

JULY 2026

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HADDONRIG

Dear clients,

What an exciting time to be in the merino industry with record lamb and sheep prices paired with a resurgence in the wool market really proving the suitability and profitability of the merino whilst putting a greater emphasis on having a dual-purpose merino enterprise.

Strong demand from China and a tightening Australian wool clip have lifted wool prices over the past 12 months. The AWEX Eastern Market Indicator (EMI) has risen to around 1,900–1,930 c/kg clean and 19-micron wool to around 2,376 c/kg. Australian wool production is forecast to fall 8.8% to 255 million kg, while AWTA test volumes are down 9.5% year-on-year. At the same time, buyers have increasingly favoured medium-fine Merino wool (18.5–20.5 micron) for its balance of comfort, performance and value in activewear and knitwear. Fantastic to see and rewarding for everyone who sticks with the merino!

Coming in from a drier start to Spring, we were pleased with shearing results, with grown ewes cutting an average of 7.5kg (greasy) of 19.6-micron wool. At today's prices, and with an average yield of 66%, this nets \$103.56/hd.

On top of that, we expect lamb prices to remain strong for the next 18 months at least, with a record low merino flock across Australia. Current Lamb prices between \$10–\$11c/kg/cwt or higher have been a great opportunity for us to capitalise on our automatic feedlot operations and value adding enterprises.

This year, we are very excited to announce the launch of our new non-mules family, HR-Select. This family will also focus on early-maturity, fertility and ease-of-care and we look forward to presenting the first rams in 2027. More details below.

We were thrilled to see the outstanding performance of our clients in ewe and wether trials this year and in sales and shows across the state. There's nothing more rewarding than seeing your success so thank you to all who reported their results!

Will and I were also thrilled to welcome our daughter Matilda on the 8th of October, 2025. She is settling in well to life at HR.

Thank you to all the new and existing clients who attended our Sale last year or who bought grade rams. We hope your first joining was a success and look forward to catching up with both new and existing clients this year at our Sale. I'd also like to thank everyone who keeps the wheels turning at Haddon Rig – your efforts are appreciated.

Kind Regards,

Liv Falkiner



Liv Falkiner, Will and Matilda Michell



2025 Lamb Marking



19.5 micron wool graph



2025 Sale rams

2026 MANAGER'S REPORT Matt Kelly

After a strong weaning performance in 2025 of 120% lambs weaned to ewes joined and average body weights up by 10kg, a dry summer and early autumn posed hurdles to sustaining this positive momentum. We had success joining on stubbles across our broadacre cropping paddocks, which helped relieve pressure on our native grazing blocks and assisted with maintaining ground cover.

Recent dry times have really emphasised the importance of efficient labour and time management. We are constructing 8 new 150m long x 60m deep containment pens with a conveyer belt bunker to allow us to feed efficiently and reduce feed wastage.

We are also aiming to complete our entire boundary in exclusion fencing to mitigate the pest problem ravaging the Central West. Conservatively, we expect to increase our stocking capacity by 10-20% and cotton and wheat yields by 5%. Using these estimates, the fence pays for itself within four years. Big thanks to WGL contracting for their services.

This year we have an excellent team of poll and horn rams which will be shown across the season. High joining numbers continue to provide great depth in our polls and horns for our auction and grade rams. Recent falls totalling 60mm have been not ideal during lambing but a great break to an extended dry period and we are looking forward to capitalising on the improved season through forage crops and a good response in our native country.

I'd like to welcome Stu Mclean to the team this year in the role of stud overseer. Stu follows in his father Mark and brother Callum's footsteps in working at HR as stud overseer. I'm looking forward to working alongside Stu in the future and have his ideas and skills contribute to our program.

Finally, I'd like to thank all the jackaroos, contractors and staff for their continued support and hard work in the recent dry times, it certainly does not go unnoticed



Exclusion Fence



Containment yards (shade and water to come)



Nev Kelly, Stuart Murdoch and Matt Kelly



Andy McLeod and Matt Kelly

LAUNCH OF NEW 'HR-SELECT' FAMILY

We are excited to announce the launch of our new non-mules Poll Merino family, "HR-Select". Our objective with this family is to provide an option for those clients looking for a non-mules animal, specifically bred with enhanced meat production, early-growth and low breech cover ASBVs.

To form the foundation of this new family, we purchased five sires from Boonoke's own 'Prime' family, linking back to Triggervale and Ridgeway Advance bloodlines. These rams were syndicate joined in December 2025 with specially selected non-mules-type HR ewes with our strongest ASBV figures. These rams offer an average of 19.9 microns, strong growth, muscle, breech cover and balanced maternal traits.

Tag	Sire	FD	CF	YEMD	YFAT	EBWR	PWT	YWT	WP	SM	BWT	EMD
PB244009	TR2100024	20.1	99.6	1.1	-0.2	-0.3	6.8	3.1	142.6	123.8	96.5	40.5
PB244177	TR2000081	19.7	99.3	2.1	1.3	-0.8	10.5	1.6	157.9	137.4	90.7	38.5
PB244171	TV2000081	19.6	99.6	2.1	0.9	-0.7	13.4	2.1	172.9	151.1	98.5	38.5
PB244176	TV2000081	20.3	99.6	2.2	0.9	-0.7	11.7	4.4	166.5	153.5	98.5	38.5
PB244189	IV2000081	19.7	99.1	1.7	0.3	-0.9	9.3	10.9	174.1	159.4	96.5	40.0
Averages		19.9	99.4	1.8	0.6	-0.7	10.3	4.4	162.8	145.0	96.1	39.2

Muscling is a key strength across the sire team, with YEMD values ranging from 1.6 to 2.2 in the lead sires. Fat cover remains moderate and functional, with YFAT values from -0.2 to +1.3. Importantly for a non-mulesed breeding objective, the rams display low Breech Wrinkle ASBVs, ranging from -0.3 to -0.9, with the sire group averaging approximately -0.7. This provides a strong platform for reducing breech wrinkle and progressing towards a plain-bodied, low-maintenance sheep whilst maintaining productivity.

The first generation will be presented at the 2027 Auction. We look forward to tracking the progress of these lambs.



HR Select Progeny May 2026

2026 WETHER SALES – WHAT THE HR WETHER CAN DO!



Matt Kelly and Stu Maclean, Reserve Champion Pen of Lambs

In May, we sold our second line of '25 drop HR wethers to Fletchers for \$10.50/kg. With an average weight of 58kg, and yielding 27.22kg meat (48% yield), that's a return of \$292.99/hd and \$17.20/hd for the skin to total \$310.19/hd. They also shored \$30 of wool after previously being shorn in October 2025. All in, that's \$340/head.

These wethers had 56 days on a mix of barley, chickpea and pellet at 1.5kgs/day and total cost of \$30/head. Other costs included shearing \$11.50/hd, animal health \$1.50, (freight, vendor commission, lamb trans levy, insurance) \$18/hd. Total cost: \$61/hd therefore total profit = \$279/hd.

A testament to the performance of the commercial HR merino was beating numerous terminal meat breeds to win Reserve Champion Pen of Lambs at the 2026 Warren Show. We also took home First Place in the Merino Pen of Lambs. A great result out of 23 pens of lambs who also competed.



2025 ram sale



2026 Auction Rams



AAAAM wool

TRILBY STATION... THE LONG GAME

A containment pen feeding program has reduced feed wastage by 30 per cent and countless hours of wasted labour for the Murray family on the 320,000-acre Trilby Station, Louth. They have recently finished feeding 9500 core breeding ewes over 10 months in newly built containment pens before letting them out to feed on the much cheaper rain fed grass. The decision to feed has enabled them to join 11800 ewes in the autumn putting them back into the position of business of usual. A high majority were joined while in the containment pens.

Will Murray estimated containment feeding in troughs reduced their feed wastage by 30% and the sheep were increasing in condition whilst in previous droughts on the trail feeding system they were battling to hold condition. The cost saving resulting from less grain and hay wastage was used to expand the number of containment pens finishing at 1 2,500 head capacity. Most of grain and hay was sourced from Parkes 600km away. The other driver to containment feed rather than destock was the cost of having to replace their HR blood ewes and the amount of time it would take to rebuild the genetic quality that they have .

Will said that “the family are in Merino sheep for the long game with the proven credentials of being pastoral graziers in the Louth district for 160 plus years.”



Wool truck leaving Trilby Station



Gary and Will Murray, with Lily Hand

STUART MURDOCH Classer's Report

Four Merino commodities are at the top of their game: wool, lamb, mutton and surplus breeders. The merino sheep producers that have stuck to their enterprises are now reaping the rewards of their hard work and tenacity.

HR now runs 3,200 pure poll stud ewes and 2400 horn ewes, offering Haddon Rig clients a deep pool of quality genetics. This allows us to have strict selection criteria on our stud ewes and gives our clients more choice and depth when selecting rams.

The HR auction is the best spot for acquiring sires with the strongest genetic and breeding potential. Seventy percent of the rams catalogued at HR are AI and Specially bred. Last year we auctioned 250 rams with an overall average of \$2,500. Interestingly 130 of these auction rams sold at an average of \$1,775, which I believe is excellent value for the top tier of our genetics.

The HR philosophy is to breed simple, uncomplicated merinos, which are consistent of type and quality. HR sheep are bred to produce fast maturing heavy lambs desired by processors, whilst still growing a soft high-quality wool that fills the bales.

At the 2025 HR general shearing, 8,500 breeding ewes were shorn, producing quality fleece wools that averaged 19.6 microns from ewes aged between 1.5 and 6.5 years May the prices and rain continue.



HR Poll Special Stud Merino Fleece



Anthony Fuller at the 2025 shearing



2025 ram sale

AROUND THE GROUNDS WITH HR CLIENTS

- Taylor family, 'Elswick', Walcha, won the Highest Potential Production class, at the Walcha Merino Flock Ewe Competition, 2026
- JD and DM Betts, 'The Peak', Cobar, recently sold 7-year-old HR poll wethers (August shorn) at the Dubbo Saleyards for \$287/hd.
- Alastair and Anna Wilson, 'Myall', Lightning Ridge, won Grand Champion Merino Fleece, from a poll merino at the 2026 Walgett Show
- Richard and Anna Green, David and George, KG Green and Co, 'Olieview', Parkes, received the top price for their one-year-old cull ewes at the Forbes Annual Breeders Sale, January 2026, in the Merino Breeders Section



Taylor Family Trust, ewes



Alastair and Anna Wilson, Walgett Show



Pressing Wool 2025 Shearing



Will Michell, Andy Mcleod and Matilda Michell



Matt Kelly, George & Liv Falkiner Visiting Clients 2025

COUNTRY ROAD PARTNERSHIP

We are proud to partner with Country Road and Landcare on a project to protect native wetlands on Haddon Rig. In 2025, we planted 3200 native trees including belahs, acacias, casuarina cristata, wilgas, saltbush, eucalypts and box trees. We are planting 1000 more in late-June.

SUCCESS AT THE WARREN SHOW

We had a fantastic day at the Warren Show, taking home:

- **Champion Pen Merinos in Trade Wether Section**
- **Reserve Champion Trade Wethers out of 23 pens**
- **Poll 250713:**
 - **Grand Champion Ram**
 - **Supreme Merino**
 - **Junior Champion Ram**
 - **Champion Strong Wool**
- **Grand Champion Medium Wool**
- **Reserve Champion Medium Wool**
- **Champion Fine Wool**
- **Reserve Champion Fine Wool**



Matt Kelly with Grand Champion Ram, Supreme Merino, Junior Champion Ram & Champion Strong Wool Ram (250713)



Jack Lane with Champion Medium Wool (250163)

2025 SALE REPORT

A total of 246 / 250 rams sold at our annual 2-tooth sale in 2025 representing a 98% clearance. Strong demand exhibited for the Polls with 130 polls sold out of 130 offered. Clients came looking to take advantage of strong wether prices, by continuing to build meat and growth into their flocks. With above industry averages for Post Weaning Weight and Yearling Weight, there was a lot of support for large-framed polls with wool cut and quality.

The top price ram, Lot 1, tag 240821, was purchased by James and Jo Morris, Bonanza Merinos, Walgett for \$16,000. Lot 1 carried an 18.6-micron fleece, CF 99.4 and BWT 110kgs. He has a Yearling Clean Fleece Weight of 36.34 and a Wool Production Index of 193.63. 240821 cut 9.1kgs of wool at 7.5 months' growth. He had an EMD of 45 and FAT of 7.

Alastair and Anna Wilson, 'Myall' from Wilson Pastoral Co, Walgett purchased Poll Lot 3 for an equal second top price of \$12,000. This ram was 118kg, PWWT 8.59, YWT 10.87. This ram cut 9kgs wool at 7.5 months growth and had an EMD of 43.5 and a FAT score of 8.5. The top priced horn ram, Lot 5 was purchased by Tony and Rhonda Milgate, who paid \$12,000 a large-framed 18.7-micron ram out of Sire W220310 with a soft, bright, white, well-defined wool.

We continue to focus on early maturity and growth to maximise returns for our clients in the wether job and keeping the wool cut and quality we're known for. New clients through the gate are communicating to us they want to build the wool piece back into their flocks and to improve / correct hooves, legs and structure – which have always been core focuses of ours. We're looking forward to continuing our breeding journey and working with clients to maximise returns for their merino enterprises.



2025 Auction



Top priced poll ram, Brad Wilson, Paul Dooley, Liv Falkiner, James Morris, "Bonanza Merinos", Matt Kelly, Andy McLeod and Charlie Savage

FARMING UPDATE

2025 was an encouraging year for our farming program, with key infrastructure investments helping us make the most of the favourable season. Our on-farm fertiliser shed, completed in late 2024, and new spreader have improved our ability to apply fertiliser when needed and hedge against market movements. We also purchased an autonomous sprayer, "George", which has reduced labour requirements, improved fuel efficiency and performed well in spot spraying. This year, the Strait of Hormuz crisis has created challenges, but limited rainfall has resulted in reduced planting. Our focus is now on preparing for when seasonal conditions improve.



Jake George HR Farming Manager



Lachy Condon & Will Michell

FEEDING LESSONS

After a tough 8 months feeding, we continue to learn key lessons about containment feeding and grain storage. A few include:

- Quality test all silage as it comes out of the pit. Time and mould can cause issues with protein and nutrition
- Stick to head counts and trough space. We have found 30-40 cm / head is ideal
- Thinner containment yards (less deep) assist in reducing the risk of 'shy feeders' sitting at the back and not eating

LIFE AT HR



Renovating the Shearer's Quarters



2026 Auction Team



Matt Kelly, Alastair Wilson & Liv Falkiner



2025 Drop Lambs



Bales of Wool, 2025 Shearing



Photo credit: Rachael Lenehan

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Visit our website for all our updated news and to download upcoming Ram Sale Catalogue.

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Haddon Rig Merino and Poll Stud 

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OUR TEAM



Stu Maclean, Jack Lane, Matt Kelly, Jake George, Lachie Tudgey, Jayson Manipon, Will Michell, Liv Falkiner & Matilda



Blade Shearing March 2026

2026 Calendar

**Marra Field Day
Show & Display**
July 10

**Australian Sheep
& Wool Show**
July 17 - 19

**Robobank National
Merino Sheep Show**
August 11 - 12

**South West Slopes
Merino Breeders Field Day**
September 1

**Haddon Rig On-Property
Ram Sale, Warren**
September 10

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