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AWEX SECURES FUNDING FOR AUSTRALIAN WOOL QUALITY SERVICES

Australia's reputation as the provider of the world's best wool was strengthened today with the announcement by AWEX of a new industry supported funding solution, effectively securing the long-term future of their quality assurance programs.

Since the 1990's, the Australian wool industry has benefited from the internationally recognised wool quality assurance programs and services delivered by AWEX including wool preparation standards, the National Wool Declaration Integrity Program and the wool pack quality program.

How to financially sustain what is widely recognised as world's best practice wool quality assurance programs as well as meeting the increasing quality assurance demands of local and international customers of Australian wool has been a challenge for AWEX in recent years.

"Following an extensive period of industry consultation with AWEX members, wool grower organisations and other key wool industry stakeholders on this issue, we have developed what we believe to be a more equitable and sustainable funding structure for our quality assurance programs," said AWEX CEO, Mr Mark Grave.

From today, an AWEX quality assurance fee will be collected on the sale of all bale labels. The bale label of \$0.65, previously \$0.25 per label, will guarantee future delivery and development of the internationally recognised framework of rules, standards and compliance services, other than costs associated with wool classer registration, delivered to the industry by AWEX.

"The new funding structure is simple and more efficient as it is paid by the wool pack manufacturer when purchasing bale labels from AWEX prior to production. Importantly it creates a sustainable long-term platform for Australian wool QA programs," said Mr Grave.

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"The new funding structure will ensure the high international standing of the Australian wool industry is upheld and provide a platform for future development. It will further build on the investment that woolgrowers have made in maintaining the reputation of the Australian woolclip over the last 50 years.

The AWEX Bale Label is easily identified in Australia and overseas and in itself represents a mark of support for Australia's quality assurance programs.

For further information on Australia's wool quality assurance programs, their impact overseas and how they protect Australia's reputation contact AWEX at www.awex.com.au or on 02 9248 6100.

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AWEX Quality Assurance Programs

The QA programs provided by AWEX are those activities directly related to the development, monitoring, maintenance or education which 'add value' to Australian wool. The objective of these services is to enhance the reputation of and maintain competition/access to Australian wool and include:

- Woolclasser Registration
- Showfloor services which monitor the performance of wool quality standards and certification (inc. 'P' & 'D' certificates etc.)
- NWD-IP
- Educational/extension activities
- AWEX-ID
- Woolpack Quality Program
- Bale Labels
- Industry Services Advisory Committee (ISAC) which provides a forum to consult on QA programs

For further information please contact AWEX on (02) 9428 6100