



Wairere

Your next move?



Wairere/Border Merino ewe hoggets at 13-14 months old, in September, with 150% of lambs. These hoggets have gone on to lamb 150-175% as adult ewes.

With around 1,000 Wairere rams air freighted from New Zealand to Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia since 2005, the Wairere advantages are becoming well known:

- Self replacing
- Growth rate equal to progeny of terminal sires
- Ewes keep better condition
- Minimal drenching
- Premium wool skins
- Sound feet
- Full hybrid vigour over Merino and Border Merino

Other comments about Wairere in Australia

- Better shape, black feet, black nose
- Can have good condition on an 18kg carcass, as well as heavy weight. Dean McKenna of Midfield Warrnambool, "I'm sick of getting 18kg lambs on a 24kg frame."
- Top mothering ability, some protection against foxes.
- "They grow like stink, so don't have to be lambed so early."
- They keep their condition better in both winter cold and wet, and summer dry. My feeding out costs and workload are so much lower now."
- "I'm down to one drench and vaccination per year. Breeding your own replacements has a lot going for it."

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

Please visit us at 6585 Woolsthorpe/Heywood road

90% of New Zealand sheep are pure or part Romney

Contact Ross Macklin on 0411 628 149 or Ewan Price on 0417 527 589

Proven Predictable Profitable

Wairere has been the biggest ram seller in New Zealand since 1987. Over the past fifteen years ram sales have averaged around 4,000 per year. Wairere Romneys are the big seller, but Wairere also breeds composite maternals and terminals, and an interbred Romney/Merino cross.

Size and scale

The Wairere flock comprises:

- 11,000 Sheep Improvement Ltd recorded ewes and twinning hoggets
- 11,000 multiplier ewes and ewe hoggets

Constitution We select for constitution by mob stocking on second class hill country up to 532m above sea level at a **high stocking rate, averaging 750kg LW wintered**. Wairere is a good **testing ground**, winter wet, summer dry, and in a Class 1 wind zone. Nationally, the Wairere reputation is built around **“shifting ability” and “bouncing back after a hard time”**.

Minimal drenching We practise minimal drenching in young stock. For six years ram lambs were part of an AgResearch trial for resilience and resistance to internal parasites. Mixed age ewes have not been drenched since

2005. Ewe hoggets have had a pre lamb at 12 months of age, and in some years get one drench after that.

Easycare lambing All ewe hoggets have been mated since 1966, and are all lambed unshepherded.

Selection for **easycare lambing** and against bearings has been practised for more than fifty years.

Hoggets must get in lamb Since 2005 this has been the practice, despite the difficulty of doing that with Romneys in consecutive droughts. This **selects for early maturity and fertility**.

Eye muscle area Since 2001, up to 7,000 ram lambs each year have been measured for eye muscle area. This measurement is integrated into our SIL index.

From 1994 to 2012 we were involved with the Wairarapa Romney Improvement Group in an annual sire evaluation trial **comparing progeny saleable meat yield**.

Heavy culling We run all sheep in large mobs, and **let the fittest survive. Big numbers allow heavy culling**.

Reducing your workload Like you, we cull heavily on dags, and other basics like feet and pasterns. We are always thinking about how **to reduce your workload**.



The testing ground at Wairere NZ in a good autumn. In July 2017, 2,600 ewe hoggets at 42kg scanned 112%; 1,400 two toothed at 62kg scanned 190%, 3,800 mixed age ewes at 69kg scanned 201%.

The self replacing wave

The Grant family near Coleraine, 625mm rainfall, lambing June/July, Craig Grant:

“We used to have Merinos, then ran half the flock as Border/Merinos. We started joining Wairere Romney rams over first cross ewes ten years ago. The Merino ewes have gone and the first cross ewes will be phased out over the next year. The second cross Romney ewes are more robust and hardy than the first cross and require less drenching.

We lamb mid June/early July, and the whole flock

averages around 135%. Rough weather at lambing is less stressful due to the lambs being far more resilient and the ewes superior mothering ability, culminating in better lamb survival rates.

Average carcase weight has been around 25-26kg in recent years. All lambs are marketed over the hooks as a mix of both terminal sired and maternal sired wether lambs with no discounts and top value skin returns. Our maternal wether lambs are of a lot higher standard than our previous first cross and have real carcase shape with a lot higher percentage being

turned off as suckers at a greater \$ value.

We have really benefitted from the hardiness of the Romney cross. They maintain an extra condition score through the tough winter period and have eliminated almost all foot problems due to their black feet.

The Romney rams have excellent longevity, have great libido and don't seem to suffer the lameness issues so often encountered in heavy breed rams.

Waireres just do it

Ewan Price, Heywood. runs 4,500 ewes and hoggets on 560 hectares, near Heywood Victoria, a stocking rate of under nine per hectare. But a lambing percentage of 145 and average carcase weight of 22kg, and a 90 percent contribution from the hoggets, delivers 310kg carcase weight and wool per hectare.



*On Ewan Price's farm near Heywood:
Wairere Romney/Border Merino ewe, early September.*

Charlie Lillecrapp, Mt Gambier. "The Wairere cross are so much tougher than the Border Merinos that I used to run. My Kiwi shearers told me to check out Wairere on the Internet. It was great advice. These sheep maintain condition through wet winters and dry summers, and are so much easier to farm, as well as making more money with extra lambs."

Tim Gunn, northeastern Tasmania. "I first bought Wairere Rams in 2008. I like the Wairere breeding philosophy, and I like the doing ability of the sheep, despite no drenching of mixed age ewes. After several years of experimentation I've taken to using around half Wairere and half Dohne Rams in my crossbred flock. I simply eyeball the ewes at the drafting gate, and put the Merino looking types to the Romney, and vice versa. I've succeeded at keeping micron reasonably fine, averaging around 26.

I want early maturing sheep which can be highly productive at 65kgs. The Wairere influence shows up in a more robust body type, plus improved lambing percentage and growth rate. The Wairere element adds some grunt to my sheep." **Stephen Creese, northern Tasmania and Victoria.** "We introduced purebred Wairere Romneys from New Zealand into our commercial composite flocks with the aim of reducing overall body size, and to give us more of a consistent type. They have certainly done that for us."

Anthony Mulraney, Hamilton. "A few years of shearing has shown me many types of sheep. I'm lucky to have come across the Wairere Romney while still early in my farming career. These sheep are more resilient to droughts and/or wet, cold winters. That reduces my workload and costs, because I do much less feeding out, yet achieve better results."

Moving forward we continue to assess our options and considering the benefits we see in breeding these types of sheep a move to a straight maternal flock is certainly not out of the question. At the moment we are keen to keep a stake in the mid micron wool and wool skin markets, so are still experimenting with a mix. These Wairere cross sheep are a pleasure to own and we are very impressed with the results so far."



190 16 month old Wairere Romney ewes were air freighted to Victoria in January 2015, and haven't been drenched since.

Richie Belleville, Macarthur. "I bought thirty Wairere Rams in 2008, and put them over my Merino flock, including the stud ewes. I've been really happy with that decision. The Merino feet used to be a big problem. The Romneys have solved that. I'd reached 100 percent with the Merinos, but the F2 Romneys do 140. The F2 ewes clip 26-27 micron, and the woolskins sell well."

Shane Malcolm, Portland. "My Wairere /First Cross four tooth ewes lambed 165% in 2016".

Dougal Laycock, South Australia "The feet are a really strong attribute with these sheep. I used to get Dorset cross lambs limping. The wool strength is a negative, but then or stronger than 25 micron is being discounted this year. But other benefits outweigh the wool. It's really exciting to observe the mothering ability, so much better, even with the ewe lambs. I mated the first Wairere cross lambs back to Wairere Rams, and had no lambing problems and no deaths. The first age group of Wairere cross two tooth ewes have scanned 167% this year. The 2,000 ewe lambs start lambing at the same time as the two tooth ewes, July 11, with 76% pregnant and due to lamb at 12-14 months of age. In the first year (2015-16) I sold the Wairere cross wether lambs onto a lamb finisher who sold them at 27 to 29kg dressed and \$180 average. The wool skins were good."

Rob Morrison, Minjah, Victoria. The Wairere sheep are built like a square brick. They can grow... we took some to 30kg this year, but normally target 23-24kg, with around 50% killed at weaning. We expect around 140 percent in our adult ewes, but it looks as though it will be better this year.

I started buying Wairere Romneys five years ago, and am now using only Wairere sires over the maternal multiplier flock. I'm toying with the idea of breeding further to Wairere, so that I don't have to buy in each year. There's no problem keeping condition on these Wairere cross ewes.

I've always viewed the price of a ram an investment in the big picture. I always like to buy at the top end."



Opportunity



Eleven month old Wairere ram hoggets, July 2017.



Eleven month old ewe hoggets scanned with twins.



Eleven month old Wairere ram hoggets, July 2017.

Prediction: The prime lamb system will steadily move towards self-replacing flocks dominated by New Zealand maternal genetics.

- In New Zealand the majority of farmers who used composite rams have reverted to using the mainstay Romney breed to restore constitution, uniformity and longevity.
- Romneys have been the dominant dual purpose breed in New Zealand for over a hundred years.

The Wairere Romney, performance recorded in commercial conditions on second class hill country since 1967, has the constitution, sound feet, and productivity to complement the Border Merino or Merino, or form part of a new stabilised Australian prime lamb composite.

Wairere Ram Booking Form 2017–18

Wairere Romney two tooth, available October Please circle price bracket. \$1,800 \$1,500 \$1,200 \$800	Wairere Romney ram lambs, available from mid January. Please circle price bracket. \$1,700 \$1,400 \$1,100 \$700
Qty: _____	Qty: _____

Contact details

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Scan or email back your order to admin@wairereramsaust.com



Ross Macklin

Ross is a Kiwi who has farmed in Australia since 2004, managing farms in W.A. and Victoria, and gold mines in WA in the 1980s. His career in New Zealand included running a sheep stud.



Ewan Price

Ewan has farmed near Heywood for many years. He has steadily improved sheep productivity with Wairere genetics.