



## **Australian company hits world stage for its innovative packaging**

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A fledgling company Woolcool, with operations in both Australia and New Zealand, has won global recognition for its insulated packaging made of sheep's waste wool.

The 2018 WorldStar Packaging Awards ([www.worldstar.org](http://www.worldstar.org)) were announced in Surfers Paradise last night (Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May) at the Australian Institute of Packaging National Conference.

Woolcool won bronze in the category for Packaging that Saves Food for the development of its innovative and sustainable packaging made from sheep's waste wool combined with a recyclable, food grade liner. Its unique thermal qualities 'save food' by significantly reducing wastage often experienced using traditional insulated packaging in the transport and delivery of temperature sensitive food.

The win caps off a massive two weeks for the three-year-old company. Woolcool Australia and New Zealand is part of the UK based Woolcool group which won the Queen's Awards for Enterprise: Innovation 2018 announced in London on 21<sup>st</sup> April. This means Woolcool Australia and New Zealand can now display the esteemed Queen's Award emblem on its products for the next five years.

The Packaging that Saves Food Award, presented by the World Packaging Organisation (WPO), highlights the role of packaging in preventing food losses and food waste. Food waste is a global issue with one-third of all food either wasted or lost, an amount that would be enough to meet global food needs. In Australia alone, food waste costs \$20 billion each year.

Woolcool Australia and New Zealand CEO Joanne Howarth says the company is over the moon with the two huge wins, which follow its recent "hat trick" award scoop at the 2018 Australian WorldStar Packaging Awards in the categories for Food, Transit and Packaging Materials and Components.

"Woolcool has now been recognised as one of the most innovative, sustainable, high performing and cost-effective insulated packaging products in the world. This should provide plenty of incentive for cold chain supply companies and home grocery delivery services to switch from synthetic insulated packaging which is clogging up our landfill and polluting our environment to an eco-responsible packaging product."

The ingenious Woolcool product is sustainable, renewable, biodegradable, compostable, recyclable and reusable. It outperforms synthetic packaging materials including polystyrene and is opening new markets for cool chain supply companies because it is allowing frozen and chilled products to be transported much greater distances and still arrive in the same fresh condition.

Woolcool has simply borrowed from nature and created a packaging product that keeps cold products cold and hot products hot while also having the added benefit of a protective cushion to safeguard products in transit.

Wool is a very efficient insulation material as it is extremely effective at absorbing moisture from the air, which creates stable temperatures through minimising humidity and condensation. Woolcool's patented technology combines a complex blend of wool fibres from different breeds of sheep to provide consistent optimal insulative properties. This wool is felted into a liner and sealed within a recyclable food grade film.

Woolcool is proudly endorsed by Planet Ark for its range of environmental benefits.

Planet Ark says the increasing use of expanded polystyrene (EPS) boxes for home grocery delivery services and pre-prepared meals is resulting in a range of negative environmental impacts.

"Latest statistics indicate that only 29.4% of EPS is currently recycled (1) and the remainder either goes to landfill or ends up polluting our environment and waterways," says Planet Ark Partner Relations Manager Kristie Baker.

"This is a major environmental concern and why Planet Ark has recently partnered with Woolcool for their range of products.

"Woolcool offers a real alternative to traditional insulated packaging like EPS and we encourage businesses to shift their reliance from petrochemical based products like EPS to renewable alternatives like Woolcool."

Ms Howarth says that since the company was launched in Australia and New Zealand, an estimated 2.5 million boxes of polystyrene have been removed from the environment.

"That's just a tiny fraction of the total number of petro-chemical based boxes used once and discarded across Australia and New Zealand every year. Imagine the difference we could make if we eliminated polystyrene insulated boxes from our environment altogether – it's now possible!"

**For more information and photos, please contact:**

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*Woolcool is a proud partner of Planet Ark Environmental Foundation, an Australian not-for-profit organisation with a vision of a world where people live in balance with nature.*

*Farrell, K. & Allan, P. National Recycling and Recovery Survey (NRRS) 2015-16 for plastics packaging (IND 299/16). [packagingcovenant.org.au](http://packagingcovenant.org.au) (2016).*