

AS I SEE IT

Charinga Merino Stud is a family affair, owned and run by myself, my wife Donna, our three children, Tim, Fiona and Lendon, and our work force, Len Reid, Graeme Shaw, Ron Flanagan, Dean Wandel and new apprentice Duane Bannan.

Charinga is a daughter stud of Banavie Merino Stud at Marnoo and continues to breed big, fertile sheep with robust constitutions, heavy cutting ability and quality medium wool, for which they are renowned.

Embryo transfer, embryo splitting, artificial insemination and pregnancy testing are just some of the tools used extensively at Charinga to improve our product for the industry.

Many of Charinga's best stock now have been bred from Embryo Transfer from within the flock for 8 to 9 generations, in some cases both the sire and dam side.

Through rigorous selection at this elite level, our genetics are proving to have great potency in the merino industry across Australia.

I am delighted with the continued success of Charinga clients at the Bendigo Sheep and Wool Show. It is the premier Australian Show, where East meets West.

Congratulations to Roland, Elizabeth and Rohan Sprigg, East Strathglen Merino Stud, Tambellup, WA on winning the Merino Ram and Ewe National Pair. The full brother and sister are sired by Charinga Junior 12, with the same sire /dam combination producing two other broad ribbon winners. The ewe "Bendigo Princess" stole the show and was sashed

Supreme Merino Exhibit.

I see the merino breeding industry at the cross roads of several selection and management decisions as we approach 2010.

Charinga's unrelenting focus on profitability has maintained our clients in the merino industry.

Commercial wool cuts of 8-10kgs of deeply crimped, nourished, long stapled fleece, between 19 and 21mic is common. Merinos must also reproduce and nurture their lambs so as they can promptly be marketed for meat or continue the breeding cycle.

FREENESS, LOOSENESS and DRAPE with nourishment, length of staple and avoiding excess skin are the key drivers at Charinga.

BEWARE OF FLATNESS, DRYNESS, LOW FIBRE DENSITY, SHORT, STAPLES, AND SUINT (COLOUR) and STRONG PRIMARY FIBRES.

Interesting times ahead, but by keeping our cool, we'll ensure that we continue to breed profitable merinos. **Keep seeking information.** Much AWI research is continuing on alternatives. I believe Skintraction, to be a good and real option in the future. Bare breach breeding will be investigated further as a possible part in our breeding. BUT, not at the peril of introducing tight skins and wrinkle as has been the reported experience of a fellow stud breeder.

My experience is that some stud and commercial flocks, promoted as being "non-mulesing", have sheep with plain, flat skins, and produce low wool cuts of 4-5kgs of soft dry wool.

A self replacing Charinga flock is very profitable.

- 8-10kg of greasy wool @ \$5-\$6 per kg = \$40 - \$60
- Fattened merino wether lambs @ \$70 - \$80 + wool \$40
- Classed out and aged ewes - mated to terminal sires. Wool 8kg @ \$6 = \$48
- Plus \$ 80 + for the lamb
- \$50 - \$60 for mutton at the end of their commercial life. Good merino ewes are returning in excess of \$100 annually.

* Please note - All sheep at Charinga are OJD vaccinated with a score 9.

BREEDERS PLEASE REMEMBER

- This year's sire selection and matings will impact on lambs in 2009.
- They will be 1 year old in 2010
- And finally, your BREEDERS in 2011 impacting on lambing and returns.
- The outlook for heavy cutting, fertile, medium wool merinos is excellent.

BE PREPARED FOR THE FUTURE

Roger Polkinghorne

