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2023 - Positive Signs for Wool

Australian Wool Innovation's Chief Executive John Roberts says the company's network of offices are reporting positive signs for wool sales across the year.

AWI works on behalf of Australian woolgrowers around the world including in China, India, Vietnam, Japan, Korea, Europe, the UK and the United States with processors, manufacturers, and brands.

"There is a real sense that 2023 will be a better year than 2022.

Our team in China has told us that a high degree of normalcy has returned after the two-month long Omicron outbreak. Most of the textile mills are operating in full capacity since early January. The country's GDP is set to bounce back and accordingly the level of optimism remains high among Chinese consumers - more than half of surveyed respondents believe their household income will increase over the next 5 years. With around 40% of Australian greasy wool consumed by domestic consumers in China - that optimism should flow through to more sales.

In Italy, our partnership with Prada Luna Rossa for the next America's Cup has led to more than fifteen other brands to approach us to use wool in more sporting and outdoor wear.

In Japan, the most recent winter campaign yielded a significant 12.9% uplift in sales of the partner's wool category, totaling \$26 million in sales. Wool's eco-credentials, particularly its biodegradability have resonated with Japanese consumers.

There has been renewed buying interest this year for Australian wool out of India as key mills plan expansion. The recent free trade agreement between Australia and India is another spur for activity.

The recent launch of the Circle Sportswear supernatural runner with 65% Australian merino wool and completely biodegradable sole has prompted other brands to explore having AWI's marketing arm The Woolmark Company logo on their items.

Last year's "Wear Wool, Not Fossil Fuel" campaign continues to resonate with consumers wanting a top-quality natural fibre instead of synthetics. The 3-D billboards in Times Square, New York and Piccadilly Circus, London showcased the difference between wool and synthetics in dramatic fashion.

Taken together these are positive signs but as the last few years have shown us there are no guarantees of success".

The positive sentiment is shared by Italian luxury fashion brand Prada.

Group Managing Director Lorenzo Bertelli is glowing in his praise of the brand's partnership with The Woolmark Company.

"The performance of wool compared to synthetic materials is on the highest level.

Wool is an active fibre changing the wearer's body temperature and the feel is much more pleasant and so I believe being able to use it for products which are very technical it was a challenging goal but we are very satisfied with what we have been able to achieve".

Australian Wool Innovation is the wool industry's research, development and marketing company. It is a not-for-profit and receives contributions from woolgrowers and also the Commonwealth government.

Australian woolgrowers own the Woolmark Logo one of the world's most recognizable fashion logos.

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