



Sheep CRC Practical Wisdom Case Studies

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New Opportunities for Terminals

CASE STUDY

Murray Long, Pendarra White Suffolks, NSW

By placing meat quality traits at the forefront of genetic selection, Murray Long and the Australian White Suffolk Association are positioning themselves as key suppliers of rams to help the industry continue to meet consumer demands for tender and flavoursome lamb.

About Murray Long

Murray Long is the principal of the Pendarra White Suffolk Stud at Ardlethan, NSW, and immediate past president of the Australian White Suffolk Association and committee member of the Superwhites Group.

The Superwhites group of 20 White Suffolk breeders was an early participant in the Sheep CRC's genomics program, and Mr Long has been leading the charge in redesigning his breeding program to maximise the gains on offer from DNA testing for hard to measure traits such as meat eating quality.

"People used to worry about how to fit genomics into their flock management, but it's actually a question of building your management around the benefits DNA testing offers," Mr Long said.

In particular, he says the additional accurate information on offer from DNA testing will allow him to manage for antagonistic traits such as intramuscular fat and lean meat yield, as well as traits that are hard to measure in his arid environment such as worm resistance.

"Meat eating quality is too important to ignore. As consumer choice increases you can't have your genetics years behind market demand," he said.

"Genomics is not only a way of getting a better product for my commercial producers and ultimately consumers, but I can also use genomics to make my management a lot easier and a lot more streamlined."

Mr Long DNA tests 25–30 per cent of his ram lambs each year using the Sheep CRC's LD test.

"The ultimate thing that genomics will give you is that consistency of product because genes are not affected by feed or the climate so once you have analysed the genes for these meat eating quality traits it is not going to change."

Take home messages

- DNA testing can accurately identify breeding stock with hard to measure traits including meat eating quality.
- Set clear breeding objectives and select stock according to a consistent genetic profile.
- Adoption will lead to more consistent product for consumers and labour savings on-farm.

Further information

- www.sheepcrc.org.au
- www.pendarra.com