

A Snapshot of Industry

I often think how difficult it must be for commercial sheep producers to sort through the huge amount of information, advertising, marketing and in many cases bullshit that is part of our industry landscape. With the combination of unprecedented seedstock operations all vying for record low national ewe numbers the use of social media and fancy marketing campaigns to drive sales is becoming common place. With the recent downturn in wool prices many Merino seedstock operations are refocusing their marketing around the dual-purpose attributes of their program. I have been a long-term advocate that every self-replacing Merino flock, by definition, are a dual-purpose Maternal enterprise. What does vary is the weighting in the stud breeders breeding objective with regards to wool, carcase and Maternal traits. For over 25 years Trigger Vale has had a clear vision to put quality Merino wools on the best carcase animal possible. The added benefit of this objective is that many of the traits you select for like early growth, muscle and fat due to natural genetic correlations tend to be more prevalent on polled, wrinkle free, easy-care fertile animals. A win win!!

I would really like to stress that the purpose of compiling Table 1 was to illustrate, using the impartial Sheep Genetics database, that Trigger Vale is one of the leading Merino studs in Australia for these carcase traits and when all three are combined with a mules free animal we are clearly Number 1. Table 1. Shows what percentage of each stud's entire drop of 2019 males are in the top 20% for each trait. The final column shows the number of the entire drop from each stud that are in the top 20% for all 4 traits combined. The studs in the table have been selected because they also have a high profile in industry as being leaders in these traits. It is important to highlight that my aim of compiling the table was to illustrate clearly that Trigger Vale leads industry due to its long-term vision in these areas not to be negative towards other studs. Therefore, I have listed them anonymously and I will never tell anyone who each stud is. If interested in doing further research in this area yourself all the information can be obtained in the SG search engine. Many of the studs listed have in fact purchased from Trigger Vale the genetics to improve their

genetic trends in these maternal carcase traits.

In summary Table below illustrates that if these traits are an important component of your own breeding objective, whether you are a traditional Merino breeder wishing to place more emphasize on carcase and fertility or a composite breeder wanting to improve wool value without compromising your carcase and fertility Trigger Vale has these traits as a fundamental part of our DNA. It will not matter if you purchase the dearest ram at auction or the last graded ram privately, they will be strong in these areas.

Finally, I think it is important to note that with the power of full pedigree generated ASBV's you can have your cake and eat it too. There has often been a perception that high carcase merit animals have lower Clean Fleece weight but a search of our Database highlights that 62% of the total Trigger Vale 2019 drop rams are above average for wool cut and 93% above average for Staple length.



STUD	Top 20% YWT	Top 20 % YEMD	Top 20 %YFAT	Top 20% EBRW	All 4 combined Top 20 %
Trigger Vale	91	87	96.2	96	77%
Stud A	75	84	86	70	52%
Stud B	92	95	96	35	31.6%
Stud C	30	56	55	90	25%
Stud D	52	44	61	94	21%
Stud E	59	23	44	79	13.5%
Stud F	51	23	13	12	5%
Stud G	5	14	13	89	3%
Stud H	12	16	24	13	1.6%
Stud I	22	8	1.5	34	1%
Stud J	73	3	1	5	0%