

MOUNT RONAN

WHITE SUFFOLKS & MATERNALS

Specialising in the breeding of elite quality prime rams

SUMMER 2016 NEWSLETTER

**"The profitability of our producers' prime lamb enterprises.....
.....is the key to the future of Mount Ronan"**

Happy New Year to you all. Hopefully winter will be arriving early this year. It would make a wonderful change, wouldn't it?

Thanks to those who invested in Mount Ronan genetics during the last season. The only agricultural enterprise we are now running on our farm is commercial ram production. Our commitment is to the enhancement of our producers' profitability and sustainability.....and to our own survival as a family business.

I have outlined some key messages in this newsletter for your attention....so buckle up!!

The **Second Annual Summer Ram Sale** will take place **on-property on Friday 29th January**. Start time will be 1.00pm this year, (inspections from 11.00am) to allow purchasers more time to travel to Mount Ronan, inspect the sheep, participate in the auction and return safely home afterwards. As always, a complimentary BBQ lunch and refreshments will be provided.

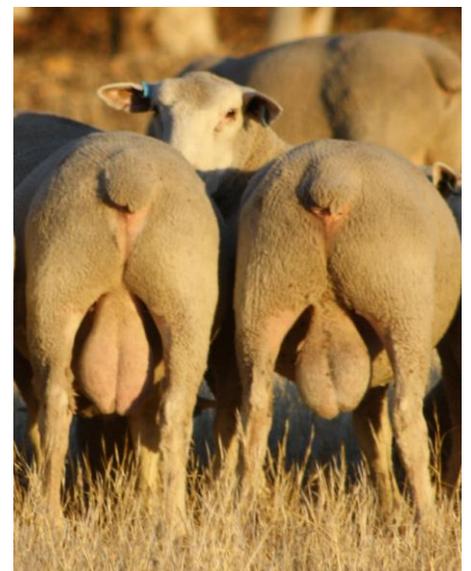
Feedback from producers who purchased rams at last year's summer auction has been outstanding. This year's offering of 2015 drop rams will be even better!! These young rams will perform wonderfully well and will provide you with the opportunity to access our leading genetics 6 months earlier.

We decided to hold a summer sale last year to cater especially for producers in the more reliable areas of the state. This is where specialist prime lamb production has the greatest potential to profitably compete with cropping enterprises, while operating with a much reduced risk profile.

In the higher rainfall zones particularly, producers can delay time of lambing into the winter-spring period and greatly increase profitability and cash flow by the use of high-powered prescription genetics and increased availability of cheaper feed. In addition, when operating such a lamb production system, producers are able to defer ram purchase expenditure until later in the financial year with consequent positive cash flow implications.

The summer sales at Mount Ronan will be a permanent annual fixture to complement the annual spring ram sale.

A large-scale, self-replacing, lamb production operation in the South-West of WA has demonstrated its capacity to outperform a precision cropping enterprise involving wheat, canola and barley, from a profitability perspective. Significantly, the lamb enterprise also has a lower risk profile.



Sale rams fleshing out at Mount Ronan.
Photo taken three weeks ago.

Ewe efficiency research at Mount Ronan

Ewe efficiency remains the key and research conducted in collaboration with Murdoch University has shown that the Mount Ronan flock is an outlier to the general maternal dataset which has been compiled through industry research. In other words, the Mount Ronan sheep flock performs too well to be included within the industry parameters....it just doesn't fit!

While this is indeed satisfying, we believe we are only just "scratching the surface".

We know we can produce big "profit-genetics" gains through our breeding program in the next few years. We are successfully identifying the most genetically efficient breeding ewes in our flock, and maximising their opportunity to reproduce lambs possessing elite-profit genetics.

Our breeding ewes are assessed for their capacity to reproduce their own mating weight of lamb in 100 days of excellent pasture availability. (ie. If a ewe is 65kgs at mating time, and she is able to produce twins whose combined body weights add up to 65kgs, in 100 days from birth, under ideal pasture conditions, then that ewe would have a 100% ewe efficiency index)

The breeding program also targets ewes with moderate adult-size genetics, combined with the capacity to maximise kilograms of lamb per hectare in the shortest period of time and at the cheapest cost.

Weighing and condition scoring ewes for the Murdoch University trial.



All 2015 drop rams being offered at our summer sale on Friday 29 January, will have the ewe efficiency rating of their dams listed in the catalogue.

One of our hogget White Suffolk ewes reproduced 186% of her mating weight in 100 days, under pretty unfavourable pasture conditions, during the 2015 lambing season. This ewe was sired by Mount Ronan 110337, and she received no hand feeding while raising her lambs. In addition, she is genetically three times more muscular than the average for all LAMBPLAN tested meat sheep.

The Mount Ronan breeding program is totally profit-focussed.

Mount Ronan Prime Lamb Producer Group

We are organising a forum and field day for all members later in March. The venue will be in the South West, and will focus on lamb enterprise benchmarking and management strategies for greater profitability. The keynote presenter will be Dr Andrew Whale, Director/Livestock Vet, Livestock Logic, Hamilton, Victoria, who specialises in animal health and animal production systems, especially within the sheep industry.

Andrew is a passionate, brilliant young fellow with a lot to offer. Producers will be able to stuff their backpacks and handbags with plenty of valuable information from this workshop.....also be on the lookout for trade displays, particularly *WA Rural Pumping Solutions* – Mike Jacobson 0409 102 021. Mike helped us out of a "sticky" situation recently, by setting us up with a wonderful solar pumping system

More details will follow shortly, and the event will be promoted in the media in late February.

Mount Ronan branded product sales

We are naturally very pleased to be able to value-add producer sales within WA and into the Eastern States. When bigger numbers of surplus breeding ewes become available from producer flocks, we will be able to organise sales via Auctions Plus, or directly throughout Australia. We have already assisted with the successful transfer to new ownership of sheep between Mount Ronan producers.

Joanne and I followed up on sales of Mount Ronan genetics in South Australia in September 2015 and in New South Wales in November 2015. We have growing producer support, particularly in the Wagga region, and the sheep have created a standout name for themselves due to their ability to thrive, grow and yield so impressively over the hooks. We are returning to NSW in February to service those producers who are isolated from the main action here in WA.

During our last trip to NSW, a local agent expressed keen interest in acquiring Mount Ronan bloodline ewe lambs. During a later discussion, he re-iterated that interest.

Clearly, there will be an increasing demand for such young ewes, especially “bred-on” types. However, producers must be realistic about valuations, especially early on in their breeding program. It is important that strong, reliable trading relationships between vendors and purchasers are established and serviced. If producers are just looking for quick money, then they will be disappointed.

First generation ewes are valuable breeders, but they are obviously not as valuable as second, third, or fourth generation sheep. As a producer’s breeding program progresses down the generations, the number of surplus ewe lambs is likely to increase each year, along with subsequent cash flow and profitability.

The on-going story of Mount Ronan 110583

Remember this young chap? Photo taken when he was about 12 months old.



Mount Ronan 110583 was purchased by Cherylton Farms at Kojonup as a 12 week old lamb, for \$3,000. Mount Ronan retained 50% semen marketing rights and his semen has been used in White Suffolk studs right across Australia.

He has also been extensively used at Cherylton Farms in its very successful commercial maternal breeding program.

583 is sired by the outstanding Mount Ronan ram 100337, and these elite genetics are dispersed right throughout the Mount Ronan flock.

583’s Lambplan figures have continued to improve significantly the more he has been used in Lambplan flocks. He is a true “super sire”, being currently ranked 5th on the LAMB2020 Index for all terminal sires of all breeds ever tested on LAMBPLAN. However, he is arguably the most outstanding sire when his balance of ASBV’s are taken into consideration. He has easy lambing genetics, wonderful early growth, exceptional muscling, very good worm resistance (PWEC), an ideal level of genetic fat (PFAT) and excellent eating quality genetics. Eating quality genetics are chiefly determined by a combination of intramuscular fat (IMF) and tenderness (SHEAR FORCE).

In addition, he has an outstanding constitution. **583 is a very rare genetic package indeed.**

BWT	WWT	PWT	PFAT	PEMD	PWEC	CARCASE PLUS	LAMB 2020	IMF	SHEAR FORCE
0.33	10.6	18.2	0.0	4.0	-40	234	119.6	0.18	-1.5

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1yo ewe lambs with newborns (August 26, 2014).
World class mothering genetics in action.

MOUNT RONAN GENETICS

\$ THE MOST PROFITABLE WAY TO CONVERT GRASS TO MEAT \$

\$ Mount Ronan White Suffolk and Maternal Genetics are designed so that producers can maximise the kilograms of lamb per hectare \$

\$ At the lowest possible cost \$

\$ In the shortest possible time \$

Mount Ronan sheep are run under commercial conditions and perform well in all environments after sale.

If you are looking for more profitability please give us a call.

2nd Annual Mount Ronan Summer Ram Sale

Friday, January 29, 2016 at 1pm

35 WHITE SUFFOLK RAMS (2015 DROP) • 35 MATERNAL RAMS (2015 DROP)

On-property 20km west of York on Wambyn Road • *Brucellosis accredited free flock OV/AC/44*

Inspection from 11am • Sale commences 1pm • Complimentary BBQ lunch and refreshments provided at sale

Tim Spicer, Elders: **0427 812 194**

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Guy Bowen: 08 9641 1483 • Mob: 0499 856 345

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Sale catalogues containing all ASBVs information are available before sale day upon request