



MINISTER FOR PRIMARY INDUSTRIES  
MINISTER FOR ENERGY  
MINISTER FOR MINERAL RESOURCES  
MINISTER FOR STATE DEVELOPMENT



## MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, 18 April, 2008

### **Macdonald tells Hugo Boss – “Come and visit NSW sheep farms”**

Representatives from international fashion house Hugo Boss have been personally invited by Primary Industries Minister Ian Macdonald and NSW Farmers' Association President Jock Laurie to visit sheep farms in NSW, in a bid to prevent a boycott of Australian wool.

Minister Macdonald said he was disappointed the fashion giant has announced it will phase out the use of wool from farms that perform mulesing, including the main alternative, clip mulesing.

“This is a simple case of misinformation – that’s why we want Hugo Boss representatives to visit the hard working farmers of our State and see first-hand that farmers are doing their best to prevent fly strike, which is one of the most serious issues affecting our wool industry,” Mr Macdonald said.

“Currently the reality is that over three million sheep could die annually if mulesing is not carried out.

“I want to make it very clear to the company that our wool industry is working overtime to identify an alternative that provides our sheep the same protection from flesh eating maggots and we have already set a target of 2010.

“I am not sure if anybody at Hugo Boss has every seen a single case of fly strike here in Australia, but I can tell them being eaten alive by maggots isn’t a good way to die.

“That’s why I have written to the Hugo Boss headquarters in Germany, inviting them to come here and see the situation for themselves.”

NSW Farmers' Association President Jock Laurie said it is important that Hugo Boss base any commercial decision upon the facts and not what they may hear from animal rights groups.

“The wool industry is continuing to develop alternatives to mulesing and these alternatives are being evaluated by independent bodies such as the Australian Veterinary Association,” Mr Laurie said.

“Hugo Boss’ announcement is a concern for the industry, especially when millions of dollars and many years of research have already been invested into developing non-surgical alternatives such as breech clips,” he said.

“The industry has made a commitment to phase out surgical mulesing, and industry and Government bodies are working hard together to deliver these alternatives.

“We would seek support as we work through this important research and development stage,” Mr Laurie concluded.

#### **For media comments before midday contact:**

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