

Prime SAMM lambs get up and grow

HIGH growth rates and high fertility make the Prime SAMM breed the ideal choice according to Newdegate farmer Matt Lloyd.

Matt along with wife Steph and his parents Tim and Nicole first ventured into Prime SAMMs four years ago when they purchased their first Prime SAMM rams and they haven't looked back.

Matt said at the time a lot of farmers in the area were getting into the breed and were getting good results so they decided to try them.

Prior to making the change to Prime SAMM genetics, the Lloyds ran a pure Merino flock for a few years and prior to that used South Suffolk rams over the Merinos to produce a prime lamb.

When they were using the South Suffolks they found they had a lot of trouble getting the lambs up to saleable weights quickly even in the best of years.

However they are seeing none of these problems now using Prime SAMM genetics used over Merino ewes.

Matt said in the three drops of Prime SAMM lambs they have had, they have never had an issue of getting weight into their lambs.

"We are turning them off quicker irrespective of the season at heavier weights than what we were achieving with the South Suffolk cross lambs in the best pasture years," Matt said.

"They seem to be able to make better use of available feed on offer therefore



□ First cross Prime SAMM ewes on the Lloyds' property with March-drop Prime SAMM lambs at foot.

growing to a saleable weight much quicker."

Last year when the Lloyds sold all their lambs in one draft in September to WAMMCO they averaged 50kg liveweight and returned just over a \$100/head.

While in 2010 in the worst year on record they sold 70 per cent of their lambs in the first draft something which they could never achieve with the South Suffolks.

But it is not only the carcass and growth traits which have impressed the Lloyds, they have also experienced improvements in lambing percentages.

Last season the Lloyds mated 750 Merino ewes and 250 first cross Prime SAMM ewes to Prime SAMM rams for a March lambing.

When it came to marking, Matt said they achieved a 100 per cent lambing in the Merino ewes and 138pc in the first

cross ewes which were their best results ever.

"From a fertility point of view they are good conceivers and the lambs are very robust and just get up and grow," he said.

Going forward the Lloyds' aim is to mate 1500 ewes to Prime SAMM rams this year, with the aim of turning off 1400 lambs while also retaining their first cross ewe lambs for future breeders.