

MEDIA RELEASE

WoolProducers working to keep the wool industry going

30 March, 2020

Peak woolgrower representative body, WoolProducers Australia has been working to ensure the wool industry, from production, harvesting, selling and exporting can continue to operate in these uncertain times.

WoolProducers President Mr Ed Storey said, 'In this unprecedented environment, we are trying to provide surety to our producers that the wool industry will continue to operate'.

WoolProducers has initiated several teleconferences with supply-chain partners to undertake a number of advocacy activities with the aim of ensuring that the wool industry is considered an essential industry during the current COVID-19 situation.

'WoolProducers has coordinated representatives from the domestic wool trade to highlight the economic, employment and animal welfare benefits that come from keeping the wool industry operational to both Federal and State Governments.' Mr Storey said.

WoolProducers has also been involved in a number of working groups and collaborative activities to demonstrate the wool industry's commitment to government health directives to mitigate the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

Mr Storey said, 'We have been working with the brokers, exporters, handlers, AWEX and AWTA to put in place protocols and contingency measures to safeguard the continued transaction of wool'.

'WoolProducers also facilitated a working group with shearing contractor associations, AWEX and SPA to develop industry wide guidance for both woolgrowers and shed staff for minimising risks around wool harvesting'.

'While there is no such thing as zero risk, we know that if everybody from growers, roustabouts to contractors do their bit by observing social distancing and implementing hygiene regimes, that we are giving the industry the best change at continued operations.' Mr Storey said.

WoolProducers has also updated their website to provide the latest wool industry specific advice and guidance, which can be found at <https://woolproducers.com.au/covid-19/>

'WoolProducers understands that this is an evolving issue and that things can change in a matter of hours. What we are trying to achieve is that we can continue to produce, harvest and transact wool for the longest time possible'. Mr Storey said.

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WoolProducers Australia contact:

Jo Hall
Chief Executive Officer
0488 554 811

About WoolProducers' Australia

WPA plays a critical role in working closely with companies and entities funded by woolgrower funds including compulsory levies or fees for service.

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Its mission is to develop constructive and profitable outcomes for woolgrowers nationally.

The agency is responsible for appointing a director to each of the Australian Wool Exchange and the Australia Wool Testing Authority, promoting good corporate governance and ensuring that the interests of growers are met.

WPA maintains a working relationship with Australian Wool Innovation as the voice of woolgrower shareholders. It aims to contribute to AWI's programs for the benefit of growers, promoting responsible use of levy funds and ensuring good corporate governance.

WPA is the sole wool industry member of Animal Health Australia, and as such, carries a significant responsibility for decision making on behalf of the industry in the event of an emergency animal disease outbreak.

As the only wool grower organisation with membership of the National Farmers' Federation, WoolProducers is responsible for providing key policy advice on behalf of our members, and other wool growers, to Australia's peak farm body.

WoolProducers also works closely with the Federal Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment on key issues such as animal health and welfare, biosecurity, pest management control, natural resource management, drought preparedness, emergency animal disease outbreak preparedness and industry development, including research and trade.