

TEXEL NEWS

- December 2001 -

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It has been a very eventful period since our last Journal. I am sure all our thoughts went out to all those affected by the events of September 11th, the repercussions of which we are still feeling. I could not help but feel pleased to live in our wonderful safe country.

Texels have again done exceptionally well in several carcase competitions. I have heard about successes in Perth, Tasmania and Adelaide. Congratulations to the breeders concerned. These competitions are one of our best promotions. We have the carcase breed let's show it.

I attended the Adelaide and Melbourne Royal shows and again was impressed by the tremendous depth of quality our breeders have achieved over the last seven years.

Congratulations to the members who have held very successful ram auctions. They have been rewarded for their efforts. No matter how good the sheep they still have to be promoted and sold to the lamb producer.

Prime lamb prices have been excellent this season and are expected to continue at their current levels. Statistics also indicate that the level of second cross lambs has increased to 33%, due to the increasing levels of exports. Breeders can look forward to solid demand for quality rams.

I attended the South Australian Region tour of Tatiara Meatworks in November. It was a fascinating day. Of particular interest was their requirement for muscle. Provided the lambs had the weight, length of loin was not important but muscle area was. The US importers measure the muscle area of the loin packs. In short, they wanted heavy lambs with as much hindquarter and loin muscle as possible – TEXEL. This is an exciting market, as a 1% increase to the US will require a 30% increase in Australian lamb turn off.

The regional member's conference in Bendigo in November was another stimulating weekend with members representing Victorian Regions and also South Australia, Tasmania and southern NSW. Many issues of importance were discussed under the guidance of Trevor Roche who was our facilitator for the weekend. The SWOT session was very revealing, but showed the great opportunities

we have. Many thanks to the organisers, in particular John Raymond and Trevor Roche.

One of the opportunities discussed is a marketing programme "Texel Supermuscle" that will be launched next year. A foundation meeting will be held in conjunction with the March Council meeting in Bendigo. This is a very powerful marketing initiative and I encourage members to attend.

Finally, I would like to thank Peter Weston and his team for the great job they have done over the year, and wish all members a safe, happy and prosperous New Year.

Bill Close
President

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MEMBERS CONFERENCE AT BENDIGO

A Regional Members Conference was held at the National Hotel/Motel, Bendigo, Vic., on the weekend of November 24th/25th where the guest Facilitor was Mr. Trevor Roche, formerly Chief Officer, Country Fire Authority.

The Conference was opened by ATSBPA President Bill Close who spoke of the exciting position of the lamb industry and the potential role of the Texel. His vision for the Texel breed is that it will be the dominant prime lamb sire within the next 8 years. This can be achieved if Members work at breeding the best Texels and promote them.

Trevor Roche then took attendees through a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) session. This resulted in very stimulating ideas and discussion.

Notes:

- ❖ We need to look at the possibilities – we need a strategic future that looks 5-10 years ahead.
- ❖ Business strategy and Marketing plan: What are the expectations? How will it be handled?
- ❖ We want to be the LEADERS in whatever market we choose to follow.
- ❖ We need to keep an eye on the global markets/trends.
- ❖ Branded Texel meat depends on the commitment of people – producers, buyers and consumers.

Funding was discussed, as we need to provide a cost effective service to members, and give them a strong reason for joining and staying in the Association. The Flock ram levy was considered an inefficient means of fund raising.

The TEXEL-SUPERMUSCLE program (draft) was tabled. A flock ram marketing arm of the Association that could operate as a business. It would allow members to give a quality assured performance recorded accreditation to the rams they sell. It would allow for the formation of market alliances and specifications requirements with producers and processors.

TEXEL-SUPERMUSCLE will be further discussed at the Council meeting on March 2 at Bendigo at 4.00 p.m. Interested members are most welcome to attend.

Mike Flavel – Area General Manager – Telstra Country Wide

Spoke about Telstra Satellite Internet connection for broadband (very fast) delivery. The greater use we can make of this technology, the greater our communication and savings will be.

Members were encouraged to make greater use of our website. Heather Buckland offered to act as a information coordinator to get news etc. up on the web page as soon as possible.

Do we need to keep such detailed records in our flock book? Is there a newer cheaper system? Council needs to be always looking out for alternatives.

Rules & Regulations on tattooing were discussed, and resulted in a recommendation to Council to add electronic or alternative methods of identification as they become available.

Membership was discussed and amongst the various suggestions looked at included Junior, Annual and non-active Memberships. Texel Supermuscle may provide a strong reason for members to reregister.

Promotions – it was pointed out that Federal Council has only \$4000 per yr. to spend on promotion Australia wide. It can only support Regions with their promotions. Who should we focus on? Stud breeders, Producers, Agents, Processors or Consumers.

Regions – it is up to Regions to decide if they want to amalgamate or just meet jointly until numbers increase.

Shows – it was suggested we look at overseas judges, more bare shorn classes. White coats or not?

On Sunday, we had interesting talks on:

Super Borders – presentation by Bruce Starritt, Kelso Border Leicester Stud.

LAMBPLAN – presentation by Steve Parker, Advanced Livestock Services.

OJD – presentation by Dr. John Galvin, Manager, Animal Health NRE Victoria.

Our thanks go to Trevor Roche for the top job he did as our facilitator.

If you would like a full copy of the notes on the meeting please contact Jill Parker (she did a great job writing them all down) at longford@ansoniac.com.au

UK JOURNAL – 'TEXEL SHEEP 2001

Head office has limited copies available of the 2000 and 2001 Journals ordered from the British Texel Sheep Society Ltd.

Price per Journal is \$12.10 (GST inclusive and post free).

Please forward your cheque to Head Office if you are interested, payable to "Australian Texel Stud Breeders Association Inc."

A tax invoice/receipt will be sent to you.

TOP SIRES – EWES IN RECORD YEAR

If you are going to run sheep as a mainstream farm enterprise, you may as well feed them the best. This is the view of specialist prime lamb producers Bill Rennie and his son, Bruce, who run Rennie Dale, Longwood, just south of Euroa, in north-east Victoria.

They have just bought one of the highest-priced prime lamb sires of the season, a Texel ram for \$6600. They also maintain a long-term arrangement with local Border Leicester/Merino first-cross ewe breeder Robert Hayes for their ewe replacements.

It is that combination, plus sound nutrition from a well fertilised pasture, that keeps the enterprise profitable. The Rennie's new ram was bought at auction early this month from Tony and Heather Buckland's Tourello stud at Lysterfield. "We studied the performance figures on Texel rams that came from Lambplan and noted this ram as one we would like to buy," Bruce Rennie said. "We didn't know he would be for sale at the Baroa and Tourello sale." "He has body length, is good for growth and eye muscle EBV's (estimated breeding values) and plenty of others wanted him. We got him."

The July 2001 Lambplan performance figures for Tourello "Howard" as he has been named, put him near the top of the Texel breed. On a 5.5 –kilogram birth weight, Howard weighed 45kg at 76 days. At 12 months he weighed 90kg, boasted a 60:20:20 index of 169.7; and had a carcass plus (production) index of 185.44. The ram will now take over as top sire in the Warren Park Texel stud.

Mr. Rennie said a combination of Lambplan performance and careful scrutiny for structural traits were the keys to selecting quality rams. The Rennie's breed about 30 rams a year for their own use and sell most of their draft privately. "We will cull our ewes heavily this year and, while I think we breed pretty good rams already, we will breed even better rams from now on," Bruce Rennie said.

The Rennie's joined 2100 Border Leicester/Merino cross ewes and 400 Texel BL/Merino F2 ewes for this year. But the Autumn opened poorly and by May it was that bad they did not know whether to mark the lambs. There were many twins in a 140 per cent lambing and the lambs looked terrible, he said. But six months later, the season and prices have come together to record an average of almost \$100 for the lambs sold this Spring.

The first draft of 454 averaged \$105.34. The second draft of 440 lambs averaged \$92.86 and the third draft of 450 fetched \$91.85. The final draft of

650 lamb went to Pacific Foods last week. They have all averaged about 23kg with \$16 skins. "Over-the-hooks is the best way to sell," Mr. Rennie said. "It's big money this year. You can't go crook at the best prices I've ever seen. Last year, we averaged \$59.10 for 2271 lambs. At the time many were averaging about \$48."

For the next joining, the Rennie's are likely to use fewer, higher quality rams. They hope to get down to one ram per 70 ewes by rotating the rams every three weeks and feeding them lupins between duties. "Lupins really fires them up," Bill Rennie said.

Not only have the prices for the Rennie's quality prime lambs been good, a strong mutton market has also produced remarkable prices for their cast for age and empty ewes. Mr. Rennie said they recently sold 120 large-framed, empty ewes a week off shearing at Bendigo for an average of more than \$60.

The Rennie family was one of the first to breed Texels in Australia. Mr. Rennie and his wife Meg went to New Zealand in 1990 as part of an inspection tour of Texel sheep organised by the VPC company. "They were grizzling that Australian lambs were too fat so we went to New Zealand to look at the Texels." Like other breeders on the tour, the Rennies were impressed and invested in 33 pregnancy-tested-in-lamb recipient ewes.

"The Texel is the best thing that happened to the Australian prime lamb industry because they introduced serious competition," Bill Rennie said, "They've been good for us, we're making money." He said the secret to successful prime lamb production was having quality terminal sires and highly maternal ewes that can successfully rear twins. "You want twins, they're worth more than a single. If you get 140pc, you're doing well.

"You also want good, long-bodied sheep that are not thin boned. The Texel over ewes of this quality results in magnificent lambs." A great deal of emphasis is put on nutrition, and Bill Rennie ensures his ewes are well fed during the Autumn and Winter and the peak of Summer. He supplements his ewes with lucerne.

The 688-hectare Rennie Dale is made up of light sandy loam supporting rye and sub-clover. It has a 625 millimetre rainfall.

(Article written by Don Story and reproduced – courtesy Stock and Land 22/11/01)

ANNUAL NSW TEXEL SHOW AND SALE

The Central North Region will be holding its Annual NSW Texel Show and Sale on Monday, 4th February, 2002, at the Dubbo Showground.

The Show section will commence at 2.00 p.m. followed in the evening by the sale of stud rams and stud ewes.

For further details and entry forms contact Peter Matus on

Phone/Fax: (02) 6337 9330

Email: matus@lisp.com.au

ACCOMMODATION FOR 2002 AUSTRALIAN SHEEP AND WOOL SHOW BENDIGO – TEXEL NATIONAL SHOW

Dates for the 2002 Australian Sheep and Wool Show are:

Friday, 19th July, 2002:

Annual General Meeting (to be finalised – 5.00 p.m.)

Saturday, 20th July, 2002:

Judging – 10.00 a.m. start

All Breeds Dinner – 7.00 p.m.

Sunday, 21st July, 2002:

Federal Council Meeting – 9.00 a.m.

Accommodation has been reserved at the following venues and will be allocated on a 'FIRST IN' basis so please book early. Members should identify themselves as Texel members and they will be responsible for their own accounts.

- ❖ Bendigo National Hotel/Motel Inn, 182-186 High Street, Bendigo, Vic.
Phone: (03) 5441 5777
Fax: (03) 5441 5890

Rooms double or twin share from \$85 per night (GST inclusive) – (Subject to a slight increase)

- ❖ Alexandra Place, 200 McRae Street, Bendigo, Vic.
Phone: (03) 5441 6088
Fax: (03) 5441 8073

Rooms from \$88 per night (GST inclusive) – (Subject to a slight increase)

The Annual General Meeting and Federal Council Meeting will be held at the Bendigo National Hotel/Motor Inn.

STRONG BAROA/TOURELLO PRODUCTION SALE

Texel stud rams sold to \$6600 at the 2nd Annual Sale of Baroa and Tourello Studs on 9/11/2001, at Blue Hills, Euroa, a/c Doug & Mary Bottcher, Baroa, Euroa, Vic. and Tony & Heather Buckland, Tourello, Lysterfield, Vic.

Bill and Bruce Rennie, Warren Park, Longwood, Vic. paid the top price of \$6600 for Tourello "Howard" a son of Tourello "Ben". "Howard" had a LAMBPLAN Carcase plus index score of 185.

Second top price of \$3500 was paid by David and Alec Pevitt, Koroit, for Tourello 101 which was supreme Texel exhibit at the 2001 Geelong Show.

The top priced Baroa ram was bought by repeat buyer D.J. & H.B. Roddis, Snake Gully, Vic. for \$1000.

Averages were:

A/c Baroa

5 specially selected rams to \$1000 av \$820.
17 flock rams to \$850 av \$578.
3 stud ewes to \$300 av \$167.

A/c Tourello

3 stud rams to \$6600 av \$3025.
22 flock rams to \$1350 av \$925.

RAMS TO \$3000 AT NEWBOLD

Texel stud rams sold to \$3000 at the Annual Newbold Sale a/c W.J. & A.J. Close, Gawler River, SA on 4/10/01.

Averages were:

4 stud rams to \$3000 av \$1962.50
2 flock rams to \$450 av \$450
12 flock rams (T1) to \$650 av \$540
4 stud ewes to \$175 av \$175

Buyer of the \$3000 top priced ram was Neil Cowin, Camp View, Laura, SA. This ram had been champion ram at the Adelaide and Royal Melbourne Shows in September.

Other stud rams went to A. & M. Tohl, Yongala \$1800; Peter Friedrichs \$1800 and Brian Hughes \$1250.

Martin Hart, New Devon, Two Wells, SA bought 4 ewes at \$175.

TASMANIAN CARCASE WIN TO TEXELS

The Texel breed again stamped its authority on the Royal National Agricultural and Pastoral Society of Tasmania Prime Lamb Carcase competition in November 2001.

Eight of the nine major prize winners were Texels or Texel crosses.

The overall winner was Henry Fergusson. Two 15-week-old lambs bred by Mr. Fergusson took out the lightweight and middleweight classes and champion carcase.

Mr. Fergusson, who has been breeding Texels since 1993, runs the Prosser Texel Stud on his property at Buckland. It is the second time he has brought home the champion title.

Mr. Fergusson is the Chairman of the Texel Association's Tasmanian Branch and Vice-President of the national Association.

"This competition not only judges the farmer's ability to produce good sheep," he said. "It tests your ability to choose the right sheep to meet the competition specifications."

Mr. Fergusson uses his Texel stud alongside his wool operation to produce prime lambs. Culled Merino-cross Texel ewes from his main flock are used as a base for his prime lamb operation.

Five of the 10 lambs Mr. Fergusson entered in this year's competition won awards. "I find they produce cuts with more meat," he said.

Mr. Fergusson said prime lamb competitions gave an indication of whether producers' breeding programs were on track.

(Reproduced – courtesy Tasmanian Country)

TOP PRICE FOR TASMANIAN PRIME LAMBS

Specialist prime lamb producers, Lawrence and Paul Young, Deloraine, Tas. made \$8269.30 from 77 Texel-cross lambs on 18/9/01.

Blue Ribbon Meats paid \$107.39 a head for the 12 month old lambs in a private sale handled by Elders.

The lambs had an average dress weight of \$32.42kg.

The Young family produces approximately 3000 prime lambs a year with most of the lambs sold February-May. The lambs are out of Poll Dorset-Texel cross ewes by Texel rams.

Mr. Young said he was happy with Texels, which had produced award winning carcasses, were resistant to twin lamb complications, had good

black hooves-a defence against footrot, and were docile.

(Reproduced – Courtesy Tasmanian Country)

DIRECT SUPPLY PAYS OFF

Mark Gubbins, Coolana, Chatsworth, is more than happy with the relationship that he has developed between his family and Coles Supermarkets.

The specialist producer of Texel/Corriedale cross lot-fed lambs has been supplying lambs to the supermarket giant for a few years. He is now a member of the Colestock Alliance Inner Circle.

"From our point of view it's been fantastic," Mr. Gubbins said. "They pay reasonable prices and talk to us about the market and what we've got." He said like all producers, he had tried to maximise price on one line of 50 tops drafted specially for the saleyard.

However when he compared the prices and costs, he said he would have been better off selling all his lambs to Coles.

"Coles staff understand the industry and have stuck by us when we were running out of feed and have honoured contracts written much earlier, when prices were higher than the ruling spot market."

Mr. Gubbins said on the strength of his lamb business and following a switch to spring calving on his Angus herd, he would soon talk with Coles about becoming a beef supplier.

He said the next major logical development in the alliance could be a genetic alliance, where lines of bulls and rams of known genetic ability are recommended and/or supplied to alliance members.

(Reproduced – Courtesy of Stock & Land Newspaper 29/11/01)

DOUBLE WIN TO PLAINVIEW AT TOOWOOMBA

The Plainview Texel Stud of Peter and Penny Hood, Pittsworth, Qld. had a double win at the Toowoomba Royal Show, Queensland, in the show ring and the prime lamb sale.

Plainview exhibited the champion Texel ram which went to win the supreme interbreed ram championship; the champion Texel ewe-later reserve supreme interbreed champion ewe; champion breeders group and won the objective measurement class.

The champion pen of Texel lambs exhibited by Messrs. Hood topped the sale at \$100 per head, paid by Garden City Butchery, Toowoomba.

ILLABO CARCASE WIN TO TEXELS

Texel sired carcasses won the major awards in the Illabo Show Carcase Competition, NSW in November 2001.

Maple Brown Investment Trust exhibited the grand champion carcase with 95.3 pts and the champion pen of carcasses 95.3 pts with Texel cross lambs.

Reserve champion pen of carcasses on 93.3 pts was exhibited by Alstonville Pastoral with Texel cross lambs.

Both the above pens scored 49.3 pts out of 50 for yield, with the champion pen scoring 25 out of 25 for eye muscle.

Total points were out of 100 and only Texel sired lambs exceeded 90 points.

Detailed awards for the carcase competition were:

Class 1

16 – 20 kg

Hillier - Dorset/Merino	1 st
88.6 pts	
J. Roberts - Texel/Merino E. Fres/BL	2 nd
87.3 pts	
Brobinya Pastoral - Dorset/BL/Merino	3 rd
85.3 pts	
S. Roberts - Texel/Merino E. Fres/BL	4 th
85.0 pts	

Class 2

20-24 kg

Alstonville Pastoral - Texel/BL/Merino	1 st
93.3 pts	
Brobinya Pastoral - Dorset/BL/Merino	2 nd
89.0 pts	
W. Muller - Dorset/BL/Merino	3 rd
88.0 pts	
Hillam - Dorset BL/Merino	4 th
84.3 pts	

Class 3

24-40 kg

Maple Brown - Texel/Merino	1 st
95.3 pts	
Maloney - Dorset/BL/Merino	2 nd
82.3 pts	
Curry - White Suffolk/Merino	3 rd
81.6 pts	
Muller - Dorset/BL/Merino	4 th
80.6 pts	

Grand Champion Carcase

Maple Brown Investment Trust	Texel
95.3 pts	

Champion Pen Carcasses

Maple Brown Investment Trust	Texel
95.3 pts	

Reserve Champion Pen Carcasses

Alstonville Pastoral Co.	Texel
93.3 pts	

In the live competition there were 55 pens of 10 with 3 carcasses from each pen to the carcase competition.

WIN TO TEXELS AT GEELONG

Seven pens of Texel cross lambs out of a total of 27 pens contested the Geelong Carcase Competition in October 2001.

Texel honours went to K. & M. Chambers, Lyndale Park, Marong, Vic. with champion pen on the hoof and two class wins on the hook.

Mark Chambers said all their Texel sired lambs came straight from the paddock to the competition pens and reflected true commercial breeding programs.

He said Texel sired lambs always presented and yielded well in proportion to other breeds entered in such competitions. Carcase competitions are worthwhile activities to learn and benchmark for all commercial lamb producers.

Texel awards were:

On the Hoof

16-19 kg	:	K. & M. Chambers, 1 st and Champion.
19-22 kg	:	K. & M. Chambers, 2 nd .
Over 22 kg	:	K. & M. Chambers, 2 nd , Leigh Partnership, 3 rd .

On the Hook

16-19 kg	:	K. & M. Chambers, 1 st .
19-22 kg	:	K. & M. Chambers, 1 st .
Over 22 kg	:	K. & M. Chambers, 2 nd and Leigh Partnership, 3 rd .

GOULBURN MURRAY AWARDS TO TEXELS

The 2001 Goulburn-Murray Prime Lamb Carcase Competition was held at Nathalia, Vic in October, with a good line up of lambs sired by three prime lamb breeds.

Results were:

Hoof

Trade weight lambs:	K. & N. Holland, 1 st with Texel cross lambs.
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K. & N. Holland, Narioka, Picola, Vic. went on to exhibit the champion pen of lambs on the hoof.

Hook

Trade weight lambs:	K. & N. Holland, with Texel cross lambs
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Export class:	K. & N. Holland, with Texel cross lambs
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The overall champion carcase group was won by K. & N. Holland with their export class group.

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HAMILTON SHEEPVENTION 2001

There was an excellent showing of 80 entries from 11 studs at the 2001 Hamilton Sheepvention on August 6. The Judge was Mr. Ralph Speirs of Heywood.

The "Woolbrook" trophy for the Champion Ram went to G. & N. Baker. The "Mertex" Stud won the "Penryn" trophy for the Reserve Champion Ram.

The "Tullamore Park" trophy for the Champion Ewe went to the Willaren Stud of W. & K. Agnew, Millicent, SA, while the Reserve Champion Ewe of A. & H. Buckland won the "Laani" Trophy.

A special trophy presented by D. Stevens of the Hallylulya Stud, to the Texel which in the Judge's opinion, appeared to be the longest, was won by the ram of G. & N. Baker.

The Mertex Stud of B.A. & H.A. Jorgensen, Dimboola, Vic. took out the South West Region Trophy for the most Successful Exhibitor.

Tim Jorgensen was awarded a special trophy presented by Hamilton Produce for Junior Handler.

Results

Ram over 1½ years shorn

G. & N. Baker, 1; Leigh Partnership, 2; D.W. & R.M. Muir, 3.

Ram over 1½ years in wool

Tullamore Park, 1.

Ram under 1½ years shorn

Mertex, 1 and 3; Leigh Partnership, 2.

Ram under 1½ years in wool

Tourello, 1; Mertex, 2; Longford, 3.

Ram Lamb

Willaren, 1 & 2; Mondray, 3.

Ewe over 1½ years shorn

Tourello, 1; Banyandah, 2; Tullamore Park, 3.

Ewe over 1½ years in wool

D. W. & R. M. Muir, 1.

Ewe under 1½ years shorn

Willaren, 1 & 3; Mertex, 2.

Ewe under 1½ years in wool

Mertex, 1 & 2; Woolbrook, 3.

Ewe Lamb

Willaren, 1 & 2.

Group of Three

Leigh Partnership, 1; Mertex, 2; Longford, 3.

ROYAL MELBOURNE SHOW 2001

Six Texel exhibitors presented 16 entries at the 2001 Royal Melbourne Show in September under Judge Mr. Ralph Speirs, Heywood, Vic. Champion ram was exhibited by W.J. & A.J. Close, Newbold North, Gawler River, SA. Newbold "Kirby", a 17 month old ram was also champion at the 2001 Royal Adelaide Show.

Mr. Speirs said the champion was a very compact, well muscled sheep, weighing 100 kgs and with 40.44 sq. cm eye muscle.

Reserve champion ram entered by Frances Murray, Burrandool, Nagambie, Vic. had better length than the champion but not his muscle, Mr. Speirs said.

Tattykeel Pty. Ltd., c/- G. Gilmore, Oberon, NSW exhibited the champion and reserve champion ewes and was most successful exhibitor. The Tattykeel champion ewe was a sound one year old sheep, nicely muscled, weighing 90kg, and was sired by Plainview "Little John." The champion had been reserve champion at the ASBA Show Bendigo.

HEAD OFFICE - CHRISTMAS BREAK

Head Office will be closed for annual holidays from 4.00 p.m. on Monday, 24th December, 2001, and will re-open at 9.00 a.m. on Monday, 21st January, 2002.

Peter and Karen Weston, Maria Mazzone and Trisha Mills wish all Members a Merry Christmas and healthy, happy and safe New Year.

Please take the opportunity over the Festive Season to complete your sale transfers and forward with your cheque, remembering to add the GST.

Head office will be manned from time to time during the holidays so if you need someone to contact you urgently then please leave a message on the telephone answering machine, fax or send an email.

