

NEWSLETTER

August 2024



ASHMORERAMS

Genetics that Perform

WELCOME

Welcome to our August Newsletter, produced to keep our greatly valued clients informed with our latest developments and progress.

Latest News

The past year has been full of exciting developments at Ashmore.

In August 2023, we employed Brent Shewan from South Africa to assist with our growing workload. Brent is a diesel mechanic with a cropping and civil engineering background back in South Africa. It has been a massive move for Brent who has migrated to Australia with his wife, Avril, and two young children. Brent has hit the ground running and has now seen a full cycle of our production year.



Brent, Avril, Riley and Jake at last years ram sale.

In May 2024, we purchased a 270ha sheep property called "Millbrae" near Harrogate in the Adelaide Hills.

The property has been in the same family for 7 generations since the 1840's so its an honor to write the next chapter of such a historic property.



Millbrae is a mixture of arable flats that have been sown for grazing and non-arable hills which we have lambed all our ewes on. Slightly higher rainfall (450mm) and a road around the whole farm for biosecurity are all things that attracted us to the property. This move has allowed us to plant lentils across the home farm with the exception of a few paddocks sown to pasture for the sale ram who have remained at Wasleys.

Lambing at Millbrae has been a challenge with predation from foxes causing losses of 20% to marking so we are contemplating exclusion fencing some or all of the property.

We also have also employed the previous owner of the farm, Dale Mills, who has been another great addition to our team. Dale has assisted Troy and Nette with tagging at birth as well as sowing the pastures, spraying, spreading and general animal husbandry. Both Dale and Brent will be helping out at our annual sale in September so make sure you have a chat with them, they are both terrific blokes.

Troy Fischer: 0456 230 099

Nette Fischer: 0439 933 111

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Lamb prices vs. season—what a mongrel but hang in there!

Many of you would have experienced the most challenging 18 months in recent memory as a result of significantly lower livestock prices followed by the toughest seasonal start on record. Watching the fodder supplies dry up and the labour required to feed that out has been a financial and mental challenge and its important to make sure we look out for each other and talk to someone if you are struggling mentally.

A key thing to remember is these factors are out of our control and history shows that they don't last forever.

In less than 18 months we have seen lamb values halve and then return to 20 year highs. Likewise mutton values fell through the floor but its possible we will see ewes making big \$ again due to tight supply and people wanting to cash in on high lamb values. At the Lambex conference recently there were forecasts of lamb prices ranging from \$8/kg up to \$10.50 in the near future. Who knows what will happen but for those that have hung in there, we hope you will be rewarded.

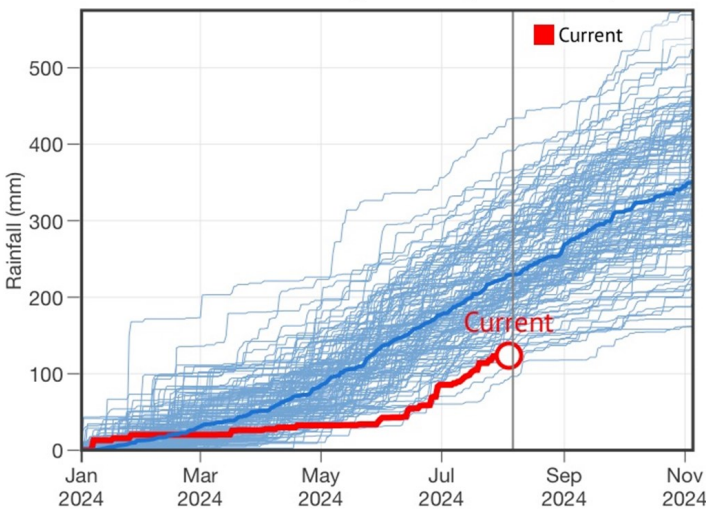
We have had 108mm YTD at Wasleys with crops about 6-8 weeks behind normal due to late emergence. There is still potential but a kind spring is essential. Whilst we haven't given up hope, we have done some worst case budget modelling for our bank and they have indicated that they have our backs if no spring rain arrives.

Coles Farmer of the Year



James Wagstaff
Two South Australian families have been recognised among the nation's best farmers. Sheep farmers the Fischer family of Wasleys, north of Adelaide, and potato growers the Buckley family of Pleasant Park, near Mt Gambier, were among 16 finalists honoured at the Weekly Times Coles Farmer of the Year awards in Melbourne last night. The awards honoured the best in farming in 2023 across six categories: beef, cropping, dairy, horticulture, sheep farming, and innovation. Judging is centred on productivity, sustainability and innovation. For the Fischers, who run 100 ewes on 14,000 hectares and sell 500 lambs a year, it includes a successful transition to the operation of the 2023 Flewo's. Since the first they have more than tripled the area they farm and doubled sheep numbers at Ashmore Rams, one of Australia's biggest White Suffolk studs. "We are conscious of our future as investment and we know the cost of production of the studs we produce and we are constantly trying to improve that," said Troy Fischer. The Buckley family, of Buckley Innovative Farming, were recognised as finalists in the horticulture category. They grow 24,000 tonnes of potatoes a year for people Smiths Chips, McCain Foods and Asahi's Ions, and focus on soil health. "The best Farmer of the Year title went to the Corah family from Cardrona in Queensland who were recognised for their forward-thinking approach to growing crops. The family has cut nitrogen fertilizer usage while increasing yields. They are also among Australia's first cropping farmers to run a soil carbon project."

Rainfall Jan-Aug 2024 (MALLALA)



Troy and Nette were very humbled to be named as a finalist in the sheep category of the Coles Farmer of the Year awards. We were excited to participate in the awards and meet many cutting edge farmers from across the country in a range of industries like horticulture, cropping, dairy, beef, etc.

The awards ceremony was held at the MCG in Melbourne and attended by a number of high profile people from Coles, the media and members of Parliament.

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Nette & Troy didn't miss the opportunity to meet MP David Littleproud, he came across as extremely passionate about Agriculture, in particular about keeping Live Export.

UltraWhites steadily building

We have been steadily breeding our UltraWhites as well as bulking up numbers of shedders with UW x F1 and F2 this year. The crosses are really interesting sheep, expressing a fair bit of hybrid vigour in growth and maternal traits. Our goal is to capture the best of both breeds in these crosses and take those traits forward into stabilised pure UltraWhite once they reach 4 generations of back cross (F4).

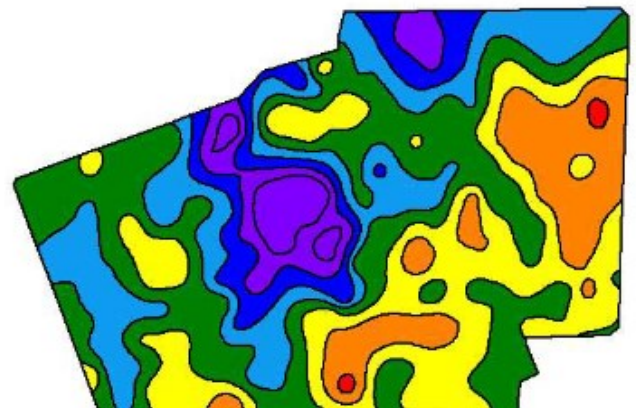
We have a limited number of pure and UW x WS F1 rams available this spring which we are selling privately. Please call Nette or Troy if you are interested.

There is often confusion between the shedding breeds, partly because the names are so similar!

UltraWhites have compulsory participation in Lambplan for all registered studs which is resulting in rapid improvement in their ASBVs. It is exciting to see how quickly we can push their production traits whilst maintaining their structure and shedding ability.

Smoothing out variation

Over the past 6 or 7 years the cropping side of our business has grown considerably with over 1300ha sown to wheat or lentils this year. Earlier this year we had 600ha of land pH mapped by Kym l'Anson of Mr pH soil testing services at Marabel. We did this as we had identified some underperforming areas in the lentil phase which is often an indicator of acidity and/or waterlogging. The maps generated were a real eye opener, we highly recommend Mr pH soil testing services. We used the maps to target the areas with pH below 6 and applied 3t of lime per hectare totaling 1100t spread. We used the pH maps overlaid on Google Earth to enable us to spread in exactly the right location of each paddock without the need to use a contractor to VR spread. Hopefully we will see some positive crop responses in years to come as the lime works its way through the profile.



An example of one of the pH maps showing huge variation across only 30ha from pH 4 (red) to pH 8 (purple).

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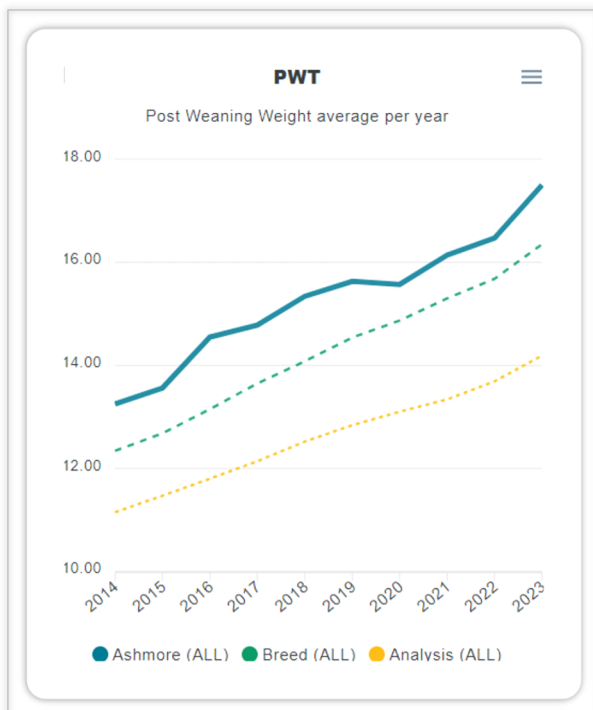
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Ashmore Ram Sale 2024

This year's ram team are shaping up to be our best offering yet. Our #1 focus is on breeding rams that contribute to a profitable lamb enterprise for our clients. Here is a summary of our objectives.

1. Growth + Muscle

Our White Suffolk flock leads the industry for growth and muscle. We are focused on how heavy and muscular our rams are at 4-7 months of age and measure them then. Extremely tall, long legged rams might look great in spring at 15 months but can lack the maturity pattern to turn lambs off grass quickly. Lambs that grow fast early with more muscle have lower cost on farm and are worth more when you sell them. Growth combined with high muscle ASBVs is key to this.



2. Easy Care

Sheep need to do their job with as little intervention as possible because labour is one of our biggest costs. By this we mean ewes need to lamb without assistance, rams don't breakdown, etc. With this in mind we measure birth weight and lambing ease, select for sound feet and leg structure with no foot trimming. Scrotal circumference and Worm Egg Count is also measured on every ram to produce ASBVS for these traits.

We also don't over feed our rams. It's not necessary to produce rams >100kg as it can create issues for longevity, shearing, handling and semen quality.



3. Eating Quality

When more processors pay on traits like marbling we will have the genetics to achieve good marbling scores in lamb. We are already ahead of the pack for this trait and will continue to improve it with the future in mind.

Ashmore Ram Sale, Monday 23rd September, 1460 Wasleys Rd, Wasleys

180 Rams with average Terminal Carcase Production Index in top 20% of Terminals

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