



NEW MANAGER FOR WOOLTRADE

Wooltrade has a new "hands on" manager with a practical background in sheep and cattle farming, and a wealth of experience in the wool, buying, management and export business.

He is Brian Vagg, who moved to Perth from Sydney this month.

His wife, Cherie Mordew, one of Australia's only female wool auctioneers, will also be moving to Perth in the near future and hopes to find a WA outlet for her passion for wool.

Brian said he was quick to see the advantages

of WoolTrade when it was introduced several years ago, and urged a previous employer Michael Kiernan & Co., to use the system.

"Being Internet based is a major feature of WoolTrade, making it readily accessible to wool producers and buyers. With the wool futures market now gone, there will be an increase in forward selling, and I see a growing role for WoolTrade in that area," he said.

Brian and Cherie have a 10 month-old son Amos.



Brian Vagg

New Shearing Shed for Challara

Challara Stud principals Ron, Deanna and Peter Wilkinson recently carried out extensive renovations to their shearing shed, bucking the trend that will in time see some shearing sheds across the country sidelined as venues for parties or ecotourism ventures.

Ron is adamant that wool will continue to make up an important component of the farming mix on the 1950ha property south of Badgingarra.

The family run a Soft Rolling Skin Merino stud which was established in 1999 and has been working on SRS principles for 12 years.

With the 3200 breeding ewes, Ron and Peter - both keen advocates of SRS genetics - are placing the breeding emphasis on high fecundity and quick maturity.

"We want to maximize our return per hectare as quickly as possible, the aim being to sell our wethers as fat lambs," Ron said.

"With SRS, the emphasis on dual-purpose sheep is already there and we may look to feedlotting lambs in the future."

Challara lambs in May and June and has an average lambing of 90 percent.

The Wilkinsons have reached their target fibre diameter of 19 micron and are working on a target fleece weight of 7kg.

The revamped five-stand shearing shed will be put to use this September and the conversion from long-board to raised-board will offer greater wool handling efficiency according to Ron and the slope on the catching pens will make life easier for the shearers.

Local builders Mal Wilkins and Gary White carried out the Renovations to the 31 year old shed and as a shearing contractor, Gary was able to offer valuable advice.

Because the floor supports were beginning to bow, the shed had to be restumped and it has now been strengthened underneath considerably.

Ron tends to allocate some of Challara's bales to the internet-based Wooltrade.

"The number of bales going to Wooltrade depends on the state of the market and the market, but it is a useful option, offering flexibility to both buyers and sellers," he said.

"It is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week and we can take advantage of variations in currency rather than having to wait for the next sale."



Peter and Ron Wilkinson of Challara with John Aylmore of Primaries.

ALL EYES ON THE MARKET

Chinese and Indian buying, a downward trend for the \$A, and further rises in the crude oil price combined to provide an improved level of support for medium micron wools in recent markets.

Primaries' Marketing Manager Matt Pedersen

said there were also signs of a slower, but consistent improvement in the finer end of the market.

The currency movement was also responsible for heightened activity on WoolTrade last week with Primaries clients achieving their reserves.

Around the Field Days

'Misty Hills' scores on breeding values

There's nothing "misty" about the commercial picture emerging for "Misty Hills" the fine wool Merino stud of Russell and Heather Meaton of Kojonup.

Apart from an increasing degree of success as producers of some of WA's best fine wool animals, sheep from the stud are also showing out as prime meat producers.

After three years of measuring and comparing, Misty Hills progeny are now amongst the top five percent of more than half a million sheep taking part in a national 10-year trial to find the sheep with Australia's highest breeding values.

The EBV's are assessed on values of both meat and wool production and Russell and Heather are delighted that their sheep are "measuring up" on both counts.

The "Misty Hills display was a feature of the recent Williams Merino field day.

This year, the stud is again offering a team of 60 two tooth rams for auction at the Kojonup district breeders' sale on October 26.

"In the last fleece testing the average was down to 15 microns on the group of 132 Misty Hills rams tested," Russell said.



Russell and Heather Meaton, with Matt Pedersen of Primaries.

20 years with Woolkabin



Len (right) was pictured inspecting a Woolkabin fleece with Chris Patterson (centre) and Tim Chapman of Primaries.

Keen to see this year's ram offering at Woolkabin during the Merino field days was Primaries client Len Simmonds of West Brookton.

Len has bred his flock on Woolkabin bloodlines for the past 20 years. Last year he paid \$10, 250 for Woolkabin's top poll ram to enhance his breeding programme and marked 150 lambs from a mating with his top ewes.

Ken runs a 2,000 acre property at West Brookton and shears for seven months of the year - 'getting home for tea every night.'

Carl Poingdestre of Primaries arranged for Len's clip to be auctioned in January when an eight-bale line of fine, high yielding wool topped the sale at 710 cents per kilogram. Last year the Woolkabin-based clip averaged 19.8 microns.

Primaries award to Rangeview

The King family's well known Rangeview stud at Darkan was one of the exhibitors at Williams showground during Field Day week, and went on to win a Primaries' field day award.

Pictured receiving the Primaries award from Matt Pedersen were Jeremy, John and Jarrod King. Jeremy King markets wool through Primaries and is a keen supporter of WoolTrade.

Rangeview's 10 year flock average micron is 19.5, with a 6.9 kg per head wool cut. The annual on-property two-tooth ram sale will be on Monday, October 11.

Top class from Quailerup



Donald Pentz, (left) and Tim Chapman of Primaries with Andrew Scanlon of Quailerup.

Discerning Merino buyers previewed another top class offering of sale rams at the Quailerup stud of Peter, Andrew and Deborah Scanlon, Wagin during the Merino field day week.

Quailerup will offer fifteen poll Merino rams for the first time this year at the annual on-property sale to be conducted by Primaries on Wednesday, October 6. The new polls have been developed from a Roseville/Baraminning base in response to demand from Quailerup clients. The exceptional characteristics of "Quailerup 80" are noticeable in the breeding of many of the 140 two-tooth flock rams on offer at this year's sale.

Quailerup also has some good lambs on the ground this year from ewes purchased at the Cringleber stud (Tammin) dispersal. Some of these are expected to be available in 2005. Peter Scanlon said clients who continued to build the ewe and wool quality components of their flocks, were still doing well with their Merino enterprises.

"At current prices, it will take some pretty good crops to beat Merinos for all-round income this year," he said.

At the 2004 Katanning Sheep Show, the grand champion March shorn Merino ram ribbon went to the Rangeview Stud of Darkan. Pictured with the ram is Matt Pedersen (left) of Primaries who represents the sponsor of this award given to John, Jarrod and Jeremy King of Rangeview.



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