

This report is a compilation of the responses for the 2014 Annual Subscriber Satisfaction Survey.

2014

Survey Results

Nicole Williams - Sheep Genetics

SHEEP GENETICS



2014 Annual subscriber survey report

The annual survey was distributed electronically for the third year to all subscribers. It opened on the 15th October 2014 and closed on the 7th November 2014.

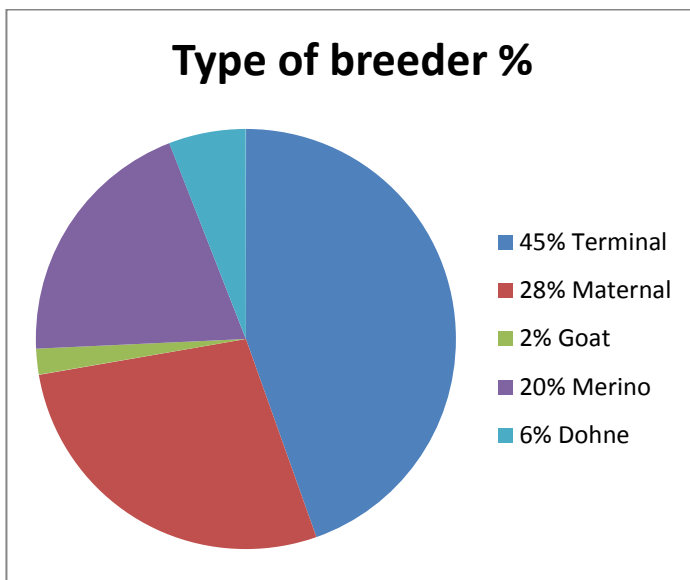
The survey was sent to 621 recipients with 84 completed surveys. A limitation of the electronic survey is that we are not receiving the responses, as we are still approx. 10% lower than 3years ago when we made the switch from paper based survey.

There is a component of people who have clicked on the link and either made no entry or entered a name only, these numbers are not included in the above total. From the online stats we can see that 39.8% of the emails are being opened, which compared to industry average of 24.6% is an excellent open rate.

Breeder Information

1. Name (Optional)

2. What type of breeder are you?



3. What is the size of your performance recorded stock? (Count of flocks)

Flock size	Merino	Dohne	Goat	Maternal	Terminal
0-50 animals					1
50-100 animals	1		2	2	5
100-300 animals	6	2		6	17
300-600 animals	7			4	14
600+ animals	16	4		9	11
Percentage of flocks by breed	28%	5.6%	2%	19.6%	45%

4. How often you visit the Sheep Genetics website?

Visit frequency	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
Never	0%	0%	0%
Daily	5%	0%	3%
Weekly	53%	66%	58%
Monthly	24%	22%	23%
Quarterly	14%	13%	13%
Yearly	3%	0%	2%

5. Website as an information

How do you find the website to use as an information source?

Rating	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
Excellent	22%	24%	22%
Good	65%	71%	68%
Poor	10%	3%	8%
Very Poor	3%	3%	3%

How do you find the layout of the website?

Rating	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
Excellent	9%	13%	10%
Good	66%	47%	60%
Poor	24%	31%	26%
Very Poor	1%	9%	4%

6. How could Sheep Genetics improve the website for sourcing information?

- On the Sheep Genetics front page for example you have breeding services as a drop down menu on the top left side and then again on the right. It is good to see the names of LAMBPLAN and Merino Select on the right to choose from there so no need to duplicated it on top left.
- Too hard to access information. Follow the KISS method for design. Not suited to 64bit computer users with common Windows programs
- It appears to be very difficult to just go in and find the info you want without having to go through a lot of screens. I sat with a friend yesterday to help her. They have been in lambplan for years and she has never been past pedigred wizard.
- Searching for the link to get info on individual animals is not easy to find for 1st time users. Need to simplify semen sire catalogue from the stud perspective. Not so easy to input data.
- I find it a bit slow, and I am not sure what the member log on is or does for me. I think that going forward software providers should be able to integrate searches with their programs.
- information needs to be more up to date. the webpages isn't intuitive ie needs better structure ie what new, reference,
- just have a few breed specific columns under basic search, most of what appear are

irrelevant. Enable search for dam progeny as well as sire progeny. show conception method and birth type.

- Firstly to find the data base you have to accidentally lob on Merino Select heading on the relevant SG page and hope you notice it changed color to give you the clue to click on it to find access to the data base. Clearer instructions on what to press would be appreciated (same for Dohne's) Then in the next screen there are no clear instructions on what to enter to get in to a particular stud etc. Stud prefix is too hard as needs to be looked up. Then when you get into the stud, the options for sire dam female male and year drop etc are hidden. Then when you search for animals under a trait or index heading, they come up in ascending order which is totally useless. This means you have to wait while it does another search to turn it into descending order and this is not quick. Also the maximum no. of animals available on display is 300 despite the screen suggesting otherwise and this can be frustrating when there are more than 300 in a year group by category. It is annoying that sheep with part Dohne breeding are hidden under non password conditions. Also is there some reason why Dohne Superior Sires must have been used in more than one stud but Merino Superior Sires do not. Would be helpful if Dohne list was best of breed not best of breed used in 2 studs.
- Sometimes find it difficult to find male pedigrees. Not sure why they don't all come up as males then a drop down box or something also indicates which are sires
- New layout of website is good, however some of the older links to the legacy site can be confusing or are broken or very out of date. For some reason my genetic trends and dashboard don't work very well either.
- Bring back the trait leaders
- Sheep Genetics could provide monthly Elites lists for each breed on their webpage. Apart from the Poll Dorsets and White Suffolks the rest of us get very little out of Lambplan any more. We all pay a subscription and expect to see where our genetics lie in relation to other studs of that breed.
- being able to do an advance search on ewes like you can do on rams
- Just transferred to Pedigree Master, some improvements. I will probably find more uses with more use. Unable to list animals with actual recorded weights/data sometimes useful to check inputs and groups.
- Easier for commercial clients to use. More explanation on traits.
- First time using it is a bit confusing some of our clients have commented. Could we have a step by step entry something like this survey the old Dohne site was easy to use and find full pedigrees of all animals. More information sessions may be the answer.
- it should also include Stockscan data alongside Lambplan data, if available
- Simplify layout. Commercial clients find it very difficult - I have to talk them through. Choosing columns for the uninitiated is virtually impossible.
- Another couple of pages on potential INDEXES and the consequences
- Better usability on smart phones
- By adding 'Australian Sheep Breeding Values - A guide for ram buyers' to your page of publications
- Need to show conception method, birth type and DOB in pedigree. Enable Dam progeny searches. Currently you can only search Sire progeny. Need to be able to do a bulk search on animals you have selected off.
- remember that very few farmers have good internet access. It needs to be very simple and very clear for satellite dishes etc to open.
- Make it easier to get the Elite Sires Dams Male Progeny and Female progeny
- simplify the directory
- Needs to be improved, takes time to get used to it, for commercial breeders wanting information I don't think it is easy to find what you are looking for.
- Seem to have to click on to many links to get where you need to be
- On the Merino select site I find it hard to find the detailed definitions of the indexes, even though I have downloaded them before (just tried tonight) The Understanding merinoselcet indexes is a good document but needs to be easy to find. this document is of particular interest to new visitors to the site. Perhaps definition of the individual indexes could be found by a link located next to the top 150 sires for each on merinoselcet home page.

- More than 50% of the time searches come up error, and finding info is getting harder.
- Initial searches of animals show too much info. Are we able to only show the major traits for our breed under the Basic Search facility? I need to be able to export files containing more than 300 animals. Why is the cutoff 300? A search facility for breeder names and stud id number would be handy, for when typing in a 16 digit id for an animal bred by someone else, you have to look up their 510xxx number before entering the ID in.
- A MORE EFFICIENT SEARCH ENGINE WHEN LOOKING FOR ANIMALS OR STUDS OR EBVS - IT OFTEN TELLS ME THAT IT CAN'T FIND IT WHEN I'M LOOKING FOR INFO ON AN ANIMAL I KNOW EXISTS
- In relation to animal search data I am not always sure what is actually there ... maybe more information on how to navigate the data Also I am sure there is data about some ASBVs that I cant find. Only some appear to be available to search. Is this correct? I know its a long list, but there are more ...

7. Have you used the Animal Search?

Yes/No	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
No	13%	6%	10%
Yes	87%	94%	90%

8. If you answered yes to using the Animal search.

How did you find the search function to use?

Rating	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
Excellent	27%	17%	24%
Good	56%	73%	62%
Poor	7%	7%	7%
Very Poor	9%	3%	7%

How relevant are the results returned?

Rating	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
Excellent	41%	34%	39%
Good	45%	62%	51%
Poor	12%	3%	9%
Very Poor	2%		1%

9. Have you used the online sale catalogues to advertise animals/semen?

Yes/No	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
No	59%	58%	58%
Yes	41%	42%	42%

10. If you answered Yes to using the Online Sale Catalogues

How did you find the process of uploading your catalogue?

Rating	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
Excellent	15%	29%	20%
Good	62%	57%	60%
Poor	19%	14%	18%
Very Poor	4%		3%

How do you rate the catalogue once listed?

Rating	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
Excellent	25%	36%	29%
Good	67%	57%	63%
Poor	8%	7%	8%
Very Poor			

11. How could Sheep Genetics improve the Animal Search area or Online Sale Catalogues?

- It would be better to be able to select the traits that are most relevant for our ram buyers. There are default traits so there is no option for that.
- Improve and create paths for searching elites and data for a specific breed.
- add sire as a line that can be displayed in a searchmy catalogue info had to be uploaded by SG staff - wouldnt work...
- In the Animal Search facility, I found it impossible to print the last generation of pedigree although it appeared on the screen.
- Animal search never has fat listed. Need to always go and find it. Painfull. Sale Catalogues are not easy to update. Hence did not do it this year. Semen sire info is hard to upload. We have not updated yet this year. In to hard basket for the moment. (IT expert in this enterprise not happy in these areas.)
- Some of the research breeding values are not listed eg worm resistance, horn poll in terminals
- two breeds is a pain, ability to do an advanced search doesn't seem to work unless you go through a predetermined search ie top sires on C+ first when printing a pedigree on a specific animal it only prints 2 generations
- let breeders choose what information they want to show.
- Doing a catalogue is a learning curve and not very easy for the novice computer user but help from staff (Nicole/Luke) very good.
- So the trait columns are able to set to always come up same for each computer not always come up with all traits
- Include the search animal's sire on the front page. Have been requesting this for about 2 years. Bring back monthly top 150 lists for Carcase Plus that are breed specific.
- Allow comparison between selected animals. At the moment I use the searches to narrow down information I want on sires with ASBV parameters, print them off and then highlight the animals I want to check out or copy and paste into Excel. Would be good to have a Shopping cart or Wish list type functionality allowing users to create a shortlist of animals. Haven't used sale catalogue but used semen catalogue for one ram - is it possible to upload photos to go next to each ram?
- make it easier to import files or titles
- Would like the advanced search feature available to search catalogues. Would like to be able to block a sire or stud within the advanced search
- Customised ram sale catalogues,

- Have a template to make catalogues. This would allow us to just enter animal number & traits to be displayed.
- Make more predefined searches or be able to save our personal search criterias
- On of the things you do really well.
- Open it so that Multi-Vendor can be load up by vendor like the On property sale can be.
- make it a lot clearer. Have and example of the format that you want the ID to be entered in.
- Improve the search for Elites in the form we used to have
- The main problem with the animal search is that not all users use the same tag formats so sometimes it take a while to find the animal you want.Is it possible to add actuals for online sale catalogues?
- change where the submit button is. clean the search trait list up, make it work more often
- Remove one of the ASBV logos and allow each individual stud to import their own logo into this space.GET RID OF THE ACCURACY figures that are printed on the pen cards. I see no relevance for this, and it is just more numbers for clients to get bogged down in. If you won't remove them, at least PLEASE reduce the font size.
- I havnt had a lot to do with as yet.I hope to in future.

12. Sheep Genetics E-communications

Should Sheep Genetics use social media to keep clients informed?

	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
Strongly Agree	21%	23%	22%
Agree	48%	55%	51%
Disagree	17%	16%	16%
Strongly Disagree	15%	6%	11%

Should Sheep Genetics offer breeders online training, to better understand and utilise ASBVs?

	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
Strongly Agree	38%	35%	37%
Agree	48%	58%	52%
Disagree	8%	3%	6%
Strongly Disagree	6%	3%	5%

Should Sheep Genetics offer online training for Promotion and Advocacy?

	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
Strongly Agree	19%	35%	25%
Agree	52%	48%	51%
Disagree	23%	13%	19%
Strongly Disagree	6%	3%	5%

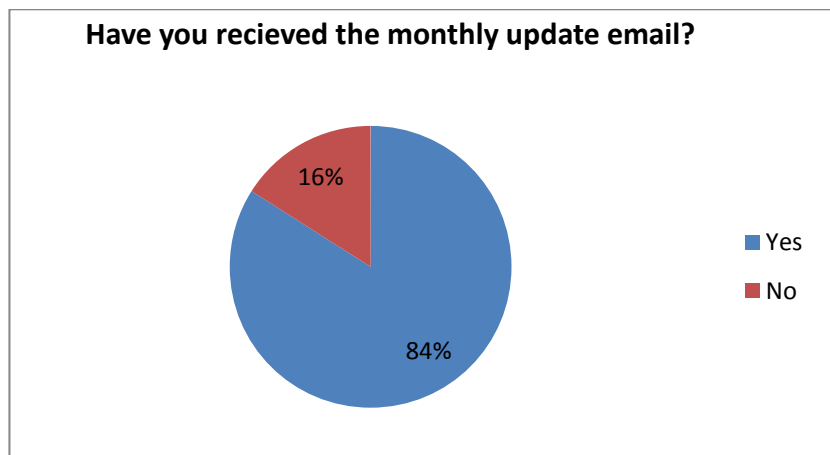
13. If Sheep Genetics were to have a social media presence, what do you feel is the most appropriate type?

Responses	Count
Facebook	38
Twitter	18
Rural Newspapers	2
Email	3
Website	2
Linked In	1
Country New papers	
Linked In is more professional . Facebook could get messy though. Maybe best to discuss at breeder meeting as we dont do face book and twitter email is best for us, not everyone uses social media	
I do not use these facilities	
posts in social media not always accessed when you are busy - email is still the best and most reliable, social media for reminders etc	
dont use either	
not relevant to me at this stage	
Doesn't affect me	
Neither. Geenrally it is left up to the breeders to disseminate information about SG and ASBV'S	
N/A	
REGULAR Rural Newspapers articles contact flock ram buyers. the show breedders have far more coverage in the Rural press	
Apps	
with directions to current information on the website..	
ANY!	
A blanket and a smokey fire	
None	
but having said facebook I don't use any of them.	
website	
in addition	
I am 28 and dont have time for either. emails are fine for me	
I TRY NOT TO USE ANY OF THESE BUT I AM PROBABLY ON MY OWN HERE	

14. If Sheep Genetics ran online training on ASBVs for promotion and advocacy, what would your preferred delivery method be?

Responses	Count
Webinar	39
Youtube	27
at the breeder update. Maybe at Leading Breeder Forum too. DVD could be helpful or even a C.D.	
Neither, nothing beats a peice of paper sitting on the shearing board, office desk or kitchen table. This is a well know fact from other surveys conducted by Shire Councils, 72% the hrd copy of correspondence posted to them, about 10 % read the electronic copy and the rest did nothing	
webinar useful but bRed Well Fed Well more effective	
back up of webinars on youtube, etc	
I don't think training should be just online.	
something that can be done at individual times to suit each business	
i PREFER TO HAVE TRAINING ON PAPER SO THAT I CAN REFER TO IT LATER	

15. Have you received our Monthly Update emails?



16. How could Sheep Genetics improve the Monthly Update email?

- Ask for our feedback. We pay a subscription so would like to give feedback.Sometimes feel we are in a vacuum.Too many ram buyers do not understand ASBV's.Agents seem reluctant to understand the enormous effort it is to collect data and have ASBV's. They just say, we run the rams up the race and select visually.A simpl DVD or CD explaining the importance of Sheep Genetics would be very helpful
- We're OK here.
- Keep the information relevant, well explained but not to bulky. Give us information on where you are heading and relevant news information.
- maybe some training could be incorporated
- Only got one, it was webpage based which was a bit annoying, could be pdf?
- Post information about research with all breeds not just convenient breeds wich are numerically easy to gather data.It appears that SG is just focussing on info and data and results to satisfy future funding
- Some industry news ie. price changes demand etc
- More information pertaining to Results, updates etc
- quite happy with format
- I think mine must be sent to junk mail unfortunately
- they are ok.
- Never seen one, so cannot comment.I like the publication : The Breeders Bulletin
- Its short which is good, but sometimes a bit simplistic
- Put something of interest in it.not sure it it is of any value as a means of disseminating information

Products and services

17. Sheep Genetics Staff

Are easily contactable

	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
Strongly Agree	25%	18%	23%
Agree	62%	55%	59%
Disagree	10%	27%	16%
Strongly Disagree	3%	0%	2%

Are approachable and friendly

	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
Strongly Agree	45%	36%	42%
Agree	40%	55%	45%
Disagree	15%	9%	13%
Strongly Disagree	0%	0%	0%

Are helpful and patient with requests

	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
Strongly Agree	42%	52%	46%
Agree	17%	15%	17%
Disagree	38%	33%	37%
Strongly Disagree	3%	0%	2%

Requests are dealt with in a timely manner

	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
Strongly Agree	52%	49%	51%
Agree	20%	30%	24%
Disagree	23%	18%	22%
Strongly Disagree	5%	3%	4%

18. Are there any other areas that Sheep Genetics staff could improve?

- Downloading data for catalogue preparation can become a total nightmare. Then the excel spreadsheet has to be edited to get the right columns. If you just want the last 6 digits to show in a column you have to individually change each animal in the column. It is very stressful and time consuming and inefficient. Then you have to get it into a format for the printer. It can take days.
- response times to requests
- Only ever worked with Stephen Field and he is great
- Not good at getting back to you if you have some queries that can't be immediately answered.
- Returning phone call in a timely manner. Even if it is just to say they are busy and when they can get back.
- I like to get more in depth information as to why we do many of the things we do. I like the technical sessions that have been run on previous occasions.
- listen to what breeders want and act
- Knowledge of farming. More practical involvement and less 'we know better, you're an idiot' attitude.
- I find despite the rhetoric, phone calls are rarely returned. It appears staff are over-loaded but with the exception of Stephen and Nicole I sometimes find responses have been somewhat curt and unfriendly. That may be my fault? I have had a most unsatisfying exchange with Hamish where he more or less refused to help with a problem I felt I had and I still haven't resolved a problem with 2012 data where there were/are numerous errors, in the error report and less than satisfactory resolution. While SG insist on a data provider being used (stockbook etc) it would be helpful to have a client liaison person with some knowledge

of recording systems available. Most of the Stock recording systems are not designed specifically for SG data capture so half the time they don't know what is wanted either.

- Don't use them a lot but they are always very pleasant and helpful when contacted.
- They have been excellent with helping me work out how to upload things to Pedigree Master and with data quality assurance
- Most of the above listed and perhaps try to understand that you are a service company for your members and that we members are not there for your convenience.
- Be more proactive
- Be more visible, get recognised - be a bit more aggressive to get media attention. It seems the number one aim is to build members. The fear of losing members is leading to a culture of appeasing breeders rather than challenging them
- Please reply to emails
- Somewhere should be listed with easy access of all staff their position and contact details Staff seem to shift positions alot
- more than two years ago I requested a one on one with a staff member when next in the area. Never got a response. Been having problems with my program for more than four months. lost pedigrees, unable to download updates and the assistance level is very little.
- Return emails
- I am starting to question some of the asbv data and dont seem to get good enough explanations. Not sure sometimes whether concerns are being listened to
- sending an industry message not a breed message. Communicate better with people and listen to their point of view and not argue and not get defensive
- I have made a number of requests and had questions as I am trying to utilise the SG website and facilities more. Some questions are answered easily and happily, others, I have never got a response from the person I contacted (will not name him here and now!), HC, always helpful and rapid to respond to me personally. :-)
- I STILL CAN'T DOWNLOAD MY DATA AND FIND IT HARD TO LOGON - MY PASSWORD OR SOMETHING IS INCORRECT
- I may have been lucky, but I have always found them responsive and knowledgable
- Listen to all their clients not just the ones who tell them what they want to here.

19. Sheep Genetics Reports

Reports can be easily interpreted

	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
Strongly Agree	30%	21%	27%
Agree	62%	70%	65%
Disagree	7%	9%	8%
Strongly Disagree	2%	0%	1%

20. Please provide any suggestions on how Sheep Genetics could improve reports.

- It would be REALLY HELPFUL if we could talk on the phone to discuss what our requirements are as different breeders in LAMBPLAN have different requirements. We are the paying customer and yet feel uncomfortable about asking for help. It would also be good if the LAMBS emails started again on a regular basis. That allows breeders to know what other breeders are thinking about or having trouble with.
- Feed back on how things are tracking would be good with some explanations as to why some movements have happened. Time commitments may make this tough but at least on a biennial basis it would be nice. Helps clients think their progress is important from an industry perspective.
- Reports should be accompanied by a brief explanation of the abbreviations. The less informed

would find it difficult to understand.

- let breeders choose what reports they would like.
- More information on how each index is developed so we, as breeders can determine if it is relevant to our business.
- Post the elites for sire, dams, male and female progeny. Stud breeds have no idea which sires / dams are performing well or which sires to buy semen from. We have to beg to get the elites. Instead of wasting time on webinars for a few computer freaks focus on info that breeders can access themselves straight from the web page at any hour
- I can not access the elite reports due to computer speed
- ASBV's should give the actual weights, along side all of the percentages. as these given percentages are of no value. unless you can compare them against your own known data...
- I generally only read exclusions & genetic trends. The rest I can find on website.
- It comes out in MS excel so I can the results into my spreadsheets
- I think what has been done with the dashboard is good A more printer friendly pedigree report straight from web would be good
- have them in both ID and C+ order not just ID order
- They need to be simpler
- Improve the method of getting the Elites More media reports on understanding ASBV's Not many buyers understand them yet
- more feedback on how we as breeders could improve the accuracy of the figures we submit would be helpful
- I would LOVE a ewe report: Something along the lines of all her progeny listed (across years), with progeny EBVs and progeny percentiles The aim being, to pull up a dam, assess the data on her progeny, and see if she (for eg...) consistently produces lambs in the x percentile.
- You could ask your clients what traits, and which indices, they would like on their data sheet with tables and graphs on it.
- The first one is gobbledegook but once you get the hang of it its easy. I have heard people say they dont understand them. I think maybe there should be an explanation sheet explaining what it all means.

21. Australian Sheep Breeding Values (ASBVs)

ASBVs assist in achieving breeding objectives

	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
Strongly Agree	55%	64%	58%
Agree	37%	36%	37%
Disagree	7%	0%	4%
Strongly Disagree	2%	0%	1%

ASBVs are an effective marketing tool

	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
Strongly Agree	43%	36%	41%
Agree	40%	55%	45%
Disagree	17%	9%	14%
Strongly Disagree	0%	0%	0%

ASBVs are used to assist in making joining decisions

	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
Strongly Agree	47%	58%	51%
Agree	42%	30%	38%
Disagree	10%	12%	11%
Strongly Disagree	2%	0%	0%

ASBVs are routinely used by my clients to purchase animals

	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
Strongly Agree	23%	27%	25%
Agree	42%	45%	43%
Disagree	27%	24%	26%
Strongly Disagree	8%	3%	6%

22. What could Sheep Genetics do to assist you in understanding and using ASBVs?

- Put together a DVD so we can show it to clients at an on farm meeting or give to agents or clients to take home. A CD would be really good too so they can listen to it in their vehicle. If Sheep Genetics put them together it would be professionally done and take a lot of stress off the breeder. IT NEEDS TO BE EXPLAINED SIMPLY AS IT IS QUITE SIMPLE but people are scared of the figures and don't like to say they don't understand them.
- Asbvs are becoming more widely expected in the market place
- We are going OK in this area at present. Getting info right to produce a constructive NLW is our biggest problem. I believe the industry is struggling big time in this area.
- I feel that I have a good understanding of ASBVs but there are a lot of breeders who do not understand how pedigree is used and the importance of linkage and grouping.
- educate commercial breeders and agents. Run elders and landmark days to teach agent how to utilise ASBV's
- More information on how each index is developed so we, as breeders can determine if it is relevant to our business.
- Explain the economic basis of derivation of indexes- put them on a dollar value footing
- Shorter, easy to understand 1 page so could include on our website and in sale catalogue
- All the info put on the website on understanding and using ASBVs is easy to read and use
- ??
- It's not me, it's my clients!!! You have GOT to get out there and educate!!! You can't rely on commercial producers to come knocking on your door. Traditional breeders & some who use selected ASBV's are trying their level best to keep producers confused.
- More case studies (ONline) of people using ASBV's in complex and real-life situations
- Have the information ie A guide for ram buyers available to more people! More webinars ect.
- Drop the carcass+ index. Drop 20/20 index. The E\$ & T\$ indexes are useful on occasions. The Bwt figure is useless. Nutrition effects birthweight more than anything else. The ram is only 50% of the influence. What about the ewe type. More emphasis should be placed on structure.
- More information to Prime lamb breeders Not me
- explain the methodology and calculations behind the ebv's. NLW is not a fertility trait. it is a management trait. Conception, drys, dab, and days tto conception are fertility
- keep the promotional brochures coming
- I agree with all above to a certain degree as have lost confidence in the accuracy of asbvs for

the harder traits to measure

- Doing good as are.
- I have a good grasp on the basic ones, but there needs to be much broader adoption of them by agents and commercial breeders. Agents are the key.....once they understand them and know how to apply them, they can assist their commercial clients to buy rams most suited to their breeding objectives. Without the support of AGENTS, you, at SG are wasting your time providing ME, the client and the ram breeder, with a seemingly unexhaustible raft of ASBVs that are being lost on the commercial client. I think commercial breeders are often more willing to hear info from thier agents, than the stud breeder, and this is not always a very good outcome. Agents NEED to be educated in the correct use of ASBVs. Farmers don't guess the rate of chemical to use on their crops, why do they guess ASBVs?????
- Explaining correlations from actuals to ASBV data presented to client
- DOWNLOADABLE INFO SHEET
- I think it is more getting the general industry to use them more. Many people find them difficult. Because they are not real numbers they dont get it. Maybe it needs more explanation of what a good ASBV for a certain situation is. eg even which ones are best to be -ve, which positive etc. I once send a colleague to a sale on my behalf with a chart of desirable ASBVs for my situation .. and he ended up being followed by people who wanted to see the information so that they could know what to buy. So there is a need for understanding out there. Not so much for breeders (though that is probably the case for those not using SGA yet)

23. Apart from material supplied by Sheep Genetics where else do you source genetic information?

- I attend the Leading Breeder Forum, the breeder updates and often go back to the presentations that have been at the Leading Breeder Forums to refresh knowledge on certain topics. I am keen to learn and keep up to date. I am not part of a breed group so do not have the advantage of breeder meetings etc for exchange of ideas.
- sheep CRC
- Watch and listen to our clients. Need to know how our genetics are tracking.
- Sheep CRC, and of course that is influenced by SG. Talking to other breeders who use SG is also useful.
- What do you mean by genetic information? If you mean information about information about sheep, then from other breeders thoughts, if you mean in general, ie how to make genetic improvement, the internet
- stud consultant
- other Geneticists, Sire evaluation etc
- No where.
- breeders
- Nowhere else - only use SGA for pedigrees, ASBVs and RBVs for meat eating quality traits
- word of mouth
- Fellow breeders, ET / AI centre vets, Scanners
- Other breeders
- NSW DPI
- Stud Websites
- Stockscan and known weight data, supplied by other breeders..
- My advisors who are closely aligned with SGA
- Angus Assn. (USA)
- Advisors & genetisists
- Breed society
- Merino Superior Sires (and their site reports)
- SIL
- Internet and sales
- catalogues, shows, sale, field days newspapers

- CRC
- Books, Geneticist, Conferences.
- direct from breeders
- sheep CRC
- conferences, etc
- Private consultant
- Books, breeders and records
- Individual breeders
- CTSE reports
- OTHER BREEDERS/BOER SELECT
- Google, anywhere. Particularly interested in Dorper traits which is not always easy to come by. Just a matter of searching and retaining /filing useful info. Sometimes other breeders are a great source ... not of specific genetic info, but for their experience in breeding using different traits

24. Did you attend a Regional Forum in the past year?

Yes/No	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
No	60%	60%	60%
Yes	40%	40%	40%

25. If you answered yes; to attending a Regional Forum in the past year.

How valuable was the information presented?

	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
Excellent	33%	22%	29%
Good	58%	71%	63%
Poor	4%	7%	5%
Very Poor	4%		3%

How well was the information presented?

	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
Excellent	27%	42%	33%
Good	73%	57%	67%
Poor	0%	0%	0%
Very Poor	0%		0%

26. Did you attend the 2014 Leading Breeder Forum?

Yes/No	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
No	77%	82%	78%
Yes	23%	18%	22%

27. If you answered yes; to attending the 2014 Leading Breeder Forum.

How valuable was the information presented?

	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
Excellent	29%	50%	36%
Good	64%	50%	59%
Poor	7%	0%	5%
Very Poor	0%		0%

How well was the information presented?

	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
Excellent	14%	63%	32%
Good	86%	37%	68%
Poor	0%	0%	0%
Very Poor	0%	0%	0%

28. Please provide suggestions on how Sheep Genetics could improve the Leading Breeder Forum or Regional Forums.

- We want to know who the other breeders are so nametags are important Eg. Person's name followed bybreeder.Bill Smith, and what he does eg. Sapien Technology or something like that.
- Unable to attend this year mainly due to drought and time constraints involved in keeping stock alive.
- have one in wa. Let us know where and when they're on.
- I have found both these forums very useful. I think people like to hear something that they haven't heard before, so it is important to look at new research and it would be useful to have some information from progeny trials and meat processors/retailers.
- The leading breeders forum needs to be for leading breeders, and not just a forum. It needs to really challenge breeders. Average would be a more realistic score than poor. The forum probably needs break outs for different types ie wool / sheepmeat, and for different levels of understanding/participation of /in SG.
- More emphasis on indexes, how use ,how derived, economic basis etc.
- I wanted to attend but couldn't!
- They could be used as forums to listen as well if managed well eg. to do a similar job to this survey.
- Watched it online and it was good.
- i was unaware of both of these forums. if I had have known about them I would have made every effort to attend.
- Make sure I am invited next year, I have only just joined the team as a committed producer
- I did watch last years leader breeder forum, but I haven't this year but it did seem to take a long time before it was available on the web.
- Every time we seem to be talking about the same things but nothing changes. Action is needed and less talk
- More information on ASBV's and RBV's for Prime lamb producers
- With the information handout booklet the graphs need to be larger and possibly in colour, otherwise it is a waste of time and space. If attendees are not able to follow the information at the session, they have no hope once they return home.
- Went to lambex. seem to be preaching to the converted all the time
- Regional Forum was good. Answered some questions I had, but raised more!!

- Often the problem is distance (in relation to attending) (and timing of course) Re content .. a problem is the range of levels of understanding in the group - somehow you have to cater for everyone ... but many of us (breeders) need practical info about managing & interpreting data rather than an intro to ASBVs

29. Please provide comments/suggestions regarding Sheep Genetics products and services.

- Selecting sires for the next joining is very important. I do this with a private consultant by matching up breeding values and structural traits with the aim to increase productivity in the progeny. I would like more guidance with this. Is TGRM available?
- Lots of breeders having problems with pages and pages of exclusions at present. They're tending to put it into the too hard basket to fix. This needs addressing.
- If I hadn't been shown how to use the website I would have got 10 minutes into it then pulled the plug and never used it again. It's a shambles no one would be able to find the info they need without being shown as a beginner. When doing a breeder search if you make a spelling mistake in name or stud no records come up. Doing an advanced search sometimes my screen just goes white and nothing happens. When in a search and on all animals when you get down to numbers deep in the list I often forget what columns are what. When you run your cursor over the square that you want to know what the figure is for the title of the column should come up not just trait leader we already know it's a trait leader by the blue shading. Also doing a new advanced search sometimes info pops up from previous search. Please ring me if you want any of this explained further 0429871873.
- Generally I think the products and services are hitting the spot. While the RBVs are good not all the information is shown on the web and I don't think the ASBVs reflect the added accuracy that was indicated earlier in the piece.
- Service is excellent in terms of timeliness of reports etc. Need to keep working on improving understanding to drive improvements in accuracy of data, grouping etc.
- Have a programme that you can enter SIRE and DAM details prior to mating to check relationships and give an inbreeding percentage to assist in matching Sires and Dams within your own flock prior to mating
- Please would you have a booklet put out on pedigree wizard as I am sure we would get more out of it if this were the case.
- Sheep should be measured for length when they are scanned, then you would get a truer eye muscle reading
- Pedigree Master/Wizard isn't particularly user friendly but I'm getting there with learning how to use it, especially with importing data from csv or text files, which is the only method of input I now use. The LD test is proving invaluable, despite the cost. If the cost was brought down I would test more sheep as we are focussing on MEQ in our breeding program. I would also like to go to more professional development, e.g. courses etc.
- My membership is temporary unless I can stop the wild dogs
- I feel that there has been a more concerted effort over the past year and a half, which is good to see, keep it up!
- When is this link with SIL going to be interchangeable? Too much emphasis is placed on the parentage links. An animal should not have figures available before it is born. The maternal influence is only diluted after weaning then the animal has to perform for its self and you can get a true idea. The staff are excellent. Pedirww Wizard needs to be upgraded
- More communication to Prime lamb breeders i.e. more Field Days and in closer vicinity to Prime lamb areas
- Sheep genetics need to listen to breed association requests & act upon them.
- It would be great if there was a course teaching how to use pedigree master
- I think I have covered these in my above comments
- ARE YOU GOING TO MARKET YOUR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES OVERSEAS? eg IN UK EU AND US?
- A valuable service. As dorper breeders our main interest is in getting ASBVs / indexes that really address our needs. We are all very concerned about the problems accounting for accelerated lambing. This is a key issue / point of difference for dorpers and we want to

capture itBetter info on how to use Pedigree Master would be good .. but I believe this is in the pipeline

Service Providers

30. Are there enough commercial service providers available to assist you with your breeding enterprise?

Carcase Scanners

Yes/No	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
No	22%	0%	14%
Yes	72%	88%	78%
N/A	5%	12%	8%

Data Handlers

Yes/No	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
No	7%	3%	5%
Yes	43%	61%	50%
N/A	50%	36%	45%

Fleece Testing Labs

Yes/No	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
No	0%	0%	0%
Yes	28%	91%	51%
N/A	72%	9%	49%

WEC Labs

Yes/No	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
No	7%	0%	4%
Yes	52%	67%	57%
N/A	41%	33%	38%

Genetic Advisers

Yes/No	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
No	21%	18%	20%
Yes	36%	61%	45%
N/A	43%	21%	35%

Other

Yes/No	LAMBPLAN %	MERINOSELECT %	TOTAL FLOCK RESPONSE %
No	0%	3%	1%
Yes	9%	27%	15%
N/A	91%	70%	84%

31. If you answered no to the above question, please provide further information.

- Difficult to make a time for muscle scanning as they are so busy with pregnancy scanning of commercial flocks. It would be good to have a breeder meeting about how to make the most of genetic gain for our breeding objectives. The breeder updates are valuable but it must be disappointing for Sheep Genetics that many breeders do not attend.
- didn't know any of these were available
- WEC lab is pretty far away from us - approx. 8 hours so it costs a bit in freight. Not too many carcass scanners near us either, they have to travel a lot which costs a lot of money. Would like more people who do the independent structural assessment using the visual scores too as would like to start putting these into LAMBPLAN.
- it is hard to get scanners when needed
- Simply not enough promoted to help new breeders.
- Don't know what you mean by other?
- We are in the US and to our knowledge we have only one LambPlan certified carcass scanner available.
- I feel I could use a genetic advisor locally
- what's a genetic adviser?
- we have an extra carcass scanner in the area that has made things easier and much cheaper.
- Need tutorials in pedigree master
- What do you mean by genetic advisers?
- Hard to get info or opinion positive or negative in regard to decision making.
- OTHER - LIVE SCANNERS also NEED MORE GENETIC INFO ON GOATS
- A shortage of scanners is a real problem in WA .. while they exist, problems with distance are an issue Not sure about genetic advisers .. not sure I need one, unless they know lots about dorpers of course With WEC I find DAFWA to be very responsive to testing - results come back very rapidly With respect to data handling, I try to do my own Stephen Field has been helpful putting me on the right track with this.
- NSW does not have enough accredited carcass scanners

General Comments

32. What are the best features of Sheep Genetics

- That it is a national benchmarking system that allows breeders to improve the genetic gain in their flock in specific traits. This means breeders can improve traits that are relevant for their breeding objectives.
- It is a great marketing tool to be used with visual attributes. Helps us to plan future joining although we have only just started to use it. Clients can see figures and assess the sheep they are looking for along with visual attributes
- To be able to indicate relative genetic merit of sheep
- ASBV's
- ASBVs are very useful, the regular updating is great.
- Timeliness of reporting, web search function
- common industry language
- database
- The Analysis
- Genetic gain, genetic trait figures ASBV, flock recording and monitoring of genetic gains etc.
- Quarterly animal data analysis. Their attendance at our Meat Elite annual conferences where we get the latest info and set our goal for the year ahead. The Sheep Bulletin. Opportunity to participate in the RBV testing.
- trusted source of sheep measurement.

- ASBVS
- The search facility and ability to download lists of animals into excel when logged in and the genetic test RBVS
- accessibility
- Potential to provide data that is relevant for our future sheep traits control.
- Linkages within breeds, A group of like minded breeders to contact. pedigree Wizard for record keeping
- Industry linkages
- Benchmarks across flock
- compare what sheep genetics are available in different studs within our breed
- ASBV info
- Provides national across flock asbvs to allow comparisons / source better and relevant genetics to meet client and industry needs
- Pedigree information
- Sheep of the same breeds are measured and assessed on the same traits at a given time.
- its layout of information
- Data
- Independence, leading edge science
- Providing direction for sheep improvement and profitability for us and our buyers.
- Breeding values
- Asbvs
- comparing sires, selling semen
- everything is always across flock. I use SIL (for maternal's) also and you have to opt in and be extremely well linked (which most flocks don't/aren't) so all meaningful BV's are only within flock. Making it hard to make progress with outside sires. The search page is very user friendly and helpful.
- Search function online. The ability to improve your flock
- Pedigree Wizard
- To me the update of ASBV's and the adoption of RBV,s to S G
- Assisting in selection of higher performing animals
- Very knowledgeable staff doing their very best to make a difference to a merino industry which is slow to change, when at times you can see more hands are required
- good info source
- Comparison of individual animals across age, stud, area, etc
- For me the best feature is the ability to find tops semen sires for my ram breeding program.
- Across flock, across breed (in terminal only)
- That I can access my Dohne Data on the website
- Competent staff, well managed, trustworthy. Provide EBVs for a wide variety of traits. Nearly always 'ahead of the pack' with regard to new research on breeding for better sheep.
- National significance & conformity.
- EBVs
- The concept
- Industry recognition

31. Where are there opportunities for improvement?

- Educating the commercial ram buyers by articles in the Land, CD's to listen to in the car. Also DVD to watch at home to explain Sheep Genetics. NOT everyone can get to things like LAMBEX but the information from that would be useful and important. Information is too fragmented. Re-instate the LAMBS emails for discussion.
- Hmmm if you could just make it easier it would be great. I would love more training on a how to go setup
- better assistance with the provision of tailored indices.

- It should be explained better that if you don't do wec that Lamb 20/20 index is of little value. ON each report it should summarize what is included in each index.
- Keep working on the technical side of the analysis - we are changing sheep very quickly, and correlations etc won't always be the same.
- only report breeding values when linkage and heritability are high and good information is provided. show conception and birth type. only show breed specific information in basic search.
- More information on the new rapidly expanding breeds.
- Extension to train producers as to value. Ban shows
- Education of commercial breeders on merits of ASBV
- Major marketing to Agents - Elders, Landmark, Ruralco etc as the agents buy rams where they are cheap and are not concerned with genetic information, just want a ram and a ram
- Same old problem of proving to non-subscribers and most livestock agents that they are losing money by not using high index lambplan rams
- by measuring length when scanned, at the moment two sheep born on same day, when scanned both have 40 eye muscle, one sheep 55 kg other 60 kg lamb plan tells you thr 55 kilo lamb has a bigger eye muscle when in fact they both have the same eye muscle but the 60 kilo lamb has more of them. the way lamb plan works now unless you gain 1-2 for growth each year you are going backwards
- SPEED UP ASBV RETURNS
- Possibility of seeing what flocks have used certain rams, ability to hide accuracies and include pedigrees (e.g. sire x dam) when you click on an animal to see their individual results being able to see linkage (e.g. no progeny /flocks) in the search facility as a column. Giving studs access to CSV files as well as Exe files for their data as I can't use exe files without a great deal of difficulty
- RBV's
- Start to listen to customers and POTENTIAL customers and be prepared to provide the services that they require. WHAT COMES FIRST? the service or the customer? You apparently have no idea. If you want new customers; then provide the services that will attract them.
- Yes
- better crystal ball for the sheep that aren't recorded or poor data collected
- Better communication in programs such as Bred Well Fed Well BUT with individual TELEPHONED FOLLOW UP of participants at extension activities to ensure `the message` has been understood. Use of extension people with whole of industry experience, including abattoir and `downstream` applied experience
- easier tracability of both sire and dams pedigrees eg single, twins, trip. etc and birth dates
- actual information alongside percentages
- Communication & vibrancy
- Yes
- Using genomics for difficult to measure traits or validate other important traits.
- Fertility scan ebv and mothering ability ebv
- Getting more members
- Letting the consumer know what is important to record, why it is important to record and the effects that it has on the index. ie scanning ewes for pregnancy v mothering up ect.
- Across all areas to make it more practical and less scientific. The gold silver bronze status is a joke.
- engaging with breeders before making changes to way things are calculated
- marketing of concept
- less is more. focus on what makes us money. spending a lot of resource money on little value results
- Good easy to access info for those who don't understand well/have confidence interpreting ASBVS and the indexes.
- Across all breed analysis More DNA info and testing Use of more breeds in info trials
- Enabling Dam Progeny searches, and in more detail, the performance of a dam's progeny. Basic

search needs to default to (in our case Dohne) most relevant ASBVs. More emphasis needs to be placed on WWT & PWT not YWT EBVs

- 1. Feed Efficiency traits. 2. Not changing newly-agreed Indices without a lot of industry consultation (not just a few NSW flunkies?). There have been no reasons given for this as far as I am aware, except that Lu Hogan did an analysis at the request of some NSW breeders. A lot more consultation was in order.
- Making info easier or simpler for producers in understanding asbvs compared to actuals
- MORE RESEARCH ON GOAT SPECIFIC INDEX TO MEET GOAT INDUSTRY NEEDS
- See previous answers Accelerated lambing! A shedding ASBV!!
- To only produce ASBVs with high heritability, high accuracy that are repeatable. Stop producing INDEXES. INDEXES are a total distraction to ALL SG users and their clients.

32. Is there any additional information that Sheep Genetics can provide to help you achieve your breeding objective's?

- Yes, talk to us one on one. Offer more webinars. Guide us on joining decisions overall. Advise how we can use available tools to improve what we do.
- dam progeny reports
- I would like to know how each index is devised as I am relying entirely on SGA telling me what is best for my industry and I would like to evaluate in my own mind that SGA have it correct as this has not always been the case.
- One thing in particular which seems to be being overlooked in high rainfall areas in particular relates to what I colloquially call water stain, notably on top of shoulders, down the back and behind shoulders. In fact I think it is the accumulation of suint which dissolves in rainwater and gets washed closer to the skin and concentrates in certain areas. In bad cases it becomes the source of dermatitis and fly strike (and maybe increases susceptibility to fleece rot or is associated with it). Culling sheep with this costs far too much of my selection potential. Clients certainly won't tolerate it. I would like to see genetic parameters developed to enable this to be reported, so selection efficiency against it could be improved assuming a reasonable scoring system is available.
- Supply programme to cross check SIREs & DAMS for inbreeding, prior to picking out mating groups within stud flocks. Keep it simple, commercial breeders find too much information confusing at Ram Sales etc. Also have one format for displaying figures at Sales, not the raw data v ASBV that is being used at present - sends mixed signals to ram buyers.
- Would be great if you could come and do a talk at our school about it rather than have me prattle on to the kids about how good it is! Also, is it possible to show visual scoring data if it is available for animals?
- ASBV's that are relevant to our type of sheep.
- A PCFW figure & some info on the correlation with this trait to fleece weights later in life.
- Monthly or quarterly asbv updates of breeders asbvs I think we get one every 6 months
- Have a structure rating for the particular ram / animal. eg Feet - 3/5, Body Length - 4/5 etc so not all emphasis is placed on figures.
- actual information alongside percentages
- Keep the genomics stuff happening and improving
- Still learning about mating strategies to get the most from the program.
- Provide more information about the assumptions behind the three main index's and more explanation. Why is it so important to get weaning weight?
- I am happy with my breeding objectives
- need access to the right staff to get guidance in getting either more or better info to sheep genetics
- Frame score, scrotal circumference,
- Would be good if we could define custom index and then rank/search sheep on it. (assume cant do this already)
- Yes, get that mating predictor working. I have NEVER been able to access it. Always get popup error message saying page is unavailable!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

- Maintenance Feed Efficiency traits. Will likely require Genomics to give a value plus or minus the average amount of kilojoules (of grain) per day to maintain the liveweight of a sheep over an extended period of time. Many farms have 5 to 8 months of no green feed and little or no residual dry feed.
- No things are ok

33. Please feel free to provide any comments/suggestions:

- Breeders often feel isolated and would like more networking communication. Most ram buyers and agents have no understanding of breeding values and they do not want to ask. This means we miss out on many average ram buyers who will just go anywhere for anything to get a lamb. This not only puts at risk biosecurity but is not targeting the final customer the consumer who eats the lamb.
- Having the bill charged from PWW doesn't suit me by then I haven't decided which animals I want to keep for my commercial flock because I need the info from PWW to make this decision so I find myself with-holding this data until later to make it more affordable
- Sheep genetics should be catering for all breeders of Dohne sheep not those associated with the breed society. In every other breed it doesn't matter if you belong to a society or not. Now that the DPI no longer processes Dohne data sheep genetics should be offering a service to all breeders.
- Please listen to some of the leading users - we actually want to make it work better, not pull it apart. Be confident to make changes as soon as they are needed, don't wait for a mid year update - it can be too late then, and a whole year is lost.
- I know you all have a lot on your plates so keep up the good work.
- carcass plus a 6 year old ewe with 150 equals a 2 year old with 190, so lambs from the 6 year figures are always behind the 2 year old when in fact they could be better, growth works the same, so people buying on figures don't always buy what they believe they are getting
- Excellent service! I use this a lot, almost daily during ram semen selection time and after data is inputted for our own stud. Would be handy to have a bit more assistance as a school to promote ASBVs and their use though to the students.
- Most of the above suggestions. Sadly a lot of breeders have given up. I know in my breed societies (2) the general consensus at meetings, shows and sales is that we get very little out of SG now days as breeders not in the ' big league ' are alienated
- Involved with research
- Where would the sheep industry be without LAMBPLAN and the CRC ? The 'felt chasers' would have even more influence than now and the industry would still be flat lining. There would be very few wool growers without LAMBPLAN. Hopefully AWI will more strongly support that side of the sheep industry to become more progressive.
- Pen cards could have room for more traits to be shown both meat and wool
- Maybe not so important but it would help if we could use a Mac for Pedigree Wizard. I hate my PC (and evidently it hates me).
- So far I the new additions to the dashboard seem really good but I haven't had a chance to have a really good play.
- provide time for one on one situations with staff even if it is only once a year because not everyone has the time to get away and attend forums etc
- Keep up good work. ASBVs are vital for profitability of our business. Many would not agree with me but I wonder how much more money the industry should spend on educating the non-believers. There has been many workshops explaining ASBVs and their value in my area yet studs without them still sell rams as high or higher than those with good ASBV indexes. WE should let these studs and owners die a fast death and focus industry dollars on enhancing ASBVs with new tools such as genetic markers.
- Stop promoting individual breeds/ breeders and present data- research findings more accurately without bias. This is especially with DNA traits in trials and research projects.
- I hope that some of my points will be considered by SG for what I see would be improvements.

- THANKS FOR THE RECENT TRIAL AS A RESULT OF IT AND THE FORMATION OF BOER SELECT, I FEEL WE HAVE MADE MASSIVE STRIDES FORWARD BOTH FOR MY OWN STUD AND FOR THE INDUSTRY
- A time limit and access limit to this survey creates false results as the time allowed to think about and express answers is restricted.