

XVII Congreso
Mundial
CORRIEDALE
PERU 2024



Australian Corriedale Journal



*“Welcome to all Corriedale
members and friends”*



Federal President Report

Dr. Georgina Pengilly

President Australian Corriedale Association.

President of the Australian Corriedale Association – Report to the XVII Corriedale World Congress

There has been much happening in Australia, and indeed the World since the last World Congress was held in Victoria in 2018 and as always, the Corriedale has endured the ups and downs of trading agricultural commodities given the breed produces both meat and wool. This puts Corriedale breeders in Australia in a unique position to be able to maximise returns on investment and increase productivity at an individual farm level.

The last six years has seen an escalation in land values within Australia to levels not experienced previously however, alongside this, Corriedale breeders and all Australian farmers have, and continue to, experience escalating costs and labour shortages not seen in the last 50 years. This has put immense pressure on all farmers across Australia and has seen some family farms exiting agriculture.

The Corriedale breed has not been alone in experiencing a reduction in studs as there is a generational change over and farmers seek higher value enterprises against the backdrop of significantly reduced labour availability and therefore time to put into breeding and showing stud sheep.

That said, the cohort of current Australian Corriedale breeders is strong and are working hard, together, to ensure that the breed is well known for its wool and meat and continues to endure.

The second phase of the Meat-Eating Quality trial that will be presented by Prof. Wayne Pitchford during the Congress is testament to the value Corriedale breeders place in science and how to use individual traits to maximise productivity and tell the Corriedale breed's story to the wider agricultural audience.

The increase in young people involved in the Corriedale breed has been an important focus for the NSW branch and has yielded results that we hope continues to see young people finish school, commence a career in agriculture and start their own Corriedale studs. The Victoria branch also fosters young people including youth programs and a Young Ambassador Program that is run nationally involving reciprocation with New Zealand. All these initiatives have led to increased engagement in the Corriedale breed of younger men and women seeking careers in agriculture and speaks to the mentoring and leadership that the Corriedale breeders are providing across Australia.

The SA/WA report highlights the cessation of Live Sheep Export in WA as a significant challenge for the industry as a whole and we watch with anticipation to see how this unfolds and what it may mean for export of other live animals from Australia in the longer term.

Other issues that the sheep industry in Australia collectively are grappling with are biosecurity and particularly the threat of foot and mouth disease, Australian Government trade policy changes globally, increasing focus on agriculture's role in emissions reduction, labour shortages including shearers, fluctuating prices for wool and meat due to a highly reactive market and global conflict.

According to Meat and Livestock Australia, the Australian sheep flock is the largest it's been since 2007, currently sitting at 78.75 million head (March 2024) due to historically large numbers of breeding ewes and high marking rates. In 2023, prices eased over eight months of the year, then started to recover from October. In 2023, the re-stocker lamb indicator fell by 62% to September and lifted by 158% to now. This trend has been seen across all indicators.

Over more recent months, the lamb market has been volatile and reactive with current prices up nearly 20% from December 2023. This was with January recording the highest lamb yardings since 2019. These high prices and high supply illustrate a greater shift in market confidence. With record rainfall over the summer prompting producer confidence, particularly in NSW and Victoria, prices have almost returned to January 2023 levels.

In the current market, the strongest indicators are the heavy and trade lamb indicator hovering at about 700c/kg cwt. The heavy and trade lamb indicators have a 63% premium over mutton. The mutton discount has led to producers to consider their options when their lambs age out of the lamb market. Over 2023, hoggets were fetching on average a 33% premium over mutton in saleyards. In 2024, hogget prices have started strong in comparison to mutton prices and received an average premium of 86% through saleyards.

The wool market continues to face challenges across all microns with demand not sufficient to drive any significant price improvements into the near future despite an overall decrease in the flock size compared to historical highs. As the Corriedale breed continues to trend finer overall, prices on average compared to the last 15 years are higher, but still present challenges for wool producers year on year meaning productivity (kg/ha) is as important as ever. The weak Australian dollar also continues to impact with the Australian Wool Exchange (AWEX) Eastern Market Indicator (EMI) currently at 1,158c/kg (April 2024) with 26 micron wool at 554c/kg, 28 micron wool at 335c/kg and 30 micron wool at 305 c/kg. This also clearly illustrates the shift the Corriedale is making towards the finer microns. Despite this Australian agriculture continues to see value in sheep production and demand for sustainable, natural clothing with limited impact on the environment and climate. This places wool producers in a unique position as consumers become more aware of the impact synthetic fibres have on the environment. Australian Wool Innovation (AWI), like MLA continues to invest in research, development, extension and marketing on behalf of Australian producers and of particular note was a very impactful media advertisement that depicted well the positive benefits of wool (<https://youtu.be/GAnfzSKFbLQ>).

The opportunity to come together globally as a breed is significant and presents a great chance for us to learn from each other and discuss the challenges and opportunities that we are all facing together. It is unique to our breed, and I encourage everyone to make the most of the time together. Australia will be presenting several scarfs to winning exhibits during the conference. These have been made from pure Australian Corriedale wool and demonstrate the versatility of the wool the Corriedale produces. They are beautifully soft and light weight and I congratulate those winners who receive one. I send my apologies to all delegates and the organising committee that I am unable to attend due to other work commitments in the USA. I wish the Congress every success and looking forward to hearing about the discussions that take place.

Contents

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| Federal President's Report | 2-3 |
| Office Bearers 2023/24 | 4 |
| Tasmanian Report | 4 |
| New South Wales Report | 5 |
| South & West Australian Report | 6 |
| Victorian Report | 7 |
| Corriedale Eating Quality Genomics | 8-9 |
| Corriedale Youth | 10 |
| Registered Corriedale Studs | 11 |

AUSTRALIAN CORRIEDALE ASSOCIATION INC

Mailing address:
PO Box 26 Donald VIC 3480
Email: secretary@corriedale.org.au
Website: www.corriedale.org.au
Inc No: A0032338V ABN: 61 163 797 235

PUBLISHER

Leahy Art & Design
Senior Graphic Designer: Gavin Leahy
Tel: 0419 575 394
Email: Gavin@leahyart.com.au
Printing: Hornet Press

DISCLAIMER

The Australian Corriedale Association Inc. reserves the right to accept or reject any advertisement submitted for publication in this journal. While every effort is made to publish advertisements as ordered, no responsibility is taken for failure of an advertisement to appear as ordered.

Opinions expressed in the ACA Journal are not necessarily those of the ACA or its editors.

This publication is for information purposes only. The publisher and its agents or employees shall not be liable for any loss or damage suffered by any person as a result of reliance on any contents hereof, whether such loss or damage arises from the negligence or misrepresentation or any act or omission of the publisher or its agents.



Cover Picture Credit Sweetfield, Victoria



South Australia Report

Brenton Lush SA/WA Chairman

South Australia (SA) and Western Australia (WA) Branch of the Australian Corriedale Association – Report to the XVII Corriedale World Congress

Greetings to all the Corriedale enthusiasts meeting in Peru, and congratulations to Peru for putting the Congress together. We hope you have a terrific time and enjoy each other's company.

The South Australia & Western Australia (SA/WA) branch of the Australian Corriedale Association looks after the administration across those two states for approximately 10 Corriedale studs. While

the two states cover a large area, most of the Corriedale activity occurs in the wetter southern areas. There is always demand for Corriedale ewes, however demand for rams has been lower in recent years.

In WA, and to a lesser extent in other states, the main issue being faced by the sheep industry is the proposed cessation of the live sheep trade. For many years, sheep have been shipped to overseas markets, mostly in the Middle East. The current Australian Federal Government has commenced a process to ban live export of sheep although a date has not been set. If the ban goes ahead, it will have a significant impact on the sheep industry, especially in WA where the majority of their sheep are exported.

Over the last six months, lamb and mutton prices have fallen following the highs 18 months ago, but are now trending upwards so the medium term future is confident. Wool prices continue to be a challenge with prices not recovering post the pandemic. Wool over 26 micron is becoming less economical as the costs associated with production increase rapidly. Having said this good quality wool is always awarded by the market.

Several of our members have been involved in both Eating Quality trials conducted federally, with some outstanding results.

We look forward to the results of the most recent trial being released and discussed at the Congress.

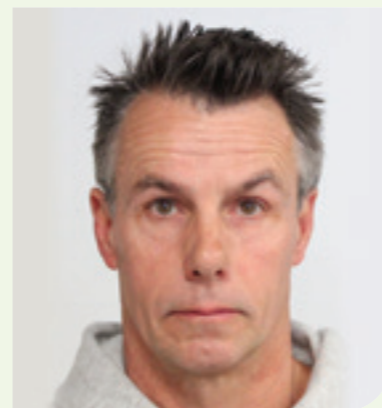
South Australian members have been involved in the SA Sheep Expo, an event held in Adelaide each year that encourages young people, aged 12 to 23, to learn more about sheep and possibly seek career options in our industry. This is important as it showcases the breed as well as encourages those that may not have previously considered a career in agricultural to consider it as Australia faces labour challenges in regional areas.

The principal shows that display Corriedales are Perth Royal and Wagin in WA, and Adelaide Royal and Mount Gambier in SA. SA breeders continue to also exhibit at Victorian shows as well. The shows are a great opportunity to catch up with other breeders and compare notes and ideas, as well as catching up with friends.

“Several of our members have been involved in both Eating Quality trials conducted federally, with some outstanding results”.



The Lush family with champion ewe and ram, Royal Adelaide Show 2023



Victoria Report

Matthew Dickinson Victorian Chairman

Victoria (Vic) Branch of the Australian Corriedale Association – Report to the XVII Corriedale World Congress

As with the varied seasons, the wool and the lamb markets have all ebbed and flowed over recent years, as have the endeavours of the Victorian Branch of the Australian Corriedale Association. An enormous debt of gratitude goes to the stalwarts, and the many young members, who have dedicated their time, experience and enthusiasm over recent times. Being relevant and active in the sheep industry continues to be a major focus for the Victoria Branch. We are steadfast in the belief that the dual-purpose characteristics of the Corriedale are as important today as they have ever been.

There have been a number of examples of this commitment, as we look for opportunities to promote and celebrate the Corriedale breed and our members. Annual Field Days, such as Elmore and Lardner, have seen Corriedale displays well supported, placing the breed in front of thousands of people. Sponsorship of events such as classes at the Victorian Sheep Shows and

the second phase of the Meat-Eating Quality Trial, help to further promote the Corriedale breed to the wider industry. However, there are opportunities for us to do more, such as publishing some of the fantastic sales results achieved in ram sales and the commercial markets. Recently a run of Corriedale heavy export lambs topped the sales in Bendigo.

The second phase of the Meat-Eating Quality Trial currently being run in Victoria provides the Corriedale breed with an amazing opportunity to promote itself to the wider Prime Lamb Industry. On 1st March at a Corriedale breeders farm at Skipton, approximately 50 people attended a field day to learn more about the role Lamb Eating Quality can play in the future of their businesses. This field day was a showcase for the MLA (Meat and Livestock Australia) funded Satellite Flock Trial and is coordinated by the Performance Corriedale Group. There were several guest speakers, including Wayne Pitchford (Director – JS Davies Livestock Research Centre, Adelaide) who spoke on the economic values of various traits in lamb production. The data from this trial will help reinforce the message to the industry and consumers that Corriedales are in fact a superior eating animal and will be discussed in Wayne's presentation at the Congress.

With approximately 75 registered Corriedale Studs in Australia, Victoria remains a stronghold for the breed with 44 studs. The committee's continued focus on Corriedale Youth sees 5 School Studs currently registered and, more importantly, over 25% of the State's studs owned and managed by young members. All of them having started their Corriedale journey whilst at a school that had a registered stud. Nowhere is this more evident than in the regional shows around the State. Corriedale Schools and Youth are to be commended for their enthusiasm and the



Supreme Champion Corriedale, Australian Sheep and Wool Show, Bendigo 2023

way they represent themselves and the Corriedale breed. Corriedale Youth members regularly participate in Junior Judging, Junior Handler and Youth Ambassador competitions and can be proud of all their successes. As some members move on from their junior days, we see them appointed as judges and holding positions on show committees, giving back to the breed and agricultural industry as a whole.

The most recent Australian Sheep and Wool Show at Bendigo, was another terrific event for the Corriedale breed. A Schools and Youth Corriedale Show was held on the first day and a Junior Judging Competition was held on the third day, which attracted over 100 participants. As part of the Open Classes on Saturday, a Corriedale Weaner class was conducted for the second year. This class goes a long way to help demonstrate the commercial relevance of the Corriedale breed to a wide audience at the major sheep and wool event in Victoria. All three events were organised and run by young Corriedale breeders who have progressed from School studs.

Whilst championing our young members, we also recognise those who have given so much in the past. We recently celebrated the impact that Geoff Risbey and Shirley Foster have had on the breed by honouring them with Life Membership. We also note with sadness the passing of Mr Oliver Guthrie, a founding figure in the Corriedale breed.

“The committee's continued focus on Corriedale Youth sees 5 School Studs currently registered and, more importantly, over 25% of the State's studs owned and managed by young members”.



Champion Ewe Ballarat Grammer, Champion Ram Sweetfield, Hamilton Sheepvention 2023

New project tests Corriedale maternal quality

By Kylie Nicholls, Journalist Australian Community Media

Building on extensive producer-led research, the Corriedale breed in Australia is now testing its reproductive and eating quality performance against other maternal sheep breeds in a new project.

Funded by the innovative Performance Corriedale Group, which comprises 10 seedstock producers from Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and New South Wales, the trial is in its second year, with preliminary results soon to be released.

According to project advisor and director of the Davies Livestock Research Centre at the University of Adelaide, Professor Wayne Pitchford, the trial follows earlier research carried out by the group in Tasmania which was focused on the eating quality of Corriedales.

"This work will build on the initial project findings and aims to benchmark the performance of the Corriedale against other breeds with Australian Sheep Breeding Values and the maternal wool production plus (MWP+) index," Professor Pitchford said.

"Testing the maternal performance of Corriedales against other breeds is a really important part of this trial and will provide benchmark targets for Corriedale breeders for a range of traits."

Chairman of the long-running Performance Corriedale Group, Legh Jenkin agreed and said while results from the previous project in Tasmania had confirmed the eating quality attributes of the Corriedale, more work was needed to test the maternal performance of the breed.

"Our group is committed to progressing the Corriedale breed in terms of genetic improvement as well as improving the linkages between Corriedales and other maternal breeds," Mr Jenkin said.



Performance Corriedale Group chairman Legh Jenkin, Nayook South, Mount Gambier, South Australia, with trial host James Cusack, Bulgandra, Skipton, Victoria. Picture by Kylie Nicholls

"As a small breed we don't have a huge amount of data within the Sheep Genetics system, so by improving our linkages with other maternal breeds it will lead to more accurate ASBVs.

"I hope the trial results will also enable maternal sheep producers to see the value Corriedale genetics can add to their breeding programs."

Hosted by James Cusack from the Bulgandra stud at Skipton, Vic, 12 rams are involved in the current trial, including nine Corriedale rams supplied by members of the Performance Corriedale group, along with one Border Leicester and two maternal composite sires.

The rams were joined via artificial insemination to a mix of 270 Corriedale and composite ewes and lambed in August 2023, with a range of measurements now being taken on both the ewe and wether progeny.

Professor Pitchford said the ewe lamb portion will be retained and joined in 2025 to enable their maternal performance to be evaluated over the next three years.

"We will be assessing ewe performance for the components of the weaning rate breeding value from Sheep Genetics, including conception, litter size and ewe rearing ability as well as the actual scanning reproductive rates and marking rate," he said.

2023-drop ewe and wether lamb progeny being measured in the new Performance Corriedale Group trial. Picture by Kylie Nicholls

"Previous research has confirmed the quality of Corriedale as a maternal breed, but seedstock producers are working on increasing growth and the number of lambs weaned, which are key profit drivers and an important part of the trial.

"But it is not just about weaning rate, traits including mature ewe weight which indicates feed demand, and body condition, as well as fleece characteristics such as fleece weight and fibre diameter will also be assessed."

Although maternal traits are the key focus of the current project, Professor Pitchford said because the trial had generated wether lamb progeny, it provided breeders with the opportunity to collect additional data to benchmark meat quality traits, including shear force and intramuscular fat, as well.

"The Tasmanian trial demonstrated Corriedales have good eating quality with some very high eating quality rams identified," he said.

"Shear force values varied from 25 Newtons up to 75N, while intramuscular fat percentages ranged from 1.4 per cent to a high of 10.1pc.

"But there was significant variation between the sires which means there's plenty of potential for additional genetic improvement.

"The Corriedale breed as a whole is very focused on improving their maternal and eating quality traits, and this research will assist significantly."

In the current trial, both the ewe and wether lamb progeny have been scanned for post weaning fat depth and eye muscle depth and their post weaning weight recorded.

"The entire wether lamb progeny has been processed and have been DXA scanned so we receive individual meat, fat and bone percentages, as well as carcass weight, and the intramuscular fat and shear force measurements," Professor Pitchford said.

"I hope to have these results available in time for the World Congress and the Australian Sheep and Wool Show in Bendigo in July."

As part of the project, the Performance Corriedale Group is also part of the Meat & Livestock Australia Resource Flock for eating quality and has also built links with several other lamb groups.

"All the results go straight into Sheep Genetics and update the breeding values immediately, extending the trial results to industry very quickly," Professor Pitchford said.

"It will also improve linkages within the maternal analysis, which will lead to more accurate ASBVs and more accurate benchmarks of Corriedales relative to other maternal breeds.

"As yet there is no value for eating quality within the MWP+ index, but as the indexes are revised, we would hope that eating quality will actually be built into it as well."

Professor Pitchford said genomic evaluation was also vital for identifying high-performing Corriedale rams that would contribute to ongoing breed improvement.

"Most of our genetic gain comes from selecting the right young rams, but we can't measure female reproduction or eating quality on young rams so the only way to do it is through records on relatives and that is done far better through genomics than through pedigree," he said.

"The project is also using genomics to mother up the lambs, both the ewes and lambs are genotyped which means we can identify ewe rearing ability more accurately and is also labour saving for the breeder."

Trial host Mr Cusack said it had been a rewarding experience holding the trial on behalf of the Performance Corriedale Group, particularly integrating the genomic technology alongside electronic ear tags.

"It's the next step forward as a breed, following on from the previous trial held in Tasmania, and being able to bring in other maternal sheep out of our flock that had linkages to Sheep Genetics," he said.

"Running both Corriedales and composites alongside each other has been eye-opening as both breeds reared a high percentage of lambs.

"Despite some differences, both breeds stack up against each other really well."

Preliminary findings from the current project will be presented by Professor Pitchford at the 17th Corriedale World Congress in Peru in June this year.



Project advisor and director of the Davies Livestock Research Centre at the University of Adelaide, Professor Wayne Pitchford hopes to release preliminary results from the new trial being run by the Performance Corriedale Group in Australia at the upcoming Corriedale World Congress. Picture by Kylie Nicholls



www.corriedale.org.au