

NEWSLETTER December 2007



ALL AT KOONWARRA WISH EVERYONE A VERY HAPPY, HEALTHY AND SAFE CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR.

Charlie, Jono, Charles, Joe and Stuart sincerely thank our clients, bidders and under bidders for their support during 2007, our second year of having Koonwarra Merino Stud based at Boorowa. Although it has been a very trying year with the drought we received 114mms of rain in November and so far in December another 32mms, so we are ever hopeful that 2008 is going to be a good year feed and water wise.

We are all enjoying the association between the Merrimans and Currans, and working with Stuart Hodgson. The potential of Koonwarra Merino Stud and the many qualities present

within in bloodlines ensures that everyone involved in the stud are looking forward and positively towards its future.

We look forward to continuing to develop a deeper understanding of what Koonwarra clients want from their flocks and what they are looking for in the Koonwarra sheep. We do appreciate receiving feedback as it allows us to develop the sheep to include clients requirements, and also incorporate our requirements of good conformation, doing ability with bright white wool and good fleece weights.

2007 RAM SALE WRAP UP



Top selling ram, Lot 1, with Jono Merriman, Stuart Hodgson, buyer Sinclair Stratton, Charlie Merriman and Joe Curran. Courtesy of The Land Newspaper.

Koonwarra held its 30th Annual on-property Ram Sale on Friday 12th October 2007 at Little Range. Of the 60 rams offered on the day 53 were sold for an average of \$948, with the top price being \$2400 for Lot 1 bought by Sinclair Stratton.

Thank you to all those who came to the sale and the preview at Koonwarra's new home. We really appreciated your interest and support, and it was great to see old Koonwarra clients here as well as some new faces – it is very encouraging.

We do have some good quality flock rams available for Autumn 2008 joining, and hopefully with a change in weather patterns and an autumn break woolgrowers can maximise their merino ewe joinings for 2008.

COMING EVENTS FOR KOONWARRA

FIELD DAY – Friday 18th January 2008, On-property at Little Range, Boorowa NSW

Koonwarra Stud will open from 9.00am to 5.00pm, as part of the Great Southern Supreme Merino Field Day. On display will be the rams for sale at Great Southern Supreme Merino Show and Sale (GSSM) at Canberra Showground, and our Sires and some Stud ewes with their progeny. Plus a selection of those ewes that will be offered at the Merrignee/Koonwarra Annual on-property Stud and Commercial Ewe Sale, on Thursday 22nd Feb '08.

G.S.S.M. RAM SALE – Monday 21st January 2008 at 11am, Fitzroy Pavilion, Canberra Showground (EPIC).

Koonwarra will be offering the following three rams. These rams are from the 2006 drop and are therefore only 18 months old at sale time with two of the rams still showing their milk teeth in mid December 2007.

LANDMARK GROUP

NO. 1 RAM Tag Red 18, Micron 18.3, S.D. 3.4, C.V.18.6, C.F. 99.4, SIRE 7.78.

This sire is a top quality young ram from the 7.78 sire that belongs to the long established Gem family. He has a rich soft thickly locked fleece, which is the required wool type to handle high rainfall areas. The crimp style is that of a well defined fine/medium wool with very good fleece weight and cover. He is very square through the legs, showing a good spring of rib and well set rear end. This ram has strong potential as a stud sire as his genetics are from a Koonwarra family that has proved itself over a very long time of merino breeding.

NO. 2 RAM Tag Red 12, Micron 17.1, S.D. 2.7, C.V.15.8, C.F. 99.8, SIRE Black Tag family

A very large framed sire from the Black Tag family, established with predominately Nerstane stud sire lines. A big ram for his age with a big fleece cut, long length of staple and with a very soft handle, as is verified by his very low figures.

NO. 3 RAM Tag Red 15, Micron 17.6, S.D. 3.0, C.V. 17.0, C.F. 99.8 SIRE Black Tag family

This young sire is also from the Black Tag family and shows a quality fleece with defined crimp, good length of staple and is well covered. The way the fleece handles and its tip structure, backed up by these very low figures for a fine/medium wool type, ensures that his style of wool will cope well with high rainfall patterns.

KOONWARRA STUD & COMMERCIAL EWE SALE – Thursday 28th February 2008, 1pm

Koonwarra will be offering approximately 100 Stud C.F.A. and Two-tooth Ewes in lots of about 20 that are November shorn and not station mated. Also offered will be approximately 100 C.F.A. & Two-tooth commercial medium wool ewes, November shorn. This Sale will be held in conjunction with Merrigee Merino Stud.

KOONWARRA THOUGHTS FROM CHARLIE & JONO

Summer rains and merino breeding. Through the past five to seven years of very dry times merino breeders have been under severe difficulties to improve their merino genetics. Some stud and commercial breeders have been trying new bloodline and merino types to improve their financial bottom line. With the summer rains returning towards a more normal weather pattern, a few growers are experiencing a breakdown of their wools due to the wetter more humid weather, which is resulting in an increase in blowfly strike.

Experience over the years has taught breeders that the bloodlines of the merino breed that have high suint ratio wools are the type that succumb to these problems in these weather patterns and seasons. Koonwarra under original stud master Mr John Williams and the current owners the Curran family with sheep classer Stuart Hodgson, has strived throughout its history to keep these susceptible wools from the Koonwarra Stud sheep through diligent merino genetic selection. From their hard work, we here at Little Range are appreciating the fact of not having to check the Koonwarra weaners and older rams other than the normal management efforts.

The various breeding families here are still showing their wool qualities of bulky white, bright wool. Pleased Koonwarra clients

have happily reported that these types of wools have brought about some very good wool prices this season. Koonwarra clients, Mac and Sandra Wilson had a very pleasing result later this year, in addition to their successes reported in our mid-year newsletter, when New England Wool Company purchased their fine/medium wool on behalf of an Italian company to make mens jackets.

On enquiring why an Italian wool company purchased a true fine/medium wool type instead of superfines, the principal Andrew Blanch said the true to type Koonwarra wool with its brightness and lustrous white colour helps the wool perform to the purchasers milling requirements. Understanding these breeding parameters helps Stuart, Jono and I in our sire genetic selection so that we can strive to achieve our aims of increased wool cut with micron control and all the other correct attributes of the Koonwarra type, to minimize the workload of our clients and increase their financial returns.

With the very low merino numbers in Australia and the wool market heading to some historically high prices for 19-20 micron types, it is now more than ever a very good time to use the Koonwarra genetics to make sure the merino stays true to type.

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