

SOUTHDOWN ADVERTISING FEATURE

Premium Southdown articles

BY ALAN WELBURN

A DREAM, stunning, popular and premium are some of the superlatives coined about Southdowns.

Producers and processors wax lyrical about the breed, which has been around for about 1000 years.

But it is the court of public opinion which is the most telling when comparisons are drawn between others and Southdowns.

Hardwick livestock manager Chris Barry, Kyneton, is well placed to comment and is happy to advocate for the breed which originated in the UK and eventually found its way Down Under in the late 18th century.

"The market can be volatile but I believe the Southdown will always have a premium price point and premium demand," Mr Barry said.

"They hang up well and through their loin and leg the meat is superior.

"They are full of muscle, rather than fat, and their frame allows them to produce great yield and I would highly recommend the Southdown."



GOOD TYPE: Southdowns are noted for their meat and are popular on the domestic market. Photos supplied.

He said butchers constantly sourced these lambs and would pay good money to buy them.

Mr Barry said the market "appreciated" Southdown lamb for many reasons and

taste was only one aspect.

He said the genetic make-up of the Southdown easily distinguished it from cross-breeds, which were more likely to hit the export trade.

"A Southdown lamb is a

traditional domestic butcher lamb and by that I mean its trade weight will be in the 18-24 kilogram or 18-26kg range and lambs will be sold on supermarket shelves and in butcher shops," he said.



ALLROUND WINNER: Southdowns are said to be superior in the fridge than other breeds.

"We would go out of our way to pay a premium for a Southdown lamb just in terms of their shape through the back and how they set up in the fridge is superior to most other breeds.

"We have a premium butcher line where we look for lambs a certain way and we call it a Hardwick 15 and the Southdown lamb would be predominantly in that make-up."

He described them as a great lamb and from a processor's point of view, they were a dream.

Tim Fincham, Finchams Burando Southdowns, Yea, agreed wholeheartedly.

"I am a third generation Southdown breeder, my father and grandfather started back in the 1950s," Mr Fincham said.

"I have never seen such demand for Southdowns from the processors because they are chasing quality right across the board and are paying \$2/kg premium in the saleyards above anything else.

"With Southdowns, whether it's two tooth or lambs, there is a nice, succulent smell when the meat is cooked and the taste is stunning."

In terms of traits, he said the breed was most renowned for its carcass.