

National Wool Declaration – Version 2.0

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (Mulesing Status)

INTRODUCTION

Through the introduction of the National Wool Declaration (NWD), Woolgrowers have been able to provide information related to Dark and Medullated Fibre Risk, Mulesing¹ Status and Chemical Use to Buyers and Processors of Australian wool. This information is aimed at providing confidence to Wool Buyers and Processors ensuring that Australian wool remains their preferred choice.

Recently, AWEX undertook a review of the NWD, specifically the Mulesing Status. This annual review, conducted in consultation with all sectors, helps maintain the confidence of the broader wool industry in the Declarations. It was agreed that any changes made should enhance the understanding and/or adoption of the NWD by industry.

VERSION 2 CHANGES TO NWD

- The Definitions were refined to ensure they are unambiguous and are able to be audited. Ceased Mulesing is now defined such that “*all sheep born or transferred onto a property in the last 12 months must not have been mulesed*. There must be no intention to mules in the future and evidence must be available for audit purposes.
- The Mulesing Status codes remain unchanged. Clips and Intradermals have not been included in the NWD at this time.
- For consistency, the NWD will adopt a Yes/No format for all questions.
- A Grower ID box has been added for use by Brokers in identifying a property brand.

BACKGROUND TO NWD

Q1. Why should I complete the National Wool Declaration (NWD)?

A. The NWD should be completed for three important reasons:

- The NWD is a positive and logical progression by all sectors of the Australian wool industry to provide better information with respect to the issue of mulesing and allows Woolgrowers the opportunity to differentiate their wool,
- Buyers, Processors and Retailers are requesting information that will allow them to source wool that meets their requirements, and
- To maintain market confidence in Australian wool.

Q2. Must a NWD be completed?

A. The NWD is voluntary but its completion is strongly recommended so wool that meets the needs of Buyers, Processors and Retailers can be identified. This data can also provide statistical and market information to industry; which are important to growers in their decision making.

Q3. Why are the DMFR, Mulesing Status and Chemical Use Declarations on a separate form to the Classer’s Specification?

A. To reduce the complexity of the Woolclasser’s Specification and to consolidate information declared by the Owner/Manager, a separate form was considered appropriate. A recommended practice is for the Owner/Manager to complete the NWD and hand it to the Woolclasser *at the commencement of shearing*. The mob information on the Declaration is of significant value to the Woolclasser at this time and it enables the NWD and Woolclasser’s Specification to be consigned together.

¹ Mulesing is defined as “The removal of skin from the tail and/or breech region of a sheep using shears.”

Q4. Which breeds of sheep are eligible for a Declaration of Mulesing Status?

A. The Mulesing Status declaration is applicable to all breeds; however, the DMFR is only applicable to Merino sheep.

PUBLICATION OF MULESING STATUS CODES

Q5. How will the Mulesing Status of my clip/lot be identified?

A. Mulesing Status is recorded against each sale lot in both the printed and electronic Sale Catalogues as well as the Test Certificate. This provides transparency and ensures down stream Processors can access the information.

Q6. When a Declaration is made, what Mulesing Status Codes will appear in the Sale Catalogue and on the Test Certificate if a Mulesing Declaration is completed?

A. Non-Mulesed (**NM**), Mulesed with Pain Relief (**PR**) and Ceased Mulesing (**CM**). These codes are **generated by the Broker** based on information provided in the Declaration. Mobs that have been mulesed (without pain relief) will be left **Blank** in the Catalogue and on the Test Certificate.

Q7. What Mulesing Status Code will appear if a Mulesing Declaration is NOT completed?

A. Not Declared (**ND**). This could also mean that the Declaration was not signed, was incomplete or was not submitted.

Q8. Can Interlots or Bulk Class have a Mulesing Status?

A. Only if the Broker or Classing House can verify the Declarations on all source components. It is expected that most Interlots/Bulk class lines will be Not Declared (**ND**).

MAKING A DECLARATION

Q9. Where can I obtain a NWD?

A. The NWD is available from the Wool Broker with their wool stationery and also from the AWEX website www.awex.com.au under Publications. A PDF version is available along with other relevant information including "How to Complete an NWD".

Q10. When can Version 2 of the NWD be used?

A. The NWD Version 2 is available for immediate use. We would expect the conversion from Version 1 to Version 2 to be completed by 3rd August 2009.

Q11. Can the Broker or the Woolclasser make a Declaration on behalf of an Owner/Manager?

A. No. A Declaration can only be made when signed by the Owner/Manager.

Q12. Can a Declaration be made without the use of a NWD?

A. The NWD was developed by industry to collect the data required for Mulesing Status. The NWD also contains standard definitions and terms of use, which are critical for the correct completion of the NWD.

Some Brokers have included NWD questions on their Woolclasser's Specification. Caution is required with the use of unofficial declaration forms as they may not ask the correct questions and data entry staff may not be able to interpret them correctly.

Q13. What happens if the NWD has not been signed by the grower?

A. For a Declaration to be valid, **it must be dated and signed by the Owner/Manager**. If it is not signed, Not Declared (ND) will appear as the Mulesing Status code in the Sale Catalogue and on the Test Certificate.

UNDERSTANDING THE MULESING STATUS CODES

Q14. How does Ceased Mulesing (CM) status work?

A. Ceased Mulesing is an interim means for a grower to demonstrate their commitment to the phasing out of mulesing on their property. To be eligible to declare Ceased Mulesing Status for your property: *all sheep born or transferred onto it in the last 12 months must not have been mulesed*. There must be no intention to mules in the future and evidence must be available for audit purposes.

To claim Ceased Mulesing status, answer **Yes (Y)** to the question. The CM status will then be applied to the older mobs that have been mulesed.

Q15. How do I declare that a mob was Mulesed with Pain Relief?

A. For each mob that was mulesed with Pain Relief, answer **Yes (Y)** to the two-part question ‘Mob Mulesed?’ and ‘Pain Relief used on Mob?’

Note: Pain Relief Used on Mob can only be answered Yes (Y) for individual mobs. It cannot be applied to sheep older than 4 years, as the product was not available prior to 2006.

Q16. How do I declare a mob that contains sheep with different Mulesing Status?

A. If a mob containing sheep with different Mulesing Status is left mixed at shearing, it is identified with the lowest mulesing status of the mob. For example:

- Non-Mulesed sheep mixed with sheep Mulesed with Pain Relief will be declared as *Mulesed with Pain Relief*;
- Non-Mulesed sheep mixed with Mulesed sheep will be declared as *Mulesed*; or
- Sheep mulesed with Pain Relief mixed with Mulesed sheep will be declared as *Mulesed*.

Q17. What is the difference between the ‘BETTER CHOICES’ Program and Use of Pain Relief?

A. “Mulesed with Pain Relief (PR)” identifies that a pain relief product has been used when this mob was mulesed. Tri-Solfen is the only product currently approved by the APVMA for use with sheep. BETTER CHOICES is a private program. The program requires the purchase and use of Tri-Solfen. According to the provider, BETTER CHOICES may apply to multiple lines of the clip, not just those where pain relief was used. The NWD and Mulesing Status only recognise the application of Pain Relief against each mob.

Note 1: The BETTER CHOICES stencil cannot be used in place of, or declared on, the NWD.

Note 2: The BETTER CHOICES stencil does not appear on the Test Certificate.

Q18. How do I declare if alternative techniques such as clips or intradermal injections etc. are used?

A. Mulesing is defined by the NWD as “the removal of skin from the tail and/or breech region of a sheep using shears”. Therefore, mobs which have used clips or other breech modification techniques are classified as Not Mulesed.

Q19. What happens to the NWD when clips or other breech modification techniques become commercially available?

A. The NWD is reviewed annually. Through this review, conducted in consultation with industry, the NWD can be modified if required. Changes will not be made on an *ad hoc* basis; they are part of a structured process of evaluation and modification.

HOW DO I ENSURE CORRECT COMPLETION OF THE NWD?

Q20. What are the critical aspects for correct completion of the NWD?

A. The critical aspects are:

- It must be signed and dated by the Owner/Manager of the Property. It is a Declaration of reliance subject to audit.
- The details of the property and all mob(s) must be completed, with mob numbers either transferred from or linked directly to the Woolclasser's Specification.
- Mob Age/Breed/Sex details must be completed on the NWD or Woolclasser's Specification.
- Mobs containing sheep with different Mulesing Status must be declared as the "lowest" Mulesing category, for example:
 - Non-Mulesed sheep mixed with sheep Mulesed with Pain Relief will be declared as *Mulesed with Pain Relief*;
 - Non-Mulesed sheep mixed with Mulesed sheep will be declared as *Mulesed*; or
 - Sheep mulesed with Pain Relief mixed with Mulesed sheep will be declared as *Mulesed*.
- Mulesed with Pain Relief is only applicable to sheep 4 years or less (in 2009), since Pain Relief was not commercially available for sheep older than this.

MULESING STATUS AUDIT

Q21. What is the NWD audit and why is it needed?

A. Audits are required to ensure the integrity of the NWD. They help maintain the confidence in the Declarations of the entire wool industry. The audit for the NWD will be implemented in two phases:

- The first phase is a desk audit where the accuracy of the information on the NWD, Woolclasser's Specification and the Sale Catalogue are validated,
- The second phase will include an on-farm audit where Declarations will be verified. Inspection of stock and proof of purchase of the Pain Relief product is required for each mob treated, listing the number of sheep and the amount of product used. These are elements of the audit. The on-farm audit is currently being developed for release later in 2009.

Q22. How does the Desk Audit work?

Desktop audits commenced in August 2008. This process is conducted on a random basis and compares the NWD, Woolclasser's Specification and auction catalogues, with anomalies and/or incomplete forms followed through to the Broker. From April 2009, the audit will be conducted **pre-sale** allowing Buyers, Brokers and the AWTA to be notified of any changes to the Mulesing Status of sale lots.

Q23. The Declaration arrived late (or an error was picked up) after the wool has been tested. How is the Mulesing Status changed on the Test Certificate and/or Sale Catalogue?

A. In the case of the Test Certificate, it is the Broker who will advise the changes to the AWTA Ltd. Where a Sale Catalogue has been published, a late change in Mulesing Status will be notified to the Buying Trade in accordance with the standard sale catalogue alteration procedures.

National Wool Declaration

Grower ID: For Office Use Only

Dark and Medullated Fibre Risk (Merino only), Mulesing Status and Record of Chemical Use (any breed) for Sheep Mobs

Owner Trading Name: _____ ABN: _____

Property Brand: _____ Phone No: () _____

Property Identification Code (PIC): Property Location: _____

- This form is to be completed/signed by the Owner/Manager and **must be consigned with the Woolclasser Specification Sheet**. This Declaration is valid for one shearing only.
- The purpose of this Declaration is to ensure that the details provided about your wool when offered for sale are true and correct. By completing this Declaration, you acknowledge that the Vendor's agent will catalogue the wool based on the statements you make, and buyers will in turn rely on those statements. You also agree that this Declaration may be subject to random audit in a format agreed to by industry.

This Declaration is for wool pertaining to shearing completed on: ____ / ____ / ____

According to the definitions below, please indicate whether mulesing¹ has ceased² on this property, Yes (Y) or No (N):

Mob No. (Refer Spec)	Mob Breaks (Bale Numbers)		Age Code	Breed Code	Sex Code	Contact with Shedding Breeds ³ (Y/N)	Mob Crutched (Y/N)	Crutched within 3 months prior to Shearing (Y/N)	Mob Mulesed ⁵ (Y/N)	Pain Relief ⁶ Used on Mob (Y/N)	Record Kept of Chemical Use ⁷ (Y/N)	Office Use Only
	FROM	TO										

Age/Shearing	Code	Breed	Code	Sex	Code
1st Shearing	1	Merino	M	Ewes	E
2nd Shearing to 2 yrs	2	Merino Dohne	MD	Wethers	W
3 years	3	Merino SAMM	MS	Rams	R
4 years	4	Crossbred	XB	Mixed (E/W/R)	M
5 years	5	Downs	DN		
6, 7, 8 years etc.	6, 7, 8...	Shedding Breeds	SB		
Mixed (e.g. 3 to 5 yrs)	3 - 5	Carpet Wool	CW		

Definitions	
1 Mulesing	The removal of skin from the tail and/or breech region of a sheep using shears.
2 Ceased Mulesing	All sheep born on or transferred onto this property in the last 12 months must not be mulesed at the time of this shearing and there must be no intention to mules in the future. Evidence of Ceased Mulesing status must be available for audit purposes.
3 Contact with Shedding Breeds	Mated, reared or run in the same paddock with shedding sheep/lambs or their crosses.
4 Shedding Breeds	Breeds that shed fibre (e.g. Afrikaner, Awassi, Damara, Dorper, Karakul, Meatmaster, Persian, Van Rooy, Wiltipoll, Wiltshire Horn).
5 Mob Mulesed	A mob is defined as mulesed if any of the sheep in the mob are mulesed.
6 Pain Relief	Pain Relief products must be registered by, or supplied under permit from, the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority for use with sheep. Evidence of the purchase and use of Pain Relief products for sheep bred on this property or transferred onto it must be available for audit purposes.
7 Record Kept of Chemical Use	If Yes (Y), details of mob, date, purpose, type and amount of chemical(s) must be recorded. If chemicals are not used, a record of this must also be kept.

By signing this Declaration I warrant that I am authorised to complete this declaration and I confirm that all details contained in it are true and correct, having made all reasonable enquiries.

OWNER/MANAGER NAME: _____

OWNER/MANAGER SIGNATURE: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

