

## The Cicerone Project Inc.

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### NEWSLETTER No 16

October 2001

## MAKING MONEY WITH NEW TECHNOLOGY

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2001

from 9.45 am to 1.00 pm

Liaison Centre, CSIRO, Chiswick

**Short talks, plenty of time to ask questions  
& see the technology in action**

Make your farm more efficient, save time and \$\$  
These technologies and others will be on display

**Radio fence**, to keep stock on your side of the boundary  
**OFDA** and **Laser Scan**, for wool testing  
**FecPak**, do your own faecal egg counts  
**Centrogen**, for GPS maps of your property  
**Gene Mapping** and **Gene Markers**, for genetic selection  
**New pasture species** for improved productivity  
**Satellite mapping** of pasture growth  
**Wool Harvester**, an alternative to the shearing shed  
**Automatic weigh stations**  
**Electronic eartags**  
**A.I. ideas**

**Members \$10, Non members \$30**

**RSVP to 6778 3871**

**TO BE FOLLOWED AFTER LUNCH BY A  
FARM WALK OF THE CICERONE FARM  
LUNCH \$10, bookings essential on 6778 3871  
or Caroline won't be able to feed you!**

## Contents of Newsletter 16

If you have only received the first and last pages of this newsletter, it is because you are no longer a financial member, please join us to receive the 'lost' pages! The interesting contents that you are missing include:-

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**We express our deepest sympathy to Board member TERRY COVENTRY on the sad loss of his wife ALICE on 21<sup>st</sup> September**

### WHAT A DIFFERENCE A DAY MAKES

On Monday we emailed jokes  
On Tuesday we did not

On Monday we thought that we were secure  
On Tuesday we learned better

On Monday we were talking about heroes as being athletes  
On Tuesday we relearned who our heroes are

On Monday we were irritated that our rebate checks had not arrived  
On Tuesday we gave money away to people we had never met

On Monday there were people fighting against praying in schools  
On Tuesday you would have been hard pressed to find a school where someone was not praying.

On Monday people argued with their kids about picking up their room  
On Tuesday the same people could not get home fast enough to hug their kids

On Monday people were upset that they had to wait 6 minutes in a fast food drive through line  
On Tuesday people didn't care about waiting up to 6 hours to give blood for the dying.

On Monday we waved our flags signifying our cultural diversity  
On Tuesday we waved only the American flag

On Monday there were people trying to separate each other by race, sex, color and creed  
On Tuesday they were all holding hands

On Monday we were men or women, black or white, old or young, rich or poor, gay or straight, Christian or non-Christian.  
On Tuesday we were Americans.

On Monday politicians argued about budget surpluses  
On Tuesday, grief stricken, they sang 'God Bless America'

On Monday the President was going to Florida to read to children  
On Tuesday he returned to Washington to protect our children

On Monday people went to work as usual.  
On Tuesday some of them died.

On Monday people were fighting the 10 commandments on government property.  
On Tuesday the same people all said 'God help us all' while thinking 'Thou shall not kill'.

It is sadly ironic how it takes horrific events to place things into perspective, but it has. The lessons learned this week, the things we have taken for granted, the things that have been forgotten or overlooked, hopefully will never be forgotten again.

*Author unknown, taken from an internet genealogy mailing list*

## Wool at the cross roads ... will it be a sustainable and viable modern industry or just become a cottage industry ... the choice is yours

This was the message from **Col Dorber**, Managing Director of Australian Wool Innovation to wool producers at the Cicerone Seminar held on 11<sup>th</sup> September. He says that wool has five years to perform or it will become a cottage industry.

Col Dorber addressed wool producers in blunt terms, telling them the government will do nothing for them in the future, it was up to wool producers themselves to seize back power and control of their industry

The key to industry success will be the generation of profits for producers. People may say lifestyle is important but life style is a consequence of having the money to live the lifestyle you want. This means money must be earned. We must generate profits for wool producers.

Already this new broom has swept much of the former wool administration clean with 307 jobs off the payroll. He and the AWI board have stopped generic funding of wool promotion and changed the culture of agri-politics. Commenting on the characteristic of hate within the industry, Col Dorber commented that in future any discussion papers posted on the web will not have the authors listed and no one will be able to use their muscle or influence anymore to obtain funding for R and D, the key issue will be wealth creation for producers.

The Strategic Plan of AWI is listed on their web site at [www.wool.com](http://www.wool.com). Producer views have been sought but only 17 out of 38500 producers have responded. The statement of Corporate Intent is also on the web, as are the discussion papers and letters from the Board to you, the producer. *Please read them*

The Exotic disease report is there for your comment ... proposed spending \$1million per year for 4 years. *Your comments are needed.* Later this year AWI will host a conference with the top UK people involved in the control of Foot and Mouth outbreak.

The highly controversial Wellsman report, held for 6 months before publication, is there for your comment ... \$30 million per year for 3 years. *Please read and comment*

**You are urged to access the web site at [www.wool.com](http://www.wool.com) and read all of articles.**

The web site is a very useful tool for getting information out to all wool producers. Traveling many miles to meetings is not efficient, but using Sky Channel and Internet chat rooms will increasingly be the way that information is disseminated because they are a cheaper and more profitable use of time. Producers need to become more familiar and comfortable with computer and Internet use. There are 5000 wool producers with an email address and email will become a more important communication tool in the future.

During recent months, all research projects were subject to a review. Contracts which were renewed will be honoured whatever the vote by producers prior to January 2004 re the amount of levy collected.

He commented that the Cicerone Project was one of the better programs currently operating, with a good extension program and at the AGM gave us some clues as to how we can continue to improve.

Research must produce wealth for producers. We need ground breaking research that focuses on the need to increase productivity, to increase the profit margin no matter what the selling price, and the need to lower costs. He wants real outcomes, not 'fancy stuff' for scientists.

According to Col Dorber, quality assurance is currently too costly and too time consuming, it needs to be driven by technology and management practices. Dr. Peter Cull has been employed to research all relevant

technologies that could influence the wool industry.

Wool producers need to look outside the square... why are wool bales still contaminated with vegetation; why are wool bales the size they are; why are they sold in small lot sizes when some processors want to buy in hundreds and thousands, not ones and sevens?

There is a future for eco-wool and the Northern Tablelands has advantages in this area.

Extension is important and he spoke of a simple ready reckoner wheel that went out in rural journals in Victoria to advise on fertilizer input.

In the future Col Dorber predicts we will see a hand-held on-farm wool-testing device under \$10,000. It will measure what the **buyers** want. The fundamental need of buyers is micron, 65% for buyers of wool under 19 micron and 80% are micron driven for buyers of 19 and higher). The profits from its sale will go to AWI for continued funding of R and D, replacing the current levy.

The new Non-Woven Wool project sounds particularly exciting. The New Zealand company has a clear commercial brief to develop four new fabrics each year and one must be commercial or there is no more research money. The wool that went into the machine was over 20 micron and came out feeling like silk.

AWI is looking to finalize a 40 year dispute with CSIRO over the ownership of the land at Chiswick. Basically CSIRO is to buy the land from AWI. Sales of various pieces of land will put about \$30 million into the AWI bank account for future investment in R and D.

On farm testing needs to be addressed. Currently there is \$22million for on farm testing and more projects are needed to be

submitted for this section of R and D. Projects have to have useful outcomes for producers, collecting data for 17 years, as one scientist has done, is of no use unless it is used to solve a problem!!!!

The Sheep CRC is, according to Col Dorber, not able to deliver what wool producers want if commercial tests are used to analyse the proposals.

AWI is also very committed to post-farm R and D. We 'want a fabric suitable for our grandchildren to holiday in space.' The military want 'smart technology' incorporated into new fabrics.

Cotton and wool are finally getting into bed together after 15 years of wooing by cotton! Miners and other worker need a better shirt, not the 100% wool one that is itchy and scratchy, that is currently in use. A wool/cotton blend shirt for heavy industry will be a boon to those workers and wool producers alike.

Pure new wool is too expensive for most consumers. We need to target the rest of the world where blends are the answer. Fabrics don't need to be 100% wool to be profitable for producers. A mere 1% wool content will lift wool sales for producers. Blends are vital. The price that is profitable for producers is what is important.

And there we have the key to Col Dorber's message ... we need to create profit for producers or they will head down road to a cottage industry.

From notes taken by Caroline Gaden at the seminar

**By the end of the year 2000 Australian mobile phone subscribers reached 10.3 million. In the Asia Pacific region mobile subscriber numbers reached 230 million by the end of 2000.**

## **DISEASE FREE**

My wife helped Bill inject his lambs one Friday afternoon  
 He'd moved them from the ewes and rams that he'd be shearing soon.  
 Bill asked my wife to help because she was a nurse  
 She'd rarely make a patient yelp ... but lambs were more perverse.

Each lamb that she injected was from pulpy kidney saved,  
 But Bill became annoyed because they often misbehaved.  
 He'd lift each lamb and hold it tight as she the needle used  
 But many fought and kicked at being so abused.

Eight hundred lambs were done, which meant just fifty more at most.  
 But Bill was tiring fast; he leant upon a nearby post.  
 His aching back he bent again another lamb to fetch  
 The one he caught was 'raising Cain', a struggling little wretch.

My wife with needle poised to plunge into the woolly shape  
 Was distracted by the sudden lunge the lamb made to escape.  
 Bill released this lamb he'd grabbed; but worse was yet to come  
 The needle with the vaccine stabbed into the poor man's thumb!

Pain made Bills facial features crease but of one thing he's sure  
 Pulpy kidney's one disease he's free from evermore!

From "Australian poems that would stun a sheep" by Philip R. Rush

### **Don't try and predict the future**

"We don't need the telephone, we have plenty of messenger boys" (Chief Officer of the British PO in 1876)

"There is a world market for only five computers" (IBM Chairman Thomas Watson 1943)

"Home computers will be a waste of time" (Gordon Moore, founder of Intel, 1970s)

"Go back to College" (to the young inventors of Apple personal computers by Hewlett Packard)

"There will be a world market of 275000 computers" (IBM, 1980)

"640K should be enough for anybody" (Bill Gates 1981)

With thanks to Doug Nettleship, editor National Business Bulletin, September 2001

### **National Business Bulletin comment on Commodity prices (September 2001)**

#### *Direction of the dollar*

A depreciation in the Australian dollar will increase the returns on commodity exports although the price of trade inputs to primary industries will also rise. Using 1999-2000 farm data it has been estimated that, for a 1% decline in the value of the Australian dollar, farm cash incomes of Australian broadacre farms would, on average, be around \$1200 higher in that year.

#### *Australian exports*

For farm commodities unit export returns are forecast to increase by 1.9% in 2001-2. World prices are forecast to increase for many agricultural commodities in 2001-02, including grains, oilseeds, beef and some dairy products.

For the whole article, check out the web site on [www.nationalbusiness.com.au](http://www.nationalbusiness.com.au). There is also an interesting article about NUFARM, a company which helps farmers protect crops from disease and also produces pharmaceuticals etc.

**The Cicerone Project gratefully acknowledges the funding support given to them by Australian Wool Innovation**

Newsletter Editor: Caroline Gaden, Executive Officer of The Cicerone Project Inc.  
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### **WEBSITE**

**Australian Wool Innovation** is located at [www.wool.com](http://www.wool.com)