

## *Our Periodic Sheep and Cattle Auctions*

### **General Information**

We periodically send a utility load of Sherana Sheep (about 15 sheep) to the sheep and cattle auction at Gatton Saleyards. (Gatton is in Queensland between Toowoomba and Ipswich.) These sales occur every fortnight, always on a Monday, but we only sell at about 5 sales per year.

And less regularly, we send cattle to Moreton Sales, near Ipswich.

The sheep sales usually include wethers and ewes.

Naturally we are continually upgrading our breeding flocks, so the wethers are the rams we did not consider good enough to breed from, and the ewes that go to auction are those that, for various reasons, we think we should sell now.

There are a few reasons that our ewes get to the auction. The main one is that we continually sell older ewes while they are still productive. So you get very good genetics in a top class ewe (and often a quieter ewe) for a cheap price. Younger ewes end up at the auction because we are overstocked, droughted, or they do not meet our high standards of temperament or clean shedding. But do not take too much notice of shedding ability for young ewes – most sheep get lamb wool which may not shed until they are about two years old. Then they may shed completely and stay clean.

These auctions are usually a great place to get some cheaper sheep for lawn mowing, eating or breeding.

The auction has pros and cons for buyer and seller.

For us, the sellers, prices are usually lower than we charge on property. That is the big disadvantage for us. But the advantage is we sell exactly the sheep we want to sell, on the day we want to sell them, without all the messing around that often occurs if we sell in twos and threes on property.

For buyers, the big advantage is the cheaper prices. And you can decide which group to bid on and what your price limit is. Judy will be there to tell you all about them – age, breed etc. The disadvantage is you cannot choose exactly the breed, age or quality you may want. And we seldom sell rams at the auction. But you can be sure that, for every auction we have, the quality of the sheep improves as we always sell the worst first.

We choose the sheep to take on the weekend preceding the Monday sale. The mob for sale usually includes wethers and ewes. Wethers will be usually less than one year old. Ewes will be mainly Meatmaster cross breeds (damara/dorper crosses). There may be one or two pure bred Damara or Dorper ewes. All will be Clean Skin Sheep and should not need shearing.

All of our ewes run all the time with a ram and so should be pregnant (not guaranteed). They would be great for someone starting up who wants good Clean Skin genetics at a very attractive price. Cheap ewes plus a good ram is a good way to start sheep breeding. We can supply the good ram, but not at the auction.

We will supply information on genetics, age and history for every sheep if you contact us later with the ear tag numbers of the sheep you buy. Naturally, no guarantees go with these sheep, but we will tell you all we know about them (we keep very good records).

We also have plenty of better ewes and good rams for sale on property – contact us with what you may like and we will advise availability and prices. We have plenty of choice in Damara and Meatmaster rams and usually can find a pure dorper ram. Also more grass eating wethers. We also have young breeding ewes and sometimes can find very quiet ewes suitable for pets. We do not send our best sheep to Gatton. As in all things, “You get what you pay for”.

There are new pictures of our sheep (and other things) on the photo album we have on our web site at:

<http://www.damaras.com/album/index.html>

If you want to discuss anything, phone 0754 640 533 preferably just after dark but before the weather report at 7.30pm. Email is the surest way to contact us at any time. We will not have any specific info about the sheep for sale until we sort them, on Sunday.

Finally, if you buy any sheep, what do you do with them once you get them home?

We are not allowed to drench sheep immediately before the auction because they may be purchased by butchers. So they may need drenching. And you do not want to introduce our worms to your property. So, drench them immediately and put them into a large shady yard. Show them where the water is, or splash it around the ground, and give them a bit of feed (not grain or pellets). Leave them there for a couple of days if this is possible to let them get used to your place, your dogs and your noises. Then let them out. If you already have sheep, put them together after about a day (or sooner if necessary).

Regards  
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PS We sometimes send weaner cattle (usually heifers and bulls) as well as occasional older cows to the Moreton Cattle sale. Our cattle selection criteria and breeding aims are the same as for sheep. We want a useful meat animal that is suited to survive in the Australian environment with absolutely minimal attention from us. No chemical or veterinary attention and minimal supplementary feeding. All cattle must be natural polls, sleek skinned and good temperament. We use Senepol/Braford genetics, with sometimes a bit of red Brahman. Contact us if you are interested.

***Apologies to those people who are far from Gatton but still get these notices.*** It is because for many people, we have no idea where you live, so everyone on our general email list gets a notice.

***Please send us your post code/state*** so we will not send inappropriate notices. And if you are no longer interested in sheep please let us know. Thanks to those few people who advised their post codes, or changes of address. And if you suddenly stop getting stuff from us, it is probably because you have changed your email address and did not tell us.