



Kelvale News

SRS®

Summer 2016

Hope this finds you well and that your season is looking after you.

We ended the 2015 year with spot on 300mm of rain, which is well below our long term average of 450mm. As a result we sold the remaining commercial ewes which has resulted in all the stock that we have left maintaining fantastic condition. Two containment areas were established early in the summer where young stock were housed and fed. Following some good summer rains the ram lambs have been let out onto well established Lucerne pastures where they are thriving. The ewes have continued to move into new paddocks in a big mob in order to create rest and allow for pastures to grow.

Our irrigated Lucerne is going well and we are hopeful for at least an average yield as it is looking to be a very viable commodity to produce, with

prices at record highs this year.

This year we will be attending the Field Days on the West Coast of South Australia in July for the first time. This will coincide with a classing trip to the area and give us a bit more exposure in a region where many of our rams perform well. We have also decided not to display in March this year at either the SE Field Days at Lucindale or at the Mid North Field Days but Stephen will still attend in person at the central venue in Burra.

We have also started a Facebook page for *Kelvale Poll Merinos* and we ask you to have a look and 'like' our page if you use Facebook. We are trying to post a few photos and comments about where we are and what's going on in the stud throughout the year.

Looking forward to seeing you all during 2016.



www.kelvalepollmerinos.com.au
Follow us on Facebook



Using Technology

Our ability to compare animal to animal by using ASBV's (to progress our genetics) require the collection of a lot of raw data. To simplify and streamline this process we have been using electronic tags in our lambs which are a great help right from a very early age.

To have accurate ASBV data we need to have full pedigrees on as many animals as possible, here at Kelvale we mother up approximately 700 lambs a year. This is done by recording the dam, sire and number of animals raised, either, single, twin or triplet. Electronic tags allow us to record this data on a hand held device which then downloads directly to our program.

We then collect more data on the animals throughout their lifetime, including body weight, muscle scanning data and wool weights at shearing. Any time a drop of ewe or ram weaners are in the yards we now have the ability to easily collect and record body weights to give us more accurate growth rates.

At the most recent shearing we recorded the wool weights from about 700 of the 2015 progeny (ewes and rams) which will enable us to have a broad look at genetic fleece weight. Previously we have only recorded the rams data as it required extra staff in the shed during shearing. When all the systems work properly we now only have to scan the animal ear tag and put the fleece on the scales and no manual data entry is required.

As we progress with more generations having electronic tags we will be able to record pregnancy scanning data to know if the ewes are getting pregnant with multiples and if she is raising all her foetuses.

The best part of the electronic tags is the improvement in accuracy in our data. Previously as tag numbers were written down some errors

were made with numbers being switched or accidentally read incorrectly. As with all advances in technology it comes at a significant cost and not all systems work all the time. Frustrations are still present but as we implement better systems we are making technology work for us.



See the Kelvale display at the following events during 2016.

Friday & Saturday May 6 & 7 - **Broken Hill Ag Fair**

Monday July 4—**Eyre Peninsula Pre-Sale Expo, Wudinna**

Friday to Sunday July 15-17 —**Australian Sheep and Wool Show, Bendigo**

Wednesday July 27—**Merino South East Field Days, Keith Venue**

Monday & Tuesday August 1 & 2—**Hamilton Sheepvention**

THURSDAY AUGUST 18th —Ram Sale at Keith

Ram Sale 2015

My oh my, what a day!!! Our expectations were blown out of the water with the clearance and the prices at the ram sale last year. We thank all purchasers and under bidders for their ongoing support and wish everyone well with their purchases. With an average for the main sale of well over \$2000, we are confident that our rams are meeting buyers needs and performing in their flocks as desired.

We realise that the prices at the sale last year could put clients off and they may look elsewhere for rams, we intend to counteract this by making more rams available in the main auction therefore creating more choice. We would prefer to see an average for the main sale certainly lower than last

year to ensure that our rams remain affordable to all clients. If you have concerns please let us know and we will see what we can do to help out. This year there will be 140 Rams in the main auction and we will still have a mini auction with 60 rams available.

This years Ram Sale will be on **Thursday August 18**, we look forward to seeing you all then.

In the mean time if you would like us to come and class your sheep or even just a quick look over we would appreciate the opportunity to visit. To have an understanding of your goals for your flock we can then assist in ram selection to suit your needs. We don't charge for classing of clients flocks, however we may need to recover some travelling costs at times.



Junior Sheep Expo

This year will be the inaugural year of the Junior Sheep Expo, a new event modelled on the Junior Heifer Expo and is all about teaching our next generation about all aspects of the sheep industry.

Stephen has been on the organising committee and it involves all breeds in the industry, terminal and merinos.

During the expo participants will have the choice to attend different breakout sessions where topics will be covered including but not limited to,

- Nutrition,
- Wool Handling,
- ASBV's and Genetics,
- Muscle Scanning and Pregnancy Scanning (how the processes are completed)
- Animal Handling
- Sheep Careers and
- Marketing

It will be a great three days at the Adelaide Showgrounds from April 27 – 29.

This first year will only be open to 100 participants however, it is planned to be run every year and will be open to more participants as it evolves.

Topics will change from year to year to maintain the relevance to all participants.

If you know of any young people who are interested in the sheep industry it will be a wonderful opportunity to develop their skills.



Encouraging the next generation to engage in the sheep industry by promoting opportunity, understanding and knowledge



27th - 29th April 2016
Adelaide Showground, Wayville SA

**Are you 12 to 23 years
with an interest in the sheep industry?**

Join us at the 2016 SA Sheep Expo and participate in a fun and interactive program to build your knowledge and identify pathways to a career in the sheep industry.

- 3-day interactive program and live-in experience
- Wool & Meat sheep representation
- Demonstrations, hands-on & workshop components
- Network with like-minded enthusiasts and industry experts
- Age group competition with major prizes to be won (NZ study tour, funded trips to Lambex 2016, prize money & more!)
- Access to industry career information and pathways

REGISTRATIONS NOW OPEN AT
www.sasheepexpo.com.au



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