



Jenny Williams  
Principal  
Firbank Grammar School

4 November 2020

Dear Ms Williams,

I hope this letter finds you well. I'm writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) regarding Firbank Grammar School's proposed new uniform, crafted with a view to sustainability. While we applaud your efforts, **I wanted to share some information about the negative impact wool production has on the environment in the hope that you will ensure that version 2.0 of your uniform is wool-free and therefore truly green.**

Wool's environmentally friendly image stems largely from its status as a natural material, but its production – like any type of animal agriculture – is actually a major contributor to the extreme environmental stressors that plague Australia, such as droughts and bushfires.

Sheep rival cows in producing methane, a greenhouse gas that is more potent than carbon dioxide at trapping heat. Farmed animals produce 70% of Australia's total agriculture-related greenhouse-gas emissions, and our nation's 68 million sheep are the second-biggest source of these emissions. That's unsurprising, given that a single sheep can produce about 30 litres of methane each day.

On the Higg Materials Sustainability Index, which ranks materials by their impact on the planet, wool carries a total impact score of 81, much higher than, for example, polyester, which scores a 41. The higher the score, the worse the material is for the planet. **Wool also ranks as worse for the environment than polyurethane, nylon, and even acrylic.**

Intensive land clearing, undertaken to accommodate sheep, also affects emissions and puts native animals like koalas at risk. Sheep-dipping to prevent parasite infestations releases toxic chemicals into waterways, polluting water supplies and poisoning many species of fish, insects, and crustaceans.

Moreover, sheep face horrendous cruelty in the wool industry. Several investigations into Australian shearing sheds have revealed that sheep are mutilated and beaten – even for “responsibly sourced” wool on disingenuously named “sustainable” farms. I'm sure you'll agree that no product that harms the planet and some of its most gentle inhabitants can be considered “eco-conscious”.

As you continue to improve the uniform, I hope you will also remove wool from the blend. We'd be happy to help you find a planet- and animal-friendly alternative. I would love to hear from you.

Yours faithfully,

Emily Rice  
PETA Australia

PEOPLE FOR  
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