



Kelvale News

2026

Hello all! What a difference 12 months can make, with a rolling rainfall to the beginning of July at Emu Flat of 557mm we've had green feed for lambing ewes and the country is looking good.

Following the Ram Sale last year, we had a great spring with over 150mm of rain, which came at an favourable time for setting up to produce lucerne hay and seed. We didn't have to water our Lucerne for a hay cut as we had sufficient moisture and the hay was plentiful. We decided to only allow for half of our usual area for seed production, and the remaining paddocks produced hay, replenishing our very depleted haystack. The Lucerne Seed prices have been exceptional, however this has been due to below average seed production.

In early March we just finished shearing before it began raining, following up on good rain in February, the early break was great for feed generation prior to Lambing.

With mild conditions through April and May, new season lambs have had a great start. The lambs were born full of energy and the ewes had plenty of milk so have reared some healthy lambs.

With the wool market going ahead in leaps and bounds there is certainly rewards for anyone who has been able to stick with breeding merinos. With ewe numbers down, selling excess stock come Spring should be fruitful.

With the favourable season conditions the rams are looking well grown for the sale in August. A select few have been making an appearance at the Eyre Peninsula Pre-Sale Expo in Wudinna and the South East Merino Field Day in Keith, both in July.

We look forward to seeing you soon,

Stephen and Peta



What is an SRS® Sheep?

This is a question that we get asked quite regularly, what is the difference between and SRS® sheep and a 'modern merino' sheep?

Having had the opportunity to class ewes and rams alongside the late Dr Jim Watts on many occasions, it is always about the skin. When you use your hands to touch and feel the fleece of the animal you must also feel the skin and it needs to be exceptionally soft. Most people cannot feel the difference until you put an SRS® skin alongside another sheep. It takes a lot of breeding to gain a genuine SRS® skin from a traditional background and many claim to have achieved this, but when you feel the skin, it isn't quite there. An artificial softness in the wool can be achieved by shedding animals for months, but when you feel the skin underneath it has a long way to go.

The modern merinos have a lot of attributes that are correlated with the SRS® breeding principles, in the alignment of the wool fibres and type of easy care non-mulesed animal. However, the true softness in the skin has a way to go.

Why is this important? The true SRS® skin will breed a true to type animal and repeatability in its progeny. We have had rams, even recently, that have had great alignment in fibres, great data but we were uncomfortable as the rams skin just wasn't quite right. He was used and the results were all over the place. He bred a few good animals but far too many culls.



That is the SRS® difference, its having a soft skin that will repeat consistently with softness and style.

However, there are so many other features that go into our SRS® sheep. We still need conformation and bone that have been Kelvale characteristics for decades. We also need to have wool cut, fertility and plain sheep that do not need to be mulesed. We need to have white wools that can handle 700mm rainfall but also repel the dust and dirt in 150mm rainfall.

These are just some of the balances that we are implement in our breeding program. Then you add in data like micron and genomic data with ASBV's, there are a lot of attributes to consider when we are assessing our next generation breeders.

It's always a pleasure and privilege to visit our clients and class their hoggetts, you can really see how Kelvale genetics are having an influence. Then we speak about their lambing percentages, the wool cut improvements and quality of the product they are producing. The Kelvale genetic results out in the sheep industry are all positive and pleasing to hear.

Ram Sale Team

What a turn around there has been in the past 12 months. Meat prices have held up, excess stock prices are looking positive, and wool has now made it back to a level that it needs to be. The merino is a very attractive and profitable commodity.

Our ram sale team this year are going along really well. The average weight is over 80kg, and they have shown no sign of water damage even though they have had 240mm of rain since shearing in March.

Genetically the rams have more fat and muscle in the team and good wool weight with staple length.

Sires that are breeding well are 231156, great wool weight with staple length, 221415 has beautiful style and wool cut. AI sires used in this drop are Karbullah 706 who consistently breed positive fat and muscle. Glenwood 1206 has bred lovely soft wools and Glenwarra 338 has progeny with great bone and balance. Young sires including Kelveale 003, 026 and 023 have quite a few rams in the top pens of the sale.



Kelveale Sale Team

The data on the sale team is available on Sheep Genetics or our own website now.

www.kelvealepollmerinos.com.au

Overall, the rams look very uniform from start to finish. We welcome your inspection at any time by appointment. Just a reminder that videos of all the rams will be available on Auction plus prior to the sale and on sale day.

Kelveale On Property Auction

At Emu Flat

675 Emu Flat Road, KEITH

Thursday August 20 at 1pm

Inspection from 10am

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

Light luncheon provided.

Nicolai Farms

Luke and Chloe Nicolai came to us six years ago following the acquisition of three properties between Marcollat and Stewart Range, with the passing of Tom Brinkworth. Along with the properties, Luke and Chloe inherited the pure blood Watervally stock.

The stock were renowned for being survivors but they wanted to put their own stamp on the quality and quantity of the wool.

Luke was able to secure 2300 hoggets which we classed and used as the base for our breeding program.

The first drop of hoggets have now passed through the breeding phase, and next year we will have at least one cross of Kelvale over every breeding ewe. The change already has been remarkable and has surprised us all.

While there are still some genetics that want to revert back, we have really managed to push out the length and softness, with most making positive change.

Following a tough lambing in 2025 there were only 1300 hoggets to class this year. 800 of which will be retained for breeding merinos. The

whole sheep flock is developing and beginning to meet some of Luke's goals with lambing percentage at 127% from nearly 3600 merino ewes and one mob of red tag twins achieving 161%.

Nicolai Farms are now shearing every six months with an increased wool cut. The micron has lowered from 23 to 20 over the past six years. The long term goal is to achieve RWS accreditation, so this year they have not mulesed any lambs.

We look forward to seeing even more positive growth as we continue to work with them into the future.



Kelvale Poll Merinos

Stephen and Peta Kellock

Stephen— 0427 438 138 Peta—0402 324 489

www.kelvalepollmerinos.com.au

Email: admin@kelvalepollmerinos.com.au

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter please contact us and we will remove your name from our list.