THE DOHNE IN AUSTRALIA

John Nadin

President, Australian Dohne Breeders’ Association
Background

- Record 4.8 million bales of wool stockpiled
- Record 173 million national sheep flock
• $3 million per day in interest costs

• 68 million sheep ... lowest in 100 years
Changes in farm land use

- Wool growing becomes unprofitable
- Move into other commodities
- Introduction of non-wool producing sheep breeders
The Dohne in Australia

The Dohne Provided:

• Dual Purpose characteristics

• Suitability to Australian conditions and traditional Breeding Systems

• Competitiveness in a shrinking market
## Dohne productivity versus other breeds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profit Driver</th>
<th>Dohne</th>
<th>Merino</th>
<th>Crossbred</th>
<th>Composite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fertility</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fecundity</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth Rate</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Wool</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prime Lamb Carcass</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Adaptable and Durable

- 800m annual summer rainfall
- 990m annual winter rainfall
- 240m annual hot dry interior
- The ability to convert inferior vegetation into sustainable products
The Facts

- High Fertility
- Prime Lamb
- Merino Wool
Adaptation

- Staple length
- Wool character
- Wool Nourishment
- Feet Structure
• Rate of change slow due to line breeding

• Growth rates and carcass traits could not be sacrificed for wool quality
Compliance

- High labour costs
- Time consuming
- New technology available – i.e. Smart Tags - affordable & user friendly

SmartShepherd Tag

- Reusable Ear Tag
- Separate Attachment System
- 3 year device lifespan
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- Estimated at over 20% of the national flock (AWI & MLA survey)
- Genetic infusion throughout Poll Merino Studs
- National average per head woolcut (all breeds) increase from 4.373kgs to 4.482kgs
Three generations on

- Natural attrition in number of studs
- Increase in
  - No of rams sold at auction
  - Average price
The Future

- Increasingly competitive market
- Relevant to current & future markets
- Commercial relevance
- Breed survival
- Important of $ value in kgs of meat and wool produced per breeding ewe
- Adult ewe body weight
Animal Welfare

- Pressure will continue
- Natural Bare Breech eliminating the need for mulesing
Conclusion

✓ Credible breed – recognised and respected

✓ Maternal traits, growth rates, apparel wool, and ‘doing ability’ is what shapes our breed

✓ Revolutionary breed

✓ It is all about balance

✓ Unite domestically and internationally
Acknowledgements

• Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA)
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