



The Smart Choice

Dohne Merino Matters

A newsletter publication of the Australian Dohne Breeders' Association

Christmas 2024

Councils' Year in Review - What a Year!

The focus for the first half of the year was the Feature Breed Celebration at ASWS in Bendigo in July.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this such a great success! We hosted a celebration dinner at the Shamrock Hotel which was a great opportunity to gather socially with judges and new and old attendees.

We also hosted the second site visit to Coonong Station for the AMSEA Dohne Merino Evaluation. All information has now been gathered and the results will be available soon. Again, thanks to Tom and Sophie Holt for hosting this valuable trial and all staff and volunteers for the huge amount of work you have done over the past years.

It was great to travel through NSW in September and catch up with fellow Dohne Merino breeders, and listen to their valuable insights into our breed. On a personal note, it was heartening to see that crops and feed can actually grow- just add water! To see the wool of our breed handle the extreme rainfall events that have occurred in NSW was a highlight.

Congratulations to Rachel Browne upon receiving Life Membership of the ADBA, recognising her many years of valuable service to the breed.

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Dates for Diary

Annual Face to Face
3-5 March 2025
Adelaide SA

2025 Australian Sheep
and Wool Show
18-20 July 2025
Bendigo VIC

Next Edition (Feb 2025)

Annual Face to Face
Promotions Update
Ram Sales

Councils' Year in Review (continued)

Don Mills has now been appointed Vice- President and some sub-committees have been formed to cover the main focuses for the upcoming year.

Now that the Feature Breed and Coonong Evaluation have been completed we can turn to other matters, which include Combined Analysis and Tiered System. The sub-committees have been working on gathering information for presentation to the members at the annual face to face meeting. I am hopeful that there will be a good turn up at the information sessions, as these items are of great importance to the future of the ADBA. The ADBA also had a stand and attended LambEx held in Adelaide in August and also the Sheep Expo at Adelaide Showgrounds in April. Individually breeders have also spent many hours attending numerous shows around the country to promote the Dohne Merino breed.

The Wolf Pack has formed and as a council we look forward to their input increasing, as they are the future of our Breed.

The Promotions Committee have had a busy year, producing a great journal, and ACM advertising. Thanks for all your great work – I look forward to what you come up with for next year!

Thank you to Kaye Butler, Tanya Barton, and Brett Wilson, for your work and input. Hope you all have a restful break over Christmas and New Year and I look forward to your input in the future.

Greg Hall, ADBA President



Annual Face to Face

Council's annual Face to Face meeting will be held in Adelaide from the Monday 3 to Wednesday 5 March 2025. Following the face to face some councillor's will be attending the Balmoral Lifetime Merino Productivity Project Open Day on the Friday 7 March 2025. This event has seen the Dohne Merino breed perform well in growth rates and eye muscle.

Sheep Genetics Analysis

The first analysis for 2025 will be: DOHNE MERINO – Tuesday 7th January

AMSEA Coonong Sire Evaluation Year in Review

Coonong AMSEA trial site began 2024 with a successful Open Day with trial updates and ewe inspection. The day included information updates from site coordinator Jim Meckiff on latest data results on adult ewe shearing, initial reproduction results from maiden joining and weaning weight results from ewe progeny.

Sophie Holt from Coonong Station gave a very informative talk on the latest results from her study into sheep dentition, which is across several AMSEA trial sites. Her work on sheep dentition is very new to AMSEA trial sites and the information provided by Sophie stimulated much discussion and Q and A at the end of her presentation.

Peta Bradley from Sheep Genetics gave an update on news and the latest from her department, and provided some observations and answers to attendee questions on breeding values and indexes from Dohne sires in the trial.

Ben Swain from BCS Agribusiness led the now ritual pen walk, with comments on pencard breeding value variations and visual observations across the sires represented by their daughters. This format provides a great opportunity for attendee questions and discussion.

It was very interesting to see the variation in bloodline types in these now mature ewes. During the course of 2024, the next and final year of reproduction and ewe performance data was collected.

AMSEA Coonong Sire Evaluation Year in Review (continued)

- The trial ewes were mated late November 2023 for 35 days
- Pregnancy scanning was 20 February 2024
- Lambing was late April for approx. 35 days
- Lamb marking was 26 June 2024
- Lamb weaning weight was 12 August 2024
- Ewe udder scoring was 13 August 2024
- Ewe mid side sampling was 13 August 2024
- Ewe classing was 14 August 2024
- Ewe shearing and body trait scoring 6 September 2024

An impressive 144% lambs weaned to ewes joined from the 7000+ewes at Coonong this year.

Udder scoring is a new measured trait in AMSEA trials, but was measured in 2023 data collection.

Details of udder scoring measurement is in the latest version of visual sheep scores booklet provided by Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) and Australian Wool Innovation (AWI).

The ewe shearing was the final data collection event for the Coonong trial and effectively the conclusion of the trial. All data in those later days will now be collated and presented in their correct formats, which will hopefully be towards the end of 2024 or early 2025.

As the chairman of the trial site, I would like to thank the many people who contributed many hours to running this trial.

Firstly, to My fellow site committee members John Nadin, Greg McCann, Jim Meckiff and Allan Casey.

Jim Meckiff as our site coordinator has done an excellent job and has been very professional and of enormous support to me.

I would like to make a special thank you to Allan Casey who not only provides years of experience in trial work but also gave his service to the trial without cost and being able to adjust his busy schedule to accommodate the timing of events at Coonong.

AMSEA Coonong Sire Evaluation Year in Review (continued)

Many thanks to our site classer Jason Southwell for his services and availability for classing days and also attending the Open Day.

Also thank you to Trent Fordham and the services of Riverina Wool Testers, Lucinda Eddy and Lexi Tupper for data collection and trait scores during the trial period and Jake Burley for pregnancy scanning and muscle scanning.

Thank you to University of New England (UNE) for their contribution in the meat testing. Also, thank you to committed volunteers Alistair Greenshields, Murray Rogerson and Darren Gurnett for making available time to work on days requiring extra staff.

Thank you to Ben Swain the AMSEA Executive Officer for all of your advice, guidance and work in helping to make this trial work.

My thanks to the Dohne Council for supporting this trial from the setup phase through open day running and to finally backing this trial to see it reach a full conclusion.

Finally, I would like to thank our site hosts Tom and Sophie Holt from Coonong Station. Thank you for providing not only a very good ewe base group to begin the trial, but also for the many hours Coonong staff have provided help in carrying out data collection events. Thank you also for making available for us the great yards and facilities at Coonong. Don Mills – Convenor, ADBA Coonong Sire Evaluation



Ethical Outback Wool has produced and manufactured these 100% Australian Dohne Merino wool garments, made entirely from the sheep in the AMSEA Coonong Dohne Sire Evaluation.

Participating stud owners and representatives are showcasing the array of garments.

L-R (standing) Greg McCann, Alistair Greenshields, Liz Hall, Greg Hall, John Nadin, Murray Rogerson, Justin Tombs, Jason Southwell, Karen Mills, Don Mills, (kneeling) Joy Kelly & Allen Kelly.

Dohne Merino Ram Sales

Dohne Merino ram sales commence in February 2025 in the New England area of NSW.

For more details, please details below:

- Friday 7 February - Harewood Annual On Property Ram Sale, Armidale NSW – [Click Here](#)
- Monday 17 February - Alfoxton On Property Ram Sale, Armidale NSW – [Click Here](#)

Exciting News from National Promotions!

We're shaking things up for 2025! Instead of publishing another Dohne Merino Journal, we're thrilled to announce the launch of the **Dohne Merino Calendar** - a stunning A4-sized calendar running from July 2025 to June 2026. Get ready for an exciting calendar packed with stud and sponsor ads, must-click editorial links, and fascinating stories showcasing how Dohnes are shaking up the Australian sheep market.

It's more than a calendar - it's a celebration of innovation in the industry!

Let's make the Dohne Merino Calendar an exciting and impactful celebration of our community.

Get your ad space or story in early to ensure your spot! Please email admin@dohne.com.au your booking details.

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