

## Hello Members,

Welcome to the 20<sup>th</sup> issue of Sheep NewZ. Sad to say I had a bit of trouble getting my preferred 20 pages but managed it in the end. Thanks to those who came to my rescue!

I trust you are all remaining Covid 19 free. I have to say I am well and truly over Covid now but I'm not sure when, if ever, the world will return to its previous comparatively carefree existence, with people able to travel freely from country to country.

It was terrible to hear of the cattle transport ship being sunk by the typhoon off Japan recently. People are calling for live shipments to be banned. I am not against them if the conditions are safe and it is just a few stud animals, but I also fail to see why we are exporting our good genetics to China. If it is really necessary, then embryos or semen would seem to be the way to go in the future. It would be better to breed from their existing landrace breeds with our genetic material, increasing the chance of resistance to their local bugs and to cope with their feeding regimes and physical environment.

Writing of semen and embryos, I believe our Association should be encouraging all breeders to be collecting genetic material, from their best rams and/or ewes, to be stored for many years down the track. I know breeds are being 'improved' all the time but sometimes there is a need to resort to older bloodlines for resilience in one's stock. Also, if the world continues to be afflicted with pandemics, it may not be so easy to acquire genetic material from overseas.

How this could be funded may be problematic, but I believe where there is a will, there is a way.

Interestingly in the "Bit of History" this time, written in 1894 but quoting from earlier material, it foresees the demise of the Ryeland, the Norfolk Heath and the Wiltshire Horn. The first and the last breeds have contributed in more modern times to the formation of the Poll Dorset and the latter to the Wiltshire which both have definite roles to play in modern farming.

Playing with DNA is currently very fashionable but you need a variety of genes available to select from. Although there are many Friesian/Holstein dairy cows in the world they have a very limited genetic base through using AI from a few overly popular sires, selected on breeding value.

*Helen McKenzie*

**Editor**

☎ (06) 372 7842 or

Email: [rosemarkie@wise.net.nz](mailto:rosemarkie@wise.net.nz)

## ASSOCIATION NEWS & VIEWS

### From The President



It is with much pleasure that I write this article as the new President of the New Zealand Sheep Breeders' Association. I regard this recent appointment as an honour and privilege and will do my very best to uphold this position in the manner that has been achieved before me.

I would also like to welcome Gary Illston and Mark Copland as Vice Presidents of the Association.

My very first sheep photo was of an old Merino Ewe and four of her five lambs, so I guess this was the path that started me on this journey!



*L: Tom, R: his cousin Gordon (aka Gandy) taken mid 1950's at Culverden*

**Photo:** Burrows family

My first venture into stud breeding was in 1977 when I purchased 59 Corriedale stud ewes from Mac Walter, "Cairnbrae" stud (neighbour) in Culverden.

Over the intervening years followed Hampshires, Dorset Downs, Perendales and Shropshires.

The great camaraderie from not only breeding sheep but the showing, breed tours and overseas tours/conferences has given our family an insight and experience into this great industry that we would not otherwise have had.

The future of our industry is heading into some very interesting times; the Covid 19 pandemic has thrown the whole world into turmoil. At least, we are the producers of protein and fibre, two very important ingredients in everyday life all over the world. The protein we produce

will become even more important if we as a country can stay relatively free of Covid and I think that we may have to re-position ourselves to endorse our already high standing in world markets.

The fibre part of the equation may not be a simple fix. I have noticed within our country a groundswell of new ideas on how to fix our strong wool industry. Is it time for a forum of all involved to get together and fix this industry before it is too late?

Currently the overbearing problem is the difficulty the world faces trying to work around Covid but we should be at least a little bit ready for normality when it returns.

On a more localized level our Association will celebrate the 125th year of the Association with "Sheep125" next year. There has been a committee appointed and the organizing has started. The proposal is for a tour of Otago/ Southland to coincide with next year's Wanaka show. Then the major celebration is to be held Canterbury Cup and Show week. We certainly look forward to this great occasion.

In signing off I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jim Berney, our retiring President, for his sterling work over the past three years in keeping our Association at the forefront of not only the rural community but the general public.

*Tom Burrows*  
**President NZSBA**

## **From The General Manager**

**Covid-19** continues to be disruptive and frustrating. Breed Conferences planned for this year have been cancelled, and meetings have mostly taken place by remote means, audio conferencing and Zooming.

An example of the uncertainty is there was a Valais Blacknose AGM here in Christchurch on Saturday, and some members were hesitant to attend, even though the clusters are in the North Island, and it's been months since we in the South Island have had a positive test. Even so numbers attending were disappointing.

However, as we continually say – **"...it is what it is..."**

**NZSBA Council & AGM Meeting** – this meeting was held in a hotel by the airport and seemed to work. The majority of hotels in Christchurch are now covid-19 hotels. It was great to see Peter Cosgriff, & Tom Burrows [not the same Tom as the new President] in attendance. Tom was in charge of NZSBA for 12 years and Peter was our Treasurer for 33 years.

### **Items discussed –**

**Sheep 125** – we invited the sheep chairman of the NZ Ag Show to discuss the concept of having breed displays, and have since met on the showgrounds to finalise where the pens will be. We intend to have shearing and fashion parades throughout the 3 days.

An all **breeds dinner** on the Wednesday evening looks like to be held at the Wigram Airbase, which is very close to the showgrounds.

A letter to breeds will be sent soon, as we need to know what breeds intend to be at the show. An invitation is also going to the Southdown, and Cheviot breed society, who at one time used to be part of the Association.

It is hoped that all breeds, especially the small breeds will make an appearance.

Once we know the breeds, then an information breed template will be sent to the breeds for their approval before printing.

**Incoming President** – Tom Burrows, a Shropshire and Corriedale breeder is now the new President of the NZSBA. I would like to sincerely thank the outgoing President, Jim Berney, for all his effort and support whilst President. Jim was always available to attend functions if required and speak at events when requested.

**Senior Vice President** – Gary Illston, and **Junior Vice-President** – Mark Copland



**Eye Muscle Scanning Workshop** – the FITT Funding application has been declined by Beef + LambNZ, but we are pursuing as they may not appreciate how important the scanning workshops are.

**Youth Initiative** – since the last meeting we have refined the motion, so now a person must be over 10 years of age and under 21 years and have no more than 50 sheep. If that is the case, then they have zero fees. A tremendous NZSBA initiative.

**New breeds approved** – Awassi and the Australian Whites NZ; subject to receiving a minimum of 3 flocks and their breed description.

**Financial Report** – the Association experienced a very good result for 2019-2020

**Breed Updates** – Breed representatives gave an update of their breed.

**NZSBA Office** – the council approved the renovation of the toilets in the office.

**Judges & Inspectors Lists** – to now have the area where they reside, their phone number and email address. This will be more relevant than having addresses.

**Past NZSBA Presidents** – to be listed in the Flock Book.

**NZSBA Website** – has now been updated and in a different format. – **BREEDS should continue to provide photos of your sheep and update any information that needs updating. Any published articles should be also included on your webpage.**

**Tag Discounts - Shearwell, Allflex, Datamars (includes Zee Tags and Tru-Test)** - Now offering discounted tags to members. When ordering please state you are a member of NZSBA, and they will send the product to you, but will send your invoice to our office, and we will then invoice you.

*Greg Burgess*

**General Manager,  
NZSBA**



## Feature Breeds #1 Gotland Sheep



*Gotland ram hogget, Ervalla 77002/18*      **Photo:** A. Skoog

### **ORIGIN & HISTORY** *[Thanks Anette Skoog for this info]*

The Gotland sheep originates from the island of Gotland, Sweden. Through selection and controlled breeding for body conformation, growth gain, wool and pelt quality, started in the 1920's, the Gotland sheep has developed to a dual-purpose sheep giving good returns for breeders.

There were around 33,000 registered Gotland lambs born in Sweden 2014 and larger commercial flocks producing meat and pelts from the breed are also present. The value of Gotlands is linked to the value of Gotland lamb pelts and wool, with their characteristic stainless steel grey curls. A quality Gotland is a medium sized sheep with a good body conformation and a uniform grey colour.

Lambs are born black and shift to a uniform grey around 3 months of age and have an average weight of 42 kg for ewes and 46 kg for rams at 110 days. Gotlands are typically raised on pasture and reach market weights (EU) around 150 days, which is also the optimal age for production of the best pelt quality. Breeders of Gotlands use phenotypic evaluation of lambs at 110 days of age and estimated breeding values for selection of sheep for breeding purposes.

The first 100% Swedish Gotlands was introduced in New Zealand 2018 by the Ervalla flock and the breed was re-introduced to the NZSBA flock book 2019.

### **Footnote:**

*The New Zealand government had a project in the 1980's importing several breeds (a few live sheep of each) from Europe to add resources to NZ sheep industry.*

*Twenty six Gotland Pelt ewes (ten in lamb) and five rams from Denmark, (not from Sweden) were imported in 1986.*



Several larger Gotland flocks emerged in New Zealand from this import; you can find a few registered flocks in the NZSBA Flock Book from 1990 until 2001.

The recently imported Swedish Gotlands have been subject to more than 30 generations of specific selection since then, so their wool is of a different quality and uniformity today compared with the mid-80s.

Stansborough stud used sheep originating from the 1986 import and eventually branded their sheep as a closed flock/breed with a different breed name, Stansborough Greys. These sheep are a separate breed in the Flock Book, selected for the particular wool type desired by the Eldridges, owners of the stud, for the manufacture of cloth such as that used in the "Lord of the Rings" trilogy.

Other sheep with Gotland traits also remained, mainly in small flocks without selection. Some flocks were also crossed on the way and they haven't been registered with NZSBA.

### BREED DESCRIPTION

A quality Gotland is a medium sized sheep with a good body conformation and a uniform grey colour. Lambs are born black and shift to a uniform grey around 3 months of age and have an average weight of 42 kg for ewes and 46 kg for rams at 110 days.



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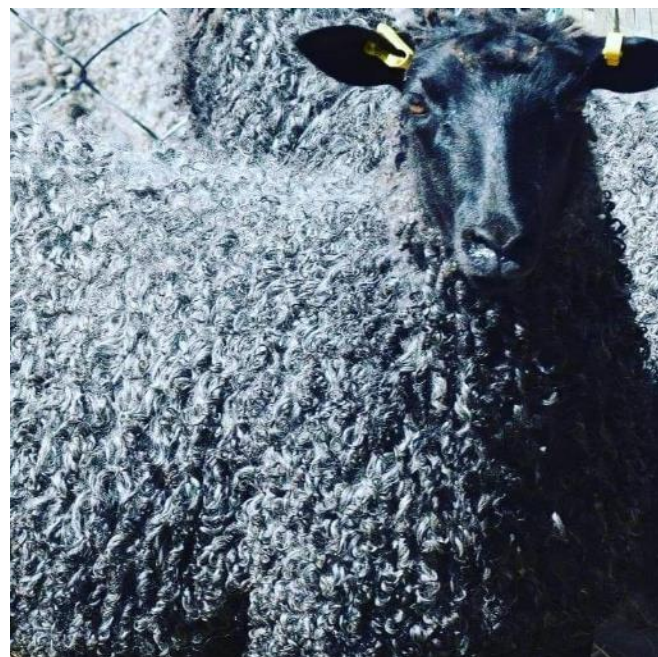
[www.shearwell.co.nz](http://www.shearwell.co.nz)

### STUD PROFILE # 1

#### Ervalla, Flock #1, Established 2019

#### Owned by Anette Skoog

Owner of the Ervalla Gotland flock is Anette Skoog, a veterinarian from Sweden. She and her family ran a 700 ewes/200 beef cow operation and a semen collection facility in Sweden until 2016. Ervalla has exported genetics from Gotlands since 2011 and was the first Swedish flock to export semen to USA the same year.



Gotland ewe Ervalla 18001/18

Photo: A. Skoog

Focus shifted in 2016 when the family decided to move to the USA for work. The goal was set to establish 2 new flocks (in New Zealand and USA) for breeding and production purposes based on the Swedish bloodlines, using embryo transfer and AI. The first Swedish Gotland Sheep was born in New Zealand 2018 after ET and the first export of embryos to USA has been made from New Zealand 2020.

The flock in New Zealand has been established in collaboration with Tawahai Suffolks in Canterbury and is expected to grow further the coming years.

Ervalla raise dual-purpose Gotland sheep for meat and pelt production with lambs born early spring and grass-fed until finishing for market during early fall months.

By careful selection of top quality rams from the best Gotland breeders in Sweden, the flock has been able to produce sheep with good body conformation and high value pelts for the fashion and interior design markets. There is also an emerging market for Gotland wool showing good returns for fibre with uniform colour and micron count.

"Fostering the improvement of all sheep breeds and providing a unified body whose collective voice has a beneficial effect on the total New Zealand sheep industry."



## STUD PROFILE # 2

**Tawhai Gotland Sheep Flock #A2,**

**Established 2019**

**Owned by Penni Loffhagen & Rocci Scott,**

**Hawarden, North Canterbury**

*(All Photos P Loffhagen)*



*Tahawai Gotland ewe with her twins*     **Photo: P Loffhagen**

Our Gotland Stud is run alongside our 600 Suffolk Stud ewes and 100 Romney Stud ewes, on our 650 acres dry land Sheep and Beef farm.

We developed a passion for Gotlands as a hobby, but our direction changed with the opportunity to purchase the superior, newly imported, Swedish genetics from Ervalla Gotland Sheep Stud. These genetics have the potential to move the current New Zealand Gotland breed into the competitive commercial carcass industry. These sheep have high quality wool and pelts, as well meeting the weight range for the meat industry. Our ram lambs averaged 18kg carcass weight this year.

Currently we have 125 Gotland ewes and we have also mated 80 Swedish sired Gotland ewe hoggets. The aim is to reach our goal of 400 top quality Gotland ewes, run as a viable commercial business.

The wool is renowned for its grey curls and extremely high lustre. It is sought after by spinners and felters who make it into a wide variety of amazing garments and luxury household furnishings.



Visit our website [www.gotland.nz](http://www.gotland.nz)

And keep up to date with us on facebook ....tawhai gotland sheep



*A Tawhai Gotland fleece up close*



◀ *Gotland pelts*

*Compare the size of the Gotland ram, (foreground) the Romney ram and the Suffolk ram ▼*





## Ile De France



### ORIGIN & HISTORY

The breed was developed in the 1830s following a downturn in the French wool industry using Dishley Leicester, Rambouillet Merino and Cotentin Sheep.

Performance Testing started in 1933. The other sheep breeds in France only accepted Performance testing during 1959. In the 1960's breeders decided to concentrate on re-productive qualities mainly on fecundity. To achieve this goal, it became clear that progeny testing was essential.

On 11<sup>th</sup> December, 1968 the Society ruled that performance and progeny testing be compulsory. During 1971, the Ile de France experimental station at Verdilly was established.

- The current national UPRA breeding programme has been running since 1971. It uses ancestry, individual and progeny testing to locate elite animals and distributes genetics through compulsory AI programmes.
- This breeding scheme is detailed. For example, registered ewes have to qualify on prolificacy and milk production. The best ewes are qualified as ram dams. The males of a generation are sorted firstly on the qualities of their paternal and maternal ancestry, as well as on their individual morphology. The meat potential of the best 400 from all studs is assessed at the testing station.
- The best 25 of these are progeny tested (meat qualities of the male lambs produced; maternal qualities of the female lambs produced). The improver animals are distributed by artificial insemination to the ewes qualified as ram dams.
- Meat testing covers growth, conformation, muscle, width, length, fat, age at slaughter and carcass yield. That is a serious genetic advancement programme!



◀  
*Ile de France rams at the testing station in Verdilly, France*

### DESCRIPTION

The Ile de France should be an alert sheep with a meaty thickset carcass with strong bone. Face and lower legs should be bare.

#### Bodyweight

**Ewes:** 65-80kg **Rams:** 80-100kg

#### Meat

Meaty carcass.

#### Breeding/Lambing

Lambing percentage: 130-160%

#### Numbers

Registered ewes (NZSA Flock book) are around 500

#### Wool

White mid micron with no black spots  
Fibre diameter, about 25-30 microns,

### The Breed in New Zealand

In a search for a paradigm shift in sheep farming profitability, Murray Rohloff, a Romney ram breeder of 25 years in Eastern Southland, trialled the Ile de France breed renowned for its extended breeding season overseas capable of 3 lambings in 2 years.

This interest inevitably led Murray to team up with Peter Ponsonby of Tuapeka West, near Lawrence, in South Otago. Peter had 40 years breeding Dorset Horns out-of-season and a prominent Poll Dorset breeder.

Unfortunately for the 3 lambings in 2 years concept, much of the land capable of supporting it was converted to dairying. However, their experience with Ile de France proved the breed's ability to survive, grow and be very drought resistant. SIL performance figures indicated that the Ile de France breed is very strong in Maternal and Terminal traits.

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“Fostering the improvement of all sheep breeds and providing a unified body whose collective voice has a beneficial effect on the total New Zealand sheep industry.”

## STUD PROFILES #1 & 2

### **Forrester, Flock #1, Established 2019**

**Robert & Jean Forrester, Amberley**

### **Thomson, Flock #2, Established 2019**

**Thomson Family, Christchurch**

Upon the retirement of Peter and Murray, the stud was purchased by Robert and Jean Forrester and James and Lisa Thomson in May 2017 and its heart moved to North Canterbury.

They have since consolidated the breed focusing on very high meat and growth traits while also being meticulous about the maternal Breeding Index and have a zero tolerance of structural imperfection.

In May 2018, James and Lisa Thomson went to the Ile de France breeding centre in France to study what the French call “the most complete and strictest genetic selection programme in the world”.

The Thomson’s were impressed with what they saw in France and, after many anxious moments and a long wait, have been able to import semen from 4 unrelated lines. Lambs from this importation are on the ground this spring and are looking good at this early stage.



Of interest also was the equal ability of these sheep to lamb in spring or autumn. In the cropping areas near Paris lambs are not wanted over summer, (like Mid Canterbury) so it is normal to lamb in autumn and feed crop residue through winter.

This is the first importation outside Europe since the 1970s that they are aware of. As such the Forrester’s and Thomson’s expect the stud to make some good gains in the next few years. With two years of lambs on the ground now, we are excited by how they are performing.

Milking ability and udder traits are important in Ile de France sheep and as a side business the Thomson’s milked

and LIC recorded over 400 ewes in 2020. These have been crossed with the world-renowned milking Lacaune breed to produce an outdoor milking flock with some Ile de France hardiness.

Ile de France NZ has an unconnected status on SIL (Sheep Improvement Limited). This is because Ile de France NZ have few sheep in other studs to compare with and so this affects our SIL Maternal Worth Index. We have introduced some very high SIL index genetics to test and connect the Ile de France stud on this NZ performance recording database (SIL).

Both the Forrester’s and Thomson’s have large commercial flocks of their own and are striving to advance profitability in sheep using the Ile de France breed. If you buy a ram from us it will be tough.

#### **Traits we are working on to improve are: -**

**Hogget lambing:** But we need to remember that the sheep last longer at the other end.

**Temperament:** Most of our sheep are good to handle but there are a few rogues and we think we have found the line that is breeding these offenders, so they will be very carefully monitored.

**Meat Quality:** Ile de France lambs have consistently performed well in the Mint lamb competition at the Canterbury A&P and the Taste Hurunui Competition at Amberley A&P. We also have progeny of two Ile de France rams being tested for meat quality at Duncraigen Landcorp Farm in Te Anau.

#### *✓ Mint Lamb winners mob 2018*



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“Fostering the improvement of all sheep breeds and providing a unified body whose collective voice has a beneficial effect on the total New Zealand sheep industry.”



Our ewes are mostly given no drenches and we are dag scoring and culling on high dag scores.

**Some immediate gains from Ile de France sheep are:-**

- Increased weaning weight
- Finer micron (24-30 micron)
- Lower cost structure (fewer wool costs and ewes that hold condition)
- Bred for meat and growth since 1830.
- All stud sheep DNA recorded.
- No need for a commercial terminal sire system so more ewe replacement choice
- Increased milking ability
- Better lamb yield and taste
- They live a year longer too!

▼ *Ewes & lambs*



▼ *Ile de France Ram hogget in the wool*



# South African Meat Merinos aka SAMM *(Thanks to Wikipedia for the following info)*

Sorry, no Flock Profile provided [Editor]

## HISTORY

The **South African Meat Merino** or **SAMM** is a [wool](#) and [meat sheep](#) originating in [South Africa](#), but now found throughout the world.

The SAMM is derived from the German *Merinofleischschaf* animals imported into South Africa from [Europe](#) in 1932, to improve the quality of wool and meat from sheep in South Africa. The *Deutsche Fleisch Merino* is a common meat sheep in Germany, Austria, and Poland.

In South Africa, the [German](#) name was translated into [Afrikaans](#) as *Duitse Vleis Merino* and then into [English](#) as "German Mutton Merino". The South African breed was recognised as separate in 1971 when the name was changed to South African Mutton Merino.

## DESCRIPTION

The SAMM has been developed as a versatile, hardy, [polled](#), dual-purpose breed. Ewes have a good maternal instinct and high milk production.

The wool is classified separately from the higher quality wool of [Merinos](#), to avoid the risk of contamination of the latter with hair and [kemp](#) fibre from the SAMM wool.

| Bodyweight   |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| <b>Ewes:</b> Up to 95kg  | <b>Rams:</b> To over 100 kg |
| Meat   |                             |
| The SAMM is bred specifically to produce a slaughter lamb at an early age (35 kg (77 lb) at 100 days of age). In judging SAMMs the emphasis is on conformation (in relation to producing meat), 60%, and not on the animal's wool (40%). |                             |
| Breeding/Lambing   |                             |
| No information given   |                             |
| Numbers  |                             |
| Registered ewes (NZSA FI book) fewer than 100 in only one flock  |                             |
| Wool   |                             |
| Ewes will produce 3.5 kg (7.7 lb) to 4.5 kg (9.9 lb) of medium / strong wool.  |                             |

SAMM rams have almost entirely replaced British breeds as terminal sires in the harsh regions of South Africa, where they (and their hybrids) are more adaptable than the former breeds. They were first imported into Australia in 1996. First flock registered in NZ in 2001.





*Otago farmer Amy Blaikie and her children Caitlyn (4) and Josh (8) with the Petition*

## WOOL USE PETITION

**Photos:** Blair Colyle

Tues the 4<sup>th</sup> of August was the day for handing over the petition to get New Zealand government to use NZ wool carpet and insulation in public funded buildings and Kiwi build homes. 15,069 people signed the online petition over the month of July which NZ First MP Mark Patterson received and presented to Parliament.

The concept originated from a Red Meat Profit Partnership group which is focused on ensuring our farms and businesses are sustainable and adaptable in the future. With the wool prices being constantly disappointing over the years I began to analyse the wool side of our business. I find it incredibly hard to fathom why wool isn't in hot demand.

Wool ticks all the boxes required by consumers in today's society:-

- it's environmentally friendly,
- fire resistant,
- renewable,
- biodegradable,
- healthier,
- plastic free
- and is made in New Zealand.

It seems crazy that people are not using wool and I believe that the New Zealand Government should lead by example by using it in all public funded buildings and Kiwi Build homes.

The next step is to present a report to the Government's Primary Select Committee once a new government has been decided, and to keep encouraging and promoting New Zealand's wool.

*Amy Blaikie*



“Fostering the improvement of an sheep breeds and providing a unified body whose collective voice has a beneficial effect on the total New Zealand sheep industry.”

# Benefits of Wool in Construction

## Construction Procurement Guidelines

October 2019

### Sustainability benefits of using wool in construction

This is a summary of some of the benefits of using wool in construction, provided by the Ministry for Primary Industries, incorporating industry feedback.

- Wool as a building and/or furnishing material can meet several sustainability criteria.
- Compared to the synthetic or petroleum-based textiles used in construction, wool is a natural product that is less toxic, and fire retardant. Wool is an available resource that is biodegradable and easy to dispose of.
- The natural qualities that wool has allow it to dampen sound and absorb pollutants. As wool grows, it absorbs carbon dioxide from the atmosphere<sup>1</sup>.
- Woollen carpets regulate humidity, are hypoallergenic (unlikely to cause an allergic reaction) and perform better than synthetics in smell and staining tests. Woollen carpets regulate humidity by absorbing moisture when the air is moist and releasing it when the air is dry, creating a more comfortable built environment, that is warmer in winter and cooler in summer.
- Wool is a very effective insulator, suitable for thermal and acoustic building insulation<sup>2</sup>. Wool has evolved to keep sheep comfortable, often in extreme conditions. Sheep wool insulation is safe, eco-friendly and energy efficient<sup>3</sup>. New Zealand's Energy Efficiency Conservation Authority supports wool products that meet their efficiency criteria and enable warmer homes.
- Wool is ideal for structures made from wooden frames, as the wool has a natural synergy with timber. The fibres in the material draw out moisture, which conditions the wood and protects the building's materials<sup>4</sup>.
- There are opportunities in new technological applications of wool, such as the New Uses for Wool Partnership Programme, which is a collaboration between MBIE and Wool Industry Research Ltd. The research looks at effective ways to deconstruct the fibre and reconstitute it in a range of useful forms<sup>5</sup>.
- Wool is a readily available resource, and there is an abundance of wool available in New Zealand. New Zealand produces 140 million kg (greasy) of wool each year<sup>6</sup>. Choosing New Zealand-manufactured wool products reduces imports and supports regional economic development.

<sup>1</sup> <https://arch5541.wordpress.com/2012/11/25/wool-in-architecture/>

<sup>2</sup> 2015, 'Sheep wool for sustainable architecture' Daniela Bosia, Lorenzo Savio, Francesca Thiebat, Alessia Patrucco, Stefano Fantucci, Gabriele Piccablotto, Donatella Marino <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1876610215023826>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.sheepwoolinsulation.com/where-to-use/who-is-sheepwool-for/#professional>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.koruarchitects.co.uk/natural-insulation-benefits-sheeps-wool/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/science-and-technology/science-and-innovation/funding-information-and-opportunities/investment-funds/partnerships/successful-2018-proposals/success-stories/>

<sup>6</sup> Ministry for Primary Industries Economic Intelligence Unit



## RED POLL TOUR TO SOUTH AFRICA

*An excerpt from Part 2 of my write up for the Red Poll News -Editor*

### Onward To “Dammerskloof Farm” Of The Van Wyk Family

**Hessequa Abattoir** was established in 2007. It processes both cattle and sheep and distributes meat products to wholesalers and butchers in South Africa. They were one of the first plants to put in a biogas plant to generate electricity from waste material.

*Abattoir  
Fashion  
leaves a bit  
to be  
desired! ➤*



After donning plastic booties, hats and tunics and listening to a Health and Safety briefing we went in to see a line of SAMM (South African Meat Merino) type lambs being slaughtered, dressed and processed into cuts. One minute they're alive and stepping off the truck, next minute, cut and packed.

Not far to go now to the van Wyk's family guest farm, Kweekkraal. On arrival, unfortunately, there is a programmed power outage (load shedding). These generally last a couple of hours and are very frequent throughout South Africa.

We were shown to our chalets and then walked, or were picked up by Nick in the bus, to go to dinner. The guest farm has several lovely chalets for accommodation as well as a couple of large purpose-built dining and function rooms. A covered barbeque area is also nearby.

✂ *A mob of ewes & lambs mustered in for us to get a better look at.*



In the dining room we were seated and then welcomed by Pieter's father and mother, Joubert & Alida, along with Pieter & Sandra's eldest son, A.J. Joubert told us some of the family history of their home farm, about 5 kms from Riversdale, which we visited the next day.

The farm was established in 1946 and the first Red Poll cattle arrived in 1952, with the stud being founded in 1956. The farm now has the fourth generation working on it. The family motto has always been “Faith, Family and Farm”. It consists of 3,500 hectares of which about 600 hectares is natural veld pasture. Half the arable land grows wheat, barley, oats and canola, with the remainder allocated to dry land lucerne. Before replanting the soils are ripped/aerated. Some soils are 400cm deep. They have used “no till” cropping for 20 years. They do use some chemical weed control. Cash crops go in in mid-April and grazing crops in mid-March. Harvesting is usually mid-October but can be as early as September in a good year.

The sheep are their main focus and are managed using a progressive lambing system known as the “star” system i.e. they have five lambing seasons in one year. This means that there is a split flock of ewes which has a ewe group lambing every 73 days. This allows the farm to have a constant cash input with lambs available for market all year round. The lambs are weaned at 8 weeks and fattened in the farm's own feedlots and slaughtered at the Hessequa Abattoir. Shearing is done 8 monthly. The stock obtain a lot of minerals from the natural pasture. The average age of the ewes is 6 tooth. Flystrike can be a problem.

A stud SAMM flock of 600 ewes is kept as well. The stud was started in 1998. The stock do well on natural pasture, with no extra feeding required to flush the ewes. The ewes produce up to 4 litres of milk.

The farm also has 8 hunting dogs (Blue Tick and Greyhounds) and some stock horses in residence. The horses are ridden around the lambing camps (a camp seems to be a small paddock) and the dogs are used to control the jackals and any other predators.

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## New study reveals how New Zealand can win in sheep milk

August 2020

A new report reveals New Zealand is well placed to succeed in the global market for sheep milk products, offering a viable alternative for farmers looking to diversify their income stream. Despite sales of sheep milk products being dwarfed by their cow's milk equals, the demand for non-bovine milks is growing around the world as consumers look for alternatives they believe are healthier, easier to digest and kinder on the environment than cow's milk.

Titled "Opportunities for New Zealand Sheep Milk Products: what are they and how can New Zealand win?", the report estimates the country's sheep milk exports could grow in value from \$20 million to \$250 million in the next five years, if the potential for high value products is realised.

The report follows a 14-month project undertaken by the New Zealand Food Innovation Network with funding from the Provincial Growth Fund. During the study, the authors estimate the size and growth of current markets for consumer ready sheep milk formats, the level of competition and their profit potential. The study also looked at farm supply requirements and processing infrastructure needed to satisfy future demand and maximise the return on a bucket of milk.

Being a small global player, the authors emphasise the need for New Zealand to focus on high margin, premium markets where it can extract as much value from the milk it produces. This will also help meet high farm gate milk expectations. Infant formula and nutritionals are identified as immediate opportunities and shelf-stable liquid formats, such as yoghurt and UHT milk and specialised nutritional ingredients as potentials in the future.

Realising these opportunities will require investment in farms, an increase in animal numbers and improvements in on-farm efficiencies to minimise costs. Enhancing sheep genetics to improve milk yields and animal health will be integral. Investment in processing infrastructure will also be needed if the sector is to expand beyond the central North Island, where powder manufacturing is now located.

New Zealand has many strengths it can leverage to successfully compete in export markets for sheep milk products. These include a reputation for making high quality, nutritious dairy products, a largely pasture based production system, and some of the highest standards of biosecurity, food safety and animal welfare in the world. All provide a solid platform from which New Zealand can deliver high value, premium food products that consumers and the wider society value.

The report is available on request at <https://sheepandgoatmilk.nz/resources/>



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*Note: Abridged by Sheep NewZ editor. For entire Media Release go to [www.carrfields.co.nz](http://www.carrfields.co.nz) – 'latest news from Carrfields'*

A recent press release from the two organisations above was headed, "Primary Wool Co-operative and Wools of New Zealand commit to work together to rejuvenate New Zealand's strong wool sector". I quote, "They have begun formal discussions about combining operations as they seek to capture more value for farmers."

James Parsons, WONZ chairman stated "Our goal is to capture more value by building stronger more direct relationships with customers and consumers. WONZ has already being doing that but we have never had the scale to turn the dial."

"Combining with PWC, representing its 1400 farmer shareholders and its 50 per cent ownership of Carrfields Primary Wool (CPW) will mean we can achieve scale, reinvent the supply chain and improve efficiencies, enabled by the increased volume, brands and exporting focus WONZ bring to the table."

Hamish de Lautour, chairman of PWC, says the collaboration will help position wool where it belongs.

"If wool is to capitalise on its rightful place as the sustainable fibre of choice for consumers, the stronger entity must focus on marketing and extracting value from products made of wool and not just trading wool as a commodity."

"Both PWC through Carrfields Primary Wool and its subsidiaries and WONZ have been developing similar strategies and doing that jointly makes real sense. PWC, in its joint venture with Carrfields, has invested significantly in the Just shorn programme and the NZ Yarn spinning mill.

"WONZ and PWC shareholders have all got 'skin in the game' and have invested cash to build their respective businesses. By working together, we are far better positioned to deliver for our grower shareholders, the sector and the country"

Mr Parsons says both WONZ and PWC envisage a lean simple commercial structure that delivers the opportunity for other grower groups and new grower shareholders to join.

"We are also supportive of the goals of the Governments Wool Industry Project Action Group and we're keen to work with others in the industry to ensure a prosperous future for the sector"



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|----------|--------------------------------------|------|
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| February | 21 <sup>st</sup> -24 <sup>th</sup> * | 2021 |
| March    | 14 <sup>th</sup> -17 <sup>th</sup>   | 2021 |
| April    | 25 <sup>th</sup> -28 <sup>th</sup>   | 2021 |

\*Limited Spaces available, be in quick!

Alternative dates could be available for group bookings of 6 or more people. Please phone to discuss.

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[www.southislandtoursnz.com](http://www.southislandtoursnz.com)



### Time to Explore Unique Areas of the South Island...

On this magnificent journey of a lifetime, your guide will give you a full understanding of life and land in this region, with the bonus of meeting Merino sheep and beef station owners. Naturally, the farmers have wonderful stories to share, as farm life here is quite different with rugged terrain, extreme scorching summers to snowy, freezing cold winters. At the majority of these Stations the farm couples will host lunch or morning tea.

At South Island Tours NZ, Geoff and Lee Swift are tour experts, they have 28 years of South Island tour knowledge and are hands on owner/operators. Over the years Geoff and Lee have made many friends and contacts which enables them to provide you with an extra special tour experience.

Smaller groups allow them to offer a more personalised, off the beaten track tour, with a varied selection of accommodation to suit each individual group. On this tour, you have an option of individual rooms in the shearer's quarters or a higher level of accommodation within a new farmhouse.

Molesworth Tag a-long tours have existing itineraries that work well; however, they also create bespoke tours on request. For further information on the 'Molesworth Four Day Tag-along Tour' or other exciting South Island tours, please contact Geoff and Lee.

*"We did the 4WD Tag Along Tour in October 2019. We would highly recommend this tour for its mix of magnificent scenery, challenging 4WD tracks, highly entertaining commentary, hospitality and good fun. It is one thing to look at great scenery and marvel at it; but this tour also gets you right in the middle of it to enjoy all it has to offer."*

*"Our tour guide Geoff Swift was extremely knowledgeable about the areas covered, its history, people and highlights. The accommodation and food were of very good standard too. We came away with a real understanding of the area and its people; as well as dozens of great photographs to help us re-live the days."*

*"Our trip will live long in the memory and we wouldn't hesitate to book another tour with this company."*

Kind Regards,

Graham and Joyce Bell - October 2019

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## HAMPSHIRE IMPORTATION FROM UK By Kevin Mawson

The continuation from my last letter when I was at the Hampshire tour and got hooked on this breed.

After I arrived home I went on line and had a look at the UK site and saw what their type was like. This really got me excited. The next thing I had to do was try and find someone that was able to export to NZ as there are not many breeders whose sheep qualify. Finally, I found someone and everything fell into place.

In March 2019 embryos and semen arrived, but then I had facial eczema that summer and I could not take the risk putting them, in so everything was put on hold. I said to my wife, "let's have a holiday in the UK so I can see what they look like", so we planned the holiday around going to the Great Yorkshire Show. We stayed in Singapore for a week then went on to London where our tour started and that took us up to Scotland then back down the east coast where we took a ferry over to Ireland.

After looking around Ireland for a week we ferried back to Wales, then slowly headed back to London, that trip took an amazing 28 days. The following day we boarded a train to Harrogate; this is where the Great Yorkshire show is held. Next day we took a taxi to the show, this was big. I thought the Field-Days was big but nothing to this show. I left the women to wander around the exhibits while I went to the sheep pens to catch up with some Hampshire breeders. There were so many other sheep breeds that I had never seen, so well worth spending a bit more time browsing.

When we arrived back home in New Zealand I made arrangements with our vet to set up a program to get embryos and semen put in my ewes by 27<sup>th</sup> February, as we dry out by Christmas and I wanted the lambs well

established by then. February came and the ewes were prepped and the embryos and semen put in, luckily before total lock down came, as that would have caused more problems.

All I had to do now was wait for the lambs to be born. On the 15<sup>th</sup> July the first embryos were born and it was all on for the next two weeks. The lambs were in top condition considering we had just been through the worst drought for a long time, but fortunately for me I had plenty of Lucerne and hay.

I now have twelve really good Hampshire lambs which has introduced new genes to NZ for the first time since 1940.

**Photos below** – some of the new arrivals



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## A BIT OF HISTORY

### REVOLUTION IN SHEEP HUSBANDRY, Mark Lane Express, December 4.)

(National Library *Papers Past*) Otago Witness, 1 February, 1894

When the agricultural history of the nineteenth century comes to be written one of the most remarkable of its numerous changes will be the creation and development of new English sheep breeds, and the destruction of nearly all the old ones. The evolution of the sheep has been most remarkable since the days of Arthur Young and those who wrote on rural life a hundred years since, and even then it had witnessed some very considerable departures owing to the great Bakewell's successful transformations of the Leicester variety. The old king, George III, who wondered how the apple got into the dumpling, could not understand at all how Bakewell made the flesh to grow on what part of the animal he liked. Nor was he the only one who deemed the Dishley flockmaster a miracle worker. When men perform extraordinary things never heard of before they are always considered so, and Bakewell's achievement was timely and badly wanted. British farmers were getting tired of their old breeds, which had served their time and were, most of them, getting rapidly into a state of decay. This must be so, or the revolution he worked would not have seemed so great. Dixon has asserted that there is not a long-woolled breed of sheep in the United Kingdom but has been transformed into

something very different from what it was before by having Dishley blood infused into it.

When the century was young this transformation was rapidly working, and new races of sheep creeping into notice to supplant the older ones which people were ceasing to have any regard for. Almost every county in England had its native breed of long-wool or middle wool sheep at that period. Parkinson, who published his treatise on sheep in 1810, mentions as many as 37 of them, nearly the whole of which are now altogether extinct or are merged into races so very dissimilar that they are known by different names. The two objects they chiefly served were to bear wool and manure the land, for the community had not learnt how to appreciate mutton as yet and turnip culture was in its infancy. An Englishman was always known as a beef eater, but he has never been called a mutton-eater, although times have changed so that legs, loins, and haunches of mutton are often preferred even to sirloins of beef by rich and poor alike in this country.

Let us however, briefly indicate the phases of those grand departures to which we have made allusion. Early in the century all the arable lands were in common fields. The flock browsed on the downs or other uplands or moors by

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day, and after being brought into a bit of good grass or green crop, it was folded at night on land intended to be sown to corn. No one thought of grazing sheep for the shambles [slaughterhouses] except “broken mouthed ewes or wethers three or four years old. But their wool was badly wanted to serve the purposes of the cloth manufacturers, for they could get little wool imported there. The Spaniards kept a firm grasp on the Merino, and it was a most blissful thing when George III had a Spanish ram and a few Merino ewes presented to him. This was the origin of the Royal Merino flocks at Windsor, and all through the two earliest decades of the century nothing was heard of agriculture more than the necessity to establish Merino flocks everywhere, this wool being so superior to that of the Norfolk Heath, Southdown, and Ryeland sheep for the manufacture of the finest West of England cloth. Of course, the enormous increase of population and sheep in Australasia after the first quarter of the century made a thorough change. We only imported 73,171lb of wool from the Australian colonies in

1815, but even in 1840 the importation had increased to about 10,000,000lb, and it went on by leaps and bounds during the succeeding decades until several hundred millions of pounds’ weight had been reached.

This will throw light on the causes of the destruction of some of the old breeds, such as the Ryeland, Norfolk Heath, and Wiltshire Horn. The enclosure of the commons had a similar result for several of the others, for when sheep were no longer required to serve the object of wool carriers, or only very partially so, their breeders began to improve their feeding capacities so as to make them serviceable for meat-making. This caused revolution the second, which did not materially affect the decline or well-being of the best of the long-wool breeds. But after the development of turnip culture and the high prices for mutton which were realised for many years after 1855, there came revolution the third, when Shropshire, Hampshire, and Oxfordshire sheep very extensively supplanted the long-woolled varieties in many parts of England.



Doug Croy has been involved in the Stud Industry for over 50 years. Doug has vast experience, from running his own successful “Spring Creek” stud and is prepared to pass on his knowledge to you, the stud breeder.

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## CORRIEDALE SOCIETY NEWS

The Corriedale Society kept ticking through conference calls while we were in lockdown and finally managed to hold an AGM in person and a follow up meeting in August.

After four years as President I stepped down and we elected Mark Sidey. Mark farms with his wife Jayne in Waipara and owns the Lockerbie stud.

Covid has made for a challenging year for all breeds. For us it has meant we postponed a crossbreeding trial until mating 2021 as well as planning to hold a Corriedale feature at Amberley Show. With Christchurch Show cancelled we had all been looking forward to this. At the time of writing Amberley show is still going to happen but Rangiora has been cancelled. The uncertainty of lockdowns makes it challenging for any A&P Society – hopefully Amberley will be able to go ahead.

In response to interest in using Corriedales in the North Island we were also looking at having a trade site at Hawkes Bay Show. While that event is boxing on it is hard to know how enthusiastic people will be to attend large gatherings then. This is something other breeds are no doubt having to weigh up as well.

Most of members are reporting great lamb survival with the mild winter we have had. Those of us in North Canterbury have had a welcome 30-40mm of rain in the past week too so while there is a way to go, spring has started well.

*James Hoban*

**Immediate Past President Corriedale Society**



▲ *Alice Hoban shifting the stud rams*

**Photo at top:** *Mo shifting stud ewes (carefully) at Glenaftric* (Couldn't resist full page width for this uplifting photo – both photos from James Hoban – Editor)

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# **“LITTLE RIVER”, Suffolk Flock # 664, Stuart & Teresa Sinclair**

*Report from DEBBIE HOLMES, SUFFOLKNZ Breed Committee Representative.*

The ‘Little River’ Suffolk Stud had a Dispersal sale held at the Ashburton Showgrounds on February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020 & attracted a large crowd with 70 buyers registering, including several from the North Island.

Also included in this sale were their flocks of #143 Stud South Suffolk’s & #118 Stud Cheviots, both under the ‘Inver’ Prefix. The South Suffolk’s sold first, Suffolk’s second and the Cheviots sold last.



## **SUFFOLKS, ‘Little River’ Stud Flock #664**



The Suffolk Little River Stud started as a partnership with Mr Cliff Vanstone in 1997 and then total ownership by the Sinclair’s in 2009. Sires purchased from the Coleford Stud of John Miles have had the

most influence.

Up for sale were 46 Suffolk Ewes & 36 Suffolk Ewe Lambs with all sheep well presented & they were well sort after.

The top priced 1 shear Suffolk ewe, Lot 144 ‘Little River’ 13/18, made \$1400 & was purchased by Studholme Suffolks; Two older ewes: Lot 162 ‘Little River’ 125/17, went to Snowdon Suffolk’s & Lot 169 ‘Little River’ 132/16 to Taranga Stud, both at \$1000.

The average price for all 46 Suffolk Ewes was particularly good at \$650, and the great line-up of 36 Suffolk Ewe Lambs sold at a great average of \$526.

Stud Sire ‘Pine Grove’ 17/16, (who was judged Supreme Champion Suffolk at CHCH show 2019) was sold after the Ewes & made \$2700. He was purchased by Brooklands Stud.

All sheep sold on the day, with 61 transferring to other studs, of these 15 went to North Island studs.



## **SOUTH SUFFOLKS, ‘Inver’ Stud Flock 233**

The South Suffolk Stud was the first breed established on the Sinclair property. Founded in 1992 with 10 ewes purchased from the Whakanui Stud of Mr Frank Amos. Ewes were added, mainly from the Spring Creek Stud of Doug Croy & Colin Perry, South Lea Stud, having had the most influence.



The line-up of 94 South Suffolk Ewes on offer were well presented & well sought after as well.

The top price South Suffolk was \$1,600 for a four-tooth ewe, Lot 30, ‘Inver’ B31/17 and was sold to Donny Maclean, Bellfield Stud. Top priced 1 shear ewe, Lot 2 ‘Inver’ B6/18, made \$1,500 and was purchased by Brice Partnership, Kaitorete Stud.

The average price for all 94 South Suffolk Ewes was good at \$591.

The line-up of 48 South Suffolk Ewe Lambs were very even & they sold at an average of \$353.

Only 3 ewe lambs were not sold on sale day, 63 transferring to studs and of these 19 went to North Island studs.

## **CHEVIOTS, ‘Inver Stud’**

The Cheviot Stud was founded in 2006 with ewes purchased from Cliff Vanstone, later purchases of 46 ewe lambs, Richard Orr’s Red Oak, and 36 ewes from John Green’s Mamaku Studs have formed the bases of my stud.



Only 3 aged Cheviot ewes weren’t sold on the day. All ewes sold between \$400-\$500 and ewe lambs \$220-\$350.

Two stud sires sold for \$1,400 & \$1,200. Overall, 50 Cheviots went to other registered stud breeders.

Stuart commented in the catalogue, that he had always tried to purchase top sires for all three breeds, with the hope of improving his flocks and culled hard to keep a high standard. With breed quality being very important, he maintained it’s better to have quality over quantity.



**NZSBA JERSEY/PULLOVERS** – We are currently investigating producing a large run of jersey/pullovers for members to purchase. They will have the NZSBA logo on them and some will have Sheep 125 on them also to celebrate 125 years of stud breeding.

<https://www.truefleece.co.nz/collections>

<https://www.wildsouthclothing.co.nz/Product/MM047/320-AWAKINO-P%7COVER>

Any feedback would be appreciated – [greg@nzsheep.co.nz](mailto:greg@nzsheep.co.nz)

Watch this space as in the Summer issue there will be a picture of the jersey/pullover with an order form.

## **FOR SALE**

### **Note: CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS**

*Free advertisements are available for member breeders with surplus stud sheep for sale.*

*Let others know that you have spare ewes. Maybe enable a new flock or two to start.*

Full or half page ads may have a charge. Talk to Greg!

*Remember the “Sheep NewZ” goes up on the website, available to be read by anyone with an interest in sheep!!!*

*Email adverts to the Editor or [greg@nzsheep.co.nz](mailto:greg@nzsheep.co.nz)*

**Sheep Breeds posters are available at the Office.**

Contact: [greg@nzsheep.co.nz](mailto:greg@nzsheep.co.nz)



The **Closing Date** for next issue of the newsletter will be **November 20<sup>th</sup> for the December 2020** newsletter.

**Please get items in well before the deadline!!!**

## **Next “FEATURE BREED” will be Romney sheep.**

If you would like to be part of this section, **photos and stud histories of all breeds are accepted at any time.**

**EMAIL OR POST TO THE EDITOR** – see front page for address details.

**Published by NZ Sheepbreeders’ Association**

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