

Celebration of four decades of success at Coolawang

This year's annual Coolawang Border Leicester ram sale at Mundulla will hold special significance for the James family as they celebrate 40 years of successfully breeding Border Leicesters.

While Trevor, Judy, Lachie and Olivia James are tremendously proud of the numerous successes Coolawang has achieved, including more major awards at this year's Adelaide Royal Show, these are not where their main breeding focus lies.

"Our clients have provided wonderful support of our program over our forty-year journey, and we value them deeply," Lachie James said.

"It is their success that is the centre of focus in our breeding program and really, is the true measure of our success as stud breeders," Lachie added.

Senior principal, Trevor James added, "Our objective has always been to breed commercially relevant sheep that can consistently produce top quality progeny for our clients."

"Also, with them in mind, we have striven to maintain affordability, while keeping quality at the highest level we can produce," he said.

In line with growing demand, Coolawang has offered a few more rams each year. However, with the exceptional demand last year, they are offering an extra 35 rams in this year's sale, hoping all clients can get quality rams at good value. There will be 10 specially selected stud rams and 210 flock rams offered this year.

The James family's many recent successes start at the annual Naracoorte first cross young ewe sale. In clear evidence they are right on the mark, they achieved yet another sale topping and national record \$386 last November, plus the best presented pen award.

This latter accolade was achieved for the tenth time in 14 years, while the top price was the third time they have set a new national record price for first cross ewes. Their entire line of 620 ewes in that sale averaged \$353. That is exceptionally consistent high-quality production.

The success also experienced by many of their clients in the Naracoorte first cross ewe and ewe lamb sales further backs up the Coolawang brand as one that can be thoroughly trusted.

On top of that, Coolawang also record-

ed the highest lamb prices in the state at the Naracoorte Regional Livestock Exchange (NRLE) on June 11th this year, selling their first-cross wether lambs at \$337/head through Elders.

This price demonstrates that Coolawang's concentration on producing true dual-purpose Border Leicesters that offer both wool and carcase attributes can result in top economic returns for commercial clients from progeny of both sexes.

"All our rams are eye-muscle and fat scanned in early August and we are very pleased with the results and progress in carcase attributes. This has carried through to our 1st cross flock where hybrid vigour is also at play and is producing fantastic growth rates and muscling," Lachie James said.

Independent phenotype assessment of the Coolawang sheep at major shows ensures the James family has their breeding objectives aligned with the highest structural and breed standards.

A continued dominance at the Adelaide Royal is evidence they are well and truly on the right road, not only within the breed, but also across breeds.

At this year's Adelaide Royal Show, they were awarded champion Border Leicester ram for the eighth year in a row. Their junior & grand champion ram, Coolawang 180177 then went on to be supreme interbreed longwool ram, and finally supreme all-breeds ram of the show.



Coolawang 180177, the Adelaide supreme all-breeds champion ram pictured when awarded the Border Leicester grand champion ram title and is with judge, Ian Gilmore, Oberon, NSW and Trevor and Lachie James.

The 12.5 month old champion is from Coolawang's Oaks Victory family line. It weighed 116.5kg at Adelaide and had an eye muscle depth reading of 44mm. It also won the objective measurement class, plus the award for the best headed Border Leicester.

Breed judge, Ian Gilmore, Oberon, NSW said the ram epitomised the commercial traits he was looking for.

"It stands up and says have a look at me; it is beautiful on its feet, has a true sire's head and carries a magnificent fleece of wool; if we breed Border Leicesters like this, we can't go too far wrong," Ian Gilmore said.

Trevor James said, "This Oaks Victory family consistently produces sheep like this including last year's Adelaide feature show champion ram. The line goes back to Coolawang 388/12, sold to Glencorrie for Australian record of \$18,200 in 2013."

The James family has made the decision that this ram will be retained within the stud, but there are many other rams from this and their other successful family lines right through the sale catalogue.

These include Coolawang 180226, a ram that was in the winning Border Leicester group of 3 rams with the champion, having even better muscling than the champion with a 48mm eye muscle depth reading. This group was very narrowly beaten into second place in the interbreed champion group of 3 rams class. C180226 will feature in the sale at lot 2, while the third ram in the group, C180120, sired by C160139, will be offered at lot 3.

While the champion ram was the headline act, 10 blue ribbon class winners reinforced the consistent quality being presented by Coolawang.

They were again most successful exhibitor for the 8th time in the last nine years.

While the James family seeks elite Lambplan performance levels, they do not focus on these alone.

Rather, the performance figures are considered in conjunction with a balance

of structural excellence, strong bone and constitution and high fertility background.

Extended lifetime performance of rams and their progeny is a point often overlooked with selections made on figures alone.

Two important extra bonuses for clients have also been undertaken by the James family in recent years. Firstly, Coolawang moved to side sampling and micron testing all their rams three years ago.

"There is a real premium for sheep producers who can offer their first cross wool in the preferred under 30 micron range, so this information is important if clients are to be able to achieve this premium," Lachie James said.

Coolawang is one of the very few studs offering this information on all sale rams.



Coolawang's winning Border Leicester group of 3 rams at Adelaide this year. From left, they are C180120 (lot 3 in sale), C180226 (lot 2) and the supreme champion C180177 (being retained).

Coolawang also undertakes testing and selection for worm resistance. This will ensure that the Coolawang rams and their progeny will be able to withstand annual worm burdens better than most other options. This information is also available on all their sale rams.

The annual Coolawang ram sale is on October 10th on-property at Mundulla, commencing at 11am, with Elders Naracoorte being the conducting sale agents.

The James family welcomes your enquiry, but prospective purchasers can get full catalogue details and updates on the website (www.coolawang.com.au), or through regular posts on Facebook.

Coolawang

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Celebrating 40 years