



DOHNE

Solutions

BALANCE

As farmers, we do not always get the Work / Life balance right, but we try.

Some interesting points in the history of sheep breeds in Australia.

Over time, as markets have changed, various extremes of type have been pursued by the Australian sheep industry. One of the classics was the move toward the Vermont sheep in the early 1900's. Its short, tight staples on a thick, wrinkly skin was "desired" in the hope of increasing wool cut. The result was the development of walking fly magnets.

Sydney Sheep Show Merino Champion 1905.



After the Reserve Price Scheme collapsed in the early 1990's, terminal meat breeds became popular in previously traditional Merino regions. Border Leicester Merino cross ewes dominated the Maternal sector. Composite ewes for Maternal purposes, crossed with terminal meat breed rams have been used for second cross lambs.

More recently, when the wool market was in the doldrums, cleanskin sheep breeds gained a significant foothold in the national sheep flock.

The arrival of the Dohne in Australia.

The Dohne is designed to be ideally balanced for productivity between growth rates and wool production. These traits are antagonistic to each other, and there is constant tension between them.

The Glen Holme approach to balance in our sheep.

In breeding sheep, we aim to breed a well-balanced animal. Having the ability to maintain body condition helps it to thrive, not just survive. Ewes in good condition at weaning are much more likely to get back in lamb, and to raise multiple lambs successfully. Tall, rangy sheep may look impressive, but tend to be less efficient at converting available food resources to the saleable products; meat and wool.

Balance is important when you choose the type of sheep that will suit your environment or production system. For instance, if you have an animal that is too long in the body, there is a risk of the top line not being able to help guard against the elements like rain and dust. Additionally, early physical breakdown is a significant risk, due to discomfort or even disability.



A well-balanced young Glen Holme Dohne Sire.

It is particularly important to achieve optimal balance between growth and wool production. Too much emphasis on wool leads to animals that find it difficult to survive in tough conditions. They will not be particularly fertile either. Fertility is the power behind the principle of kilograms of lamb weaned per ewe; this is often the most significant profit driver in a sheep enterprise.

The free lunch with growth rates is higher weaning rates and weights.

At Glen Holme we utilise the tools available to us in the form of Australian Sheep Breeding Values. These have proven to be a predictor of an animal's genetic performance. ASBV's for growth and fleece traits are employed by us **after** visual classing which ensures that structural soundness and integrity are prioritised.

We have worked hard to get wools that are free growing and stylish, with the ability to withstand the elements.

The fertility of our flock is high, and the growth rates are a testament to efficient conversion of feed to protein.