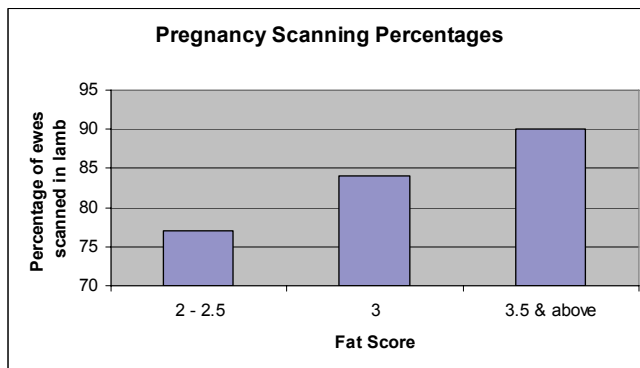


PREGNANCY SCANNING

This year we have seen a greater demand for our pregnancy scanning service as the value of this as a management tool is recognized. This year we have been running two ultrasounds and our trained operators have been kept extremely busy. Plans are underway to establish an operator on the West Coast for next year to ensure that we can continue to provide a high level of service to our clients – we will keep you informed of developments.

Having the opportunity to scan ewes across South Australia has presented some interesting observations, which seem to always promote much discussion. Compared to previous years there has been a 10-20% increase in the amount of multiple pregnancies scanned. There is always a lot of conjecture as to why this may occur, some of the theories are that it is due to the early break in the season and/or it follows a drought year. Another interesting observation by our scanners was that the conception rate for those clients using a terminal sire was markedly higher for those mated after January. One observation that we have noticed is the direct correlation between fat



score and the percentage of ewes scanned in lamb; however the extent of this becomes much more apparent when expressed in table format. The information shown in the table was collected over the last two years, but is shown for interest only and you should consult your advisor for further information on this.

This year we also have been scanning a lot of ewes prior to sale to establish their pregnancy status, providing a certificate for sale. We can scan ewes on property or at sale yards depending on clients needs. Significant premiums have been obtained for both ewes scanned in lamb and those scanned dry.

Out and About with Cousins Merino Services

This year has continued to be very busy – which is always pleasing, if not hectic. We have continued our



association with the Sheep CRC and were fortunate enough to attend the Sheep CRC "Precision Sheep Production Masterclass" at Orange in April. The workshop was designed to train service providers in the area of Precision Management and the role of electronic identification systems. We have continued to find that this offers significant benefits to clients and are always available to discuss how you could incorporate this into your livestock enterprises. We also have a number of publications and software from the Sheep CRC we can send you or it is worth a visit to their internet site at www.sheep.crc.org.au.

Paul has been busy travelling the state with his trusty dog "Woofie" (you may of guessed that he didn't pick the name) and now that he is moving into sheep classing and ram selection mode is looking forward to seeing how the young rams that he saw earlier in the year have grown out. John Lehmann has been kept busy with pregnancy scanning and is moving into muscle scanning and wool testing mode, you may even catch a glimpse of him in an upcoming Landline story. My (Michelle) claim to fame has been sitting in front of a computer screen – we have had a lot of clients interested in the SGA "try before you buy" scheme, which I am looking forward to seeing the results of.

ULTRASOUND SCANNING FOR CARCASE TRAITS : FAT AND EYE MUSCLE SCANNING

Cousins Merino Services has recently added fat and eye muscle scanning to the list of services it provides to the livestock industry in response to client demand to measure this heritable trait. The two main attributes scanned are eye muscle depth and fat depth. Scanning for eye muscle area is also offered, however because of the strong genetic relationship between eye muscle depth and eye muscle area this adds little benefit to the data collected.

Ultrasound scanning enables ram buyers to select rams based on how well muscled and how fat that animal is accurately and without harming the animal. It is also a valuable tool in breeding programs to promote genetic gain in carcase traits, especially when it is incorporated into estimated breeding values.

Research from MLA and the Sheep CRC indicate that selecting a ram with a more positive eye muscle depth can:

- Produce lambs with greater muscling and the potential for higher yielding carcasses.
- Produce progeny with a higher proportion of their carcass weight in the more valuable loin and hind quarter area of the carcass.
- Research based on the eating quality of meat indicates that lambs with greater EMD are less prone to stress and dark cutting.

We provide customised reports for fat and eye muscle scanning and can integrate these with your other objective measurements for comprehensive reporting. We are also available to assist in submitting data to SGA or Lambplan.

On Farm Wool Testing (OFFM)

It has taken a while but it is pleasing to see such positive signs in the wool industry with clients reporting a marked increase in the returns from their wool clip.



We have offered on farm wool testing utilizing the OFDA 2000 for over five years now and are a OFFM accredited organization. Many clients have benefited from using this service and now is probably a good time to access how this could be of benefit to your wool enterprise.

Clients, both commercial and stud operations, have used OFFM for the following:

- Genetic improvement
- Wool clip preparation and marketing
- To capture price premiums in the wool market. (not as prevalent now as early 2000, but they still exist.)
- As a marketing tool for selling stock.

Ultimately the aim always has to be to improve the productivity and profitability of your enterprise. A useful tool to use to see how you could benefit from using the OFDA2000 is the OFFM calculator. This can be found on the internet at www.wooloffm.com.au or contact us and we can send a CD or talk you through it.

We are always available to discuss the cost effectiveness and logistics of implementing OFFM into your wool enterprise management. The portability of the OFDA2000 means it can be used both in shed and the sheep yards. The majority of our work however is done in the yards prior to shearing. This reduces the amount of tasks conducted during shearing and removes the need to remuster. It also gives clients the opportunity to visually class animals as data is collected – real time data management!

PRICE LIST

Current from 1/6/07 – prices exclusive of GST (Prices are subject to change.)

Sheep Classing/Consultancy Service	\$70 per hour (minimum charge of \$250)	
Ram Selections	\$70 per hour	
OFDA2000 Home Testing	\$1.30 per test	
OFDA2000 On Farm Testing	- under 500 sheep	\$1.30 per test
	- over 500 sheep	\$1.20 per test
Body Weighing/ Fleece Weights	\$0.02 per sheep	
Customised reports from the OFDA2000 provided either on the day tested or compiled in a binder for larger reports.		
Rampower Reports	\$30	Data Management \$40 per hour
Pregnancy Scanning (minimum charge of \$200)		Muscle Scanning (minimum charge of \$200)
1000 and under	60c per ewe	300 and under \$4 per sheep
1001 & over	50c per ewe	300 and over \$3 per sheep
Multiples	80c per ewe	
Hire of Equipment (Scales, Barcode readers & scanners, wands)	\$50 per day	
Autodrafting	\$80 per hour	
Travel	\$1.00 per km (we aim to coordinate our work to minimise travel costs for clients)	

CONTACT DETAILS

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- ❖ Our website is currently under construction, we hope to have this up and running within the next month. You will be able to access information on our services offered and book online at www.cousinsms.com.au
- ❖ Please notify us if we need to update your contact details or you wish to be removed from our mailing list.