



SA Merino Sire Evaluation 2020 Drop nomination

Nominations are open for the South Australian Merino Sire Evaluation site for AI in early November 2019. The site is part of the Australian Merino Sire Evaluation Association (AMSEA) and is supported by Merino SA. AMSEA trials provide the opportunity for objective comparisons to be made between rams from different studs by evaluating their progeny for sheep type, structure, wool production and carcass traits. The progeny are all run together in the same environmental conditions with all male progeny marked. The site is important for South Australia's Merino industry given no other public sire evaluation trials occur in SA. Sire results will be reported in the Merino Super Sire publication as well as at site field days, newsletters and media.

Site breeding objective: rams will be capable of producing progeny with 18-21 micron fleece at 12 months with at least 4kg of wool from 8 months growth from an easy-care plain bodied sheep. In addition progeny should be capable of achieving 22-25kg carcass weight at 10 -12 months of age. Ewe progeny will be capable of high natural conception rates when first mated at 18 months.

Host property and ewe base: The McMahon family at McPiggery, Lameroo are generously hosting the site. McPiggery receives an average 325mm rainfall in a winter dominant pattern. The McPiggery ewe mature weight is 70-75kg and produce approximately 20 micron wool.

Site structure

The site will be evaluating 16 rams, including 3 link sires. 60 ewes will be joined to each sire via AI in early November 2019. Sire pedigree will be established through a combination of lambing paddocks and DNA testing. Traits evaluated include:

- Visually assessed traits – as per AMSEA protocols and include: classer's grade, wool quality, pigmentation, conformation
- Fleece: greasy fleece weight, clean fleece weight, yield, fibre diameter, coefficient of variation of fibre diameter, fibre diameter curvature, staple length and staple strength
- Body weight: weaning, yearling and at second wool assessment (20 months)
- Body composition traits: eye muscle depth, fat depth
- Worm Egg Count (if conditions permit)

It is expected that there will be a Yearling Assessment (full classing, midside and shearing) at 10 months in early March 2021. A further Adult Assessment (full classing, midside with no SS/SL and shearing) at 18 months in early October 2021 will be conducted.

Sire entry costs: the sire entry cost is \$3000+GST. 62 doses of frozen semen are also required to be donated to the site.

Sire selection process: Sire nominations will be evaluated by the SA AMSEA site management committee comprising the site Chairman, site host, industry service providers and ram breeders. Sires are requested from a registered Merino flock. There is a preference for young rams and animals that are polled, however all nominations received will be considered, and sires of significant interest that do not meet the above criteria may still be included.

Site labour requirements: The site has significant labour requirements associated with AI and subsequent performance recording. It is expected ram breeders whose sires are included in the site will endeavour to provide at least 2 days of labour or representative at the site per year. Opportunity exists to coordinate travel to the site.

Nominating a sire

If selected, you will be required to

- provide 62 frozen doses of semen from your sire
- complete the Entrant Agreement and the AMSEA Sire Entry Form
- Pay the site entry fee

Further information

Roger Fiebig, Site Chairman	0407 568 786
Michelle Cousins, Cousins Merino Services	0407 607 899
Bill Walker, Classings Merino Sheep Classing	0428 973 804

2020 Drop SA Merino Sire Evaluation Site Nomination

Form Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Able to provide 2 days labour (or rep) at site: YES NO

Please list sires in order of priority for entry:

SIRE 1

Stud/Flock Name: _____

Sire Identification: _____

Sire 16 Digit ID: _____

Is frozen semen available? YES NO

Where is semen held? _____

SIRE 2

Stud/Flock Name: _____

Sire Identification: _____

Sire 16 Digit ID: _____

Is frozen semen available? YES NO

Where is semen held? _____

Please return completed nomination form to :

Jennifer Light, Merino SA Executive Officer

Email: info@merinosa.com.au

Fax: "Attention SA AMSEA" 08 8231 7095

Sire nominations close 5:00pm September 16th, 2019