

MEDIA RELEASE

Ram buying time, what do we do?

What are our ram needs this year? How many? What breed? These are the questions that many ram buyers will be asking themselves over the next few weeks. With the wool market still in the doldrums, many traditional Merino breeders are wondering if there is a future in continuing to breed Merinos. Do they go out of sheep altogether? For those who have been breeding sheep for many years, the thought of not running any sheep is an option too hard to contemplate. Do they change to prime lambs? Again the thought of just doing “a few fat lambs” is not very appealing.

So what other options do they have? Do they look at one of the newer breeds? There are many new breeds out there. Some of them making many claims, of which they may or may not be able to deliver. Some of these breeds also have the added problem of dark fibre contamination in the wool clip. With today’s wool prices this would be the last thing you need. With all these choices out there, it is easy to over look one of the older established breeds that has a proven track record and is a vital part of the Australian sheep industry, the **Border Leicester**.

For sheep breeders out there with their self-replacing Merino ewe flocks, they must look on and scratch their head in amazement at the current prices being paid for lambs. Something they may not be aware of is that the unsung hero behind the vast majority of these lambs is the Border Leicester Merino First Cross Ewe. Quietly going about their job of producing large numbers of quality lambs year after year. One only has to look at the prices being paid for first cross ewes to know of her importance in a prime lamb enterprise.

The Australian lamb industry needs the skills and expertise of experienced Merino Breeders to help meet the ever growing demand for first cross ewes. So by joining a portion of their ewes to Border Leicester rams Merino breeders will still be involved in the production of quality breeding ewes. They will have also added another enterprise into their farming mix, and they will be able to take some pleasure in knowing that they are playing a vital role in the continued growth of the Australian lamb industry.