

## **Breeding out the Horn – how to do it**

In sheep genetics the poll gene is dominant and the horn gene is recessive  
To start the process of breeding out the horn....

### **1<sup>st</sup> Season Mating**

The horned ewes must be mated to a double polled ram (a ram that does not carry the horn gene).

- A double polled ram can only be produced by two polled parents.
- A double polled ram may have a small scur/scurs but it/they must be less than 12 mm in length.

**All of the offspring will be half polls** carrying a horn gene from the ewe, and a poll gene from the ram.

Visually: All ewe lambs will be visually polled (or displaying small keratin knob or a very very small scur).

All ram lambs will display scurs (some big, some small) but will not display true horn.

### **2nd Season Mating**

The half polled ewe lambs from the previous mating must be mated with a double polled ram.

**The majority of the offspring will be double polled.**

A small percentage (both ewe and ram lambs) will still carry the horn gene and will be half polled.

Visually: All ewe lambs will be visually polled.

As described above the few ewe lambs which are carrying one horn gene and one poll gene will appear polled and may display a small keratin knob or a very very small scur on their horn sites).

A small percentage of ram lambs will display scurs. **No true horn displayed.**

All of the first drop ewe lambs will be visually polled (even though they will still carry a **hidden** horn gene), and after the second mating the majority of your flock will be a double poll animal.

This information has been sourced from C.H.S.(Scott) Dolling, M.Ag.Sc., R.D.A. the genetic advisor to the Australian Wiltipoll Association Inc. Scott was also the genetic advisor to the Australian Poll Dorset Association.

**Pip Hughes**

**Kars Station**

**Broken Hill NSW**