



EOFY WRAP NEWSLETTER

JULY 2025 EDITION

willera.com.au

THE 24/25 EOFY WILLERA WRAP



Written By Simon Coutts
Willera Merinos - Stud Operations

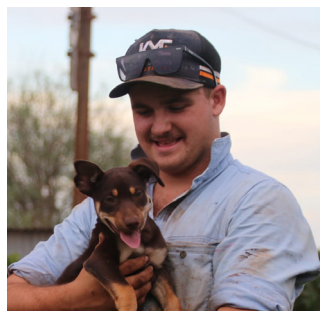
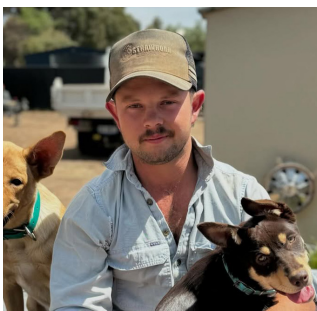
We would like to begin our yearly wrap by giving a big shout out to all our clients and followers who have and still are enduring what has been, one of the tougher times on record in terms of season. We realise some areas have been affected more severely than others and the flow on affects will take some time to recover from.

We at Willera always try to learn from the tough times and use these experiences to position ourselves more preparedly for the next. Sometimes easier said than done but it does give you the opportunity to re-evaluate some parts of the operation and look at ways to do things better and even capitalise on it.



As always, we've seen some changes over the past 12 months, we said goodbye to Mitch A'Vard (pictured left) as he pursues a career off farm, and we thank him immensely for his efforts and contribution to our business.

We have also welcomed two new faces to our team in Paddy Hansford (pictured below, left) and Todd White (pictured below, right).



Paddy brings with him a huge enthusiasm towards sheep and a terrific work ethic, along with great attention to detail. He has had a lot of prior experience with the Willera sheep and understands our operation and the way we work. Todd has stepped into the role of "mister universal", from stock work to tractor work to welding and fencing, his skill set is very broad for such a young man, a very welcome addition to our team.



Willera's 2024 On-Property Ram Auction - Willera 230826 sold to Farmer's Leap for \$6,500. Simon Coutts (left) and Jo Roper (right).

CONTAINMENT, FINISHING, AND MANAGING THE DRY

As the finishing pens swung into gear after Christmas and the constant flow of wether lambs started to hit the processors, our paddock sheep quickly caught the early summer flush, and the season turned on us and most of southeast Australia. Sometimes the finishing pens are finicky and fickle but as the dry took its grip, at least we had control of them, unlike the paddocks. With the aid of a relatively new 6 day starter ration in the feeders we have been able to induct sheep straight from the paddock with virtually no transition problems and weight gains have sky rocketed.

As always, the irrigation carries the ewe lambs, the ram lambs and spring drops over spring and summer but in a flash, you're planning lambing feed and scratching heads thinking, ok where are the youngsters going to fit, the Riverina was no good, the Western District worse and so, in April we built another containment area at Wadalla.

In no time, the boys had it built and everything other than the pregnant ewe lambs and the ram lambs came in, and on the 2nd of May we had 6200 young sheep off the paddocks, on either a finishing ration, or a steady gain maintenance ration. Great work, boys!





With help from Nextgen Agri's Darren Gordon we tailored a mix for the containment based on a 50kg ewe lamb with a target base weight gain of 75g a day, the ration consisted of barley, vetch hay and barley straw from the back of the header and delivered via the mixer wagon.

Once again, we planted Sudan Grass to fill the late summer early autumn feed gap with pregnant commercial ewes with 85 hectares carrying 4500 ewes for 4 months. This crop has been a revelation in recent years for us and really does sure up the condition score of ewes during this period and because of the carrying capacity of it, doesn't swallow up a massive area and also fits in around a conventional winter cropping program.



GENETICS

Last year we looked at genetic trends and how the Willera sheep sit within the industry, the 2024 drops have once again moved towards the directions our objectives desire and pleasingly sit us in the top ranked studs for many of these performance and welfare traits.

Our more recent focus traits, for instance worm resistance and dag have moved significantly for the better and will be reflected in this year's auction and private selection ram teams.

Significant work has been done over the last 12 months with the help from some outside expertise in identifying rams and ewes that breed above or below prediction and expectation. This means this year's ewe classing regime will have this information included, it basically means we will only retain rams and ewes that have bred a classed in stud ewe, auction ram or sire, no more passengers in a sense.

The other side of this tactic has meant we were able to identify specific sire lines to influence specific stud ewes and also the commercial flock on a big scale, STUD SIRE 217804 was identified as an "A Grader" in terms of how many tops versus how many culls he was producing along with balanced data and flawless phenotype, so therefore we pulled his 2024 drop sons aside and ranked them as well, and as it turned out we used him (217804) and 3 of his sons in a syndicate mating to the best ewes we possess not of the same line, an exciting match which we can't wait to have a look at.





FLOCK PROFILE

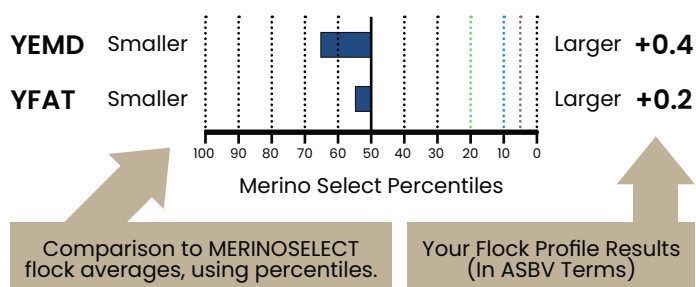
Flock profiling has been a major revelation in our industry of late and will become common practice into the future.

For those of you who are unaware of what it is and what it has to offer you can click on the link below to learn more, but put simply – it is a very quick and easy tissue sample taken from a random 20 ewes, preferably young ewes. When the samples are processed you will receive a set of breeding values that represent your flock, what that information will mean for you is that when looking at rams to buy, you can tailor your selections to that data.

For example:

"I have a flock profile figure for YEMD of +0.4 and a YFAT figure of +0.2, I would like to increase lamb survival and condition score of adult ewes, as well as have the ability to sell wether lambs with improved condition score/cover".

EXAMPLE FLOCK PROFILE



So, you can sort ram catalogues according to this and look at rams with trait data that will improve these figures and ultimately help you achieve these goals, all the while not forgetting to balance all other traits.

If you're feeling confused and/or overwhelmed by this process at all, the team at Willera are able to help with the sampling and the processing or alternatively, the link we have added below will outline what you need to do.

CLICK OR SCAN THIS QR CODE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT FLOCK PROFILING AND FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN GET STARTED YOURSELF



 **sheep GENETICS**

HOUSE KEEPING PRIOR TO THE 2025 ON-PROPERTY AUCTION

- ➡ We will have a new auction starting time of 12.00pm sharp this year
- ➡ Collection of rams on sale day is encouraged, unless you have pre organised other arrangements with a member of our team
- ➡ The auction will be interfaced with Auctions Plus with full videography available
- ➡ If people require flock profiles, please allow as much time as possible to ensure you have that info on hand prior to sale day
- ➡ If you have a question at all on sheep classing please give us a call to discuss your flock

Following the ram auction, we will again open our gates to you for private selection (via appointment) from the 1st of September. We haven't graded a large number up this year so let it be advised that if you want the top end quality and uniformity, the auction is your best point of call.

As is always the case, we would like to say a huge thank you to everyone for their continued support and wish you all the best for the rest of the year.

The **willera** Family



ON-PROPERTY OPEN DAY

FRIDAY 22ND AUGUST 2025

INSPECTION FROM 10AM ONWARDS

LOCATION: “WADALLA” 1072 OLD BOORT RD, BEARS LAGOON 3517

DISPLAYING AT THE FOLLOWING UPCOMING EVENTS:

Australian Sheep & Wool Show

Bendigo, VIC - Merino Marquee
(18th-20th July 2025)

Victorian State Merino Field Day

Marnoo, VIC
(20th August)

Note** Also available
for private selection
from 1st September





7TH ON-PROPERTY RAM AUCTION FRIDAY 29TH AUGUST 2025

Offering 160 non-mulesed, genomics tested, poll merino rams

AUCTION TO START AT 12:00PM SHARP

LOCATION: "WADALLA"
1072 OLD BOORT RD, BEARS LAGOON 3517



Rams can be viewed online via
Auctions Plus closer to the sale.

Simon Coutts

☎ 0498 724 850
✉ simoncouthts@live.com.au

Will Hooke

☎ 0428 228 444
✉ will.hooke1@gmail.com

Karl Hooke

☎ 0412 006 736
✉ karlhooke@gmail.com

Designed by
GET LOST MEDIA



**McKean
McGregor**

Lachie McAllister

☎ 0459 310 797



Adam Millard

☎ 0400 499 064



David Rankin

☎ 0427 938 187

@willeramerinos on
Facebook and Twitter

PO Box 27, Serpentine, Victoria 3517