



Client Newsletter
September 2014

Wairere

Riding the wave



Out with the old and in with the new

Last season was difficult, too wet, too dry, wildly fluctuating prices which were mostly too low.....

The 2014-15 season is shaping better for prices. One driver will be the quantum shift in international beef price. That hasn't flowed through to Australian schedules yet, but beef prices in New Zealand are around \$A4.60/kg, with bull beef nudging ahead of prime grass fed steer.

The lift in global beef price will improve the market for mutton and lamb.

The domestic market for lamb took a hit after the price spike four years ago, with 30-40,000t less consumed annually now, compared to five or six years back. That tonnage has to be sold on world markets which return less than the home market. The farm gate average price for the average 18.3kg lamb in New Zealand last season was \$A4.65, but that includes the skin. Skins in New Zealand are usually sold as pelts, but there has been a move towards wool skins in recent times. Australian skins have achieved an historical premium, due to larger size, better wool bulk, and finer/softer handle.

Talking of skins, the processing industry is in turmoil, the result of the Chinese government clamping down on pollution. An Ugg Boot factory, employing 22,000 people, was closed down in early September. Let's hope that the situation is resolved quickly.

Wairere has sold around 800 rams in Australia since early 2006, a toe in the water compared to the more than four thousand sold annually in New Zealand over the past decade or more. But the Wairere sheep have been subjected to enough on farm trials to encourage a belief that they can make a big contribution to the Australian prime lamb flock.

The self replacing wave

The Grant family near Coleraine, 625mm rainfall.

"We used to have Merinos, then ran half the flock as Border/Merinos. We started joining Wairere Romney rams over first cross ewes seven years ago. The Merino ewes have gone and the first cross ewes will be phased out over the next four years. The second cross Romney ewes are more robust and hardy than the first cross and require less drenching.

We lamb mid June/early July, and the whole flock averaged 135% this year. Rough weather at lambing is less stressful due to the lambs being far more resilient and the ewes superior mothering ability, culminating in better lamb survival rates.

Average carcase weight has been around 25-26kg in recent years. All lambs are marketed over the hooks as a mix of both terminal sired and maternal sired wether lambs with no discounts and top value skin returns. Our maternal wether lambs are of a lot higher standard than our previous first cross and have real carcase shape with a lot higher %age being turned off as suckers at a greater \$ value.

We have really benefitted from the hardiness of the Romney cross. They maintain an extra condition score through the tough winter period and have eliminated almost all foot problems due to their black feet.

The Romney rams have excellent longevity, have great libido and don't seem to suffer the lameness issues so often encountered in heavy breed rams.

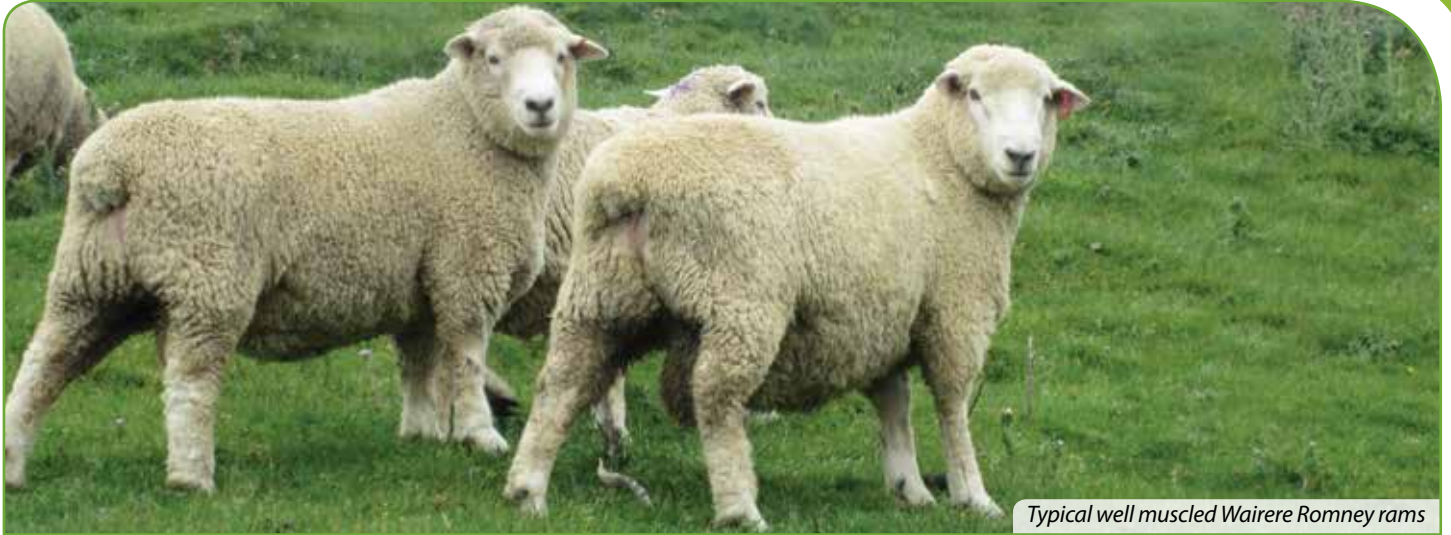
Moving forward we continue to assess our options and considering the benefits we see in breeding these types of sheep a move to a straight maternal flock is certainly not out of the question. At the moment we are keen to keep a stake in the mid micron wool and wool skin markets, so are still experimenting with a mix.

These Wairere cross sheep are a pleasure to own and we are very impressed with the results so far."

PTO

Ewan Price mobile (417 527 589)

Wairere Ram Booking Form 2014 –15



Typical well muscled Wairere Romney rams

Two tooth Romney, available October and December ex NZ, \$1,480	Romney ram lambs, available early February, \$1,380	TefRom two teeth, limited number available October, \$1,480	TefRom ram lambs, available early February, \$1,380
Qty:	Qty:	Qty:	Qty:

Wairere rams have strong libido. A mating ratio of 1:150 in mixed age ewes is common for New Zealand clients, 1:120 for two teeth; and a ratio of 1:100 for ram lamb sires. **These ratios reduce your effective ram cost.** Your ram picks will be selected in New Zealand. Costs of freight and quarantine have increased to \$A630 for two tooth rams, and \$A420 for ram lambs.

Thank you for your order. Please telephone Ewan Price, or email if you wish to discuss your ram requirements in more detail.

Phone: 03 55271110 **Email:** elsted55@bigpond.net.au **Fax:** 03 55272041



Ewan Price

Your reply by 15 October 2014 would be much appreciated!

Wairere breeding policy

- **Nil drench (after 12 months old)** This has been policy since 2005. There have been three small exceptions, with some two teeth drenched after droughts.
- **Pregnant hogget replacement** All ewe hoggets have been mated since 1966. From 2005 they have had to get in lamb to be retained. There has been one exception: in 2009 8% of retained hoggets were dry.
- **High stocking rate** Wairere has run a high stocking rate (average 750 – 800kg liveweight/ha, 30th June) over the years, and a low cattle ratio, 20 – 25%. This is being achieved on medium to steep hills, 220 – 530 meters above sea level.
- **Constitution plus** Wairere sheep have to deal every year with wet, cold, and mud, and sometimes summer drought.

Address
sticker



Wairere TefRom ram lambs, February, aged 5-6 months

Email: _____

Mobile: _____

Best Wishes,
Ewan Price & Derek Daniell