

Wool Broker and Auctioneer

Samantha is a wool broker and auctioneer who lives in Melbourne. Samantha grew up in Sydney, but was encouraged by her teacher to sign-up for some hands-on farm experience. When she's not selling wool, she's farming it. Sam and her husband own farm on the outskirts of Melbourne and raise their own flock of merino sheep

unsw.edu.au/future-you/pathfinders/samantha-wan



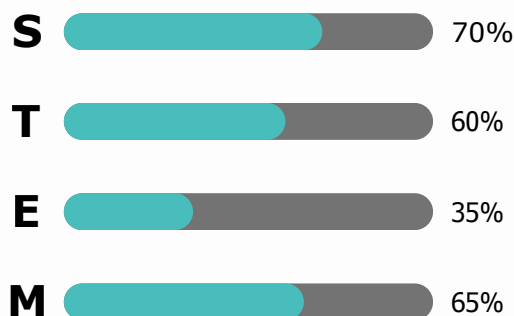
Artwork by Christine Le

"Agriculture might take you somewhere you never expected."



STEM Meter

How much Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) does this job use?



Source: jobsandskills.gov.au

5 reasons why you should do this job

- 1 Travel Australia and the world
- 2 Work with all kinds of people
- 3 Use cutting-edge tech in your job
- 4 It's very hands-on
- 5 Make a positive difference in the world

3 STEM skills required for this job

Data analysis

Mathematics

Communication

Subjects to develop these skills

Science, Mathematics

Mathematics

English, Digital Technologies, HASS, Mathematics, Science, The Arts

A day in the life of a Wool Broker

- 5.00am** Beep! Beep! Beep! My alarm goes off while it's still dark outside. Before I even think about breakfast, it's time to feed everyone else! First is Bear, our farm dog, then I let the chickens out of their safe coop for the day. I also stop to say hello to Dave and Jack, our Merino rams. Now it's my turn. Breakfast is scrambled eggs on toast, made with eggs collected from our own chickens.
- 6.00am** Time to jump in the car and drive to work. Today is wool auction day! I put on some upbeat music to get me ready because auctioneering is all about speaking clearly and keeping a steady rhythm. On the drive, I answer a call from Wendy, a woolgrower who has wool selling today. We talk about what prices she's hoping for and what the wool market has been doing this week. Every decision is based on information, market trends and data.
- 7.30am** At the wool selling centre, I head straight to the showfloor where hundreds of wool samples are on display. I find Wendy's wool and inspect it carefully. Then I chat with Billy, one of the wool buyers, to find out if anything has changed since yesterday. Looking at wool isn't just about seeing if it looks nice. We use science to understand fibre diameter, strength, length and yield so buyers know exactly what they're purchasing.
- 11.00am** Auction time! I stand in front of buyers representing mills from all over the world and begin calling the sale. Maths wasn't always my favourite subject, but being an auctioneer means I need to think quickly. I calculate price changes in my head, keep track of bids and make sure every sale is correct. Clear communication is just as important as maths because everyone needs to hear every bid.
- 2.00pm** Once the auction finishes, there's still plenty to do. Our wool sale team checks that every catalogue is accurate and that all the wool has been sold correctly. I also request that some wool bales are inspected. Inside the woolstore, computer-controlled machines called Automated Guided Vehicles (AGVs) collect the heavy bales from giant storage racks and bring them to the inspection area. Technology helps make the job safer and more efficient.
- 4.30pm** Time for the drive home. Along the way, I notice how the paddocks change with the seasons. Rain, sunshine and temperature all affect how grass grows and how sheep produce wool. Back on the farm, I sneak a few raspberries from the greenhouse before checking that the sheep have enough feed and seeing if any new lambs have arrived. Every day is different, and that's one of my favourite things about being a wool broker. I get to use science, technology, engineering and maths while working with animals, farmers and people from all around the world.