



Alma Merino Stud

Merinos for wool, sheep and meat \$ales

Newsletter

For Alma clients and Western woolgrowers

Spring 2006

The Alma Vision:

www.almastud.com.au

“To breed Merinos that adapt to and utilise the vegetation of Western NSW through all seasons, Merinos that provide a profitable business and lifestyle for their owners by producing valuable wool, sheep and meat \$ales.”

Our vision is designed to ensure that **Alma Merinos** remain true to their long-standing reputation: large-framed Merinos with outstanding fertility, carrying a soft handling medium wool. It is because of this reputation that **Alma-blood** sheep are sought-after by buyers at sheep sales and on-property.



What type of Merino will be profitable in 2006? A Merino that produces lots of **soft-handling, long-stapled medium wool** on a **large, plain-bodied frame**. A Merino that has **high fertility** and the **constitution** to withstand the variable seasonal conditions of Western NSW.

NLIS Forum & Ram Shearing Day

More than 100 Western sheep breeders and agents attended the **Alma** Sale Ram Shearing and Sheep NLIS Information Day, held Friday 21 April at the Alma woolshed. Ian Lilburne kept the

crowd's focus as he gave his view of the type of Merino that must be bred out west today to be profitable. Ian said that no longer are the wool traits of our Merinos the primary focus of a breeding program. We need to look at where the profit is generated in a Western Merino. Fertility and good mothering ability, along with early maturity and a plainer-bodied, easier to shear sheep have all come into the equation of profitability. Ian said that the Merino still has a rightful place out on the Western Hay Plains and beyond, but we will have to reassess what we have been doing as breeders for many years. Ian introduced the new **Alma Poll Merinos** as an example of the type of sheep he believes are needed to remain profitable in all seasonal and market conditions.



Ian Lilburne and young **Alma** rams at NLIS Forum

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— Ian Lilburne

2006 Sale Rams

2006 Ram Grades **\$500, \$400, \$300**
(GST exclusive)

Bred on the Saltbush Plains –
ready to join now!

Sale Rams will be available at **Alma** on
our Ram Day, **Thursday 5 October**.

**Please contact Peter Thomson at
Alma or Graham Morphett to discuss
your ram requirements.**



Alma-blood clip - Elders Supreme Clip of the Year

A flock run under "constantly tough conditions" has taken out the Elders Supreme Northern Victorian and Riverina Clip of the Year. The Yamba clip, run by Graham and Helen Morphett at Booligal and classed by Geoff Stewart of Warracknabeal, was announced as the 2006 winner. The Yamba flock is pure **Alma** blood, and shorn in August with the wool sold between September and November.

"The award was judged on a number of factors, including wool quality, preparation and presentation", according to Elders Victorian wool marketing manager Frank Jones. "The Yamba clip was outstanding in terms of the quality of the wool, the manner in which it was classed and its presentation on the show floor" Mr Johns said. The clip comprised 287 bales of fleece wool that averaged 22.0 micron, 1.2 percent VM, 69 percent yield and 41 nkt sample strength. The Supreme Clip is judged on excellence of style, general presentation of clip, evenness of length, tensile strength, mid point break, preparation of skirtings and clarity of wool classer's specification, for a total of 100 points.

Mr Stewart has classed the Yamba clip for the last eight shearings, where it has been nominated for Clip of the Sale many times. "To be in the top 10 as a finalist this year is a real achievement", he said. Mr Stewart works for Argyle shearing contractor, Peter and Sandra Gratz of Warrnambool.



From left: Frank Jones, Elders State Wool Marketing Manager; Geoff Stewart, Yamba wool classer; Helen & Graham Morphett

Alma Diary

- **Friday 22 September**

Hay Sheep Sale

Alma will sell 600 1 & 5 year-old August-shorn ewes, and Yamba will yard 1800 2, 5 & 6 year GSM August-shorn ewes, all in very good condition. This year's lambing at Alma and Yamba was excellent, with grown ewes nearly achieving 100% in a very difficult season.

- **Thursday 5 October**

Alma Ram Sale Day

Rams will be in excellent order, well-grown and ready to join. Please contact us at **Alma** to book your order.



2006 Alma Sale Rams

Alma NLIS Forum & Sale Ram Shearing

April 2006- Bill O'Halloran, NSW DPI Industry Leader for sheepmeats, answered How, Why and When to tag for sheep NLIS at a forum that attracted over 100 interested Western sheepbreeders and agents. Bill said that he was happy to have so many breeders question him closely, as all lambs born after 1/1/06 will need to be tagged once they leave the property of birth, unless they are going direct to an abattoir. However, this exemption will be reviewed in 2007. Different coloured tags are available for each year of birth, and although it is not a requirement of NLIS in NSW, it is recommended that these colours be used, as they are a means to easily tell ages in the sale yards or in the draft.



Peter Thomson demonstrating NLIS tagging

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