



One Stop Ram Shop



INTERNATIONAL
NEWSLETTER No. 68
February 2008



6am Kaikoura.

OSRS NOTICE BOARD.

I wish to acknowledge Colin and Dot McDonald who did so much for OSRS/TMG in Southland.

It is a decade since Colin visited HB with a bus load of farmers. Soon after we talked seriously about Colin acting for OSRS as the southern depot.

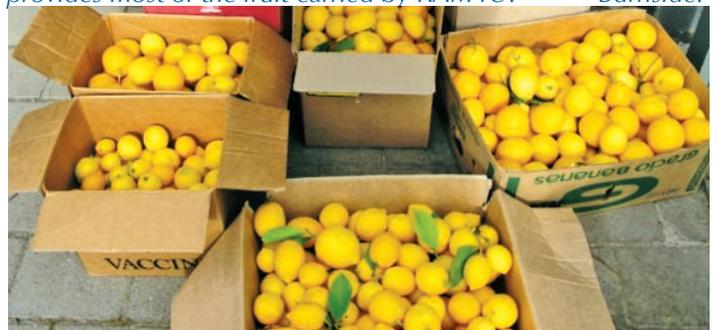
How well it worked. Colin's enthusiasm and practical nous complimented our scientific development. Dot's contagious humour and organisational skills were shown best at the numerous field days and farm visits.

Now with a large farm at Slope Point they both need time to soak up the views and enjoy their delightful children as they mature into southlanders.

Thank you both, Robin.



Farmers know the lemons, but not the tree. This lemon tree provides most of the fruit carried by RAM4U. Burnside.



All for SI farmers. 120kg of lemons about to be loaded into RAM4U. Some become white lemons after ten days in the boat. Oct, 2007.



OSRS West sale rams at Taumarunui in November.

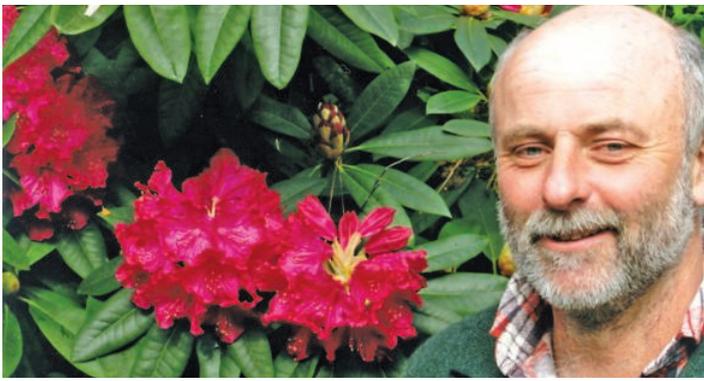
PREDICTIONS. Summer 2008.

- Candidates 'for change' winning meat company and MWNZ elections
- Dampish (La Nina) summer. Warm winter.
- Shortages of cattle and sheep breeding stock.
- Takapau plains; the next grape region.
- Processors competing for lambs in winter.



Bowls made by Gill Gane of Nelson are found country wide. OSRS gave bowls and lemons to longstanding clients.





Jeff Moss, the new OSRS South. A smooth transition from Colin to Jeff has occurred. OSRS is pleased to keep OSRS South operational.



Sue and Jeff Moss, Peter Kettle (Operations Manager), with rams selected for OSRS South. Paratu, Nov 2007.



Phillip Smith, Rangiwahia, bought Maire branches with seeds for Robin to grow. Phillip's Maires are some of the best in NZ Openday, Nov 2007.



Burnside Openday. Nov, 2007.



Don Buchanans' Piedmontese sire bull looks magnificent above his farm. Don's cattle have amazing muscling and are worth a visit to view.



Don Buchanan (OSRS West) has been a finalist in every 'Steak of Origin'. There is room on this board for more plaques.



Gordon Gailey, uses Texel Suffolk rams at Waimiha in the heart of the King Country.



Maria Lupton, farmer, and Mike Wood, stock agent, catching up. OSRS West, Openday.



Freshly drilled Tarata hill country. Chou and Swedes sown will be utilised in late winter.

Jan, 2008.

WHAT THE FUTURE HOLD FOR SHEEP BREEDS.

Prof Hugh Blair. Massey Geneticist.

At **present** the rate of genetic gain comes from the following.

- Selection differential, i.e. The proportion kept as replacements.
- Selection accuracy, i.e. Merit prediction based upon recorded and physical information.
- Variability. Greater variability allows great genetic gain.
- Generation interval.

In the **future**, the rate of gain will be quickened up by the use of genetic markers for specific traits. When a bundle of markers is combined it is then a **genomic selection**.

This will be possible.

However performance characteristics may be transferred through generations (heritable) but which are not encoded directly in DNA, this is **epigenetics**. Epigenetic marking is different for each tissue of the body. *Expensive; but it is coming also.* (FW, article)

How long will this science take to reach farms and how much will it cost?

2008. 80-90% of sheep genes are shared. The 10% of variants 'could' have great potential but they are scattered on the DNA. To find useful genes, multiply the carriers and speed up the rate of selection is the objective.

2020. 10 variants have been found and are being multiplied by 'selected' ram businesses.

2030. The "Muldoon" is launched. This sheep has all the good traits science has been able to isolate over the last 22 years. Levies have funded this research at \$10 million/year, i.e. \$220 million. Through science funding, successive governments have contributed also.

Farmers may now **buy** back the genetics (as a ram), but most opt not to buy into the new genetics; only ram breeders do that.

Traditional selection has meantime steadily progressed for traits of survival, worm resistance, longevity, hardiness and tough productive sheep have resulted.

*Will meat processors **pay more** for the product of science or is it useful only to increase the 'on farm' production i.e. ewe productivity and efficiency?*

It took from importation of new breeds in 1985, rapid multiplication through Sheepac, to major genetic contribution by 2005. 20 years for the genetics to reach all the national flock, just in time for the sheepmeat price collapse.

We now have the genetics, but not the monetary return!

By 2030, \$220 million will have been spent. But it will be 2050 before the national flock is the perfect 'Muldoon'

Can we wait this long?

Will sequencing put money in farmer's pockets?

CLARK'S TIME IS UP.

This Labour Government has over-seen the greatest exodus ever of trained, educated NZers to overseas lives. Replacement by masses of unskilled, non English speaking migrants from everywhere, has not improved NZ.

Our sons and daughters have gone.

1,000,000 Kiwis are overseas. 24.2% of Kiwis with tertiary education live outside NZ.

Overseas they'll breed; there they'll be buried too. Their sons and daughters will never be Kiwis.

MMP HAS NOT WORKED.

Name 120 MP's? Name 20 MP's?

Although the NZ tax rate is low by OECD standards, it is a disincentive which *kills initiative*.

Now NZ has the **Electoral Finance Bill**, which is about "the sweet scent of power, and lust for control. It's about the decadence of corruption, the stench of deceit and the refusal to accept the reality of impending defeat".

Hone Harawira, 18-12-07.

No kiwis would wish to return to NZ when its Prime-Minister Ok'd such an odious piece of legislation.



Royal Flush!. A Beefeater holds the Corgis. Eketahuna.



Visit by Massey University diploma students. Warren Anderson (Lecturer) and Peter Kettle ran the session at Paratu. Nov, 2007.

BRANDING.

Is the red car, RAM4U and the lemons it carries a 'BRAND'?

People have suggested they are!

Farmers give gifts for the lemons; embarrassing.

Hello Robin,

Finland calling, winter is coming. Weather is turning colder and colder. But the situation is better than during the past years, because ewes are still out in the fields.

Not yet freeze and snow, but it looks like summer-and amusement is over.

Ewes could be outside little over 4 months, from the beginning of June now.

Now begins the costly period of taking care of lambs in the sleephouse and feeding them with hay, silage and oats.

And that is why our profit margin is not better than in NZ in spite of our better lamb prices. I think that our margin is less than yours.

All the expenses are risen; fuel, electricity, machinery, feeds, "production material" (big bale wrap plastics) etc.

Only thing that remains the same, are producers prices.

And that's why many older farmers put an end to their farming.

And the EU beurocracy is making the life of the rest of us, very difficult.

The EU is very bad to our agriculture. Now we have too much sugar in the EU and every country was duty bound to reduce it's own production.

Finland reduced its production 38% and shut down our other sugar factory.

Now we have here only 1 factory but it must be shut down as well, because big countries, Germany and France have increased their own production.

Hereby we lose our self-sufficiency and we must import all the sugar!

That's absolutely total absurdness.

Sugar is the first branch of farming industry that ends here, many farmers believe that sheeps are the first animals that end here!

EU is killing farming in Finland little by little, We joined the EU in 1995.

I think farming in Finland is mainly over by the year 2040-2050, in the worst case scenario, if the systems are not changing.

Farmers that can continue after that get their money elsewhere and farming is a hobby.

This global farming system is not good for us, because it's so expensive to produce anything here in the northern periphery.

Let's hope that there isn't coming any wars in the future.

If we try to import our food in the wartime, we're doomed without own agriculture.

Now you see, I'm quite worried about the way things move ahead here in EU.

But what can we do? I don't know.

It helps, if the farming conditions in the best farming areas global are getting worse (dryness wetness etc) and there is coming shortage of food and the prices of food are getting up.

Okay, that's enough this time!

Greetings from Finland.

Lauri Leinonen.

Finland,8-10-07.

INTERNATIONAL COMMENT.

Australia.

'Beaut Blokes' is a Victorian dating organisation which introduces urban singles to rural singles "with a few 'ks' on the clock". It's been a raging success, with urbanites involved with a weekend of rural activities, i.e. feeding out, shearing etc.

Australian Finnsheep Breeders Association newsletter.

'Our purebred Finns now have some NZ blood through their genetics from (OSRS) semen imported. (Sale information) Neil Blenkiron, NSW.

'Our lambs from AI OSRS (Finn) semen from NZ are particularly pleasing-showing good growth rates and excellent wool. Maureen Shepherd, Victoria.

Reports of Finn-Texel and Finn semen used in West Australia and Victoria are excellent. More quality semen will be sent across for mating this autumn. Orders for next season have been received.

Bruce McClymont has growing interest in Victoria for Finn Texels as their performance is publicised. OSRS FT semen was used by Bruce.

He said "they were great survivors, living only on straw throughout last years drought".

"Lambing percentages in NSW are well down. Because of the early spring dry, most big singles were sold for killing at weaning. Then it rained and has not stopped. Lambs have grown well and there will be a major shortage in autumn. This season is La Nina, very wet and harvesting is tricky":

"Rudd was always going to win; time for a change. Your Helen better watch out".

Andy Roberts. Jan 2008.Cootamundra, NSW.

UK. It is illegal to die in the parliament.

It is treason to place a postage stamp upside down with the monarch's head on it.

It is illegal for women to be topless except as a clerk in a tropical fish store.

It is legal in the city of York to murder a Scotsman if he has a bow and arrow.

US. Ohio. Its illegal to get a fish drunk.

Florida. Unmarried women parachuting on sunday may be jailed.

Vermont. Women must have written permission from their husbands to wear false teeth.

France.

It is illegal to name a pig Napoleon.

Switzerland.

A man may not relieve himself after 10pm standing up.



Wairau river with raging waters. This beautiful braided river is under threat from power generators and irrigators. Oct, 2007.



No explanation needed.

Foxhill, Nelson.



West Coast lakes are stunning.

Lake Paringa.



Finn-Texel ewes and lambs. "I wish had such productive, well muscled sheep years ago".

Russell Brodie.

Rangitata Island. Oct, 2007.



Haast Pass in spring.



'Biggles' the pet lamb is not allowed to fly Russell Brodie's museum planes. Worth a visit.

Oct, 2007.



Oyster Catchers. Fortrose, Southland.



Peter and Julie Cloughley's beautiful farm with its superb sheep has been sold and will continue its organic path.

Waimate, Oct, 2007.



Robin and John Turner, Alliance Chairman, met to discuss sheepmeat issues. John was voted off the board by disgruntled southern farmers, wanting change.

Galehills, Mossburn. 16 Oct, 2007



No feed. Dacre, Southland.

15 Oct, 2007.



Peter Crone has trained his dogs at Sherwood Down to widdle on thistles. Peaceful here in spite of a howling nor-wester. Fairlie, Oct.



Peter Quinney is proud of his Finn Texel Romney hoggets and so he should be. A tough autumn and winter; yet they looked excellent. Motupiko, Nelson



Rugged beauty. Anatoki hills tower over tranquil Takaka Valley pastures. Some of NZ's best Finn Texels are farmed here by Gavin and Jane Petterson. Takaka. Oct, 2007.



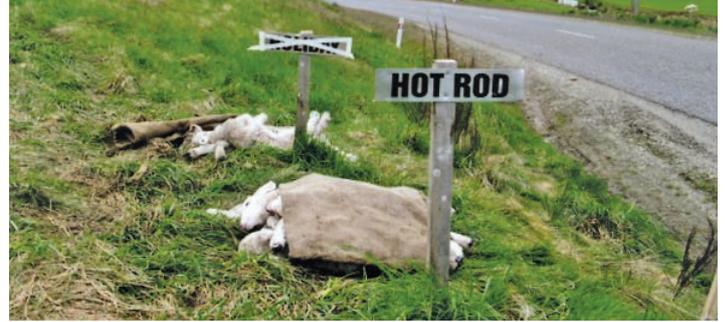
Lots of mail hinders starling nestbuilding not one iota. Kaiwera, Otago.



Sandhill Creek at NW Nelson, is tannin stained, beautiful and mysterious.



Smoko room with a million dollar view. David Hobson's farm overlooks Able Tasman National Park from Takaka Hill.



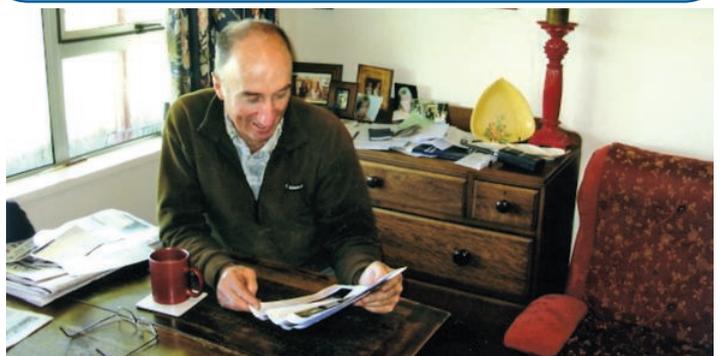
New signage. No holiday this year from slink skin money. Kaiwera, Otago.

MORE SCARES.

Bacterial infections become super bugs when they develop resistance to drugs used to treat them. Many bugs occur naturally and only cause trouble when they enter a bloodstream.

One such superbug is now in Dutch pigs, Canadian pigs and the farmers. It is particularly nasty, with a virulent form which appears to spread between people. US uses many Canadian pig products and the superbug is increasingly found outside hospitals in US.

NZ imports tonnes of Canadian pig products.



Barry O'Carroll, chuckling over some newsletter comment. OSRS Texel Suffolks are used on his Hawarden farm.



No place for pollution. A beer bottle bobs in the Sandhill Creek. NW Nelson



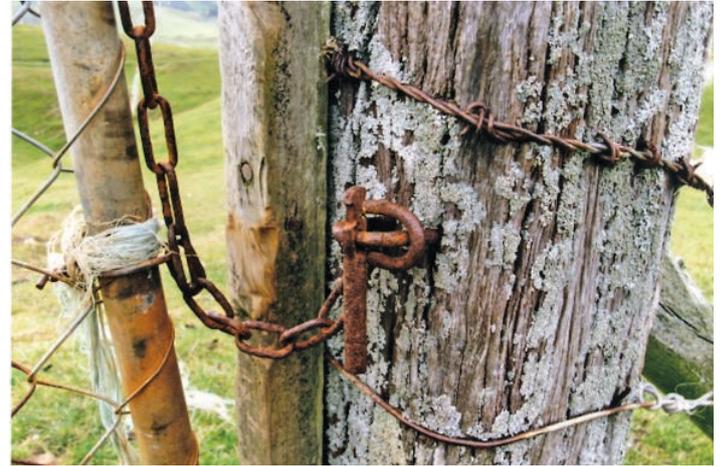
As the sunset farewells the day, schist outcrops exhibit many forms. Central Otago is so interesting.
Middlemarch, Oct, 2007.



A "skinny fence" at Middlemarch. Deer, goat and pig skins adorn many SI fences.



RAM4U at Rotherham. Road dust penetrates car linings to enter the driver's 'cocoon'.
'Clean me' time.



This latch mystifies all town visitors. The Glen 2008.



November. Simon McKay, Eketahuna does his bit for prostate awareness. 'Mos' were everywhere.



Tagging and tailing. Evcha recording, Colin Burlace tagging, Dave Mulinder catcher, Walter Cresswell spraying and tailing. Tailing finished in November because of inclement weather.



These mowers consume grass, weeds and fertilise the ground. They use little fuel, take years to wear-out, are quiet and require little maintenance. Banks Peninsular, Oct, 2007.



Serious reading (OSRS newsletter), sad sports news and assorted trivia of the daily mail. Owen River, Murchison.



Steve Wyn-Harris has provided cover for his sheep from the scorching HB December sun. His coopworths are very productive.



Robin lifting an express bowl from (ex cricket) mate Steve Wyn-Harris over the boundary. Steve and Robin may have become 'Blackcaps' if they had facilities like this for practice instead of the Tarata lawn. Marlow Hill, Takapau.



Robin and Matthew Hilson sailing away on Lake Paratu. 2007.



Grandad's pets. All five yelling and squealing at a Xmas splash. Rebecca, Mathew, Lucy, Jonty, Charlotte. Trouble brewing, water pistols being filled. Paratu, 2007

THE END OF CHEAP FOOD IS NIGH.

As UN's Food and Agricultural Organisation looks to blame food production for all the planet's ills it is apparent **humans need to leave planet earth.**

Livestock uses 70% of all Agricultural land, which is 30% of the planet's surface.

Livestock produce 18% of the greenhouse gases.

Livestock use 8% of the global water available to humans.

Livestock reduce biodiversity.

The solution to all this livestock degradation of planet earth is to price all natural resources e.g. land, water, waste sinks so the true economic and environmental costs are recovered. By putting a 'true' price on food, it will not be cheap (and somehow the planet will be saved.)

RN, 14-12-07.

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WHY FOOD PRICES ARE ESCALATING.

Between 1974 & 2005 food prices fell by 75%. Since 2005 they have risen 75%. Only small grain reserves remain worldwide. 30 million tonnes is going into ethanol production due to US subsidies. Everywhere forest clearance has accelerated to plant more grain.

A SUV tankful of ethanol comes from sufficient maize to feed one person for a year.

3kgs of maize produces 1kg of pork and 8kgs produces one kg of beef.

US farm income will be \$US 87 billion; a rise of 50% due to ethanol production.

The increasing wealth of India and China boosts demand for meat. In 1985 Chinese ate 20 kg of meat/head, by 2007 it was 50kg/head.

NZ will benefit as land use options develop. More grapes, dairying, cereals, lucerne, and stock will be required. NZ's future is in smart primary production; producing quality all year.

NZ's wealth is the innovative farmers and their land.



All home grown. The black stuff is mushroom. A small fertile vegetable patch is producing great volumes of chemical free food.