

Understanding LAMBPLAN ASBV's

(Australian Sheep Breeding Values)

At the request of the meat sheep industry, the South Australian Department of Agriculture launched its Meat Sheep Testing Service in April 1987. This Testing service has now combined with 'Lambplan', a national recording system which promotes genetic improvement in lamb production by identifying the animals that are genetically superior.

Lambplan results are aimed at:

1. Increasing Growth Rates of prime lambs
2. Increased Muscling of prime lambs
3. Maintaining an acceptable Fat coverage on prime lambs

The basis of the service is farm measuring of weight, fat and eye muscle depth of stud lambs. Using this data, corrected for such things as age, birth type and age of the dam, the best breeding value (ASBV) of each lamb for both growth rate and lean meat is calculated. These values are combined in an index using economic values for weight and fat to allow more accurate selection of rams and ewes for genetic development of the flock.

Using the Estimated Breeding Value's for live weight, fat and index:

1. Sheep that have high post weaning weight (PWT) ASBV's are the fast growers at that stage of their life.
2. Sheep with negative fat (PFAT) ASBV's are leaner sheep.
3. Sheep with high eye muscle (PEMD) ASBV's are well muscled in relation to their weight.
4. Sheep with a high Carcase+ or Lamb2020 index have the best balance of weight, muscle and fat.

These figures are across flock, and can be used to compare sheep from different properties, that have born and bred under differing environmental conditions.

Trial results consistently show that buying high index rams from a high index stud will increase the profitability of your prime lamb enterprise.