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## SustainaWOOL™ Integrity Scheme finds a new home with industry body, the Australian Wool Exchange

New England Wool Pty Ltd and Italian fabric makers Successori Reda and Vitale Barberis Canonico have transferred ownership of The SustainaWOOL™ Integrity Scheme to the Australian Wool Exchange (AWEX).

The SustainaWOOL™ Integrity Scheme was launched in 2015 in response to demand from consumers and retailers. Since its inception, over 950 farms have been accredited, making it the largest sustainability scheme in the wool industry worldwide.

“The SustainaWOOL™ Integrity Scheme provides wool producers the opportunity to showcase the efforts that allow them to produce a quality and sustainable product from their valued stock,” Andrew Blanch, Managing Director of New England Wool.

“We want to share the opportunities in the scheme with all wool producers and users around the world to help us work and grow together in an increasingly competitive and sustainability conscious landscape.”

In a landmark decision to expand the scheme to all professional wool producers in Australia, the owners, developers and managers of the SustainaWOOL™ Integrity Scheme signed a Memorandum of Understanding in May 2019 to relinquish 100% ownership of the scheme to the fully independent industry body, the Australian Wool Exchange (AWEX).

“At a special Board Meeting late last week, we unanimously agreed to complete the transfer of SustainaWOOL™, in time for the start of the 2019/20 wool selling season,” Mark Grave, CEO of the Australian Wool Exchange.

Thanks to its new home with the independent industry body, the Scheme will be able to develop and grow, allowing wool from accredited farms to be made available to all users worldwide.

“AWEX was the natural answer to our project and the Australian wool producers deserve it. We are very proud that we can provide the wool industry with this gift,” Francesco Botto Poala, COO of Successori Reda.

AWEX has received overwhelming encouragement and support from the wider wool community to provide the Australian wool industry with a single, rigorously audited sustainability scheme that is independently owned and operated.

“As an independent industry owned and operated program, AWEX now has the opportunity to make SustainaWOOL™ available to all wool users,” Mr Grave said.

Globally, customers of wool are demanding evidence of sustainability through independent and credible integrity programs.

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“We have been working hard for four years in order to build the most important integrity scheme in the world. It is an independent powerful system that brings added value, not only to the Australian wool industry, but the whole supply chain. SustainaWOOL™ is indeed one of the strongest support structures for the modern green world,” Alessandro Barberis Canonico, CEO of Vitale Barberis Canonico.

SustainaWOOL™ has become a strong foundation for Australian wool producers to promote their product to the world and gain access to premium markets.

Mr Grave said, the textile market is very competitive, and we are aware of the importance of getting this transition right and providing a scheme that caters for the needs of the market now, and into the future.

“AWEX programs such as the Code of Practice for Wool Preparation and the National Wool Declaration Integrity Program are recognised and respected globally. SustainaWOOL™ is an extension of these and we are excited and proud to take this on,” Mark Grave, CEO of the Australian Wool Exchange.

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