

# Show success spurs business at Wattle Farm

## AT A GLANCE

- ◆ Jeff Sutton, Wattle Farm Border Leicesters, Temora, NSW.
- ◆ Old lines run through new stud.
- ◆ Producing 500-plus progeny a year for commercial market.

By LIZ RYMILL

**A** SUCCESSFUL outing to the Australian Sheep & Wool Show at Bendigo last year has paid dividends for Wattle Farm Border Leicester Stud, with a number of new clients coming on board since the relative newcomer to the show circuit took out some prestige awards.

Last year Wattle Farm took out top honours in the junior champion ram; grand champion ram (Stan Fraser Trophy); supreme Australian long-wool group of one ram and two ewes; The Oaks Trophy for the best four Border Leicester sheep; ewe class over 1.5 years; and were the winners of best ASSBA ram under 1.5 in wool; best ASSBA ewe over 1.5 years, and champion ASSBA at the Sheep & Wool Show.

Stud principal Jeff Sutton hopes to continue the stud's success again this year, and with wins at the NSW State Sheep Show – including senior champion ram and reserve grand champion ram – 2013 is shaping up to be another promising year.

Buyers know that they can source proven animals that will perform well under a range of conditions and produce good numbers and quality lambs.

– JEFF SUTTON, Wattle Farm Border Leicesters

## BORDER-LEICESTER

“We certainly don't expect to take out the top award again this year in Bendigo as it's very rare for a stud to win two years in a row, but I really enjoy competing and putting the work required to get the animals looking their absolute best,” Jeff said.

But aside from the glory of notching up a win, Jeff said the best reward from showing his stock was the opportunity to meet other breeders, receive feedback on his animals and meet producers interested in the Border Leicesters for commercial operations.

“Since becoming involved in the show circuit and meeting commercial operators, we have sold rams and ewes into Queensland, Victoria and across NSW,” he said.

“Wattle Farm sheep have also been sought by clients in colder areas because of their hardy nature and easy-care management qualities.

“In October last year we exported semen to New Zealand following a visit to our sheep pens by a client at the NSW Sheep Show.”

Wattle Farm produces more than 500 Border Leicester progeny per annum for the commercial sale market and

holds two on-farm sales each year, including an annual production sale of about 70 rams and a cast-for-age ewe sale.

“People come north to buy sheep because they know that we run our operation under commercial conditions,” Jeff said.

“We don't pander to a couple of sheep and buyers know that they can source proven animals that will perform well under a range of conditions and produce good numbers of quality lambs.”

Sandy and Sue Campbell of Cooloongatta Estate Border Leicesters, at Byawatha near Wangaratta, purchased a ram from Jeff after seeing his “highly impressive” line of sheep on show at last year's Sheep & Wool Show.

The ram has been joined to the operation's stud ewes which are due to lamb in late-June-July this year.

“Our stud was founded along Kelso lines; however we just thought Jeff's stock were outstanding when we saw them last year, so decided to buy one of his rams and see how we go,” Sue said.

“The ram we purchased was very impressive; he stood up well, had a terrific body shape and really good wool – both in terms of quality and coverage.

“His hindquarters were excellent also and he has

■ Jeff Sutton, Wattle Farm Border Leicesters, Temora, NSW, sold sale-topping Wattle Farm 20/11 at

