

Willandra sells to \$15k

Heavy wool cutting rams attract support

BY ALEXANDRA BERNARD

INTERSTATE buyers were strong at the 48th annual Willandra Merino stud ram sale, held on-property at Jerilderie on Wednesday last week.

At the fall of the hammer, all 74 Poll Merino rams sold to a top of \$15,000 to average \$5155, while 24 of 25 Merino rams sold to \$7500 twice and for an average of \$4604.

A mini-auction was also held with 11 of 12 Poll Merino and Merino rams sold for an average of \$3000.

While the top-priced rams stayed in NSW, interstate buyers were particularly active with rams also going to Queensland, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia.

The top-priced ram was Willandra 0080, which sold for \$15,000 to Vatua Partnership, Coonamble.

The Poll Merino ram, sired by Glenlea Park, was 20.9 micron with 3 micron standard deviation, 14.6 per cent coefficient of variation and 99.5pc comfort factor.

He weighed 114 kilograms and scanned an eye muscle depth of 41.5 millimetres and 7mm fat.

Buyer Bill Mackay said they selected the ram for his structure, micron and wool style.

"We've got big-framed sheep already, so getting a high body weight is a big part of it," he said.

Mr Mackay said they run about 4000 Merino ewes in a true dual-purpose operation and cut an average of 20.5 micron wool.

"We breed our own rams and like to keep it simple -

trying to produce as much red meat per hectare as we can and as many kilograms of wool per hectare as we can," he said.

"I think he's going to be a good fit and introduce some new blood into our program.

"He's going to breed some more future breeders for us and keep getting fast growing weaners we can sell quickly and anything we keep is going to be producing a lot of wool."

Mr Mackay said they had been buying from Willandra on and off for about 10 years.

The second top-priced ram was Willandra 0246, which sold for \$14,500 to Narada Grazing Co, Tambo, Qld. The Poll Merino ram, by Wiringa Park 220450, was 22.2 micron with 3.3 micron SD, 15pc CV and 98.5 CF. He weighed 112kg and scanned 41mm EMD and 5mm fat.

In the horned draft, the top price of \$7500 was reached twice including for Willandra 0052, which was purchased by Hayden Croake, Piambong.

The ram, by Wanganella 190163, was 19.5 micron with 3.3 micron SD, 16.6 CV and 99.8pc CF. He weighed 112kg and scanned 40.5mm EMD and 6mm fat.

The other Merino to reach \$7500 was Willandra 0050, which sold to Sleight Pastoral Co, Jerilderie. The ram, by Wanganella 190163, was 21.8 micron with 3.3 micron SD, 15.3 CV and 98.5pc CF. He was 109.5kg and scanned 40.5mm EMD and 4.5mm fat. Buyer Tom Sleight said they selected the ram for his overall structure.

"And his figures were exceptional," he said.



Nutrien's Peter Godbolt, Mackay's classer Jason Southwell, Willandra's classer Chris Bowman, Elders' Nick Gray, Willandra's Ross Wells, buyers Ron and Bill Mackay, Coonamble, and retired classer Steve Phillips, with the top ram.



Buyer Tom Sleight, Jerilderie, Angus Heath, Willandra, and stud classer Chris Bowman, with the equal top-priced horned ram. Pictures by Alexandra Bernard.



Angus Heath holding ram bought by Walkindyer stud, WA, represented by Callum Teakle, Josh Trafford, Sophie Seabrook and Nathan Teakle. Picture supplied.

The Sleights, clients for 36 years, bought 10 rams for an average of \$4300, plus further grade rams after the sale.

Mr Sleight said they predominantly opted for the horned Merinos as he said they cut a little bit more wool and had more cover.

He said they normally join about 5500 ewes a year and cut a flock average of 18- to 19-micron wool.

Nathan Teakle, Walkindyer stud, Northampton, WA, bought a \$12,000 sire, after

purchasing semen for 10 years and being losing bidder on the top priced ram last year. He said they were lucky, as they were prepared to pay \$20,000 for the ram.

Willoway Farming bought five rams to a top of \$8000 for their ram breeding program. Classer Chris Bowman said that Willoway aim to increase the overall woolcut of the Brinkworth family flock of Merino ewes which require 500 rams a year to supply their own flocks.

Volume buyers included long-term buyer Merri Merri, Gulagambone, who bought 21 rams for an average of \$3619.

Buying on behalf of Steve Rae, Merri Merri, classer Chris Bowman said they opted for the Willandra rams for their wool and frames.

"They like a sheep with a big barrel and they like good lambing percentages," he said.

Willandra stud principal Ross Wells said it was very

pleasing result with a few new clients along with strong support from repeat buyers.

"With an average over \$5000 there were still \$2000 to \$3000 rams available for the 41 registered buyers

He said clients were opting for heavy wool cutters.

The sale was conducted by Nutrien Ag Solutions and Elders, with Peter Godbolt, Nutrien, and Nick Gray, Elders, sharing the rostrum.

AuctionsPlus provided the online interface.

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Willandra Merinos

To the buyers, under-bidders, agents, visitors and the workers
who all helped make the 2026 sale a successful day —

A very big and sincere thank you from everyone at Willandra

Grade Rams Available: Enquiries: Ross Wells 03 5886 1223 / Angus Heath 0417 365 333 **Classer:** Chris Bowman 0429 935 101

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