

Flock rams dominate Detpa Grove returns

For a sale that has prospered on the back of outstanding stud sales for a decade and a half, it was a change to see the often-overlooked commercial flock rams dominate to become the highlight section of this year's Detpa Grove White Suffolk sheep sale at Jeparit last Thursday.

The Pipkorn family's 29th annual sale achieved an overall sale gross very similar to last year, but with very different sectional results. The stud rams and ewes were down 35% on last year's averages but the huge 32% lift in flock ram average compensated for this. The fall in stud demand had nothing to do with quality as this offering was as good as the Pipkorn family have ever offered whether assessing on phenotype, or genotype.

Overall 64 bidders plus many on the Auctions Plus network competed for the 257 lots offered, with 16 of the 80 stud ewes being the only lots not to clear at auction.

It would be hard to find a better line-up of sheep presented for sale anywhere in the country and with the greatly improved seasonal outlook in the region and extremely buoyant prime lamb market, commercial lamb producers responded appropriately. All 144 flock rams sold from \$1200 to \$2100 and averaged an extremely strong \$1621. This average was up \$21 on the top price last year for flock rams.

The buyers' list was dominated by regular names with three buying agents the most prominent; these being PPH&S Naracoorte, Elders Bendigo and Elders Warracknabeal. Combined they accounted for 53% of the flock ram sales, plus the three rams to achieve the section's \$2100 top price, up \$500 on last year's top flock ram price.

Irving Partnership, represented by Peter Irving was again the biggest individual buyer with 24 rams from \$1300 to \$1600 and at a \$1471 average. He bought through PP H & S's Simon Mulraney who was buying agent for clients with purchases totalling 37 rams. Craig Bennie was another, purchasing eight, including one from the stud run and paying to the \$2100 equal top flock ram price.

Five Elders Bendigo clients purchased a total of 21 rams, including the Mann family whose four purchases also included one at the \$2100 equal top and at a \$1900 average. SJ & GM Wilson with seven rams to \$2000 and average of \$1843 was the most prominent of them.

Four Elders Warracknabeal clients purchased 18 rams in total. These included Ashfield Villa whose three rams averaged \$1967 and included the third ram to sell for \$2100. Prospect Rural with six at a \$1483 average was the most prominent.

Other notable buyers included Bibby-Grant Trust through TB White & Sons, Ballarat with eight at a \$1588 average, J & M Kilpatrick through Elders Ararat with eight ave \$1775 and PW Spicer & Co through Elders Birchip with seven ave \$1843.

To put the quality into context, besides their outstanding phenotype, 91% of the flock ram draft exceeded 190 on the Carcase Plus index, including 51% that were 200 or better.

The elite of the rams were catalogued in the 32 strong stud ram draft. While flock ram buyers were prominent, confident and active, the same could not be said about the registered stud breeding fraternity which has been a puzzling trend this year across most sales, with obvious exceptions.

However, those present were the beneficiaries. Basil and Tim Jorgensen, Mertex stud, Antwerp bid strongly for DG 160077 Tw, the biggest and most powerful ram in the draft, displaying huge growth and muscling in the classic easy care wedge shaped structure. With a Carcase Plus index of 210 he ranks as an industry leading sire of the future.

The second ram to make \$9000 was DG 160323 Tw, catalogued late in the draft but one that attracted plenty of interest for his growth, breed type, balance and exceptional hindquarter. He had a C+ index of 206 and his overall balance of top phenotype and genotype particularly attracted Andrew Saunders, Salamander stud, Horsham who outlasted WA competition on the Auctions Plus network. Both these top sheep were sired by DG 140300.

Western Australian support was a strong positive aspect of the stud offering with seven rams and one semen package heading to service in that state, plus 8 stud ewes.

The ram regarded by Detpa Grove's principal David Pipkorn as the best of the drop, DG 160027 Tw and sired by Anden 140293, unfortunately died a few days before the sale, so to honour the pre-sale interest in him, the Pipkorns offered a semen package of up to 100 doses in the ram from their limited reserves. This was purchased by Nathan Ditchburn, Golden Hill stud, Kukerin, WA for \$5625, in partnership with the Donnan family, Woomelang, Vic, the breeders of its sire.

Bruce Buswell, Matilda Downs stud, Mt Barker, WA paid \$5000 each for DG 160018 and DG 16068, both sons of Anden 140293 with C+ indices of 215 and 199, adding to the top sires he has purchased from Detpa Grove over many years..

The White family, Blackwood stud, Boyup Brook also went to \$5000 to purchase DG 160021 Tw, another son of Anden 140293. They also purchased five stud ewes to \$1000 and averaged \$860, doing their bidding through Auctions Plus.

Max Whyte, Brimfield stud, Kendenup, WA purchased two stud rams at \$4000 and \$2000 with the former being another DG 140300 son, DG 160355 Tw with a C+ index of 203.

Denam Carter, Ridge Top stud, Albany and Keith Ladyman, Kantara stud, Dumbleyung benefitted from the bargains at hand by picking up stud rams at just \$2500 and \$2000 respectively.

Other stud ram buyers of note were Hodder Pastoral Co P/L through Elders Horsham (DG 160212 Tri) for \$7000, M & Y Williams Family Trust, through D & MD Nhill (two rams @ \$6000 and \$3250). RG & JA Roberts, Vic (two rams @ \$3500 and \$3000), Kevin and Dale Moore, Penrise, Campania, Tasmania (two rams @ \$2000 each) and Brendan Rogers, through BRC Swan Hill (one @ \$4000).

When the Hull family, Kattata Well stud, Pt Kenny, SA was able to purchase an absolute cracking ewe, DG 160209 Tw at lot 1 for just \$800, the writing was on the wall that it was going to be a buyers' stud market. Kattata Well was also able to purchase a stud ram for just \$2500.

J H Harding, Burrupark stud, Boyup Brook, WA and bidding on Auctions Plus paid the \$1400 top in the ewe draft for DG 160033. They purchased three ewes at an average of \$1033.

The Medlyn family, Clover Valley stud, Stuart Mill, Vic was the biggest volume purchaser with 10 ewes to \$800 and average of \$650.

A & P Milling, Dubbo, bidding through Auctions Plus purchased nine to \$800 and average \$644, while G & T Ellis P/L through Landmark Euroa picked up eight to \$700 and ave of just \$625.

Clive and Deb Shillabeer, Karoonda purchased two ewes at \$1000 and \$900 for Gary Heilig, Montana, USA, also at bargain rates compared with the top end prices he has paid in the past for elite Detpa Grove ewes, including the \$2300 top at this sale last year.

Sale Summary

	Stud ewes		Stud rams		Flock rams	
	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016
Offered	80	65	32	36	144	146
Sold	64	63	32	36	144	146
Top	\$1400	\$2300	\$9000 x 2	\$22,000	\$2100 X 3	\$1600
Average	\$720	\$1108	\$3344	\$5117	\$1621	\$1228

Agents: Elders Wycheproof

Auctioneers: Ross Milne and Nick Gray



Pictured with DG 160077 Tw, the \$9000 equal top priced ram at the Detpa Grove White Suffolk sale are purchasers Basil and Tim Jorgensen, Mertex stud, Antwerp, Vic and Detpa Grove principal David Pipkorn.



Pictured with DG 160323Tw, the \$9000 equal top priced ram at the Detpa Grove White Suffolk sale are principal David Pipkorn holding the ram and purchaser, Andrew Saunders, Salamander stud, Horsham.



Pictured with the two equal top priced rams at the Detpa Grove White Suffolk sale are Detpa Grove principal David Pipkorn, Jeparit, holding the ram on the right and purchasers Basil and Tim Jorgensen, Mertex stud, Antwerp and Andrew Saunders, Salamander stud, Horsham.



Loading: a large tray top truck was used to transport the 37 rams purchased by four buyers in the Naracoorte/ Edenhope area and bidding through PPH&S. Organising the loading are Peter Irving, Irving Partners (24 rams) on the truck, Peter Gebert, Elders Jeparit and Simon Mulraney, PPH&S agent, Naracoorte.