



Flock 336 - Est. 1960



KENTISH DOWNS POLL DORSET STUD

Newsletter No.1

August 2008



Welcome

Welcome to the 1st Kentish Downs Newsletter for 2008. We trust this newsletter greets you all with markedly improved seasonal conditions from those we have been experiencing over the past six months.

Our newsletter is aimed at establishing a consistent information flow from us to all lamb producers, on events past, present and future at Kentish Downs.

Our breeding objective is to produce prime lamb sires that will make a significant positive difference to your bottom line profitability. The support we have received at our ram sales has been terrific. However, we realise that support will only remain and grow if we continue to improve our product. In order to achieve this we need and value your feedback, whether it is positive or negative we want to hear what we need to hear, not just what we'd like to hear!

Kentish Downs Website Launch

In 2007 we launched our new website which had a fantastic response. We will continue to keep this site updated and as informative as possible.

Breeding is a Patience Game

Breeding is like a game of patience, for progress is generally relatively slow for each individual selection point. This is because we are trying to improve many points at the same time. Single trait emphasis achieves much more rapid progress for that point, because you concentrate your selection on that point only. However single trait emphasis is a dangerous and futile exercise. For example, it is no use rapidly increasing muscle throughout the flock if it leads to a huge loss of growth rate, which could well be the case. Beside structure, length and specific body shape and cleaner points, there is fertility growth rate, leanness and muscling to all be controlled in most prime lamb seedstock enterprises. To avoid disasters in stud breeding programs, we feel it is more important to have a good balance of top figures and other positive assessment points, while addressing progress in particular individual traits carefully, without risking a downturn in others. Your feedback is very important because if we are to change some aspects of the rams we are producing, we need to know.

2008 Ram Sale - Wednesday 1st October

The 2008 Ram Sale Catalogue will be available online from the middle of September on our website or alternatively please contact us for a catalogue on (02) 60367261.

Coming events for 2008

September

Sept 2-8	Adelaide Royal Show
Sept 13-16	Bendigo Australasian Poll Dorset Show & Sale
Sept 23-25	Henty Field Days – Site U2

October

Oct 1 On-Property Sale Day 1:30pm

The Right Blend

From all the selection traits that come into our focus, we feel the one that has the biggest influence on your profitability is growth rate. The promising start to the 2007 season saw our lambs growing like 'mushrooms' and are more even than in previous years. We are endeavouring to get our 'blend' right, with higher growth rates, neutral fat and increased muscle. Feedback that has come back identified that there is a need for more neutral fat ASBVs with the tough seasons we have been having. Out of the 150 clients surveyed last year 95% finished their own lambs. We are very pleased with this aspect of our breeding program. We feel that if the client spends the money, does the research and goes through the painstaking task of lambing, then they should profit from the finished product, not someone else.

2007 Sale Report

A big thankyou to all who purchased Kentish Downs rams in 2007, whether at our annual sale or privately. Over, 116 rams were offered at the spring auction, including 60 spring-drop rams, which sold to a 77% clearance and an \$675 average. We all know the 2007 season was a big contributor to a downturn in prices, particularly towards the end of September when it became apparent the country was not going to be saved by a spring deluge. While the average and clearance was lower than in recent preceding sales, considering the seasonal conditions and buyer confidence, we were very happy with this result. Particular thanks to all those loyal clients who have bought year in year out, individually or through agents. Last year clients were able to pick up some significantly cheaper and average breaking rams as a result.



Henty Field Days Inspection September 23rd – 25th

Please come and visit us at Henty - Site U2 and have a cup of coffee and chew the fat while viewing a selection of our 2008 sale rams.

www.kentishdowns.com.au

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