

# Kurralea sizzles to spectacular result

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It is hard to imagine there could be a stronger sale result than the Kurralea Poll Dorset and White Suffolk studs experienced last year when 312 rams averaged \$1454, but that is exactly what happened at the 2015 annual Kurralea ram sale at Aria Park last Tuesday.

For the Prentice family, it was a perfect tonic after such a challenging year from a personal health perspective. Even though they offered 44 more rams to give wider selection choices, the combination of a buoyant lamb industry and a terrific season in this region of NSW created even stronger demand than anticipated.

They offered 356 stud and flock rams and in a total clearance, these sold to buyers from three states at an amazing average of \$1785, grossing \$635,600.

There was a bigger crowd than for the previous few years with 71 registered bidders and under the auctioneering of Michael Glasser, Glasser Total Sale Management and Elders' Joe Wilks, competition was strong throughout, but particularly on the large drafts of flock rams. Reflecting the season, the rams were presented in wonderful working condition, enabling them to reflect their high Lambplan performance figures.

In comparison with last year the stud drafts were solid rather than spectacular. The sale commenced with the 29 Poll Dorset stud rams, several of these having had showing success at the recent Adelaide and Melbourne Royal Shows.

Wallace and Sue Binnie, Coledale stud, Devenish, Victoria opened the buying with a successful \$7000 bid to secure K140740, a very classy August drop Poll Dorset ram, sired by K130228 and having top performance figures culminating in a Carcase Plus index of 203.

Philip Wardle, Eldra Pastoral Co, Naracoorte, SA and a Kurralea regular buyer grabbed a bargain on the next ram, K140696 at just \$2500, before Grant and Bryce Hausler, Janmac stud, Goroke, Vic made it a hat trick of rams going south of the NSW border. They bid what was ultimately the sale's second top price of \$9000 to pick up K140412, a beautifully balanced 142kg son of K130153, this ram having been a class winner in Melbourne.

It was not until lot 25 that this price was surpassed. Garry Armstrong, Armdale and Armdale Park studs, Marrar combined forces with Andrew and Donna Scott, Valley Vista stud, Coolac to win a strong bidding duel with the Binnie family to secure Kurralea 140521twin for \$11,000. Sired by K090684, this ram displayed outstanding balance, muscling and sire power, backed up by good performance figures highlighted by an eye muscle depth EBV of 1.6 and a Carcase Plus index of 183.

WR & MM Honner, through Elders Wagga purchased two rams from this draft at \$4500 and \$3000 as did Ian Sandilands, through Elders Shepparton (\$2750 and \$5500) and D & M Younger through Landmark Narrandera (\$2500 and \$2750). Astute flock ram clients jumped in to pick up the slack from stud buyers, with three purchasing a total of 10 of these, paying from \$2000 to \$3000. The 29 rams in this draft averaged \$3491. Although the top was down \$7000 on last year, because of the stronger middle ground buying the average for the entire draft was up \$106.

The White Suffolk stud ram draft lacked the number of standout rams from last year when they sold to \$12,000, but like most of the Poll Dorsets, demand was solid for what was still a very good line. Brought forward to start the run was K140562, the reserve champion from the Melbourne Royal. Sired by DG110522, this 117kg August drop youngster sold for just \$4000 with Graham and Carmel Wilson, Kismet stud, Howlong being the recipients of this great value. They later added another at \$2500 to add to their earlier \$3500 Poll Dorset stud ram purchase.

Top price honours in this draft went to Robert Hage, West Wyalong who bid \$4250 for K140095, a big, long and 157 kg son of K120186.

Tim and Marianne Ferguson, Mallee Park stud, Hopeton, Vic picked up one at \$3000, adding to the \$3000 Poll Dorset ram purchased earlier to also be multiple breed stud ram purchasers. Again, flock ram buyers did not hesitate to grab rams the stud buyers missed. The 16 rams in this draft averaged \$2309, down on last year's \$3838 average.

That was the only decline in price from last year as the flock ram drafts sizzled, such was the strength of competition. The power and buying numbers required by two buying accounts was the big driver of this demand.

This was headed by Australian Food & Ag, formally FS Falkiner & Sons Pty Ltd, buying through Elders Deniliquin who have been major purchasers at Kurralea for many years, this year being no exception. Justin Campbell, Boonoke and David Marshall, Burrabogee did the bidding this year to purchase a total of 123 superb quality rams, 56 from the Poll Dorsets and 67 from the White Suffolks. They paid from \$1400 to \$1750, putting a very strong floor in the sale.

Knowing the breeding quality and performance of these Kurralea genetics another major agricultural organisation attended to purchase 70 rams; 14 Poll Dorsets and 56 White Suffolks paying from \$1400 to \$1700.

However, these two buying accounts did not have it all their own way. Matt Dart, DB Ag, Aria Park was back again to bid strongly, purchasing 16 rams from \$1500 to \$1800, picking up eight from each breed. BFB Pty Ltd, Temora paid from \$1600 to \$1700 to purchase their 16 pick Poll Dorsets.

Springbank Unit Trust and buying through J Keady & Co, Cowra paid the top of \$2100 in the Poll Dorset flock ram draft while purchasing six of the best at an average of \$1850. Also strong on the Poll Dorsets was CW Mattiske & Co, through RCA Wagga, who purchased 11 to \$2000 from this line, plus three from the stud draft to \$2500; their total of 14 rams averaging \$1986. Similarly Poinsete Pty Ltd, buying through Landmark Wagga purchased nine rams from both Poll Dorset drafts, paying to \$2000 and averaging \$1811.

Greg Moncrieff, Greg Moncrieff Agencies, Condobolin is a very strong supporter of Kurralea genetics and regularly attends with, or on behalf of several clients from his area. He is also one who is very alert to the great value that can be attained in the stud drafts for his commercial clients. One is Bill Ramsey who purchased four of the Poll Dorset stud draft from \$2250 to \$3000, plus three of the better White Suffolk flock rams at \$1600 each, averaging \$2221 for the seven.

Another of Greg's clients, McDonald Bros, purchased six of the White Suffolk stud draft from \$1750 to \$2000, then added another nine from the White Suffolk flock ram draft, their 15 rams averaging \$1747 in great value buying considering the quality.

Greg Moncrieff and Bill Ramsey combined to successfully bid \$1600 for the first ram in the lot 100 pen of three rams in the flock ram drafts. The Prentice family donated the proceeds from this ram to Can Assist, an organisation that as its name suggests, assists cancer patients, having experienced that again first hand when Ben's wife Lucy was diagnosed this year and has undergone extensive and hopefully successful treatment.

The 160 Poll Dorset flock ram draft averaged \$1640, while the 151 White Suffolks were not far behind, averaging \$1556.

#### Sale Summary

	Poll Dorsets				White Suffolks			
	Stud		Flock		Stud		Flock	
	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014
Offered	29	28	160	134	16	17	151	135
Sold	29	26	160	134	16	17	151	135
Top	\$11,000	\$18,000	\$2100	\$1600	\$4250	\$12,000	\$1800	\$1500
Average	\$3491	\$3385	\$1640	\$1187	\$2309	\$3838	\$1556	\$1047

Agents: Elders Wagga and Glasser Total Sale Management  
Auctioneers: Michael Glasser and Joe Wilks

Photos:



Pictured with the \$11,000 top priced Poll Dorset ram at the Kurralea ram sale are joint purchaser Garry Armstrong, Armdale and Armdale Park studs, Marrar, NSW; auctioneer Michael Glasser, GTSM; Kurralea principals Lucy and Ben Prentice, Aria Park; and joint purchaser Andrew Scott, Valley Vista stud, Coolac, NSW.



Kurralea's Kim Prentice (2<sup>nd</sup> left at back) is with key flock ram buyers at the Kurralea ram sale; Matt Dart, DB Ag, Aria Park (16 rams) and his children Zac and Sophie; and Justin Campbell and David Marshall, Australian Food and Ag, Deniliquin (123 rams).



Pictured with the \$4250 top priced White Suffolk ram at the Kurralea ram sale are purchaser Robert Hage, West Wyalong with Kurralea principals Lucy and Ben Prentice and their daughter Ruby.



Lucy and Ben Prentice donated the \$1600 proceeds of the lot 100 ram in the sale to Can Assist, the organisation that has been so important to Lucy and Ben during Lucy's treatment. They are with the joint purchasers Greg Moncrieff (left) and Bill Ramsey (right), Condobolin.