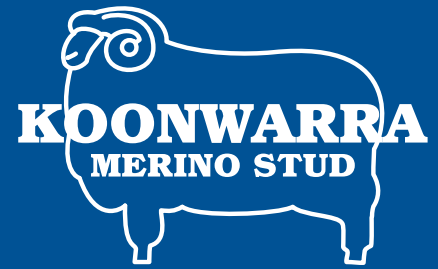


# NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2008



**STUD PRINCIPALS** CHARLES CURRAN AC, LL.B. FCPA., CHARLIE & JONO MERRIMAN

**STUD MANAGERS** CHARLIE & JONO MERRIMAN **STUD CLASSER** STUART HODGSON OAM.

Charlie, Jono, Charles, Joe and Stuart sincerely thank our clients, bidders and under bidders for their support during 2008, in our third year of having Koonwarra Merino Stud based at Boorowa. We feel it is a good working relationship between the Curran family, Stuart Hodgson and the Merriman family for the development and growth of the Koonwarra Merino Stud. We all believe in the potential of the Koonwarra sheep and their qualities, and look forward to the future.

**BEST WISHES FROM ALL AT KOONWARRA FOR A VERY HAPPY, HEALTHY AND SAFE CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR.**

Koonwarra held its 31st Annual on-property Ram Sale on Friday 10th October 2008 at Little Range. We thank all those who attended, both present Koonwarra clients and we were pleased to have new clients who came and supported the sale. Your support was most appreciated with 40 of the 60 rams offered being sold for an average of \$1022.

The top price ram was Lot 25 for \$2000 bought by DN & CM McFadyen from Harden. We thank Don and Judy for their follow up support as they were new clients in 2007.

We encourage past and present Koonwarra clients to come to the combined Koonwarra/Merrignee Open Preview Day held in mid September, before both on-property ram sales. This way merino breeders can inspect and assess the development of the Koonwarra Stud at their leisure and see all the young rams to be put up for auction in early October.

Thank you to those who did come to the combined Koonwarra/Merrignee Merino Studs preview on 15th September 2008. We enjoy the day as it gives us time to talk to clients and interested breeders. We appreciated all feedback on our sheep.

We have some good quality flock rams available for autumn 2009 joining. With the change in the weather patterns, hopefully we will get a good autumn break that will maximize our merino ewe joinings in 2009.

## COMING EVENTS FOR KOONWARRA

### FIELD DAY – FRIDAY 16TH JANUARY 2009

Koonwarra Stud will be open from 9.00am to 5.00pm, as part of the Great Southern Supreme Merino Field Day. On display will be the rams that will be for sale at Great Southern Supreme Merino Show and Sale (GSSM) at Canberra Showground, some Koonwarra sires and Stud ewes with their progeny. Also a selection of ewes that will be offered at the combined Merrignee/Koonwarra Annual on-property Stud and Commercial Ewe Sale held at 1pm on Thursday 26th Feb '09.

### G.S.S.M. RAM SALE – MONDAY 19TH JANUARY 2009, 11AM

**In the air conditioned Fitzroy Pavilion at the Canberra Showground (EPIC)**

Koonwarra will be offering the following 2 rams through Landmark.

**NO. 1 RAM** A large framed stud sire from the Black Tag BU family. He is a very square stance sire and up straight on his feet, with a good width through the back and front legs, displaying a meaty rear end and good spring of rib. He has a soft strong muzzle and open horn set. His fleece is a quality fine/medium wool with a very good length of staple for his wool type. He has a bulky heavy fleece and plenty of underline/belly. This sire would improve frame size and structure and add plenty of fleece weight to merino flocks. These features are supported by very good fleece figures – micron of 17.7, SD 2.7, CV 15.3 and a comfort factor



Koonwarra GSSM No.1 sale ram for 2009

of 99.7. He has been used in the stud for lambs born in 2008, and his progeny show the sire's qualities that are required for enhancing merino flocks.

No. 2 Ram A sire for merino flocks needing to improve wool style and increase whiteness and brightness of fleece. This sire is from one of our KWA sires, 1.9, who is from the 8.7 family, which has been used in Koonwarra for many years (a genetically proven sire group). His fleece is a very stylish fine wool type and of a standard that could fit the Italian wool type. He is very well covered on the points and underline. His fleece figures fit the wool type very well, with a micron of 18.8, SD 3.0, CV 16.0 and Comfort Factor at 99.7.

## **KOONWARRA STUD & COMMERCIAL EWE SALE – THURSDAY 26TH FEBRUARY 2009, 1PM**

Koonwarra will be offering approximately 100 Stud C.F.A. and Two-tooth Ewes in lots of about 20. They will be January shorn, and not station mated. Approximately 100 C.F.A. and Two-tooth commercial medium wool ewes January shorn will also be offered..

This Sale will be held in conjunction with Merrigee Merino Stud.

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## **KOONWARRA THOUGHTS FROM CHARLIE**

The Koonwarra Stud has been here at Little Range for three years now and we have used that time to evaluate and improve the stud ewes.

Stuart Hodgson, Jono Merriman and I agreed in the early stages to work very hard at assessing and improving the Koonwarra stud ewes as we all knew that the basis to merino breeding is to have the female portion showing all the requirements of a profitable merino.

Using the profit keys of micron control and fleece weight, we put emphasis on wool style, handle and, in particular, structure.

When structure is correct, and there is width between the back and front legs, the merino has the ability to perform the basic duties.

With correct structure the ewe can cope with most seasonal conditions, enabling them to have a high lambing percentage, good fleece weights and very good body weights, all of which are especially important in the wether portion.

By working hard on these breeding traits, the Koonwarra genetics have also improved in their stud sire group. Progeny for viewing in 2009 will include those by Koonwarra Ruby 244, who is from the Gem family, and on early assessment his progeny could be top of the drop for micron and fleece weight.

The world economic downturn has wool prices floundering at the moment with 20 microns around 800 cents a kilo clean. This is 200/300 cents down from where it was in early September

this year. The Koonwarra wools are used into the higher priced end of the merino wool usage and is susceptible to financial downturns. The meat component of the Koonwarra type merino is where the high priced value is at this moment. Most of us can remember when lamb and mutton were at the bottom of the income scale and it was only through a quality marketing program that these products have developed their strong prices of today.

With that thought in mind, all the principals of the Koonwarra stud congratulate the newly elected directors of our AWI company and urge them in these difficult times to keep marketing our merino fibre to the world through their well developed retailer test marketing programs.

Before the fiscal downturn these programs were developing demand to an area where merino wool was on the verge of a historically high pricing period. This demand held until the credit squeeze and consumer downturn in purchasing power finally succumb to world fiscal pressures.

The bottom line is that merino fleece is still very well situated in consumer minds. It's the affordability that is the problem. As the world finances slowly recover we believe that with the very good meat prices, and the world market acceptability of wool, that the Koonwarra merino type can maintain and increase its profitability in the rural markets.

Enquiries please do not hesitate to contact us.

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