



ASHMORE
WHITE SUFFOLKS
Genetics that Perform

NEWSLETTER

March 2017

Welcome

Welcome to our March Newsletter. This is part of our program to keep in touch with our greatly valued clients, and to inform you of the latest developments and progress at Ashmore

Ashmore expands with second ram sale in the Mid North

After careful consideration and plenty of planning we have decided to hold a second flock ram sale during spring this year. In addition to our on-property sale at Wasleys on 25th September where we will offer 170 rams we will hold another flock ram sale at Farrell Flat on 3rd October where we will offer 80 flock rams.

The reasoning behind this development is:

- The simple desire to expand our gene pool and our ram breeding business
- A top stud, Wheetelände, dispersed and we wish to present Ashmore as a viable alternative supplier for their previous regular clients
- With our desire to supply both quality stock and service, we believe we need to take rams to the normal purchase area, rather than hope previous Wheetelände clients will undertake further travel south to Wasleys.
- To qualify as a viable alternative, following our major losses from the catastrophic Pinery fire, we purchased a significant number of the very best Wheetelände ewes at their two ewe dispersal sales, plus two rams at their final ram sale.
- We have bred a significant number of additional lambs in 2016 from these purchases and through artificial breeding programs to cater for this planned expansion.

There may well be a number of questions that arise for existing Ashmore clients that we would like to address up front in this newsletter.

Q: Will the quality of the rams at the Ashmore Wasleys ram sale be compromised?

A: Absolutely not. Both sales will offer genetics that are at the pinnacle of the lamb industry on

measured performance. The average of our 2016 drop is 202 on the Carcase Plus index. In terms of genetic progress, this ranks us about 4 years ahead of an average White Suffolk flock.

Q: How will the rams be selected for each sale catalogue and will the rams at either sale differ in quality?

A: The rams presented at the Farrell Flat sale will be out of Wheetelände genetics, or will be by bloodlines that Wheetelände has also introduced in past years. We anticipate very little difference in ram size, body weight, Lambplan figures, or any other attribute.

Q: Is there any reason for me to attend both sales?

A: No, but if anyone was to miss out on purchasing all of their ram requirements at the Wasleys sale, the Farrell Flat sale then provides a logical option to top up.

Q: When and where will the Ashmore Farrell Flat Sale be held?

A: Through the kind agreement of Bob & Idrienne Neill, this sale will be held at the same place as usual, on the Wheetelände property, Wheetelände Road, Farrell Flat.

If there are any other questions, or concerns please don't hesitate to contact us. We are more than happy to provide answers.



Fully loaded: Rams will be trucked up from Wasleys on the morning of the ram sale on 3rd October.

2017 breeding program underway

During January we inseminated our top 150 ewes to some of the top proven sires in the country. In addition, we inseminated 10 of our identified elite ewes for an ET program. We flushed the embryos out of them six days later with a terrific result, yielding 100 transferrable embryos! We are certainly looking forward to the pregnancy scanning time to see how many lambs we should end up with from this exercise.

A further development was to enter into a Juvenile Invitro Embryo Transfer (JIVET) program to potentially accelerate genetic progress.

From the first round last August, the first lambs were born during January this year. Whilst the technology holds enormous promise, the final result was very disappointing. In summary, our 12 donor lambs produced 480 eggs which were then fertilized in test tubes, yielding 240 viable embryos. These were then transferred into 100 recipient ewes.

From this we only achieved 14 foetuses at pregnancy scanning, and 14 live lambs. The scientists who pioneered the technology, including Dr Simon Walker aren't sure of the reasons for such a low success rate. As a consequence, there weren't enough lambs to contemplate a second round of JIVET on the top ewe lambs born from this batch. However, we have committed to do another JIVET program on the AI and ET lambs that will be dropped in June, naturally hoping for a better stick rate on the embryos. Overall though, the 2017 lambing is going to be an active and exciting time!



Laboratory meets dining table: grading the embryos.



Embryo Transfer: The legendary Drs Simon Walker and Jen Kelly transferring JIVET embryos into recipients.

Highest Animal Health Status Achieved

One of the things we do to ensure you can buy with confidence is to provide rams with the highest possible health status. During 2016 and following the importation of sheep from flocks in several states as part of our post fire rebuild, we endured a rigorous regime of testing and audits to demonstrate that our animal health status was maintained. We are pleased to report that we passed everything with flying colours and have maintained our MN3 Ovine Johnes Disease status and are accredited free of brucellosis, lice and footrot.

There have been many reports of increased detections of brucellosis and footrot across the industry, so for your own stock health and peace of mind, you should always insist on buying rams only from accredited disease free studs to greatly minimize your risk of getting these diseases.

Along with the performance data we provide, our health status eliminates the need for you to take the risk. After all, the potential losses from contracting one of these diseases can be devastating, so why be tempted to gamble with your future income?

Monday 25th September, Ashmore Ram Sale at Wasleys -170 rams

Tuesday 3rd October, Ashmore Ram Sale at Farrell Flat – 80 rams

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