

WFMB Membership from Lesotho

The Kingdom of Lesotho is also welcomed to the ranks of members of the World Federation of Merino Breeders, represented by the Lesotho National Wool and Mohair Growers Association, Maseru, Lesotho.

Around 10 per cent of the total land area in Lesotho is suitable for arable cropping with 66% being usable for grazing. Agriculture contributes some 23% of the gross domestic product and occupies about 65% of the labour force with small-scale farming predominant.

While crop production is primarily for home consumption, more than half the national livestock inventory includes sheep with goats and cattle making up the remainder.

Sheep are a local Merino strain which arose from the upgrading of the indigenous fat-tailed sheep over many generations since the 1800s to the extent that the characteristics of the fat-tailed sheep have virtually disappeared. Lesotho also imports stud sheep to improve the local strain. The local Merino is described as hardy and well adapted to the environment.

Wool is the Kingdom's most valuable export commodity and mutton is also an important meat in the kingdom with the highest per capita consumption in the region.

Lesotho is a small landlocked country in southern Africa, completely surrounded by the Republic of South Africa, with a total area of 30,355km the country is divided into four main agro-ecological zones, namely:

- The lowlands in the west, lying between 1500 and 1830m, which occupy about 15% of the country
- The foothills in the centre between 1930 and 2130m covering about 8% of the land
- The Orange River Valley lying between 1500 and 2250m and occupying around 11% of the total
- The mountain range that lies between 2130 and 3480m and comprises about 66% of the total land.

The mountain region has the highest number of sheep followed by the Orange (Senqu) River Valley, the lowlands and then the foothills.

Average rainfall in Lesotho is 750mm, 80% of which falls in the warmer months from October to March.

A shift towards education through group activity gained support of government officials in the 1960s. This approach resulted in the formation of schemes for progressive sheep and goat farmers, the purpose of which was to "build up a class of sheep farmers as opposed to sheep owners." These farmers were regularly visited and advised on all aspects of modern animal husbandry and were also encouraged to maintain records of work done.

By late 1966 the schemes had evolved into the present Wool and Mohair Growers Associations (WMGAs).

The WMGA, an officially recognised wool and mohair marketing channel in Lesotho, sells their wool through the South African Wool Board.

Source FAO

Russia joins WFMB

Continued from previous page

Federation the association makes its own proposals and modifications to projects in government documents regulating the use of tribal resources in breeding and commodity economics.



The NASB also has a Cooperative Agreement with ten regional Ministries of Agriculture for cooperative work in the development of sheep breeding.



Another function of the NASB is to hold seminars on fine-fleece, mountain and meat sheep breeding and popularising rare and endangered breeds of sheep (Romanovsky breed of sheep – high-quality fur woolland and the Karachaevsky breed – high meat potential and adaptability to the mountain conditions).

Since the serious sheep breeding crisis in the Russian Federation which lasted for 15 years from the beginning of the 1990s, a combination of government actions and activities of the NASB during the last several years has increased the quantity of sheep and the quality of sheep breeding production. Today, all energies are directed to increasing the quality of wool and mutton.

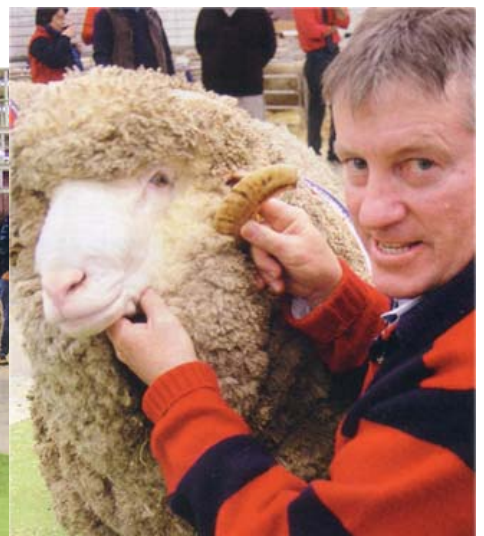
For news and information on Russian's National Association of Sheep Breeders visit www.rnsor.ru

Australian Champions 2009



Jim Sullivan, Greenfields stud, Hallett, South Australia with his supreme champion of the 2009 Adelaide Show, the strong wool champion ram.

Matthew, Graham, Tom and Angus Ashby, North Ashrose, Gulnare, SA, with their top priced ram of the 2009 Adelaide Sale, sold for \$AU23,000 to a Queensland buyer.



Pictured are some of the main winners at the most recent major Merino shows in Australia.

This page, from the top:

- Alec Merriman holds the supreme Merino from the Merriman family's Merryville stud, Boorowa, NSW, at the Great Southern Supreme Merinos Show, Canberra, in January this year. The 2½-year-old, 16.9-micron ram was by Ringmaster Francesco and in his first showing had won his way through the ranks from superfine champion ram.
- Top prices at the ram sale at the same fixture were secured by Bogo stud, Bookham, NSW, with \$AU6000 for the Poll ram on the right and \$AU5000 for the horned ram on the left, held by agents and buyers with stud manager, Malcolm Peake, second left.
- At the Campbell Town show, Tasmania, last year, the Merriman family's Merryville stud, Boorowa, NSW, won five supreme awards and six grand championships with the four sheep pictured with Penny Merriman, Ken Arnold and Wal and Prue Merriman. Penny holds the supreme Merino, a superfine ewe; Ken has the supreme Poll, the grand champion fine wool Poll; Wal, the supreme fine wool and overall grand champion ram; and Prue, the supreme medium wool ram of the show.
- At the Australian Sheep and Wool Show in Bendigo, Victoria, in July, the Walton family's Wurrook stud, Rokewood, Vic, exhibited the winning group which includes the show's grand champion superfine ram and ewe and grand champion fine wool ewe.
- Warren McRae, Oakbank, St Arnaud, Vic with the stud's junior champion ram of the Australian Sheep and Wool Show, Bendigo, later sold for the sale's second top price of \$AU11,000.

Facing page, anti-clockwise from top right:

- Supreme exhibit at the Queensland State Sheep Show, held at Longreach in July, went to Mt Ascot stud, Mitchell, Qld, for their champion ram pictured with Heather, Reuben, Felicity, Lachlan and Nigel Brumpton.
- Jan Lowing of Karmala stud, Nobby, Qld, holds her Queensland champion pair which went on to be runner-up in the National Merino Pairs competition in Bendigo in July.
- The supreme exhibit of the 2009 Rabobank Katanning Show in Western Australia from Angenup, Kojonup, is pictured with judges Pip Merriman, Merrignee, Boorowa, NSW; Jan Lowing, Karmala, Nobby, Qld; Heather Dalla, Orrie Cowie, Warooka, South Australia; and Shelly Powell, Northampton, WA.
- The supreme Merino of the 2009 Perth Royal Show was shown by the Button family, Manunda stud, Tammin, WA. The ram was the Poll Merino grand champion and champion fine wool Poll.
- This North Ashrose Poll ram of the Ashby family was grand champion ram at the 2009 Crystal Brook show in South Australia and runner-up to Langdene's Supreme Australian ram at the Dubbo National Show in August.

Australia's Champion Pair

The title of National Merino Pair of the Year was won in 2009 by the NSW State finalist when the One Oak stud of Graham and Mary Wells, Jerilderie (pictured right) in the NSW Riverina area, secured this prestigious title at July's Australian Sheep and Wool Show in Bendigo, Victoria. Their fine-medium pair had won the right to represent NSW at the 2009 Sydney Sheep Show. One Oak also had the best exhibit of three Merinos at the Bendigo fixture.

Runner-up to the national title was the pair exhibited by Queensland stud breeder, Jan Lowing, Karmala, Nobby (see photo page 8). The other National Merino Pair finalists were Wurrook, Rokewood (Vic), and North Ashrose (SA).



Hungarian Changes

In news from WFMB member country, Hungary, there has been a name change to their association, formerly known as the Hungarian Sheepbreeders' Association. This is now the Hungarian Sheep and Goat Breeders Association.

With the recent retirement of Prof Dr László Fésüs, the association also has a new president, Prof Dr Peter Horn of the University of Kaposvár. He can be contacted by email on Horn.Peter@ke.hu

MAJOR AUSTRALIAN MERINO EVENTS - 2010-2011

5 - 6 March 2010

Wagin Woolorama, Wagin WA
Email: smbawa@bigpond.com

15 - 16 March 2010

South Australian Merino Field Days, SA
Email: info@merinosa.com.au

8 - 11 April 2010

Sydney Sheep Show, Sydney NSW
Email: office@merinos.com.au

30 April - 1 May 2010

Queensland State Sheep Show, Goondiwindi, Queensland
Email: qmssa@bigpond.com

16 - 18 July

Australian Sheep & Wool Show Bendigo, Victoria
Email: office@merinovictoria.com

19 July

Ram Sale, Bendigo, Victoria
Email: office@merinovictoria.com

19 August

Katanning Show & Ram Sale, Western Australia
Email: smbawa@bigpond.com

24 - 25 August

National Merino Show, Dubbo, NSW
Email: office@merinos.com.au

26 August

National Ram Sale, Dubbo, NSW
Email: office@merinos.com.au

8 - 9 September

Royal Adelaide Sheep Show, South Australia
Email: info@merinosa.com.au

10 September

Adelaide Ram Sale, South Australia
Email: info@merinosa.com.au

25 - 26 September

Royal Perth Sheep Show, Western Australia
Email: smbawa@bigpond.com

2011

22 - 24 January 2011

Great Southern Supreme Merinos Show & Sale,
Canberra, ACT
Email: tamarayoung@netspace.net.au

For news and information on the Australian Association of Stud Merino Breeders visit www.merinos.com.au

MERINO WORLD

Newsletter of The World Federation of Merino Breeders

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The opinions expressed in contributed copy in this newsletter are those of the contributor, not necessarily the Federation.

Buscot - best Merino Hoggets in N.Z.

Although dairy cattle now graze the flats of Buscot Station near Omarama in New Zealand's South Island, Merino sheep continue to be an important part of the farming operation.

Since the property's owner Richard Gloag began installing pivot irrigation at Buscot in 2006, the farm has been transformed. The 350 hectares of once brown Hieracium infested flats now grow rye grass and clover all year round. While grazing dairy cows is the single biggest income source for the station, Merino meat and wool still contribute well over half of the station's income.

Richard believes Merinos will always be part of the Buscot farming business. He said "Merino sheep suit the dry hill country and I am very passionate about the fibre they produce. They will always have a place here. "I really enjoy working with Merinos and I think the Merino has a big future in New Zealand farming as a dual purpose sheep breed."

Buscot's Merino hoggets drew national attention late last year when they won the New Zealand Sheep Breeders Association's annual New Zealand Ewe Hogget competition. The objective of the competition is to encourage farmers to produce productive and profitable hoggets as replacements for their ewe flocks.

This was the first time since the competition was established 12 years ago that Merinos have won outright.

Twenty flocks of various breeds made the finals with judges commenting that while the top flocks were very good, the Buscot hoggets were exceptional, especially considering the class of stock and class of country.

Buscot Key Facts

- Breeding objective: produce big framed heavy fleece cutting dual purpose Merino ewes.
- Scanning % ewes 140-150
- Lambing % ewes 105-110
- Wool production 2009 (greasy): 30,722 kg @ \$8.10/kg net
- Ewes 5.2 kg/head, 18 av micron, \$NZ42/head net
- Hoggets 3.6 kg/head, 16.5 av micron, \$NZ30/head net
- Lamb production 2009: 2600 lambs, 18.3kg av weight,

Richard is the fourth generation of the Munro-Gloag family to farm Buscot which each generation has sought to improve since it was established in 1916, but the 2300 hectare property was economically marginal until large scale irrigation was developed.

The irrigation helps ensure the hoggets are well fed all year round. The lambs are born on the 1700 hectares of dry hill country but are weaned down on the irrigated flats. They are moved back up into the hills for the autumn and in late autumn go back under pivots until the grass runs out and they go on to turnips and grass with Lucerne balage. In spring the lambs are culled, shorn and put back on the pivots until the grass comes away again on the hill country. The hoggets are also used as a tool to eat off sprayed-out paddocks.



Richard Gloag and Allan Paterson

Eight hundred replacement ewe hoggets go into the breeding flock and the cull ewe and wether hoggets are sold for meat production.

Allan Paterson of Armidale Merino stud supplies mixed age rams to Buscot and this is part of Richard's success. Alan classes all the sheep so knows exactly what sort of rams Richard needs.

The judges commented a number of contestants had unsuitable rams sent to them but didn't send them back to the breeder.

"It is so important to make sure the ram breeder is on the same wavelength as the grower. Richard liaises closely with his breeder and that is important," said a spokesperson for the judges.

Story contributed by Robin Major, marketing consultant on behalf of the New Zealand Merino Stud Breeders

Royal NZ Show - Christchurch

Allan Paterson and his son, Simon, of Armidale Merino stud, Ranfurly, were star performers in the Merino ring at the 2009 Royal New Zealand Show in Christchurch in November.

Armidale was the most successful Merino exhibitor also taking out the prizes for the champion Poll ram that went on to be grand champion Merino, the champion medium ram, champion fine ram and the champion fine wool ewe that became grand champion Merino ewe.

The stud also showed the winning group of five sheep and won the Merial Ancare Pairs.

In a repeat performance of last year, the prize winning Poll Merino ram, owned by Mark Urquhart of Grays Hills stud, Fairlie, NZ, went on to win overall supreme champion Merino of the show.

There were 120 entries in the Merino classes and Australian judge Steven Phillips, who has judged at all the major sheep shows in Australia, said the standard at Christchurch was on par with back home and the NZ sheep had particularly good quality, well nourished wool.

Glen's Tour Album

Pictured is a selection from the album of president of the World Federation Merino Breeders, Glen Keamy, following a recent visit to South America.

Clockwise from the right:

- Executive members of the Asociacion Argentina Criadores de Merino (AACM), secretary Carlos Epper, president Pablo Serres and past president Alejandro Duhart.
- With the Andes as a backdrop, the crowd of over 360 gathers for the auction of 600 sale rams at Benetton's Leleque Merino stud.
- Sale rams at Leleque.
- Some of the rams carrying Australian genetics at the Los Manantiales stud pictured with assistant handler, Diego; Los Manantiales principal, Carlos Mottino; general manager, Reuben Alonso; stud groom, Zenon Chicahu; and general manager of San José stud, Jorge Scott.
- Glen Keamy (third from right), meeting with Uruguay sheep consultant Gustavo Peinado; president of the Brazil Merino Breeders Association, Geraldo da Paixão Jesus; president of the Brazil Sheep Breeders Association, Paulo Schwab; secretary of the Brazil Sheep Breeders Association, Federico; and northern Uruguay sheep breeder, Servando Fros.
- Glen, right, with Dr Hugo Raso, principal of Estancia La Ester and auditor of the AACM and Dr Adolfo Ramirez, laparoscopic veterinarian.

