

Profit OUT OF SEASON



Cashflow without the costs is what the Aussie whites continue to produce for the long time Tattykeel clients, McKelvie family based in Marrar NSW. Without any supplementation, February drop Australian white lambs, out of Tattykeel Blue Tag Flock Rams, have gone to processors 5-6 months of age, with an average carcass weight of 27kg giving a return of \$249 p/hd.



6 MONTH OLD, PASTURE ONLY WETHER LAMBS AUGUST 2024



RETAINED EWE LAMBS



NO SUPPLEMENT, READY FOR SLAUGHTER

Damien McKelvie describes the season, "They lambed down alright, then we had no rain in March, some real good rain started April and then there was nothing for like 8 weeks after that. So the feed just didn't grow before it got cold with frost. We only just started to get growth late July, but nothing like we've been used to for the last 2 years that's for sure."

The Marrar based operation in the Riverina would usually have grazing crops available but these weren't able to be used for the weaned lambs due to lack of growth, "The crops were just sitting there doing nothing, so we put the lambs on a pasture rotation of lucerne and clover" Damien said.

The ewes are 3 and 4 years old, joined to Tattykeel blue tag flock rams on about an 8 month cycle. "We have done two lambings a year but that's going pretty hard so we tend towards that 3 lambings every two years". Damien has had lambing percentages up at 170% but is happier when they average out at around 135% as it is easier on the ewes and reduces losses.

The 8 month production cycle of the Australian whites mean this translates to nearer 200% lambing averaged annually, though with better spread of market access and feed cycle flexibility over single season lambing.

Damien will look to get rid of empty ewes at about 6 years of age but the self replacing ewe flock means surplus ewes can be moved at any time to access favourable markets or manage seasons.

"We recently scanned a 10 year old ewe with twins, but generally at a certain age if they scan empty they go."

Running a self replacing flock, McKelvie's have been using EID tags for over 4 years now and see some great advantages to the increased data recording. "I'm recording a lot of stuff now, like twin bearers and growth rates, with real data points synced with your phone".

He now records birth types with an emphasis on twins, and is looking to keep them, previously they have culled based on type, but now they are all really good shedders so the focus can be on production data.

Damien makes particular comment on how even the line of lambs usually is, with the more challenging season this year a greater tail in the flock was expected but he happily reports that is still less than 5% of the lambs. "The daily weight gains are holding as well, we had two weeks of minus two nearly every day and were still doing 300 grams", he said.

After some good rain again late July and with increasing feed quality going into spring, Mr McKelvie expects daily gains of 500 grams from the next round of lambs.

Having a long term commitment to **Tattykeel Australian White flock rams**, Damien supplies to the branded meat line of MARGRA. The combination of the genetic package from the rams and the weight grid that really suits, means reliable and consistent cash flow.

Tattykeel's annual sale is coming up 25th September 2024.