

LEAHCIM NEWSLETTER

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Newsletter No.16



July 2018

White Suffolks & Poll Merinos

Welcome

Welcome to our 2018 Newsletter. For fear of repeating ourselves each year, it is indeed an exciting time to be a sheep producer. The lamb market just continues to get stronger, while wool is now reaching record levels. Those who believed in the future of this industry and the surety and diversity of income it offers, are now being rewarded.

When times are tougher, as specialist wool producers have experienced more recently than lamb producers, it is important to concentrate on improving quality.

However, now is not the time to sit back and become complacent. Investment in continuing that quality push, plus the new ventures in the

marketing chain to build a stronger information flow to and from consumers, is imperative. We have covered some points relevant to this in this newsletter.

We appreciate the weather gods are not smiling on everyone at this stage of the year. However the saving grace is the breeding stock in everyone's flock are now an extremely valuable asset and well worth any nutritional expenses needed to keep them productive.

We look forward to catching up with as many of you as possible at any of the venues below.

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 2018 Calendar of Events

- ★ Displaying – Bendigo ASBA – Friday 20th to Sunday 22nd July
- ★ Hamilton Sheepvention – Monday 6th & Tuesday 7th August
- ★ Leahcim's Snowtown Poll Merino Sale – Tuesday 11th September
- ★ Leahcim's Snowtown White Suffolk Sale - Friday 14th September



Leahcim - Past and Present

In Australia over the last 12 months we have seen a major drying out of our subsoil moisture. The season for our northern properties is at the crossroads but our South East property has reasonable feed as lambing has just started. We have supplementary fed many mobs of sheep from February to maintain their body condition and also to preserve some ground cover.

All the sale rams are in good condition and with the completion of the data analysis, preparation for the ram selling season is going well. With our extensive DNA commitment and data collection work undertaken, we are extremely confident that our products and breeding philosophies are where the future of our sheep industry is heading.

Luke has undertaken some major pasture renovations at Panlatinga over the last few years which is helping with feed availability at present. Kikuyu established through the middle of the farm on some sandy soil has turned them from our worst production paddocks to our best, while also adding a great fire break area.

Stewart has achieved some more goals with flying by completing his commercial pilots license, full aerobatic endorsement, and just recently his ag rating, plus working on the farm. Later in the year we might even see him helping fight fires from the air. When Stewart has been flying, on his return he will often put on an aerobatic air show for patrons at Hummocks Station.

Last year's newsletter mentions our purchase of Hummocks Station, which is now fully functional and achieving our goal of showing people a great part of Australia's history plus Snowtown.

Alistair and Elle are living in the Hummocks Station homestead and with help from Jem and Rosie are managing the B&B, Function Centre and Caravan Park. Alistair's work with all the technologies used at Leahcim is having a massive change in the genetic gains made and the ease of management within the business.

In November last year I was elected onto the board of MLA for a three year term representing sheep producers. The position was for a person who had a good understanding of the red meat industry, sheep breeding, technologies, marketing, governance and a positive future overview for the industry going forward. I feel extremely privileged to be a member of the MLA board representing red meat producers and look forward to seeing our industry continue to adopt technology, be transparent and prosperous.

Fact or Smoke and Mirrors

With many challenging events happening in the sheep industry over the last twelve months we have decided to cover the positives, problems and some changes that need to be addressed in the future within this newsletter.

Industry concerns

Twelve months ago I attended a meeting organised by AWI with eight progressive sheep seed stock producers. We were encouraged to attend and give our thoughts on how our breeding philosophy could help the Australian sheep flock going forward. Since that meeting there have been plenty of media articles (man behind the mirror) written and a senate review about AWI and the conduct and performance of the board. AWI marketing and promotion has helped the wool prices to record levels and the demand for wool within our major purchasing nations is

strong. The problem I have is the lack of leadership towards the hard to address areas within the sheep industry and the lack of transparency and accountability within AWI. We are currently getting great financial rewards for our meat and wool so let's be proactive rather than reactive.

As an Industry are we addressing these challenges?

- * Live sheep exports
- * Alternative options for shearing, or defleecing
- * Pain relief
- * Mulesing
- * Identifying superior quality and getting paid for that quality within our wool and meat sectors
- * Reproduction, using genetics and technology to achieve best practice results
- * Adoption of ASBVs

Comments: Leahcim have not mulesed any lambs since 2004 and all lamb marking is combined with pain relief.

- Mulesing is NOT just a problem for the Wool industry; it has also caused resistance from overseas companies purchasing sheep meat.

- At a Sheep Meat Council meeting in September 2017 it was resolved; producers should phase out mulesing as soon as practical and promote best practice, including the use of pain relief. In prime lamb production systems, prime lambs should not be mulesed and producers are encouraged to introduce genetics and management changes to enable prime lamb mothers to be unmulesed. In February this year Sheep Producers Australia (SPA) also endorsed that view. The Australian sheep meat industry is losing contracts from overseas because we can't guarantee that lambs and their mothers are unmulesed.

Within this newsletter I will give some positive results achieved at Leahcim to these challenges.

Temora MLP trial

The Merino Lifetime Project (MLP) is an AWI funded program to identify a lifetime, or five year breeding and performance record of different genetics. The performance data from this trial is independently calculated and assessed while the classing is undertaken by (in most cases) two independent classers, one traditional and one progressive.

The Leahcim sire 090918 has been used in three MLP sites across Australia as a link sire to give accuracies within the data. L090918 has not been used at Leahcim since 2012 when he was superseded by superior performing younger genetics. The data below will show why genetic evaluation will address some of the challenges facing our sheep industry and make a substantial difference to the profits achieved. The owner of Trigger Vale 140477 is another seed stock producer who has great faith in genetic evaluation which is clearly vindicated within this trial data. Another sire, Bella Lana 130296, is sired by Leahcim 111173 and is also producing some good results.

The chart below is L090918's most recent ASBVs for the traits covered in this article. It also shows the accuracy of that data and the average percentile within the Merino Industry.

	PWWT	YWT	YFAT	YEMD	YCFW	YFD	YSL
090918	3.3	5.0	-0.1	-0.1	11.1	-1.0	11.3
Accuracy	99	98	97	98	98	98	98
Breed Average	3.3	5.0	0.2	0.3	14	-1.0	7.6

The data below is from the first cross F1 ewes hoggets in the trial.

Raw Data

Wool Measurements – F1 Ewes

Breeders flock, Sire number	Yearling 24/3/17						Adult2 5/3/18			
	GFW (kg)	CFW (kg)	FD (um)	CV (%)	SL (mm)	SS (mm)	FD (um)	CV (%)	SL (mm)	SS (mm)
Bella Lana, 130296	2.9	2.0	16.3	18.4	84.8	32.9	19.5	16.0	121.4	29.7
Boyanga, 145112	2.6	1.9	16.0	18.3	90.8	29.0	19.0	15.5	121.5	35.4
Glen Donald, 120014	2.9	2.1	15.9	20.7	81.6	32.1	19.5	17.5	114.0	37.2
Greendale, 120012	3.0	2.0	15.0	19.1	82.3	34.6	17.9	16.3	115.2	37.6
Leahcim Poll, 090918	3.0	2.1	16.4	18.3	88.5	28.2	19.4	15.4	120.4	34.0
One Oak No. 2, R56	2.9	2.0	16.0	19.7	76.4	32.6	18.9	17.8	111.3	36.6
Pastora Poll, 082893	2.9	2.0	15.5	20.3	80.1	30.1	17.8	17.4	109.8	34.6
Poll Boonoke, 120020	3.0	2.1	15.7	19.9	83.7	29.7	19.0	17.1	114.5	34.3
Pooginook Poll, 140632	2.9	2.0	16.4	18.9	84.8	33.0	19.9	15.9	116.3	37.3
Roseville Park, 140611	3.0	2.0	15.5	19.0	75.7	30.7	18.1	16.1	111.3	36.3
Trigger Vale Poll, 140477	3.0	2.0	17.4	17.3	87.0	36.5	20.4	14.7	119.0	34.3
Wattle Dale, 140754	3.0	2.1	15.4	19.6	80.8	32.7	18.1	16.1	115.9	37.2
Wurrook, 130149	2.9	2.0	15.4	20.7	74.2	36.2	17.9	17.8	108.1	36.8
Average	2.9	2.0	15.9	19.2	82.4	32.2	18.9	16.4	115.3	35.5

Table 1

Table 1 shows the wool data from the F1 progeny

L090918 has a breech wrinkle reduction (Ebw) ASBV of -1.5 (top 3 sheep in Australia within sheep genetics) but still has progeny that are matching the other sheep in the trial for wool production. The sceptics say you can't grow wool on a plain bodied sheep, we believe you can if you increase follicle density. In our opinion to cease mulesing you need to have a sheep with a breech score of 2 or less.

Breech wrinkle (BRWR)

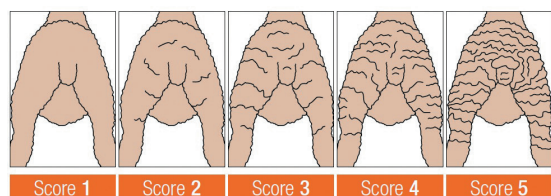


Table 2 left, shows the breech scores from 1-5.

Table 2

If your ewes are breech score 3 (I believe a majority of the Australian Merino ewes are breech score 3) and they were mated to 090918 their progeny would not require mulesing after one cross. If we are serious about ceasing mulesing it can be achieved with genetic selection. Combine that with compulsory pain relief and the Australian sheep industry will be making some great animal welfare statements. After October 2018 we will be the only country left in the World still mulesing. I would strongly urge all sheep producers to use genetics that make it possible to cease mulesing, to be prepared for the inevitable.

Now that we have accumulated thousands of individual data sets on our Leahcim sheep we believe the original research undertaken into the skin biology of sheep by the CSIRO in the 1980s which included researcher Dr Jim Watts, that research data has a great deal of credibility.

When you combine measured follicle density (rather than flat earth guesses) with staple length and the surface skin area, we can get an accurate fleece weight measurement and assessment. With high follicle density comes lower micron, research that dates back 50 years (we are slow learners). Combining all the wool data with pedigree information and correlated traits through Sheep Genetics will make selecting for wool production repeatable. When selecting sires for wool production (YCFW) and micron (YFD), ASBVs must be taken into consideration. An example of this is sire L122899 that has a YFD of -2.5, yet has a YCFW of +17. Even if he had a YCFW of just +6, his progeny would still produce a high value fleece. L122899 has outstanding carcase production; Pwt 8.9 and Ywt 11.4 which is great on a fine wool sheep. The variation in this trial clearly shows that staple length (YSL) can be easily identified and selected for and if six month shearing is an important part of wool production, genetic gains in this area can be very easily achieved.

Table 3 below is the weight gain information from weaning to adult.

Raw Data

Weights – F1 Ewes

Breeders flock, Sire number	Weaning (kg)	Post Weaning (kg)	Yearling (kg)	Weight Gain (kg)	Hogget (kg)	Adult2 Pre Joining (kg)	Weight Gain (kg)
	25/10/16	31/1/17	17/5/17	Weaning to Yearling	15/07/17	21/12/17	Weaning to Joining
Bella Lana, 130296	30.0	34.7	37.3	7.3	49.3	63.6	33.6
Boyanga, 145112	28.9	33.5	36.8	7.9	47.0	62.2	33.3
Glen Donald, 120014	30.8	35.2	36.3	5.5	47.8	63.8	33.0
Greendale, 120012	29.1	33.7	36.3	7.2	48.3	62.7	33.6
Leahcim Poll, 090918	31.6	37.3	39.6	8.0	50.9	67.2	35.6
One Oak No. 2, R56	30.7	34.5	37.9	7.2	48.8	63.6	32.9
Pastora Poll, 082893	29.0	33.4	34.8	5.8	45.5	59.9	30.9
Poll Boonoke, 120020	29.7	34.1	36.2	6.5	47.6	62.1	32.4
Pooginook Poll, 140632	29.8	34.7	37.1	7.3	48.6	63.1	33.3
Roseville Park, 140611	29.8	32.8	35.7	5.9	46.9	59.4	29.6
Trigger Vale Poll, 140477	32.5	38.4	41.8	9.3	53.3	68.3	35.3
Wattle Dale, 140754	30.5	33.6	36.6	6.1	47.2	61.9	31.4
Wurrook, 130149	29.6	32.6	34.9	5.3	45.4	58.3	28.7
Average	30.2	34.5	37.0	6.8	48.2	62.8	32.5

Table 3

The weight gain from weaning to yearling is the genetic potential for that sheep to grow without the dam's influence. The raw data weight gain difference in this trial at yearling age is 4kg which equates to 1.7kg of carcase weight. At \$6.00/per kg this gives a \$10.20 difference in value per lamb.

Table 4 below is the condition score and carcase measurements.

Raw Data

Condition Score and Carcase Measurements – F1 Ewes

Breeders flock, Sire number	Condition Score			Carcase Measurements			
	Yearling 17/5/17	Hogget 4/10/17	Adult2 Pre Joining 21/12/17	Hogget 15/7/17 EMD (mm)	FAT (mm)	Adult2 Pre Joining 21/12/17 EMD (mm)	FAT (mm)
Bella Lana, 130296	2.4	3.3	3.7	25.6	3.1	27.7	4.2
Boyanga, 145112	2.4	3.4	3.6	24.0	3.9	27.6	5.6
Glen Donald, 120014	2.3	3.3	3.5	22.6	2.7	24.8	3.8
Greendale, 120012	2.4	3.5	3.6	23.5	3.0	25.8	3.9
Leahcim Poll, 090918	2.5	3.6	3.7	24.0	3.1	27.2	4.7
One Oak No. 2, R56	2.5	3.4	3.7	23.4	2.7	25.8	3.6
Pastora Poll, 082893	2.3	3.3	3.6	23.2	2.2	26.7	3.8
Poll Boonoke, 120020	2.4	3.5	3.7	24.1	2.7	26.8	3.6
Pooginook Poll, 140632	2.4	3.4	3.5	23.7	2.7	26.6	3.9
Roseville Park, 140611	2.3	3.1	3.5	23.7	2.9	25.6	4.0
Trigger Vale Poll, 140477	2.6	3.7	3.9	25.2	3.7	26.6	5.1
Wattle Dale, 140754	2.4	3.4	3.6	23.4	2.6	24.9	3.6
Wurrook, 130149	2.3	3.1	3.4	22.3	2.8	24.2	3.3
Average	2.4	3.4	3.6	23.7	2.9	26.3	4.1

Table 4

Condition scores of ewes are strongly correlated to fertility and ability to respond under varied climatic conditions. A combination of fat and muscle will be very positive in achieving fitness within the flock and also produce a much higher yielding carcase. The profit difference in producing a high growth, high yielding carcase compared to the lowest animals is enormous.

Table 5 below is Reproduction in the F1 hogget ewes

Raw Data

Reproduction in 2018 – F1 Ewes

Breeders flock, Sire number	Ewes Joined	Pregnancy Scanning – Ewe Numbers 12/3/18				
		Empty	Single	Twin	Number Foetuses	Foetus Rate ¹
Bella Lana, 130296	29	2	18	9	36	124%
Boyanga, 145112	37	4	17	16	49	132%
Glen Donald, 120014	19	4	7	8	23	121%
Greendale, 120012	20	1	14	5	24	120%
Leahcim Poll, 090918	28	1	10	16	42	150%
One Oak No. 2, R56	36	10	13	13	39	108%
Pastora Poll, 082893	28	6	13	8	29	104%
Poll Boonoke, 120020	29	12	8	9	26	90%
Pooginook Poll, 140632	26	0	15	11	37	142%
Roseville Park, 140611	16	3	9	4	17	106%
Trigger Vale Poll, 140477	35	5	19	11	41	117%
Wattle Dale, 140754	29	3	12	13	38	131%
Wurrook, 130149	16	5	4	7	18	113%
Total	348	56 16%	159 46%	130 38%	419	121%

Table 5

Without doubt most sheep businesses have NLW (number of lambs weaned) as their biggest profit driver. Fitness, or doing ability, which is a combination of growth, fat and muscle all in balance, will help achieve good NLW results. Animals that lack these traits tend to have lower fertility and later puberty; and in turn a greater number of dry breeders that are very unproductive, as can be seen in this trial.

Within-Site and Within-Drop Flock Breeding Values

Table 6 right- Within site and Within Drop FBV (flock breeding values)

This is the genetic value for these sires within this trial. Later in this newsletter you will see the same comparisons in another trial that has similar results. When we do a similar comparison to the raw data for yearling weight, the genetic FBV is more pronounced. This data is the sire information without the dam, so we can only use 50% of the value. The difference in YWT is 11.7kg or 5.85kg of sire only influence which equates to a 2.9kg

Weight, Carcase and WEC

Breeders flock, Sire number	Progeny Number	WWT (kg)	PWT (kg)	YWT (kg)	HWT (kg)	AWT (kg)	HEMD (mm)	HFAT (mm)	PWEC (%)
Bella Lana, 130296	62	0.5	0.9	1.8	2.6	3.1	2.0	0.4	-26
Boyanga, 145112	68	-0.9	-0.9	-1.0	-0.3	-1.0	1.6	3.9	-3
Glen Donald, 120014	33	0.0	-0.1	-0.5	-0.6	0.2	-1.3	-1.2	-22
Greendale, 120012	37	-1.2	-1.6	-2.0	-1.6	-2.1	-0.9	-0.3	-17
Leahcim Poll, 090918	61	1.6	2.9	3.8	3.7	4.1	0.1	0.6	-2
One Oak No. 2, R56	65	0.3	0.2	-0.1	-1.0	-0.9	-1.0	-1.5	46
Pastora Poll, 082893	59	-0.5	-1.3	-2.2	-2.4	-2.1	-0.3	-2.1	-18
Poll Boonoke, 120020	51	-1.1	-1.7	-2.2	-2.8	-2.8	0.2	-1.4	-3
Pooginook Poll, 140632	64	0.3	0.8	1.4	1.5	2.0	0.2	-0.1	55
Roseville Park, 140611	44	-0.7	-1.4	-1.7	-1.9	-2.5	-0.2	-0.5	10
Trigger Vale Poll, 140477	68	3.3	5.6	8.0	9.1	9.1	1.6	3.3	-21
Wattle Dale, 140754	49	-0.7	-1.4	-1.6	-2.0	-2.4	-0.4	-0.6	19
Wurrook, 130149	45	-0.9	-1.9	-3.7	-4.3	-4.6	-1.5	-0.7	6

Table 6

difference in carcase weight. At \$6.00/kg that is \$17.40 difference in carcase value. If the ewes were of similar genetics to the sires you would be able to double the difference.

SA Merino sire evaluation trial

This trial has been run at Keynton station by the Keynes family and they must be congratulated for this massive undertaking, especially with difficult seasonal conditions. Leahcim has for many years entered sires and progeny in as many independent trials as possible in every state of Australia. The SA trial data only became available just prior to writing this newsletter. The data included carcase information, wool measurement and classing results but not wool weights.

Leahcim 152775 is represented in the trial and we will have many of his progeny available at this year's sale. It will be interesting to see his wool weight information later in the year as he is our ram with the highest test for follicle density (120+ fibres per square mm).

The chart below is the latest ASBV data on L152775

	WWT	PWWT	YWT	YFAT	YEMD	YCFW	YFD
152775	7.4	8.7	10.5	0.9	0.6	23.9	-0.9
Accuracy	97	97	94	89	93	87	97
Breed Average	1.8	3.3	5.0	0.2	0.3	14	-1.0

It is interesting to see the strong correlation between the balance of good carcase data and the classing results. Again, in this trial there are two studs that are great users of genetic evaluation with high accuracies, Leahcim and Mumblebone. The Mumblebone 130850 ram's grand sire is Leahcim 080445. He has great links within the industry and high accuracies in Sheep Genetics.

Again, if we take the YWT in this trial there is a 12kg difference, or 6kg in sires which equates to 3kg difference in progeny carcase weight. At \$6.00 per/kg the difference of \$18.00 carcase value results. (If both sire and dam were similar genetics the value could be doubled). The 3.9mm difference in genetic muscle and 3mm in fat measurement is very concerning, especially when we experience tough seasonal conditions. This would have a huge impact on lamb survival, fertility in later life and quality of meat in lamb production.

Breeders flock, Sire number	Progeny No	WWT (kg)	YWT (kg)	YEMD (mm)	YFAT (mm)	YTOPS (%)	YCULLS (%)
Collinsville Poll, 135111	34	-0.5	1.6	-0.3	-0.1	-7	-11
Flairdale Poll, 150078	28	-1.1	-3.9	-1.8	-1.6	-2	-4
Greenfields Poll, 140345	23	-0.6	-6.1	1.6	0.5	-5	18
Gunallo Poll, 140007	42	-0.9	-2.3	-1.5	0.0	0	8
Hamilton Run, 150600	35	0.4	1.5	-0.1	0.9	-10	-4
Hazeldean, 13.4936	29	-1.1	-3.8	-0.1	-0.4	-7	3
Hilton Heath, 14Y447	40	-0.2	1.7	0.0	-0.2	-4	10
Kelvale Poll, 150120	46	0.4	0.8	1.1	0.1	9	-3
Leahcim Poll, 152775	36	1.4	2.7	0.5	0.1	13	-10
Malleetech Poll, 155180	34	1.7	-1.1	-0.2	0.6	-11	8
Mumblebone, 130850	35	-0.1	2.0	2.1	1.3	18	-18
Pepper Well Poll, 155227	36	-2.0	1.6	1.8	0.8	-5	-7
Poll Boonoke, 150026	33	1.4	0.8	-1.4	-0.3	-13	17
Ridgway Advance, 150103	24	0.8	5.9	1.4	0.6	21	-6
Ridgway Poll, 140721	38	1.2	1.7	-1.7	-0.7	10	-11
Roemahkita, 150092	33	-0.6	-2.9	-1.4	-1.7	-7	10

Table 7 (left) shows SA trial data

Table 7

Auctions Plus

This year we will be offering all the Poll Merino rams at this year's sale through Auctions Plus: audio and visual live stream. We are still finalising the details, but we will post the sale arrangements on our web site when complete.



Leahcim next generation Poll Merino sires

If any sheep breeder is not purchasing their genetics from flocks with good ASBVs and high accuracies, then the economic losses could be enormous and the ability to address future animal welfare issues will become extremely difficult.

Leahcim 152775, along with some of the next generation sires listed below are the result of our extensive JIVET programs that have given Leahcim an enormous lift in production.

Tag	Sire	PWWT	YWT	PFAT	PEMD	YFD	YFDCV	YCFW	YSL	DP+
152349	110490	7.3	8.7	0.5	0.9	-1.4	-1.3	20.6	8.9	166
152775	122899	8.7	10.5	1.1	0.9	-0.9	-1.6	23.9	10.6	177
153207	132298	3.9	7.0	0.6	1.2	0.1	-1.4	30.6	19.1	159
153223	132624	7.5	9.4	0.5	0.5	-0.8	-0.8	21.3	8.3	162
153234	132624	5.8	7.7	0.5	0.8	-0.4	-1.7	24.9	12.5	165
162170	123153	5.6	7.8	0.5	1.2	-1.3	-1.4	20.6	14.7	166
162929	120103AN	9.0	11.4	1.0	1.4	-0.8	-1.0	22.0	12.7	177
172277	152775	6.5	8.4	0.9	1.3	-0.6	-1.6	19.9	10.3	163
172390	143567	7.7	10.1	0.7	1.2	-1.3	-0.8	19.1	7.8	165
172621	143567	7.3	9.2	0.5	1.3	0.1	-1.5	19.9	11.9	154
173032	153234	5.3	6.4	1.0	2.3	-0.3	-2.3	20.3	9.3	167
173041	152349	7.4	8.7	0.4	1.0	-1.2	-1.1	20.6	11.3	158
173090	152775	6.2	7.4	0.6	0.7	-1.4	-1.3	17.5	9.2	160
173167	152775	7.9	9.3	0.8	0.9	0.4	-1.7	26.1	16.9	162
173205	152775	7.4	9.6	0.4	0.3	-0.7	-0.8	25.3	11.9	167
173282	152775	7.6	9.4	0.6	0.3	-0.1	-1.6	22.8	11.9	166

■ Top 10% of industry ■ Top 20% of industry

Leahcim next generation White Suffolk sires

At Leahcim we are extremely pleased with the current group of White Suffolk sires being used; for their balance of carcase traits and spread of diverse pedigree.

Within breeds of sheep, being able to have a wide gene pool to select future breeding stock from, while reducing inbreeding is very important. It is not always easy to achieve this when we are trying to use the best genetics available.

The balance of good growth, fat and muscle is evident in this sire group, with nearly all being trait leaders for Carcase Plus index within the White Suffolk breed. However, the really pleasing feature is our LEQ (lamb meat-eating quality) index, with all sires ranked in the top 10% of the breed.

In the future, having sires that have both good production levels and great meat-eating quality will be very important, as mentioned earlier in the newsletter.

Tag	Sire	WWT	PWWT	PFAT	PEMD	Carcase	LMY	IMF	SFS	LEQ
160012	122261BD	11.7	18.6	-0.7	1.9	217	4.5	-0.5	2.9	144
160026	140306EM	10.9	16.9	-0.5	3.0	221	4.5	-0.6	3.7	143
160027	122261BD	13.8	21.3	-0.7	0.7	218	4.6	-0.4	3.5	143
160094	140137F	9.6	15.4	-0.2	3.0	211	3.3	-0.4	-2.6	155
170015	160027	11.7	18.7	-0.8	1.6	214	4.5	-0.6	3.2	142
170289	160094	9.8	15.0	-0.3	2.7	208	3.5	-0.5	0.4	143
170324	130517	9.0	13.9	-0.5	3.0	206	4.0	-0.5	2.0	141
150097EM	130269A	12.0	18.6	0.1	2.3	219	3.5	0.2	-1.1	166
170137EM	110548HF	10.5	15.8	-0.8	3.2	220	4.4	0.1	-1.4	164

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Meat Eating Quality going forward

The quality of the red meat produced and marketed in Australia in the future is going to be highly measured and priced according to weight, yield and quality. Once a device that can measure eating quality of red meat (intramuscular fat and shear force or tenderness) at line speed is available to processors, the way we get paid for our products will change forever. DEXA (Dual- energy X-ray absorptiometry) has the ability to measure the yield of carcasses and when we combine that with eating quality, the way we select our genetics will need to cover these important traits.

Only in the last few weeks a South Australian company has signed an agreement with the MLA's donor company to trial a probe that can measure intramuscular fat, shear force and pH (acidity / alkalinity). Jordan Kitschke is the company's contact person for MEQ probe and their company is looking forward to trialling the probe on both cattle and sheep over the next 9 months. After that period they are hopeful of having individual animal feedback available for producers through to consumers. This will then enable the supply chain to offer a value based price.

The picture (right) is the MEQ probe being used on a lamb carcase.



Wool traceability for growers to retailers

For many years our clients have asked if there was any way Leahcim wool could be marketed as one group. When you can get every part of the supply chain talking to each other, full traceability of a product from farm to the end consumer can be achieved. Consumers are becoming more demanding of the place of origin and the story behind the products they are purchasing.

NewMerino – What is it?

1 An independent organisation with no legal or financial connection to any member of the wool chain. As such it operates without bias, or conflict of interest.

2 Provides a point of difference and a pathway to market for growers who have ceased mulesing.

3 All New Merino consignments are fully traceable from farm to spinning.

4 Farmers will be recognised by their end customers, the retail brand.

5 All Farmers who contribute wool to a processing consignment will be informed about where their wool is processed, the garments that are made and the retail brand that is selling them.



Benefits for growers:

- * Growers continue to sell through the broker of their choice.
- * Growers can promote their wool by maintaining a forecast of their wool production online on the the NewMerino website
- * Growers can become accredited as "Certified Merino Growers" and are then recognised as having a responsibly managed farm.
- * There is no cost to the grower.
- * We believe it would be fantastic to have your great product recognised and this concept will create traceability and sales for our industry in the future.

Anyone interested in obtaining more information

contact: **Peter Vandeleur** on **0419 776 066**.

Website: peter.vandeleur@newmerino.com.au

School wether competition

Adelaide Royal



The huge line-up of 154 wethers (46 teams of 3) extended over 70 metres of the Adelaide sheep shed.

The Adelaide Royal Show conducts one of the sheep industry's best learning exercises for school students with its school wethers competition. The schools and students have the sheep delivered from producers throughout SA in March, six months prior to the show. They are registered tagged, shorn and weighed at the schools to have all the sheep on an even playing field. The students then handle and manage the sheep through to the show. Last year there were 46 teams of three wethers that must have no more than two permanent teeth.

The results from the Urrbrae Agricultural High School team were outstanding. Their team of three (with lambs teeth) was awarded the highest value of all the teams.

They were:

1st for meat value averaging \$164.97 per lamb.

3rd for wool value averaging 4.14 kg of wool in six months with an average value of \$54.17 per lamb.

The overall average value of each lamb in the group was \$219.68.

These lambs were unmulesed. It would be interesting to see the overall wool values for all wethers if that information was included.



Merino SA president Ian Michael congratulates the Urrbrae team on winning the highest meat value award.



Alistair and Andrew (back right) with the total Urrbrae team of students, the 3 winning wethers & their awards. Eddie Morgan (left) presented the overall highest value award, representing his family's Mooturoo Pastoral, the major sponsors.

Fishing

Rob Cummin, Alistair, Andrew and Gordon Wood. Winners of the overall competition for biggest Snapper, King George Whiting and Blue Swimmer Crab (overall length of the three).



We extend our thanks to Gordon for his great team performance especially with his LIGHT bulb moment! Gordon would love to discuss his full performance from the start of the day to his light bulb moment – and make sure you ask him!

The following are sale reports from our 2017 ram sales as they appeared in the press.

Sale Reports

Leahcim tops at \$11,000 in total clearance

Andrew and Rosemary Michael and family were ecstatic following their Leahcim Poll Merino ram sale at Snowtown, where they achieved another total clearance of 249 rams at a \$2246 average.

This encompassed a lift of \$1000 in top price to \$11,000. With a drop in average of \$487 their delight may have been a little confusing to the casual observer, but it had been a deliberate plan to make their offering more affordable to a wider range of buyers with varying budgets.

"We put an extra 28 rams in last year at the last minute which prevented our average skyrocketing, but this year we added more again which worked a treat, with over half the rams selling below \$2000 including nearly 20% below \$1000.

"That allowed all producers the opportunity to compete and the volume buyers to average out their purchases," Andrew Michael said.

In a celebratory mode to mark the milestone of their 30th annual sale, Andrew Michael thanked everyone in attendance for the faith they had in Leahcim genetics, giving special mention to Peter Ebsary, Barunga Gap who had purchased at every previous sale. This year he kept that record going with the purchase of two rams at a \$2800 average.

There were around 150 in the crowd, including 59 registered

bidders encompassing six states. All but four were successful in purchasing from one to 31 rams.

Landmark auctioneer Gordon Wood described the catalogue as one of magnificent quality, with rams carrying elite, highly defined and naturally nourished wools that also had extra staple length and cut, plus terrific carcass attributes.

"You will find no-one more passionate and forward thinking than the Michael family, who believe it is their moral obligation to make your enterprise profitable and successful," he said in his opening remarks.

Besides a strong and long term contingent of local area buyers, the major buying honours went to Western Australian and New South Wales clients.

Paul Goerling, accompanied by his daughter Maddie, Lukin Springs Poll Merino stud was the successful bidder on the two highest priced rams at \$11,000 and \$9200 respectively. The 13 month old sale topper, L162360, sired by the highly muscled L123153, had excellent phenotype, especially in body and loin length, but the biggest positive was its outstanding balance of Merino Select figures across all traits. These included +19.5 for yearling clean fleece weight, +14.7 for staple length, +7.2 for yearling weight, and +1.3 for eye muscle depth.

Paul Goerling's \$9200 second top priced purchase was L163700, a 9.5 month old ET lamb from Leahcim's second JIVET program of 2016. Featuring yearling growth of +7.5, yearling clean fleece weight of +21.4 and +13.5 for staple length, this youngster has a huge potential upside.



The two top priced rams at \$11,000 (right) and \$9200 were both purchased by the Goerling family, Lukin Springs stud, Boyup Brook, WA.

Pictured are Landmark auctioneer Richard Miller, Maddie and Paul Goerling, Landmark auctioneer Gordon Wood, Stewart Michael, and at the back, Andrew and Rosemary Michael.

Surprisingly the JIVET lambs which were 'the elite from the elite' within the Leahcim flock met somewhat reserved bidding compared with the lots before them. There were 22 of these JIVET ram lambs in the first run that averaged \$2547, compared with the sale average for the first 56 lots that preceded them of \$3725. Possibly their immaturity was a factor of influence in this price difference.

One other 9.5 month old JIVET ram lamb that didn't escape notice was L163725 with a +27.2 ycfw and a +16.9 ysl. Penrose Pastoral, Esperance, WA outlasted the opposition with a \$4600 winning bid.

The third top price of \$6600 for L162647 was paid by Classings Ltd's Bill Walker for Welke Bros, Wesswood Poll, Esperance. It carried an absolute elite wool covering, with a yearling clean fleece weight of +21.8 and staple length of +17.9.

Continuing the Western Australian prominence were regular supporters Phillip and Kelsie Foss, Bruce Rock. They purchased the equal third highest number of rams with 12, paying to \$3800 and averaging \$2167. Also purchasing 12 rams was Shepwok Downs, Gibson, WA, their purchases coming from the high value range of \$1000 to \$1200 and averaging \$1183.

Underbidder on both of the top two rams was Keller Bros, Ramsgate stud, Keith. However they were successful on their third choice late in the catalogue, L162766 for \$3400. A clean fleece weight of +22.3 was a highlight performance figure on this ram.

Triggervale Polls at Lockhart in NSW set the early benchmark with a winning \$6200 bid for L163266, the second ram offered. New Zealand studs, Nine Mile and Earnsclough are semen share partners in this impressive July drop ram.

Rounding out the seedstock purchases were Mamblin Pastoral with one at \$6200 for their O'Brien stud, Kyancutta; the Woolford family, Karawatha stud, Kimba with four to \$6000 and the Pindari stud, Waterloo with two to \$5200.

A large NSW contingent again purchased through AWN agents Denis Hewitt and Pat McNeill. Eight buying accounts within this

group collectively purchased 64 rams. Paul and Hayley Glynn, Paspaley Pearls Props, Coolah with 17 from \$800 to \$2200 were the most prominent, while RA & SF McLean, Crookwell with 14 from \$1000 to \$3000 was not far behind. Kevin and Heather Collins, Crookwell purchased eight from \$1600 to \$3600 and Scott and Tristan Kensit, Hollywood Pastoral Co, Crookwell purchased six from \$900 to \$4000. Denis Hewitt purchased for Waroo Pastoral, Goulbourn and hit double figures, with 10 from \$900 to \$2200.

The biggest volume buying account, and highlighting the value available within the sale, was R & C Martin, Swan Hill, Vic. Roger Wheaton purchased on their behalf and was successful on 31 lots, all at \$800. The Martins have been using Leahcim genetics for five years and have been breeding half their ewes to Poll Merinos and half to White Suffolks. However, such are the carcase strengths in the Leahcim Poll Merinos they are now changing focus to an all Poll Merino mating. They will select the balance of the 60 rams they need from private selections.

Richard Beresford, Moonjaree Pastoral Co, Cunnamulla put Queensland on the list of buying states, paying to \$5000 and averaging \$3933 for three top rams.

Local SA commercial producers were far from left out in this sale with 10 different buyers purchasing from five to seven rams each. Leading the way was Dianne Johnson and her manager Travis Cooper, Martindale Station, Mintaro and trading as Arapunya Investments. They purchased seven of the very best in the catalogue from \$1700 to \$5400 and at a \$3929 average. Also with seven top end rams was Harslett Rural, Gladstone, paying in the tight range from \$3400 to \$4400 and averaging just \$100 less than Arapunya at \$3829.

WR & EM Jackson, Willalooka, N & A Jaeschke, Clare and PJ & JM Hayes, Redhill all purchased six rams each, at \$1917, 1816 and \$983 average respectively. Rounding out the more prominent buyers were Emeroo Downs, Tooligie (five to \$4400 and ave \$3520), Kanmantoo Pastoral, Kanmantoo (five to \$3400 and ave \$3200), EW Hoepner & Co, Balaklava (five to \$3000 ave \$2960), AP & DJ Germein & Sons, Pt Vincent (five to \$3400 ave \$2320) and Chelwood Farming, Mintaro (five to \$1900 ave \$1760).



Key buyers at Leahcim from 3 states were Richard Beresford, Moonjaree Pastoral Co, Cunnamulla, Qld (3 rams to \$5000), Kelsie and Phillip Foss, Bruce Rock, WA (12 rams to \$3800) and Arapunya Investments, Mintaro

farm manager Travis Cooper and owner Dianne Johnson (7 rams to \$5400). They are with Leahcim's Rosemary Michael.



2017 Poll Merino Sale



Collectively, eight AWN clients from NSW purchased 64 rams at the Leahcim Poll Merino sale. Amongst them were Heather and Kevin Collins, Crookwell (8 rams to \$3600), Tristan and Scott Kensit,

Crookwell (6 rams to \$4000)

and Paul and Hayley Glynn, Coolah (17 rams to \$2600).

Leahcim White Suffolks excel

The Michael family's development of industry leading trait figures was rewarded at the Leahcim White Suffolk sale, with a top price of \$6000, a full clearance of 143 rams and a record number of registered bidders.

The top price was up \$2000 on last year's top, and the average of \$1212 for the 143 rams sold mirrored last year's solid sale average.

The Michael family was rapt with the result of the sale, which included 15 rams from three 2016 sires featuring the highest ASBV figures in Australia for carcase and eating quality.

All 15 rams by the three top sires featured in the highest prices at this sale, affirmation of the growing focus on the importance of these traits. Commercial sheep growers and White Suffolk stud operators competed strongly for these industry leading genetics.

"We are seeing more and more demand for rams with good carcase and eating quality traits," stud principal Andrew Michael said.

"We are not far from a time when the market will reward the grower financially for breeding sheep with these traits."

Commercial sheep growers and long-term Leahcim clients, Paul and Yvonne Wurst of Appila purchased the top priced ram, which sported outstanding muscling conformation through the loin and hindquarter areas, plus outstanding ASBV carcase and eating quality figures, (Wwt of 11.8; Pwwt of 17.8, Pfat of -0.4 and PEMD of 1.9, culminating in a carcase plus index of 213).

The Wursts purchased two additional high end rams, one at \$3000 and one at \$2000.



Leahcim stud principal Andrew Michael with Paul and Yvonne Wurst, who purchased the top priced ram.

"The benefits of the top end rams come back to us in our next lambing – with increased carcase size and lambing percentages," Paul said.

A ram with virtually identical figures as the top priced ram (and from the same sire) achieved second top price of \$4400. He will be an integral part of the stud breeding program at Paul Goerling's Lukin Springs White Suffolk stud, Boyup Brook in WA.

Fellow Western Australian Scott Welke, from Esperance, purchased 11 rams to a \$3000 top and average of \$1382. Scott also purchased 53 Leahcim White Suffolk ewes and plans to develop his own stud.

The depth of quality was clearly displayed by the highest volume buyer, Spalding farmer Tom Trengove, of Trengove Partners, who bought 16 high quality rams with a great balance of figures across the traits, but especially with good growth and carcase size, all at \$900.



Leahcim stud principal Andrew Michael is with Tom Trengove, who purchased 16 rams, and Landmark auctioneer Gordon Wood.

Regular volume buyer Tom Hawker, Anama, via Clare, bought 15 rams for an average of \$1046, again targeting the traits of early growth and carcase eating quality.

Another long-term volume buyer, Craig Bell, Bono Station, purchased 11 rams at an average of \$818. Craig has averaged \$100/head on-property for 4000 lambs sold through Auction Plus over the past three years.



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