



# One Stop Ram Shop



INTERNATIONAL  
NEWSLETTER No. 64  
September 2007



Lake Pukaki and Mt Cook. Sunrise, 6am.

NZ is a *special* country. March 2007.



After three years almost all the new and repair fencing is complete. John Douglas fences, 800m up Maire Hill.



Dorper Ram

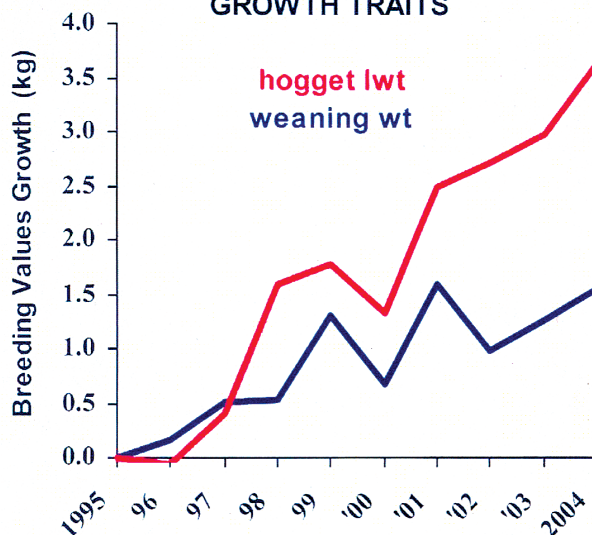
OSRS

Mike Plowman, Ruapehu Constituency candidate for Horizons Regional Council deserves your vote. Mike is a stropky, practical defender of all things to do with King Country farming. Mike would represent your interests and not be covered by Manawatu/Palmerston North parochialism.

## One Stop Ram Shop Genetic Trends

OSRS flocks are achieving good genetic gains

### GROWTH TRAITS



All pedigree links & data recorded for years  
1988 - 2004 used in analysis.



Genetic Trend derived from SIL BV's.  
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Breeding Trust

## PREDICTIONS

Sept 2007

- Sheep meat woes will vanish quickly
- Ram 4 U will reach 500,000 km's soon.
- Farmer supplier loyalty can only be earnt by strong meat processor performance.
- Unless Meat and Wool NZ make their business transparent they will struggle.
- After Mr Peters visits North Korea, expect "Dear Leader" Kim Jong-il to be seen with a wavy, grey haircut and a smart double-breasted suit.





Attractive weaned  $\frac{1}{4}$  Finn,  $\frac{1}{4}$  Texel,  $\frac{1}{2}$  NZ whiteface lambs.  
Argyle Station, Waikaia. Feb 07,

## RAM BUSINESS.

Tangarakau/OSRS has been selling rams for 53 years. OSRS has farmed Finn and Texels for 21 years

OSRS is a major NZ ram business with genetic links to Australia and with many international contacts.

2007 sales were pleasing. Appreciable numbers of ewes are now stabilized and mated annually to a similar stabilized sire. Gains were initially made by hybrid vigour. Now, with OSRS flocks stabilized for a decade, genetic gains will be through performance recording. For ten years fertility of the crosses has been ok. Traits for survival and growth rate are the priority now. Excellent genetic gains have been achieved (refer to graph in OSRS ram catalogue and on the previous page.

The reproductive efficiency of all OSRS breeds has given consistent, predictable production where-ever they are farmed.

*OSRS regularly assesses NZ and Australian rams for animals offering genetic gain. Many new rams have been evaluated and their progeny are now represented in the flocks. Australian semen will be used next tugging, March 2008.*

A feature of recent years is the number of new enquiries received each season, half of which buy rams. Many clients have been coming to OSRS for 15+ years; one family for 40 years.

*Creating long-term relationships with farmers has always been the OSRS prime objective. These farmers make ram selling so pleasurable and help TMG to establish market opportunities.*

Future newsletters will outline the objectives and genetic directions for stabilized flocks, i.e. Finn and Texels in various proportions with Romney and Perendale bloodlines. These crossbreds are dual-purpose sheep.

Specialized flocks i.e. Texel, Finn, Texel-Suffolk, Finn-Texel, Dorper and  $\frac{3}{4}$  Texel-Finn will also be examined. These sheep are used mostly used for a single task which varies for each ram genotype.

OSRS knows that farmers want 'sound' sheep which last, grow well, need little maintenance, are tough and have repeatable performance. OSRS rams do provide all these characteristics on a carcase type required by modern processing. OSRS rams last and last. At OSRS everyone

understands the present sheep crisis. OSRS produces top genetics for farmers nationwide, inspite of the crisis and drought!

## DORPERS AT OSRS

- Key Points....
- (i) Rapid early growth rates.
  - (ii) Non-seasonal mating.
  - (iii) Highly fecund.
  - (iv) Unmatched lamb survival.
  - (v) Muscled carcase.

### ○ SIL Recorded; NZ Animal Breeding Trust (Bureau)

- Dorpers are very Hardy. Minimal lamb losses.
- Lambs are born with an insulating layer of wool.
- Lamb growth rate is similar to those of NZ prime sires.
- Large skin area under the tail. Few dags.
- Dorpers are blocky and well muscled.
- Sexually promiscuous ram and ewe lambs.
- Carcase weight to live weight yield percentage is high. 8% more red meat yeild.
- Ewes are non seasonal breeders.
- Ewes are capable of two matings annually.
- Rams may be used for breeding or as terminal sires.
- Dorpers were developed in South Africa for the harshest of conditions.

*Medium sized sheep. Very good rams for hogget mating. Lambs survive.*

### Comments:

Dorpers are an interesting addition to our NZ sheep genepool. Dorpers have succeeded in some awful environments. 'Ethical' sheep; short tail, large anal skin area, little belly wool. Dorper feet are improving rapidly. Poor feet are not tolerated at OSRS. Lactating ewes benefit from supplementary feed if mated 'out of season'.

*"Show a dorper ewe a photo of a ram and she will start ovulating."*



Stabilised  $\frac{1}{4}$  Finn  $\frac{1}{4}$  Texel  $\frac{1}{2}$  Romney Rams.

### Beijing Hotel Notice.

*"If no room in lift, do not perform yourself. Coolie make lift jump. Do not burn joss sticks in bedroom, mouses much like. If mouses annoy ask at desk for hotel cat".*





Robert Walker bought stylish Houlston Bros, ¼ Finn, ¼ Texel, ½ Romneys. Waimumu, Feb 07

### **BITS 'N' PIECES**

- By changing to low energy light bulbs throughout all NZ, savings equivalent to the light energy used in Dunedin would be saved.
- Sell Landcorp, there is no reason for the Crown to be a farmer. Land and Survey settled innovative young farmers to the benefit of all NZ.

*Now is the time to settle 100 young farmers on Landcorp properties.*

- New Zealanders are generous to charities, they give \$1.3 billion annually.

*Unfortunately \$272 million of this comes from gambling machine societies.*

- Huge areas of the central plateau have been harvested for timber, trash windrowed and chewed into mulch; nothing is wasted. Trees to pasture fast.

*Also are Canterbury, South Canterbury and Otago, each with a local flavour.*

- RMA compliance costs farmers \$81 million annually, a survey of 900 farmers proved. Changes to the Act are needed to make the process simpler and less costly. Any proposal attracts hordes of objectors and creates masses of lawyer work.

- NZ has the second to highest coal reserves per capita in the world.

*Coal to liquids technology is an option for NZ.*

- World wide pet care is worth \$50 billion. Pets are 'family'. Some families are dysfunctional here also. Paris Hilton discarded Tinkerbelle for a younger Chihuahua, then replaced that by a ferret which in turn was replaced by a kinkajou monkey. All this almost as fast as she has changed male consorts.

**Petting will never be the same again.**

- Fonterra's payout is \$5.53 per kg of milk solids for 2007-8. Only 3.5 % of this sum comes from 'added value'. The world is short of dairy commodities.

*A land buying frenzy has started.*



Dairy conversion. An old farm is gone. New pasture, new everything. Only possible with irrigation. Kurow



Len and Sheryl Win's stabilized ¼ Finn, ¼ Texel, ½ Romneys. All surplus dams are eagerly sought locally.

Collingwood, March 07.

**Peter Chamberlin.**

**Norwood, Canterbury.**

Scanning. 1106 MA ewes mated with OSRS Finn-Texel rams: 16 dry, 221 singles, 810 twins, 59 triplets. 182%. Peter warns that "local farmers will not tolerate these desperate times for long before changing land use". Also he "chides MWNZ for spending \$10-12 million of levy money on overseas markets and access yet, claim to know nothing about pricing in market".

**Chris Bowron.**

**Avon Valley, Marlborough.**

"We recently scanned our little mob of Texel ewes. They must have approved of the Texel rams you sent to us as they did 183%. Only two with quads and no dries!"

*Chris has been using OSRS Texels successfully for almost a decade now.*



Texel Perendale lambs ready for final selection for the 'Lamb Oscar' competition at Wanaka. Second out of 56 entries. Robert Gardyne, Boggeyburn, Southland.

OSRS provided Perendale-Texel sires for Robert's use.



Southland kuni kuni's rushing to hear gossip about their cousins, Arthur and Martha, at OSRS, Hawke's Bay.

Ewen Dunnage, Dipton West. Feb 07.



OSRS is a constructive critic of Meat and Wool NZ (MWNZ) and will continue to be so until provided with evidence that levy payers benefit from the huge sums annually spent on farmer's behalf; approximately \$40 million (ie; put money in farmer's pockets).

An enquiry of expenditure and outcomes is required. This is **not** an audit, but an independent investigation by a person of the calibre of Pita Alexander. His task is to look at **all** inputs, value the outputs and report with clarity to the farmers.

**MWNZ will not want an enquiry as its credibility will be threatened.**

*Only after scrutiny of all Board activities, by a 'Pita Alexander', will the Board gain credibility. His investigation and report would finally help farmers to decide whether to shake hands or kick MWNZ backsides.*

At present MWNZ have embarked on a program of spin which is annoying. There are meetings with farmers about the Proposed Work Plan, June 2007.

*Addressing farmers as 'Dear Levy Payers' sounds like 'Dear Leader' Kim Jong-il of North Korea fame. We are farmers; call us farmers.*

Writing about what MWNZ **will do** is fine, *but we need transparency first. How effective have past outcomes been? What has been the **cash** value of the outcomes to farmers? Why ask for increased cattle levies when MWNZ has large cash reserves? Prove that advertising in Asia pays?*

Forget about market initiatives; they are the responsibility of the meat processor who owns the product, any MWNZ initiative is a **subsidy**.

*If I sell my grapes to Montana it is Montana's task to produce and sell the wine. Montana doesn't ask me to **subsidise** their promotions. Meat processors in NZ have no trouble asking for funds from MWNZ for promotion: a subsidy.*

**(TMG, experience)**

As Robin explained to Chairman Mike Peterson, who visited recently, the organization suffers, because it assumed the mantle of the old Meat and Wool Boards when it became Meat and Wool NZ. Mike assured Robin it had changed, and no doubt it has, but it is **perceived** to be the same; the name is too similar.

**New name please** e.g. NZ Pastoral Board. (so other primary producers may be included.)

Some democratic changes need to be made which Mike has promised to address, e.g. the voting rolls are full of errors.

Only by a large improvement in farmers cash position will sheep and beef farmers not look at alternative land use. MWNZ has a political role (not indicated by farmers in the 2003 referendum) to create a better marketing environment, and a leadership role to prod Government on behalf of farmers.

**Farmers need a proactive Board working for them or else why have it?**



Facial Eczema Tolerant Crossbred Rams Kirikau, KC



Tough, grunty Finn-Texel Perendale rams for Simon MacKay, Alfredton. Paratu, Feb 07.



Tim and Richard White (Masterton) have used Dorpers for years. They bought eight rams from this group.

Paratu, Feb 07.



Robin Hilson and Mike Peterson MWNZ.

*Do MWNZ activities put money in farmer's pockets? "Yes", said Mike. "Show me the proof", said Robin. Answers may come from regular meetings. Both want to be positive.*

OSRS, Paratu, May 07.



## THE AUTUMN DROUGHT IN HB

Quotations from Anna Clouston, Flemington.

"Financially it (the cost) has been huge. We sold bulls at lower weights than normal. All late lambing ewes have been sold. Our scanning percentage was down. All hoggets have been grazed out for the past five weeks - this will continue until early September, and we are wintering 250 less bulls than usual.

We kept a journal of feed options, ME values and prices which can be referenced in subsequent droughts.

We also checked out all alternatives and options before making any decision.

Financial recovery will take about two years with the drought costing at \$25/su. The 'spring growth demand' for bulls will push up the bull purchase price and the lower than normal lambing percentage will mean less lambs for replacement and sale"

Farm Focus, 21-08-07

*Farmers moved pretty quickly but the severity of the drought was such that its effect will be felt for a long time.*



Noel Erickson (Gore) trying to photograph whilst being harassed by a 'gusty' westerly. Tarata, May 07.

### The Penultimate Apology.

Helen Clark has apologized to everyone for 'mistakes' of the past; the habit has caught on internationally.

A tribe in New Guinea recently apologized to a Fijian delegation for killing and eating four Fijian missionaries in the nineteenth century. They had been murdered only because tribesmen wanted to eat them.

*Now the Fijians can apologize because they killed ten natives, supposedly the murderers, in a revenge attack. Then, **no more apologies please.***



Good deed. This Clinton ram was released after much effort. Otago, Feb 07.



Trevor Rowlands track making.

Tarata, May 07.



A conservation dam. NZ plants only. Paratu, April 07.



Stream cleaning. Springs have created three permanent streams. OSRS Burnside, March 07.



Refuse fences; mugs. Heaphy Track trampers leave mugs at Rockville. Collingwood, Feb 07.





Robin stalked deer over these immense hills. The deer were **never** under any threat. Rakaia River. March 07.

## COUNTRY OF ORIGIN LABELLING

Customers are entitled to know the country of origin for items they purchase at a supermarket. Vegetables, fresh fruit and meat should not be problematical, but blended products will be a headache.

*Watties canned fruit from China! Watties tomato sauce from Australia!* **Not good enough.**

*Supermarkets and processors did not want the public to know where items are sourced.*

**"I don't wish to eat any food from China". (Robin)**

NZ imports 1.5 million tonnes of food each year ie 375kgs per citizen. (Campbell Live)

## 'OFF-PUTTING' LABELS.

Would you eat something made of sugar, flour, eggs, vegetable oil, baking soda, baking powder, salt, whey, flavour, food starch, propylene, glycol monoesters monodiglycerides, lime juice and coconut? *This was a soggy, tasteless, sweet lump of Lime Coconut Cake, which was started but not finished.* Venice Beach, Los Angeles, 16-6-07.

## CLIMATE

Both France and Belgium are home to the EU Parliament. 20268 tonnes of CO2 emissions is generated by commuting parliamentary people, monthly.

*Taxpayers pay \$370 million to maintain this moving circus. EU is considered a leader in fighting climate-change!* **Really? (Reuters)**

California is leading US climate-change consciousness. Thanks to Schwarzenegger the move there is to renewable fuels and limiting emissions.

Alert dedicated people are making global warming a presidential election issue. These active people knock on doors nationwide with their message, they are well financed and organized. Naturally every 'celeb' is green. Most actors have been 'closet' greens for years.

US with 6 % of the world's population uses 30 % of the world's energy, and is the second biggest polluter.

If fear of global warming creates political pressure in the US let's hope that the new president is courageous enough to tackle the polluters.

<b>ROBIN HILSON</b>	<b>06 8558 335</b>
<b>COLIN MCDONALD</b>	<b>03 2468 475</b>
<b>DON BUCHANAN</b>	<b>07 8966 845</b>
<b>DAN WHEELER</b>	<b>0274 363 167</b>
<b>PETER KETTLE</b>	<b>0274 839 595</b>



The Hossack, Hamner Basin. Gene Thomas has transformed this beautiful station which has OSRS Finn-Texels performing well. Canterbury, March 07.



Every farm needs a Walter (Cresswell.) Paratu, Dec 06



Vasectomies. Dutch vet, American vet, Kiwi vet (final year), Czech (wwoofer), Belgian (wwoofer), Richard Hilson vet, Ron Falconer (OSRS).

**More genotypes than OSRS!**

## SOMETHING WE ALL KNEW.

Emissions are impossible to calculate at farm level.

"Emissions can only be measured experimentally and farm emissions only estimated – because of the inability to qualify environmental, physical and biological influences". Harry Clark, Ag Research Scientist. FW, 20 August 2007.

*Methane production was not just in direct relationship to what an animal consumed.*

**Lots of questions, few answers, plenty of guesses.**

Ungulates have been on earth for 40m years. Now, they have become a target as humans like to blame everybody else for polluting the atmosphere. First culprit was the NZ beef herd which produces 25% of NZ's methane emissions. Now it's the turn of the moose. An adult moose burps methane with a gas equivalent of 2100kgs of CO2 per year. There are 140,000 moose in Norway alone.

**Let's get rid of all cows, moose and humans, then there would be no pollution problems.**

## A WARNING

FW Editorial, Aug 20, 2007. If the NZ dollar settles at 60 to 70c US how strong will be the calls for radical change at PPCS and Alliance? Historically, a kind exchange rate and improving schedule has seen meat company sins forgiven.

**Pressure for change must not be relaxed.**





Texel Rams

OSRS

Vegansexuals are vegetarian, ethical consumers who although attracted to meat-eaters cannot form relationships because the potential partner's body is made up of animal carcasses.

*Human canine teeth evolved for tearing of flesh.  
Elephant canines evolved into tusks for tearing vegetation.*

*Do vegetarians get dentists to take out their canines or do they let them grow into tusks?*



Makaretu River rainbow trout; delicious. Tarata, Jan 07



What is worse: the notice or graffiti?

Otaki.



Refuse fence; old bikes. Fencing skills are being lost in rural NZ.

Alexandra, Central Otago.



Stabilised 1/4 Finn, 1/4 Texel, 1/2 Perendale Rams

OSRS

### THE 'ADDED VALUE' MYTH

Price increases come from shortages. 'Value add' comes from 'fast moving consumer goods', (FMCG's) such as icecream which is taken quickly from the freezer, or from the use of sophisticated ingredients such as those used to hold muesli bars together.

FMCG's have run their course and major food processors (eg. Nestle) have found that they are not adding profit in established markets.

Neither of these 'added value' options are available for sheepmeat although careful packaging will help sales.

As consumer products get cheaper the prices for oil and minerals are getting higher and higher; a trend now starting in agriculture. Prices of central resources are climbing steadily ie. corn, wheat, dairy product so an agricultural boom is starting.

NZ should continue to do that which it does well; produce quality and quantity, on time. NZ producers are reliable and should prepare for an increased demand.

**Food prices are going up.**

NZ is too far away from end users to successfully make money from 'added value'.

Now is the time to control resources and in so doing control the future (after Prof. Keith Woodford Lincoln).

**Now is the time to increase sheep numbers.**



Colin and Dot McDonald's sheep enjoy the view of Foveaux Strait, at the bottom of the Mainland.





Stabilised  $\frac{3}{8}$  Finn,  $\frac{3}{8}$  Texel,  $\frac{1}{4}$  Romney Rams

If you're frustrated with the sheep meat industry, so are we all, but ponder these points

A worldwide shortage of protein is only **now** apparent. Demand is huge by the emerging economies of China and India; supply is limited. Shortages of minerals, oil and milk exist now; the next will be grains, meat and water.

Long term prospects for sheep meat are strong as, are the short term prospects. Why?

- (1) An exchange rate of 65c to 70c US is now probable and the industry will adjust to fluctuations
- (2) Processors do not have the sheepmeat stored, available for spring 2007. They're short now; they will be shorter soon.
- (3) Australian lamb kill is down. So much is working against production growth but their strong local consumer base will account for at least 80% of the production. By eating lamb Aussies support their farmers willingly, and they're eating more.
- (4) Rain has fallen on trashed Gisborne, Hawke's Bay and Wairarapa pastures but recovery is **slow** inspite of warm temperatures. Losses of lambs and ewes have been considerable. A 10% decline in lambs docked is expected.
- (5) Dairy conversions sap the energy of farmers which often leads to lower production by the historic farmed stock, which just do not get the required attention for top performance. Fewer quality lambs.
- (6) Increased overseas demand for the 1m tonnes of sheep meat traded internationally (as reported by OSRS). Quality sheep meat is a health food. Poorer countries want cheap sheep meat (eg Middle East) but the NZ industry will move away as a demand increases elsewhere.
- (7) Untapped opportunities along the northern East Coast of US remains neglected.

Information source: John Atkins (Lean Meats Ltd), Brendon O'Donovan (Westpac Economist), Pita Alexander (Christchurch Accountant)

### OSRS ADVICE

- (a) Do the sheep job as well as possible (considering the drought and lack of cash).
- (b) Plan to **increase** sheep numbers.

- (c) Consider using Dorper Rams to increase lamb survival, carcase yield (up 8%) and reduce wool.
- (d) Purchase high index rams from OSRS. Book and discuss your requirements early.
- (e) Weigh up **all** land use options constantly.

**Prediction: the sheep industry return to profitability will be rapid and permanent.**

ps Read this newsletter (No 64) in Sept 2008

### PERSONAL STUFF



Grandad Robin wrecking daughter Jane's garden for a new driveway. A week of bliss. Nelson, July 07.

Overheard at a Nelson 'learning centre' (kindergarten)  
"Grandfather Robin has got a beard and lots of fluff and he looks funny" **Morning talk, Lucy Tucker**

"Oh grandfather, you have a beard! You know, Roald Dahl said "people who have beards have something to hide"  
**Rebecca Hilson (9), Takapau.**

**Fruitful Paratu.** Visitors will be able to taste some real HB flavours as the garden now has; persimmons, kiwifruit, apples, apricots, nectarines, mandarins, peaches, grapefruit, feijoas, grapes, pears, raspberries, boysenberries, strawberries, and lots of lemons.

**Because possums have been eliminated.**



'Macho', Joy's best-ever horse died, aged 19 years. A stoic horse which never flinched when being repaired by vets was a favourite of everybody. Macho would willingly hunt everyday, if possible.