



**The New Zealand Merino Company Limited (NZM)**

**Mulesing Policy**

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**INTRODUCTION**

The New Zealand Merino company (NZM) is committed to sourcing wool from sheep that are treated ethically and humanely.

We actively source fibre from growers with the highest animal welfare practices that share our values around the humane treatment of sheep.

NZM specifies animal welfare and health requirements for grower suppliers within the ZQ Accreditation Manual, and its associated support documentation.

Mulesing is a surgical procedure that removes a section of skin from the sheep. It is carried out to reduce the risk of attack by flies (often described as flystrike).

Mulesing is not permitted on properties that supply the ZQ and ZQRX programmes.

ZQ growers have adopted integrated strategies to manage the risk of flystrike, without mulesing.

ZQ led the world to be the first accredited Merino fibre that guarantees mulesing does not occur.

**OVERVIEW**

In line with our long-term objectives to continuously improve animal welfare within our supply chain, NZM does not permit growers that undertake the practice of mulesing to supply the ZQ or ZQRX programme.

NZM is committed to ensuring that we support our brand partners and end-consumers with a high level of confidence around marketing claims for the supply of wool from properties that do not practice mulesing.

This policy defines NZM’s position in relation to the practice of mulesing, and tools that NZM apply to ensure that growers are supported in their transition away from mulesing, and how wool is verified to originate from farms that do not practice mulesing.

This policy, and the following requirements should be read in conjunction with the ZQ Grower Manual Version 5.0, available on our website.

## REQUIREMENTS

The following represents the ZQ accreditation requirements as specified within the ZQ Programme.

### Prohibited Procedures

Mulesing is prohibited in the ZQ programme from the point of the grower joining the ZQ programme, or previous, if in line with legislative requirements. Random veterinary inspections or third-party audits of stock will periodically be conducted on properties supplying fibre into the ZQ certification programme in order to confirm their mulesing status. Any action undertaken by the grower must respect the intent of the ZQ programme to prohibit mulesing in its entirety.

Mulesing must not be conducted on properties supplying fibre into the ZQ Certification programme.

Farms with Ceased Mulesing status are accepted. A Ceased Mulesing status must be maintained for at least one year prior to joining the ZQ programme. Chain of custody of the previously shorn wool must be confirmed.

Freeze Mulesing (Steining) is prohibited.

Non mulesing declaration forms are available to our growers on our internal Grower Gateway.

## BEST PRACTICE RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

In 2007 NZM prohibited the practice of mulesing within the ZQ programme.

To support this prohibition, and to give guidance to growers transitioning away from mulesing, NZM undertook, in partnership with the broader industry and New Zealand Government, a comprehensive research and development programme.

This included establishing genetic solutions, and integrated management practices to assist growers in managing the risk of flystrike. This research continues today and has broadened to support all aspects of farm production and animal welfare.

NZM also undertakes a comprehensive grower education programme to keep growers up to date with best practice, and to support continual improvement.

## DEFINITIONS

Ceased Mulesing (CM) = No lambs born on the property in the last 12 months have been mulesed

Non Mulesed (NM) = No sheep in this mob has been mulesed

*Mulesing: The removal of skin from the breech and/or tail of a sheep using mulesing shears.*

## RELATED INFORMATION

New Zealand Mulesing legislation:

<https://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2018/0050/latest/LMS22932.html>