



# One Stop Ram Shop



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## **Theresa Gattung visited OSRS, 9-12-08.**

Koru Mullins phoned, "Theresa just wants to get her hands or feet on the ground with regards to wool". So, she came to see ewes being shorn.

**ROBIN;** "Why should I support your company?"

**THERESA;** "Because we are searching for opportunities world-wide. Nobody has been positive about wool for ages."

Our opposition is united in criticising the WPI company. NZ farmers have to get more for wool, now.

Manufacturers have said "I can pay plenty more, but why should I, when I don't have to?"

This took ten minutes to say.

**ROBIN;** "You appear not to have a strategic plan that farmers can relate to?"

**THERESA;** "We have, but first we will come out with a brand/logo in April".

**ROBIN;** "Our shearing gang; Paewai-Mullins, make as much out of OSRS wool as I do".

She appeared quite surprised by this .

Summary: Theresa said that 'we' just need to promote wool better and returns will improve immediately. Nothing she said was new. Nothing mentioned would encourage any farmer to support the new organisation.

OSRS has exported specialised raw wool and understands the 'issues', which is more than Theresa appears to.

Note: OSRS will support WPI because the present group of exporters has done nothing to improve the price to farmers for decades.

*They (wool exporters) have had their day.*



Robin Hilson, Theresa Gattung (WPI);

Burnside

## **TWO TOOTH RAMS ARE STILL AVAILABLE AT OSRS.**

Reasonable numbers of all genotypes are still available for purchase at two sites on each Island.

Anybody requiring rams is still sure of a good selection.

Farmers appreciate the number of stabilised crossbred rams marketed. Pricing and selection based upon SIL ranking has made choice simpler.

OSRS ram sales usually cease about May each season.

Staff and rams enjoyed a Xmas/New Year break after months of intensive activity for man and stock.

TMG is moving surplus sheep between farms now.



Perendale-Texel rams.



Ewes and lambs, 1/4 Finn, 1/4 Texel, 1/2 Romney.

Tarata.

Robin Hilson (OSRS)	06-855 8335.
Peter Kettle (OSRS)	0274 839 595
Jeff Moss (S)	03-246 8308
Robert Carter (KC)	07-896 7020
Dan Wheeler (NC)	0274 365 167
Guy Bellerby (TeAnau)	03-249 8220
Blair Gallagher (SC)	03-303 9819

## CONFUSION

### CASE I: WEL IS A DISGRACE. (WOOL EQUITIES LTD)

Our M&W NZ Board (equivalent of the day) established Wool Equities Ltd.

Wool Board assets (some) could have been liquidated and the funds given back to Levy payers.

*"I thought WEL was set up as a business model in 2004. I hoped they would develop a marketing business to try and lift sheep farmers incomes. They chose not to and that was a mistake---?"*

*Mike Peterson, FW, 27-10-08.*

Assets no more. How naive 'our' representatives have been.

Fortunately farmers responded to the proxy form in the last OSRS newsletters and a WEL motion to 'delist' was defeated. WEL is unable to hide its business and still legally has to report to shareholders.

An act of faith saw 9000 farmers leave money in WEL and take shares. Alarm bells should have rung when the composition of the board was made public (all appointed). These 'experts' have since paid themselves well, achieved little business and wrecked any share value.

The only chance now to get any value for shares lies with WAG (Wool Action Group) wresting control from the present board. Determination and farmer support could achieve this.

Farmers are confused (and bored.)

### CASE II: WPI AND WGH

Wool Partners International (WPI) and Wool Grower Holdings (WGH). Wrightson-PPG (WPGG) became

a partner supplying sites for storage and handling for a new trading entity which will be 'close' to farmers, manufacturers and marketers. Kiwi-owned and business-like, with plenty of farmer financial backing (optional) better returns will surely come. Founding directors of both companies are poor appointments. (*Loud voices from consultation meetings?*) These directors are responsible for the direction the company takes and ultimately its marketing success, only by which it will get farmer confidence.

Where are directors who could make this happen?

Directors are needed to replace the present ones who represent the past and reflect the stoic conservatism of those who appointed them.

WPGG will be delighted to shed off its wool division eventually.

Nobody will pay enough to make wool worth producing. China underpins the whole selling price.

'Wool Marketer' a newsletter published by the Council of Wool Exporters has not helped their cause. For decades this body have been 'marketing' NZ wool and failed to improve farmer returns. The first sign of a new initiative and they cry 'foul'.

*Wool Exporters: Compete with WPI, succeed and you will get support.*

What is needed to save wool?

Lots of knocking on doors, good marketing and stable supply lines. A new batch of directors who have skills to direct the companies.

*All of which we've heard before.*

Farmers need to support this last effort.

Farmers are confused (and cynical.)



Seed pea crop at OSRS.

Oct 2008.



Shorn hoggets at Tarata.

Sept 2008.



Poor malting barley at OSRS. Tough spring, just too dry.



Drilling a summer fodder crop into a green, sprayed paddock. Burnside, Oct 2008.

### FROM NEWSLETTER 47, AUGUST 2004.

David Norgrove, Director of the British Museum, Director of the Strategic Rail Authority, (£4.5 billion budget), Chairman of the Marks & Spencer Superannuation Fund, (£3.5 billion fund). David was in charge of the apparel division of Marks & Spencer which was the largest in EU and No 3 in the world. Personal advisor to Margaret Thatcher for three years. Wwoofed 2004 at OSRS, for 4 weeks. Excellent rabbit shooter. (visitor at OSRS for four weeks.)

#### The position of wool in the world fibre market.

“Wool has very positive features.

- 1) Its quality.
- 2) The way it drapes.
- 3) It is a luxury product.

The challenge is to make it **relevant**. Advertising is not enough. Wool must adapt to new needs. Marks & Spencer is quite unique because it could employ technologists who would change the fibre to meet the requirements of clients and ultimately therefore create sales.

This, Marks & Spencer did very successfully. It did things that IWS never even considered.

Younger people see wool as “slightly old fashioned” as they like glitz and disposables. As the young age they want “easy care”. However, all generations are using less and less wool. Artificial fibres actually are a huge threat. Recently developed ‘intelligent fibres’ can change their characteristics. Fibres are being developed which can be electrically heated by batteries that are woven into the fabric. These fibres and fabrics are at present being tested worldwide.

- 1) Money is needed to produce fibre the market wants.
- 2) Wool products must be sold properly. It has to move away from the ‘fuddy duddy’ image.

However, it is the **farmer** (the producer) who is needed to finance the technology required because the processors of wool cannot do this globally, they are just **too small**.”

**Summary:** David was really positive about wool’s future if the money is spent to make it meet the requirements of changing markets.

OSRS: There is **no answer**. Farmers are too stretched to put more money into R & D. So much in the past has not produced results. (Agreed by David – IWS failed.)

### CASE III. MEAT INDUSTRY CHANGE

Joint marketing of sheepmeat has not happened. PGGW’s purchase of 50% of SFF’s has not happened.

MIAG’s campaign to replace processor directors with some of their own has happened.

*Prediction: The new directors **will** have influence*

Many farmers, who were fortunate enough to qualify, voted for the PPCS-WPGG alliance but later admitted that they were delighted when the deal crashed as they “were against it all along”.

PPCS wisely changed its name to Silver Fern Farms (SFF). Now with financial security arranged it does not need WPGG although they both want to bed down sometime. **Why?**

Meat processors have all announced healthy profits. Competition for sheepmeat is starting now.

Nationally the sheep population is **lower** than experts think. (personal observation).

*Sheepmeat prices will stay up.*

All that is needed is ‘backbone’. (SFF’s supply contract)

SFF already has shown to have none, After travelling NZ talking commitment, loyalty, teamwork for ‘backbone’ sheep and beef contracts, SFF reneged on their first beef contract.

*No words from Garden or Cooper will placate farmers.*

*SFF has failed at the starting blocks.*

OSRS prediction, N/L 64, September **2007**.

**“Farmer supply loyalty can only be earned by strong processor performance”.**

SFF’s lack of backbone will delight fellow processors, who will have plenty of new clients coming.

*Farmers are confused, but ‘feel better’.  
2009 looks good.*



OSRS social. Friends joined staff for a rousing evening and delicious meal at Takapau’s own restaurant, ‘Friar Tuck’.  
Dec, 2008.



Haymaking in a day.

Paratu, Dec 2008.

**CASE IV. LOOKING FOR ALTERNATIVES.**

Many farmers are still looking for alternatives. Some being wool enthusiasts have had enough and are using Dorpers (+ Wiltshires). Quite a number are increasing their sheep flocks. Many are unhappy with dairy support.

Much of NZ is suitable only for sheep. Now topdressing is not happening durable sheep are sought. Tough OSRS genetics have succeeded, with their repeatable performance where other sheep have flopped.

Drought has been a financial burden. Dairy grazing has not been the panacea expected. Crops for dairy cows have often failed. Farm sales have fallen away and leasing is now not as popular. Dairy farmers have reneged on contracts.

So sheep it is. Sheep production is improving and sheepmeat products meet market specifications. OSRS genetics do the right things in the paddocks and on the hooks.

*Sheepmeat prospects are excellent. It only takes a few health conscious, wealthy shoppers to buy the declining volume of available meat. Less than 1,000,000 tonnes of sheepmeat is moved internationally. (There are 11 million tonnes of Bonita bananas sold and 90 million tonnes of fish caught each year)*

Federated Farmers say \$150 per carcase is needed.

“Not possible” says Cooper (SFF), typically negative.

“Farmers will have to improve” says Peterson M&WNZ.

**Why?**

OSRS, “a worthwhile target for all players in the sheepmeat industry to aim for”.

Imaginative, committed sheepmeat marketing and prices will reach \$150.

- Sheep are the most suitable species for much of NZ.
- Sheepmeat markets will be undersupplied forever.
- Sheepmeat is a health food for the wealthy.
- Sheepmeat volumes from NZ are sustainable.
- Ewe production has not yet peaked.
- Sheepmeat may be grown easily to specification.
- All year supply of fresh sheepmeat is now possible.
- The castration requirement of SFF is not backed by science.

**Set targets, contract lamb supply, reward producers and end-users will get perfect red meat. Its all possible and quite simple.**



Dead ram, Blast!



*Oxford surprise. Twin sisters chatted happily about how they had been driven. RAM4U had covered 537000 kilometres, her sister only 304000. Canterbury, Oct 2008.*



*Blair and Sarah Gallagher’s farm is nestled beneath foothills. This attractive farm lies well and has more regular rainfall than does most of Canterbury. Mt Somers*



*A good weasel, dead. Shot in the Paratu Garden.*



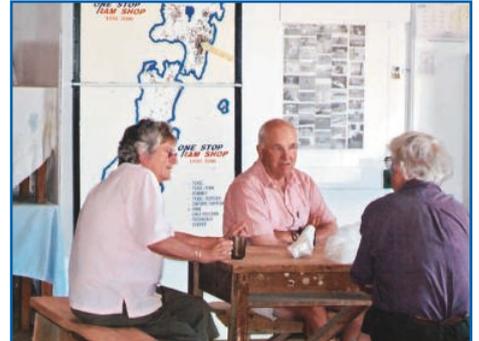
*New wetland at The Glen, Pauatahanui. Spot the bullfrog. Porirua, Sept 2008.*



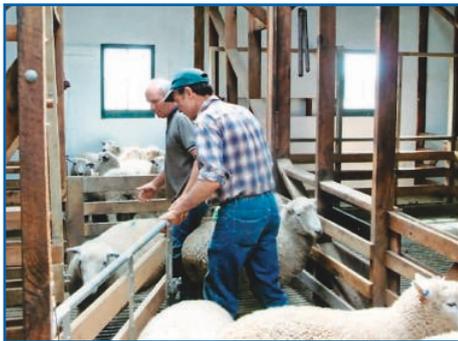
Dennis Meade buys 'stud' sires only. A perfectionist with stock. Surplus sheep from Dennis have thrived where-ever TMC has placed them in both the NI and SI Paratu, Oct 2008



Associated with OSRS since 1987, Phil and now Dougal Simpson get top recording Texel Suffolks and 1/4 Finn 1/4 Texel 1/2 Romney rams for 'Heaton Park' Marton.



Ram selection brings annual reunions. Peter and Rachell Blundell's kids schooled with Robin's. They farmed perendales, sold rams and competed at provincial sheep shows together. OSRS, Dec 2008.



Te Kuiti farmer Bernard Kearins buys two tooth 1/4 Finn 1/4 Texel 1/2 Romneys. He was first to use this stabilised breed.



Barry Burge from Rotorua has been selecting Finn-Texel rams at OSRS for almost two decades.



Ali and Craig McCartie, with food for the journey home. Tahora, Taranaki. Paratu, Dec 2008.



OSRS first Openday. Two Robins. Robin Clapham (Wairoa), Robin Hilson (Takapau) 4 Nov, 2008.



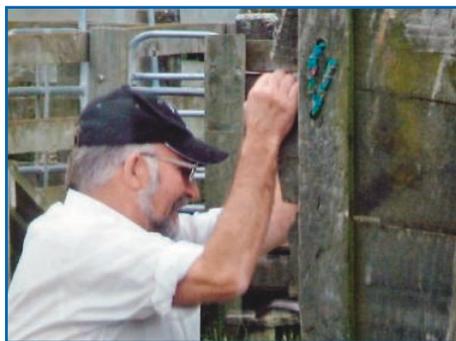
Second OSRS Openday. 20 Nov, 2008



Wayne Harriman farms Finn-Texel sheep at Eketahuna. Strong country with an equible climate.



Dale and Geoff Hornblow from Onga Onga.



Thoughtful, practical Alec Olsen, valued client.



Peter Sorenson, Tracy and Glen from Pongaroa.



Ewe with 1/4 Finn 1/4 Texel 1/2 Perendale lambs. Pirongia in the distance. Merv Nelson developed these hills from gorse. Spectacular. Te Kuiti, Nov 2008.

### THEY SAID.

"Two bad years finished me Robin" *KC farmer who sold up..*

"The lambs have never been better, solid. Really a nice type of lamb" (1/4 F, 1/4 T, 1/2 Perendale).

*Ben and Rebecca Stubbs, Te Kuiti.*

"I was most impressed by the photos of your sheep in your newsletters".

*Graham Bushell, farmer, NSW.*

"Enjoyed your recent newsletters. If I knew I was to feature on your catalogue I would have worn a more colourful shirt".

*David Darby, Porangahau.*

"Sorry we always seem to miss you when you visit – definitely our loss! The (dead lamb) pile wasn't huge this year but neither was the overall lambing percentage – too many dries and at a loss for a reason."

Keep up the great information supply; especially the five liners.

*Pukerau, Southland.*

"Thanks Robin, the ram is great. He has settled in well. Much quieter than the others we have got."

*Taumarunui, new client.*

"Ram arrived safely and looks great. The truck guy told us he was mad, but he seems pretty quiet to me! He hasn't stopped eating since he got here."

*Auckland, new client.*

"Robin just ringing to say thank you for the rams; they're magnificent. They obviously had been on the trucks for a few days but weren't limping, they looked great. I really love Texel – that straight line between the hind legs. My wife loves Texels; the feel of them and their muscled look. They are really nice rams, quality rams which really suit us."

*Northland, client of 20 years.*

"Great rams Robin. Thanks"

*Marlborough.*

"Thank you for the excellent rams and a happy and wet new year".

*It was wet. Marlborough.*

"Robin; Top rams. Thank you".

*Murchison.*

"I love the drive and being amongst dedicated sheep people". A Northland client of twenty years who drives 1506kms to select his rams and carry them home.

"When you first came to OSRS you said you'd like 150% lambing and better finishing (1991)".

"Well I get 150% weaned and plenty 'off' their mothers. I achieved what I set out to do. Unbelievable. I'd like to think that the management, which changed browntop to ryegrass, had a part in it too. I really enjoy these trips down to select rams: a little holiday".

*Barry and Mary Burge, Rotorua.*

Perendale Texel rams are tough.

"Taupo had a major drought; each day I fed 3000 ewes maize from a side feeding trailer. All up it weighed four tonnes. Sheep learnt quickly about maize, they mobbed the tractor and ran under the trailer to reach the maize. Under the vehicles was the shortest route. Eventually I ran over a new ram and thought him dead. He got up dangling one leg. I isolated him. When all the rams were shorn in December I could not recognise him. They're tough."

*Ewen Lilburn, Taupo.*

Pickled lamb; a new Marlborough vintage.

Nelson born lambs were finished in vineyards last autumn. They thrived, enjoying the sweet grapes and leafy prunings. Fearless lambs harassed frightened pruners who felt threatened by these aggressive sheep.

*Tony Turnbull, Marlborough.*

"Now sit down. I've said it before and I'll say it again, those newsletters of yours are bloody marvellous! Well done, my son."

**Well known** Southlander.

(OSRS) "Rams have bought the percentage from 120% (in a really good year) to 150% now for 5 or 6 years. No shepherding this year and it would appear to be one of the best drops we've had. All stock are finished."

*Southland, Five Rivers.*

"Newsletters make you think out of the square, how you would live if in that country".

*TeAnau*

OSRS: Exactly the objective.

"In terms of objectives we achieved everything we set out to achieve with your rams. We moved from a high of only 120%, mostly stores, to 150%, all finished to heavy weights (season provided) but the processor let us down. They wouldn't keep up, the money was not there. We have done our part and done it well. We can slot into any pasture to plate system, easily if the money were only there. We do not need some company to tell us how to do it with their genetics thanks, we've been doing it for years with your rams. I love my sheep. So now we're dairying too."

*Southland.*

"Actually, I read it (newsletter) before the paper".

*Tokanui, Southland.*

"We really enjoyed your trip to Alaska, it was really interesting. Full of facts and points of interest. We have a visitor who stays here every year six weeks fishing and he goes annually to Alaska – but sees a very different Alaska. Who pays you to go there and write like that?"

*Nobody pays me.*

*Motelier, Southland.*

"If I was farming again, you know, I would use your rams. You select them for all the right reasons, practical reasons and no foolery."

*Ex Perendale ram breeder, Central Otago.*

*Thanks. Skilled, experienced staff make it happen.*

"(NL) give information about all parts of the country, information which is interesting. It's the best read – I share it with others. The photos are marvellous".

*Taihape farmer.*

"Is it the same car?" Yes.  
Taihape Farmer.

Tale from a school mate.

"I remember once in the fourth form finding an injured hedgehog (not common in 1950's) which we took around to Fendalton. There we built a most elaborate home and nursed it for ten days. It died of course".



A 'wise' tree in Audrey Walker's Waimiha garden.



Fooled you!

"Robin you always had a deep interest in animals", Frogs, lizards, spiders (katipos), birds – mostly, they died. Bee hives were kept from 10 years to 22 years of age.



OSRS rams were relaxed and sure of a National Party win. National's signs attracted vandalism in Christchurch. Nov 2008.



Labour's election signs were trashed by people everywhere. NZ wanted change. Pahiatua, Sept 2008.

## A TRAVELLER'S TALE.

**Mysore, India. December 08.**

Tiny sacred cattle are everywhere; on the streets, in the shops. Cattle are devious thieves, as Alastair Hilson discovered.

When he was shopping, a cow squeezed through a narrow door and started munching on lettuces. Trapped behind the counter the helpless shopkeeper could do nothing. Asty pushed the cow outside. There she stood, Asty shopped. She squeezed in and started eating again. Asty pushed her out. She waited, then returned, this she did numerous times before he left.

Another shopkeeper driven mad by such bovine cunning stabbed a robber cow many times.

*He was immediately imprisoned. Sentence: one year in jail.*

When you ask your kids (aged 30) to come home to the farm and they say "No way while you have smelly sheep, but I will if you dairy farm"

Despair not.

Think what their kids will say when asked to come home (at 40)

"No way, I'm not milking smelly dairy cows but I will if you sheep farm".

*Each generation wants to do its own thing and it matters not as long as the land is cared for.*

Ian and Sandra Orr. Balfour, Southland.  
Breed: 2900 stabilised 3/8 Finn, 3/8 Texel, 1/4 Romney.

"Have just had our best lambing result ever, ex the ewes with a tailing percentage, to the ram of 163%.

*'Finn effect'. Extremely dry in the autumn. Flocks with-out finn blood had more dries and fewer lambs. Finns do not need flushing.*

Ray Stafford. Waipukurau.  
Ewes were mated to Dorper and 'named' sire (X). All 33kg and above lambs, were killed. X sired were 15.5CW and Dorper X 17kgCW.

*This was not scientific but indicates what John Atkins (Lean Meats) reported: a 8% greater red meat yield from Dorper and Texel cross carcasses.*

OSRS. 11 bales, Mic 29.2, Yield 74.5, VM .3, Y-Z 1.9.  
Tarata hogget wool. Auctioned by WPI, 18-12-08.  
Quote, 229c/kg. sold, 335c/kg. Top price.

*Auctions are gambles. 46.3% in OSRS's favour, this time. Wool destination: China*

Duncan McLeod. Wanganui.  
Ewes: 3/4 Texel 1/4 Finn. Rams, 3/4 Texel, 1/4 Finn and Texel-Suffolk.  
25-11-08 85 lambs LW 39kg, 18.16 CW, \$98.93.  
Killed at Alliance, Levin.  
6-11-08. 57 lambs, LW 39.2, 18.01 CW, \$98.87.  
Killed by Affco at Imlay.

Dennis and Pat Meade.

Matariki, Nelson.

Breed: 1850 stabilised 1/4 Finn, 1/4 Texel. 1/2 Perendale.  
Mated 20-4-08. Ewes 57kg, 2ths 47.4kg, liveweight.  
2ths 467; 4 dry, 258 twins, 3 triplets, 156%.  
MA 1377; 10 dry, 1020 twins, 57 triplets, 182%. Tailing, 156.2%

*'Finn effect'. Nelson was seriously dry in autumn. Ewe body weights were down but the finn effect showed, few dries, few triplets, good survival. In both Islands percentages were down in sheep, but more so in traditional flocks.*

## OSRS HAS GOT IT RIGHT

OSRS rams are durable. They last and last. A Texel-Suffolk died as a ten year old after being used every year since sold as a two tooth.

*Other blackface breeds do not last; three tups is usually enough. Whiteface sires are better lasting.*

OSRS crosses are stabilised in 'definite' breed proportions which are not hidden behind fancy names.

*A ¼ Finn ¼ Texel ½ Perendale is exactly that, nothing else.*

Texel muscling is visible in all stabilised genotypes.

*Seeing is believing. Always look at the back end of OSRS sheep when selecting rams.*

OSRS rams are used in every environment in NZ (and some internationally), North Island, South Island, East Island (Chathams), between Islands (D'Urville), south South Island (Stewart Island) and West Island (Australia).

OSRS will not tolerate daggy sheep. Years of selection against dags has worked e.g. Greg Davis, Balfour, "no ewes were crutched prior to shearing for years."

OSRS has had 22 years of experience farming Finns and Texels. (more than anybody)

OSRS staff are hugely experienced, all having managed farms; they will not take short cuts. All sheep are managed 'commercially'. Sheep not pampered 'studs'.

OSRS has always used technology extensively. Much has been very expensive and has not 'put money in farmer's pockets so has been discarded.

*OSRS is practical in all its activities.*

OSRS has always sought opportunities for its clients hence the supply contracts with Richmond, Lakeview and to Feltex NZ. Although these companies have gone the experience OSRS/TMG gained has not.

*Supply contracts from TMG will come again. Meanwhile moving stock between clients is part of our regular activities.*

OSRS has 'Innovative' breeding programmes, e.g. NZ's first large-scale crossbred grading-up programmes. Now, Dorper sheep are mated every 73 days and soon six lambings will occur each year.

*OSRS shares these experiences with farmers, international visitors, educational groups.*

OSRS has constantly maintained that all sheep need a dash of Finn. This season 'proved' the value of finn genetics. Sheep with some finn:

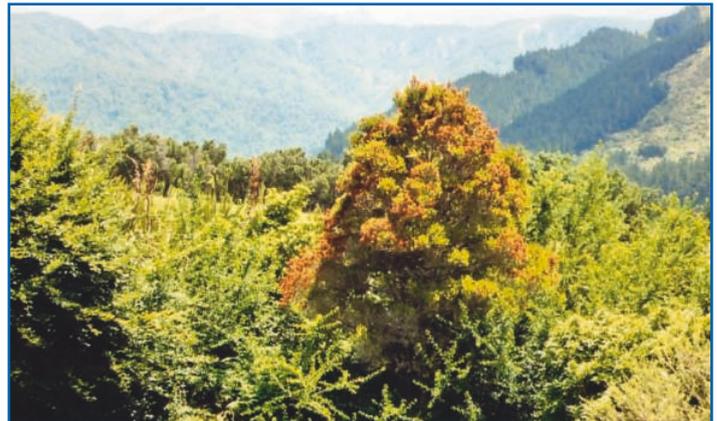
- withstood, a late bad FE outbreak,
- withstood the ravages of drought
- conceived well (some farmers had their best-ever tailing percentages)

These comments are based on observations from farms all over NZ in spring and are **correct** even if generalisations. The 'Finn effect' will please the Bank Manager.

*Finnsheep (25% and less) finish better than NZ traditional sheep. (proved by TMG/Richmond trials and OSRS clients)*



Joy Gray and Gwendolyn (wwoofer) at the summit of Maire Hill. Tarata, Dec 2008.



A conservationists delight. A Waikaremoana rata seedling now in full flower. Tarata 2008.



Hotmail? Burnt letterbox.

Tutukau, Taupo.

Northern South Island sheep and beef farmers.

You have a chance to vote onto the Meat and Wool NZ Board, a farmer who will represent your interests well; **Peter Chamberlain**.

Peter is an ideal candidate, being a practical, 'hands on' farmer, who is politically experienced. Peter farms at Norwood, Burnham.

If farmer's interests are threatened Peter does not bow to political pressure. He will represent the ward with commitment and energy to ensure that levy payers get some value from the organisation.

A stronger advocate for farmers would be hard to find.

Vote for Peter, you'll be pleased you did.