

2014 Lachlan Merinos Ram Sale Summary

At the Rubie family's ninth annual Lachlan Merinos on-property ram sale at Forbes last Wednesday, a total of 115 rams from 120 offered sold to \$12,000 as one of the biggest crowds to date at the sale competed for their selected sheep. Forty buyers from across three states paid an average of \$2163 for the draft. With most rams being 12 to 13 months of age, this year's current short-wool tests averaged a fibre diameter of 19.6-micron, co-efficient of variation (CV) of 15.4 per cent, standard deviation (SD) of 3- micron and comfort factor (CF) of 99.6pc across the draft of Poll Merino and Merino sires. The Lachlan Merino five-year adult flock average is 19.5-micron and flock wool cut average is eight to 9.3kg.

The top priced ram was purchased by Brett and Jenny Woods of Rosedale Poll Merinos, Trundle. By Big Joe 449 Poll, the 115.5-kilogram August September drop ram had a fibre diameter of 18.5-micron, 2.4 standard deviation (SD), 12.9 co-efficient of variation (CV) and 99.8 per cent comfort factor (CF). It was the Woods' first time at Lachlan Merinos, making their way to the Rubie family's sale after they saw the ram at Dubbo National Show and Sale in August. "I liked him when I saw him at Dubbo," Mr Woods said. "I came here after the one ram and I am very pleased I got him." He said what attracted him to the ram was his long body and the quality and evenness of his wool. "The consistency of his wool is impeccable – his test results are all perfect and he stands well too. "I really can't see anything wrong with him." The second highest price ram of \$9000 was sold to firm client, Robert Green, Green Partnership, Forbes. The 108kg ram, by Midas, measures a fibre diameter fleece of 18.6-micron, 2.6 SD, 14.4 CV and 99.5 CF. Both the top and second highest price buyers took just single lots home.

Clients were again treated to a shearing demonstration of the 12-13-month-old full sisters of the sale rams. With the wool off comments were made on the long plain bodies of the sheep and wool quality and quantity. The most valuable ewe lamb cut 9.9 kilograms of 18.0 Micron, SD 3.2, 17.7 CV and 99.5 CF, valued at \$80.69, by Jemalong Wool. The twelve ewe lambs averaged 81.5kg, with average fleece weight of 8.5kg, with micron averaging 17.5.

Volume buyer on the day was return client Mark Jones, Condobolin, who purchased a 19 strong draft of both Poll Merino and Merino rams to an average of \$2874 and top of \$4000 twice.

Mr Jones, who runs a pure Lachlan blood flock, said that the Lachlan sheep were doing the job for him, having helped increased his wool cut to 8kg per head.

Buying rams from the Rubie family for 10 years, he and his family run a 3000 flock of self-replacing breeding ewes. "We keep with Lachlan Merinos because of what they have done for our sheep," he said. The wether portion of their draft are kept for two years before they are sold to the meat market.

Mr Jones said they can return \$169 per head. For two years running they have won the productivity award at the Don Brown ewe competition with a Lachlan-blood fleece. Roger Warren, Boorowa, purchased four rams at auction and secured another eight grade rams after the sale. He topped at \$1400 and averaged \$1100 for his auction rams. He said he started buying the Lachlan Merinos four years ago, needing a sheep with stretch, staple length, bright, white wool and were quick growing. "They have delivered all of these traits I was after," Mr Warren said. "They have handled two really wet autumns without a mark on them. "The lambs grow really well, very quickly. "We have no sign of fly or body strike and no colour in the wool.

He said this year will be the first year the lambs dropped will be 100 per cent Lachlan-blood and he is looking forward to the next couple of years when my sheep are more pure Lachlan blood.

The Knight family, Grenfell, paid to \$3200 for their six rams to average \$2300. Terry Knight said the Lachlan sheep are a genuine true dual-purpose animal providing high wool cuts, early maturing attributes, high fertility rates with deep crimping well-nourished wool. He said the fertility trait flows right through the flock, this year scanning 140pc in lamb, last year 160pc. Return clients, Taylor Bros, Caragabal, took home six lots to average \$1600 and top at \$2600, as did Des and Helen Mohr, Weethalle, with their six averaging \$1666 while the Taylor family, Caragabal, managed an average of \$1933 for their six.

Lachlan principal Glen Rubie, said the top priced ram was one of his best Poll rams on the property. "At 11.5 months of age he was the same weight he is today (115.5kg)," he said. "That's my goal – get there quick, we call it fast growth rates, which is why we shear the ewe lambs on sale day, to prove this point!" "People are always blown away by what Lachlan Merino lambs can achieve in the first 12 months of their lives. "They are a good reflection of our breeding objectives – to breed big dual-purpose Merinos producing meat combined with high wool cut. "We are in the game of producing wool and meat – if you increase your wool cut your bottom line is increased. "After all, you get paid per kilogram of wool and meat produced." He said their recent sire success with a number of rams dominating and excelling in sire evaluations and ASBVs for growth rates, number of lambs weaned and clean fleece weight, has been very pleasing. "We have set new standards and being used as link sires around Australia," he said. He said because of continued positive feedback from clients regarding improvements in their flocks, they decided to put an extra 20 rams in the sale this year. "Year in and year out you have your commercial clients, and we really value their ongoing support," he said. "There were some great buys again this year, with one third of the sale \$1200 and less."

The sale was conducted by Elders, Forbes, with Andy McGeoch as the auctioneer.



*Glen, Mitchell and Campbell Rubie of Lachlan Merinos, Forbes,
with buyers of the top priced \$12,000 ram, Brett and Jenny Woods, Trundle*