

SEPTEMBER 2012

PASTORA

Poll Merinos



2012 Sale Rams

OPEN DAY

Thursday 13th September 2012

Commencing at 10am
at Pastora Woolshed

check website for directions



Ram Selection

Welcome to our 2012 spring newsletter. Last years sheep and wool prices have certainly created some excitement within our industry. This has translated to quite a few clients committing to running more breeding ewes. There has even been a renewed interest in running a few wethers as wool cutters. Some clients have cut back on acres sown to crop due to the rising cost of production; yield uncertainty and prices received and increased their stock numbers in reaction to the improved income from their sheep enterprises.

At Pastora this has translated to our largest ever clearance of rams with 635 sold. We are steadily increasing our ewe base and will join 4000 stud ewes next year to cope with the increase in demand. We aim to sell only 25-30% of the male progeny each year as rams, so they will all be of the highest quality. An additional 1750 acres was recently purchased to allow us to steadily increase our ewe base annually.

We are in the process of setting up a website and hope to have it up and running within the next week. Google [pastora poll merinos](http://pastora.pollmerinos.com) and you will find us!! Who knows where this will go. We will start with a traditional merino stud website and as time passes it can be changed or extended to suit the needs of existing and potential clients with links to relevant or educational websites.

This year our Field Day will be held on Thursday the 13th September 2012. We received positive feedback regarding the client's ewes displayed last year. As a result, this year we will welcome clients who wish to bring 8-10 maiden ewes to be displayed on the day.

To have a successful merino enterprise the sheep must be competitive in comparison to the industry when assessing all key profit drivers (fleece value, fertility and growth). Each year whilst writing the client news section of our newsletter I focus on one key profit driver. 2011 was wool quality (price) and 2010 was surplus sheep sales. For this year's client news will concentrate on fertility. Two Pastora clients that I know of have joined their ewe lambs for the first time. These clients have not selected rams solely for fertility, but they demonstrate what can be achieved with sound management and good genetics. Whilst reading their results it is relevant to remember that the national weaning percentage for merinos is 78%.

Client News-Lambing Percentages

Colin, Graham and Darren Bahr from The Rock have had some favourable lambing results. Their results are listed below:

Maiden ewes 121%

Mixed Age Ewes 132%.

127% overall at lamb marking.

Lambing percentage from ewes joined including dry ewes – 118%

(This percentage does not include the lambs marked from their dry ewes as they re-joined them after scanning)

For the first time this summer the Bahr's joined their 7 month old ewe lambs straight after their rams came out of their breeding ewes. These lambs were pregnancy tested in July and 60% of their ewe weaners are now due to lamb at the end of August. 25% of their weaners are having twins! They are due to start lambing on the first of september.



The Bahrs Pregnant weaners 15th Aug

Larry and Jenny Smith from Lockhart also joined their 7.5 month old ewe lambs this year, 70% of them are lambing at the time of writing this and 31% of the scanned in lamb ewes are having twins.

They have just marked the lambs from their maiden and mixed age ewes and averaged 116%. Well done Larry and Jenny!!!

Mal and Judy Wooden from Old Junee achieved a great marking percentage also. Their results are from ewes joined.

- **Maiden ewes 128%.**
- **Mixed Age Ewes 131%.**
- **129% overall at lamb marking**

Inaugural Peter Westblade Scholarship Recipient

Jo Newton

You will already have read about the Peter Westblade Scholarship in last year's newsletter. This year's winner is Jo Newton. Jo comes from a city background and has done the opposite to most of her city friends by pursuing a career in the Australian Sheep Industry and in doing so following her dream. Jo has recently completed a four year degree at Armidale (UNE) and has just commenced further study, undertaking her PhD in the area of Sheep Genetics, in particular genetics related to sheep reproduction.

The Peter Westblade Scholarship has allowed Jo to travel to South Australia where she attended the Super Borders Conference and also to Victoria where she attended the LambEx Conference in Bendigo. The scholarship has enabled her to learn about the latest research and tools available to sheep producers; visit key studs and commercial breeders in South Australia and to expand upon Jo's farm experience which to date has focussed on the New England and Western Victoria regions.

Jo's future plans will be to spend time with key commercial and stud breeders in Southern NSW, including Pastora. Jo will be presenting a summary of the activities, experiences and benefits that the Peter Westblade Scholarship has afforded her at the Peter Westblade Memorial Merino Challenge dinner in April 2013 (Temora).



Jo Receiving her scholarship

Sire Evaluations

Last year, for the first time, Bluechip Livestock inseminated ewes to 10 stud rams, all from different studs, at the Temora research station. The progeny of these rams have been thoroughly measured and assessed throughout the year. We have 1 ram participating in this trial, Black 2893, which has performed well. He has the finest micron progeny and average for fleece weight compared to other ram progeny in the trial, with one of the highest tops to cull ratios.



2010-2069 entered in the 2012 sire evaluation

We currently have another two rams entered in this years sire evaluation trial at Temora. Both rams have indexed extremely well at home, and it will be interesting next year, when their progeny is measured, to see how they compare to the other rams entered in the trial. All three of these rams will be on display at our field day on September the 13th.



Pastora ewe weaners at 12 month of age Sept 2011

Wether Trials

At the moment we have clients entered in five wether trials at Temora, Ovens Valley, Bookham, Orange, and Monaro. The highlight from these trials has to be the Temora Merino Challenge where eight Pastora teams have participated. Between them these teams have approximately 120 wethers. When all eight teams are averaged their combined result places them in the top third for price per head compared to all the other individual teams. These are the final results from this trial. Another intake of wethers has just occurred and a new trial has started at Temora.

Craig and Michael Morton from Stockingbingal participated in the Temora Challenge and with a total sheep value of \$236, which is \$9 above the trial average, they were placed 16th overall out of 50 teams. In 2004 the Morton's entered the first wether trail run by Craig Wilson at Collingullie using wethers from their previous bloodline. They were placed 23rd out of 27 teams with a sheep value of \$189, which was \$21 below the trial average. In 2006 they changed to Pastora rams. This is a great improvement in only a few years.

The other great performance for this year is Pat & Marion Drew's result in the Ovens Valley Wether Trial. Their team achieved an average wool value of \$104.83, placing them first overall. They also attained the most valuable individual fleece at \$130.36. This particular fleece was a micron of 15.4 and weighed 7.5kgs. To read the full article on Pat & Marion's result visit The Weekly Times website and search 'Drew tops wether trial'.



Above: Left to right: Owen, Luke, Hayden, Jacinta.

Upcoming Events

Open Day

13th September, 10.00am onward
Clients commercial ewes displayed
Helmsman auction commencing at 12.30pm
Pastora Woolshed

Henty Field Day Display

18th, 19th & 20th September
Merino Stud Breeders Tent
Next to the eastern entrance

Orange National Field Day Display

16th, 17th & 18th October
Located in the shearing Shed

Private Ram Selection

Mid September onward

On farm inspection

Welcome all year round



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