

# QUALITY PROGRAMME BEST PRACTICE - SHEARING



## BACKGROUND

Given the current climate of animal rights activism, Wright Wool has commissioned a report into the best practice of shearing sheep.

As a strict policy Wright Wool supports best practice to all operations that interact with animals, complying with all relevant legislation, codes of practice, and best industry practice.

### INDUSTRY BEST PRACTICE, GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES, RSPCA STANDARDS

A literature search has compiled twelve international publications that reference “shearing”, industry best practice (7), Government Guidelines (3), and RSPCA standards (2).

The twelve international publications are in addition to the 5 domestic publications adhered to, regarding industry standards (3) and Government standards (2) that are from New Zealand.

## BEST PRACTICE

Industry best practice is for a sheep to be shorn with minimal stress, by a trained and competent shearer and at a time when the removal of the animals insulating fleece would not cause cold temperature stress. The animal should then be returned to feed, water and shelter with minimal delay.

The process of shearing has been divided up into multiple stages, defined by using a collaboration of domestic and international literature, providing a broad range of information regarding each stage of the shearing process.

### OVERRIDING PRINCIPAL - THE FIVE FREEDOMS

1. Freedom from thirst, hunger and malnutrition.
2. Freedom from discomfort.
3. Freedom from pain, injury or disease.
4. Freedom from fear and distress.
5. Freedom to display most normal patterns of behaviour.

## THE SHEARING OPERATION

### MUSTERING AND YARDING

1. Minimal stress during this mustering and yarding.
2. Feed and water should be restricted pre shear to minimise discomfort, 12-24 hours\*.

### PRE-SHEARING

1. Adult sheep shall be shorn at least once a year.
2. Shearing pattern shall take into consideration climatic conditions.
3. Sheep should be presented clean and dry to shear.
4. Sheep should be drafted according to:
  - Breed
  - Age
  - Sex
  - Wool Length
  - length of time of the property
  - Illness (footrot, flyblown and or Zoonosis)
5. Facilities checked to ensure minimal stress to stock.

### SHEARING

1. Sheep should be shorn by competent trained shearers.
2. Sheep will not be caught, dragged or lifted by their wool.
3. A plan must be in place for any incident in where a sheep becomes free on the board.
4. Any injury should be attended to immediately, by a vet if necessary.
5. Create a culture where mistreatment of sheep is not tolerated in the shed.
6. Shearing gear must be properly sharpened, and electrical gear grounded.

### POST SHEARING

1. Returned to feed and water ASAP.
2. Health and wellbeing monitored over the following days.

## REFERENCES

PUBLICATION	REF	COUNTRY
NZ Wool classers Assoc. – Clip Preparation- Best Practice guideline	1	NZ
Fernmark – Grower checklist	2	NZ
AFFCO – AFFCO select farm assurance programme	3	NZ
ITWO – The ITWO Guidelines for wool sheep welfare	4	Belgium
National Farm Animal Care Council – Code of Practice for the care and Handling of sheep	5	Canada
Farm Animal welfare advisory council – Animal welfare guidelines for sheep farmers	6	Ireland
Wool Forum of South Africa – Best Practice reference manual for sheep farming in South Africa.	7	SA
Global Animal Partnership – Draft, 5 step animal welfare rating pilot standards for sheep meat v1.0	8	USA
Humane Farm Animal Care – Sheep, including dairy sheep.	9	USA
American Sheep Industry Association – Sheep Care Guide	10	USA
Dept. of Labour – Best Practice guideline for the NZ Shearing Industry	11	NZ
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry – Animal Welfare, Fact Sheet 1	12	NZ
The Scottish Government – Sheep, codes of practice for the welfare of sheep.	13	Scotland
Victorian Dept. of Primary Industries – Code of accepted Farming Practice for the welfare of sheep	14	Australia
Dept. for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, DEFRA – Code of recommendations for the welfare of livestock, Sheep	15	UK
RSPCA – RSPCA welfare standards for sheep	16	UK
Animal welfare issues with shearing of sheep	17	Australia

## BECOME A REGISTERED MEMBER

To become a registered member of the Wright Wool Quality Assurance Programme (WWQAP), please complete the registration form.

Your wool brand will be recorded as a WWQAP qualifying property on the basis of the information submitted and declared on the registration form.

Non-compliance issues will be recorded and your registration will not be valid until they are rectified.

It is the responsibility of the registered brand owner to inform Wright Wool of any changes to the initial registration.

As a WWQAP grower you undertake to comply with the standards set out in this manual.

Compliance with the requirements and recommendations of the programme enable Wright Wool to offer your wool with the assurance of ethically grown, sustainably produced wool, traceable back to the grower.

If you make any significant changes to your farming policies that may directly affect this registration you must contact us.

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### THE FINE PRINT:

New Zealand has a national animal welfare system. The Animal Welfare Act 1999 (the Act) sets out the high level responsibilities for owners and persons in charge of animals to provide for their physical, health and behavioural needs. Codes of welfare provide in more detail than is contained in the Act, minimum standards for specific species and situations. The Sheep and Beef Cattle code of welfare is the code which sets the minimum standards for people in charge of sheep and beef cattle. New Zealand is currently consulting on animal welfare regulations that sit between the Act and codes of welfare. The regulations are able to be more specific than the Act and provide direct penalties for non-compliance. In contrast, codes of welfare must currently be enforced via offences in the Act.

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) and the Royal New Zealand Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RNZSPCA) both have responsibilities for animal welfare compliance in New Zealand. MPI primarily deals with farmed animals while the RNZSPCA is primarily concerned with pets.

## REGISTRATION FORM

Either print this page and fill it in then fax it to 06 858 9466 or scan and email it to [charlotte@wrightwool.co.nz](mailto:charlotte@wrightwool.co.nz). Or save the PDF to your computer so you can fill the form in online. Move from one field to the next by using the tab button, then hit submit.

GROWER INFORMATION	
Trade name	
Grower name	
Wool brand	
Address	
Rapid no.	
Shed rapid nos.	
Home phone	
Mobile phone	
Email	
Shearing contractor	
Contact number	

FLOCK INFORMATION	
Breed	
Ewe nos.	
Ewe hogget nos.	
Current shearing pattern	
Products used when you dip & spray	
Are you pesticide free - yes or no	
If organic, to what standard	

DECLARATION	
I agree to abide by the terms of business as detailed on this document.	
Signed (grower):	Signed (WW rep):