your local agent or for all sales and technical enquiries please email info@ofda.com

Fibre Diameter and Length Measurement



OFDA2000 Laboratory Benchtop Model

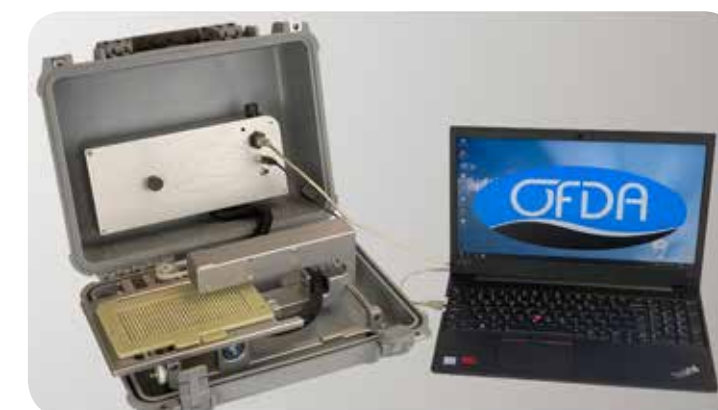
Rapid Automatic Measurement of Diameter and Curvature of Wool, Alpaca, Cashmere, Synthetic and Other Fibres

Recognised by IWTO Test Method 47 for measuring fibre snippets.

OFDA2000 Portable Farm Model

Measures greasy wool and gives diameter profile along the staple.

Robust but light weight design. One third the size of the previous model.



OFDA4000

Rapid Automatic Measurement of Diameter, Length and Hauteur for Wool, Alpaca, Cashmere, Hemp, Synthetic and Other Fibres

Recognised by IWTO Test Method 62 for length measurement.



To contact your local agent please email info@ofda.com or visit www.ofda.com



SPINNING AND TWISTING RINGS FOR ALL TEXTILES



Pietro Prosino

We were very pleased to have the opportunity to meet with new and existing customers at ITMA Milan. The exhibition provided face-to-face communication, so important for listening to our customers and learning about their plans, so we can help them achieve their goals', says Pietro Prosino. 'Nothing ever stays the same and this is very evident when it comes to textile machinery. The advances in spinning technology are overwhelming and we are very proud that our spinning rings continue to be part of the innovation story.

PROSINO Borgosesia rings offer a quality solution for every type of textile spinning. The company has a yearly production of 9.000.000 rings and specializes in spinning rings for any frames operating for long and short staple fibre and technical yarns. It supplies to Original Equipment

Manufacturer (OEM) companies including SAURER, COGNEX, and GAUDINO and works with many leading yarn manufacturers around the world.

PROSINO customers, particularly in Europe, continue to favour Borgosesia rings. Saurer comments, 'PROSINO has the flexibility to produce small batches of customised rings and this is a big advantage that should not be overlooked'.

Loro Piana notes that 'a further strength of the Italian textile machinery industry is the existence of a network of precision mechanical component companies able to help find effective solutions quickly'.

PROSINO Steel Conical Rings provide extra speed and reduce yarn breakage, yarn hairiness, and provide a longer-lasting life to spinning frames. 'Users can expect up to 10 years of unbroken performance from these rings', says Pietro Prosino. 'Wear and tear over time alters the geometry of the ring and the surface will lose its initial characteristics and level of roughness. The co-efficient of friction between ring and traveller starts to change and increases the possibility of breakage and a decreases control over the spinning process'.

'Using cheaper, unreliable spinning rings can result in costly maintenance. Yarn breakage and a loss in production time are also costly'.

'Our rings provide greater control of the spindle-to-spindle yarn tension and a high consistency in yarn quality parameters including hairiness, Uster Value, and other imperfections. They also reduce the chance of contamination from lubrication oils'.

'PROSINO rings can be customized and we can manufacture any ring size for any spinning brand'.

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WE KEEP THE WORLD SPINNING

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- Longer lasting life - up to 10 years
- Constant lubrication
- Reduced yarn breakage
- Reduced yarn hairiness
- World class OEM



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COGNETEX under new management



including "Tow to Top", and spinning preparation in combing lines, carpet yarn lines, and semi worsted lines'.

'Cognetex integrated drawing frames, intersecting drawing frames, rubbing finisher, and spinning frame machines for long staple fibre for wool and synthetic fibre are a brand well recognised around the world', he notes.

The Cognetex IDEA Spinning Frame has been designed for worsted wool staple length fibres, to produce high quality at high speed. 'Its simple operation, low maintenance, and low energy consumption, are further features that we are very proud to provide our customers', says Patrick Strehle. 'These multiple configurations and the technological solutions we offer make this series the optimal response to the most demanding requirements of the wool processing industry'.

The IDEA spinning frames can be supplied with 3 or 4 - cylinders drafting unit, spindles gauge of 75 or 82.5 mm and single or double-drive. The IDEA single-drive provides the ideal combination of production performance and yarn quality. The IDEA double-drive can work yarns of different type, colour and count on both sides of the machine, completely independently from each other. The count range it can process is from Nm 10 to Nm 200.

The new head stock design enables users to change drafting ratios and twist settings by means of an electronic drive mechanism (E-drive). Feeding, intermediate and drafting cylinders are controlled by 4 motors and 2 inverters. Feeding and drafting speed ratios and twist settings can be changed directly from the new Dialoguer touch screen machine interface.

The supporting structure of the IDEA spinning frame is made of steel plate and cast iron elements. In particular, the vertical support legs - one every 8 spindles - are made of flat steel plate and are connected with each other through the support bars

Cognetex is under new management but it's essential raison d'être, as a world-class specialist in long staple fibre processing, continues. It is now integrated in the nsc Schlumberger group of companies. 'Cognetex has been designing and manufacturing high-quality textile machinery from Italy since 1938 and we will continue to provide the same quality, reliability, and innovation', says Patrick Strehle of nsc Schlumberger in France.

'Innovation in terms of design and technology is always on-going. We aim to meet the needs of customers that require ever-improving productivity, reliability, and easy use in complete spinning lines,

(steel) of the pendular arms, the spindle rails (cast iron) and the aluminium longitudinal elements of the automated doffing. Together, all these elements make up a "self-supporting box type structure" which, at equal weights, is sturdier than conventional frames.

COGNETEX provides full technical and commercial support for its range of products and spare parts and will customize according to customer requirements.

Sales and post-sales technical support is also available.

'We have a wide commercial network of agents and service personnel in Argentina, Peru, Mexico, USA, Spain, Portugal, Italy, France, India, Thailand, South Korea, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Iran, China, Egypt on the ground that will assist clients if needed', Patrick Strehle concludes.

Schlumberger's worsted cards make a difference

The Schlumberger worsted card W235 in 3.5 m and 2.5m working width is a single or double doffer card equipped with a volumetric hopper-feeder, developed with Tecnomeccanica Biellese. This continuous flow volumetric feeder incorporates a feed silo or can be equipped with a feed condenser and includes individual motor drives which allow a constant density batt to be fed to the card. The card is built for fibers with low fiber-to-fiber cohesion such as Alpaca or Mohair.

High variations of fibre moisture rates are pneumatically fed to the card and can be equipped with an in-feed auto-leveller working on an X-ray basis.

The drafting head has numerous parts common to the gills; the fibre control is done by discs. The drafting rates and the pressures can be adjusted from the card control panel screen, with an individual drive to the drafting head. The reducing head is equipped with its one suction and dedusting network. The drafting head is followed by a can coiler delivery for cans of Dia 1200 or 1600 mm, which can be fed with



Schlumberger worsted card with new volumetric hopper-feeder developed with Tecnomeccanica Biellese

up to 90 kg of carded wool sliver. When several cards are working together, each out coming sliver can be delivered on a common conveying system with a reducer gills before delivery.

The internal and external card contamination is maintained at a minimum level due to the integrated suction network and a complete covering of the card and the delivery.

Practical and industrial experiments show that the sucked dust and short fibre level is always inferior to 1% of the card production

(between 0.3 and 0.8 0/0), allowing a better cleanliness of the card sliver, with a positive impact downstream on the longevity of all machine parts in contact with the wool fibres (as chains, needle bars).

The card efficiency can be, according to the working conditions, over 90-92 0/0.

These cards can perfectly integrate complete combing lines by nsc Schlumberger, together with the GC 40's and the Era 40's combs for wool top makers to achieve the best possible results.

Q&A

with Eric Fessler commercial director
nsc Schlumberger



Everything changes for textile machinery manufacturers when mechanical gears are changed to electronic gears - changing the way topmaking plants operate. Benefits and improvements include production speed, fewer operational staff, energy savings, and more consistent quality from one batch to another.

Following ITMA Milan, where leading textile machinery manufacturers exhibited their latest machinery, Victor Checky asked Eric Fessler about the reaction to this change from spinners and weavers.



nsc's ERA 50 combing machine features a 9 axis servomotor drive execution. Thanks to this multi-motor drive, most of the settings will be set through the main electronic control screen. The electronic settings also enable it to memorise the last or any previous production run. This information can be stored and repeated whenever it is required - providing consistent quality is always important to customers.

'Topmaking and spinning have gone through some changes past Covid. Although the industry is still very competitive there are a number of other challenges being faced today. Energy costs, difficulties in attracting staff, and demand for environmental credentials by their customers are just some issues'.

As a leading supplier of textile machinery for TowToTop, carding and combing, defelting, blending, recombining, spinning preparation, crush cutting, semi-worsted, stretch-breaking, and worsted spinning preparation, nsc Schlumberger must innovate and integrate answers to these challenges.



Chain gill GC50 is built with digital mechanical settings to reduce operator intervention. Many of the settings are electronically controlled to enhance precision and reactivity. The setting of the nip distance and tensions can be modified for easier use and greater reliability. A new suction system uses filtering bags to replace the traditional suction box for cleaning. The filter surface is larger and the power suction can be modified.

'The old combs operate as individual units. This requires resetting machines individually every time the operator makes an adjustment, and each machine needs a person to do that. If you look at, say, 15 combs you might need at least two hours to reset 15 combs. All 15 machines of our new ERA50 can be operated by one or two people. Adjustment or changes to batches can be done in 10-15 minutes and all machines talk to each other, producing reliable quality top'.

The quality of every batch usually depends on the experience and knowledge of the floor operator. The new machines are all controlled through a touch screen. No great experience or knowledge is required as all parameters are set electronically.

An important focus for the spinning industry today is sustainability and circularity as textile manufacturers look for green solutions to be more competitive. As such, there is an increase in interest in textiles made from natural materials, including wool.

Spinning machines are now built to be intelligent and can perform a myriad of tasks automatically. For example, settings can be made in a more precise manner than human operators, and optical sensors can also help monitor waste. Digital innovations enable the collection of data that can be used to make better informed decisions.

As a result, spinners can leverage the latest technologies that provide a combination of consistency and efficiency that enable them to have greater control of yarn quality and to optimise for maximum productivity.

Against the backdrop of such technological developments in the spinning industry, nsc Schlumberger developed textile machines for processing long staple fibres such as wool and wool-like fibres that are user-friendly, with accurate settings through control screens, enhancing textile quality.



The mechatronized Vertical rubbing frame FMV50 is prepared to Industry 4.0 with complete data collection. Internet connection allows machine diagnostic by the nsc Schlumberger customer service team. The FMV50 has fewer mechanical settings and therefore requires less operator intervention. Settings are electronically monitored in order to enhance precision and reactivity. It provides outstanding performances up to 275 m/min with only one rubbing level.

nsc
fibre to yarn

*nsc Schlumberger
Industry 4.0 offers
multiple benefits*

FYBER MES (Manufacturing Execution System) is an information system for textile production developed by nsc Schlumberger in collaboration with Schaeffer Productique.

This new management interface for nsc Schlumberger machines uses the standard OPC-UA protocol, which is compatible with any system handling this standard. The introduction of this online system into all nsc Schlumberger 50 series machines maximised the performance of these new machines.

FYBER MES is a real Industry 4.0 tool, increasing operational efficiency and saving time. Data is collected, analysed, and processed quickly and can be utilised for future use.

Optimized workflow results in cost reductions and reduced downtime and setting times. Settings can be uploaded instantly, preventing errors that happen in manual operations.



from the editor's desk...

Meeting with companies around the world I am often asked whether advertising is really necessary – I believe it is.

It is important to remain visible and promote the benefits of your products and services. It is important to promote this to existing customers and to new customers. It is complacent to rely on the loyalty of your existing customers.

I am also asked whether advertising in hard copy magazines is still relevant.

The shelf life of a magazine is long-lasting. It can be picked up and referred to time and again. **wool2yarn** magazine provides buyers the opportunity to dip in many times over an extended period.

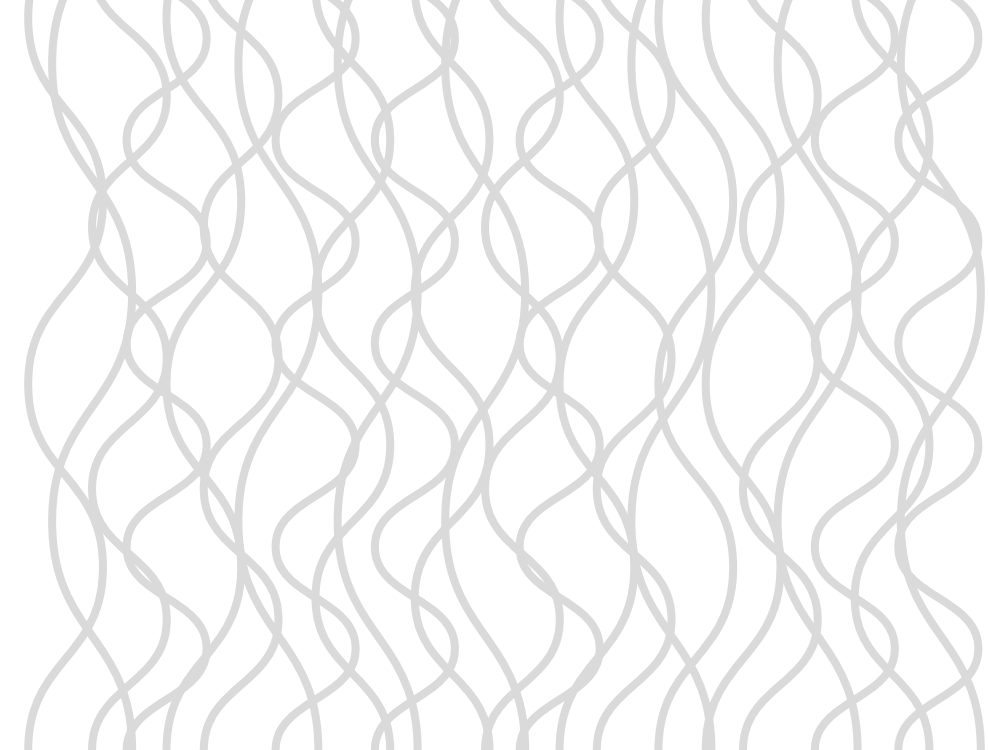
Marketing and advertising is about communication – about gaining new business and about protecting existing customers from your competition. The need to remind them that you are a preferred supplier never goes away. Repeat advertising exposure is a powerful tool to create and cement recognition of your company name and product.

And if your local agents tell you that you don't need to advertise because they are there on the ground..... well I have never met an agent who can visit or talk to 10,000 companies in one year.

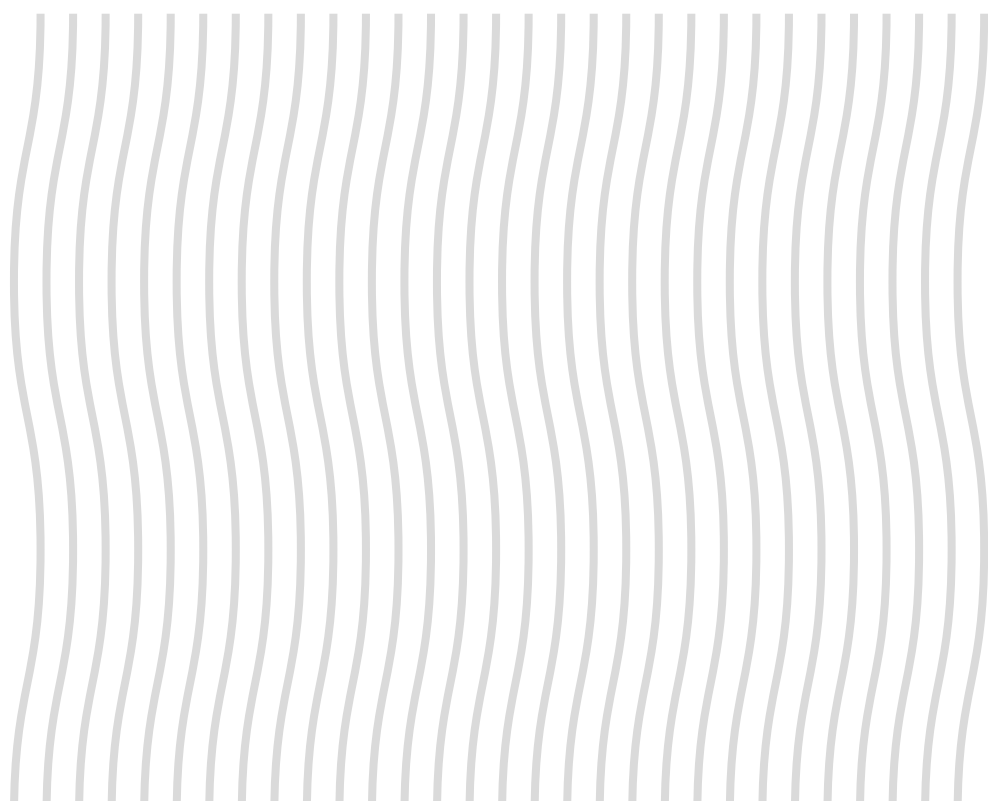
wool2yarn magazines reach 10,000 textile companies in over 64 countries including China. Advertising in **wool2yarn** can effectively present your story and your product in a very cost-effective way.

www.wool2yarnglobal.com

“Stopping advertising to save money... is like stopping your watch to save time”



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