

## NEWSLETTER WINTER 2012



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

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



Sydney Show 2012 Reserve Champion  
Fine-Medium Wool March shorn ram held by Jono

**Thank you to all buyers and under bidders for their support since Koonwarra Merino Stud moved to Boorowa in January 2006.**

Koonwarra Merino Stud is owned in a partnership between Charles Curran and his family's Capital Investments Rural Pty Ltd and Charlie and Jono Merriman and their family's Merrignee Pty Ltd.

All management and breeding decisions are done in conjunction with the well respected Stud Classer, Mr Stuart Hodgson.

At the 2012 35th Annual On-Property Koonwarra Unhoused Ram Sale, all 60 rams to be auctioned are from the 2011 May/June drop rams.

The sale date is Wednesday 26th September with the auction commencing at 1pm and inspections from 10am.

Koonwarra will be taking only show sheep to Dubbo on 28th and 29th August 2012.

On Thursday 6th September, Koonwarra will be taking a display team to the SWS Merino Field Day at Iandra Castle, Greenethorpe via Young from 11am.

In January 2013, Koonwarra will be taking a show and sale team to the GSSM held at the Canberra Showground (EPIC) from 19th to 21st January.

## **35th ANNUAL KOONWARRA UNHOUSED RAM SALE**

**WEDNESDAY 26th  
SEPTEMBER 2012 at 1pm**

**INSPECTIONS FROM 10am**

**60 MAY/JUNE 2011  
DROP RAMS**

**PREVIEW DAY – FRIDAY 21st SEPTEMBER  
10am to 4pm**



A group of Koonwarra one year old rams  
(all these rams are paddock reared)

**This will be Koonwarra Merino Stud's seventh sale at Little Range, 16kms from Boorowa (NSW) on the Cunningar Road towards Harden.**

These rams were shorn on 16th April 2012 and their fleece tests will be taken about six weeks before the sale. **Each ram will have individual fleece figures for micron, SD, CV, Spinning Fineness, Bodyweight and Greasy Fleece Weight percentage.** These rams were Gudair vaccinated as lambs out of approved vaccinated ewes.

These rams will be selected by Stuart Hodgson, the Stud Classer, and Charlie and Jono Merriman, the Stud Managers.

We will be holding an **Preview Day of the sale rams on Friday 21st September at Little Range from 10am to 4pm.** We welcome all clients and

non clients who may like to come along to see the Koonwarra sheep and how they are developing and inspect the 60 sale rams at their leisure.

**Alternatively, prior to the on-property sale a private inspection of the sale rams can be arranged by appointment with Charlie, Jono or Stuart.**

Individual details on each of the 60 rams will be available on [www.koonwarrastud.com.au](http://www.koonwarrastud.com.au) before the sale once the fleece tests are taken and the rams catalogued.

**Individual body weights will be available on the day of the sale.**

At the 2011 34th Annual On-Property Ram Sale 53 of the 60 rams sold with an average of \$1,340 (GST exclusive), with the top price being \$3,600 (GST exclusive).

**Shorn Sire KWA 9-022  
in the paddock Aug '12**



**SOUTH WEST SLOPES MERINO FIELD DAY at Iandra Castle, Greenethorpe via YOUNG, Thursday 6th September 2012, from 11am**

**Koonwarra will be participating in the South West Slopes Merino Field Day.**

Jono will be taking a group of Koonwarra sheep to this Field Day including some young sires and a selection of the rams to be offered at the 35th Annual On-Property Ram Sale on Wednesday 26th September. Also on display will be sheep Koonwarra intends to take to the Great Southern Supreme Merino (GSSM) show and sale at Canberra Showground (EPIC) from 19th to 21st January 2013.

## **FLOCK RAM SALES**

**Commence mid-October 2012, by appointment** at a time which suits clients.

This is done individually so each client has plenty of time to inspect and discuss their individual requirements. These rams are from the same drop as those to be offered at 35th Annual On-Property Ram Sale.

**There will be two grades \$700 and \$500 (excluding GST).**

## **HEALTH STATUS**

Koonwarra Merino Stud is Accredited Brucellosis Free No. CW98/23, is Vendor's Declaration Ovine Footrot Free and OJD Approved Vaccinates.

Koonwarra Merino Stud has been vaccinating with Gudair since 2002. The 2012 drop lambs have been vaccinated and are from ewes that were themselves vaccinated as lambs. Koonwarra has been vaccinating its lambs for 10 years and therefore every sheep offered is at least a second or third generation Approved Vaccinate.

## MESSAGE FROM CHARLIE & JONO

The 2011–2012 year has seen another very good start to the season in our area and later in the year it has become a harder winter type growing scenario. The ground is still holding very good moisture and warmer weather will enable the area to launch into spring so we can look forward with confidence to our merino markets.

Mr Charles Curran's excellent report in this newsletter on the European and the world's financial problems outlines the effects this has on our wool markets, especially in the superfine and fine wool sector. It is having a lesser effect on the 19 to 21 micron wool apparel of which China is now using a much higher percentage of these wools internally rather than relying on the export of these garments for profitability.

The meat portion of the merino is as always an integral part of the profit and while mutton is still holding onto good prices there is a large opportunity to develop more meat markets as Fletchers abattoir has pointed out in discussions on rural news recently.

The young 2011 May/June drop rams for sale in 2012 are a high quality group who are maintaining and improving wool type and style. They are able to withstand high rainfall patterns and maintain fleece weights whilst becoming plainer in skin type.

These traits only occur with a lot of effort put into reviewing and sourcing the sires to produce these progeny. In the Koonwarra 2010 AI program we decided to use Roseville Park RP 9-014 who has very good E.B.V. figures, especially on fleece weights. Koonwarra also used a semen sire from East Strathglen Merino Stud (WA), which has Victorian fine wool genetics on the female side of this sire. Recently East Strathglen progeny from this ewe base became Grand Champion Ewe and Grand Champion Ram and Supreme Merino Exhibit at the 2012 Bendigo Sheep Show in July. At Bendigo there are exhibitors from WA, SA, NSW and Victoria, so it has a large cross-section of the best genetics throughout Australia.

We have 10 young rams from the 2011 drop in our sire, show and sale group for 2012–13 and beyond, including one from the KWA Uniform family and one from the KWA J12 genetics. These are some of the weaner rams we had on display last year and they have become high quality types with a micron average is 17.6 and fleece weights of 5.6kgs at 10 months of age.

Koonwarra sire 9-022 was exhibited at the 2012 Sydney Show and was awarded the Reserve Champion Fine/Medium March Shorn Ram. KWA 9-022 is a very good ram with a lot of high grade commercial traits which suit the both the wool and the meat markets of the merino industry. This sire's traits can now be seen in his progeny who will be in the 2012 on property ram sale.

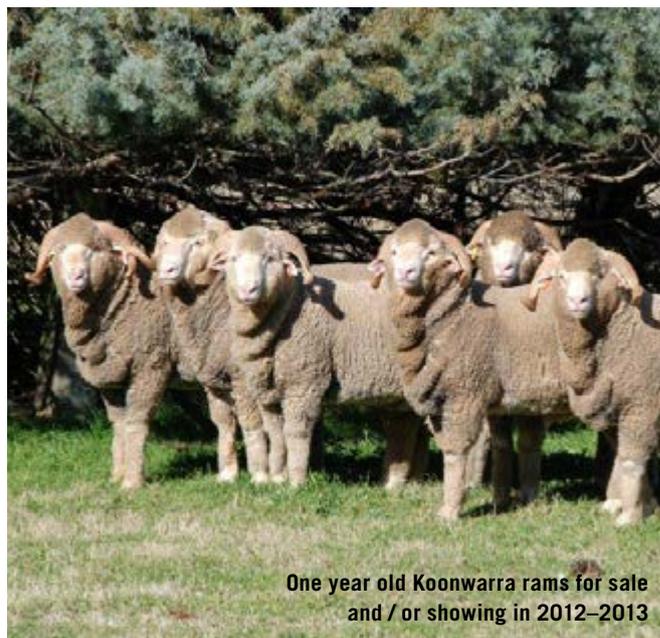
Koonwarra has a whole flock micron average of 19.0. We annually test their 2 year old ewes for micron and fleece weights for the following results:

- 2010 drop ewes: micron 19.6, SD 3.3, CV 16.8, CF 99.0%, GFW 7.0kgs
- 2009 drop ewes: micron 18.8, SD 3.4, CV 18.4, CF 99.0% GFW 6.9kgs
- 2008 drop ewes: average micron 19.4, average fleece weight 7.4kgs

Our thanks to Stuart Hodgson for his input throughout the year and we look forward in developing the Koonwarra Stud sheep with Stuart in the years ahead. I reiterate Stuart's comments in this newsletter on ram management to help ensure good lambing rates as it is an important point for conception rates to have rams in very good order.

A special thank you to the Curran family – Charles, Eva, Joe, Michelle and their extended family – for their continued support and enthusiasm for the Koonwarra Merino Stud.

We are certain our clients will be able to see the improving profitable traits occurring within the Koonwarra genetics when inspecting our rams to be offered in 2012–2013.



**One year old Koonwarra rams for sale and / or showing in 2012–2013**

## MESSAGE FROM CHARLES CURRAN

Each year for the last several years, this segment of the Newsletter has commenced with a short commentary on global economic conditions. This year is no exception, with the world having recently marked the fifth anniversary of what has been described as the GFC or the Global Financial Crisis.

Interestingly, the Reserve Bank of Australia has declined to use this term and had spoken of the North Atlantic financial crisis. In doing so, the Reserve Bank had noted the strong growth being achieved in countries such as China, India and a number of South American economies. That having been said, there have been global ramifications from the difficulties experienced in Europe and to some extent in the United States, which has had an impact upon the demand for manufactured goods, including the demand for capital items by China and India, with there also being some easing in demand for raw materials.

Despite these impacts, China in particular continues to achieve strong growth. Also, some improvement is being seen in the United States where that country is again demonstrating its ability to deal with financial problems and to reinvent its economy to meet changing circumstances. Significant difficulties continue to exist in a number of European countries and in the Euro zone generally, with economic and political problems over several decades having created these difficulties, the solution for which requiring fundamental reform. However, the United States and developing countries, particularly China, are contributing to an improvement in global economic activity, albeit at a slightly reduced level.

These circumstances are of direct relevance to the Australian wool industry. The growth of the Chinese economy has had a major impact on the demand for Australian wool, with commentators suggesting that from having taken 10% of the Australian wool clip ten years ago, China now takes over 70% of the clip, with a significant proportion being manufactured for the Chinese domestic retail market. In this regard, the development of the Chinese economy has been of major benefit to Australian wool producers.

However, Australia's role as a major exporter of iron ore, coal and other energy products to China and other developing markets has led to the Australian dollar being considered a safe haven by international investors, at a time when the economic outlook for many countries is uncertain. In consequence, Australian industries involved in export trade, including wool producers, are having to cope with an A\$ which many believe is trading at levels somewhat higher than its fundamental value.

This has undoubtedly been one contributing factor to the decline in wool prices over the last twelve months. However, the fundamentals of the industry remain strong and breeders must be encouraged by the increase in Australia's total sheep population from 70.8 million in 2011 to 74.3 million in 2012 and forecast 77.4 million in 2013.

We continue to support the work of Charlie, Pip and Jono Merriman, with the benefit of advice from Stuart Hodgson, to enable Koonwarra to continue enhancing its proven genetics developed over many decades. Koonwarra's big-framed, heavy cutting ewes are versatile and they provide breeders with a good wool clip and valuable market potential for lambs and replacement ewes at a time when Australia's sheep population is expanding.

# MESSAGE FROM STUART HODGSON

## KOONWARRA STUD CLASSER

As I drive around classing, I would have to say the rural scene is looking quite good. Central Victoria, South Australia and southern NSW all look to be in a healthy position with regards to moisture. Most areas have received enough rain to keep things going along pretty well. Grain prices have taken a sudden spike due to a series of heat waves in the northern hemisphere which will affect their harvest.

The wool market has dropped and is down from this time last year, but having said that many of my clients producing a 19 to 20 micron clips are enjoying returns of \$1,200 to \$1,400 per bale which I believe it is still profitable. Couple this with a sheep market that should open in the spring quite favourably and a self-replacing merino flock is still looking good. We may not see the extraordinary prices paid for young merino surplus stock received last year, but I do think that for well classed flocks with surplus sheep to sell, prices may be somewhere in the vicinity of \$165 for young ewes and older ewes for \$60-\$70. While young wethers

dressing around 17-20 kgs could make \$75, therefore all of the above is still a good business!

The importance of a good lambing is a crucial factor and all efforts should be made to increase this – scanning, wet and drying ewes along with good animal health practices are critical tools to enhance and improve your bottom line.

Ram care and management play an important part in ensuring a good joining percentages. Ideally rams should be shorn twice a year, feet pared and a fly protection used along with a pre-joining booster of lupins or some other protein source six weeks prior to joining will enhance the chances of a good joining.

While the industry heads down the “plain body” path we must not lose sight of the fact that we are looking for a total package – an animal that can cut wool, have lambs and give us a shape suited to the meat market.

## KOONWARRA SEMEN SIREs

ALL SEMEN \$40 PER DOSE (+ GST)

Koonwarra Stud has collected semen from its top sires that are used within the Koonwarra stud. If clients would like to purchase semen from a particular Koonwarra family please contact Charlie, Jono or Stuart and we will email a list of available Koonwarra Semen Sires.

## 2012/2013 SCHEDULE

### 2012

- **August 28-30:** Dubbo National Show and Sale
- **September 6:** South West Slopes Merino Field Day at Greenethorpe via Young on Thursday 1 September from 11am
- **September 21:** Preview of the Koonwarra Sale Rams to be offered on 28 September from 10am to 4pm at Little Range – all interested sheep breeders welcome

- **September 26:** Koonwarra 35th Annual On-Property Ram Sale, on Wednesday 26 September at Little Range from 1pm undercover
- **September 30:** Sunday of the long weekend as part of the Annual Boorowa Woolfest Koonwarra will have a display along with other local studs in the Landmark Woolstore
- **October 15:** Koonwarra Flock Ram Sales commence mid-October, by appointment

### 2013

- **January:** Great Southern Supreme Merino Field Day (on-property) on Friday 18 January, with the Show and Sale (at EPIC – Canberra Showground) from 19 to 21 January
- **February:** Canberra Show
- **March:** Boorowa Show
- **Easter (March/April):** Sydney Show



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