

meatup FORUM

For the latest in red meat R&D

AMARULA DORPERS & WHITE DORPERS

BRED TO SURVIVE ADAPTED TO THRIVE

Lorroi Kirkby



AMARULA

DORPERS & WHITE DORPERS

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AMARULA DORPERS

2200 acres, 50km east of Moree.

Mixture of black basalt, red loam and sandy country with some scrub.

Purchased 16 years ago and was a degraded traditional farming property.

Thinking outside the box we have regenerated our country back into native and sub-tropical grasslands.

Multispecies pasture cropping.

Incorporating saltbush into our system (Dorpers love to browse).

Rebuilding our flock to 1000 breeding Stud ewes, now at 700.

Trying to breed rams as fast as we can.

ABOUT US

- Amarula Dorpers was established in 2000 with 6 ewes, after a trip to South Africa.
- Bred in an arid dry environment so they fit very well into our hot, dry country.
- Used ET to grow our numbers.
- In 20 years we have bred over 15000 Dorpers
- Introduced White Dorpers in 2008
- Now run 800 breeding ewes
 - 600 x 2019 drop and older ewes
 - 200 x 2020 drop ewes that have just been joined
 - Plus 200 late born 2020 drop ewes
- Aiming for 1000 breeding

A large, spreading tree with a thick trunk and many branches dominates the center of the image. The tree's canopy is dense with green leaves. Underneath the tree, a flock of white sheep, including several lambs, is gathered. The ground is a mix of dark soil and green grass. In the background, a flat, open field stretches to the horizon under a clear sky. The lighting suggests late afternoon or early morning, with a warm glow on the horizon.

The Ideal Dorper Sheep is an animal, which can maintain itself, produce meat and reproduce under sub-optimal conditions.

BREEDING PHILOSOPHY

A photograph of a person in a utility vehicle herding sheep in a field with mountains in the background. The image is split diagonally, with the top right portion being a clear, bright scene and the bottom left portion being a dark, shadowed scene. The sheep are white with black faces and legs, and are gathered near a wire fence. The background shows rolling hills and mountains under a blue sky with light clouds.

Amarula breeds early maturing, hardy rams with a focus on commercial relevance and emphasis on the production traits of fertility, quick growth and carcass, with a moderate adult weight.

OUTSTANDING CHARACTERISTICS FOR PRODUCTION AND REPRODUCTION



**LAMB
PRODUCTION**



**ADAPTABILITY
HARDINESS**



**PASTURE
UTILISATION**



**COVERING
DORPER SKIN**



**MOTHERING
QUALITIES**

These important characteristics are essential for proper selection and has been proven over 100 years. It is important when doing your selections, to maintain and invest in these characteristics (traits) for future generations of Dorpers.

Adaptability

This is measured by the well being of the animal and the ability to produce and reproduce under any condition, and is determined by low mortality rate, reproduction rate, growth rate and the ewe's ability to keep in reasonable condition while raising her lamb and also to start cycling for the next mating cycle.

Hardiness

The Dorper was originally bred to produce under arid conditions but can also flourish under all environments. Now also farmed in ultra cold, snow and wet conditions. Under these conditions the animal must be able to survive and resist health hazards and diseases. You continue to select for hardiness through observation and record keeping.



DORPERS



Reproduction and Production

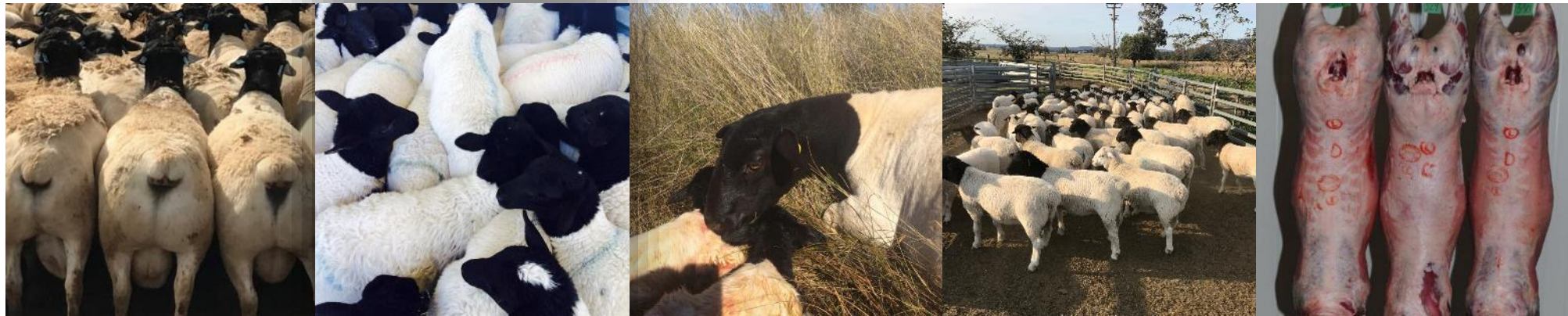
- Ewes are the heart and soul of the flock, stud or commercial.
- Our goal is to breed ewes, that in turn breed rams, to fit their environment.
- Our mostly dry environment can only support so much growth, size and milking ability.
- The larger the adult, the more they eat to maintain themselves.
- A more moderate sized ewe will be just as fertile and rear lambs, on a smaller feed intake.

- These ewes lambed Sept 2019. March/Apr 2020, Oct/Nov 2020 and just about to lamb again in 1 week.(April). Maidens added as they are old enough



LAMB (MEAT) PRODUCTION

Kilogram's meat produced per Ha



MEAT QUALITIES

Sire selection

REPRODUCTION

Twins

WEIGHT GAIN

Fast Growth

CARCASE QUALITY

High dressing %

FERTILITY (HIGH PRODUCTION RATE)

High production rate leads to more lambs born per year. Dorper ewes can lamb three times in two years if managed properly. Quick recovery of numbers in a recovery phase after drought.



EASY CARE

Dorper and White Dorper sheep are true easy-care, self replacing sheep, returning maximum returns to the producer for minimal inputs in term of labour, resources and money.

Dorpers offer a farming option that is economically viable, even in the toughest conditions, environmentally sustainable and employs ethical farming practices. (Future bans through public perception)



COVERING

With the correct covering on the animal, you are ensured of good demand for breeding material as no shearing is required.



DORPER SKINS

Dorper skins are regarded among the best in the world. It has no wrinkles and a smooth grain. It is used in the manufacture of high-quality leather clothes and gloves.



GENERAL APPEARANCE

The appearance of the Dorper appeals to many people, and it is easy to care about something that you enjoy doing and makes you high \$ returns.



GOOD MOTHERING QUALITIES



The Dorper ewe will nourish her lambs under difficult conditions. When the ewes are left alone, they will lamb easily and will retain and look after their lambs.



The Dorper does not easily lose their lambs, even if they are handled soon after lambing. The mortality rate in the Dorper is low. High weaning rates.

CHALLENGES

- Introducing a shedding meat sheep breed to Australia
- Educating farmers to the Dorper attributes
- Changing the perception of industry leaders
- Bias in the yards and agents
- Improving the breed conformation
- Management and seasonal changes
- Dynamic system – not for everyone
- **Breeding enough rams to meet the demand!**

SUCCESSSES

- Overall acceptance of new meat breed to Australia
- Successful ram sales, full clearance.
- Winning carcass competitions – Dubbo All breeds Prime Lamb Comp. Champion pen on hoof, Res Champion Pen Hoof and Hook and took out the Dorper Section
- Highest price ram and ewe records at National sales
- On farm sale records – sold ram \$45,000 averaged \$4,800 overall. Full clearance.
- Long term clients back year after year
- Selling Dorper genetics internationally
- Integrating our love of Dorpers with regenerating our soil and healthy pastures.
- NSW Landcare Farmers of the Year in 2019 – waiting for the National Landcare Awards this year.



Dubbo Hoof and Hook Competition

No 1 Challenge – How to refocus.

- The biggest challenge for any farming enterprise is drought.
- Drought forced us to refocus on our enterprise and refine our management practices
- Out of adversity comes opportunity and therefore success
- Classed out on reproductive performance so only the best remain in the Stud.
- Less ewes but more lambs. Make your ewes work for you.
- Ewe Fertility is the key – along with a few good highly fertile Amarula Rams!
- Dorper ewes start to cycle when the lambs are 5-6 weeks old
 - Join when the oldest lambs in the group are 8 weeks old, for 5 weeks.
 - Lambs are weaned and the rams are removed at the same time.
 - Most ewes have lambed every 6.5 to 8 months.
 - We have achieved a pregnancy scanning rate averaging 150% depending on the number of maidens and a lamb marking average 130%.
 - Lose negligible amounts of lambs to weaning.
 - This is at least a 200%+ lambing per year (working on 3 lambings in 2 years).



Accelerated Joining





PERFORMANCE RECORDING

LAMBPLAN

Performance recording is an objective means of benchmarking the genetic capabilities of our own animals against animals from other studs, free of known environmental biases such as rearing type and feed regime.

LAMBPLAN provides practical information for sheep producers on the genetic potential of their sheep. Sheep are ranked according to various production characteristics using Australian Sheep Breeding Vales (ASBVs). ASBVs are available for growth, carcase and reproduction.

ASBVs allow you to evaluate a ram's genetic potential for a range of traits that directly impact on the profitability of your lamb and sheep production business.



Traits that we measure and record include the following; Sire & Dam, Date of Birth, Birth Type and rearing type, weaning weight, post weaning weight, post weaning eye muscle depth, post weaning fat depth & faecal egg count.



Information is analysed by the LAMBPLAN computer to produce ASBV's. The ASBVs are used in conjunction with visual appraisal to select future sires and dams in our breeding programs



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How do ASBVs help in the selection of rams?

They take into account the performance of the ram's relatives as well as the animal's own performance.

They allow you to compare rams on the basis of how they will breed (breeding value) rather than how well they have been fed (environmental influence).

They can be used to accurately estimate progeny performance for specific traits and to predict the outcome of breeding programs.



ClassiMate

Visual Assessment Data Collection

- ClassiMate is a new App for the visual assessment of any livestock, in the yards and recording the information on your mobile device.
- ClassiMate allows you to visually evaluate the quality of your livestock, by taking you through a series of prompts related to the animal's structure and overall correctness. The platform then generates an overall quality score that is measured against industry-accepted ideals.
- Quick and easy to use - a complex assessment can be done in as little as 60 seconds per animal
- The animals body is broken into individual parts such as head, neck barrel, hindquarter legs and feet and given a score. This enables the purchaser to see where the positive attributes and negative points of the individual animal are.
- ClassiMate provides instant, detailed comprehensive reports on the strengths and weaknesses of your herd.

White Dorper
Tag #191452
Born: Nov 2019

9.11_{/10}
Assessed by Justin Kirkby
28 Jan 2021
(Meat Sheep criteria)



Size / Frame
Neck, Top line, Withers
Bone Quality
Fore Quarter, Chest, Brisket
Hindlegs
Pastern Strength
Feet/ Hooves
Depth, Carcass
Barrel, Length, Spring of Rib
Twist and Thighs
Fat Distribution (Soft Fleshing)
(Rump) Width
(Rump) Length
Head Character (Horns, Ears)



0 25 50 75 100


Breeder **Amarula Dorpers**
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 ClassiMate
Livestock Visual Assessment Tool

ClassiMate is a Livestock Visual Assessment tool designed to assist in providing accurate and unbiased assessment of livestock. This process generates valid assessment data for the purposes, of breed development, benchmarking and sale and marketing information.

www.classimate.net

Available on  App Store
Get it on  Google play



Commercial success in the rangeland areas

- Have clients all over Australia, but the largest proportion is in the rangeland areas of NSW and Queensland.
- Largest client is running 25,000 ewes and building up to 50,000.
- Can target many different markets
- Normal or Organic
- Sell straight off mothers
- Joining twice yearly in spring and autumn
- Joining ewe lambs
- Surviving in tough conditions and rearing lambs

Where to from here.



CONTINUE TO BE INVOLVED IN THE RESOURCE FLOCK.



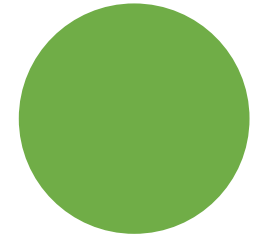
MULTI SIRE JOINING



DNA TESTING OF PROGENY FOR PARENTAGE PLUS 50 SNP CHIP



EATING QUALITY



VISUAL DATA COLLECTION – CLASSMATE

Take home messages

- Ram selection is important for your business - the better the ram the better the ewe progeny.
 - Improved fertility and production
 - Use the tools available to you but keep balance in your choices.
 - Better resale value
- Ewe Selection
 - Class out reproductive non-performers
 - Scan and wet/dry
 - Fertility, Growth, Carcase
- Management - Profit not Production
 - Less ewes, more lambs

Tools and resources

Lambplan – genetic data collection

Classimate – visual data collection

DNA – improved ASBVs plus eating quality data

Lambs Alive - Jason Tromph
– (Lamb Survival)

MLA run information days and field days

- Bred Well Fed Well
- Lifetime Ewe Management
- Leading Breeder Lambplan conferences