



Are your Maternal Rams a good return on investment?

Our sale rams deliver \$25.80 per ewe mated per year above industry average. At 7.5 ewes per Ha that is \$193.50 Ha.

Our 2018 breeding program delivered genetic improvement of \$4.20 per ewe mated per year compounding.

Other ram sources:

\$1000 rams – 125 Index (base level production)

Cashmore Oaklea rams:

\$1000 rams – 135 Index (\$10 per ewe mated better)

X 1 year @ 65 ewes mated per year X \$10 = \$650

X 3 years (200 matings) = \$2000

Cashmore Oaklea rams return \$2200 more per head over their working lifetime.

Are you getting fair value for money / return on investment?

RAM SALE

FRIDAY 11th OCTOBER 2019

HAMILTON SHOWGROUNDS, 11am EST

- 467 specially selected Performance Maternal Rams
- 40 Nudie Rams

Rams in top 5% Lambplan decile report.
Lambplan Maternal \$ index 164 to 178.



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OPEN DAY

10am, Thursday 26th September 2019 at Cashmore Park
114 Wilmots Rd, Cashmore.

Presentations on breeding and production,
display of sale rams and stud ewes and lambs.

Lunch provided.



Cashmore Oaklea Rams

Proudly Australian Made for our environmental conditions and market requirements.

Cashmore Oaklea September 2019 Newsletter



Economic progress 2018 was \$4.20 per ewe mated.



Maternal Recipient and 2019 ET Nudie and Maternal Lambs

Hi All,

What a great time to be in the sheep industry. International demand is strong and increasing for our excellent product and will see exports rise above 60% of the 500,000 tons produced annually. Supply is predicted to be down 7% this coming year and at some stage the dry times will abate and ewes will be in strong demand to rebuild the national flock.

At Cashmore Oaklea we continue to leave no stone unturned in our quest to breed the highest performing Maternal sheep that will provide better economic, environmental and farmer satisfaction outcomes.

Good luck with the next crop.

Don and John

PARASITE RESISTANCE AND RESILIENCE AND STOCKING RATE PRESSURE

We have been selecting sheep that show **resistance** to internal parasites in that they pass lower numbers of worm eggs in dung and our flock is the most resistant Maternal Composite flock with twice the resistance as the breed base. Our sheep also show great **resilience** as they are born, grow and live in a continual challenge worm environment, which is something many northern flocks do not have. Stocking rate pressure is applied to all young growing sale rams and coupled with parasites sees them only attain 50 kg and condition score 2.5 each year at 12 months of age. This means that a few fall by the wayside and only the fittest make it to the next stage.

We now often hear that Cashmore Oaklea rams thrive in all environments.

TERMINALS

Each year we purchase semen collected from industry leading Terminal sires, with most being Poll Dorset but the odd White Suffolk has caught our attention. Lamb 20.20 and Lamb Eating Quality indexes suit the direction we are taking out Terminals being moderate birth weight and fast early growth with adequate muscling and fat cover. One and a half year old rams are available privately from mid October and ram lambs in February each autumn post their final measurements.

173282, Leading low faecal egg count sire with bare breech

This heavily used young sire is the leading low faecal egg count sire in the Maternal data base and nearly 100% below breed average. This means that against a breed average mob count of 500 eggs per gram, he would express only 250 eggs per gram.



1500992017173282, - 97FEC, 1 % band Mat \$ Index

ET

2019 saw us again undertake an Embryo transfer program so as to better utilise the best ewes in the flocks. After classing up for structure and some independent culling on performance and type we had 3500 Maternal and 800 Nudie ewes as candidates. After using MateSel we came up with short lists of 34 for each breed type and reduced this to 8. Fifteen ewes were flushed for 155 transferable embryos of which we have had a good stick rate and have about one hundred 0.01 % band lambs on the ground.



After breeding and performance recording 8700 Nudies since 2003, these are the best 8 ET donors selected for the 2019 program after considering fertility, structure, wool shedding, genetic diversity and ASBV performance.

EWES BREEDING SEASONALITY

For many years now at Cashmore Oaklea we have been selectively breeding our sheep to be able to breed prolifically over an extended breeding season.

Each year in June at Oaklea we lamb down a mob of 3, 4 and 5 year old ewes which have all been demoted from the stud.

We put teasers out with the ewes on 20th December. The teasers come out and rams go in on 3rd January. It is important that the ewes have no contact with rams in October and November as this can induce the ewes to go into anoestrus causing them to lamb much later than you want.

The results at Oaklea this year were:

1513 - 2014/15/16 drop ewes mated.

Approximately same numbers in each age group.

1462 ewes were scanned to have 2668 lambs in June, 47 ewes scanned late to have 94 lambs in early July. 51 ewes were scanned empty.

The 51 empty ewes were rescanned with our July/August lambing ewes and 31 of them were scanned to have 45 lambs, 20 were scanned empty.

These 20 empty ewes were again rescanned when our ewe lambs which lamb from 22nd August to 30th September. 10 of these ewes were scanned to have 16 lambs and 10 were scanned empty.

Overall of the 1513 ewes that were mated to lamb in June:

2668 lambs born in June

94 lambs born in July

45 lambs born in August

16 lambs born in September

RESEARCH

At Cashmore Oaklea we are always looking at improving our animals and the systems around them and currently have a number of projects on the go.

1. Dung Beetles

Currently we are surveying existing dung beetle populations for numbers and time of activity. We have a dung beetle nursery running and aim to introduce a new dung species *Onthophagus vacca* that is spring active and will increase pasture nutrient cycling.



Kate Joseph, South West Prime lamb group with *Bubas Bison*.

2. 13 Month old ewe lamb embryo loss

A national data collection exercise is in place and aims to investigate when and why a large number of pregnancy scanned foetuses from young ewes don't make it to the marking cradle as lambs. Currently we have had 4 blood tests and condition scores recorded on a sample of rising one year old stud ewes and are currently tagging and recording details on all lambs at birth and any losses. I am looking forward to the final report, with either good or less than good news.

3. Use of Biochar in sheep feeds

Current information indicates that Biochar, the product of heating organic matter to high temperatures in the absence of oxygen, when added to sheep feeds can increase feed conversion, decrease parasite burdens, increase growth rates and decrease CO2 emissions. We have had a group of ewe lambs fed Biochar and a control go through a feeding trial and are currently collating results. Recently MLA and CSIRO have initiated research into this area also.

4. Pasture

Cashmore Park is hosting a ryegrass persistence demonstration site comparing Victorian and Base perennial ryegrass across 3 soil types. Andrew Speirs from Meridian Agriculture, Casterton is overseeing sowing, early establishment and will advise on grazing and calculation of kg/lamb/ha difference this coming 2020 growing season.



2019 Sale rams grazing Base Perennial ryegrass

5. Lowering Puberty in maternal ewe lambs

The 2018 joining saw us mate all ewe lambs at a maximum age of 7 months and down to as low as 4.5 months. This was undertaken to push our understanding of when puberty is occurring and spread the variation of our large ewe lamb mating data base. A number of fascinating insights were observed. The youngest ewe lamb gave birth at 353 days of age, and after a long and drawn out lambing the last at 430 days, a spread of 80 days. Assuming that we had adequate weight at the time of mating some females must need much longer time frames to reach puberty. This is probably observed when you see large, heavy ewe lambs pregnancy test empty when 85% of the mob is in lamb. In effect they are the late maturing genotypes. Similar to other years, the lowest puberty weight ewe lambs were pregnancy scanning in lamb to singles and twins at 28 kg live weight at the time of joining.



Early puberty rams (blue spot) from dam less than 360 days old at first lambing mated to 4.5 - 7 month old ewe lambs, March 2019 at Cashmore.

6. Marking weight

We currently have 9600 marking weights and post lamb marking 2019 will have 15,000 records in a good quality data set ready to be analysed. We envisage that valuable information will come in lamb survival, early growth and milk yield of dams. There may be data to assist understanding why some ewe lambs seem to take a week after lambing before they milk well, and potentially reduce lamb losses in this area.

NUDIE IMPROVEMENT, \$ 5.50 per ewe mated

2018 saw us collect reproduction data on 1032 Nudie ewes and performance record 769 lambs to 15 sires. A similar program in 2019 with the best 2018 drop ET ram lambs used as sires has produced some great lambs and I'm looking forward to getting them through the marking yards and having a closer look.

It is very pleasing to see that all rams in the sale catalogue are positive for NLW and YNLW, plus a number are double digit or even top 10 % percentile in the very competitive maternal data base. The Nudies are still \$20 per ewe mated behind the Maternals but strategy is in place to close that gap and essentially make them wool less Maternals.



2017 Drop Nudie Flock Rams as 1.5 year olds

TOTAL EWE ENROLMENT: "TEE"

At Cashmore Oaklea we often ask ourselves why our ewes do certain things whether good or bad. Some examples of this are why do some ewes get cast when the majority don't, why do some ewes get foot abscesses, why are some late lambing, what is the performance of ewes next year that have had difficult births this year, why some die and a myriad of other factors that have an impact on our overall returns.

In our research, we have discovered that the North American Beef Cattle societies have initiated a program called Total Herd Enrolment (THE). In this program they do a complete stock take of all cattle on the property and record measurement and events that happens to them throughout the year.

Cashmore Oaklea have developed data collection processes and implemented a program in which we record everything that happens to a ewe throughout her lifetime and when and why she leaves our properties.

We start with about 3,500 pedigreed ewe lambs at weaning. All of the normal Lambplan recording will continue to happen and on top of this we will record these ewes for our early puberty program, pre and post mating weights and pregnancy scan results. At lambing we will record how far away the ewe stands when we are tagging her lambs, any ewes that have to be assisted at lambing and why, any ewes that get cast, ewes that fail to rear their lambs and why if known. All dead and culled ewes will be recorded and the reason why.

Our aim is to account for all animals and have the best unbiased information at our disposal. Many current systems only record the animals that make it into the yard, with no understanding of where losses occur and dead wood that can be trimmed.

Each year thereafter half of each age group are demoted into our large commercial flocks. With these ewes we record adult body weight, pregnancy scan results and any observations that are made such as casting, birth assists, foot abscess, culls and deaths. Ewes that remain in the stud will go through the same recording process at lambing as the ewe lambs.

When the ewes are 5 years old there is about 2,500 in the flock and 200 in the stud. Their mouths are checked and broken mouthed ones are recorded.

As we sell all dry ewes from 2 year old on we will not be able to capture what their performance would have been. We cannot afford to carry passengers.

This will be a huge data set but hopefully it will be able to answer some of the questions that we have and support or dispel some of the myths that are out there. Is it the most productive ewes that lose their teeth early, are there correlations with traits and bloodlines that cause things to go wrong with our sheep.

This is taking a lot of work and resources from Cashmore Oaklea but if we don't start we will never know what we don't know.



2017 drop white tag stud ewes post rearing a lamb and pre classing. All enrolled in TEE.

TWINNER CATTLE

Mid February each year always has an interesting day and that is when we pregnancy scan our cows. John Connell from "Sheep Scan Australia" brings his ultrasound probe and rattles through them in an hour. This year saw 62 adults and 34 heifers scanned with 85% in calf. Of those pregnant, 64% carry a singleton, 20% carry twins and one a triplet. One cow is on a fifth twin set in a row and another two their 4th set of twins. The cows are calving at present with good survival from the multiples and showing better uniformity with the Angus infusion.



6029 overshot the mark and presented a set of triplets