



Kelvale News

2023

Welcome to the Winter Newsletter from Kelvale Poll Merinos. We hope that everyone is travelling well and staying warm and dry.

We have had an amazing couple of rain events over the past couple of weeks following good opening rains from April and into May. The season is treating us well so far and we hope for it to continue.

Following the ram sale last year our spring rains were fantastic leading to a huge cereal hay cut (that got very wet more than once) to a massive Lucerne Hay cut that didn't get wet between cutting and baling giving great quality hay. With the spring rains and very mild summer our irrigated Lucerne just wanted to grow and grow but not flower to set seed leading to a very below average Lucerne Seed harvest. The pastures that have a Lucerne base have performed well through the summer and the stock are all faring well.

Lambing has been great with ewes having green feed through the last stages of pregnancy and into lambing. The paddocks are providing great feed and trees shelter for the young lambs. Majority of ewes pregnant with multiple lambs and they are raising them well.

In March we both travelled to Canberra to attend the AGM and working forum for The SRS[®] Company. We both came away enthused about the newly formed company, options for ourselves and our clients from a marketing perspective of selling stock and wool. It certainly a work in progress and you can read more about membership options and benefits further on in this newsletter. A display of Kelvale rams will be at the Eyre Peninsula Pre Sale Merino and Poll Merino Expo in Wudinna and at the Keith Field Days in July and please put the Ram Sale date of August 24 in your diary. Look forward to seeing you soon

Stephen and Peta



Use of Data

ASBV data continues to be at the front of mind when it comes to objective measurement. Balance is referred to often, if you are breeding a productive merino, you need the animal to be able to do it all, not just perform well in a few traits. There are a few traits that if you push too hard on alone will have a detrimental influence on another trait. The traits that we focus on are outlined below and the reasons for our decisions.

Post Weaning Weight (PWT) – A higher PWT figure gives you good early growth. Why is this important? Early growth has many positives, including the ability for animals to reach a kill weight at an earlier age with less feed to achieve this, and positive muscle and fat will give the grower better meat yields. When looking at the females, many are starting to mate ewe lambs, early growth rates will allow for the ewes to reach a mature weight at an earlier age and therefore more lambs on the ground.

Muscle and Fat (YEMD & YFAT) – Often referred to together and both need to be positive. Our muscle figures are going well but our fat has decreased slightly over the past couple of years due to our emphasis on wool cut. Over the next couple of years, we will endeavour to hold our wool cut but increase our fat. A challenge!

Yearling Weight (YWT) – This trait is one that we monitor and try to keep under control. If we continue to promote a higher YWT then our animals will get even bigger. We need to be careful not to breed animals that are hazardous to ourselves and the people that we employ to assist us, especially the shearers.

Yearling Clean Fleece Weight (YCFW) – This trait is particularly relevant but not much influence on our decision making. Breeding Merino sheep requires them to grow wool and we are never going to have the heaviest cutting wool sheep. If we try to do this there are many other detrimental influences on other productive traits. If the amount of wool that we cut goes up, fertility, doing ability (genetic

fat) and survivability goes down. These traits are most important for production and so we need to be careful with wool weight.

Yearling Staple Length (YSL) – A trait that we have excelled in over the past 10 years and it gives us the ability to shear twice annually easily. The general health of our ewe flock has improved as they are not carrying around a large fleece whilst trying to raise a lamb. We have found that ewe survivability and lambing percentage have improved by the introduction of two shearings a year.

Yearling Fibre Diameter and Coefficient Variation (YFD & YCV) – Not much focus is put on these two traits, however we are noticing that the more influence we have on muscle and fat the more pressure we are putting on raising the micron. A trait that we are aware of but believe classing the with our SRS® breeding principles, we will keep the skins right to keep this under control.

These are the ASBV traits that are in line with our breeding objectives and provides a balance for us going forward.



Ram Sale Team

The 2022 Ram Sale again exceeded our expectations with a complete clearance of 210 rams. A few private selections followed the sale and we still had a few spares which meant that we had good numbers about.

This year we will endeavour to add a few more rams, we are running short of room however, we will offer 170 in the main sale with an additional 60-70 in the mini auction. We aim to keep numbers up for individual selection requirements.

With all this in mind, the rams look well. They are well grown and displaying great white wools.

The next generation of young sires are lead by 200114, his progeny display exceptional white wools and a heavier wool cut. This ram has been used in the SA Sire Evaluation Trial and has



good growth figures especially PWT.

Another young sire is 201011. He is a solid boned ram with good early growth, muscle and fat.

The entire drop has pushed our growth, muscle and fat forward.

Kelvale Sale Team

The data on the sale team will be available on the website a couple of weeks prior to the sale.

www.kelvalepollmerinos.com.au

Kelvale On Property Auction

At Emu Flat

675 Emu Flat Road, KEITH

Thursday August 24 at 1pm

Inspection from 10am

**170 Specially selected Rams
plus a mini auction**

Light luncheon provided.

SRS® Genetics

Kelvale Poll Merinos is an SRS® Stud and has been breeding using these principles since 1999. Over more than 20 years a number of benefits have been noticed from breeding along these lines including but not limited to eliminating the need to mules lambs, longer stapled wool and higher fertility. A more profitable merino is being bred. Kelvale Poll Merinos is a founding member of the company and now a Stephen has joined the board as a director. An invitation has been extended to Kelvale clients to take up a membership.

Why sign up today?

Commercial Membership to SRS® Genetics will add valuable insights to support your operation while supporting your marketing advantage.

- Exclusive access to SRS® Certification and application of unique SRS sheep identification tags⁴
- Access to discounted management tags²
- Exclusive access to SRS® Wool marketing opportunities
- Specialist Flock Classing by SRS® Genetics specialists
- SRS Stud ram purchase rebate up to the value of \$600¹
- Access to SRS® Genetics Group Chat for real time Q & A as well as online presentations
- Access to RWS Group Certification
- Exclusive use of the SRS® Genetics trademark for use in advertising and promotion
- Participation in SRS® Genetics Research and Development, access to participate in research and receive findings
- Access to Classi-mate, a visual assessment tool standardising scoring

- Access to SRS® Genetics advertising opportunities including published features, SRS® Genetics website and social media platforms.
- Exclusive access to discounted Lambs Alive membership with specialist sessions for SRS® Members only³
- Exclusive access to SRS Genetics Wool Testing rates supplied by Riverina Wool Testers
- Exclusive market access with presentation of wool clip to International buyers through WOOLCONSULT Int. Pty Ltd

Talk to Stephen today for more information on becoming a member.

www.srsgenetics.com.au/membership

email admin@srsgenetics.com.au or call SRS Genetics on 0418 296 805.

SRS® Genetics recognises the importance of the legacy of Dr Jim Watts. A trail blazer, ahead of his time; a true innovator and influencer with unrivaled passion and commitment, Jim was responsible for developing the Soft Rolling Skin® method of breeding sheep by visual and objective selection to optimise fleece quality and quantity. These methods are also recognised for producing sheep that do not require mulesing, while increasing lamb production, survival, and natural resistance to fly strike.

1 All Stud and Commercial Members are eligible for a ram purchase rebate of up to \$600 when purchasing rams from SRS Stud Members

2 Through bulk buying power SRS can aid in securing management tags for your business economically

3 Discounted membership to Lambs Alive applies one time only, for more information including pricing contact SRS Genetics.

4 The Unique Identifier Tags are exclusive to SRS and can be read using a smartphone camera as well as including RFID technology.



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