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NSW COMPANY'S WEARABLE TECH TO BEAT FOREIGN FAKES

Customers buying the finest wool-based clothing can confirm they're getting what they paid for, thanks to technology developed with the support of the NSW Government.

Mittagong-based Bluey Merino has developed a Near Field Communications (NFC) label with the University of Wollongong (UoW) to incorporate in its range of active and outdoor wear made with the softest rare grade, super-fine merino wool. Customers can scan the label with their mobile phones to confirm the origin of the wool in their new garment.

Bluey Merino worked with the University of Wollongong as part of the NSW Government's $18 million Boosting Business Innovation Program to open up university research centres to local companies.

"This is an outstanding example of a local company working with our university sector through the Boost program to deliver a true 'value-add' for our regional primary industry sector," Deputy Premier and Minister for Industry John Barilaro said.

"Throughout the world NSW products are renowned for their high quality so it's critical that we guard against their counterfeiting with technology that guarantees their provenance."

Bluey Merino founder Andrew Ross said, "This gave us access to a world class R&D facility and a host of professors and PhD students focused on our problem".

"The technology gives our customers assurance their purchase is not only of the finest quality but has been produced according to the highest ethical standard.

"It traces the history of the product right back to our farmers and allows it to be differentiated from the commodity wool fibre products on the market."

UoW research lead Dr Javad Foroughi said, "It has been a pleasure to collaborate with Andrew and to apply breakthrough research to real world problems. It also gave the PhD students a chance to interact with industry".

Bluey Merino's next step is to develop body-sensing capabilities within their garments to monitor the wearer's vitals such as blood pressure and temperature, with applications in fields including athletics, defence, healthcare and aged care.

The Boosting Business Innovation Program connects the state's businesses with the NSW university sector's research and testing capabilities, helping push the development of new products and services and further strengthening the NSW economy.

Further information on the NSW Government's Boosting Business Innovation Program can be found at www.industry.nsw.gov.au/business-and-industry-in-nsw