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SA MERINO SIRE EVALUATION TRIAL NEWSLETTER – OCTOBER 2021

DIARY DATES

October 13th 2021
Webinar – 2020 Drop results

October 29th 2021
2022 Drop sire nominations
close

Mid December 2021
2022 Drop AI

WEBINAR

The Field Day for the SA Merino Sire Evaluation Trial, in conjunction with Red Meat and Wool Focus Farm scheduled for Friday September 24th 2021 was cancelled. With the support of SheepConnect SA and the Red Meat & Wool Growth Program, a webinar has been organised for 13th October 7:30pm to discuss the 2020 Drop results and information surrounding the trial.

The following presenters can be heard during the webinar:
Ben Swain (AMSEA): Sire Evaluation in SA and the 2020 Drop Site results
Bill Burgess (Weatherbys Scientific): Sheep Genomics; Using this tool in your Merino enterprise.

You can register here: <https://bit.ly/3nWAFd2>

For more information contact Anna Cameron via 0403 747 332, or acameron@yalumba.com

McPIGGERY SITE UPDATE – 2020 DROP

From weaning in late July 2020 through to December, the 2020 drop lambs were run together as one mob on sown barley pasture. They were crutched and jetted in December 2020.

McPiggery had a good Winter with slightly above average rainfall, although July was dry and frosty which slowed feed production dramatically. Rainfall during Spring 2020 was above average giving good feed growth, however this was followed by a very dry Summer/Autumn with only 70mm rain falling from November 2020 to the end of June 2021. The lambs were supplementary fed cereal hay and barley self-feeders on and off from January/February 2021 through to mid-June 2021.

On 19-20 April 2021, carcass scanning traits Eye Muscle Depth and Fat were obtained. The remaining major phenotyping was recorded on 7 June 2021 for the 2020 Drop progeny, including:

- Mid-side fleece sampling: yield, fibre diameter, fibre diameter coefficient of variation, fibre diameter standard deviation, curvature, comfort, staple strength and staple length.
- Visual classing: fleece rot, wool colour, wool character, dust penetration, staple structure, face cover, jaw, legs/feet, dag, and Classifier's Visual Grade.



2020-Drop Yearlings. Photo courtesy of Duane Simon, 25th March 2021.

Hogget shearing was undertaken on June 10 and 11, 2021 with greasy fleece weight being collected, and post shearing visual traits shoulder/back and body wrinkle also assessed. Shortly after, the wether component of the 2020 drop was sold. The site is obtaining meat trait data from this wether component, including GR Fat and Carcase Weight adjusted for birth type. Results will be available later in the year.

Worm Egg Count was not collected on the 2020 Drop progeny as the average worm egg count did not rise above the AMSEA testing threshold of 300 eggs per gram.

The SA 2020 Drop Hogget Assessment Sire Evaluation Site Report is available on the Merino Superior Sires website: www.merinosuperiorsires.com.au

MENTARA PARK SITE UPDATE – 2021 DROP

There was solid interest in the site from both SA and interstate ram breeders again for the 2021 drop. The trial accepted 15 sires, which include two high impact sires as allocated by AMSEA. CIDR's were inserted on 1st December 2020, CIDR's removed and PMSG injected on 13th & 14th December, with AI occurring on 15th & 16th December 2020.

2021 Drop Sires:

Anderson Poll 160729
Callowie Poll 190055
Claypans Poll 170632
Flairdale Poll 190401
Forest Springs 190193
Hazeldean 002529
Kelvale Poll 191148
Lorelmo Poll Merinos 160172

Malleetech Poll 199100
Mumblebone 191150
Nantoura 190061
O'Brien 190455
Ridgway Poll 190240
The Yanko 190086
Wallaloo Park 172032



2021-Drop lamb marking. Photo's courtesy of Chris Prime, 15th June 2021.

Pregnancy scanning by Paul Cousins occurred on 11 February 2021 resulting in a 45% conception rate. Lambs were born 12th-18th May 2021. Lamb marking occurred 15 June 2021, giving a total of 572 lambs. We are waiting on some final DNA resamples collected recently before being able to share some early data results. The lambs were weaned on 13 August 2021 with a weaning weight collected, and even up shearing of the lambs occurred on 23 September 2021.

In the lead up to lambing, ewes grazed barley and wheat stubbles as well as being fed supplementary silage, with grain introduced in the lead up to lambing. To avoid disturbance, ewes were not supplementary fed during the lambing period. Following the lambing, the ewes and lambs grazed lucerne based grass pastures and once the season broke, were supplementary fed hay roughage plus some oats and lupins twice a week.



2021-Drop lambs at weaning. Photo courtesy of David Eckert, 13th August 2021.

MENTARA PARK SITE UPDATE – 2022 DROP

Nominations are now open for the SA Merino Sire Evaluation Trial 2022 Drop. The closing date to receive applications is 5pm Friday 29th October 2021.

The nomination form is available via:

www.merinosuperiorsires.com.au

www.merinosa.com.au



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FOR ALL ENQUIRIES

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SA MERINO SIRE EVALUATION SITE COMMITTEE

Chairman	Roger Fiebig	Breeder Representative	Hansi Graetz
2017/2018 Site Owner	Keynes Family	Breeder Representative	Matt Ridgway
2019/2020 Site Owner	McPiggery/Duane Simon	Breeder Representative	Stephen Kellock
2021/2022 Site Owner	Mentara Park/Eckert Family	Finance & Administration	Jennifer Light
Data Manager	Michelle Cousins	Site Coordinator	Anna Cameron
Classer	Bill Walker	AMSEA Site Representative	Stephen Lee

SPONSORS, CONTRIBUTORS AND VOLUNTEERS

As a non-profit site, our sponsors provide a very important contribution, and we would like to acknowledge their generous support of the SA Merino Sire Evaluation Trial. We would also like to thank those individuals, and/or businesses whom have volunteered their time in helping the site run as smoothly as possible throughout the year, whether that be in the form of providing labour, or helping with specific tasks as required by the AMSEA protocols. It is important to acknowledge McPiggery and Mentara Park, who importantly offered to be the host site for 2019/2020 and 2021/2022 drops respectively for the SA Merino Sire Evaluation Trial, as well as volunteering their own time in planning and labour.



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CLASSINGS P/L - MURRAY BRIDGE
- MERINO BREEDING ADVISORY -
- WOOL TESTING LABORATORY -

Bill & Rose Walker 0428 973 804



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James Ellis 0409 229 368



New Supporters of the SA Merino Sire Evaluation Trial are always welcome. Please contact Anna Cameron via 0403 747 332, acameron@yalumba.com to discuss.