

Collandra North rams bred to perform

THE Lawrie family, Collandra North Poll Merinos, has been producing wool and grain for more than 100 years in the Tumby Bay region of South Australia and has been at the forefront of new technologies and farming techniques, putting much investment into improving the sustainability of their soils and environment on-farm.

Collandra North Poll Merino stud principal Sydney Lawrie said their high-yielding, early maturing lambs put more money in client's pockets.

"Collandra North's carefully designed breeding program continues to produce rams that transform farmer's flocks," he said.

Recent genetic investments have also begun to pay for Collandra North, in particular the purchase of Greenfields XP87 (Bond) at the Adelaide ram sale three years ago for \$29,000.

At last year's Australian Sheep & Wool Show, the Lawrie family sold a stylish son of Bond at \$20,000 to Victorian Merino breeders Kelvin and Jackie Pendergast, Pendarra Merino stud, Benambra, Vic.

The ram weighed 93kg at only 11-months-old, and recorded 19.1-micron, 2.5 standard deviation, 13.1 coefficient of variation and 99.8 per cent comfort factor.

It was a record sale for the stud.

Mr Lawrie said Collandra North rams and genetics went all over Australia last year, from northern WA, to the snowy mountains, Southern Tablelands and pastoral regions of NSW.

"The genetics are producing great results in all farming climatic conditions Australia wide," he said.

At their on-property sale last August, 109 of the 110 rams offered were sold, averaging \$1716.

The top-priced ram at \$4000 sold to Bralca Merino stud, Molong, NSW.

The 17-month-old ram, weighing 121.5kg, recorded 21M, 3.6 SD, 17 CV, and 99.3pc CF.

This year's sale will be held on-property on August 12, when 120 Poll Merino rams will be offered, with genetic influence from Greenfields, Collinsville, Banavie, Lewisdale and Charinga.

ASBVs will be provided on April-May 2014-drops.



■ Steve Agars out on his home block at Sheringa with his daughters Miley, seven, and Skylar, 11, and some Collandra North rams.

Hardy sheep key at Tungatta

By PAULA THOMPSON

FOR South Australia's Eyre Peninsula farmers Steven and Reyah Agars, producing large-framed, hardy sheep with early maturity is their key to success.

The Agars' home base is Tungatta Station, at Sheringa on the western EP. They also run adjoining properties Kappawanta Station and Tree Park Station.

The country ranges from limestone coastal, to speargrass pastoral, to red clay suitable for quality cropping.

"We run 9000 sheep and crop 500 hectares," Mr Agars said.

The sheep enterprise is mainly Merinos.

"We run a small percentage of crossbreds through our culled ewes," he said.

Suffolks go over the culled ewes.

"We use Suffolks so that in case of any mistakes, we can easily identify them and there's no risk of compromising the pure Merino flock," he said.

Mr Agars is the fourth Agars generation on the Tungatta

Station property.

"We've always had a sheep focus, we're in a good wool and sheep growing area," he said.

The Agars family has been buying rams from the Lawrie family's Collandra North Poll Merino and Merino stud at Tumby Bay for more than 30 years.

"It's the only stud we use for rams," he said.

"We use Collandra North rams mainly because they produce large-framed, uncomplicated sheep. They also do very well in our station country."

Mr Agars said he had been getting exceptional results from using Collandra North genetics.

"Last year we sold our wether Merino lambs at four months of age and at about 40 kilograms liveweight," he said.

"As they are very early maturing we were able to sell them prior to shearing."

Mr Agars said it was a real bonus being able to sell wether lambs early and beat the market flush.

"By selling lambs in the wool before the flush we've been able to achieve a \$10

premium, just by being able to turn lambs off early," he said.

The wool quality being produced on the farm is also outstanding.

The Agars have been nominated for Elders Clip of the Month twice, once for their September shearing and once for their January shearing.

Last year, at their September shearing, their hoggets averaged 7kg a head, and their cuts are proving to be consistent.

"It doesn't really change with the year or the season," Mr Agars said.

"We've been achieving very high yielding wool, reaching 76 per cent for our highest yield."

"I've been very happy with the test figures, we're producing fairly consistent tensile strength."

The Agars are producing fleece in the mid 21s for micron with a mature age ewe and in the low 19s for hoggets.

"Our micron has come down from what Graeme and Sydney are doing at their stud," Mr Agars said.

"The micron in our flock has been steadily dropping down over the years and without compromising any size or

frame in the sheep."

There are a number of qualities the Agars are looking for when choosing sires.

"Large-framed sheep are able to cover the distances to water on sheep stations better," he said.

Longevity is also important.

"By keeping the rams in good order, we would lose less than 1 per cent per year," he said.

"We normally buy 15 to 18 rams each year from Collandra North. We have tried additional rams from other studs but we weren't happy with the results."

"I keep coming back to the Lawries' sheep for their large-frames, early maturity, good fertility and high yielding fleece."

"The biggest thing I'm looking for is uncomplicated sheep with very good figures."

Mr Agars said the move to Poll Merinos by the Collandra North stud over the years had been a bonus.

"I've followed Graeme with his Poll Merinos since about 1992 and have been happy with the poll rams he has been breeding," he said.

"They are much easier to handle and generally a quieter sheep."

CN Collandra North

Rams that produce results

In 2015 we will be exhibiting at:

🏆 **On Property Auction**
120 Poll Merino Rams
12 August 2015

🏆 **EP Merino and Poll Merino**
Pre-sale Expo, Wudinna

🏆 **Bendigo Sheep and Wool Show**

🏆 **Royal Adelaide Show**



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