

Price rally drives sheep genetics

By SALLY CRIPPS

SOARING lamb and mutton prices are creating huge demand for meat sheep genetics and bodes well for the upcoming Dorper and White Dorper sale at Tara, according to organisers.

Sale committee chairwoman Andrea Weiss said the outlook was quite a turnaround from last year's drought-impacted sale for a number of reasons.

"It's still terribly dry in places but there has been rain around. We are looking at a much different picture to last year," she said.

But it's the desire for rams and ewes to take advantage of lamb prices in the \$5 to \$6 range that is most impressive vendors at the seventh annual Queensland sale on September 26.

Nine vendors will have 42 rams and 17 stud ewes for sale at Tara.

They include Basecamp stud at Kogan, Davenport Hill at Haden, Henry Dorpers from Allora, the Kamura stud at Dalby, Kilara Dorpers at Wellcamp, Smit Dorpers at Roma, TimKaren stud from Murron, Tinalong at Surat, and Yarrabee stud at Goombungee.

The numbers for sale have been reduced, thanks to advance demand from around the state.

"A lot of people have been selling on-

farm to people who've been chasing replacement rams, which is not a bad thing," Ms Weiss said.

She has been told of people who are buying extra land in order to take advantage of excellent lamb prices.

Selling agent George McVeigh from Topx Warwick agreed there were positive vibes being generated around the sale, and the buoyancy in the market meant people could buy with confidence.

"The best thing people can do now is to buy good rams and improve their genetics," he said.

Interest has been received from various parts of the state, west to Longreach and Cunnamulla and as far north as Airlie Beach, as well as local buyers.

They will be assured of prize-winning genetics on offer, with some vendors having ribbons from the Ekka and Bendigo's national sheep and wool show under their belts.

Steve and Donna Emmerton are among the nine vendors preparing a sale team, buoyed by their recent national championship win in Bendigo.

They made the long journey from their Davenport Hill stud at Haden, 50km north west of Toowoomba, to the Australian Sheep and Wool Show in July and were rewarded with their first ever national trophy, for junior champion White Dorper ewes.



The excellent fertility characteristics of the Dorper breed, such as those exhibited by this ewe and lambs from Davenport Hill stud, will be sought after at the seventh annual Dorper and White Dorper sale at Tara.

"It was a long way but it was great exposure for us," Donna said. "There were over 470 Dorper entries and lots of fellow producers to talk to."

They went on to collect second places in the sires progeny and breeders group sections.

John and Ann Waters will also be going to Tara as prizewinners, having secured the champion pen of three ribbon in the RNA prime lamb carcass competition this year, only their second year in the competition.

The pen included two milk tooth White Dorper-Suffolk cross lambs and one milk tooth White Dorper-Merino cross, weighing between 46 and 49 kilograms and snapped up for \$294 a head to Pattemore's Meats at Alexander Hills.

Although preparation has been difficult for all vendors over the past couple of years, keeping nutrition up to lambing ewes, they are all committed to producing animals with typical Dorper characteristics of excellent fertility and mothering, fast growth rates, good muscling and good shedding abilities.



Tara on September 26 will be the venue for the annual Dorper and White Dorper sale, where ewes with excellent mothering capabilities like the ones shown here from Davenport Hill stud at Haden will be offered.