

The Maternal Qualities of the Dohne



Wayne Hawkins
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A Picture Paints a 1,000 Words



World Leaders ???

Background

Positive Succession Outcome – move from a successful large family farming operation to start our new journey together.



- In 1997 we formed Circle H Farms
- Started off with 6,000 wethers
- Concentrated on cropping – Sheep were secondary in our program

1998 – Trip to China

Purpose of the trip to China –

- To learn about wool



Decision made following trip

- Realised that we had to start breeding sheep and on our return from China, we commenced purchasing Merino ewes

Early 2000's - WA trip

- Ken Solly's Agribusiness Consultant/Tour Leader theory when on tour :
- **“When you go on tour you have to come home with an idea that will make money to cover the trip.”**
- Visited a Dohne display at Katanning.
Murray Drage, Geoff Beeck, and David Kain

Light Bulb Moment



- Observed a change in the market – people are not wearing wool
- To live and survive people need a full stomach – we need to be in the protein market!

We changed our business direction – to focus more on meat and less on wool

How we changed our focus

- Kept in touch with the WA breeders and purchased old merino ewes carrying Dohne F1 embryos
- We bred our own Dohne stud rams and ewes
- We developed our own commercial self replacing Dohne flock

Strategies completed in 2006

- Purchased Murray Drage's commercial Dohne ewes from WA and transported them home.
- This provided our business with the opportunity to fast track our Dohne breeding program by a number of generations.
- **We felt set up now – we were all Dohne**
- By 2013 we were running 23,000 Dohne ewes and cutting 860 bales of wool.

The Maternal Qualities of the Dohne

What we discovered –

- Dohne's are perfect for Australian conditions
- Dual purpose meat and wool sheep
- Natural breeders - 'lambs slip out like a cake of soap'
- Very fertile - cycles (pregnancy testing)
- Strong body structure & constitution
- Caring mothers



Running Dohne's is like running a mixed farming operation.

The Maternal Qualities of the Dohne (cont'd)

- Dohne's are great milkers
- Their lambs are small at birth, with a high survival rate
- Lambs mature early
- Dohne ewes are docile mothers
- They are easy care & low maintenance
- Intelligent sheep



What we have learnt

- How to breed a bigger, stronger, and larger framed Dohne dual purpose ewe.



What we have learnt (cont'd)

- Lambing %'s increased by up to 30%
- Fewer lamb and or ewe deaths



What we have learnt (cont'd)

- Fast Growing, early maturing lambs in both paddock and feedlot situations



Business Success in 2015

- Cropping guy wins award for sheep.



Success due to the Management Program of Dohne Maternal Ewes

- Dohne Breeder wins 2015 JBS Lamb Producer of the year with 96.5% out of possible 100%



A photograph of a yellow and white award certificate. The top left corner has a yellow banner with the text "2015 JBS FA LAMB PRODUCER OF THE YEAR." in bold black letters. The top right corner features a circular logo with the text "GREAT SOUTHERN" and "ESTABLISHED BY 1890". The main body of the certificate is white and contains a table of results. The table has three columns: "Producer", "Name", and "Score". The first row is highlighted in yellow and lists "1. Wayne Hawkins" as the winner with a score of "96.500". The following nine rows list other producers and their scores, ranging from "93.000" to "90.125".

Producer	Name	Score
1.	Wayne Hawkins CIRCLE H FARMS	96.500
2.	Damien O'Keefe AB & DG O'KEEFE	93.000
3.	John Davis DAVIES AG	92.050
4.	Koch Family TALLAGEIRA PAST	91.975
5.	Rowan Giles RE & SB GILES	91.925
6.	Tim Williams WILLSWOOD FARMS	91.550
7.	Graham Pickles GL PICKLES	91.325
8.	Shane & Linda Longbottom TATIARA INDUSTRIES	90.475
9.	Jarrold & Jeff Andrews J & J ANDREWS	90.320
10.	Scott Davidson GOULBURN VALLEY WATER	90.125

Dohne Maternal Ewe Management Our “Big 5”

- **Conception –**
timing and feed management
- **Survival –**
timing, feed & management
- **Growth Rate –**
genetics & feed type & quality
- **Ewe Wastage –**
classing, age, feed management
- **Ewe Efficiency –**
classing, scanning, age, feed management

Vision for the future

- The marketing of the Dohne breed could be the “ANGUS” of the sheep industry.
- Can the Dohne breed become the benchmark for the sheep industry?
- Dohne’s breed like a crossbred and grow wool like a merino.
- Where or how can we determine where our best pool of genetics are?
- Genetic traceability is it possible?

Closing thought for the day

**“Nothing great was ever
achieved without enthusiasm”**

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Contact Details

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