



# Wilfield

SUMMER 2020 ISSUE

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[www.facebook.com/Wilfield sheep stud](https://www.facebook.com/Wilfield%20sheep%20stud)

[www.wilfieldsheepstud.co.nz](http://www.wilfieldsheepstud.co.nz)

# Welcome to the 2020 Edition of our Client Newsletter

The year 2020 will be remembered as the year of Covid. The years following 2020 will be known as the recovery from Covid.

For farming folk, little changed through lockdown. Now we see world economies struggling on the back of Covid and our incomes compromised from Covid. Wool has dropped in price significantly since the start of Covid, due to mills not operating as their clients were not spending. Lamb sales have been reduced due to the reduction in the hospitality trade.

The world still needs food, of which lamb and mutton are basic proteins. The world still needs fibre, natural fibre, like wool for clothing, upholstery and carpets.

The Corriedale breed is perfectly placed to give us both, in the form of meat and wool. Meat that is desired by the marketplace for colour, tenderness and taste. Wool for versatile uses and affordability. The Corriedale is the ultimate dual purpose breed, giving higher valued meat (Silere premiums - \$8/lamb) and higher valued wool. (4 times more per kilogram than crossbred) Last year Corriedale wool was 3 times the price of Crossbred and this year Corriedale wool is 4 times the price of Crossbred! Add in the continued improvement of fertility, mothering ability and footrot resistance and you have the sheep of the future!

Crossbred growers can use a corriedale ram and reduce their micron of their wool by 1-2 micron annually and return \$5-\$8 more per sheep, whilst retaining the lambing percentage and growth of their flock. Crossbred growers can use a merino ram over their ewes and reduce their micron by 6-7 micron and increase their wool return by \$15 per ewe, however the merino x crossbred ewe is likely to have a 20% to 25% loss in annual lamb production. This equates to approximately \$30 per ewe/year reduction.

Our Corriedale clients are continuing to see the benefits of using Wilfield based genetics. For the second consecutive year the SIL ram hogget across flock selection list of the top 100 ram hoggets in the breed, 76 come from our West Melton based flocks! Amazing!

Add in the Footrot DNA results where we have **96 1-1's, 33 1-2's and 39 1-3's**

80% of our Corriedale rams for sale are born as multiples and 75% are reared as multiples

We promise to add value to your business. We pride ourselves on being the most innovative and performance driven Corriedale stud in New Zealand and at the same time have open headed, well structured, fine woolled, fertile, highly maternal, "meaty" sheep that are footrot resistant.



# WILFIELD NEWS 2020

- ❖ Corriedale ram hogget average micron is 26.8
- ❖ Dominate Corriedale Ram Hogget Selection list – over 70 Goldmark rams! 8 of the best 11 rams bred at Wilfield!
- ❖ 8 of the best 12 proven Corriedale Breeding Rams bred at Wilfield!
- ❖ Champion Corriedale Ram and Champion Corriedale Ram Hogget at NZ Corriedale Society Show ( Due to Covid 19 and the cancellation on the Christchurch Show, the NZ Corriedale Society chose to exhibit at the Amberley Show)
- ❖ We undertook a comprehensive artificial insemination programme using WB 250/17
- ❖ Outstanding Marble Point Pregnancy Scanning. 170% M/A ewes, 153% 2th ewes.
- ❖ Best ever group of SufTEX rams.
- ❖ SufTEX rams include some BELTEX genetics!
- ❖ Wilfield is now on Facebook.  
Like us - [www.facebook.com/Wilfield sheep stud](http://www.facebook.com/Wilfield%20sheep%20stud)



*"We are really pleased with your rams, they are doing a great job for us"*  
**William Lowe**



# Sheep Outlook

Prepared for Wilfield Sheep Stud

November 2020

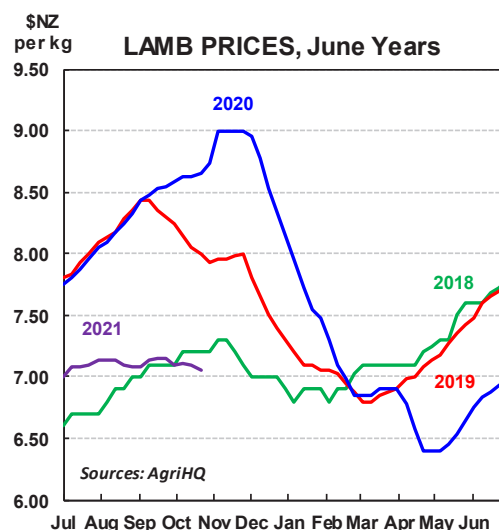
## Commodities Outlook

### Lamb – COVID pressures

The COVID-19 pandemic has wrought disruption to global economies and to logistics. Prices are tracking even further behind 2019 than they once were, and, as of the end of October, they are down about 19% on an annual basis.

Unfortunately, the outlook for lamb still looks far from certain. At the time of writing, new lockdown measures have just been announced in France, Germany and the UK, shutting restaurants in one of the sector’s most important markets. The looming Brexit deadline adds another layer of uncertainty to the mix too, and our friends at AgriHQ note lamb exporters face tariffs of up to 14% in the British market if a free-trade deal can’t be arranged or the UK and EU can’t agree on a quota split. So Brexit negotiations will be something to keep a watch on.

Another thing to watch is that other ongoing viral outbreak – African Swine Fever – which continues to spread around the world, disrupting the global supply of protein. Heavy flooding in China earlier in the year has also affected several of the key pork production regions. The Chinese economic recovery to date has been strong, a welcome development.

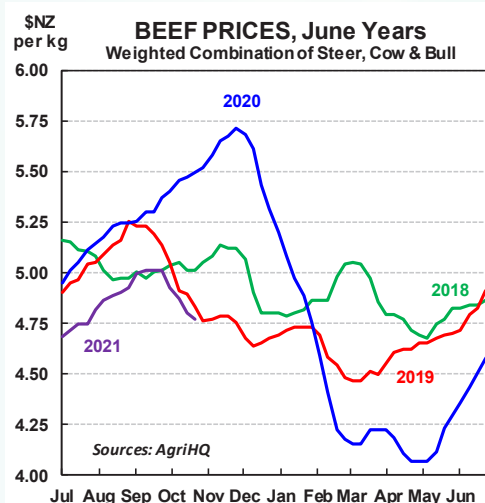


### Beef – Faring better

Beef prices have struggled to consolidate their recent gains. Beef prices have performed a bit better than lamb but are still down about 14% on an annual basis and have been losing further ground over recent weeks.

Like the outlook for lamb, beef prices face further downside risks. As noted above, new lockdown measures have just been announced in parts of Europe that will impact on meat export prices, though we expect beef prices will be a bit more resilient than those for lamb.

As with lamb, the spread of swine fever and flooding in China (which heavily impacted the country’s pork supplies) is something to watch and should provide some support for global protein prices. Tightening beef supply out of Australia is another emerging factor, though it is too early to gauge the impact just yet.

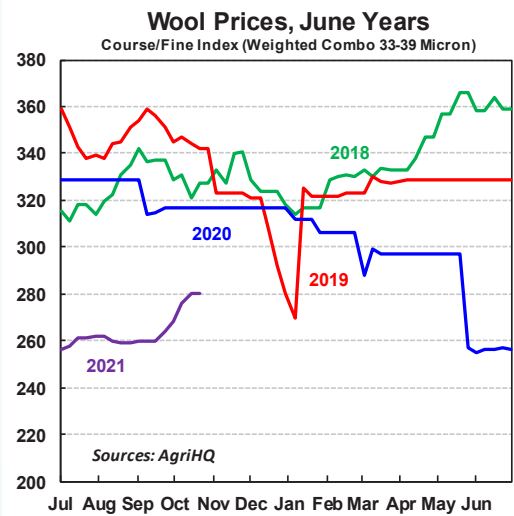


**Wool – Signs of life**

Wool has been one of the commodities most impacted by the COVID-price shock. For much of the winter, prices were down nearly 20% on year-ago levels as measured by our weighted index. The industry was already in a challenging spot pre-COVID, and things went from bad to worse when the pandemic hit as the global outlook weakened and inventories began to build up domestically.

Fortunately, over the past couple of months we've seen prices start to tentatively lift off their lows. The index is now running about 10% behind year-ago levels off the back of some stronger auction results. Global supplies have tightened, and the sector is also benefitting from the recovery in China, which is by far the largest export market

Still, the gains aren't being distributed evenly across all wool-types. Whilst there is upside for courser grades, fine wool, like Merino is still well down on a year ago. With working from home now more commonplace, many will be holding off on going out and buying a nice new suit.

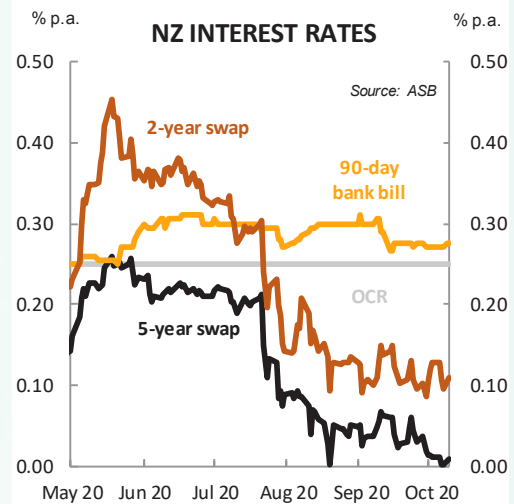


**Financial Markets Outlook**

**Interest Rates – Low for even longer**

The outlook for interest rates remains much the same as it has been since the crisis began: very low for a very long time. Central banks globally have continued to take strong action to avert disaster, and consequently, we've seen interest rates remain at historically-low levels over much of 2020 to date. In New Zealand, the Official Cash Rate (OCR) remains at 0.25%, whilst the cap on the Reserve Bank's massive asset-purchase programme has expanded to \$100bn since our last report.

Strong action by the RBNZ has been broadly successful in lowering rates, with both deposit and lending rates plumbing record lows. The RBNZ is also introducing the Funding for Lending Programme (FLP), to directly lend to banks at the rate of the OCR in order to further drive down bank funding costs and enable lending rates in the economy to fall further. There is still the possibility the bank could take the cash rate negative next year if it feels more stimulus is prudent, pushing rates even lower. Interest rates should start to drift higher when the pandemic ultimately recedes, but the timing and speed of any shift is highly uncertain – and a long time away.

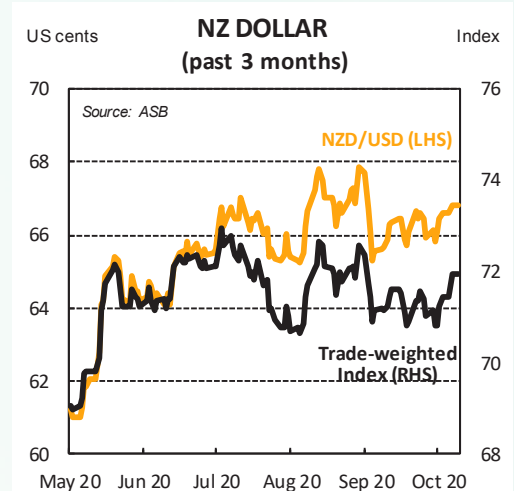


**NZ Dollar – Off its panicky lows**

The NZD had a rollercoaster ride earlier in the year when COVID-19 ramped up, crashing as low as 55 US cents during the peak period of market fear.

In the months since, the kiwi has staged a comeback to trade at higher range. Having spent most of April and May shy of 0.62, the NZD/USD has been broadly higher in the months since, even managing to creep up to 0.68 when conditions have been accommodative.

Still, there remains a fair degree of volatility around. Markets have digested a litany of US election and COVID-19 related headlines over recent months and the NZD has been characteristically vulnerable to swings in sentiment. At the time of writing, positive risk sentiment had helped the NZD sweep higher in the aftermath of the US elections and the positive COVID-19 vaccine news.



# Farmer Focus

written by James Hoban

Emerald Hills is a 900ha property situated near Hyde in Central Otago. With a mean annual rainfall of 520mm farming for dry conditions is essential. David and Joc Kinney have built a low input, profitable farming system to cater for the dry and ensure they can mostly run the farm alone with help from their 3 children Meg, Ruby and Ben. Casual staff and contractors are used at busy times. Corriedales are a key part of the family's success.

The Kinney's have had a long association with Hyde having lived and farmed there since the 1870's. David's relationship with the Wattlebank stud started in around 1984 when his father first purchased rams from Bill and Pauline Bain. David has always appreciated Bill's eye for stock, and honest advice with selections that fit well with the Emerald Hills program, system and environment.

*"Bill's a fantastic stockman. He has got a great eye for it and he understands what we are looking for."*

At the time they first went to Wattlebank, David was not satisfied with the direction of the flock. He had come home from school and was farming for his parents. Romneys had previously been put over the family's Corriedale ewes in an effort to increase the size but David and his father were looking for a change.

One of the biggest factors ensuring the Kinney's' loyalty to Corriedales is the breed's work with Footscores in an effort to breed footrot resistant sheep. When breeders first started using the Lincoln gene marker test to Footscore rams Bill helped David test all the rams already on hand. This allowed David to retain the best rams based on these Footscores and speed up the rate of progress. It was a great head start for David and Joc, based on some visionary thinking and support from Bill.

Footscores remain an essential component for the Kinney's when it comes to selecting rams. Years ago 60-70% of the flock suffered from footrot whereas today David says less than 1% are susceptible.

David also looks at SIL figures and balances these with micron and type to ensure the rams he takes home meet the needs of his commercial operation. A large proportion of the rams he buys are either Goldmark or Silvermark, meaning they are in the top 25% of rams offered by members of the Corriedale across flock performance group, based on dual purpose index. David targets 26-27 micron rams that are born and reared as twins.



The Kinney family, from left Ben (14), Joc, Meg (21), Ruby (17) and David



Corriedale Ewe Hogget

It is partly the footrot resistance work of breeders such as the Bains along with Robin and Pip Wilson that has kept the Kinney family happy with the Corriedale breed. David says the breed has a significant advantage over Halfbreds because of this.

Most of Emerald Hills is run country which is topdressed and oversown with good natural shelter. Approximately 160ha of finishing land offers a great balance for the hill, with a further 50ha of lucerne. The finishing area includes Aber grasses, clover and chicory. 32ha are under K-line irrigation.

Half of the 2900 ewe flock, including all two-tooths, are mated to Poll Dorset/Texel rams and around half their lambs are killed prime at weaning at 16-17kgCW. Lambing dates are split with a focus on the majority of early terminal lambs being sold in time for Corriedale lambs to take their place on the finishing areas. David weans deep to ensure every killable lamb is gone at weaning and then gets another draft of terminal lambs away as soon as possible. This allows the Kinney's to hold onto the Corriedale lambs for longer if rainfall for the season is sufficient and finish them to a higher weight often up to 22kgCW.

Lambs are finished by autumn but David remains flexible depending on the season and market. He has used the Wilfield lamb scheme at times and says this is a great backstop to have up his sleeve in a challenging year. David and Joc keep 700 replacement Corriedale ewe hoggets' annually, and also run 55 Hereford breeding cows plus replacements. Before the four-tooths go to the ram, their wool is inspected carefully and anything stronger than 28 micron is mated to a terminal ram. These ewes have their ear tag changed to the opposite ear and stay in the terminal flock for life. Twin two-tooths and older twin ewes lamb on the paddocks with David doing a lambing beat once a day. All other ewes lamb without shepherding on the hill, and from a scanning of around 160% typically wean 135-140%.

Fertiliser is prioritised with all of the hill country receiving 150kg of Super every two years and the finishing country receiving 250kgs of Crop Master annually. The farm is good healthy stock country with a natural pH around 6. Sulphur is the limiting nutrient.

Wool is a substantial component of annual income and in recent years mid micron wool has continued to sell well relative to strong wool. David targets a mainline of 27-28 micron and has achieved a fine woolled, productive flock with ewes clipping 5.5kg/head. As an example in 2019 the Kinney's sold a fine line of ewe fleece wool for \$11.58/kg clean.

The annual wool cheque along with the ability to finish lambs quickly is a great reminder of how well Corriedales suit the Kinney family and the environment in which they farm.



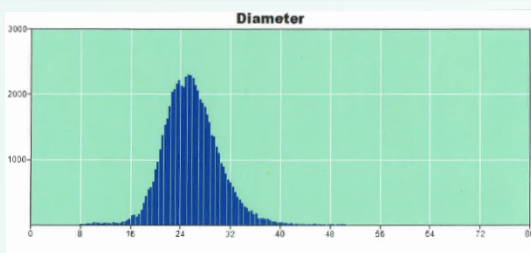
# MEAT AND WOOL

Jon Hickford, Professor of Animal Breeding & Genetics, Lincoln University

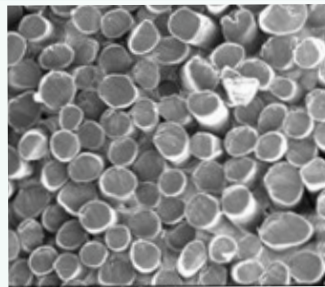
Recently I was asked by a Romney sheep breeder what I thought of a ram he had found that had very fine wool (by Romney standards). It had tested at just over 25 microns as a hogget, and while it would likely blow out by 5-6 microns as it matured, it would probably still have wool under 32 micron as an adult.

That might not sound anything worth getting excited about for the average Corriedale farmer, but this Romney breeder has excellent SIL figures, and produces slaughter lambs from his commercial stock with lean meat yields that average in the high 50s. A lot of Texel's struggle to do that! What is more, he has great lamb survival, with typically less than 5% of his lambs dying between scanning and weaning, and this being achieved in hard hill country at altitude. That survival performance is something that every sheep farmer should aspire to.

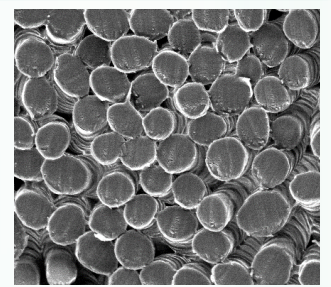
There was little doubting the ram in question had amazing wool and in comparison to other Romney wool samples it had amazing handle. While some of this would most certainly be attributable to the low micron count, when we tested it and looked at it under the electron microscope, the uniformity of the fibres was astounding. I had only seen this uniformity previously in fine wool sheep.



**Romney Ram.** MFD = 25.4 micron, FDS = 4.5 micron, 0% medulation



**Romney Ram.** 32.5 micron wool



**Elite Merino Ram.** 17 micron wool (Approx. 2x greater magnification)

So was the Romney ram purchased? In short – no!

While the wool was outstanding the ram's SIL figures for reproduction (NLB) and survival were poor. Both of these critically important lamb production traits have low heritabilities, and so the ram if passing that performance on (along with the beautiful wool), would have taken the Romney breeder's flock backwards genetically by many years!

What is the lesson in this for Corriedale farmers?

Overall, it is that a dual-purpose meat and wool sheep like the Corriedales that the Wilsons produce, need performance for both wool quality and lambing/growth/carcass performance. One, without the other is insufficient. Both are needed to make money!

You also need to think about heritability too. Improving low heritability traits like NLB and survival takes time. One bad ram choice can have an enduring negative impact on your flock performance. In comparison, key wool traits are typically moderately to highly heritable. That makes them easier to breed for, albeit be careful about how much you trust your eye when it comes to selecting elite wool rams. Use wool testing, and if you want wool with the consistency of either the Romney or Merino wools presented above, then place your emphasis on not just micron, but fibre diameter standard deviation (FDS) too. Look at the fibre diameter histograms (the Romney one is shown), because FDS describes the spread of individual fibre diameters around the mean, and even low MFD wools can have fibres in excess of 40 micron. You don't want that in your wool. That uniformity is also heritable and it does contribute to you having wool with great handle.

Also never lose sight of the fact that production traits must always be balanced against other key traits, like disease resistance. I really admire the work that the Wilsons has done over many years with footrot tolerance, and with fine wool sheep that is an ever present problem.

While I see a lot of cross-bred wool producers dropping the ball on wool, and I understand that given how little they are getting for it, it is pleasing to see that some of the Romney and Perendale breeders I know are keeping pressure on it. While COVID-19 has done damage to many markets, the shift away from the use of synthetics to more sustainable products like wool is coming. The shift will be seen first in high-value markets, so even when the market is down, emphasis needs to be placed on wool quality.

I am also not losing too much sleep over the environmental footprint of sheep. While some political zealots seem happy to undermine our sheep farmers, there is little doubting that it is a low impact-high productivity industry by any global standard, and one that all New Zealanders should be proud of.



# Wilfield SufTEX

The cross is becoming more popular year by year. We sold another record number of Wilfield SufTEX rams last year on the back of the quality of the rams we put into the market.

We are excited to inform you that this year's crop has been infused with Beltex genetics to enhance the muscling of our existing Suftex flock. We purchased an excellent 50% Suffolk/50% Beltex ram in March 2019 and are very pleased with the resulting progeny. The first crop will be offered for sale in December 2020. We have chosen Beltex genetics because of their hind quarters and their meat yield.

The ram we purchased was also Footrot Resistant 1-3 and fits in with our required standards.

We are continuing to have increased inquiries for our SufTEX genetics with Footrot Resistance. We will test 50 rams this season. If you are interested in Beltex and/or Footrot resistant rams please inform Robin on ordering.

We have several points of difference to other Suftex flocks:

1. We mate our best rams with our best ewes
2. We test for Footrot
3. We are always looking to improve and add value for our clients
4. We are SIL recorded
5. We cull heavily – less than 40% of our ram lambs are offered for sale as 2ths and less than 30% of ewe lambs are in our stud breeding program.
6. We have a commercial flock – all progeny are sold

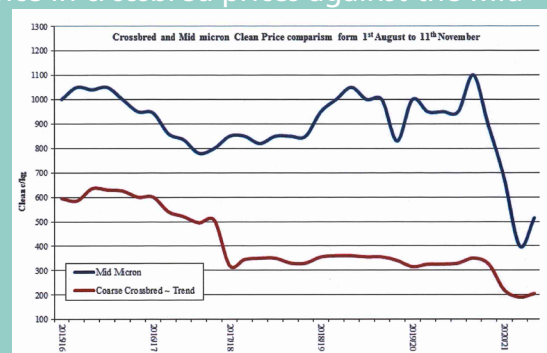


## MID MICRON MARKET UPDATE

Roger Fuller - Carrfields

Currently we are experiencing issues that many in the industry have not had to deal with in their careers. Covid has certainly taught us how to deal with unusual circumstances. During lockdown there were no wool sales for seven weeks which left exporters unable to purchase wool or ship wool. World markets became uncertain and processing mills came to a halt, with many closing, or on reduced hours while these countries dealt with the pandemic. When Auctions eventually got underway markets were very fragile with prices dropping dramatically in Australia and in New Zealand. Once confidence got going and processing mills began opening up wool flow started although at very subdued levels. Demand for Mid micron wool at time of writing has seen some major increases across all categories. Although the figures below put in perspective the affect this pandemic has had across the world. The quality of the Mid Micron clip this year has been outstanding, and the disappointing returns have not reflected the work that you the farmer has put in over the last 12 months. The following graph gives a good indication of the difference in crossbred prices against the Mid Micron price.

Micron	10/10/19	22/10/20	Change+/-
25	1325	940	-41%
26	1220	820	-49%
27	1155	710	-63%
28	980	645	-52%
29	900	630	-43%



# WILFIELD LAMB PROGRAM



**We want to purchase YOUR lambs that are sired by OUR rams and we will pay you more ... and YOU will share in the profit from the Programme.**

"The Wilfield Lamb Program carries all the risk, yet share the profit with their stakeholders. Nothing can be fairer than that" David Hazlett

The Program starts with us purchasing your store Corriedale lambs of between approximately 23 to 32 kilograms liveweight and placing them on farms to be finished between 21 and 25 kilograms CW. Breeders who use Wilfield based genetics are paid the current market price plus a \$2/head, Research and Development payment. Breeders will also share in the profits generated from the sale of the lamb and the wool, sold in the spring, providing there is a surplus.

There will be no bonus paid out this spring to either Breeder's or Finisher's for the 2019 born lambs due to the high purchase price and the reduced market price this Spring. Covid 19 and how it has affected the world markets is the major reason.

***Please speak with Robin if you wish to be part of this program. Wether and ewe lambs are accepted into the programme.***

Hazlett's facilitate the program from purchase to processing.

*"I honestly think people need to change their thinking a bit. They have the mindset that corriedales can't count their lambs and their lambing percentage is no good but since we've been here, it's opened my eyes, they're performing just as good as any other sheep round the place and we're getting paid for the wool."*

*"They're not kicking round the easy country, they're out in the high stuff and they always seem to come in in reasonable order. They're not hanging down at the gate waiting to be shifted so I've been really impressed with them."*

**Matt Black (Marble Point)**



# WILFIELD

## 2020 PRICE LIST (GST exclusive)



**Wilfield Corriedale Base Flock Ram      \$800**

**Premiums for:**

- Gold Mark \$450                      (limited supply)
- Silvermark \$350                    (limited supply)
- Footrot Resistant                  1-1    \$450 (limited supply)
- Footrot Resistant                  1-2    \$350 (limited supply)
- Footrot Resistant                  1-3    \$250 (limited supply)
- Footrot Resistant                  2-2    \$250 (limited supply)
- Smart Wools                          26.5 micron and less    \$250 (limited supply)

Example Purchase

Base Ram	+	Silvermark	+	Footrot Resistant 1-3	=	Ram Purchase
\$800	+	\$350	+	\$250	=	\$1400

**Wilfield SufTEX Base Flock Ram      \$900**

**Premiums for:**

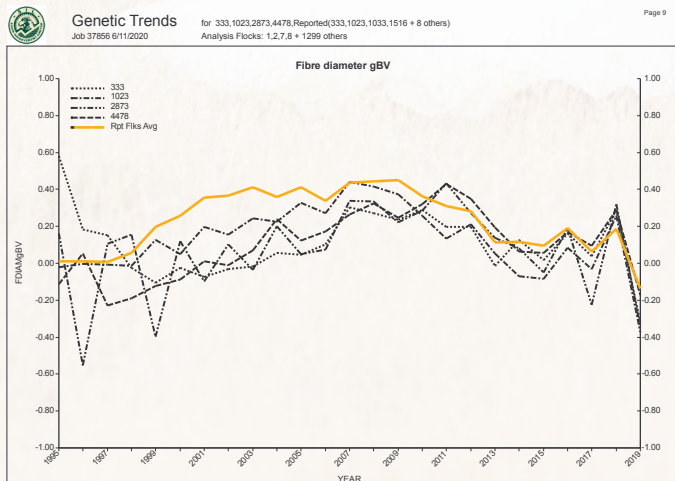
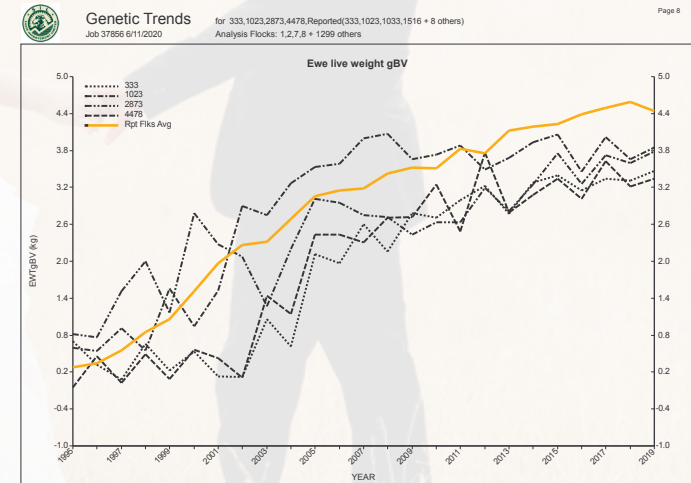
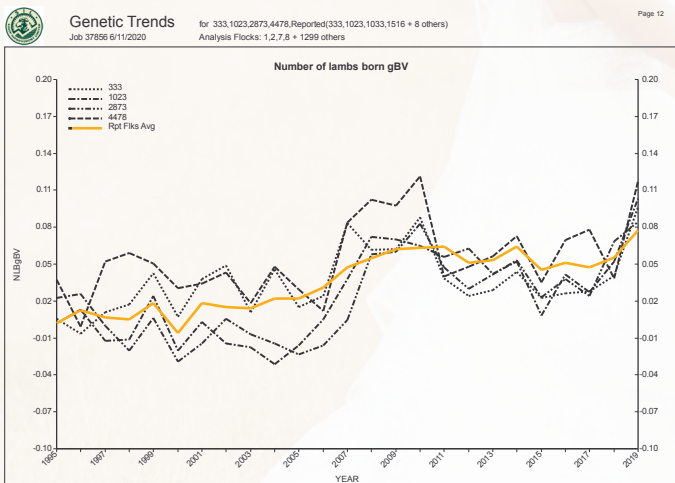
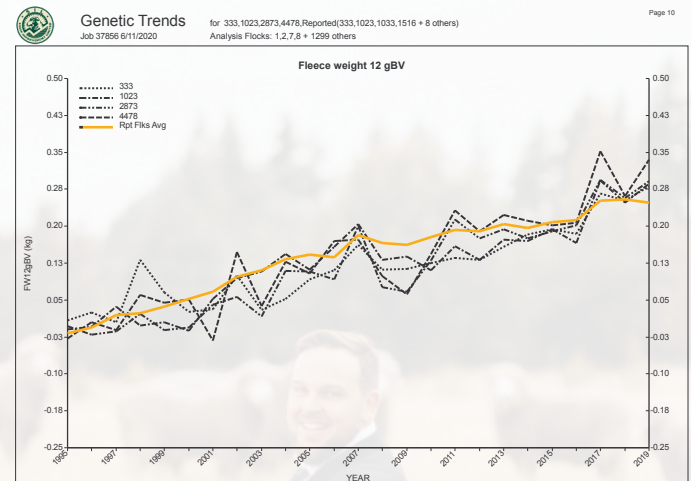
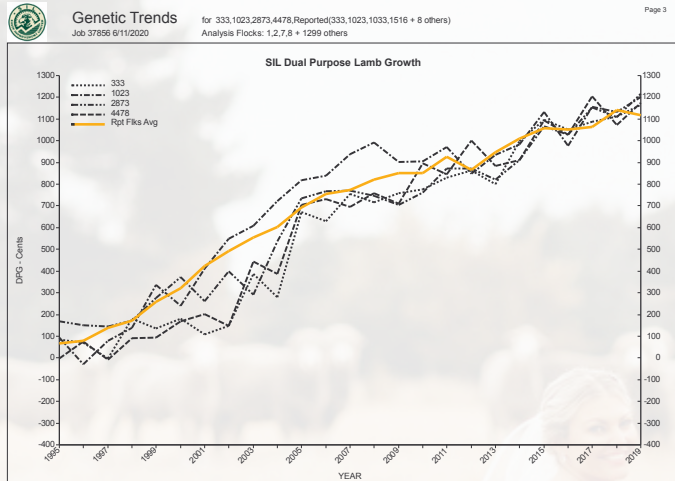
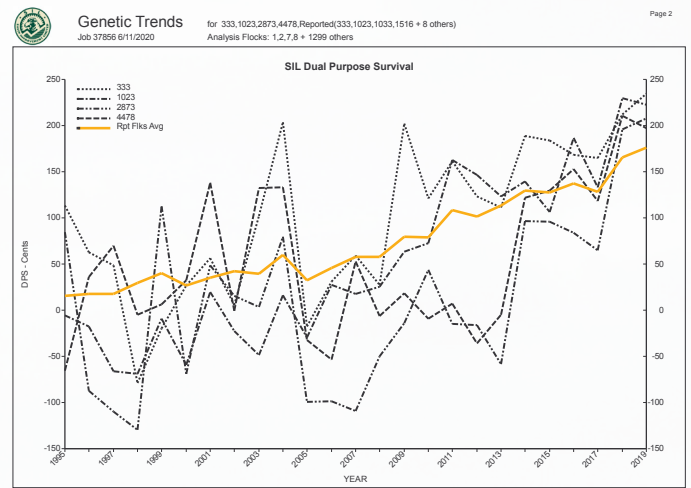
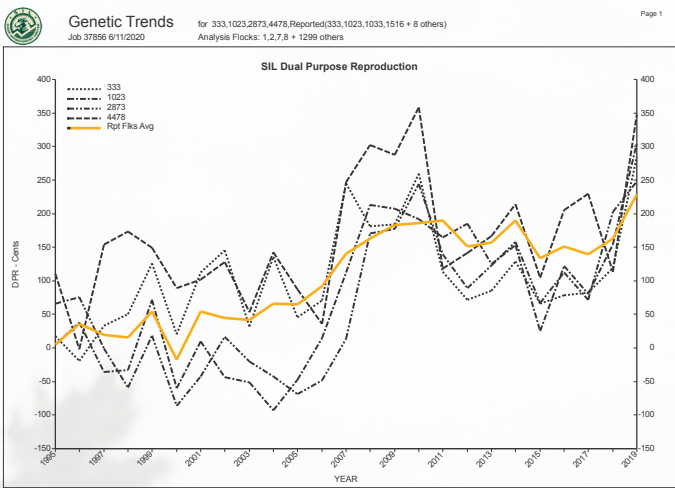
- Beltex Cross                          \$100 (limited supply)
- SIL Index - GOLD                    \$200 (limited supply)
- SIL Index - SILVER                   \$100 (limited supply)
- Footrot Resistant                  1 - 1    \$450 (limited supply)
- Footrot Resistant                  1 - 2    \$350 (limited supply)
- Footrot Resistant                  1 - 3    \$250 (limited supply)
- Footrot Resistant                  2 - 2    \$250 (limited supply)

Example Purchase

Base Ram	+	SIL Index GOLD	+	Footrot Resistant 1-3	=	Ram Purchase
\$900	+	\$200	+	\$250	=	\$1350

**Wilfield Vasectomised Rams \$300**

***Phone Robin to discuss your requirements on 021 158 3866***



**Key:**  
**Gold Line:** All Corriedale flocks combined  
**Black Lines:** Four individual flocks from West Melton