

Telephone: 59 6155 002 AREA CODE
Cormo Sheep

"Dungroo"
Bothwell
Tasmania
Aust. 7411

MIDNIGHT here 12:00 PM
77 15 4:00 PM
IN BOMBEAU 3

Pan Am
Aug-23rd
Sun-night

6th. Feb. 76

Mr. Travis Jones,
Route 2, Box 83,
Montrose, COLORADO. 81401.

5.57
2.74

Dear Mr. Travis Jones,

Your letter containing information on the sheep industry in the U.S.A. was very much appreciated. I always try to keep up with what is happening in the world sheep scene. It is an encouraging sign that the I.W.S. is becoming active again in your country.

The first time I saw Colombia sheep was in Montana, in 1974, and again at the Salt Lake City Ram sales in the same year. Their size and quality of their wool was very impressive, and I was wishing I could import some to Tasmania.

Regarding the Cormo:

LAMBING. September-October. There is no shedding or lending of assistance, for with 7500 ewes lambing over this period it would be most uneconomical, and damaging to the selection system, in which all are given equal opportunity. There is nearly always sleet and snow during lambing, but it does not settle for any length of time.

SHEARING. August - for Rams and Ewes before lambing. This pre-lamb shearing is becoming quite common now, as it has many advantages. We began it several years ago on the advice of the Dept. of Agriculture.

1. It provides for Ease of Management. The shorn ewes can be taken back to their lambing areas, and need no further handling until the lambs are brought in for marking etc. Shearing ewes with lambs at foot is a harrowing experience, as you may well know.

2. Because the ewe now feels the cold, she will seek out a sheltered spot to have her lamb, thus giving the new lamb some protection from the elements, and in practice this happens.

Telephone: 59 6155

Cormo Sheep

"Dungroo"

Bothwell

Tasmania

Aust. 7411

2.

3. If the ewe is shorn in warmer weather, and we experience a cold snap (as nearly always happens in our area), there will be much greater losses from the cold than if she is shorn in cold weather, and we have proved this to our satisfaction. The reason for this is that in the warmer weather the blood is circulating in all the capillaries near the skin in order to lose heat, and when a sudden drop in temperature occurs, there is instant freezing of a large exposed system of blood vessels. In colder weather the blood is circulating deeper, and there is no sudden loss of heat. After the initial shearing of rams and ewes, the rest follow in three more shearings.

RAM SELLING. January, to local buyers, and usually there are mainland or overseas orders throughout the year. Last year two of our rams went to the Trade Fair in Pekin, and we were fortunate to go to the PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF CHINA later, and have discussions about them.

EWE FLEECE WT. 5.2 kilograms. (Average over 7500 ewes). 11.44 LBS

CLEAN FLEECE. 73.6% " " " " 8.42 LBS.

EWE WEIGHT. 50.55 Kgs. (Average for mature ewes). 111.2 LBS

I would like to explain further about these measurements, as both the fleece and body weights depend on individual management of the sheep, i.e. the stocking rate per hectare. If I run one sheep per hectare it will cut a very heavy fleece, and be a heavy sheep, but it will mean that my total carrying capacity will be low, as will be my wool clip.

For example: it is more economical to have 8 sheep per hectare cutting 4 kgs. of wool each, than to have 5 sheep cutting 5 kgs. So the emphasis is on Wool per Hectare, not Wool per sheep.

I hope this is clear to you. I wanted you to understand how management affects the weights, and that the figures are not always what they seem.

Appropriate literature on the Saxon Merino is hard to find, but I will do my best for you. "Modern Development" in this breed does not exist, as they have not changed from the early 19th. century, when they were brought out from Saxony to Tasmania. This does not apply to the Peppin Merino, which constitute the greater bulk of Merinos in Australia.

Telephone: 59 6155
Cormo Sheep

"Dungrove"
Bothwell
Tasmania
Aust. 7411

3.

My family had run Saxons only on this property, but when I took over I could see how uneconomical they were. Apart from Australian record prices for ONE top bale, the average price was very low. In breeding the Cormo I have tried to blend the beautiful soft, fine wool qualities of the Saxon with the larger-bodied Corriedale and its high fertility. In the breeding programme the Corriedale was used once only, and from then on selection of rams has been from the highest producers of the progeny.

May I suggest to you that I select six rams to your requirements, and send you their production figures for you to make the final selection? Also that the rams and ewes be 1½ years old. Finally, do you wish the ewes to be mated before they leave here?

I hope to visit your area again some time, and look forward to the pleasure of meeting you. If there is anything else you want to know, please don't hesitate to ask.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Downie

Ian Downie.