

Another year slips by and it's almost crazy to think we are on the verge of another selling season. The winter here has been a typical wet and cold one, a good challenging test for our sheep. Nothing like a cold wet one, to get the worm numbers up for testing and stir the pot a bit which is good as it enables the good ones to float to the top. We have more depth of numbers and quality right across the board this year, so hopefully everyone's ram requirements can be met.

The maternal rams have been wintered in a big mob of 650, creating a bit of competition for feed, etc. With the wool off they will pile on some condition leading up to the ram sale.

Catching up with some clients at Sheepvention and Lambex at Albury suggests lambing percentages are going to be fairly solid across the board this year. It's great to be part of the excitement and positive attitude our established clients have and "can't wait" mentality our newer clients express about developing their self replacing systems.

If anyone would like to catch up for a chat, about their breeding program or a look over their ewes/rams etc please contact us to arrange a time.



# OCTOBER RAM SALE – Thursday 6th October

We will catalogue around 500 rams for our October sale this year which will hopefully help to satisfy the increased demand for our Chromedale and Icon Southie rams as has occurred at our recent sales.

Sale catalogues will be available online around mid September, on the Chrome website in both PDF and Excel formats so that you can sort by data if you wish. If you would like a hard copy posted please email us.

The October ram sale will be held on property at Chrome and will begin at 11.30am. Lunch will be available prior to the sale.

A good opportunity to inspect Auction rams is at our Open Day on Monday the 3rd of October 11am – 4pm.

Chrome will be listing all auction rams on the newly designed Ram Select Plus, to allow clients to identify rams that align with specific breeding objectives. The app has a few new features such as facilities to save ram searches and includes a ram team management module that stores details of rams, past and present, in order to track changes over time as well as benchmarking the team against industry averages.



Progeny from the above two Chromedale sires will be available in this October sale.



*Lead Poll Dorset sale rams in October sale*



*ICON Southie sale rams*

# NEW MATERNAL INDEXES

Sheep Genetics have release two new indexes for the maternals, MCP and MCP+. A description of the indexes and the forecasted gain over 10 years compared to the Maternal \$ index are shown below. We will be displaying the MCP+ which puts some emphasis on carcass traits in maternal sheep and puts some downward pressure on adult weight.

## Maternal Carcase Production (MCP)

The MCP index identifies animals with a carcase production focus. This index balances the main economic traits relevant to Maternal breeders which fleece traits or worm egg count are not considered important.

## Maternal Carcase Production Plus (MCP+)

The MCP+ index is similar to the MCP index with the addition of both wool and worm egg count. This index targets self-replacing production systems where maintaining adult weight and fleece weights are seen as important at the same time as improving carcass traits. It also aims to reduce WEC which is important in high rainfall areas or high input management systems.

Trait	MCP+ Gain Over 10 years	MAT \$ Gain Over 10 years	MCP Gain Over 10 years
BWT (kg)	0.14	0.11	0.14
WWT (kg)	1.9	2.51	2.04
PWT (kg)	3.11	4.03	3.37
MWWT (kg)	0.98	1.19	1
AWT (kg)	0	4.49	0
PFAT (mm)	0.27	0.21	0.14
PEMD (mm)	0.75	0.37	0.73
YNLW (%)	0.03		0.03
NLW (%)	0.03	0.06	0.02
PWEC (%)	-25.82	-28.05	3.43
YGFW (%)	0.09	-0.37	1.04

We will be reporting both the Maternal \$ and MCP+ indexes in our ram sale catalogue.



## NEW TEAM MEMBER

Robert Morgan has recently joined our team here at Chrome. Growing up near Ballarat he worked locally for a number of years before a four year stint in Western Australia (putting on a pair of gumboots for the first time in four years has been a bit of a culture shock) Rob has extensive livestock experience and has already proved to be a valuable addition to our team. Please make yourself known to Rob when you bump into him at our Open Day and Ram Sales.

# BREDWELL FEDWELL WORKSHOP

Chrome had a full house on a freezing 13th of July with 40 participants attending a hands-on MLA Bredwell Fedwell workshop. The workshop provided an opportunity for producers to gain knowledge and skills in breeding superior ewes through the use of genetics and better nutrition to help meet their enterprise objectives. Workshop facilitators Jason Trompf & Darren Gordon provided an informative session giving producers practical tools to optimize reproduction and profitability in their ewe flocks.

The workshops focus on the following:

- improved understanding of how to use reliable breeding tools to improve enterprise profitability;

- how to develop a breeding objective for your sheep enterprise;
- better management of ewe nutrition for reproductive performance, including lamb survival and flock profitability; and
- skills in assessing ewe condition and developing simple energy budgets for the ewe flock.

Practical sessions include condition scoring, feed budgeting, ram rankings and ram selection.

Judging by the huge amount of positive feedback, everyone should have taken home something they can implement to their enterprise.

## NEXT BREDWELL FEDWELL WORKSHOP

Monday 12th September, 9am – 3pm

\$75 per person (cheques to be made to Murdoch University)

RSVP to [office@chromesheepstuds.com.au](mailto:office@chromesheepstuds.com.au)



# CHILEAN SHEEP PRODUCERS

In late July a group of about 12 Chilean sheep producers and consultants visited Chrome to learn more about Australian sheep genetics and our production systems. The Language barrier was certainly a challenge but luckily there were 3 or 4 of them that had a reasonable grasp on English, who could interpret to the rest of the group.



## FIELD DAYS

We attended Lambex at Albury recently where over 1000 delegates from all over Australia engaged in the positivity surrounding our industry at the present time.

Hamilton Sheepvention was once again a great couple of days and it was great to catch up with many of you then.

## Chrome Sheep Studs



Coopworth • Chromedale® • Perendale • ICON Poll Dorset • ICON Southie®

# CLIENT CORNER

## Kevin Moyle

FORMER grain farmer Kevin Moyle has found a one-stop shop for reliable high performing maternal and prime lamb genetics at Matt and Tanya Tonissen's Chrome Sheep Studs near Hamilton.

Up until nine years ago -- before he moved down to Heathmere in the Victoria's south-west to "scale things back a bit" -- Kevin Moyle cropped mainly cereals at Hopevale, though also joining a few Merinos with Poll Dorset and Suffolk rams for prime lambs.

Sheep were a minor part of the Mallee cropping operation, but when Kevin made his move south he started buying sheep to stock the Heathmere farm, trying several types and breeds, including First cross, Composite and Coopworth ewes.

But it was the purchase of about 150 maternal Chromedale ewe lambs at the 2013 Hamilton crossbred ewe sale that has proven to be his best buy and his Chromedale blood

ewes have continued to outperform all other ewe options for production, hardiness and temperament.

"They've been excellent ewes – last year they produced me 173 percent of lambs marked and in 2014 and in 2013 they did 168pc.

"Last year I had a 141pc lambing average over every ewe, this year I'm down a little bit because of the dry autumn, so I've

had 130pc over all my older ewes, not counting the maidens," he said.

"I've been buying Chrome rams for four or five years and it has certainly proven that his program is working for me."

These figures easily exceed the 110-115pc lambs marked from the Merinos of his cropping days and his Chromedale ewes have consistently outperformed the fertility any other crossbred ewes on his property by 10-20pc.

He now runs about 1800 ewes over about 340 hectares of freehold and leased land. About 60pc of the ewe flock is Chromedale blood and the remainder are first cross,



Kevin Moyle with his kelpies - Tige and Brandy

composite and Coopworth cross ewes he has bought or bred. He joins his Chromedale ewe lambs each year and normally marks about 60-80pc lambs.

"Those few extra lambs you get is money in the bank, isn't it?"

Kevin also loves the outstanding maternal instincts of his Chromedale ewes, even with their first lamb. He expected to mark about 100pc of lambs from a mob of maiden Chromedale blood ewe lambs this year, despite their lambs dropping during a cold snap about three weeks ago. He lost only a few lambs.

"For a maiden ewe to sit with new lambs for about three days after it died is not a bad effort."

Kevin said he bought some White Suffolk-Corriedale-East Friesian cross ewe lambs on AuctionsPlus this year after missing out on a draft of Chromedale ewe lambs at the last Casterton sheep sale earlier in the year. But the composites proved to be "wild", he said.

"I've been driving through the paddock with them for two months and they still run away from the vehicle, whereas with the Chromedale ewe lambs, the second time I drove in the paddock they just stood there and watched me.

"I can drive through the paddock within five yards of a young ewe lamb with a lamb sitting beside her and they just sit there and look at me – so that's just a difference," Kevin said.

"If I get 40pc lambing out of them (the White Suffolk crosses) I will be fairly pleased and the mothering instinct is just not there – if you go too close to them they just race off from their lamb."

Kevin said he had also bred some of his own commercial Coopworths, but some of them also did not have the quiet temperament of the Chromedales.

"So all Coopworths are not all the same."

The Chromedales also handled the area's 890mm

average rainfall and often wet low-lying improved pasture on his Heathmere land, unlike the first cross ewes he bought about four years ago.

"I couldn't wait to get rid of them.

"It took them 12 months to get acclimatised, then they had foot problems and then in that real bad autumn about four years ago they got fly-struck on the shoulder."

Also the first cross ewes did not produce as many lambs as the Chromedales.

Kevin said the heaviest of his June-drop Chromedale wether lambs are sold in the Hamilton saleyards off their mothers before Christmas each year, with the rest finished on Lucerne and improved pasture for autumn sale.

Last year the Chromedale wether lambs sold before Christmas – about half the drop -- averaged around 25kg cwt and sold for around \$160 in the saleyards.

After missing out on buying surplus Chromedale ewes from the Tonissens in recent years, Kevin said he is now determined to buy or breed his way into 100pc Chromedale flock.

"I'll just keep putting my finger up until I get 'em."



12 mth Chromedale ewe lamb with twins

# Chrome Breeders Sale



## DECEMBER

Each year in December we hold a Chrome branded annual maternal ewe sale through AuctionsPlus for Chrome blood surplus maternal ewes. Clients that were involved in this fixture in 2015 had a very solid sale result and sold their Chrome branded ewes substantially above the current market value. There has been strong enquiry for Chrome blood ewes right through the year, ranging in age, from ewe lambs through to older middle aged ewes.

Please note that ewes do not need to be Pure Chrome bloodlines, they can for example be out of 1st X BL/merino ewes sired by Chromedale rams, as long as they are described as such. We would expect demand for ewes to be exceptionally strong again this year, so will be confident of another successful Chrome Breeders Sale this year.

To be involved in this sale please indicate your interest as early as possible to Matt on 0417 149 805. Sale details will be advertised through our media channels.



## CONTACT



### Matthew & Tanya Tonissen

PO Box 95, Hamilton, Vic, 3300

Ph (03) 5571 1797

Mobile 0417 149 805

Email [office@chromesheepstuds.com.au](mailto:office@chromesheepstuds.com.au)



Hamish Thomas Mobile 0488 666 265



## OPEN DAY / RAM INSPECTION

Monday 3rd Oct 11am – 4pm

## RAM SALE

Thursday 6th Oct

Inspection 9.30am | Sale commences 11.30am

EVERY 6<sup>TH</sup>  
RAM  
FREE

## COOPWORTH NATIONAL RAM SALE

Monday 24th Oct Sale 1pm, Hamilton Showgrounds

Chrome will be offering 10 Coopworth rams. Details will be posted on our website.

## JANUARY RAM SALE

Our summer ram sale will be held on Friday, January 20, 2017, offering approx. 180-200 rams with all breeds represented. As per previous years, the sale will feature the Spring drop maternals out of ewe lambs and ICON Southie ram lambs.