

8th MARCH 2010

TRIAL PROVES GENETICS IS THE KEY

Merino bloodlines committed to performance testing and genetic evaluation dominated the top 20 per cent of the teams in Australia's largest Merino wether trial.

This trial, coordinated by Craig Wilson Livestock, Wagga Wagga is being held at Paling Yards, Taralga and follows similar trials run at Wagga Wagga, Parks and Warren.

The trial commenced in March 2008 with a total of 900 wethers sourced from all major wool growing regions of NSW. This trial has 30 teams of 30 wethers and represents some of the most progressive woolgrowers and influential merino bloodlines in NSW.

All entrants are from commercial operations and include some of Australia's largest woolgrowers; the trial is unique in both the number of sheep per team and the quantity of data that is being collected.

NSW Industries and Investment sheep and wool officers are an integral part of the trial overseeing all of the thousands of measurements and processing the data.

Merino genetic consultant, Craig Wilson said one of the main aims of the trial is to evaluate the entrants flock genetics not only in terms of gross returns per head but also in net profit per hectare.

"This trial shows that woolgrowing can outperform other land uses in terms of profit per hectare. Results from last year showed a net profit difference of 77% between the top and bottom teams due to the genetics."

The teams that have performed well have a strong track history of performance at other trials in different environments. "The teams with the best balance of figures, constitution and conformation always come out on top. The top four performing teams all use on- farm objective testing in their ewe selection."

On March 4 & 5 shearing took place at Paling Yards, Taralga, all fleeces were weighed and wool values were calculated on individual measured fibre diameter, staple length, staple strength, and yield. Shorn sheep were weighed, condition scored, wrinkle scored and valued.

Mr Wilson said the entrants who are participating in this trial are progressive woolgrowers and it is interesting to see the profit variation due to genetics amongst the entrant's flocks.

"The reality is you wouldn't enter sheep in Australia's largest trial if you thought your flock's genetics were uncompetitive"

“When there is this much variation at the top end of the industry, it highlights why dramatic change must occur in the genetic makeup of the nations merino sheep population”

Genetics are the one thing that you have direct control over and this clearly has a large impact on your profitability.

This trial has received great support from Taralga Rural Supplies, Riverina Wool Testers, New South Wales Industries and Investment, Allflex, Moses and Sons and Aust Wool Network..

<p style="text-align: center;">Craig Wilson Livestock Wether Trial 2008-2010 – Paling Yards - Taralga TOP 20% OF TEAMS Final Results – Lifetime Performance Deviations from trial average</p>					
Entrant	Town	Bloodline	Wool	Meat	Total
Sam Weir Bertangles Pty Ltd	Bookham	Bogo	122%	99%	116%
David Glasson Jimenbuen Past Co	Dalgety	Hazeldean	112%	103%	110%
Pat Drew Anunaka	Bethungra	Pastora	107%	111%	108%
Brent Alexander Annesley Past Co	Lockhart	Pastora	103%	119%	107%
Bernie and Pat Dwyer Derrymore	Alectown	Greendale	105%	101%	104%
John Phillips Inglewood	Jerangle	Yarrowonga	106%	98%	104%
<i>Wool and meat values are based on five year rolling averages.</i>					

For more information about the Trial contact Craig Wilson 0428 250 982.