

CENTRAL NUCLEUS THREE SPRINGS

Nearra Report – Craig & Ray Morgan

While livestock returns aren't the most exciting thing on the farm at the moment the costs aren't as frightening either. Who knows where the next 12 months will lead us.

There is a theme that I am hearing more and more across many sectors of farming and that is "it doesn't really matter what you do as long as you do it well."

A trial conducted at Merredin over the last 3 years compared pure merinos, pure damaras and pure dorpers. Merinos as adults had as many and more lambs and produced a fleece of wool. So economically at the end of the 3 years came out significantly in front.

I strongly believe there is a place for merino's on our farms.

At Nearra we had a fairly tough summer with very little ground cover after 2007. The sheep were fed lupins at varying rates right through the summer and up until about the end of June. Although the crops came out of the ground well and looked good early the feed was slow. This was due both from rainfall amounts and grazing pressure. We have adequate feed now but no surpluses anywhere.

2008 is looking so much better than the last 2 years and we had an excellent July (160mm out west) and crops are looking good. We are now looking for rain again as things are wilting in the wind and warmth. 20 days is a little long to go without a drink on the sand, so I hope the forecast is wrong.

This year we single sire mated 15 rams in the nucleus and they were separated for lambing and marking is now part way through. We have been pleased with the percentages and there are plenty of good strong lambs whose mothers have big bags of milk. We are culling the worst for wrinkles but the cut has been higher this year and this has affected some rams more than others. One mob had 49 culled from 72 for ginger and wrinkles. That ram won't get a go next year! We are also not mulesing this year, just docking the tail a little shorter.

I was pleasantly surprised by the number of bales of wool we cut this year as it was more than I expected. The season showed in the wool results with micron nearly 0.5 finer than normal but the yield was also lower.

The rams are in very good condition and will be scanned this week. Approximately 250 samples were sent away to be tested.

The Nearra ram day will be on the **9th September** at "Nearra" starting at **11am**.