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# Low-stress lambs bred for eating

**NIGEL AUSTIN**  
RURAL EDITOR

**JAMIE McTaggart** and **Scott Herde** have cast aside generations of farming traditions in the battle to run viable pastoral businesses.

They produce sheep that don't grow wool and try to control their product from the farm through to a growing number of restaurants and butchers which buy their meat.

The business partners started **Spear Creek Dorper Lamb**, a new range of branded lamb products, to supply the Adelaide market

**PORT AUGUSTA**

late last year. **Spear Creek** uses genetics and low-stress animal husbandry practices from their **Port Augusta** stations to provide a high-quality chemical-free meat range.

"We use low-stress farming techniques because the dorpers don't grow wool and you don't need to shear, crutch, or mules them," Mr **McTaggart** said.

The **Port Augusta** lamb producers are among a growing number of Australian pastoralists running

dorper sheep. The dorper, developed by mating black-headed Persian ewes with a Dorset horn ram in South Africa in the 1930s, was imported to Australia in 1996 to produce high-quality meat from the rangelands.

"It's been the fastest growing sheep breed in Australia since then because of its unique attributes," Mr **McTaggart** said. "I can see the day when there won't be many merino sheep in the pastoral country. I like being a farmer, but I also like to make a living from it."

Mr **McTaggart** said they



**TASTE TEST:** Jamie McTaggart, Royal Hotel Kent Town chef **Bob Van** and **Scott Herde**, started marketing the **Spear Creek** brand in Adelaide about 10 weeks ago through **My Butcher** to restaurants, clubs and pubs and to butchers such as **P & A Meats**, **Gully Meats**, **Aldgate**

**Butcher** and **Wychwood Meat** at **Yankalilla**. The dorper is bred to survive in 125mm rainfall country. "They grow extremely quickly and they are very fertile and breed all

year round, which allows us to supply consistently," he said. "Our aim is to produce about 10,000 lambs into the SA market through the **Spear Creek** brand each year."

Picture: **CALUM ROBERTSON**