

## **Wool Industry Sector Session**

*by Peter Marin*

A small but productive number participated in the wool industry sector session led by John Stanton and John Horley (Wool Program, AGWEST) with assistance from Jim Young, (Wesfarmers Fibre Direct). As a means of examining the current situation participants were asked to portray the role of companies trading 'blocks' (used to represent lots of wool) simulating a supply chain. A number of constraints were highlighted with the present situation. These included:

Lack of communication between each of the players along the chain and this extended the complete length of the chain. Timing and the delays in placing orders by the major companies. Consequently the supply chain moves slowly, as there is a slow movement of information from one party to another.

Imbalance of stock held at each point along the supply chain adding to the high cost that already exists.

The group did not dwell on how to overcome these constraints but listened to suggestions floated by John Stanton on products that could be supplied from rangeland regions. These included a market for long lambs wool tops and investigation of possible markets for top making from bellies. As a result a commitment was made by producers to supply a consignment of long lambs wool to trial and be involved with any future development on top making from bellies. The Wool Program, AGWEST have agreed to help facilitate this process

Another request of growers at the session was if Wesfarmers could investigate the opportunity to develop a station direct product with buyers that would differentiate their product. Jim Young agreed and will work with producers to try and coordinate this process.