

Presidents Report 2023

This year has been a challenging year on many fronts.

The large interest rate rises over the last year or so have impacted many of us with mortgages but also the amount of discretionary spending people have available.

Our Damara Sheep have become a breed that is mainly purchased by people from small holdings in Australia. With less discretionary spending available, Damara sheep sales are down from other years.

Damaras have also been a sheep of choice for live export in Western Australia especially, and the uncertainty of the future of live sheep exports has impacted Damara numbers in WA.

This situation can't last forever, and sales should rise again in the future when more discretionary spending is available again and when the export situation is clarified by the Federal Government.

We have had a number of new studs start up this year and the stud membership has grown over the year to x13 Studs and x3 Associate Members.

Good records and Pedigrees are now being kept by all Stud members; yearly flock returns are being sent to the Secretary so we can now monitor how many provable purebred Damara are around. New Society By Laws, introduced recently, will help to maintain the purebred flock. I am hoping our Australian purebred Damara flock numbers will rise appreciably in coming years and the number of studs will continue to increase.

This year we lost Cameron Hills as our Secretary. He did an excellent job for a few years. Our new Secretary, Kaye Butler, was welcomed to her position earlier this year. Kaye has stepped into big shoes as the position maintains many Sheep and Cattle Breed Societies not just our Damara Society.

After three years of way too much rain we are now looking at much drier conditions in the eastern states for the coming summer. As with all livestock, the challenges will change from Barber Pole worms and sore feet in the wet, to finding feed to keep our flocks going in the dry.

Our Society is moving ahead with a new website now in use. This is a great improvement to the old website which had begun to show its age. Many thanks must go to Ken Hardy from Green Patch Stud who did some great work getting the new website up and going. She is also maintaining the website with any changes or additions needed. Thanks again Ken!

A suggestion for setting up a Breed Standard will be discussed at this AGM General Meeting. We already have Breed Characteristics which is on our new website. These will be a good start for getting a Breed Standard written.

Yours Sincerely

Marianne Wilkinson

President/ Chairperson

The Damara Breeders Society of Australia