

DETPA GROVE CONTINUES TO RAISE THE BAR

There's an old adage that says, "It's hard to get to the top, but harder to stay there." If that is the case then it is truly remarkable that the Pipkorn family, Detpa Grove stud based at Jeparit, Vic continues to dominate stud sales on the White Suffolk breed. About 25% of all Australian White Suffolk flocks currently carry Detpa Grove blood; such has been the dominance of Detpa Grove for the last decade.

At their 23rd annual on-property sale last Thursday, the Pipkorns produced their best ever result, with a sale gross of \$429,250 for 254 head of tremendous quality stud rams, stud ewes and flock rams, averaging out at \$1690/head.

In 2004 and 2006 Detpa Grove set individual national meat sheep records for stud rams with sales at \$35000 and \$36000, and while this year's result did not reach those individual highs, it did exceed the 2003 record gross by \$64,586

The backbone of this year's result was the depth of quality in the magnificent stud ram offering of 37 wonderful rams. While there were not necessarily many standout rams, it was the overall evenness through this number of top rams that was the feature. They all sold to a top of \$18,000 with eight selling for \$10,000 or better and the draft averaging \$5993.

Buyers came from five Australian states, plus international exports. Two studs based in South Australia, 'Wingamin' and 'Wheetelande' combined forces to win the bidding for Detpa Grove100247ET, with Days Whiteface stud, also from SA being the final underbidders. The Lambplan figures on the Detpa Grove sheep is industry leading and was typified by this son of Anden 080276Tw. His Pwwt figure was 13.95, Pfat of -0.83, Pemd of 1.25, C+ index of 188 and L2020index of 112; a wonderful combination on top of his visual excellence. The Shillabeer family from Karoonda (Wingamin) and Neill family from Farrell Flat (Wheetelande) have both come off successful showing and selling seasons and were searching for the ram to give their studs the next lift in quality.

Anthony Ferguson, Anna Villa stud, Weetulta, SA set the scene for a successful sale with a winning bid of \$12,000 on the first ram offered, DG100217, another top son of Anden 276. Operating by phone via Steve Funke, were Simon, Matt and Peter Kerin, Bundaleer Grazing, Katanning, WA, the new owners of the well-credentialed Ashbourne stud formally owned by Roy Addis and family. They were successful at \$11,000 on a very correct and powerful Anden 276 son coming in second in the offering. Steve Funke then bought the next ram in for \$5000 for his Bordertown based Bundara Downs stud, rounding out a significant stud ram buying spree this year.

The Anden 276 sons were highly sought after and 12 of them in the stud ram draft averaged \$7958. Detpa Grove principal David Pipkorn was astute enough to purchase a half share in him privately as a ram lamb for \$10,000 and he has certainly clicked with the Detpa Grove family lines.

Loyal repeat buyers, Matt, Andrew and Rodney Weidemann, 'Sunnydale' stud, Rupanyup, Vic persisted to purchase DG100632, a grandson of An276 for \$13,000, the second highest ram price. This ram had the equal second highest Carcase Plus index in the draft of 193; the entire group averaging 185.6 for this index.

Lachlan Day, Days Whiteface, Bordertown who was runner-up on the top priced ram was more successful on DG100695, an August drop son of 'Sovereign' with the highest C+ index and highlighted by a massive Pwwt Breeding Value of 16.43. He outlaid \$8500 for this ram, an investment level also made for DG100562 by Bob & Idrienne Neill, Wheetleande stud, Farrell Flat and one of the top priced ram purchasers, this time buying on their own.

Another Day family and relative newcomer to the breed, PJ & RG Day of Mundulla paid \$10,000 for an An276 son, but it was Bronte Mawson who made the biggest impact on the overall sale result. Operating for the Inner Mongolia Equity Joint Venture with China Agribusiness Limited, Adelaide, he purchased four outstanding stud sires, paying \$12,000, \$9000 and then \$10,000 twice, plus 33 of the 74 stud ewes to sell.

Amongst these 33 ewes he bought was lot 1 in the specially selected draft, DG100132Tw, a very impressive and high performance daughter of An276 with a C+ index of 182. She was purchased for \$2600, a Detpa Grove record for unmated ewe hoggets; although this year's biannual mated ewe sale in April saw mated ewes sell to \$2800 and average \$1173.

Mandy Meulman and Dean Cameron were also significant ewe buyers, purchasing ten and paying from \$400 to \$1050 for their new 'Noremac' stud based at Balmoral in Victoria.

The Auctions Plus network operated on the stud rams and the 34 special stud ewes with Elders' Ross Dickenson being kept very active on the ewes. He had up to five bidders on individual ewes. While often riding second fiddle to Bronte Mawson, whose 33 ewes averaged \$753, the A+ network of buyers was successful on 14 ewes to \$1000 and two of the stud rams to \$7500.

In the only disappointment in the sale, not all ewes cleared, possibly an aftermath of the hugely successful mated ewe sale, resulting in some prospective buyers expecting it to be too expensive and not keeping their options open. However the 34 special stud ewes averaged a very good \$869 and the 40 ewes that sold from the 51 offered in pens of four, or three ewes averaged \$509. Collectively they averaged \$674 with eight selling for \$1000 or better.

The 143 flock rams offered produced an excellent result with a very strong top end, but values at really affordable levels at the end allowed buyers to average out their purchases if they chose to. The draft topped at \$2000 and averaged \$1102. The volume buyer was Jason Gordon, buying for Ferguson Pastoral. They purchased 35 flock rams in total, regularly paying \$1300 and \$1200 at the top end, but with later purchases of younger spring drop rams they averaged out their buying at \$1014, nearly \$100 below the sale average.

Regular Detpa Grove supporters Malcolm and Peter Irving, Edenhope and buying through PPH & S Naracoorte were back again and purchased 18 high quality rams from \$1000 to \$1300. They are one of several buyers from that region who have come to appreciate the Detpa Grove quality. The Irvings are averaging \$145 for the sale of their new season sucker lambs so far this year.

Joff and Robert Sporn, Murrayville have trekked to Detpa Grove for many years. They seek out the best rams they can find and are willing to operate on the stud rams as well for their commercial ram requirements. This year they selected ten rams including four of the later studs that met their budget, paying from \$2000 to \$2250. The six they then added from the flock ram draft were purchased from \$1700 to \$2000, the ten averaging \$1955. For this they got ten of the elite rams available in the industry, their average C+ index being 183 and all having a great balance of growth, fat and muscle breeding values.

Craig Benny was also a purchaser of a ram at the draft top of \$2000, this being one of five purchases he made at a \$1420 average. Like many sales, as strong as the ram buying competition was, there was still very good value to be had, especially for rams of this quality. 33% of the flock rams sold under \$1000, which took the average for the draft down to just under last year's exceptional result. Also 19 (51%) of the stud rams sold under \$5000; great value in today's meat sheep industry.

Sale Summary

| Stud rams | 2011 | 2010 | Stud ewes | 2011 | 2010 |
|------------|----------|----------|-----------|--------|--------|
| Offered | 37 | 35 | | 95 | 99 |
| Sold | 37 | 35 | | 74 | 82 |
| Top | \$18,000 | \$13,000 | | \$2600 | \$1500 |
| Average | \$5993 | \$4086 | | \$674 | \$449 |
| Flock rams | 2011 | 2010 | | | |
| Offered | 143 | 135 | | | |
| Sold | 143 | 135 | | | |
| Top | \$2000 | \$2200 | | | |
| Average | \$1102 | \$1117 | | | |

Sale agents: Elders

Auctioneers: Ross Milne & Ben Finch



Pictured with the \$18,000 top priced ram at the Detpa Grove White Suffolk sale are Detpa Grove principals Michelle & David Pipkorn, Jeparit, Vic and buyers in conjunction, Clive, Deb & Caitlin Shillabeer, Wingamin stud, Karoonda, SA and Idrienne & Bob Neill, Wheeland stud, Farrell Flat, SA.



Detpa Grove principals David & Michelle Pipkorn, Jeparit, Vic are pictured with DG 100439, the impressive ram sold to the Kerin family, Ashbourne stud, Katanning, WA for \$11,000.



Matt, Andrew and Rodney Weidemann, Sunnydale stud, Rupanyup, Vic are pictured with the Detpa Grove ram that they purchased for \$13,000, and Detpa Grove's Michelle and David Pipkorn (holding ram).



Bronte Mawson, representing China Agribusiness Limited is with Detpa Grove's David & Michelle Pipkorn and behind the 4 top stud rams purchased for the company's Joint Equity Venture with Inner Mongolia.



Prominent in the ewe buying at Detpa Grove were Mandy Meulman (holding daughter Imogen Cameron, aged 7 weeks) and Dean Cameron (ten ewes to \$1050), Balmoral, Vic; Ross Dickenson, Elders and operating the Auctions Plus bids (14 ewes to \$1000); Bronte Mawson, China Agribusiness, Adelaide (33 ewes to a record \$2600); and Michelle and David Pipkorn, Detpa Grove, Jeparit.



David Pipkorn, Detpa Grove, Jeparit is holding the record \$2600 top priced ewe bought by Bronte Mawson for the Inner Mongolia Equity Joint Venture with China Agribusiness Limited, Adelaide.



Pictured are the 33 top stud White Suffolk ewes purchased by Bronte Mawson for the Inner Mongolia Joint Venture with China Agribusiness Limited, Adelaide.



Prominent flock ram purchasers at Depta Grove were Glen Nuske (3 rams) and Joff and Robert Sporn, Murrayville (ten rams to \$2250).



Malcolm & Peter Irving are pictured with their 18 Depta Grove flock ram purchases, loaded and ready for the trip back to the Irvings' Edenhope property.