



RIDGWAY

Poll Merino Stud

NEWSLETTER
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Early 2022 proved to be very tough again for us here in the Mallee. Coming off two dry summers we went into lambing with little paddock feed and no subsoil moisture, so we have been handfeeding all stock since early February. We had our entire flock locked up in confinement pens prior to lambing and the earlier lambing AI mobs were again locked up with their lambs until late May.

Fortunately, we received opening rains of 40 plus mm in late May and early June which gave us the best germination of feed and crops that we have had for

many years. Hand feeding has virtually come to an end now and lamb marking has been completed with good percentages considering the dry start.

Prices for both wool and meat are continuing to hold up well and a wetter than average spring is predicted, so demand for wether lambs and breeding ewes should again be high at upcoming off shears sales and markets. We attended several sales here in the Mallee last September/October and were thrilled to witness many of our clients achieve record breaking values for their ewe hoggets and 4 & 5yr old ewes.



CONTACT RIDGWAY MERINOS

RIC, GAIL, MATT & RACHEL RIDGWAY

50 Walker Road, Lameroo SA

P 08 8578 8039

M Ric 0459 432 679 Matt 0439 460 554

E merinos@ridgwaymerinos.com.au

W ridgwaymerinos.com.au

F facebook.com/ridgwaymerinos

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

During good times in the sheep industry, we believe that it is important to invest in technologies and equipment to improve not only our efficiencies but also our safety and breeding outcomes on the farm.

Over the past 12 months we have converted an old shearing shed to a 3 stand raised board with return race and front fill. We also purchased a new set of yards for that shed to allow us to work stock efficiently and safely.



Hopefully our shed upgrade will encourage young shearers like these Ridgway boys to stay in the industry.



Electronic ear tags really enhanced our data collecting abilities and have been used on farm for over a decade now and recently we bought an auto drafter to speed up our classing, cataloguing and joining processes. This will also be very useful for weighing and sorting lambs for market.

Our dam pedigree is something that has lacked a little in the past. We started using pedigree matchmaker but found it a little un-reliable and hard to use during some seasons and we don't have the time to mother all mobs up in the yards.

We have made the decision to DNA test our ewe base and will use this to determine our maternal pedigrees in the future. This process will begin soon and we hope this will improve the accuracy and predictability of the data we provide on sale day.

SALE RAMS

260 rams are available for sale this year at the various multi-vendor sales, our on-property auction or by private selection.

We are pleased with how this year's team has come up, considering the very tough start that they had as lambs last year, being drought-lotted until well after weaning.

Five rams will be sold at the Hamilton Sheepvention in early August and select teams offered at both the Classings Classic and Adelaide Ram Sale in September.

The catalogue for our on-property sale will consist of 152 rams in the main auction and 48 will be offered in our pen of three "buyer's choice" sale.

We also welcome your enquiry for the purchase of our excess 4 & 5yo ewes and ewe hoggets.



RETURN TO FIELD DAYS

With many field days being cancelled over the past two years we look forward to the opportunity to get out and display our sale rams this year.

This month we will travel to the Australian Sheep and Wool Show in Bendigo as well as the South East field day at Keith and the Karoonda and Districts field day in Murray Bridge. In early August we will be displaying and selling at the Hamilton Sheepvention.

LAST YEARS SALE REPORT

The following is an abbreviation of our printed sale report

Return buyers facilitate total Ridgway clearance

Alisha Fogden - Stock Journal - 10 August 2021

Satisfied clients returned to Ridgway Poll Merino stud on Monday to bid strongly and often, ensuring a total clearance of 155 rams for the Ridgway family at Kulkami.

Stud principal Ric Ridgway was “very happy” post-sale, as it was the first time they had achieved a total clearance of the larger numbers.

“We had total clearances years ago, but we weren’t offering as many back then,” he said.

“It was also really pleasing to see our clients get rams at the value they were willing to pay, but also interesting to see even some of the later lots go for prices up to \$5000.”

Overall, the Ridgways sold all 155 rams offered to \$7200, averaging \$2352 - a \$39 dip on the 2020 sale result, but “realistic” said Mr Ridgway.

The sale was interfaced with AuctionsPlus to help those unable to attend, with 12 rams selling online, also to mainly return buyers, including John Lamb Pastoral, Conargo, NSW; Stephen Allen, Goroke, Vic; Tim Philip, Maroona, Vic; and Simon Brady, Rhymney, Vic; while Daybron Farms, Wongan Hills, WA, was a new client.

The top price ram at \$7200 sold to fellow Poll Merino stud breeder Robin Schwartz, Pindari, Waterloo, who also bought the last lot of the sale at \$3700.

Both were by Gunallo 295, which Mr Schwartz said he was targeting.

“These will improve our staple length further and nourishment, plus their good muscle and positive fat.”

Now that all Covid restrictions have been lifted, we are also excited to welcome our interstate clients and agents back to our on-property sale again after the border closures of the past two years.

This years on-property sale will again be interfaced with AuctionsPlus. Photos and videos together with all objective data and ASBV’s of our sale team will be available online soon. We feel that this gives our clients valuable information to assist them with their possible selections prior to the sale and also eliminate those rams which may not suit their specific selection criteria.



The \$7200 top price Ridgway ram with Nutrien auctioneer Gordon Wood; buyer Robin Schwartz, Pindari stud, Waterloo, and his Nutrien Burra agent Josh Nourse; Ridgway stud’s Ric and Matt Ridgway; and Nutrien auctioneer Richard Miller.

The top price ram was an April 2020-drop, weighing 112 kilograms, with an eye muscle depth of 45 millimetres and 10.5mm fat depth.

The 19.2-micron ram had wool tests of 2.5 standard deviation, 12.9 coefficient of variation and 99.9 per cent comfort factor, while its outstanding MerinoSelect figures included a yearling clean fleece weight of 27.5 and yearling staple length of 13.6.

“We attended the sale last year and bought a pair from that same G295 family,” Mr Schwartz said.

“Because we lamb at this time of year, which is miserably cold, we keep working on genetic fat and eye muscle so they survive the bad weather better.”

The sale’s second-highest price of \$6200 went to return clients and one of the sale’s biggest volume buyers Craig Graham and Deb Stone, Glencorrie stud, Sandilands, who were restocking their Kangaroo Island flock at Duncan after the devastating 2019-20 summer bushfires.

Glencorrie paid handsomely for 18 rams in total, averaging \$2972.

Their top price ram was the first lot of the sale - also a G295 son - was March 2020-drop weighing 118kg, with a 48EMD and 8mm fat.

The 18.1M ram had wool tests of 2.6SD, 14.1CV, 99.9CF and had a 22.4YCFW and 6.5YSL.

Mr Graham said they were chasing “plain bodied rams, with fast growing wool and lower micron”.

“They are good doing sheep in our country - they’re not too dense in the wool,” he said.

Another to buy up big and put a floor in the sale was GNB Investments, Lameroo, who took home 20 rams averaging \$955.

A few rams sold at the third-highest sale price of \$6000.

One was among the ram haul by long-time clients, the Hampel family, Loxton, who averaged an impressive \$3725 for their eight; James Irwin, Balah Station, Burra and Keith, also bought one at \$6000; while Colara Farms, Tintinara, also got one in a sole purchase.

Also buying at the top end were neighbours McPiggery, Lameroo, with the one ram at \$5400; JP&C Hein, Murray Bridge, with two averaging \$4400; Altus Pastoral, Lameroo, with two averaging \$4500; GL&SL Auricht, Pinnaroo, bought three averaging \$3867; while CJ&YM Butcher, Meningie, bought four averaging \$3700.

Other volume buyers included the Johnson family, Mt Boothby, Tintinara, with nine rams averaging \$1689; Tara Hills Pastoral, Tungkillo, with six averaging \$2167; KD&G Fagg, Mt Mercer, Vic, with six averaging \$2267; LJ&SL Barrett, Lameroo, bought seven averaging \$2386; SN&CA

Paech, through Nutrien Murray Bridge, averaged \$1883 for six, while ND&CM Smith, Loxton, averaged \$978 for their nine.

Nutrien Ag Solutions conducted the sale, with Gordon Wood and Richard Miller at the rostrum.

Mr Wood said it was a really good result to sell more rams at a good price, while Mr Miller said it was good to see rams sell to all parts of the state and interstate.

“The consistency of the wool types here, they are some of the sharpest, whitest, crimpiest, stylish wools you would ever see anywhere - they’re very predictable that way and people were prepared to pay for that,” he said.

A buyers choice of 48 rams were also offered in a mini auction after the sale, with 18 selling from \$800 to \$1200.



BUY UP: Craig Graham and Deb Stone from Glencorrie stud at Sandilands bought 18 rams at the Ridgway sale.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2022

Australian Sheep & Wool Show, Bendigo VIC - Friday 15th - Sunday 17th July

South East Merino Field Day, Keith SA - Wednesday 20th July

Karoonda & Districts Merino Field Day, Murray Bridge SA - Friday 29th July

Hamilton Sheepvention, Hamilton VIC (offering 5 rams) - Monday 1st & Tuesday 2nd August

RIDGWAY ON-PROPERTY SALE (OFFERING 200 RAMS) KULKAMI - MONDAY 8TH AUGUST

Classings Classic, Murray Bridge SA - Monday 5th September

Adelaide Royal Show Merino Ram Sale - Friday 9th September