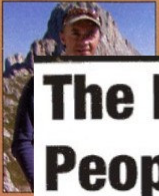


## Q&A

OIA board chair Mike Wallenfels is leading initiatives to grow the industry.

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# FOR DAILY

## The Merino Wool Company Puts People Back in the Supply Chain

Monday, January 24, 2008

In all the talk of sustainability, one aspect is usually forgotten—people. Through its Fair Wool program, The Merino Company (TMC) helps merino growers in Africa, who get fleeced when they go to market, develop sustainable economies.

“These small growers in Lesotho, Transkei and Ciskei have 20 to 100 sheep. They come down from the hills to shear them and historically it’s not an equitable transaction,” said Jose Fernandez, chief executive officer of TMC. “But we assure the growers market price for their fiber. Once we sell the fibers through a branded platform, funds flow back into the community.”

TMC (Booth #38183) is a manufacturing and marketing firm that offers apparel makers sustainable merino. It calls its traceable supply chain platforms “sheep to shelf” solutions.

Associated with the 150-year-old

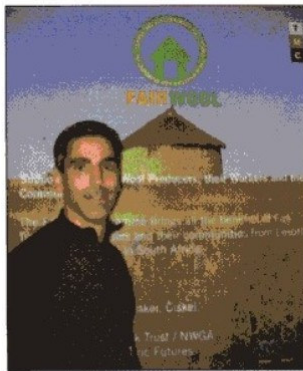
wool broker Lempriere, TMC represents seven merino wool brand platforms and has begun marketing for the Zque program.

“We give our customers different positions from which to market, so they can design and position differently than the guy two booths down. And we can do it across categories,” Fernandez said.

TMC also supports a ZeroCO2 program, which creates a carbon neutral supply chain. Merino growers who participate set aside

parts of their land to plant trees to neutralize the carbon footprint of fabric production. In return, the growers can charge a premium for their wool.

“Regardless of whether they decide to continue in the program, the tree will still grow and the carbon those trees neutralize increases, so they have sort of built-in organic growth,” Fernandez said.



TMC's Jose Fernandez

### g Bullish page 8

and retailers are shrugging off economic riding on cold temperatures and early up strong winter sales.

### Powered page 16

dees can pedal to keep the lights on at footwear booth. The company hopes 3,000 watts of electricity each day.

### ad Runner page 22

3 Duffy believes there's room in the crowd-winning market for Merrell. The company's ne is waterproof.

### / Marriage page 27

ent have partnered to launch a new line of REI-branded outerwear utilizing eVent's and breathable technology.

### d Up Apparel page 46

outerwear manufacturers are embracing es that appeal to weekend warriors as well : climbers, skiers and backpackers.

### Assault page 47

rs embrace urban style with skate-inspired

