

Illegible Bale Numbers

Several pieces of information are marked on wool bales in the shearing shed. All these markings are important for the marketing of the wool, but the most important of these markings is the bale number.

By Tim Steere

When bales are delivered to the wool store for preparation for sale they must be handled several times by wool store staff. On most of these occasions the store staff identify individual bales by referring to bale number markings. Unfortunately, their job is often made more difficult when bale numbers are poorly marked in the shearing shed, making them very difficult to read in the wool store.

Some of the more common faults are:

- Small markings
- Faint markings
- Illegible markings.



A Storeman uses a video camera to read a bale number and record a bale weight.



Faint bale numbers made with red ink are difficult to read.



Poorly crossed out bale numbers cause confusion.



Red marker pens are difficult to read through video monitors and fade easily.



Marker pens with chisel points are difficult to write clearly with.



Black marker pens with bullet points make the most legible markings.

Shed staff involved in stencilling or marking bales should use the following guidelines when marking wool pack labels:

1. Use a medium size, permanent marker pen or a rubber stamp.
2. When using a permanent marker, choose one with a bullet point in preference to a chisel-point.
3. Use black or dark coloured ink, not red.
4. Make use of all available space on the pack label.
5. Write neatly.

Most Wool Store staff have a preference for the traditional stencilled bale head markings, rather than the stitched bale label.



A better example of a clearly written pack label.

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