



Wools of New Zealand

www.woolsnz.com

Ecolabel Product Group: Textiles



“From our perspective, if you are a brand claiming sustainability credentials why would you settle for anything less than knowing where and how your fibre was produced? Wools of New Zealand is a 100% New Zealand grower-owned company that connects its growers with brands in the market. In doing so we can grow wool especially for our customers to exacting technical and environmental standards. We are the only group of wool producers that grow our wool knowing that if we market it under the EU Ecolabel, our customers are assured of a fibre that is already surpassing excellence in sustainability,” said Steven Parsons, Business Development Manager.

Why did Wools of New Zealand apply for the EU Ecolabel?

Wools of New Zealand (WNZ) is the first company in the world to be accredited with the EU Ecolabel for its on farm fibre production. “We had been supplying wool to customers that were accredited with EU Ecolabel and it became apparent that by partnering directly with EU Ecolabel we could provide far greater transparency and integrity to our customers and ultimately consumers of wool textiles. With WNZ, the EU Ecolabel provides the best practice in sustainability right from the farm. We removed obstacles to



market, such as timely and expensive testing, and increased visibility of fibre production prior to wool scouring.”



Steven Parsons continued, “We applied for the EU Ecolabel to provide our customers with a recognised label, but also to ensure that we could use the EU

Ecolabel as a minimum requirement for sustainable wool and to encourage our partners to move towards truly sustainable and ethical production. The EU Ecolabel provides WNZ with an endorsement of our existing product, but also an opportunity to drive improvements in integrity and best practice in sustainability across the wool industry.”



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The Application Process

WNZ's network of wool growers already held 'Laneve', the gold standard for ethical and sustainable wool fibre production, which is audited by Asure Quality New Zealand to strict guidelines that cover land management, animal welfare and social welfare. Steven Parsons said, "The EU Ecolabel was an easy environmental add-on to our existing integrity programme. We were already doing all the right things. Sustainability is a core value to WNZ. The application process was not hard for us, especially as UKED walked us through it, even visiting New Zealand to help us bring the value chain partners up to speed. Our farmers are proud of their world class standards in sustainable wool production and welcomed the chance to show others how excellence in farming can deliver quality without compromising the environment."

WNZ EU Ecolabel Products

WNZ was awarded the EU Ecolabel for its 'Greasy Wool' in March 2016 (UK/016/015). "We offer our customers full transparency of their wool, which is often grown especially for them under Ecolabel guidelines and we can ensure that no banned pesticides are used, which makes scouring even more efficient and means that wool flows through the value chain seamlessly. We feel the best way to ensure wool leaves the scour without chemicals is to ensure the fibre going in is compliant with the EU Ecolabel to begin with. Because we know our customers' requirements, we can deliver wool which is a perfect fit for their manufacturing."

Results and benefits of having the EU Ecolabel



WNZ has only recently become accredited with the EU Ecolabel but has already seen strong interest from partners that are looking to create sustainable textiles. Some of these partners do not use the EU Ecolabel brand in the market but accept that it delivers an assurance of sustainable production. "It ticks an important box and we are seeing a steady increase in requests for fibre which is ethically and responsibly produced, and believe that demand for sustainability labels is growing," said Steven Parsons. "To deliver ethical textiles you must know where the raw materials come from, so we are seeing a trend away from commodity trading towards managed value chains where the growers are considered partners of the brand owners," said Steven Parsons.

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