

95/T01



## Producer Research Support

Boosting awareness of the best time to market prime lamb  
Tasmanian Lamb Development Group



### The project

In conjunction with other Tasmanian Lamb Development Group initiatives, new breeding programs were developed under a Producer Research Support project and the suitability of 'new' breeds were tested for the production of heavy weight lamb carcasses.

Through the efforts of the Tasmanian Lamb Development Group (Taslamb), breeding, production and marketing alliances for high quality Tasmanian heavy lean lamb as a specialty product to improve the viability and sustainability of the Tasmanian Lamb Industry were developed.

### What was done

A company called Island Prime Pty Ltd was set up to market individual member's lambs. An alliance was formed with Blue Ribbon Holdings to enable lambs that met the Island Prime specification to be traded direct to retailers.

A business plan for marketing lamb as a branded product - Island Prime – was completed. Members also adhere to an accepted Code of Practice and specified level of animal husbandry.

There are eight producers in the Island Prime company with an additional seven or eight that supply lamb on a periodic basis.

About 160 lambs were sold during the trial under the Island Prime brand each week.

A number of breeding projects were implemented.

### What happened?

Lambs are typically sold at a premium of 20 cents a kg over average sale yard prices. Most lambs are sold in the 18 to 20 kg carcass weight range.

The cost of administration is recouped through a 5 c/kg levy on lamb sales. The net gain to producers is 15 c/kg.

In conjunction with other Tasmanian Lamb Development Group initiatives, new breeding programs were developed under a Producer Research Support project and the suitability of 'new' breeds were tested for the production of heavy weight lamb carcasses.

### Key points

- Feedback from Blue Ribbon has enabled members of the subsequent alliance to identify more cost-effective production strategies.
- Lambs are typically sold at a premium of 20 c/kg over average sale yard prices.
- Most lambs are sold in the 18 to 20 kg carcass weight range.
- The cost of administration is recouped through a 5 c/kg levy on lamb sales. The net gain to producers is 15 c/kg.
- Performance of the prime lamb dam sire was identified as the most important area for research.
- Pure Merino ewes were found to be unsuitable as a source of lambs for Taslamb.
- Development of more appropriate first cross ewes has commenced.

### Contact details

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## Producer Research Support

MLA Producer Research Support offers support funding of up to \$15,000 over three years for groups of producers keen to be active in on-farm research and demonstration trials.

These activities include:

- Producer Initiated Research and Development
- More Beef from Pastures demonstration trials
- Prime Time Wean More Lambs demonstration trials
- Sustainable and productive grazing grants.

Contact Stephen Feighan - MLA Project Manager, Producer Delivery and Adoption.

Tel (02) 9463 9245 or  
sfeighan@mla.com.au

## MLA also recommends

### EDGEnetwork

EDGEnetwork offers practical field-based workshops to improve productivity and profitability for the long-term.

Workshops cover breeding, nutrition, grazing management, marketing and selling.

Call MLA on 1800 993 343 or  
www.edgenetwork.com.au

### Meat and Livestock Australia

Level 1, 165 Walker Street  
North Sydney NSW 2060  
Tel (02) 9463 9333  
Fax (02) 9463 9393  
Free Phone 1800 023 100 (Australia only)  
www.mla.com.au

### Boosting awareness of the best time to market prime lamb

July 2006 / PIRD OUTCOMES

## Discussion

Prime lamb producers participating in a branded product marketing program have increased their awareness of the best time to sell lambs with a fat score of two.

Feedback from Blue Ribbon has enabled members of the subsequent alliance to identify more cost-effective production strategies.

Performance of the prime lamb dam sire was identified as the most important area for research. Pure Merino ewes were found to be unsuitable as a source of lambs for Taslamb. Development of more appropriate first cross ewes has commenced.