

AMS ewes a valuable tool in lamb production

AMS ewes are a valuable tool in the Cunderdin-based prime lamb production of Perry and John Jasper.

While the Jaspers may be renowned for their Poll Dorset stud, Jolma, their commercial prime lamb enterprise produces top results and is an important factor in their farming business.

Merino ewes are essential in the commercial flock and the Jaspers have found that AMS bloodlines help to achieve the results they desire.

The Jaspers believe AMS ewes have a plainer bodied Merino appeal.

“They are more fertile and tend to be suited to prime lamb production,” Perry said.

“They are a plainer animal that has better meat attributes and AMS select hoggets based on body weight so we can select for higher growth.”

The Jaspers manage a small number of first cross Poll Dorset ewes and say that the AMS bloodlines are almost equal to these in the prime lamb they produce.

“Whether it’s a sucker or a finished lamb the AMS ewe turns out a quality product,” Perry said.

“They produce a higher yielding carcass and the wool from the AMS ewe is a very saleable product.

“If we were using first cross ewes these still have to be shorn so the wool from the AMS is a beneficial by product.

“While it may not be heavy cutting it has a good micron and yield and doesn’t vary a lot in type.

“It sells very well, being keenly sought after as there is not a lot available.”

Over the years the Jaspers have managed a few lines of AMS ewes and they have suited their purpose perfectly.

The Jaspers don’t breed any Merino ewes themselves and say they prefer AMS if and when they are available, but find the bloodlines hard to source.

Currently the Jaspers are running 860 AMS ewes which they purchased from the Shepherd and Stacey family’s reduction sale of Mulureen Merinos, Shackleton.

The ewes were already mated to AMS rams and even though they had only been in for three weeks the Jaspers say they would be surprised if there wasn’t 100pc lambing.

“They were only in for one cycle and it looks as if they are all in lamb,” Perry said.

The AMS ewes fertility and mothering ability are also beneficial in the Jaspers prime lamb enterprise.

They say that AMS ewes are generally very good mothers and there is a high incidence of twinning.

“This goes hand-in-hand with the ewes body type,” Perry said.



Perry (left) and John Jasper, Jolma Poll Dorset stud, Cunderdin, manage AMS ewes for their commercial prime lamb operation and say that the bloodlines have numerous benefits to their enterprise.

“As long as the nutrition is right the Merino ewe can produce as much milk as any other.”

The Jaspers use a number of Merino ewes as recipient mothers for their stud Poll Dorsets and say that as long as they attend to the ewes with quality feed during lambing they are able to produce milk equal to their Poll Dorsets.

In the Jaspers commercial operation they don’t tend to get as much nutrition as the stud animals however they are placed on stubbles when possible.

The Jaspers also favour AMS ewes as they believe they have a better temperament.

“That is a factor AMS has been working on in the nucleus flock,” Perry said.

“A non stressed flock, other than being quiet, also assists in higher weaning rates as more lambs survive from mothers not walking away from their lambs.

“So the benefit of low stress and quiet

temperaments flows through.”

The Jaspers have worked for the last 12 years to produce terminal sires that are as high performing as possible to benefit prime lamb production.

“With the ram only contributing 50pc of attributes to the lamb, the ewes maternal side is a big influence,” Perry said”

“So selecting ewes for growth can make a big difference to the enterprise.”

The Jaspers say that commercial prime lamb production has been made more efficient and profitable over recent years with lambs now killed and the carcass measured through VIAscan.

“Heavier yielding lambs ensures our enterprise is more profitable and our ewes are working efficiently,” Perry said.

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