

# Wairere



## Time for Change!



“First-cross ewes joined to terminal sires and cattle were the starting point for Geoff and Janine Meyer of Garvie Downs, Bessiebella. After several years Mr. Meyer and his second-in-charge, Jeremy King, decided they wanted something unique and distinctive to improve their operation.

The pair sought better mothering ability and increased survival rates, black feet to reduce incidences of lameness, black points to prevent skin cancer, less drenching (Wairere don't drench adult sheep), better constitution and increased resilience from their ewes.

Mr. Meyer and Mr. King wanted to breed their own replacements in order to mitigate the importation of parasites and foot problems from other properties. Furthermore, they wanted to avoid reliance on market fluctuations when purchasing two-tooth ewes.

After conducting an analysis of like-minded operators in the industry in 2017, Mr. Meyer and Mr. King

decided to purchase 12 Wairere Romney rams to join with their 1000 best performing ewes.

Two years on, Mr. King said he felt like he had fixed everything. The lambs were born in atrocious Western District weather, however they possessed the get-up-and-go that other breeds lacked.

“From the 1000 ewes mated, we managed to draft 500 lambs exactly to the type we were looking for,” Mr. King said.

“They hung on incredibly well during this season's long dry, requiring minimal drenching. The ewe hoggets are lambing now.”

A recent visit to the Wairere operation in New Zealand has reinforced Mr. King's confidence that he is on the right track. He now plans to increase his ewe numbers which will in the future encompass a fully self-replacing flock.

“Wairere gives us more lambs to sell, it's that simple.”

- Self replacing
- Growth rate equal to progeny of terminal sires
- Ewes keep better condition
- Minimal drenching
- Full hybrid vigour over Merino and Border Merino
- Better shape, sound black feet, black nose.

**New Zealand's largest ram supplier now farms  
Wairere Romney ewes near Heywood, Victoria.**

**90% of New Zealand sheep are pure or part Romney**

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