



Media Release

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New technologies a paradigm shift for strong wool

In a move to improve the returns of New Zealand strong wool growers, Wools of New Zealand (WNZ) has entered into a commercial agreement with The Merino Company (TMC), to acquire the exclusive global rights to an innovative scour and dyeing process providing new opportunities for New Zealand strong wool previously only the domain of man-made synthetic fibres.

The two innovative technologies will considerably improve the 'white and bright' properties of strong wool, along with colour fastness enhancements that will provide a "paradigm shift" in the demand for end products using strong wool.

The scour process, *Glacial XT™*, produces whiter and brighter wool and enhances the properties of the fibre. The wool is then dyed using *Kiteq™*, a process that has been proven to improve colour fastness in finished products such as carpets and rugs whilst providing vibrant and clean colours on a par with synthetics.

"The application of the same dye technology within the fine wool sector has proven a 'game changer' in high value apparel sectors," said Andy Wynne, CEO of TMC. "What is exciting is that we've been able to apply the technology into an aligned sector as a collaboration with WNZ's wool marketing efforts, further supporting our NZ Inc story."

Rosstan Mazey, Chief Executive of WNZ said the new technologies presented an opportunity for the New Zealand crossbred wool industry, allowing strong wool to compete alongside synthetics. "WNZ is planning to roll out these technologies over the coming year in selected markets via our extensive network of brand partners.

“As a company targeting premium market segments we must continually innovate and develop unique points of difference. These two technologies combined, *Glacial XT™* and *Kiteq™*, will add a number of benefits to both manufacturers and consumers, in terms of colour fastness, a broader spectrum of colour and opportunities for warranties, all of which open doors into new markets and increased volumes which will ultimately benefit our WNZ shareholders and the wider industry.”

Mazey said there were significant opportunities in hand-tufted rugs and printed broadloom carpets, for example, where clean, white wool was essential and with colour-fastness potentially on par with solution-dyed nylon, allowing New Zealand wool to compete in otherwise very challenging areas for the fibre.

In recognition of the opportunity that the *Glacial XT™* and *Kiteq™* technologies represent for the strong wool sector, New Zealand Trade & Enterprise (NZTE) are working to help expedite the path to the global marketplace for this Coalition.

Commenting on the opportunity, Alan Koziarski, Director of Coalitions, said, “NZTE is keen to grow coalitions that can succeed internationally and this coalition aspires to do that. Through working together, WNZ, their strong wool growers and TMC have increased their capability to deliver a unique solution to the strong wool market.”

Mazey said the development was good news for WNZ shareholders but also good for the New Zealand Wool sector. “We are in the interiors fashion business and these technologies will re-position Wools of New Zealand branded wool as a contemporary, modern fibre – the perfect blend of nature and science.”

“This is what WNZ was established for, to provide a commercially viable link between our grower shareholders and the consumer,” added Mazey.

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