



Elders Balmoral Victoria Sire Evaluation

Serious Sheep Breeders

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Presented by Sheep CRC specialist Steve Semple in association with the Balmoral Elders Victoria Sire Evaluation Committee

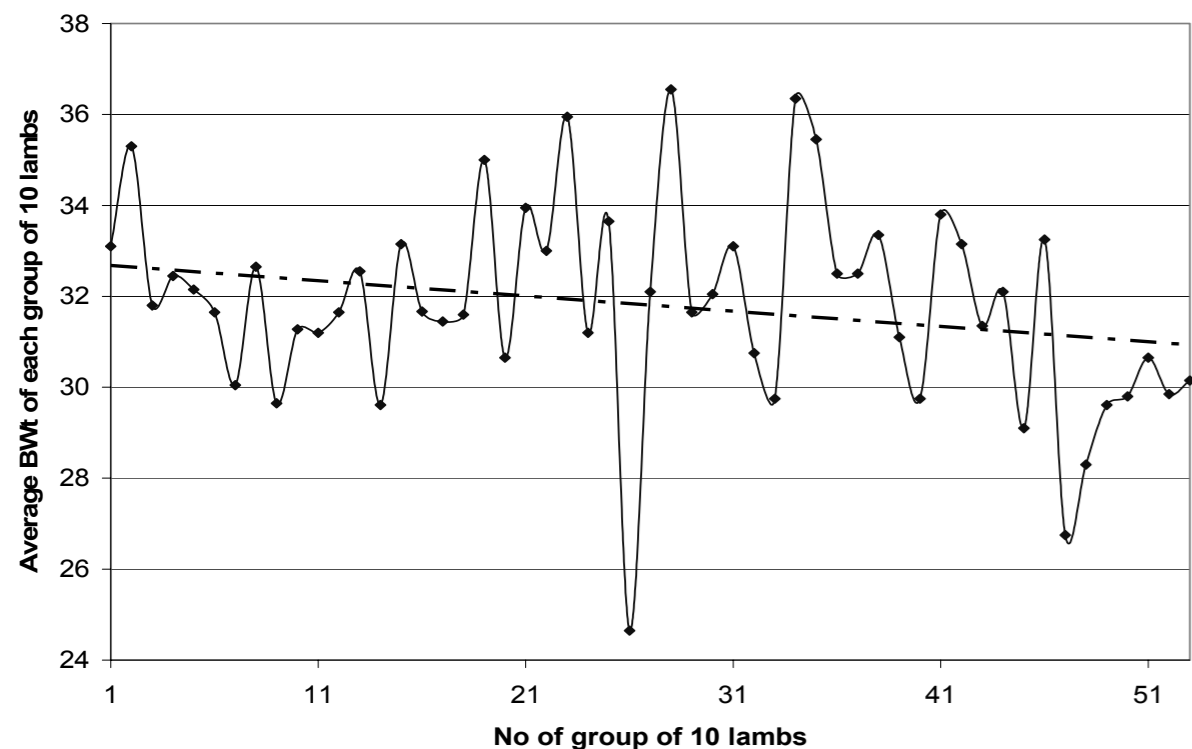
Utilising the 2006 sire evaluation trial progeny

24 October 2007 @ Tuloona Pastoral Company

8:30—4pm \$20/head for catering

For enquiries contact:
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This graph shows the average bodyweight of each group of 10 lambs weighed successively throughout the session. It appears to bounce all over the place, but when a “line of best fit” is applied, it becomes obvious that there was a definite trend for bodyweight to decrease during the time it took to weigh all the lambs. This could have occurred if insufficient time was allowed for gut emptying before weighing. Given that the data shows that some sire groups tended to stick together, this was a reason to be quite concerned about the data that we had collected. The decision was made by the Management Committee to reweigh these animals on another occasion and to ensure that there was a minimum of 4 hours off feed to allow for more complete gut emptying.

Did we observe similar patterns of progeny from some sires sticking together?

And were the same sire progeny groups showing “bonding” to the same extent? Are they “Mates for Life”?

Did we remove the bias from bodyweights decreasing during the weighing period.

The answer to the last question is a definite “Yes”, so everyone can be reassured that the second lot of bodyweight data collected is much better (in terms of no bias for or against any sire progeny groups), but to find out if sheep in our trial remain “Mates for Life” then you will have to wait for the results in the next EVSE newsletter!

Susan Jarvis

Thank-you to our Sponsors

We gratefully acknowledge the generous support of our sponsors and appreciate their participation. Please support these businesses.



- 1. Central Test Sire Evaluation site details for the ram being entered**
 - i. The Site & Drop being entered Site: _____ Year of Drop: 2008
 - ii. Other Sites & Drop the ram has been entered in: _____
been entered in. _____
- 2. Ram details**
 - i. Ram's common name (including flock): _____
 - ii. Ram's year of birth: _____
 - iii. Ram's ear tag or record number: _____
 - iv. Ram's 16 digit code (if known): _____
- 3. Owner details - Owner and contact for inquiries about the ram, plus owner(s) permission**
 - i. Owner: _____
 - ii. Contact's surname: _____
 - iii. First Name: _____
 - iv. Address: _____
 - v. Town and Postcode: _____
 - vi. Phone and Mobile: _____
 - vii. Fax: _____
 - viii. Email address: _____
 - ix. Does the Owner(s) of the ram at the time of entry give permission to enter the ram into this CTSE site:
Yes No (circle) Owner(s) signature: _____ Date: _____
 - x. Does the Owner(s) of the ram give permission to publish the ram's results in Merino Superior Sires:
Yes No (circle) Owner(s) signature: _____ Date: _____
 - xi. Does the Owner(s) of the ram give permission to publish the ram's results in Sheep Genetics Australia:
Yes No (circle) Owner(s) signature: _____ Date: _____
- 4. Breeding details - only fill in (iv) to (ix) if different to details in 'Owners details' above**
 - i. Breed of flock: _____ (eg. Merino or Poll Merino. If other breed give details)
 - ii. Breeder: _____
 - iii. Flock Code: Registered: _____, or Unregistered _____
 - iv. Breeder's contact surname: _____
 - v. First Name: _____
 - vi. Address: _____
 - vii. Town and Postcode: _____
 - viii. Phone and Mobile: _____
 - ix. Fax: _____
 - x. Does the Breeder of the ram give permission to enter the ram into this CTSE site:
Yes No (circle) Breeders signature: _____ Date: _____
 - xi. Does the Breeder of the ram give permission publish the ram's results in Merino Superior Sires:
Yes No (circle) Breeders signature: _____ Date: _____
 - xii. Does the Breeder of the ram give permission to publish the ram's results in Sheep Genetics Australia:
Yes No (circle) Breeder(s) signature: _____ Date: _____
- 5. Pedigree details – OPTIONAL**
 - i. Sire of Ram entered: _____
 - ii. Sire of Sire of Ram: _____

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

- 6. Signature of Entrant**
I believe all the above details to be true.
Date: _____
- 7. CTSE Site Committee representative**
I have checked all required details are listed.
Date: _____

Ram Entries for 2008
Ram Registration Form on the back page

**A Word From Our Chairman
Tom Silock**



As we enter a lull in work days before the next 2008 trial starts we are focusing on the workshop on the 24th Oct and our Christmas windup dinner on the 23 Nov.

The industry has now selected on 'Visual Scoring' and we hope to provide examples in the next newsletter. I will be attending the next Australian Merino Sire Evaluation Association (AMSEA) meeting on the 25 Oct. It is an AGM where our new chairman will be elected. AMSEA is the national body providing an over arching guidance to individual trials.

Special thanks to Elders for their continued sponsorship and support.

Visual Classing at Arundale

4 July 2007



Entries open for 2008 Trial

Entries are open for our 2008 trial. There are limited entries and last year there were 5 rams that missed out! To secure your ram in the 2008 trial fill in the entry form on the back page of this newsletter and fax to 03 55765051. Please don't forget to include your ram's 16 digit ID number and then ensure you have viable semen collected well before required.

*Results for each assessment
from 1998 – 2005 are
available on request or from
our website*

www.balmoralbreeders.com.au

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Tuloona Host property 2006—2008



Here at Tuloona things are looking good, despite August and September rainfall being in the lowest 30%. An hour drive north of Harrow and you would think you are in another country. We have been lucky, although we still feel the effects of the drought with livestock prices still suffering from a supply imbalance being pushed by these high grain prices. Having 950 acres of crop in, we are questioning whether we can justify feeding our merino sheep this expensive grain.

2006 Progeny

The 2006 Sire Evaluation progeny, with 14 different sires, are progressing well, with all sheep in condition score 3+. Their first shearing averaged 3.6kg/head of 15.9 micron wool with an average tensile strength

of 36 N/Ktex. A key lesson coming out of the drought has been the benefit of a proper high protein balanced diet, and being prepared to invest this time and money to develop durable, profitable animals for the future.

2007 Progeny

The 2007 progeny were tagged in mid August with 121% of lambs tagged born to ewes scanned in lamb, 22% of ewes had already been removed as dry from the AI and backup joining. The progeny have been marked, wrinkle scored and breach scored. The lambs appear to be growing well on over 2500 kg/DM/ha and the next major activity is weaning in early November, when we expect weaning weights to be over 25kg.

2007 AWI Clip Trial

An AWI clip trial is being conducted on Tuloona flock progeny that will be available for growers to view at our Sire Evaluation Field Day in April next year. The early results appear very encouraging, although clearly there are some technical issues that have to be resolved. We hope to have an AWI representative available at next year's Field Day to discuss AWI's progress in achieving the industry's objective to replace mulesing by 2010.

Michael Craig

**Elders Continue to
Support the
Balmoral Sire Evaluation**

For 9 years Elders have been the major sponsor of our Sire Evaluation trial during which time their support has been invaluable. As a non profit trial we rely on our sponsors and ram entrant fees to meet the expenses involved with running a two year trial. Over one year we have approximately 14 work days, 1 field day, displays at Bendigo Sheep Show, Sheepvention and the Balmoral Show, distribute quarterly newsletters and report on data from WEC results through to wool samples. Elders representatives are involved in every part of providing labour and wool classers, and David Whyte attends our committee meetings where his knowledge of the industry is constantly called on.



Rohan Macauley (Elders Branch Area Manager), David Whyte (Elders Wool Territory Manager) and Tania Rentsch (Sire evaluation manager)

We would like to thank Elders for their continued support and look forward to 10 years of working together to providing a successful and well regarded contribution to a continuous genetic improvement of the Australian Merino Sheep & Wool Industry.

Are Lambs Mates For Life?

A careful investigation of the bodyweight data from the 2006 drop of progeny collected at the end of July this year revealed some interesting findings.

The order in which the sheep were weighed was kept as part of the data, and then the average order for each sire group was calculated, and compared with the average weigh order for the whole mob. Sire groups that had an average weigh order less than that of the whole mob were weighed early, and sire groups that had a greater average weigh order were weighed late. The average weigh order for some sire groups was not very different from the mob average.

Sire Group	Average Weigh Order	Difference from Mob Average	Average BWt
A	260.0	-5.9	31.5
B	243.6	-22.3	33.3
C	271.1	5.1	31.1
D	266.6	0.6	31.3
E	288.7	22.8	34.0
F	269.4	3.5	31.4
G	266.1	0.2	28.9
H	233.8	-32.2	32.7
I	257.0	-8.9	28.5
J	289.6	23.7	31.7
K	271.7	5.8	35.0
L	270.6	4.6	35.6
M	284.1	18.2	28.9
N	249.7	-16.2	32.7
Average of Mob	265.9	0.0	31.8

For example, Sire Group H had an average weigh order much less than the mob average. The lambs by this sire were, on average, weighed much earlier, than the progeny of Sire J.

What does this mean, and is it important?

This data seems to indicate that lambs in some sire groups (but definitely not all), tend to stick together, even though they have been boxed with all the other progeny groups since they were tagged as lambs at two weeks of age. Perhaps bonding occurred in those first two weeks which continues throughout the animals' lives – or is this just a random event? Observant sheep breeders frequently notice animals that are known to be twins staying together, but this data seems to indicate that it is not just twins that bond.

The importance of this tendency of some sire progeny groups to stick together is that if there is any chance of some bias occurring over time, then those groups that have an average weigh order very different from the mob average weight order might be either advantaged or disadvantaged. For example, is the average bodyweight for Sire Group H really greater than the mob average bodyweight or is it just because this group of animals tended to be weighed early?

To see if there was any change in bodyweights over time, the average bodyweight of each successive group of 10 lambs weighed was calculated, and then plotted.