

12 April 2021

**By email:**

### **Econopack woolpacks**

I am writing to inform you that we have taken the difficult decision that from 1 July 2021, we will no longer accept wool contained in Econopack wool packs into our scours.

We have reluctantly made this decision because of issues we have been experiencing with the performance of the Econopack wool packs arriving in our scours.

- First, we have observed fibrillation of Econopacks to an extent which causes serious concern. As you will appreciate, fibrillation is an issue for our business and for your wool. Fibrillation creates a serious risk that scoured wool will become contaminated as fabric from the woolpack is scoured with the greasy wool contained in the woolpack. This contamination erodes the quality of the scoured wool product we can provide to you.
- Second, we have identified health and safety risks arising from the Econopack. In the short time the Econopacks have been arriving in our scours we have observed Econopacks falling off cat claws at our scours, which appears to result from the woolpacks not being strong or robust enough when filled with wool. We are also aware from our own experience and feedback from transport operators that Econopacks are sliding on trucks, which appears to result from the Econopacks not having sufficient friction to prevent movement when transported.

Unfortunately, these issues have not abated since we first became aware of them in November and December 2020.

Having considered the issues and observed the frequency of their occurrence, we have concluded that we cannot practicably mitigate these risks in the medium to long term.

We recognise that our decision may have impacts on you and on growers. We have allowed a transitional period until 1 July 2021 to mitigate the impact, but we do not believe we can responsibly continue to accept Econopacks after that date. In this respect, during this transitional period (and more generally) we recommend that you have regard to the health and safety issues we have highlighted above in the operation of your business, when you purchase greasy wool.

The issues we have experienced with the Econopack have highlighted a more general issue about the role of, and compliance with, the Australian/New Zealand specification for woven woolpacks for greasy wool (AS/NZS 4546:2004). Our view is that as an industry we need to re-examine the standard and the regulatory settings for wool packs given their importance in ensuring a high-quality product and given the importance of ensuring that the health and safety of every person working in the industry is protected. We hope that you will lend your support to such an initiative.

We regret the impact this decision may have on you; however, we do not consider there is a practical alternative available to us at this time.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "N HALES". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Nigel Hales  
Chief Executive Officer  
WoolWorks New Zealand Ltd