



December 2018



# Balmoral Sire Evaluation Group

## ***Trial News***

[www.balmoralbreeders.com.au](http://www.balmoralbreeders.com.au)

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### From the Chairman

Welcome to our final newsletter for 2018. While the season in our local area has been quite reasonable, we are ever mindful of our fellow farmers to the north of us who are struggling with record low rainfall and high feed costs. We all hope for rain soon for the benefit of the whole industry.

We recently held our AGM with no change to the executive of the Balmoral Sire Evaluation Group. We have had one reluctant resignation from our committee through Richard McShane, who has recently had a change in his workplace. I would like to thank Richard for all his inputs, efforts and commitment to the committee over the last few years and wish him well in his new job.

It was also decided at our last meeting that from 2019 our site will move to using DNA to determine pedigree for our future lambings. Although this will require an increase in the entry fees we charge, we feel this will bring increased accuracy to the trial as well as a greatly reducing the workload and commitment for the host properties going forward. As we see the increased use and the cost of DNA sampling reducing, we feel this is the way of the future.

While on the subject of next year's trial, we are receiving strong interest for the ram entries for the 2019 joining which will take place in late March at our new host property, Jigsaw Farms. There are still a few places left, but they are filling fast. Please contact Tom Silcock or return the entry form attached to this newsletter ASAP.

I would also like to remind you that our field day is on again next February. We are planning a couple of great guest speakers as well as the progeny on display for the 2017 and 2018 drop at "Koorungal". We look forward to seeing you all there.

Wishing all sheep breeders and co a very merry Christmas and a wetter 2019.



*Mark Bunge*



## **ANNUAL FIELD DAY**



**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2019**

2017 & 2018 drops on display

Guest speakers: Nitrogen breech treatment & wool market analysis

**On property at Koorungal, Coleraine**



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



The spring of 2018 and early summer at Harrow has being dry, yet mild weather has ensured pastures maintained in their vegetative stage.  
The nett result has shown animal growth rates slightly above average.  
The MLP F2 progeny were weaned on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> November at an average age of 10 weeks (8-13 weeks). As shown below the average weights and condition score illustrate the positive progress of the MLP sheep.

	Ewe Weight @ weaning	Ewe Condition Score	Weaning Weight of Lambs
2015 F1 Ewes	62.6kg	3.37	26.9kg
2016 F1 Ewes	58.1kg	3.27	24.9kg



Michael Craig, owner,  
"Tuloona"



Weaning of the MLP lambs at Tuloona took place in November.

FAR LEFT: The F2 progeny of the 2016 MLP sheep.

LEFT: & BELOW FAR LEFT: MLP site manager Tom Silcock, and Tuloona employee Aurica Brzezinski assess the MLP sheep as part of the data collected at weaning.

BELOW LEFT: The data collection took note of interesting animal features, such as multiple nipples on ewe udders which could indicate greater fertility or production capacity.



BELOW: The 016 MLP progeny in November at the weaning of their lambs.





## Trial property update 2018 AMSEA trial: Koorinal, Coleraine



The spring at Koorinal, and in general around the south-west Victorian area, has been a case of just enough rain at the right time to produce a good season. By the end of winter we had filled all the dams and the soil profile was full which allowed us to get out of jail with a dry spring. Lambing conditions in September were mild resulting in good percentages and healthy looking lambs.

This year's ewes joined to the 2018 sires were pregnancy scanned in late July and achieved a pregnancy rate of 59%, consisting 428 singles and 229 multiples. One interesting set of results to come out of the scanning percentages was that of the Sydney University's 50-year-old semen which is being trialed. It appears the semen viability hasn't been compromised at all over that time as the syndicate ram semen used has achieved very similar pregnancies to other sires. The ewes lambed down in September and the progeny were marked and had data recorded in September and were treated with the liquid nitrogen breaching process as an alternative to mulesing in early October. The ewes and lambs are currently being run through pedigree match maker scanners to ascertain their parentage before weaning in December. These lambs will also be on display at our February field day.



*Mark Bunge, owner  
Koorinal*



*Lambmarking of the  
2018 drop lambs.  
ABOVE LEFT: 2018  
lambs in September  
at marking.  
ABOVE RIGHT  
Committee mem-  
bers entering lamb  
data, September.  
TOP RIGHT: 2018  
foundation ewes in  
September.*

*LEFT: 2018 drop  
lambs pictured in  
October prior to the  
nitrogen breach  
treatment.*



## Trial property update 2017 AMSEA trial: Koorinal, Coleraine



Since our last newsletter, the 2017 lambs have been putting plenty of weight on and are growing out well. In September we completed the fat and eye muscle scoring requirements (*sheep pictured at the time below left*), and in early November, undertook the dag score requirements (*pictured right*). Results are published below.

The next jobs with this mob will be crutching in early December and then classing and mid-side sampling at the end of January, with result at our field day on February 22.



### Balmoral Sire Evaluation Trial 2017 Drop Update



Sire Name	No Progeny	Flock Breeding Values (FBVs)				Hogget DAG
		Yearling WT (kg)	Hogget WT (kg)	Yearling FAT (mm)	Yearling EMD (mm)	
Anderson Poll, 120096	38	2.2	0.6	0.6	0.0	0.3
Centre Plus Poll, 407445	22	-0.5	-0.1	-0.1	0.4	-0.4
Connewarran, 015024	19	-1.8	-2.2	-0.2	-0.5	0.2
Hazeldean, 12.4030	22	-3.3	-1.0	-0.7	-0.5	0.6
Kerin Poll, 151911	19	1.5	2.0	-0.4	-0.5	0.5
Kurra-Wirra, 150583	18	1.3	2.5	-0.6	-0.6	-0.1
Lachlan Merinos, 150280	13	-4.5	-5.7	-0.6	-1.0	0.2
Merinotech WA Poll, 122041	21	2.7	2.4	0.6	1.0	-0.9
Moorundie Poll, NE73	16	0.0	0.6	-0.3	0.0	-0.6
Mumblebone, 130850	32	1.9	2.1	-0.1	0.5	0.0
Mumblebone, 151723	23	-2.8	-2.4	1.1	1.4	0.1
Nerstane, 140053	17	-1.7	-1.1	0.0	-0.6	-0.3
Ridgway Poll, 140721	25	-0.7	-1.9	-0.2	-0.8	-0.3
The Mountain Dam, WYA037	17	0.7	0.4	-0.2	0.3	0.2
Tuckwood Poll, 131026	18	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.7	0.1
Tuckwood Poll, 141025	20	0.8	0.9	0.2	-0.1	0.3
Turkey Lane, 150077	31	-0.1	0.1	1.4	0.8	-0.2
Wallaloo Park Poll, 140261	35	-1.3	-2.8	0.1	0.6	-0.4
Woodyarrup, 140149	20	8.2	8.9	-0.5	-0.9	0.7
Yiddinga, 154995	11	-2.6	-4.9	-0.2	-0.1	0.0
<b>Progeny Group Average</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>38.5 (kg)</b>	<b>50.6 (kg)</b>	<b>2.8 (mm)</b>	<b>21.0 (mm)</b>	<b>2.5</b>

## 2017 AMSEA trial liveweight growth path:

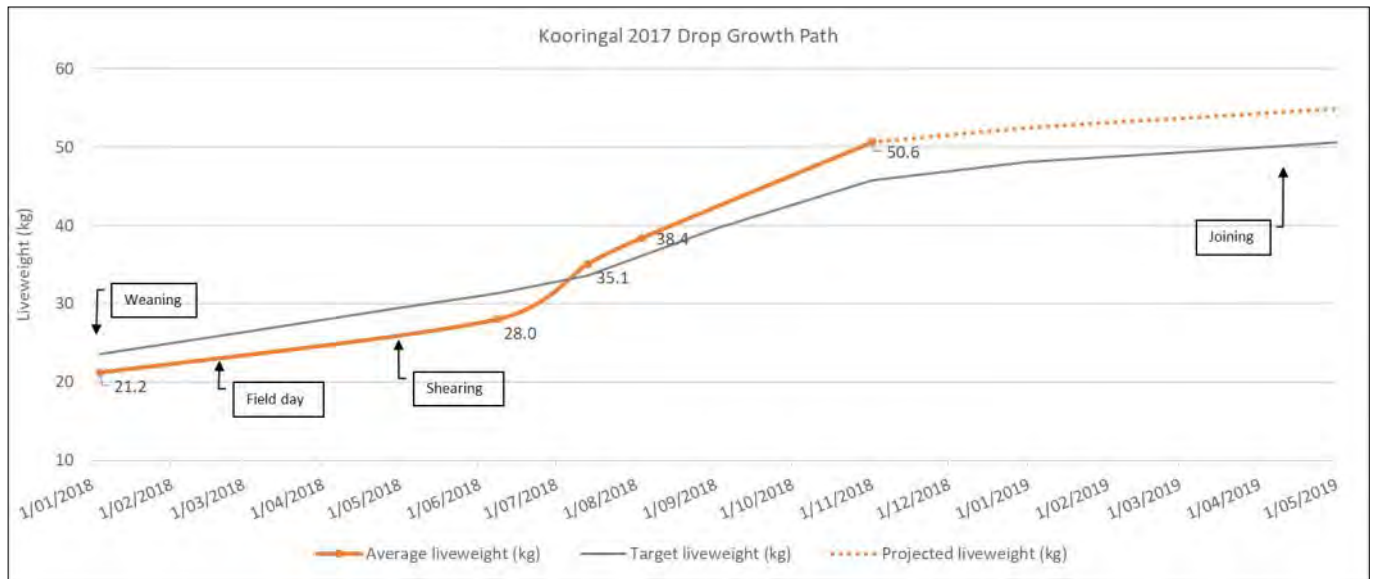
Hamish Dickson

AgriPartner Consulting



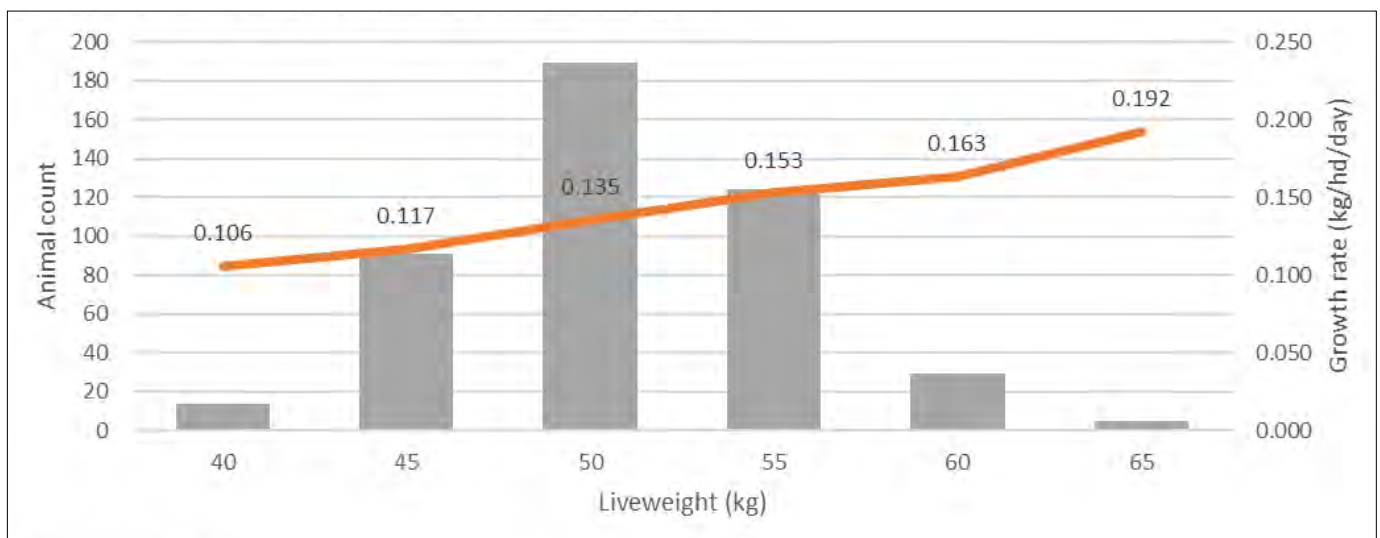
The most recent weighing of the Koorinal 2017 drop animals has shown that this group are well on track to achieving good joining weights next year. Feed conditions from winter have generated an average growth rate of 155 grams per head per day since June 2018, resulting in an average current liveweight of 50kg, which is nearly 5kg heavier than the minimum target weight for this time (see graph below). While it is important to ensure that these animals do not lose weight from this point forward, minimal growth is now required over the summer period. This is a great outcome and will minimise any supplementary feed required as pasture growth rate slows and feed quality declines.

**Figure 1 - Liveweight growth path for 2017 Koorinal Drop**



Data from the most recent weighing at the start of November has shown once again the value of the improved growth leading into summer, as those animals of a greater liveweight have a higher growth rate, increasing their resilience to poorer quality summer feed. The graph below shows that spread of liveweight within the group and the corresponding average growth rate of each group, ie. there are approximately 190 animals at an average liveweight of 50kg and the average growth rate of these animals is 0.135kg/hd/day.

**Figure 2 - Count of animals in each liveweight category and corresponding growth rate of each group**



Hamish Dickson

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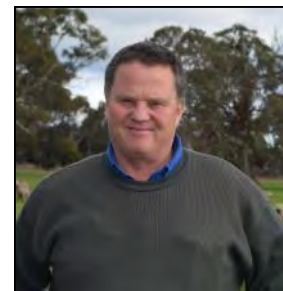
## Trial property update 2019 AMSEA trial : Jigsaw Farms, Hensley Park & Melville Forest



The proposed foundation ewes at Jigsaw Farms ewes that will be used in the 2019 AMSEA sire evaluation trial seem to be travelling well.

This is particularly pleasing as we have received 114mm less than our average rainfall for this time of year, and 164 mm less than we received this time last year. All things considered, the pastures at Jigsaw Farms have held up well, particularly the sub clovers. The season is closing in now.

In early November, these spring-2015 drop ewes had their 11-week-old lambs weaned off them prior to crutching. This year's whole drop of 4400 ewes had a lambing percentage of 100.3% (on ewes joined to lambs weaned) and a 80.5% foetus survival rate. Liveweights were measured on weaning, and it appears the cryogenic breeding process is paying dividends in terms of lamb condition.



*Mark Wootton,  
Jigsaw Farms*

To begin preparation of the 2019 AMSEA trial, and to ensure an even playing field is established for the trial, a selection of ewes will be made from the flock by the Balmoral Sire Evaluation committee December 18, 2018. These foundation ewes will then be shorn in January. The AI program for trial is booked to be completed by Genstock on March 27 and 28, 2019, and will take place at the Illira woolshed at Hensley Park.



*Jigsaw blue tag  
ewes with 11-week  
-old lambs at foot  
in November at  
weaning.*

**Want to keep up to date with what's going on at the  
Balmoral Sire Evaluation Group? Here's how:**



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Get yourself on our mailing list by emailing our  
secretary: **[lizmecham@bigpond.com](mailto:lizmecham@bigpond.com)**

# 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

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

Sire of sire (16 digit code): [see sample code above right:] \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ - \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ - \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ - \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

Grandsire of sire (16 digit code): [see sample code above right:] \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ - \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ - \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ - \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

## 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.

.....  
.....  
.....

# 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)  
 Mark Bunge – 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.



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Sapien Technology

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<b>Hugh Jarvis</b>		03 5588 6356
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