



# The Hon Katrina Hodgkinson MP

## Minister for Primary Industries

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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**\*\*Note: Scope of the review below\*\***

Monday 1 December 2014

### REPORT TO EXAMINE FUTURE DIRECTION FOR WOOL INDUSTRY

Future directions and opportunities for the State's wool growers will be the focus of a major NSW Government review into the sector, Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson, said today.

Ms Hodgkinson said the review, *The Future of the NSW Wool Industry by 2025*, follows on from the release of the highly anticipated Agriculture Industry Action Plan.

"What is clear is that the NSW Liberals & Nationals have a clear plan to underpin continued growth in our primary industries sector," Ms Hodgkinson said.

"Last week I announced the release of the NSW Liberals & Nationals Government's Agriculture Industry Action Plan – a blueprint for the future of our primary industries sector; a strategy to drive growth in the next decade.

"The NSW Liberals & Nationals have restored the vision for our primary industries sector, to ensure it remains the nation's largest, most diverse, most globally connected and sophisticated.

"One of the important next steps following the release of the Agriculture Industry Action Plan is the development of strategies for particular sectors, including the wool industry.

"Already we have commissioned the comprehensive *Growing the NSW Dairy Industry* report which, similarly, is now forming the basis of work by the NSW Department of Primary Industries to develop a strategy to grow that sector."

Ms Hodgkinson said during the past decade, the NSW sheep flock has dropped by 35 per cent, with a similar drop in wool production.

"We have also seen a fining up of the average micron and, since the global financial crisis, this increase in the production of lower-micron wool has placed significant pressure on the economic viability of superfine wool enterprises," Ms Hodgkinson said.

"This report will provide the NSW Government with a unique insight into how these changes are impacting on producers and how we can help industry to develop a way forward."

Independent consultants have recently been appointed to work with wool industry leaders to identify the potential opportunities and challenges for the industry.

**The report, *The Future of the NSW Wool Industry by 2025*, will examine:**

- how changes in the wool supply chain has impacted industry investment and economic development;
- production issues such as genetics, flock management and animal health;
- a new direction for the wool industry and new partnership opportunities between the NSW Government and industry;
- future opportunities for the wool sector and how, at a farm level, producers can position their business to capitalise on these opportunities;
- how the NSW Government can continue to support the development and growth of the wool industry;
- emerging challenges for the industry such as animal welfare and impacts of wild dogs; and
- socio-economic factors such as the age of producers, workforce and changing consumer priorities.