

LEAHCIM NEWSLETTER

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Newsletter No.11



July 2013

White Suffolks & Poll Merinos

Welcome

Welcome to our 2013 Newsletter. We trust the wonderful spring that has been experienced across most of the state has greatly eased your feed situation and improved your prospects after such a long dry spring, summer and early autumn.

We sincerely thank all clients for their great and continued support in 2012 and to any new clients, we say, "Welcome aboard for the 'ride of your life'"

Regards; Andrew, Rosemary, Luke,
Stewart & Alistair Michael, 'Leahcim',
Snowtown, SA

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We encourage you to regularly check out our website for updated information

www.leahcim.com.au



Leahcim's 2013 Calendar of Events

- ★ Displaying – Bendigo ASBA – Friday 19th to Sunday 21st July
- ★ Displaying – Keith SE Merino Field Day – Tuesday 23rd July
- ★ Displaying – Hamilton Sheepvention
– Monday 5th & Tuesday 6th August
- ★ Leahcim Field Day and Inspection Day – at Snowtown
– Monday 2nd September
- ★ Adelaide Royal Show White Suffolk Judging
– Friday 6th September
- ★ Adelaide Royal Show Elite Sale – Sunday 8th September
- ★ Leahcim's Snowtown Poll Merino Sale – Tuesday 17th September
- ★ Leahcim's Snowtown White Suffolk Sale - Friday 20th September

Leahcim 2013

2013 is without doubt the most exciting period we have ever been involved in within the sheep industry. We have seen tremendous changes over the last ten years with both our White Suffolk and Poll Merino sheep, but within the last three years with the use of GENOMIC technology and the improvement in data collection and management, we have seen outstanding progress.

Within this newsletter we will expand on this progress and with some help from Greg Poppelwell and others involved in our business, show the increased genetic gains and dollar returns that have been made at LEAHCIM that then flow on to our clients.

We also include sale reports from our Poll Merino and White Suffolk ram sales from last September.

In Adversity You Need Friends

This year has seen some challenges with the very long hot summer and a large fire at our Snowtown property which created management issues and limited feed availability for our sheep. We often hear bad reports about insurance companies but Steve Larson (Elders Kadina) and CGU (Chris Marland) have been outstanding with their support and understanding in regards to our feed requirements and fence losses due to the fire.

Our other comment about the fire was how great some neighbours and friends can be when you least expect it. We had only shifted our top stud ewes and recipient ewes carrying our ET lambs into the paddock where the fire started the previous week.

The day the fire started we were all out at Nolan's (our station property) and if it wasn't for 'Punk' Davidson and his family and staff we could have lost all those valuable sheep.

As he knew we were away, it was Punk's first thought when he saw the fire to ring us to see if our ewes were in the vicinity of the fire. He jumped onto one of our motor bikes and shifted the sheep around the fire onto some burnt ground and saved every ewe. That is one great friend, neighbour and client.

Peter and Jarrod Ebsary, other neighbours and two of our best and most loyal clients worked for three days to help manage and control the fire for all their neighbors; a great job by the Ebsary family.

2013 Sale Rams

This year's sale rams received a slight check because of the restricted paddock availability but they have still grown out very well to date. The rams for this year's sale are without doubt the most impressive group of rams bred at LEAHCIM for both phenotype (visual traits) and genotype. The very best extensive data will accompany all rams.

The season has rapidly turned for the better as depicted in these photos below and we expect the rams to really blossom from here on.



From Dust 27/4/2013 to Water 26/6/2013



Large Scale Commercial Genomics Program

This year is the first occasion that a large scale genomics program has been undertaken by the sheep CRC for sheep producers throughout Australia. The program was made available to individual sheep producers or breeding groups to measure large numbers of rams within their breeding programs to assess their value to the sheep industry. This value in genetic gain will be measured by commercial producers, scientists, data technicians, and businesses valuing sheep products.

LEAHCIM was very fortunate to be allocated 250 DNA blood cards (the largest allocation available), plus we purchased an additional 50 cards to be used in our ET and Jivet programs. We are still collecting full actual measurements for all of the meat and wool traits to add into the Lambplan and Merinoselect databases. By combining the ASBVs gained from our raw data collection and the genomics data gained from our blood cards, it is giving LEAHCIM and all our clients the greatest volume of information with the best available accuracies on a large variety of traits.

JIVET

(Juvenile In Vitro Embryo Transfer)

Through the use of Genomic technologies and breeding values that can be achieved as early as eight weeks of age, combined with Jivet, we believe that we have one of the greatest breeding tools available to maximize our breeding progress.

JIVET has been available commercially for about ten years, but had limited uses as there was too much guesswork in identifying the genetically superior donor lambs. Ewe lambs at between four and ten weeks of age have a large number of eggs developed and available for collection. By injecting these lambs with a natural hormone these eggs can be collected from the ewe lamb, fertilized in a test tube and the fertilized embryos then transferred into surrogate recipient ewes. This maximises embryo numbers and greatly reduces generation turnover.

In 2006 we undertook a Jivet program which was extremely successful, producing 720 eggs from 10 donor lambs, with 625 of those eggs being fertilized and transferred into recipient ewes. All these donor lambs then had a full natural breeding life at LEAHCIM. The only concern with this program was the donor lambs had limited information on their genetics; to a certain extent we were guessing.

In June 2013 we undertook another Jivet program with outstanding support from the Sheep CRC, Brecon Genetics, Turretfield and their associated bodies. The difference with this Jivet program was that we have an enormous amount of information and Genomics data with high accuracies on the donor ewe lambs.

Some examples of this Genomics data are Poll status, Growth, Fat, Muscle, Meat Quality, Wool Weight, Micron, Staple Strength, Staple Length, Wool and Skin Quality, Worm Resistance etc. Some of these traits have accuracies greater than 65%, which is outstanding. A DNA blood sample was taken the week the lambs were born and sent to the Sheep CRC, then on to America for testing. The genomics data from these tests were

then added to each lamb's parentage ASBVs information to give us some very accurate data to help select the best lambs for the Jivet program.

It was great work from all the CRC team to get the Genomics results from America and run a TGRM (Total Genetic Resource Management) and then have that data analyzed within 8 weeks, enabling us to conduct our Jivet program using the best genetic tools available in the world.

In the just completed Jivet program from 10 donor lambs we collected 465 eggs and transferred 210 embryos. The fertilization on one of the main sires used in the program was down to 25% was a little disappointing and it reduced the overall number of embryos available to transfer. The exciting result for us and our clients is that all groups of sires and donor lambs had a good number of embryos transferred. The lambs from this program will be born in November and we then plan to conduct another JIVET run in conjunction with our normal mating to fully test their progeny on a larger scale.

The data and information below from Greg Popplewell clearly show how exciting this technology is for LEAHCIM and our clients.

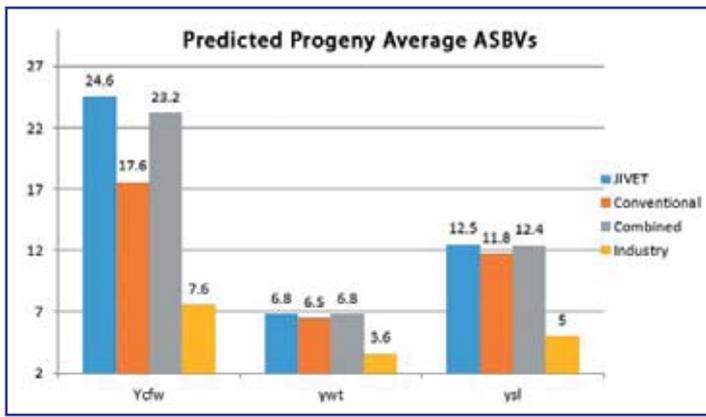
Article and Tables from Greg Popplewell

“‘SMART’ breeding, or Selection with Marker Assisted and Reproduction Technologies has for decades been theorised by many scientists and leading animal breeders as the utopia of animal breeding programs. Genomic Selection (GS) in Australian sheep, thanks to the Sheep Cooperative Research Centre is now a reality, and advanced reproductive technologies provide more reliable success rates. Thus an opportunity emerged to integrate the two with decision making technology to see what could be achieved.

As part of the Sheep CRC program, the Michael family of Snowtown, South Australia piloted the integrated use of GS with the Jivet reproductive technology and advanced mating selection technology (TGRM) in their Leahcim Merino nucleus flock.

Benefits and returns on investment from JIVET can be maximised through integration of GS technology and artificial intelligence mating selection programs such as TGRM whilst still managing genetic diversity and inbreeding.”

The tables on the following page compare the different breeding models alongside the industry averages.



Trial Information

LEAHCIM is very committed to offering our clients and the sheep industry as much information with transparency, on the performance of LEAHCIM genetics as possible. LEAHCIM has entered 090918 in the 2012 and 2013 (as a link sire) Balmoral sire evaluation trial. The first display of those lambs was in April and people who attended said the lambs looked very good. We look forward to sharing their results in next year's newsletter.

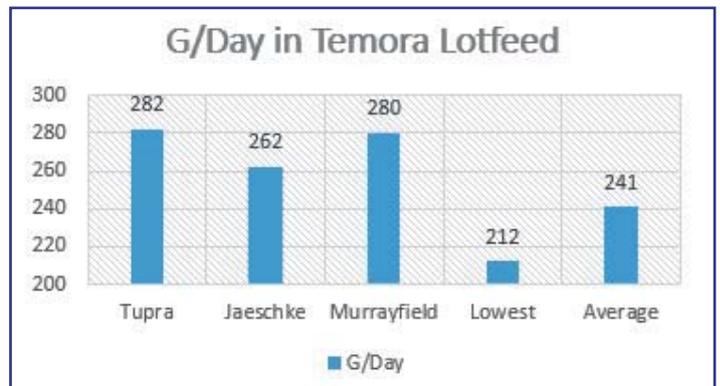
Three clients who use LEAHCIM genetics have entered wethers in the Peter Westblade trial in NSW, these being the Jaeschke family (Clare SA), Murrayfield (Bruny Island TAS) and Tupra (NSW). 30 wethers are entered from each property; 15 randomly selected to go into a feedlot situation where carcass information is recorded before being slaughtered and further information recorded on carcasses. The remaining 15 are run for 3 years with wool data being captured at shearing.

These three flocks have all infused differing levels of LEAHCIM genetics within their flocks with some purchasing semen and some purchasing rams. The results within this trial have been very pleasing with them explaining some of the best carcass growths and good wool data.

The Jaeschke family have been purchasing Leahcim rams for over 10 years and with a family restructure

between Rob and Andrew now operate two separate flocks. Both flocks are very focused on selecting sheep with ASBV's that continue to improve their flocks.

Murrayfields have been purchasing semen from Leahcim which they use on their top selected ewes to produce rams for their large commercial breeding programs. Both Jaeschkes and Murrayfield have been classing their own flocks and have a very good understanding of the profit drivers within their businesses. Tupra has purchased some semen for their internal ram breeding flock to supply rams for their station near Hay, NSW. Tupra use an independent classer for their wool selection. In 2012 Tupra had an outstanding lambing percentage and you can see from this data they do have outstanding carcass and growth attributes.



	2002	2012
DSE	15000	175000
Weaner micron	17.1	16.2
M/A micron	21	18.5
M/A length	90	96
M/A wool cut	4.2	4.9
Weaning %	73.3	105.5
Stock Losses %	5.5	1.8

	Greasy Fleece Wt	Micron	Yield
Tupra	6.0	18.7	61.8
Jaeschke	6.1	19.3	57.6
Murrayfield	5.2	17.8	54.3
Average	6.1	17.5	55.9

Field Day and Information Day

This year LEAHCIM will be displaying sheep at the Bendigo ASBA, Keith Field Day (for the first time) and Hamilton Sheepvention. We will be displaying some of our Jivet donor lamb plus a cross section of our top Genomics tested young sires. We feel it's important to display sheep at these events to give us extended time to discuss sheep breeding issues with our clients and other sheep breeders in a more relaxed environ-

ment. LEAHCIM attended the Mid North Field Day in March (first time for 10 years) which had a very good attendance and it was great to catch up with some of our regular clients at that event. We hate to be negative but when only 3 of the 33 studs with displays had any ASBV data on display we wonder as to the commercial value of that day.



These are some of the young rams we had on display at Burra, supported by Merino Select ASBV figures.

LEAHCIM will be holding a sale ram Inspection day on **Monday the 2nd of September** with the sheep on display from **10am to 3pm**.

Indus Films

Indus Films is an English based company that was commissioned by the BBC to film a three series documentary on the evolution of sheep throughout the World. After much research the company made contact with us to see if we would be happy to be part of this documentary. The documentary aims to showing sheep that were basically untouched for hundreds of years to a flock that uses every progressive breeding and management tool that is available. The filming was done throughout the world from the mountains in Peru, Argentina, England and Australia.

The stories that came from the film crew were very interesting and too many to tell in this newsletter, but the genetic gains we have made and the issues that face our sheep industry are many and varied.

Brecon Breeders genetics (Bill and Marg Trowbridge) were also involved with the filming showing how LEAHCIM has adopted breeding technology with AI, ET and Jivet.

This documentary is to be released in July in England and then through the rest of the BBC connecting companies later this year. When we have some indication of the release and showing in Australia we will inform you through our web page.

White Suffolk Sale Rams

Over the last 5 years LEAHCIM has slowly increased our White Suffolk ewe breeding flock to allow us to maximize the availability of top quality White Suffolk rams for sale.

Last year we seemed to reach a point for the first time of having surplus rams left at the end of the selling season.

We feel this is great for our clients as we could supply rams with outstanding genetics all year round.



Using Sapien technology with our White Suffolks at Panlatinga, Keith.

Last year we increased our on property auction sale numbers from 120 to 150 and had a good number passed in, which again allowed our clients to average out their buying and receive outstanding value for money. We intend to again offer 150 outstanding rams with ASBVs that sit in the top 15% of the White Suffolk breed. The balance of high growth and muscle ASBVs is a feature of these rams, the type that will produce

o u t s t a n d i n g
prime lambs over most ewe breeds and under a wide range of management situations.



Leahcim 100488, one of our leading White Suffolk sires

LEAHCIM 100146

is currently our top sire with ASBVs of **WWT 11.8** **PWWT 17.4** **PEMD 1.0** **Carcase plus Index 206** and will have a high percentage of progeny available for sale this year.

Poll Merino Sale Rams

The 2013 auction rams will have the largest amount of information accompanying them that we can possibly offer our clients. We hope that over 180 of the rams will have full ASBVs incorporating all their Genomics data. Any remaining rams will still have standard ASBVs. By early August we will have all the rams catalogued and that information will be on our web page. There will be progeny available from a number of new sires for the first time, which offers our clients excellent scope to expand the diversity in their breeding lines.

Because of the increased number of top ranking ewes within our flock and our outstanding lambing percentage last year, we will have a much larger number of rams for sale available for private selection after the auction.

Leahcim will have private sale rams available from the 24th of September with a preference for clients who operate at our 2013 sale or previous purchasers.

One of our leading sires in the Poll Merinos is Leahcim 1259 (pictured). He will have Jivet embryo transfer lambs on display at all our field day stands. We recommend you check them out.

He is also the sire of the top growth ram in our annual sale offering.



Following are sale reports from our 2012 ram sales as they appeared in the press.

New \$38,000 State Record at Leahcim

A new on-property SA state record price of \$38,000 was set when Leahcim 111355 was purchased by Chad Burbidge, Murray Bridge and Gary Ferguson, Tintinara, representing the Superior Wool Syndicate. They outbid Bill Walker, Classings Ltd who was bidding for a WA syndicate comprising Scott Welke, Esperence, the Clark family Brookdale stud, Arthur River and Bruce Pengilly, Penrose stud, Esperence. This price was \$7000 above the previous SA on-property record of \$31,000 set by Lorelmo-Willalooka and was \$13,000 better than Leahcim's previous high individual ram price of \$25,000 achieved at the Classings Classic.

Leahcim 111355: the \$38,000 record priced ram in the sale ring.



Sired by Leahcim 080187, the new record priced ram had wonderful Merino Select wool and carcass figures across the board, highlighted by a yearling fleece weight breeding value of +24 and eye muscle breeding value of +0.5.

Chad Burbidge said this was the best ram in the 200 strong catalogue for his all-round attributes and figures, but particularly for his length of body and wool staple. He said the ram will be mated to over 2000 ewes in this next mating by AI in Superior Wool Syndicate members' flocks.



Leahcim's Alistair Michael holds the impressive \$38,000 top priced ram at the Leahcim Poll Merino ram sale with Chad Burbidge (left), Murray Bridge and Gary Ferguson (right) Tintinara representing the successful Superior Wool Syndicate purchasers. Also pictured are Jed and Hugo Keller, Ramsgate stud, Tintinara (semen share purchaser), Elders auctioneer Tom Penna, Ray Schroeder, Gunallo stud, Murrayville (semen share purchaser) and Landmark auctioneer Gordon Wood. Gunallo and Ramsgate also purchased rams at the equal second top price of \$7000.

Ray and Brad Schroeder, Gunallo stud Murrayville, Jed & Hugo Keller, Ramsgate stud Tintinara and the Paech family, Lucernebrae stud Callington all negotiated semen shares in this record ram.

This price was far above anything else at the sale, with \$7000 being the second top price, paid by two of the semen share partners in the top ram; Gunallo taking lot 1, L110190 and Ramsgate picking up L111545 at lot 11.

Last year demand was so strong that the prices were pushed up to what was believed to be a national on-property record average at the time of \$2988.50 for the 200 rams offered, with another 120 rams being sold privately the next day.

Leahcim principal Andrew Michael was delighted with this year's result, when 196 of the 200 sold for a much more affordable \$2123 average.

"When you take the stud ram purchases out it was even better for our long time regulars. We are delighted that all our loyal clients were able to get

cheaper rams this year, or purchase a higher quality for the same budget," Andrew said.

A case in point was Rob Germein, Pt Vincent. He regularly buys top end quality rams and last year paid to \$4400 and averaged \$3667 for six purchases. This year he was able to purchase seven at a \$1943 average, selecting all in the first half of the catalogue and topping at \$3500.

Fourteen rams went to seedstock breeders and with these taken out, the average for the other 182 sold was \$1811, down over \$1100 on last year's sale.

There were buyers present from five states to appreciate this value. South Australian buyers accounted for half the offering.



Buyers from five states made an impact on the buying ledger at the Lehcim Poll Merino ram sale. Pictured are Sam Kelly, 'Redhill', Bowering NSW (20 rams); Sam's AWN agent Mark Hedley, Goulburn, NSW; Anthony Glasson, Picarilli Pastoral Co, Thargomindah, Qld (seven rams); Phillip Foss, Bruce Rock, WA (13 rams); and Richard Beresford, Cunnamulla, Qld (three rams).

The most prominent of these was the Atkinson family, Crafrers who purchased 12 rams to \$2800 and at a \$2033 average, adding to the 13 they purchased last year. ML Jaeschke & Co, Clare was also active, buying eight rams to \$3500 and at a \$1963 average.

Colin Wegner Nominees, Callington and Rundle Farming Props, Kulpara purchased six and five rams respectively.

New South Wales buyers were very prominent last year and again this year. Fifteen individual buyers purchased a collective 70 rams, with a majority of these buying through the Australian Wool Network agency.

Sam Kelly, FJ Kelly Trust, Bowering was the biggest volume buyer in the sale, purchasing a total of 20 rams at an \$1835 average and paying to \$3000. Lumley Pastoral, Goulburn and Markdale Pastoral, Binda both purchased eight rams to \$3000 and \$1300 respectively, while Glensloy Pty Ltd, Young picked up five to \$2200 to be the bigger volume buyers amongst them.

GJ Warner, Wangaratta averaged \$3000 for two select rams to put Victoria on the Lehcim buyers' map, other than the Gunallo stud.

Staying east, two Queensland buyers made an impact. Anthony Glasson, Picarelli Pastoral Co, Thargomindah paid to \$2800 and averaged \$1529 for seven high quality rams, while Richard Beresford, Cunnamulla selected three of the best to \$4000 and at a \$2933 average.

Phillip Foss, Bruce Rock made a significant WA impact in the buying ledger, being the second highest volume buyer with 13 select rams. He operated to a \$2000 budget and with this year's better buying value, was able to average his purchases out at \$1246.

Despite missing the record ram, Bill Walker, Classings Ltd, Murray Bridge was successful in purchasing two select rams at \$4000 and \$4400 for the Welke family, Esperence, WA.

In thanking buyers, Andrew Michael said he was excited about the future of the industry and with Leahcim's productive commercial focus, he was particularly pleased to see commercial clients get good rams at value this year.

Great Value at Leahcim White Suffolk Sale.

Buyers received exceptional value for money at Leahcim's outstanding offering of White Suffolk rams during its annual White Suffolk on-property auction on Friday, September 21.

Stud principal Andrew Michael said he believed the inflated prices paid at last year's on-property sale due to the intense demand had worried some clients so this year's sale offering had been increased to 150 rams to ensure everyone received better value.

"Our focus is to have volumes at very commercial values," he said. "Without doubt, this is the best offering we've put up in terms of quality and their Sheep Genetics ASBVs."

Auctioneers Gordon Wood (Landmark) and Damien Webb (Elders) sold 104 rams under the hammer to stands of enthusiastic buyers.

First time buyers Ros and Robert Cuthbert, of Glenbrook White Suffolk stud at Darkan, WA, achieved their pre-sale goal of buying either the top or second-top performance rams in the auction, by purchasing both rams. They paid \$4000 for the top priced stud ram and then picked up his brother for \$2000.

Mrs Cuthbert said the top two rams were well grown and structured and, with the bonus of excellent Lambplan figures, would fit in well at the south-west WA property.

The four Leahcim White Suffolk stud rams offered at the action averaged \$2525.

The 100 flock rams that sold at the auction reached a top price of \$1200 and averaged \$807.

The largest volume buyer was the Bell family of Bono Station, Pooncarie, which bought 39 rams to a top price of \$800. Roger Wheaton, who did the buying on behalf of regular client Craig Bell, said the sale offered good value for money and plenty of choice for discerning buyers.



With the top-priced ram at the 2012 Leahcim White Suffolk on-property sale on Friday are (from left) Gordon Wood (Landmark), Stewart Michael (Leahcim), buyers Ros and Robert Cuthbert, Darkan, WA and Damien Webb (Elders).

Other volume buyers included regular clients Tom Hawker of Amana, Clare, who purchased nine rams to a top price of \$1100, and Adalis Pastoral, of Snowtown, who purchased eight to a top price of \$900. MF Page & Co, of Jamestown, purchased seven rams to a top price of \$1100.



Roger Wheaton, who bought 39 White Suffolk rams for regular Leahcim buyer, Craig Bell of Bono Station, Pooncarie is with Leahcim principal Andrew Michael.

Mr Michael said he was very pleased with the client and agent support at this year's sale and all buyers had received a bonus from another Michael family enterprise – a bottle of Koolyatta Vineyard Shiraz.



Progress Integrity Transparency Client focus Honesty

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