



One Stop Ram Shop



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Summer, Tervola, Lapland, Finland. Silja's home farm.



Late Summer, Finnsheep ewes of three colours, grazing on pasture.



Winter, Snow lies about for five months.

More Finnish Connections.

Marja-Leena Puntila arranged for 19-year-old, Silja Alamikkotervo to come to OSRS, May to February, to gain experience. Silja (Celia) is at Helsinki University studying Animal Science. She is very intelligent, articulate, practical, willing and loves Finnsheep. Silja is very welcome at OSRS.

Her home is Tervola, Southern Lapland. The family farm is 80kms south of the Arctic Circle, latitude 66 degrees north. Helsinki is 750 kms to the south. Temperatures range from -15.C in winter (extreme -30.C) to a summer average of +15. C (extreme +30.C). Daylight for 24 hours in high summer. 24 hours of darkness in deep winter. Snow lies for five months.

90 hectares of flats are used for grazing and cropping. Silage is made. Barley and oats are grown for winter stock food. 35 ha of forest is clear-felled in 5 ha lots, replanted and thinned in a slow rotation. It is a beautiful 'biological / organic' farm.

Silja's mother Johanna, runs the farm. She does all the business, shearing, lambing, selling the surplus sheep and wool, recording for registration, scanning ewes. Family members are involved with paddock cultivation, sowing and harvesting for silage and cereals.

Almost half of Finnish farms are

managed by women.

150 Registered Finn-sheep are mated in three flocks: 70 white, 40 black, 40 brown. White ewes are most productive and sought after as breeders. Brown ewes are least productive.

Coloured wools are scoured and skeins sold locally. The family members knit wool into scarves, socks and rugs which are sold country-wide from web-site promotion. Pelts are cured and sold for their colours, warmth and natural origin. (www.vanhalanlammastila.fi View the fine products.)

Sheep are housed in winter and fed silage, oats, barley, beans and a range of minerals. Lambing inside purpose-built sheds takes place in March-April (spring) and August (autumn).

75 spring ewes give 200 lambs. Lambs are weighed and tagged at three days (Average 4.1kgs), 42 days (15kgs), 120 days (32kgs), 220 days (49kgs). Weaned lambs are separated into sexes and grazed on pasture from June to September. Lambs are sold to farmers for breeding by weight, performance indices and breed characteristics. The same indices are used when the small number of replacements are selected. Finnsheep are long-living. All surplus sheep are finished to 18 and above kgs for which they receive a bonus and the best

meat/carcase price.

65 autumn ewes give 150 lambs. The same programme is repeated. Last season lambs averaged 19.5 kgs carcass weight. Sheep are fed well at all times.

Lamb returns. Meat price for lamb ranges between NZ\$ 6.14 – 7.17 /kg. An 18 kg carcass has a value of NZ\$ 110.52-129.06 for the above prices per kg. Carcasses processed at 18kgs and above, receive an additional bonus of \$55.78, which increases their value to NZ\$ 166.3 – 184.84.

Ewe flocks are small, too small to escape 'in-breeding'. Registration is designed to keep tabs on parentage, enforce data collection and maintain society standards. It works. Most farmers join breed associations willingly. Value of registered Finnsheep.

Ewe (4—12 months) NZ\$ 414.34, Ram NZ\$ 605.57.

Ewe (1 year+) NZ\$ \$ 525.89, Ram NZ\$ 717.12.



Silja and Robin, recording/checking tags after scanning. The Glen, Pauatahanui Wellington.

An opinion.

Small is beautiful.

The best, most committed marketing viewed by OSRS over decades was that of Biological/ Organic farmers of Germany and Finland. They're proud of their product. It is presented well and sold with total expectation of seeing the customer again. This personal approach contrasts that of city supermarkets where large, colourful shelf space dominates. Buyer's selection is made on price and freshness. Customers look and feel produce when judging quality. Management only, know if produce has real quality.

Farmer's markets are crammed with growers who talk and answer questions. These sellers are accountable. Fastidious buyers love farmer's markets.

Could not the marketers of NZ lamb show such commitment? John Aitken (Lean Meats) took NZ farmers to talk with Wholefood customers in US. All the NZ farmer-marketers enthused about their experience. Farmers are not marketers, they are experts at grass growing and managing their 'lawn-mowers' (cattle, sheep, deer).

John Brackenridge (Merino NZ) **"Today remarkable products with average stories fail, remarkable stories with average products can win."** "Producer's hard-work and investment is rewarded by marketers, who instead of seekingroutes of least resistance (price-taking), have taken the harder, high-value route (market-shaping)." Farmers Weekly

NZ's tiny tonnage of sheep meat needs to be marketed away from the historical route. Wealthy new customers need culturing as they get identified. Some facts are known **1**, they wish to live long **2**, they like 'Mary's lamb but would like processed cuts bigger **3**, they know the lamb is raised in a clean green country **4**, they are very wealthy and will not buy cheap sheepmeat. NZ\$ 93/kg in Los Angeles. French Rack packets were selling.

The super-wealthy are not fools. They will pay for a rare product, produced naturally which guarantees an unique eating experience. FinnTexel lamb meat braised and under-cooked gives them just that experience. Flavour, colour, tenderness, natural and NZ produced. Full of iron, lean and all but shouting "Eat me and live longer".

Lamb sheepmeat has a wonderful story. Known 'wealthy' markets are; EU (Germany, UK), North America (mega-rich and same sex couples). Brazil should be considered too. Ideal rich customers are world-wide. Customers appreciate that 'rare' lamb is produced in the country that had Moa (big KFC chickens) and Kiwis, if the story is told carefully.

Five Liners

○ TXT. **You're not getting her back.**

Colin had no clue from whom it came. Jeff had sent it and was referring to Silja. She stayed at Clinton with Jeff and Sue who were impressed with her work ethic.

○ OSRS second shear ewe wool. FinnTexel 34.2 micron, 78.2% yield, \$567c/kg. TexelSuffolk 34.8 micron, 74% yield, 482c/kg. June sale. High microns for OSRS wool!

○ NZ petrol at \$2/litre. 40c is for refining, 60c fuel company margin, 100c fuel tax (annually 1.6 billion) Road user charges for trucks gather, 1.2b. and registration 183 m.

○ Myths. **1**, Screening saves lives. Not many. **2**, Antioxidents are good for you. Life is no longer if they are used. **3**, Vaccines cause autism. They do not. **4**, homeopathy works. It doesn't. **5**, Genetic engineering is dangerous. 40 years and no bad evidence.

○ Alternative therapies, additional to conventional medicine are a 34b industry. They are given in 42% of US hospitals. No scientific test has proved any work.

○ 350 US Clinics sell stem cell therapies. Some help heart problems, some show promise, few work. Most stem cells are taken from the patient, multiplied and reintroduced.

○ Western electorates are losing faith in globalisation. Antonio Gramsci (political theorist) "in the interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appear." eg., **Brexit**. "the crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born"

○ 6000 millionaires settled here in 2015. NZ is a safe place for women. It has efficient police, free media, shared values and good social services. When times are tough these wealthy people are the first to leave.

○ Dolly, the first cloned ewe, baffled scientists by dying unexpectedly. Four genetically identical twins of Dolly and nine other clones are "remarkably well" and aging properly in UK.

United Kingdom has benefited from being in the EU. Brexit is a disaster. The youth of UK wished to remain part of the EU but didn't vote. Democracy provides an opportunity for everybody to 'have a say'; to not vote is lazy.

England gave to the EU, Whitehall's experience of administration, fair play and high professional standards. 'The City' has become a major financial, banking and investment centre for world-wide business. Research and Education in English, the second most used language, became sought by many emerging powers.

Manufacturing was lost to competition. UK has expanded services impressively. Contracts for Whitehall's organisational skills, National Health Service's 3.6 billion pound of annual contracts and Education exports worth 30 billion pounds by 2020, are proof of the 'new' business of UK. An ability to absorb and analyse the ideas from multiracial people is attractive to the world.

English living standards will fall because of this dismal Brexit decision.



Beautiful Clinton, Jeff and Sue Moss's tussock, hill property. Thoughtfully farmed. Otago.



Kuni-Kuni pigs; Arthur, Martha and Ginger love visitors with a bucket of scraps. Pele the calf pushes in too. Jeff, Sue and Joy having a chuckle.



Jeff and Sue joined in with the scanning. Paratu, June 2016.

WEL, WEL, WEL.

The Commodities Levies Act gives farmers an opportunity to vote for or against compulsory product levies which finance activities of producer boards. After decades of squandering huge sums of money which gave few benefits to the stakeholders, the wool levy was voted out. **OSRS had run a successful "No" campaign.**

A recent attempt to resurrect the levy failed miserably. Farmers said "**No**" again, very clearly.

The outgoing 2003 Wool Board gave Wool Equities Limited (WEL) their financial assets. 'Wellington' did not want money given farmers who were issued shares in WEL instead. Shares had dubious value.

The Board chaired by Richard Bentley

(50k salary) and 'business-smart' Directors (20k salary) knew how to spend other people's money (**OPM**). This they did. Glossy plans; all the old Wool Board hype again. 9439 farmers (including Joy and Robin) left their money with WEL in an 'Act of Faith'. Assets worth \$ 24.67 million were provided WEL over the years. Experienced farmer Directors eg., Hugh Taylor, Alister Polson, Cliff Heath came and went. Directors enthused and spent **OPM**. Audited reports finished in 2012. Nothing since!

'WEL is going for broke' headlined the Farmer's Weekly, 18th July. Great news for exasperated stakeholders. Chairperson, Anne Walsh is asking

shareholders to be patient while financial issues are resolved.

Shareholders have been **patient** since 2003. If only the 'know-alls' in Wellington had returned the assets in 2003 and 2011 farmers would have received something.

It has taken since 2003 for WEL 'experts' to lose millions of **OPM**! Exactly what the Wool Board did over many decades.

Nothing changes. Nobody learns from history. But as long as **OPM** is available, salaries will be paid, plans made and failure delayed.

Richard Bentley's optimistic newspaper statements are prominent amongst reports preserved at OSRS woolshed for all to read.

Beef and Lamb NZ (B&L) Constitution Consultation

Only with a 75% majority vote will changes to the constitution be accepted at the March 2017 AGM.

The present structure was proposed by SheepCo in 2003 when the producer Boards were in a tither after defeat of the wool levy. Some reshaping occurred. Few employees, if any, lost jobs. Quite appreciable numbers of farmers wanted the organisation reduced but not the proposed Board structure. The Chairman designate wanted MIA representatives around the table and was not prepared to reduce Wellington staff numbers. David Carter (Minister of Ag & F) was emphatic, there would be no B&L job losses or moving of headquarters out of the capital. Massey and Lincoln were alternatives put forward.

An opportunity to modernise and better serve stakeholder's interests was lost. SheepCo's suggested structure, in spite of intense lobbying by Steve Edge, was adopted.

Productivity increases behind the farm gate are a key objective. Increased farm production helps only in a small way and does nothing to guarantee future sustainability. Profitability can only return with hugely increased prices when farm produce is sold by farmers to processors. This appears unlikely without marketers being given an opportunity to market outside the present historical routes.

Fresh ideas at Board level will come from regular replacement of Directors.

Two term directorships were suggested in 2003.

MIA representatives are industry people. They should be replaced by farmers who know about farming and what is needed. Processors are factory operators processing product they have bought. They do not know farming. Farmers are farmers, processors are processors, marketers are marketers. Each is an expert in their field but not qualified experts in any other. If the Board needs other viewpoints those invited to the table should be experts as are MIE. This is a grass-roots group and would bring practical experience and 'common-sense'.

What is needed?

1. *B&L needs to swap **MIA for MIE** representatives.*
2. ***Less 'behind the gate' efforts to increase production.** Be selective. Increases will happen quickly if profits return to sheep farming.*
3. *Commission academic **research** into **mega-rich**, wealthy people who don't know the NZ lamb 'story'.*
4. ***Embrace change.** Lead innovation. B&L could cajole and encourage marketers to get higher returns by 'market-shaping'.*
5. ***Leadership; Board driven.** Slimmer management, concentrating on marketing and related projects.*
6. *Limiting Board **tenure** to six years; **two terms**.*

www.onestopramshop.co.nz

Predator Free NZ by 2050

(eradicate all pests that threaten NZ native birds)

Sir Paul Callaghan "It's crazy, it's ambitious....it's worth a shot"

Government spends \$60-80m/year on pest control. National will give \$28m to kick-start this initiative. For every \$2 received as a donation they will give another \$1.

Pest control techniques are improving rapidly and are impressive even now. NZ has 26.8 m hectares (bigger than UK) and science has made it possible to remove all cats, mustelids, rats and possums.

Prof Wayne Linklater (Victoria University) regards people as the main problem to succeeding as most don't care about conservation. Many keep cats, some trade possum fur, rats are taonga, hunters enjoy shooting while others do not like any killing of 'pests'.

Technologists and biologists have an achievable goal, but without help from social scientists (anthropologists, sociologists) "to build consensus, support and change human behaviour" the project will never succeed. To eradicate predators throughout NZ and change human behaviour will be a huge task but, "worth a shot".

Bought your drone yet?

Used since 2002, drones have enabled the world to be a potential war zone. 19 countries are known to have drones.

Everybody will need one for self-defence and to eliminate baddies.

Drones will . . .

1. watch your gates
 2. allow snooping of neighbouring farms
 3. check your stock for an outbreak of virulent, contagious diseases which could threaten the whole livestock industry
 4. make farmers 'feel good' when product prices are awful or weather conditions are awful too
 5. use up the entitlement cash from SFF shares (nothing from Wool Equities). Deciding how to spend the windfall had been troublesome
 6. impressing anybody who needed to be impressed
 7. all this, while your farm is being cased-out by baddies wanting to pinch stock, burgle the homestead, steal any tools.
- Black-market meat paid for their drone.**



Raking stones. Unnecessary jobs may give much pleasure, as this did. Holes were filled in lots of odd places.



Tarata Xmas party, 2007. Peter Kettle, Walter Creswell, Rod (Canada), Colin Burlace, Emily (UK), Ron Falconer, Joy, Gayle Falconer, Evcka (Chezcha), Matt (Belgium). Pleasant company from different lands.



Bonfire of farm receipts. Records are complete. No need for paper from daily transactions after seven years.

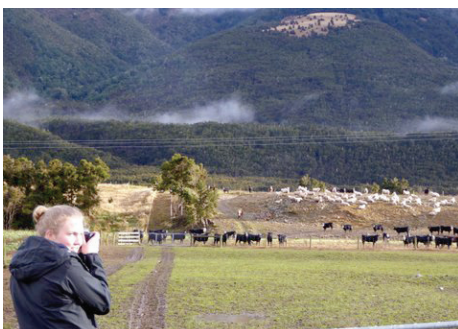
Her Story

Dear Robin,
Thank you for all the wonderful newsletters I've received over the last three years. Regretfully I would like you to take me off the mailing list, as we are moving to France. I have been meaning to write for some time, to say how wonderful the ram we purchased from you was.

You might remember me. We only had ten sheep. The first year we had three sets of triplets and many sets of twins. He was a great performer, but as my daughter pointed out, he wasn't over-worked.

He has gone to a property where they have just retired their twelve-year old ram. So I think he can look forward to a long life. Look forward to dealing with you again in the future. Warm regards, Patricia. Otane, Central Hawke's Bay.

The largest technical companies have more influence over our lives than politicians and nobody can vote them out. Any new App or technical advance is hailed as a tool to make life easier. Not true. Learning more nomenclature, navigating 'friendly' websites and remembering another password is a pain. Did you ask for an upgrade? You got it anyway. Where is evidence that apps make life easier? Digital progress is not enjoyed by everyone. Many people are dragged along as there is not any opportunity to get out.



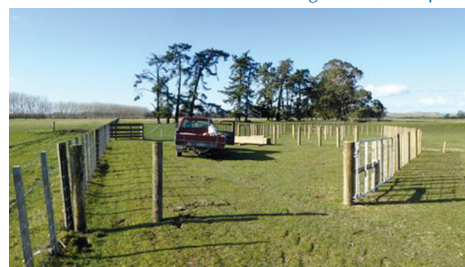
Silja at Rainbow Station, Marlborough.

May 2016



Jaana Hujanen (Prof, Helsinki Uni), Janne Jokela (Farmer, Alaviirre), Silja Alamikkotervo (OSRS Student, Tervola) pleased with OSRS Finns.

Richard and Karen's Jedburgh Farm, Takapau.



Sheepyards close to the finish. OSRS has built and maintained 25 sets of yards over the decades. Good infrastructure is easy on man, stock and dogs. August 2016.

Recognition of farmers by Beef and Lamb.

The contribution to our industry by Gordon Levet, James Hunter, Derek Daniell and Blair Gallagher has been acknowledged by B&L. Their efforts are greatly appreciated by the farmers of New Zealand. Farmers know very well who deserve recognition, farmer's numbers being so small. Congratulations to these good people. Farmers are not prominent as are industrialists, academics, judges and politicians who receive most of the Queen's Birthday and New Year honours.



One Stop Ram Shop Wwooffer-Mobile. Able to be used by all and sundry. Stuck by Mac the Canadian in the Makaretu riverbed. March 2016.



Silja loading branches snapped off trees by swirling July winds. Wwooffer-mobile workhorse