Rocklyn Merino Stud

FLOCK No. 501039 & 601505 EST. 1938

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 3, AUGUST 2020

WHAT A YEAR it is turning out to be! Following the extreme bushfire season and now the Coronavirus pandemic, the fact that one of our worst droughts has now broken has almost gone un-acknowledged.

The Greenethorpe area has had around 500 mm for the year to date, with crops and pastures looking better than they have for a long time. To capitalise on the season break earlier this year, we sowed a lot of grazing crops, with the grazing canola being a real winner.

Here at Rocklyn, we are thankful to live where we live in that we have not had to change our lifestyle too much due to COVID-19. That's not to say that it hasn't impacted us, with the wool market crashing, barley markets narrowing, cancellation of regional events and COVID guidelines restricting business.

Thankfully, our ewes seem unfussed by all the chaos going on around them and are making the most of the good tucker, with great lambing percentages noted.

DNA Stimulation Project Update

The DNA Stimulation Project, a collaborative project between MLA Donor Company, University of New England, MerinoLink Limited, NSW DPI and Sally Martin Consulting that commenced in 2018, is already starting to meet the target of doubling the rate of genetic gain of project participants by 2022.

The project works with project participants, including Rocklyn Merino Stud, to strategically use the genetic and genomic tools currently available. There are 30 seed stock breeders involved in the project, 18 commercial breeders breeding their own rams and 52 commercial breeders purchasing rams.

DNA parentage and genomic testing has enhanced the accuracy of the estimated breeding value predictions. With more trust in using ASBVs, the collective ram breeder group are improving their rate of genetic gain. In the first year of the project, participants increased the rate of genetic gain within the group by 2.4 index and are 5 MP+ index points higher than the rest of the MERINOSELECT database when comparing average index improvement.

Flock Profile and RamSelect's Ram Team Manager are tools commercial breeders are using to benchmark the genetic merit of their Merino flocks. This information is aiding participants in better ram selection and buying decisions to increase the genetic merit of their flocks.

The project focuses on capacity building to improve data quality and integrity, strategic use of tools available and most importantly, building relationships between breeders (ram and commercial), service providers and geneticists. The project is on-track, meeting all milestones and looks to continue on past the life of the project.

This year, Rocklyn is extending its testing and will conduct improved 50K genomic tests on all stud ram and ewe lambs.

2020 ON-PROPERTY RAM SALE

THURSDAY 10TH SEPTEMBER

Visit our website at rocklynmerinostud.com.au to sign up to our newsletter or

Find us on

MERINOLINK SIRE EVALUATION

2019 Drop 'Ravenswood' at Yass

MerinoLink Limited have recently released the post-weaning and yearling assessments for the 2019 Drop Standard Sire Evaluation being conducted at 'Ravenswood', Yass. Rocklyn's entrant, 170184, was sired by Centre Plus Poll 307574 and is a trait leader with outstanding ASBVs including YCFW 33.1, YWT 12.1, YFAT 1.8, YEMD 1.4, DP+ 211 and MP+ 193. Rocklyn's sire 170184 performed particularly well, being a trait leader for greasy fleece weight, clean fleece weight, FDCV, staple length, staple strength, post-weaning body weight, fat and eye muscle depth (Table 1). For more sire evaluation results visit merinosuperiorsires.com.au

Table 1. Adjusted Site Means for Measured Traits

Adjusted Sire Means are the average performance of all the progeny of a sire adjusted for all available information on sex, birth type, rear type, age of dam, age of measurement, management group and number of progeny per sire, in order to improve the accuracy. No account is made for trait heritability and genetic correlations between traits that can improve the flock breeding value accuracy, as is the case in Tables 2, 3 and 4.

The highest performing sires for each trait (trait leaders) are highlighted by shading. The **Progeny group average** listed at the bottom of the table is the actual mean of the progeny group.

Ram Code	Breeders flock, Ram number	No. of Progeny	Ram progeny averages for measured traits											
			GFW kg	CFW kg	FD um	FDCV %	Curv deg/mm	SL mm	SS N/ktex	WT kg			Fat mm	EMD mm
			Y^	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	W	P	Y	Y	Y
1	Bogo, 170003	48	3.0	1.9	15.7	19.4	89.6	62.5	28.0	33.0	39.0	55.8	3.4	25.2
2	Bogo, 170018	54	3.0	1.9	16.7	17.7	88.2	70.7	30.0	33.5	40.0	58.6	3.8	24.5
3	Bundilla Poll, 171495	43	3.3	2.1	16.1	18.5	91.8	64.2	23.0	35.5	41.2	60.9	3.9	25.1
4	Centre Plus Poll, 507333	42	3.1	1.9	16.0	16.8	87.2	72.4	31.3	32.5	40.6	57.5	4.9	25.5
5	Hazeldean, 000113	46	3.4	2.1	15.3	17.4	89.9	69.6	31.1	33.1	40.3	58.7	3.7	24.7
6	Hilltop, 160156 (HT156)	58	3.1	2.0	15.8	16.5	92.4	70.7	32.8	33.9	40.6	58.9	4.4	24.9
7*	Langdene, 140700	48	3.2	1.9	15.8	18.7	93.3	66.1	25.0	33.1	40.0	58.1	3.7	25.0
8*	Miramoona, 140012	38	3.2	2.1	16.6	17.8	84.4	78.6	33.3	34.3	39.7	59.7	4.8	25.8
9*	Moorundie Poll, NE73	49	3.4	2.1	15.9	19.2	86.2	71.0	26.8	35.1	39.5	60.5	3.8	25.1
10	One Oak Poll, W17002	46	3.1	2.0	16.6	17.9	90.0	67.5	27.1	34.2	41.3	59.7	4.1	25.3
11	Pooginook Poll, 170364	38	3.0	1.9	16.4	18.0	87.3	71.8	28.6	34.0	40.8	60.5	4.0	26.6
12	Rocklyn, 170184	48	3.5	2.1	16.4	16.6	88.3	76.3	33.7	33.8	41.8	59.7	4.7	26.7
13	Tallawong Merinos, 170511	39	3.1	2.0	15.5	18.4	88.6	67.6	28.3	33.1	37.2	55.1	3.4	23.8
14	Wattle Dale, 170625	47	3.4	2.0	15.8	18.3	91.0	71.6	28.6	33.6	39.0	55.5	3.9	25.9
15	Woodpark Poll, 160058	50	3.2	2.0	15.5	18.8	89.8	66.3	24.4	34.3	40.5	59.8	3.5	25.4
	Average performance	**46**	**3.2 kg**	**2.0 kg**	**16.0 um**	**18.0 %**	**89.2 deg/mm**	**69.8 mm**	**28.8 N/ktex**	**33.8 kg**	**40.1 kg**	**58.6 kg**	**4.0 mm**	**25.3 mm**

Rocklyn's sire 170184 also received good results in the Classer's Grade for tops and culls (Table 2), indicating high repeatability of good traits. Progeny of 170184 will be available at Rocklyn's on-property ram sale on Thursday 10th September 2020.

Table 2. AMSEA Index Values and Classer's Grade

The index values reported are based on measured traits Flock Breeding Value (FBV) performance with varying emphasis on fleece weight, fibre diameter, body weight, staple strength and worm egg count. See 'Index Options' (page 14) for more information on the indexes presented in the table below.

The highest performing sires for each trait (trait leaders) are highlighted by shading. Each sire is listed for Classer's Visual Grade and the same four indexes are reported at all site evaluations.

Ram code	Breeders flock, Ram number	Sire DNA Horn/ Poll	No of Progeny	AMSEA Indexes values				Classer's Grade	
				Dual Purpose Plus	Merino Production Plus	Fibre Production Plus	Wool Production Plus	Tops % (dev)	Culls % (dev)
								P^	P
1	Bogo, 170003	PH	48	89	92	96	91	-5	9
2	Bogo, 170018	PP	54	80	86	86	88	0	1
3	Bundilla Poll, 171495	PP	43	102	100	93	107	-5	14
4	Centre Plus Poll, 507333	PP	42	97	93	101	88	6	2
5	Hazeldean, 000113	PH	46	111	127	128	119	3	-9
6	Hilltop, 160156 (HT156)	PH	58	98	107	112	97	3	4
7*	Langdene, 140700	HH	48	91	92	93	94	-9	-1
8*	Miramoona, 140012	PH	38	108	100	97	103	0	-15
9*	Moorundie Poll, NE73	PP	49	109	113	104	118	3	2
10	One Oak Poll, W17002	PH	46	96	90	87	95	-10	-2
11	Pooginook Poll, 170364	PP	38	115	89	87	93	1	-10
12	Rocklyn, 170184	PH	48	128	110	109	109	3	-9
13	Tallawong Merinos, 170511	PP	39	68	97	104	93	-8	20
14	Wattle Dale, 170625	PH	47	96	96	100	97	14	-11
15	Woodpark Poll, 160058	PP	50	110	107	103	109	5	5
	Average performance		**46**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**14**	**26**

Rocklyn's sire 170184 performed very well in the combined visual and measured assessments, especially for DP+ (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Combined visual and measured performance (DP+)

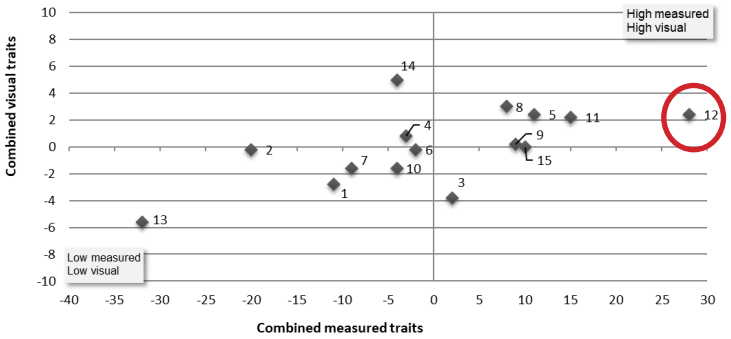


Figure 1. Combined measured traits AMSEA Dual Purpose Plus (DP+) index and combined visually assessed traits for the site objective.

With high clean fleece weight and body weight averages (Figure 2), 170184 is a high-performing, dual-purpose ram.

Figure 2. Fleece Weight and Body Weight (FBV)

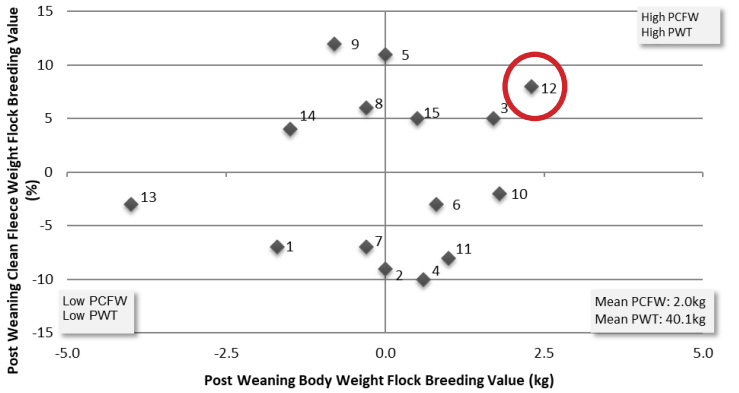


Figure 2. Fleece Weight and Body Weight (FBV's) – Sires that are above average for post weaning clean fleece weight and above average for post weaning body weight are located in the top right-hand quadrant.

Rocklyn's 170184 also topped the clean fleece weight to breech wrinkle assessment, proving that plainer bodied Merinos can still be heavy wool cutters (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Clean Fleece Weight (FBV) and Breech Wrinkle (Dev)

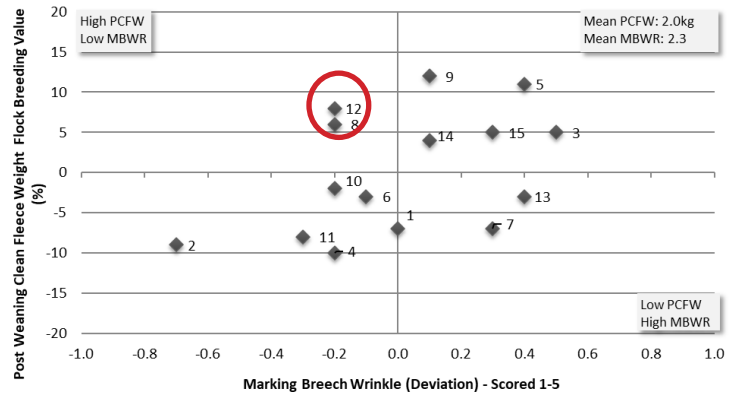


Figure 3. Clean Fleece weight (FBV) and Marking Breech Wrinkle Score (deviation) – Sires that are above average for clean fleece weight and below average for marking breech wrinkle score are located in the top left-hand quadrant.

CLIENT SUCCESS

Whist it is satisfying to see the improving genetic trends and ASBV results in the stud, it is most rewarding to view the success of clients.

Congratulations to our long-term clients T.H. Cooper and Co. who took out FIRST PLACE and the People's Choice Award at the Caragabal Merino Ewe Competition this year.

Rick Power (Nutrien Livestock) presenting Stephen Cooper of T.H. Cooper and Co. with the First Place Award, sponsored by Jemalong Wool, at the 2020 Caragabal Merino Ewe Competition, earlier this year.

T.H. Cooper and Co. run around 2300 breeding ewes, with an average adult micron of 18.46. T.H. Cooper and Co. have been sourcing their rams from Rocklyn Merino Stud for the past 11 years, with key attributes of the stud certainly having a flow-on effect. T.H. Cooper's flock boasts high fertility (average lambing percentage to ewes joined 112%) and heavy cutters (average adult greasy fleece weight 7.44kg).

The Caragabal Merino Ewe competition is held every February and provides a good cross-section of Merino bloodlines, classing objectives and sheep management.

SHEEP GENETICS UPDATE

Sheep Genetics has recently introduced new Research Breeding Values (RBVs) for ewe reproductive performance traits to MERINOSELECT. Breeding values are available for Conception, Litter Size, Ewe Rearing Ability along with Maternal Behaviour and pre-joining Body Condition Scores. These new traits provide breeders with opportunities to focus on specific traits.

The new trait analysis sees genomic information combined with industry data to provide breeders with more accurate reproduction breeding values. Information derived from lambing records and pregnancy scanning are used in the new system, plus up to 12 other traits.

Sheep Genetics has also launched their new search website search.sheepgenetics.org.au, which features enhanced filtering capabilities to make it easier for buyers to identify rams suited to their breeding program.

RAM SALE
THURSDAY 10TH SEPTEMBER 2020

Rocklyn's annual on-property ram sale will be held on Thurs 10th September 2020 at 'Elon' 343 Barker's Rd Greenethorpe.

- Seventy Merino and Poll Merino rams by leading sires will be offered at the sale.
- Inspections are welcome from 10:00am on the day, with the sale to commence at 1:00pm.
- Buyers will need to register with Elders before the sale and strict COVID-safe guidelines will be in place.
- The sale is held under shelter, with morning tea and lunch provided.
- The sale will also be live-streamed this year on StockLive. Buyers will need to register with StockLive before the sale at stocklive.com.au
- The sale catalogue will be available for download from mid-August on our website rocklynmerinostud.com.au

All sale rams have been paddock run (unhoused) this year.

Surplus, graded rams will also be available through private on-farm sales following the on-property sale.

Contact Ralph if you would like help to customise your ram selections to meet your breeding objectives or to discuss ways to improve your flock.

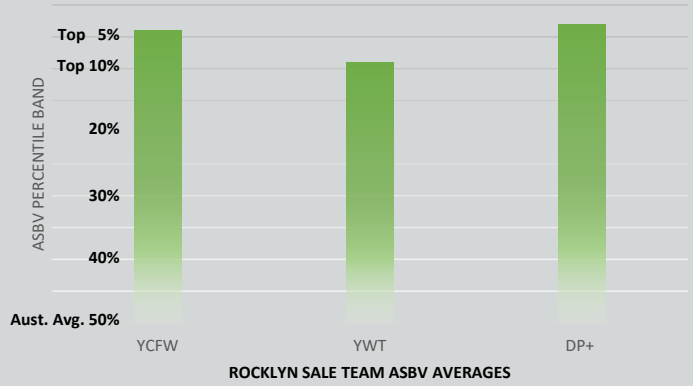


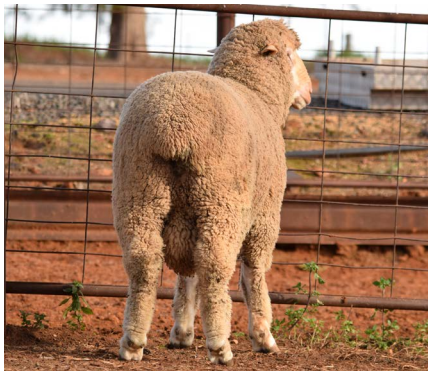
Figure 4: Rocklyn will offer ASBV trait-leading rams by leading sires at the 2020 on-property ram sale on Thursday 10th September.

2020 SALE RAMS SNEAK PEEK!

Lot 2: Poll Merino Ram 190304

Sire	WP172070
FD	20.8
BWT	90.0
YCFW	33
YSL	13.7
YWT	9.2
YEMD	0.4
EBWR	-0.47
DP+	206

Lot 10: Poll Merino Ram 190035



Sire	170003
FD	19.9
BWT	94.0
YCFW	33
YSL	14.0
YWT	12.3
YEMD	1.1
EBWR	-0.57
DP+	193

Lot 11: Poll Merino Ram 190219

Sire	170184
FD	19.3
BWT	93.5
YCFW	25
YSL	14.2
YWT	13.2
YEMD	1.5
EBWR	-0.66
DP+	194

We look forward to seeing you at the sale!

CONTACTS

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