



December 2017



Balmoral Sire Evaluation Group

Trial News

www.balmoralbreeders.com.au

In this edition:

- Chairman's reports — Page 1 & 2
- 2018 Field Day information — Page 3
- 2015/2016 trial update — Pages 4-8
- Teeth eruption scoring results — Page 6
- 2017 trial update — Page 8 & 9
- MLP national update — Page 10
- 2018 trial sire entry form — Page 11
- Committee and sponsors — Page 12

From the outgoing Chairman

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has been associated with our trial during my 10 years as Chairman.

To the current and past position holders, the committee, owners of host properties and all entrants, a big thank you for your great support. During that time we have grown the size of our trials to be by far the biggest in Australia. We have added to the traits we evaluate, along with trialling and adopting new technologies. We can be proud of evaluating, then helping adopt new and better ways, while always staying true to our main game - seeking out the best performing genetics suited to our tough Western Victorian climate.

I would also like to take this opportunity to especially thank the Elders team for their long term support and naming rights sponsorship. The committee had to let the naming rights agreement with Elders go due to it prohibiting other promotional support. Although we are a not for profit entity serving the industry, this commercial name was limiting our opportunities. We look forward to the ongoing involvement of the Elders team, along with the many other business representatives that are sponsors and supporters of our committee and trials. We rely on the sponsorship and support of industry companies to keep our entry costs down and to provide the best evaluations possible.

For the next 12 months only, I will remain our site's AMSEA representative (where I have just completed six years as the National Chairman) and I will take entries for the 2018 trial, to assist with the transition. I also remain manager of the MLP trial at Tuloona. I wish Mark Bunge, supported by Anthony Close, Michael Craig and Liz Mecham every success with the future governance of our trials.

It has never been a better time to be in Merinos and I look forward to supporting the new, talented team into the future.

Tom Silcock



From the incoming Chairman

As my first newsletter report as president of the Balmoral sire evaluation trial I would like to take the opportunity to pay tribute to our past president Tom Silcock. Tom has been a tireless and dedicated leader of our committee for the last 10 years and has taken the Balmoral site onto be the biggest AMSEA site in Australia. Under Tom's leadership we have been at the forefront of sheep breeding by always trying to be at the cutting edge of technology which I hope to continue.

Tom will continue to be the site manager for the MLP project at Tuloona and will still be a valuable committee member of our site.

Tom will also be taking entries for the 2018 AMSEA trial which is now open for entries.



CONTINUED...

From the incoming Chairman

I encourage breeders keen to enter a sire into our site's trial to get in touch with Tom sooner rather than later to ensure a place in the trial as it has been oversubscribed in recent years.

An entry form for 2018 is on page 11 of this newsletter, or you can contact Tom by phone 0419 882 239 or email tom@themountaindam.com.au

Thanks Tom for all of your years of contribution to the Balmoral Sire Evaluation Group to make it the success it has been.

While the Western District of Victoria is enjoining a magnificent season with good returns for wool enterprises there is plenty of optimism for the industry.

We hope to bring this positive vibe to our annual field day which has been brought forward to February 16th 2018. After last year's very popular sheep classing workshop we are again planning to hold this prior to the field day.

This year should see a big display of sheep including the 2017 AMSEA drop at Koorringal and then the 2016 and 2015 AMSEA and MLP ewe progeny as well the 2017 2nd generation MLP trial lambs all at Tulloona.

I look forward to seeing you all at next year's field day and wish you all a Merry Christmas.

Mark Bunge

The official changing of the guard at the Balmoral Sire Evaluation Group's Annual General Meeting held in October:

RIGHT: Incoming Chairman Mark Bunge (left) gets the official handover handshake from outgoing Chairman of 10 years, Tom Silocck.

BELOW: Balmoral Sire Evaluation Group executive team members (from left) Deputy Chair Anthony Close, Chairman Mark Bunge, Treasurer Michael Craig, and Secretary Liz Mecham



Balmoral Sire Evaluation Group

2018 Field Day

Friday, February 16, 2018



1800+ sheep on display

Merino Lifetime Productivity & AMSEA trial sheep

2015, 2016 & 2017-drops

Field day activities

Main on-property display and field day

1pm — 5pm

Tuloona, Harrow

4580 Coleraine-Edenhope Road, Harrow

Guest speaker panel: *MLP - What is it all about?* 2-3pm

Sheep selection workshop — *How to select your best flock*

10am-12.30pm @ Tuloona

2017 trial progeny display at Koorinal, Coleraine 10am-12pm

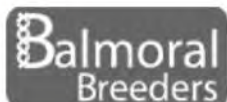
2115 Coleraine -Edenhope Road, Coleraine

Displays

Demonstrations

Catering on site

www.balmoralbreeders.com.au



Keep up to date with field day plans: follow us on Facebook www.facebook.com/balmoralbreeders

Trial property update 2015 & 2016 trials: Tuloona Pastoral Company, Harrow



There is a concern at Tuloona, two good seasons in a row, something has to go wrong soon.

But let's not be Hanrahan.

The 2015 drop MLP progeny lambed for the first time in mid-September on over 3200 kg/DM. At lamb marking, 504 lambs were marked from 530 maiden ewes joined.

The lambs averaged approximately 12.5kg at two weeks of age, while their mothers averaged 61kg at lamb marking.

The F2 progeny will be weaned at 12 weeks of age in mid December.

The 2016 drop have had their individual worm egg counts done on all 820 progeny. A nice problem to have — finding dirty country to increase WECs was a bit of a challenge.



*Michael Craig, owner,
"Tuloona"*

2017 Joining and Lambing Summary		
Ewes Joined	584	
Ewes Pregnant	541	93%
Foetuses Scanned	670	115%
Lambs Tagged	500	86%
Note: DNA pedigree results are currently being analysed and are expected to be returned by the end of the year.		



2015 MLP trial ewes with F2 lambs at foot. December 8, 2017.

Marking and scoring 2017-drop F2 lambs from 2015 MLP trial ewes October 9, 2017



Glorious spring weather prevailed at Tuloona as the team of helpers marked and scored the 2017-drop lambs from the 2015 MLP trial ewes.

The lambs are the first F2 lambs from the MLP trial. A total of 504 lambs were marked, scored and measured.



Trial update: 2015 MLP trial Teeth eruption scoring of 2015 drop



As part of an investigation into potential new Visual Sheep Scores, the 2015 Tuloona MLP drop ewes were scored for teeth eruption over a number of occasions using the following scoring system:

Score 1: Only lambs teeth showing.

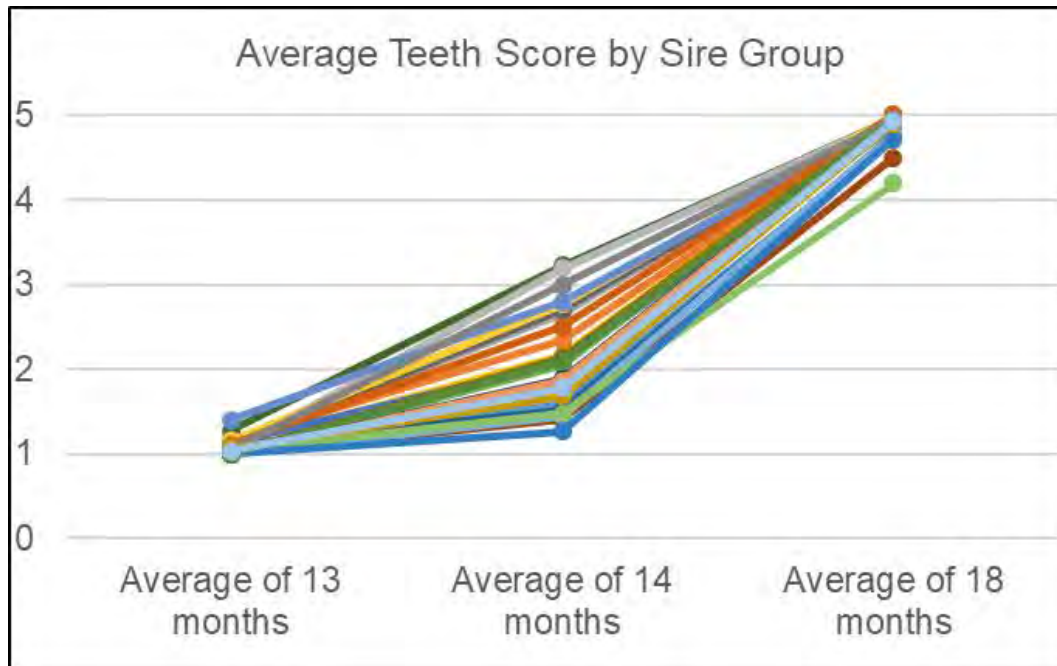
Score 2: Lambs teeth missing or one of either of the permanent teeth starting to be seen.

Score 3: Both permanent teeth showing slightly.

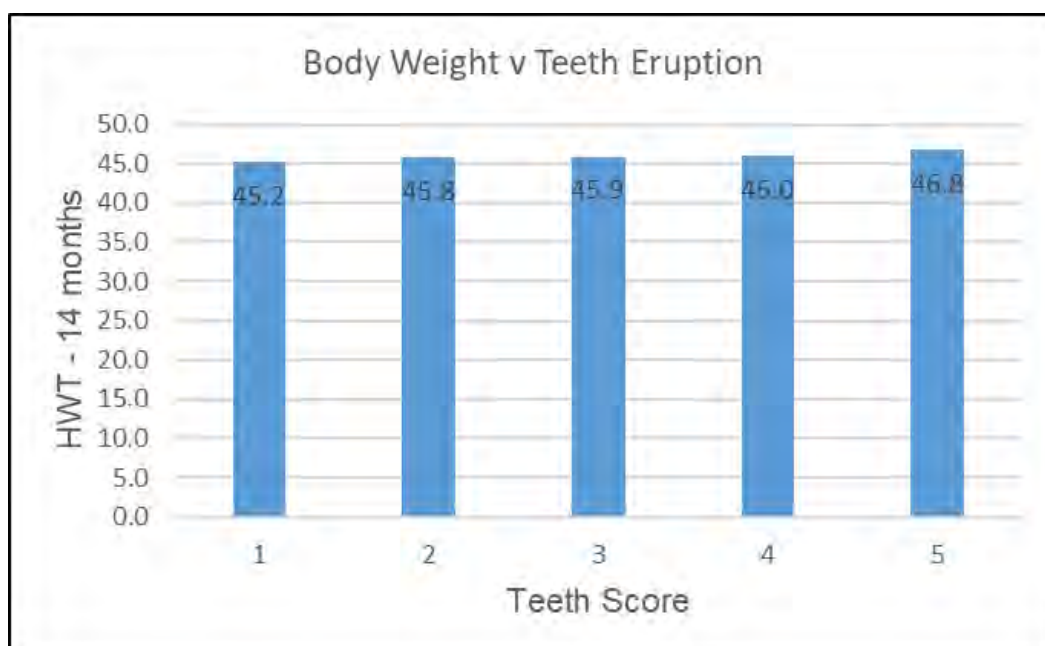
Score 4: Both permanent teeth half up.

Score 5: Both permanent teeth fully up.

Considerable variation was observed between the 25 sires groups included in the trial (*see graph below*)



Furthermore, when compared to hogget weight at the time of scoring, very little difference was observed between those sheep that had not cut teeth (Score 1) and those that had cut teeth (Score 2, 3, 4 and 5).



Work will continue in this area and is expected that teeth scoring may become a normal part of sire evaluation trials in the future.

Ben Swain — AMSEA executive officer

Trial update: 2016 MLP trial



2016 MLP ewes had body measurements taken at Tuloona on September 25. Ewes were condition scored, weighed, had fat and EMD scanning and teeth and dag scores taken. They also received a treatment of click, Eryvac and 6-in-1.



2016 MLP trial ewe progeny pictured (left and below) on December 8, 2017, at Tuloona.



2017 Balmoral Sire Evaluation trial Property update: Koorungal, Coleraine



Since our last newsletter the excellent season has kept rolling along at “Koorungal” with all the dams full, above average lambing and a huge spring to finish it all off. The first two days of lambing of the 2017 trial lambs in mid-September was very wet and cold, which even included a flurry of snow! But the weather soon turned for the better and a reasonable lambing result was achieved with 780 lambs marked from 777 pregnant ewes.

Single bearing ewes lambbed down onto approximately 1800 kilograms of dry matter (kg/dm) and the twins would have had 2000kg/dm or better.

Lambmarking was done in mid-October where we recorded birth coat, sex, body wrinkle, breech bare area and pigmentation. Thank you to all those that came to help on the day.

After the lambs were tagged we have set up Pedigree Matchmaker scanners in the paddocks to record their ewes against them to get the parentage of the lambs.

We are hoping to get as many recordings as possible and do a DNA paternity test on those not matched up on the Pedigree Matchmaker. The lambs are now being imprinted with a grain trail at least four times before weaning in December.



*Mark Bunge, owner
Koorungal*

2017 Koorungal Joining and lambing summary		
Ewes Joined	1201	
Ewes Pregnant	732	61%
Foetuses Scanned	1098	91%
Lambs Tagged	781	65%



Pictured (left and below) are the 2017 trial twin lambs on December 8 at Koorungal.



2017 Balmoral Sire Evaluation trial:
Host property: Koorungal Coleraine
Lambmarking 2017 trial lambs, October 16, 2017



Tagging and scoring 2017 drop lambs at Koorungal took place on Monday, October 16. Pictured ABOVE The team hard at work scoring the 2-3 week old lambs; TOP RIGHT Jonno Hick entering lamb data; TOP LEFT: Mathew McCartney and Rosey Leeming taking and recording measurements.

Merino Lifetime Productivity Project National Update Project manager: Anne Ramsay



QUICK FACTS: The focus of the Merino Lifetime Productivity (MLP) project is to gather a lifetime dataset on the F1 daughters of 135 unique and genetically diverse Merino sires across a range of environments.

Each year these F1 ewes will be wool sampled, visually scored, fleece weighed, live weighed, carcase scanned, faecal sampled, classed by two independent classers and finally, once mature, will be joined to Merino sires and repeat measured until they are over five years old.

This data plus genomic testing will be used to better understand how our current selection systems relate to lifetime production, and to fill data gaps so that we can learn more about the lifetime relationships between wool, carcase, disease resistance and fertility.

The MLP project is entering into a new era as the first of the next generation Balmoral (F2) progeny are tagged and further natural joinings are planned.

While at other sites the assessment and generation of the F1 ewes that will be tracked for life remains the focus.

Next year (2018) will see the tenth and final AI program in the project where 15 sires will be selected for the New England's ultra-fine site located just outside of Armidale.

Ram breeders interesting in having their sire's genetics evaluated through life are encouraged to nominate during December and January. For more information, head to www.wool.com/MLP.

For those keen to see inspect the projects ewes first hand, and to catch up with the latest in project news, make sure you jot down these key project field day dates:

Site	Date	Location	Contact
MerinoLink	16 March	Temora, NSW	Sally Martin 0400 782 477
Pingelly	28 March	Pingelly, WA	Bron Clarke 0418 957 293

Balmoral Sire Evaluation Group

2018 Field Day
Friday, February 16, 2018

Main on-property display and field day activities

1pm — 5pm

Tuloona, Harrow

4580 Coleraine-Edenhope Road, Harrow

2-3pm Guest speaker panel: *MLP - What is it all about?*

10am-12.30pm Sheep selection workshop — *How to select your best flock*

Workshop to be held @ Tuloona **registration required**

10am-12pm 2017 trial progeny display at Koorungal, Coleraine

2115 Coleraine -Edenhope Road, Coleraine

MORE INFORMATION: www.facebook.com/balmoralbreeders

www.balmoralbreeders.com.au

2018 AMSEA trial: Host property: Koorungal Coleraine

Sire Entry Form



1. Site details for the sire being entered

Site & year being entered Site: Year:
 Other sites & years the sire has been entered:
 Has the sire been genotyped: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

2. Sire details

Sire's stud/flock name:
 Sire's identification:
 Sire's stud/flock code: Sire's year of drop:
 Breed of stud/flock (Merino or Poll Merino. If other breed give details):
 Sire's 16 digit code [see sample code below right:]
 Is the sire currently alive: ☐ Yes ☐ No
 Is semen available for sale: ☐ Yes ☐ No
 Sire of sire (16 digit code): [see sample code above right:]
 Grandsire of sire (16 digit code): [see sample code above right:]

Example 16 digit code: 50 - 4697 - 2014 - 140012
 Breed Flock Year of drop On-farm ID

3. Owner details - Owner and contact for enquiries about the sire, plus owner(s) permission

Owner:
 Contact: First name: Surname:
 Address:
 Town: Postcode:
 Phone: Mobile:
 Fax: Email:
 Does the owner of the sire give permission to enter the sire into this sire evaluation site: ☐ Yes ☐ No Initial:
 Does the owner of the sire give permission to publish the sires results in *Merino Superior Sires*: ☐ Yes ☐ No Initial:
 Does the owner of the sire give permission to publish the sires results in Sheep Genetics reports:* ☐ Yes ☐ No Initial:

* If you are an existing Sheep Genetics member, your default Sheep Genetics publication settings for your flock code will be used.

4. Breeder details - only fill in section 4 if the breeders details are different to the owners details in section 3.

Breeder:
 Contact: First name: Surname:
 Address:
 Town: Postcode:
 Phone: Mobile:
 Fax: Email:
 Does the breeder of the sire give permission to enter the sire into this sire evaluation site: ☐ Yes ☐ No Initial:
 Does the breeder of the sire give permission to publish the sires results in *Merino Superior Sires*: ☐ Yes ☐ No Initial:
 Does the breeder of the sire give permission to publish the sires results in Sheep Genetics reports:* ☐ Yes ☐ No Initial:

* If you are an existing Sheep Genetics member, your default Sheep Genetics publication settings for your flock code will be used.

Note: Sires entered will be included in the AMSEA database and managed by AMSEA.

5. Signature of entrant

I believe all the above details to be true: Date:

6. Stud/flock details - if you are a first time entrant of sire evaluation please provide a short summary of your stud/flock's history and breeding objective.

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Australian National Merino Sire Evaluation Association Executive Committee (AMSEA)

Jock McLaren (Chairman) – New England (NSW)
 Rich Keniry (Deputy Chairman) – MerinoLink (NSW)
 Matthew Coddington – Macquarie (NSW)
 Tom Silcock – Elders Balmoral (VIC)
 Phil Toland – North East Victoria
 Bill Sandilands – Yardstick (WA)

Brett Jones – Muresk/Pingelly (WA)
 Stephen Lee – South Australia
 Georgina Wallace – AASMB
 Geoff Lindon – AWI
 Hamish Chandler – MLA
 Ben Swain – Executive Officer

Thank you to our Sponsors

We gratefully acknowledge the generous support of our sponsors and appreciate their participation in our trials.



Elders Hamilton (03) 5572 2266



Peter Mecham 0408 279 823



Ben Swain (02) 6743 2306



Jerilderie: (03) 5886 1772 Hamilton (03) 5570 8280



465 Hume Highway, Craigieburn, Victoria, 3064
 Ph: (03) 8339 9000 Fax: (03) 8339 9051
 Email: enquiries@leaderproducts.com.au



Scott Davis 0419 783 987



Riverina Wool Testers

Ph.: (02) 6925 1407



Ph: (03) 5572 1419



Hamish Dickson 0427 446 499



Richmond Hill Agribusiness Pty Ltd

Steve and Debbie Milne

Steve 0428 786 327
 Debbie 0407 724 066
 sjdjmilne@bigpond.com

Balmoral Sire Evaluation Group Committee Contacts

Mark Bunge	Chairman	03 5579 7224
Anthony Close	Deputy Chair	0437 085 217
Michael Craig	Treasurer	03 5588 1395
Nick Falkenberg		0407 559 680
Tom Silcock		0419 882 239
Hugh Jarvis		03 5588 6356
Tom Sweeny		0419 362 173
Andrew Howells		0418 846 291
David Whyte		03 5572 2266
Jim Farran		03 5585 1888
Richard McShane		03 5574 2367
Tony Kealy		03 5586 5252
Peter Mecham		0408 279 823
Sean Harvey		0417 869 674
Dale Bruns		0458 899 918
Rosey Leeming		0408 704 243
Russell Macgugan		0438 314 390

Scott Davis	0419 783 987
Hamish Dickson	0427 446 499
Daniel Rogers	03 5388 2257
Elise Kealey	0448 600 525
Jonno Hicks	03 5392 2366
Marina VanAken	0497 686 192
Amy Tierney	0427 555 027
Mark Williams	0427 932 269

Liz Mecham (Secretary)
 Mobile 0407 015 059
 Email: petelizmecham@bigpond.com
 Correspondence to: 247 King Street, Hamilton, 3300

Ben Swain (Data Manager) Ph 02 6743 2306

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