

Balmoral Victoria Sire Evaluation Group

Trial News

www.balmoralbreeders.com.au

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Our Chairman - Tom Silcock



The sheep industry is in one of those unique periods of history when new developments are opening new ways and opportunities for us. Sire Evaluation and our Elders Balmoral site are at the lead on much of the research and validating. I feel privileged to be part of it all at this exciting time. I find it incredible that the lambs represented in this year's drop at Wando Estate from 19 sires from all over Australia, at this young age look so even and similar in type. It is a credit to the management, how well they all look. I'm sure we will see their genetic variation start to exhibit as they mature.

One of the new changes for this year is; all rams entered will need a blood sample for DNA evaluation instead of semen as in the past. From the blood sample we will provide all entrants with a predicted research breeding value for selection traits after the AI program. It then takes us 2 years to discover, or now it will be, to validate the same information. Normally only members of Sheep Genetics have the opportunity to participate with this research and discovery; however we are offering all entrants in our trial the ability to be part of this development. One of the regular criticisms of our trials has been it takes so long to get information back, such is the traditional method of collecting it. Now at least we will be able to provide the predicted results back to entrants within a few months of AI. I'm sure the interest in this will challenge our ability to meet demand for entry places this year.

As part of the same research program, we now have lambs on the ground in our current trial, by ram lambs from Toland Merinos and The Mountain Dam. Both ram lambs were selected using predictions from DNA samples taken as lambs. We will watch with interest to see the validation results.

I make special mention of new sponsors and supporters. We are currently utilizing Leader ear tags which are by far the best I have seen trialled yet. Also the Datamars data collection device we are using is proving its worth to us. Utilizing CIDR@s supplied by Pfizer has also simplified our AI program enormously. We thank all our regular sponsors as well being, Stefan Spiker Advanced Livestock Services, Mark Jenkinson pregnancy scanning, Paul Hocking Riverina Wool Testers, David and Ros Kennett Genstock AI, RIST, Worm tests Livestock Intel. Our trial continues to grow the interest of what we are doing and experimenting with. To all the supporters thank you for making it possible.

Tom Silcock

Australian National Merino Sire Evaluation Association Executive Committee

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Graham Peart (Deputy Chairman) NSW Macquarie
Bill Sandilands WA Yardstick
Jock McLaren NSW New England
Rick Keogh QLD Longreach
Sam Gill Meat and Livestock Australia

Ben Swain Executive Officer
Knox Heggaton TAS
Phil Toland VIC North East Victoria
Sally Martin NSW Blue Chip Livestock
Geoff Lindon Australian Wool Innovation

Thank-you to our Sponsors

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



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rwt@wooltesters.com.au

GENSTOCK Aust.
David and Ros Kennett
Ph: (03) 5570 8280
mail@genstockaust.com.au

DATAMARS



Sheep Pro
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Vic Stud Merino Breeders



Advanced Livestock Services
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‘Yiddinga ’ Host property 2010-2012

The progeny from the 2011 drop are going along very well. It was a tough autumn and early winter for them, but the season has improved and the sheep have grown out well. So far the spring rains have just been adequate, even though we just seem to be hanging out for the next rain.

We gave the sheep a long acting Cydectin drench after the WEC had been collected and we have not had any animal health problems with the group, so far. We will be collecting yearling weight and dag score data very soon and the classing and collecting mid side samples will be carried out in March prior to the Field Day in April. Shearing will take place after that.

The ewe progeny from the 2010 drop have lambed well. At this stage will be collecting the blood samples for the DNA parentage testing in mid-November for the fertility trial being carried on these sire groups. We will also road test the DNA testing, which could be a very handy tool for studs and commercial operators who breed their own rams to trace parentage in an easier way.

I helped Wando with the tagging and scoring of the lambs for this year's Sire Evaluation Trial, the lambs look good with the operation going smoothly so I must congratulate Tom and the staff at Wando on the way the sheep were presented.

We live in interesting times for the sheep industry and all the genomic research that has been carried out by the Sheep CRC is starting to filter down to the studs which will also be of benefit to the of the commercial sheep farmer. This could turn out to be a great tool for the sheep industry for further productivity gains into the future. So I hope that the industry sees how important it is to continue funding this research.

Jim Farran

Yiddinga

Wando Estate — Host property 2012-2013

Since my last report in May certainly a lot has happened. Firstly, a reasonably wet winter has hopefully set us up for a very good spring if the rain continues. From May until the start of October Wando has received 462mm of rainfall, our normal average is 346mm for that period. The trial ewes held their condition very well over the winter period averaging 2.8 to 3.0+ CS.

The 38 lambing paddocks we had allocated for the trial ewes had been stock free for some time so feed on offer at entry time of the ewes was quite high. Our main issue was that some of the paddocks were very wet with some surface water covering some areas. As we had another 9000 ewes split up lambing as well, we had no room to move the trial mobs. Regardless, the ewes coped very well with minimal lamb losses. The ewes lambed over a three day period from the 29th August to the 1st September. The mob sizes per lambing paddocks ranged from smallest being 7 ewes to the largest being 29 ewes. It certainly shows smaller mob sizes at lambing are a huge plus. And as mentioned lamb and ewe losses were minimal. Tagging of the 2012 progeny took place over two days 10th and 11th of September, with 780 lambs tagged, this worked out to 112% lambs born to ewes scanned after empties and ewes in lamb to the backup rams were removed. At tagging a score was recorded for skin and fibre pigment along with birth coat and the lambs also body weighed.

We are still running the singles and twins in separate mobs. The lambs are currently fresh and looking fantastic and have just been marked and mulesed. A score for bare breech, breech wrinkle and stain were given prior to marking. We have only had about 5 deaths since tagging at about 1 week of age. The next activity is a weaning weight at weaning, so I look forward to supplying the results.

Tom Sweeney

Wando Estate

AMSEA Report Oct 2012

Ben Swain - BCS Agribusiness

Merino Sire Evaluation in Australia will enter a new era in 2013 with some significant initiatives due to be implemented. For some years now, AMSEA has been requesting entrants provide additional semen to be used for sheep genomic validation. This has proved very successful with almost 200 sires genotyped using the 50k SNP test as part of various Sheep CRC programs. The owners of these sires have had genomic enhanced research breeding values made available to them as well as a predictive poll-horn breeding value.

In 2013, this program of genotyping will be extended with all entrants at all sites being genotyped using the 50k SNP at the time of joining. In this very exciting development for sire evaluation, all entrants will be provided with genomic enhanced research breeding values as well as a predictive poll-horn breeding value prior to the progeny even being born. These results will provide yet another source of genetic evaluation information provided by AMSEA in a very timely manner. It will also provide a valuable validation resource to the industry to further refine the genomic breeding values. The Sheep CRC has committed to subsidising the genotyping of all 2013 entries so as the cost of the 50k SNP test will be \$50 (ex GST) for each entrant, which will be part of the entry fee for 2013. Entrants will need to provide a blood card for each ram entered for the genotyping to be carried out on.

Also in 2013, AWI will be funding an 'historical sire' program. This program will allow each site to enter a sire that was used in sire evaluation more than 15 years ago, with the aim to validate genetic gain that MERINOSELECT (and its predecessors) has achieved over the past 15 years and beyond. Whilst the program will provide 'proof of profit' that the system of performance breeding works, it will also no doubt generate significant interest at the site level.

AWI will further increase its commitment to sire evaluation in 2013 by providing funding for one of the link sires that each site is required to join each year. Specifically, the sire that provides linkage between the years at each site will be funded, along with the historical sire, by AWI. At this stage, eight sites have suggested they will be joining in 2013, so it looks like being a big year for sire evaluation.

Merino Superior Sires Update

Merino Superior Sires 18 is soon to be published and will include the results of all sires entered between 2007 and 2011 that have data available. As usual Merino Superior Sires will be distributed free of charge to every Merino stud breeder in Australia as well as over 1000 agents and service providers. Merino Superior Sires will also be available for download from www.merinosuperiorsires.com.au, which is also where additional information on sires can be found as well as results for those sires entered prior to 2007.

Users of Merino Superior Sires will see some significant changes to this year's edition. Firstly, three new MERINOSELECT indexes have been included. These new indexes are the Dual Purpose Plus (DP+), Merino Production Plus (MP+) and Fibre Production Plus (FP+) indexes.

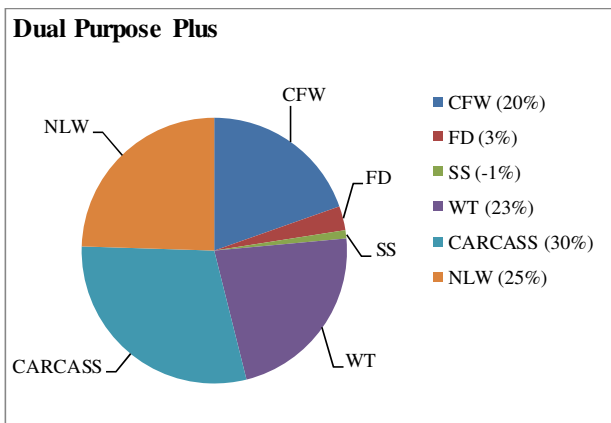
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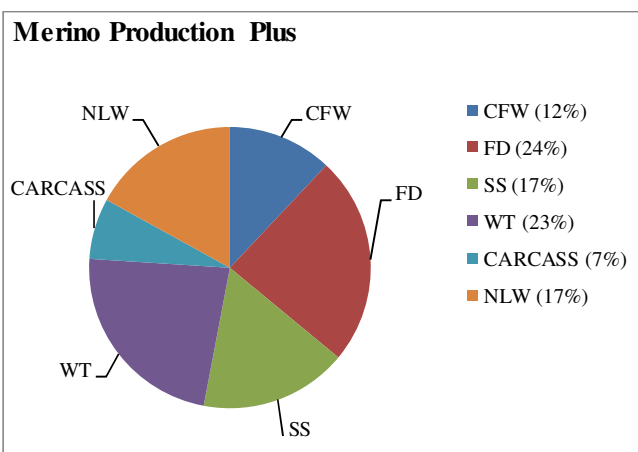
These new indexes (described below), that will replace the previous MERINOSELECT indexes in Merino Superior Sires, have been introduced by Sheep Genetics to incorporate more recent economic data on wool and meat prices. Whilst the correlations between the new and old indexes are moderately to very high, the use of these indexes will lead to slightly different outcomes in terms of genetic change in traits compared to old indexes. A full explanation of the new indexes will be included in Merino Superior Sires.

Reducing the number of indexes reported in Merino Superior Sires from six to three has also made room for another major improvement in this year's edition. The previously published Top 25s have been extended to include the Top 50 sires ranked for each of the three new indexes. Together with the previously published TOPS and CULLS results, the Top 50 now also includes breeding values for fibre diameter, fleece weight and body weight, together with a the recently released predictive breeding value for poll-horn status as well the wool type of the flock that sire was breed in.

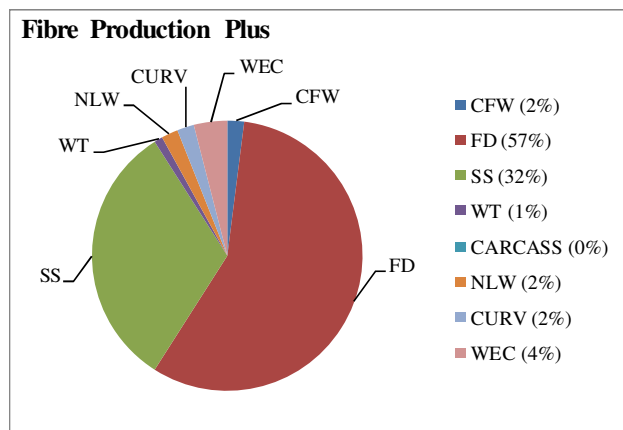
As a result it is hoped that the Top 50 will become even more useful to breeders looking for a quick reference to industry leading sires that match their own breeding objective and type. **The graphs below show the listed traits percentage contribution to economic gain in a commercial flock that selects sires using the index.**



Dual Purpose Plus (DP+): Based on a meat focused production system where surplus progeny are sold as lambs and a portion of ewes are joined to terminal sires. High increase in carcass traits and fleece weight, moderate increase in reproduction, fibre diameter maintained, maintain or small increase in staple strength.



Merino Production Plus (MP+): Based on a balanced wool and meat production system where surplus progeny are sold as hoggets. Moderate increase in fleece weight, staple strength, carcass traits and reproduction, moderate reduction in fibre diameter.



Fibre Production Plus (FP+): Based on a wool focussed production system where wethers are retained, operating in an environment where worms cause economic losses. Large reduction in fibre diameter, large increase in staple strength, moderate reduction in WEC (if measured in the breeding program), small increase in fleece weight. Little change in carcass traits and reproduction.

NEW APPOINTMENTS—ELDERS HAMILTON

Elders Hamilton is pleased to announce

Mathew Treglown

has joined the Livestock Team as

Territory Sales Manager

Mathew can be contacted on 0488 929 026



Mathew relocates to Hamilton from Millicent with

his wife and 2 children. Mathew is dedicated to the rural industry.

Mathew was brought up on a family property, worked as a shearer for

4 years and involved within the agency business for 5 years prior to joining Elders.

Mathew's role in the Millicent branch held the responsibility of managing key livestock client accounts whilst also performing the role of auctioneer in the local and neighbouring district. Mathew has a thirst for working in the more major selling centres where he has the added opportunities to utilise his auctioneering skills

Elders Hamilton also welcomes to their team

Senior Agronomist

Mark Rouse (B.Ag.Sc)

Mobile 0488 094 140

With extensive experience in pasture/ lucerne

and cropping operations within the Western District,

Tasmania and New Zealand Mark is well qualified to help you increase livestock production from your farm.

Mark is available for on-farm consultation to assist with your seasonal feed requirements.



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Below L: The team tagging 2012 lambs at Wando Estate, R: Lambs waiting to be breech scored Oct 2012



2012 Drop Tagging, Breech and Fibre Pigmentation Sept/Oct 2012

Table 1: Tagging Weights (not adjusted)

Sire	Tagging Weight (kg)	Fibre Pigmentation	Non-fibre Pigmentation
BINDAWARA, 080358	7.7	1.1	2.2
CONNEWARREN, 088016	7.3	1.3	2.1
GLENPAEN, 080356	6.7	1.1	1.9
GRINGEGALGONA, 071609	7.5	1.2	2.1
HAZELDEAN, 8.3561	7.6	1.2	2.1
KOORINGAL, 102277	7.6	2.3	2.4
LACHLAN, 08SP30	7.7	1.1	1.9
LEACHIM 090918	7.5	1.0	1.8
MOOJEPIN, 100248	7.9	1.3	2.0
NAREEB NAREEB, 100655	7.8	1.2	2.2
NERSTANE, 080121	7.8	1.1	1.9
ONE OAK, 100010	7.5	1.1	2.0
POOGINOOK, CLARK 103462	7.3	1.1	2.0
RIDGEWAY, 091137	7.6	1.3	1.9
ROSEVILLE PARK, 090014	7.2	1.3	2.2
THE MOUNTAIN DAM, COA029	8.6	1.2	1.9
TOLAND, 111021	7.5	1.3	1.9
YALGOO, 070441	7.4	1.0	1.6
YIDDINGA, 10105	7.0	1.1	1.8
Average	7.6	1.2	2.0

Table 2: Breech Traits (not adjusted)

Sire	Breech Cover	Breech Wrinkle	Urine Stain
BINDAWARA, 080358	4.3	1.9	2.4
CONNEWARREN, 088016	4.2	2.4	2.7
GLENPAEN, 080356	4.4	2.0	1.9
GRINGEGALGONA, 071609	4.5	2.2	2.7
HAZELDEAN, 8.3561	4.0	2.1	3.2
KOORINGAL, 102277	3.7	1.9	2.1
LACHLAN, 08SP30	3.7	1.6	2.0
LEACHIM 090918	4.1	1.3	1.8
MOOJEPIN, 100248	3.6	1.2	2.2
NAREEB NAREEB, 100655	4.4	2.3	2.6
NERSTANE, 080121	4.1	2.4	3.4
ONE OAK, 100010	4.1	2.0	2.1
POOGINOOK, CLARK 103462	4.5	2.5	3.2
RIDGEWAY, 091137	4.4	1.7	2.1
ROSEVILLE PARK, 090014	4.3	2.0	2.2
THE MOUNTAIN DAM, COA029	4.2	2.3	2.0
TOLAND, 111021	4.4	1.8	2.2
YALGOO, 070441	4.3	2.6	3.0
YIDDINGA, 10105	4.5	2.5	2.8
Average	4.2	2.0	2.4

Note: These raw figures have not been corrected for birth type etc & are subject to verification and analysis

Ram Entry Form



1. Site details for the ram being entered

- 1a. Site & year being entered Site: Year:
 1b. Other sites & years the ram has been entered:

2. Ram details

- 2a. Ram's stud/flock name:
 2b. Ram's identification:
 2c. Rams year of birth (drop):
 2d. Ram's stud/flock code:
 2e. Breed of stud/flock (Merino or Poll Merino. If other breed give details):
 2f. Ram's 16 digit code [see sample code below right] - - - - -
 2g. Is the ram currently alive: ☐ Yes ☐ No
 2h. Is semen available for sale: ☐ Yes ☐ No
 2i. Sire of ram (16 digit code): [see sample code above right] - - - - -
 2j. Grand sire of ram (16 digit code): [see sample code above right] - - - - -

Example 16 digit code: 50 - 4967 - 2009 - 090012
 Breed Flock Year of drop On-farm ID

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

- 3a. Owner:
 3b. Contact: First name: Surname:
 3c. Address:
 3d. Town: Postcode:
 3e. Phone: Mobile:
 3f. Fax: Email:
 3g. Does the owner of the ram give permission to enter the ram into this sire evaluation site:
☐ Yes ☐ No Owner signature: Date:
 3h. Does the owner of the ram give permission to publish the rams results in Merino Superior Sires:
☐ Yes ☐ No Owner signature: Date:
 3i.* Does the owner of the ram give permission to publish the rams results in Sheep Genetics reports:
☐ Yes ☐ No Owner signature: Date:

* 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.

- 4a. Breeder:
 4b. Contact: First name: Surname:
 4c. Address:
 4d. Town: Postcode:
 4e. Phone: Mobile:
 4f. Fax: Email:
 4g. Does the breeder of the ram give permission to enter the ram into this sire evaluation site:
☐ Yes ☐ No Breeder signature: Date:
 4h. Does the breeder of the ram give permission to publish the rams results in Merino Superior Sires:
☐ Yes ☐ No Breeder signature: Date:
 4i.* Does the breeder of the ram give permission to publish the rams results in Sheep Genetics reports:
☐ Yes ☐ No Breeder signature: Date:

* 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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