

Hello Members,

Yet again, thanks to our contributors of articles and photos. Be nice to have a few more profiles for the Feature Breed series. Remember this is free advertising for your breed and studs.

This issue we start a series of articles on wool and its properties. While being many years old most of it still applies today. Thanks to Roland Sumner and The NZ Black & Coloured Sheep Breeders' Association for permission to reprint the series which will run for this and the following eight issues. Wool features in several articles this time. Speaking of which I see the Campaign for Wool has just released a Strategy document – obviously designed for townies – lots of pretty pictures, flow charts and not a lot of substance.


I could never understand what made NZ develop its own Wool Mark instead of using the internationally recognised one. One of the twenty best recognised brands in the world!

Helen McKenzie

Editor

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Email: rosemarkie@wise.net.nz




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ASSOCIATION NEWS & VIEWS

From The President



We are in the throes of winter, a lot of rain, heavy frosts and not a lot of grass. Dryland North Canterbury is very short of grass - although with the amount of rain we have received in the last couple of months (approx 350mm), we should at least get a good spring. Lambing is well underway and by-n-all the weather has been quite favourable. Scanning results in our area are back from last year, to be expected after a very dry autumn.

As social media, and most reports from around the country are alluding to, sheep are selling fantastically well. Here is hoping these prices are sustainable well into the future. It's about time our industry had its day in the sun.

Once again Covid dominates our lives, a great tool for the Labourless government and their spin doctors to sell their propaganda to us, and now to add insult to injury, they have let the Delta variant loose and locked us down yet again!

The Groundswell, Rural Advocacy Network and other groups have made a grand job of organizing the ute protest day. The Government was put on notice to reply, their noise is deafening. This is typical of the way this Government treats rural NZ!

Following up on the long tail debate it was decided at the NZSBA AGM to contact MPI and arrange a "please explain" meeting- mainly as to why our organization was not offered a chance to submit on this legislation This process is underway. Watch this space!

The celebrations for the upcoming Sheep125 event are well in hand, by now all members should have received an invitation to the Breeders Dinner to be held in conjunction with the New Zealand Agricultural show at the Members Marquee. If you haven't received this, please contact the office for more info.

In closing, I wish all breeders a good and safe lambing and take care out there.

Tom Burrows
President NZSBA

Note: Hawkes Bay A & P show is going ahead with a full schedule of sheep classes. 20, 21 & 22 October.

From The General Manager

Covid-19 continues to hinder and disrupt our year. As I write we are currently in Level 3, and the South Island who haven't had a positive covid 19 case in 18 months, has gone out in sympathy with Auckland.

The worrying thing is how long our government will keep us at the various levels. If they decide to keep us at level 2 for the rest of the year, then no large events will be able to take place. Hence the NZ Agricultural Show, cancelled last year may not be held for the second year running.

In the previous Sheep NewZ I mentioned we were off to Melbourne to visit our daughter. Well, we made it to Melbourne for 2 days and on the 3rd morning the media were suggesting there would be a 7day lockdown. As our flight home would be cancelled, I booked a flight to the Gold Coast to remain there for a couple of days and then fly home from the Gold Coast. When we arrived at Coolangatta Airport we were stopped from departing to Christchurch as we had been in Melbourne on the date of the arrival of the virus. Even though we weren't in any hot spots in Melbourne, and even though the Gold Coast were happy to allow us to enter their state, but for some reason the NZ Govt refused to allow us to return home. Very frustrating as I contacted numerous govt departments, and received no help, just bland remarks about keeping safe. So, I feel if we don't all get vaccinated, we will continue to endure a cave-like mentality.

NZSBA Council & AGM Meeting – I am pleased to report we recently held a successful face to face meeting in Christchurch.

Items discussed –

Sheep 125 – Celebrating 125 Years of Stud Breeding – As well as the breeds display there will be an extensive wool display along with those from meat companies Silver Fern Farms and Alliance.

Commemorative Jerseys - for sale

Cost of Jerseys – Men's - \$170.00 – Ladies - \$135.00 and these can be posted anywhere in New Zealand. Check out our website for more details.

Wednesday Evening – All Breeds Dinner - Guest speaker Sir David Fagan. Only 250 tickets available so 'first in first served'. To be held in the Presidents Marquee on the Showgrounds. Contact the office now as you don't want to miss out.

I would like to thank our Sheep125 sponsors, Allflex, PGGWrightson and our principal sponsor Boehringer-Ingelheim for their support.

Ewe Muscle Scanning Workshop – Mr Stevenson is pursuing.

New Breed Approved – The Teeswater Breed has been accepted, as the Breed has three flocks and a Breed Description.

New Tail Docking Law and the Phasing out of Live Shipping – It had been agreed that a delegation meets with MPI to voice the Council's concerns.

NZ Ewe Hogget Competition – Breed Committees have been asked if they know of any persons who would be interested in helping run this competition, but there has been no traction. It has been agreed to ask the Southland West Otago Competition and the North Canterbury Vets if they are willing to run a national competition.

Youth Initiative– As of 31 March 2021 there are 13 registered Youth Initiative studs. A tremendous initiative and congratulations to the members from the various breeds who initiated this.

Promoting Members – It was agreed that the Assn investigates promoting members in a printed medium on the benefits of using purebred sheep.

Meetings can be held via video or telephone conference – The one thing this pandemic has highlighted is the need to access remote meetings, and our Rules just needed to be updated.

Breed Reports – Breed representatives delivered a brief report on their Breeds.

Breed Committee Elections – February 2022

Flock Book – we are all working on getting the book to the printers, albeit a couple of weeks late now. If you have been contacted regarding any breeding return issues, please contact the office.

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.

To our sponsors, thank you for your continued support, and to Helen who continues to put this newsletter together.



Feature Breed

Dorset Down



Marnoch 401-16

ORIGIN & HISTORY

The Dorset Down was developed in the UK in the middle 1800s by crossing local Dorset sheep, Wiltshire, Berkshire and Hampshire ewes with Southdown rams.

In time a breed developed that was well suited to the local area and became popular as a terminal sire. A breed society was formed in 1906, and as with the other UK Down breeds, they were in demand throughout the UK until the arrival of the Continental breeds.

Good news from the ‘Spinning Loft’ website – *“However, the increasing market demand for “real food” and recent CAP reform has meant that the Dorset Down has returned to the fore as the ideal solution for the production of premier quality lamb.”*

NZ HISTORY (kindly supplied by Stacey Burrows)

Dorset Downs were first introduced in 1921, then were reintroduced in 1947 when Mr J. D. Henderson of Winton, Southland imported 10 ewes and a ram from England. The breed slowly grew in numbers until the 1954 outbreak of Scrapie resulted in an embargo being placed on sheep importation from Great Britain.

Between 1957 and 1960 there were further importations, this time from Australia, which saw a marked increase in flocks registered. As of 1960, about half the registered Dorset Down flocks were in the Canterbury area, 8 across the North Island, and 4 from Marlborough to Southland – indicating that they had gained a foothold in most areas and were becoming a recognized meat sire.

Today, the Dorset Down is well known terminal sire, selected for its quick maturity and high growth rate. 2019 saw a Dorset Down ram sell for \$17,500 – setting a new breed sale price record. There are currently 46 registered Dorset Downs studs in New Zealand.

Some current Dorset Down studs are descended from some of the original flocks in NZ and carry with them a rich history, while others are just getting started – with young farmers choosing the Dorset Downs to breed commercial rams, as well as enjoying the camaraderie of the stud breeding community.

BREED DESCRIPTION

Dorset Down sheep in NZ are a medium to large size terminal sire breed. Renowned for a rapid growth rate, early maturity with a thick, meaty carcass of high yield.

Bodyweight
Rams: 100-130kg Ewes 65-80kg
Meat
Carcase; high-yielding. Lean red meat.
Breeding/Lambing
110-140 percent
Numbers
Around 5,000 registered ewes
Wool
Dense, Down type. Full-handling and springy. Staple length: 50-75 mm (2-3 inches). Fleece weight: Range 2-3 kg (4.4-6.6 lb); Average 2.5 kg (5.5 lb). Uses: Frequently blended with other wools to give extra elasticity and crispness. Also used in the production of high-quality hosiery, fine knitting wools, bedding and furniture fillings, papermaking and felts.

New to the Dorset Down breed are Marcus White of Waikari with *Glenkinnick*, Jade Knight & Karl Chitham of Mangatawhiri with *River Rock*, and Edward & Jenna Harrington of Springfield with *Springvale* the newest flock.

The New Zealand Dorset Down Society is well known for being a social bunch, with regular tours both in New Zealand and occasionally Australia. There is good-spirited competition between Canterbury and ‘the rest’, with each tour having an opportunity for a challenge to win the Shield. Present on these tours are also life members, such as Bob & Marilyn Masefield and Alistar & Christine Busch who have studs with lineage that can be tracked back to the 1950s when Bob’s father and Alistar’s father started their own Dorset Down studs.

“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.”



▲ **Dorset Down Ram Hogget** class, at the 2019 NZ Agriculture Show. L to R is Malcom MacKenzie (Life Member), Guy Letham of Sherwood Stud, George Fletcher (presenting the Fletcher Trophy for best ram hogget), Andrew Letham holding **124-18 from Sherwood Stud**, David Wyllie (Judge).

Recently Dorset Downs have fared well when compared with other breeds. At the **2018 NZ Agriculture Show**, Dorset Downs won the **Best Meat Breeds Pair** title (*Glendhu & Marnoch Studs*), ▼



and in 2019 won the **Meat Breed Section of Miss Canterbury** (*Bankhead stud*) at the NZ Agricultural Show.

◀ With the introduction of more exotic breeds, it's good to see the Dorset Down maintaining its foothold as a recognized terminal sire.

Dorset Down Tour



▲ *Okaahu* sheep on display



▲ Viewing at *Trackly*



▲ *Belview* in the sun

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STUD PROFILE #1

Burrows Genetics Stud, Flock #386,

Established 2005

Owned by John, Stacey & Holly Burrows



Formerly *Marnoch* Dorset Downs, Burrows Genetics is the home of John, Stacey & Holly Burrows' studs – including Dorset Down, Southdown and Suffolk.

John established the Dorset Down stud in 2005 and has focused his energy on producing “sheep that will improve the profitability of our clients”. John started with 12 ewes from J&H Lang, 5 ewe hoggets from D King and 4 lots of ewes from RV & M Masefield. From this, John has built the numbers to their current 120 ewes – through occasionally buying in but primarily breeding replacements from the existing flock.

There are three aspects to the Burrows Genetics stud to which particular attention is focused – purchasing stud rams that support the breeding goals of the stud, maintaining our ewe flock with strong enough material attributes to produce good lambs, and breeding rams that meet the needs of our commercial clients.

Purchasing rams allows us to not only support fellow breeders, but to bring in fresh genetics that help us to achieve our goals. Using tools such as RamFinder and SIL, we focus on foot scores, survivability, and growth – as well as ensuring full Dorset Down lineage so that our clients get the full benefits of the hybrid vigor. Viewing rams is also important, as over reliance on genotype can lead to negligence in the phenotype of the rams. We look for rams with good constitution and balance, correct breed attributes and soundness.

✓ *Holly among the flock*



Maternal abilities are a balancing act in a terminal breed, but we believe that you need good sheep to breed good sheep. We continue to focus on ewes that show strength in mothering, as well as having good milking ability – helping our lambs to show their potential.

In the last 4 years, Burrows Genetics has sold 23 rams to stud – with many more going to commercial clients. A highlight of this, is that most clients won't buy rams each year – as John has focused on producing rams with longevity, that will do well for a client for more than one season. We find it satisfying to go to other breeders' sales and see sons of our rams selling well.



Ram hoggets sold to stud

As a stud, we continue to support local A & P Shows. Not only are these a good chance to check the progress of our stud in comparison to other studs, but we really enjoy the camaraderie of the Dorset Down breeders. We are looking forward to the SHEEP125 celebrations at the New Zealand Show in Christchurch this year – as well as the opportunity to

showcase our stud through a variety of classes.



◀ *1st, 2nd, 5th ram hogget 2018*

The stud is also taking a leading role in working with MPI & B+LNZ regarding the new tailing regulations, including inviting these industry groups to their tailing day to physically look at what the new regulations look like on a variety of breeds of sheep and on different aged animals. The feedback from this will be made available through SHEEPCO NZ Facebook, and Burrows Genetics Instagram page – as well as through official channels.



▲ Marnoch 527-17 Prize winning ram & John Burrows



◀ Holly getting used to helping Dad with the sheep in the yards



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Exotic Wool and Fibre Marketing

Network *by Marina Steinke*

Members of the Rare Breeds Conservation Society of New Zealand are always on the lookout for opportunities to increase the desirability of the animals they keep. When it comes to sheep, wool is the obvious product that needs to be marketed as wool prices have reached rock bottom in a world where nylon and polyester are pushed by multinational conglomerates who have nothing else but profits at all cost in mind.

However, wool products are still very desirable but have priced themselves out of reach of many families.

Take for instance a pair of Merino socks. They are soft and warm and absorb sweat, thus discouraging fungal infections. In short – Merino socks feel comfortable and warm when worn – unlike socks made from polyester and nylon which basically feel like wearing a plastic bag. A pair of Merino socks weighs about 50g and costs N\$25 to buy. 1kg worth of Merino socks (that's 20 pairs) cost \$500 to buy.

Some Merino farmers are 'lucky' – they have a contract guaranteeing them a price of \$16 per kg for their highest quality Merino wool. These are farmers who have, for generations, maintained flocks that grow some of the finest fleeces in the world. From the \$16 they get paid per kg of fleece, they have to pay the shearers, their helpers, wool grader, transport to the wool buyer and possibly more. Plus they have to provide the grazing, water, drenching, foot care, and countless hours of caring for the sheep.

All this for \$16 per kg – and they are considered to be the lucky ones.

Once the wool leaves the farm it is shipped to China where it is scoured, spun and made into fancy products by poorly paid workers to then be shipped to wholesalers around the world. Once it is sold to the New Zealand consumer, the value of the wool is 30 times higher than when it left our country.

Wool from almost all other breeds of sheep yields \$.50 to \$2.50 per kg and when it comes back as tailored suits, soft furniture or carpets, the price increase is even higher due to the lower starting price.

On the other hand, we have thousands, if not tens of thousands of talented knitters, spinners, weavers, felters, crafters and the likes right here in New Zealand who would love to have the opportunity to work with unique wools and fibres to create their own pieces of clothing, furniture coverings, art, and so forth.

It's not easy to source good fleeces that suit the project someone may have in mind and that's where the Rare Breeds

Conservation Society's Exotic Wool and Fibre Marketing Network comes in. It is still a work in progress but so far we have pages for the following breeds of sheep: Arapawa, Gotland Pelt, Karakul, Karakul cross, Lincoln, Raglan, Valais Blacknose and Stewart Island. The link to the pages can be found here: <https://www.rarebreeds.co.nz/fibreintro.html>

▼ *Karakul fleece and socks made from it*



For each breed there is a short article, describing what the wool is like, what it is most suitable for and some examples of what can be done with it. Lincoln wool, for instance, is a strong wool but that does not mean it's only suitable for carpets. It has a beautiful lustre, takes dye incredibly well and the hat and scarfs I have made from Lincoln lambs wool are comfortable to wear. However, in the hands of a true artist, this very special wool with its long curly staple could be made into the most interesting wigs, cushions and maybe even lamp shades.

▼ *Lincoln raw fleece, roving and yarn*



The other extreme would be the wool from an Arapawa or Stewart Island sheep. The staple is rather short, the crimp is fine and once spun, this wool makes soft lofty garments. I have worked with one Arapawa lamb fleece which was dark brown with golden coloured tips. Carding would have ruined the effect the golden tips have so I decided to spin it uncarded. This resulted in a very knobbly yarn suitable for weaving. The result is a very interesting and unique table runner.

In today's world, people are getting more aware of the benefits of natural materials which have zero impact on the environment once they have reached the end of their lifetime. Producing them also is a natural process in tune with the environment, especially here in New Zealand where many sheep – and the rare heritage breeds in particular – graze on marginal land.

Coloured sheep offer the additional advantage that no artificial dyes are necessary to create a coloured garment or artwork.

The wools still waiting in our shed to be evaluated are from Awassi, Mohaka, Dorset Horn (can't wait to work with this one as it handles beautifully), Finn and East Friesian.

However, there are many more breeds out there to be explored. Some of the evaluations and fibre articles have been provided by people who actually breed these special sheep and the Society welcomes input from anyone who has worked with wool from rare heritage breeds. Please contact editor@rarebreeds.co.nz

Romneys and Corriedales are not considered Rare Breeds, and neither are Merinos and Half Breds but hopefully the current initiative will lift awareness of these wools as well.

It is very difficult to put a price on a fleece but one figure that has been floated a while ago is \$20 per kg for a standard fleece. However, some fleeces have fetched prices over \$100 per fleece, reflecting the uniqueness of the fleece and the items that can be created from it.

Primary producers have, for decades, been urged to produce more and more from the same amount of land while receiving less and less per unit they produce. Anyone can see where this will eventually lead to. This process needs to be reversed and putting value back into wool is one small step into the right direction.

Getting a fleece to the crafter can be a logistic challenge as they usually are very bulky. If breeders are able to skirt the fleece so the less desirable bits don't need to be shipped, the cost will be reduced. Raw fleeces contain some vegetable matter as sheep live outside and eat grass and some of the grass plus some weed seeds get caught in their fleece.

New Zealand Post offers prepaid bags for \$11 and they hold around 1kg of wool. Rural delivery is, of course, extra, but for a good and unique fleece it's a worthwhile expense.

Finding a breeder who will sell a single fleece is not always straight forward. The directory on the Rare Breeds Website can be a starting point:

<https://www.rarebreeds.co.nz/directoryd.html#sheep>

Negotiations will be directly between the breeder and the interested party.

The Canterbury group of the Rare Breeds Conservation Society of New Zealand holds 2 big events per year: the Rare Breeds Auction and a Rare Breeds Display at the New Zealand Agricultural and Pastoral Show. At both events there is a spinning display and fleeces are available for purchase.

▼ *Spinning display at the NZ A & P show*



In Taranaki, Avonstour Island Rare Breeds Organic Farm holds Open Farm Days once or twice per year and fleeces from several Rare Breeds can be purchased there. John at Avonstour Island can be contacted via email avonstourisland@gmail.com or phone number (06) 762 7992.

▼ *Mohaka sheep at Avonstour Island*



Creating a finished garment or artwork from a raw fleece is a very satisfying process and a jumper made from unadulterated pure wool really feels like wearing a hug.

Another great sign of changing times are the waiting times at fibre mills for people who bring in fleeces to be carded or wool from their flocks to be carded and spun. Some mills are really busy and no longer deal with small orders which, in turn, makes it necessary for home crafters to do the whole process of washing, carding and spinning themselves. Spinning groups are busy teaching others to spin and used spinning wheels in going order are no longer available on an online auction site for less than \$200.

Let's hope the benefits of this trend will eventually reach those who actually produce the wool!



WOOL – AND HOW IT GROWS

A revised series of article on aspects of wool biology.

(First published in Black & Coloured Sheepbreeders' magazine Issue #17, November 1980)

By Roland Sumner, AgResearch, Whatawhata Research Centre. Reprinted with permission of BCSBA & Roland Sumner

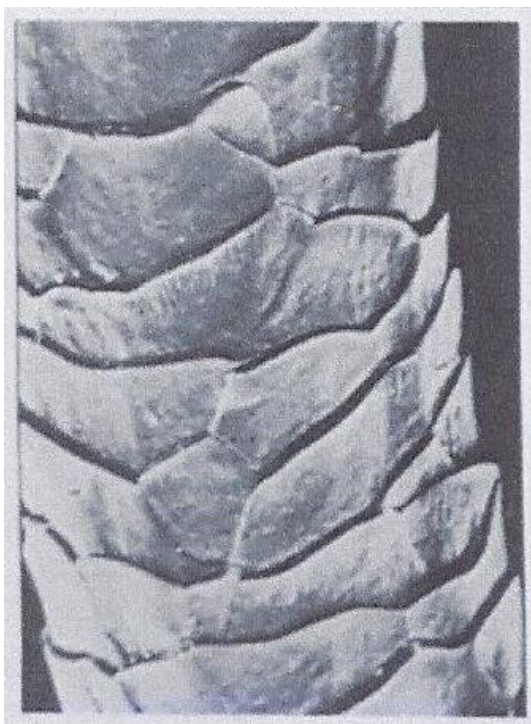
Part One

What are wool fibres made of?

Though wool fibres may appear to be just like fine hairs to the human eye they are made up of a complex grouping of several different types of cells possessing amazing and unique properties.

Wool fibres grow from tubular depressions in the skin called follicles. These follicles are essentially similar to the hair follicles on our bodies. Wool fibres consist of three major parts; the cuticle or outer skin, the cortex or main part of the fibre and (in some fibres only) the medulla or central air core.

Under a microscope the cuticle can be seen to be a single layer of flattened overlapping cells with their exposed edges pointing towards the tip of the fibre. These overlapping edges act like a ratchet and it is this action which is the basis of the ability of wool to felt. Shrinkage which occurs when woollen clothes are tumble in a washing machine is a mild form of felting. One way to overcoming shrinking is to coat the fibres with a plastic-like substance and so prevent the ratchet action working. Another method is to chemically stick some of the fibres together and again prevent the ratchet action.



Scale pattern of the wool fibre cuticle

Scientists have also been able to show that the cuticle is important in the appearance of wool fibres. Some coarse wools tend to have large cuticle cells which reflect more light making them appear more lustrous than other wool with smaller cuticle cells.

Structurally the cuticle is important in holding the fibre “together” and protecting the cortex. If the cuticle becomes damaged, as with abrasion through wear, the fibre may be weakened. If the damage occurs before or during processing the ability of the fibres to take up dye may be affected and the damaged part of the fibre may dye to a slightly different shade. Even though the cuticle affects the dyeability of wool it still allows water to pass through it giving wool its unique ability to absorb moisture without feeling wet. In some way the cuticle is possibly the most important part of wool fibre with the “cement” which holds the cuticle cells together being of paramount importance.

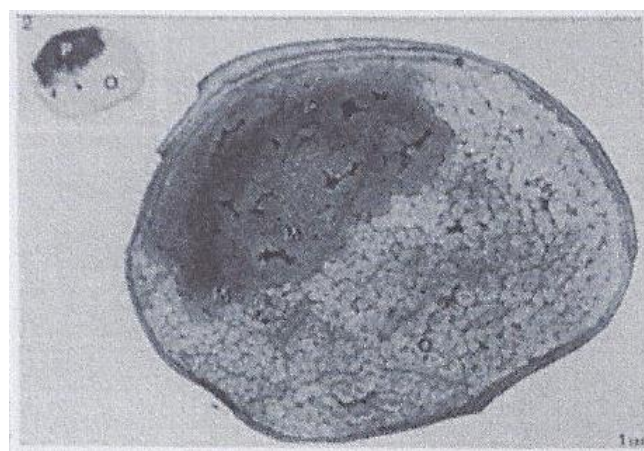


Diagram – Cross section through a wool fibre
O= Orthocortex, P= Paracortex

Inside the cuticle is the cortex, a tightly packed mass of long thin cells. These cells are in turn packed with bundles of fibrous protein called fibrils. The fibrils consist of long spiral chains of a complex protein called keratin. Keratin is a unique protein in that it contains approximately 3% sulphur. Though this may not seem much it places special demands on the sheep to efficiently convert the sulphur in its diet into wool. Hooves, horn, hair, and finger and toenails consist principally of keratin. The sulphur in the cortex is very important in giving the wool fibre its strength. Some of the atoms in sulphur in the protein chains “join-up” with sulphur atoms in adjoining chains providing “crosslinks” or disulphide bonds. These are very stable chemically making wool strong yet flexible and resistant to chemical breakdown except from strong alkalis. If sheep are short of sulphur in their diet the wool contains less sulphur and may become weaker. With normal grazing, sheep obtain sufficient sulphur for their needs and supplementation with sulphur containing substances is unnecessary. The cells within the cortex are of two types with the ratio of one type to the other being related to crimping of the fibre and also its dyeability. Recent

research work at the Whatawhata Research Centre indicates that the ratio between the two types of cortex is associated with the “springiness” or bulk of wool. This in turn affects the “bulkiness” of the resulting yarn and the feltability of individual fleeces.

When wool absorbs moisture, and it can absorb up to 30% of its own weight, the water is held within the cellular structure of the cortex by small electrical charges. The internal structure of the fibre is not changed in any way. It is the formation of these “electrostatic” bonds which generate a small amount of heat that gives wool the effect of warmth when worn against the skin. Wool fibres do, however, swell as they absorb moisture. This is thought to be one of the factors contributing to the formation of clotting (felting) in the fleece of some sheep under wet conditions. With swelling and contraction the fibres creep over each other due to the ratchet action of the cuticle. Under normal atmospheric conditions wool contains approximately 15% of its own weight of moisture.

The other important part of wool fibre is the medulla or region of large air-filled cells which form the central core of hair and kemp fibres. The medulla may be continuous, intermittent, or not there at all. If present it may be either one or several cells in width. The air-filled cells of the medulla reflect light and can give medullated fibres a chalky appearance. The presence of a medulla is also thought to give the fibre greater resistance to bending thereby making it more suitable for carpet yarn.

For this reason, Drysdale and Tukidale wool, is considered a specialty carpet wool. Though little is known about the chemistry of the medulla it does appear to be made of different proteins to the cortex.



Diagram: Oblique section through a medullated wool fibre



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WHO SAYS OUR LAMB ISN'T HEALTHY?

By Jon Hickford

We scientists are big on objectivity, which put simply, is not showing bias. When it comes to things we humans like to eat though, objectivity tends to go out the window and fashion takes over. The problem is that fashions change and rapidly at times, while the ability of breeders to respond to those changes in fashion is hampered by the speed that we can breed livestock. Accordingly cautious sheep breeders, tend to focus on making their stock as robust as possible, and without getting too carried away with the latest fad or fashion.

This brings me to omega-3 fatty acids. The three main omega-3 fatty acids are alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) and eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA). ALA is an essential fatty acid, meaning that your body can't make it, so you must get it from the foods you consume. Humans can convert some ALA into EPA and then to DHA, but only in very small amounts. Therefore, getting EPA and DHA from foods is the only practical way to increase levels of these omega-3 fatty acids in your body.

Omega-3s are components of the membranes that surround your body's cells and DHA levels are especially high in your retina, brain, and male sperm. The Omega-3s also provide energy and have other functions in your heart, blood vessels, lungs, endocrine system, and immune system. In the US, the National Institutes of Health have recommended daily intakes of ADA, with the highest levels of 1.6 grams per day being recommended for males over the age of 14. Various credible health organisations suggest an EPA+DHA intake of at least 250 to 500 mg per day.

You can get adequate amounts of omega-3s by eating a variety of foods, including the following: fish (especially cold-water fatty fish, such as salmon, tuna and sardines); nuts and seeds (such as flaxseed, chia seeds and walnuts); plant oils (such as flaxseed oil, soybean oil and canola oil); and some fortified foods. I do realise some of these foods aren't a 'big hit', albeit I don't mind salmon and walnuts go down well too. With the salmon, 100 grams can contain in excess of 4 grams of omega-3s and in that, nearly 1.8 g in total of the important DHA and EPA.

What happens if you have a deficiency of omega-3? It can cause rough, scaly skin and a red, swollen, itchy rash. According to the Ministry of Health, inadequate intakes of the essential fatty acids are considered rare in NZ, albeit some Massey University research suggests pregnant women are not getting sufficient omega-3, especially DHA, and that the likely reason for the deficiency was the low intake of fish and seafood. I can find little evidence of omega-3 deficiency anywhere in the developed world, although omega-3 insufficiency or inadequacy has been shown to occur in

people of all ages. Many observational studies link higher intakes of fish and other seafood with improved health outcomes. However, it is difficult to ascertain whether the benefits are due specifically to the omega-3 content of the seafood, other components in the seafood, the substitution of seafood for other less healthful foods, other healthy behaviours, or a combination of these factors. Data from randomised and well controlled clinical trials are needed to shed light on these questions.

There is omega-3 in beef and lamb, albeit the content varies and it is typically low relative to fish. It seems to be present in higher levels in grass-fed lamb. The Omega lamb programme funded by MPI set out to 'produce the world's tastiest, healthiest lamb and increase returns for farmers'. It was claimed the project would be 'targeting premium markets through a new, healthier type of lamb meat – with higher levels of polyunsaturated fats and omega-3 fatty acids. It was also claimed that the 'programme could add over \$400 million in domestic and export earnings, increase revenue for farmers by 34%, and deliver a 19-fold return on government investment'. The programme started in July 2015, to run for 7 years, with Progressive Growth Partnership (PGP) funding of \$12.5 million and in industry funding of \$12.5 million. The last year of operation hasn't been reported on, but the July to September 2020 summary (Published November 2020) concluded that 'difficult trading conditions affected the financial performance of the Omega business', but despite that they retained their farmer participants.

It isn't my job to comment on the success of the programme, but key participant, the Headwaters Group (<http://headwaters.nz/the-omega-lamb-project/>) says that post weaning, the high Omega lambs are moved to specialist chicory-based forage operations to further boost Omega-3 and intramuscular polyunsaturated fats, and they are typically above 40 mg/100 gm of Omega-3, around three times that of the typical New Zealand lamb. Their intramuscular fat levels are also claimed to be 'in advance of that of mainstream New Zealand lamb', averaging above 3%.

The 40 mg/100 g figure is impressive for lamb meat and in one of our studies we are only getting figures around 20 mg for lambs that haven't come out of specialised finishing systems, but the IMF at 3% is not extraordinary. We have found numerous lambs above this figure. Balance this against some of the lambs we killed off of very hard hill country that produced 20 kg plus carcasses (with lean meat yields over 55%). That is still where the value proposition is if you are paid on carcass weight. In the context of omega-3, while 40 mg/100 g of red meat is a notable achievement, don't forget

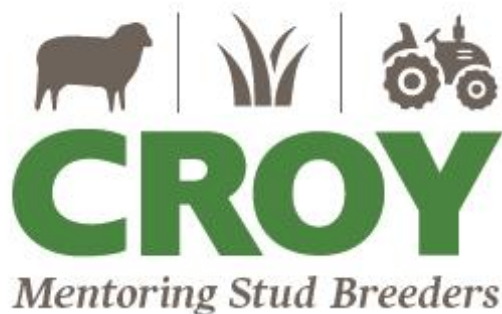
"Fostering the improvement of all sheep breeds and providing a unified body whose collective voice has a beneficial effect on the total New Zealand sheep industry."

that the equivalent weight of salmon may contain nearly 1.8 g of the critically important DHA and EPA.

Why discuss all this anyway? Because I do not think that trying to improve omega-3 is the be all and end all of lamb production in NZ. It is a nice to have, but if it comes at the expense of the three key traits of fertility (Number of Lambs Born in SIL), weaning weight and carcass weight, then we are doing ourselves a disservice (albeit those north of Taupo add FE resistance to that mix). These traits 1) increase your productivity (and thus potentially your profit) and 2) they accrue us benefit in respect to the carbon footprint of sheep farming. Faster growing lambs, have a lower proportional

cost of maintenance in terms of dry matter intake, they should wean at heavier weights, and kill out to give heavier carcasses, which is where farmers derive their income. Lower overall DM intake will mean a lower carbon cost and a better lamb production system.

Accordingly, rather than trying too hard to gain benefit from getting high omega-3 lamb, I do wonder if we shouldn't instead make more mileage out of our low carbon footprint system. After all it is our biggest marketing advantage, and in having slower growing lambs and using specialist feeds that may require annual cultivation to gain a marginal health benefit, you may be compromising our biggest advantage.



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RARE/MINORITY [SHEEP] BREEDS?

By Helen McKenzie (First published in "Growing Today" - now Lifestyle Block - in 2007)

Note this applies to any livestock breed you wish to farm, not just "Rare or Minority" breeds.

Thinking of owning and breeding 'rare breed' domestic animals? Why do you want to breed rare breeds – fashion, finance or future of the breed?

Fashion is fleeting and chances are you won't contribute anything to the breed on a long-term basis. Fashion followers tend to buy when a breed becomes popular, breed it flat out and somewhat indiscriminately, while there's money to be made and abandon it as popularity wanes.

Finance – well unless you're with a fashionable breed you are not in it solely to make money. Rare breeds 'intrinsic value' as meat, fibre or milk producer dictates their worth. If you can breed stud stock from lines that other breeders desire to own then you should attract a premium above the intrinsic value for well bred, well grown, recorded and registered stock.

Future of the breed? 'Breeding for the future' requires commitment. To stick with your breed when no-one else wants to know of their existence, to improve their intrinsic value by selection within the breed, not to take the easy way out and throw in a bit of something bigger or better from another breed.

Things I have learned since beginning with rare/minority breeds:

- Choose a breed/species you like and feel empathy with; that you enjoy dealing with and that you take pleasure in watching from the kitchen window.
- Not all breeds are suited to all environments or people. Within species there are docile breeds and freer-thinking types. Pick one to suit your farm's topography, your degree of patience and your fences.
- It's better to have more animals of one breed rather than a bit of this and that. You can really make a difference to your breed's genetic resource in New Zealand.
- Buy registered stock from a registered breeder. Most breeders are keen to assist new owners 'do it right'. I have made lifelong friendships from within the breed societies I belong to.
- Take any opportunities to learn to judge stock and improve your knowledge of breeds. Showing your animals can be great fun. To show your animals they must be registered with the appropriate breed society.
- Buy the best foundation stock you can afford (buy fewer, better animals).
- Keep an open mind. Keep up with what other breeds are doing. Conserving a breed does not mean it can't be judiciously improved.

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TYPICAL CHEMICAL ANALYSIS

Element	g / Litre	Element	g / Litre
Nitrogen	30.0	Zinc	0.350
Potassium	30.0	Boron	0.060
Phosphorus	24.0	Copper	0.375
Calcium	0.3	Iodine	0.150
Magnesium	0.3	Cobalt	0.090
Sodium	4.5	Selenium	0.075
Sulphur	2.3	Sucrose	22.250
Chlorine	1.2	Vitamin A	150000 IU
Iron	0.600	Vitamin D	15000 IU
Manganese	0.090	Vitamin E	90 IU

RECOMMENDED DOSE RATES

Livestock	Daily	21 Days	Livestock	Daily	21 Days
Sheep:			Goats:		
Lambs	1 ml	6 ml	Milking	2 ml	15 ml
Hoggets	1 ml	10 ml	Kids	1 ml	6 ml
Rams/Ewes	2 ml	10 ml	Adults	2 ml	10 ml
Dairy Cows:			Horses:		
Cattle:			Foals	2 ml	15 ml
150-300kgs	2 ml	20 ml	Yearlings	2 ml	20 ml
300kgs plus	3 ml	25 ml	Adults	3 ml	30 ml
Calves	2 ml	15 ml	Pigs:		
Deer:			Adults	2 ml	15 ml
Fawns	1 ml	10 ml	Working Dogs:		
Hinds	2 ml	20 ml	Adults	1 ml	10 ml
Stags	3 ml	25 ml			

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MISS NZ 1965, GAY PHELPS, AND HER NZ WOOL BOARD SPONSORED GOWNS

by Helen McKenzie & Angela Williams

In March we had our local Wairarapa Federation of Women's Institute AGM. Our afternoon speaker was Mrs Gay Williams.

Back in the mid 1960's Gay Phelps, as she was then, represented New Zealand at the 1965 Miss World contest. She spoke of her time there and displayed three of the pure NZ wool gowns that she wore.

Gay, who has a lovely warm personality, began her talk by saying she remembered 1965 as being epitomised by the Beatles and Flower Power. Gay said the name, Gay, had become somewhat controversial in latter years, but early on she was told that the letters GAY stood for "Good As You". She has always thought this a very good explanation.

In 1965 she was attending Teachers' Training College and University in Auckland. While there the Auckland Junior Chamber of Commerce members organised a "Miss Personality" contest to raise funds for the first rescue helicopter service in New Zealand. Gay was persuaded by her flatmates to enter the contest. Unrealised by Gay, the fine print said the top three finalists would automatically go forward to the Miss Auckland competition. The surprise of the fine print was lessened by the lure of the prize, a black and white television. This was a coveted item for the flat.

Gay, who was a farmer's daughter, born and bred in the Wairarapa, found herself in the last three of the Miss Personality Contest and subsequently became Miss Auckland.



◀ *"Gay looks charming in a wool knitted skimmer frock with polo neck"*

Photo: Gisborne Photo News #136, October 6th, 1965

From there she was a participant in the 1965 Miss New Zealand competition, run by NZ entrepreneur, Mr Joe Brown. The regional competition winners went on tour throughout New Zealand over several months, along with the likes of the Howard Morrison Quartet, guitarist Peter Posa and John [Hore] Grenell. The girls were chaperoned and did not get to consort with the musicians! They were expected to front up every day, except Sunday, promoting the NZ Wool Board, the major sponsor, and the products of the lesser sponsors such as Lane's Hosiery. As they exited the bus at each stop, they were surrounded by photographers and local

dignitaries. Gay said they always had to be perfectly presented, with hats on.

The Miss New Zealand final was held in Dunedin and Gay won. It was the beginning of a very busy year. First up, tours of all the major department stores in the main centres, all the while promoting the benefits of NZ wool.

Her first international competition was Miss Universe, held in Miami, USA. Gay's wardrobe featured all-wool gowns sponsored by the NZ Wool Board. She travelled over there with Miss Australia. Miss Thailand, who went on to win the competition, was Gay's roommate. Among other personalities, Gay met the renowned American singer, Pat Boone, who she said was very nice. Unfortunately, Gay was unplaced. Home to NZ and back on the road promoting NZ wool and the Miss NZ contest. A highlight was featuring on the first coloured cover of the well-regarded Auckland Weekly News which most older readers will remember as having a pink paper cover.



The Miss World competition was held in London on 19 November 1965 at the Lyceum Ballroom. Gay and Miss Australia, Jan Rennison, flew to the UK for this occasion. The show was run by Eric Morley and his wife, Julia. Forty-eight countries were represented. Gay made it into the top ten. The winner was Lesley Langley of the United Kingdom. As an aside, Gay said she sat at the same table as renowned British movie actor, Kenneth Moore and he was great fun. (Some of you may have seen the recent film, "Misbehaviour" about the 1970 Miss World contest where the women's libbers were out in force attempting to disrupt the Show.)

After the competition, while still in London, Gay was invited to Wool House where she was introduced to the now world-famous. Wool Mark to be used on all pure wool clothing, furnishings and carpets. The international promotion began at Wool House in London.



[Initially the mark was owned by the International Wool Secretariat. In 2011, British design magazine, Creative Review, declared the Woolmark number one of the top twenty logos of all time.]

Upon her return to New Zealand Gay was required to introduce the Wool Mark and continued with her role promoting wool on behalf of the NZ Wool Board. This promotion included giving talks on aeroplanes as she flew around NZ. While visiting the mayors of larger towns and cities, Gay was charged by the NZ Wool Board with presenting them with pure wool mats as an example of the beauty and usefulness of wool.

After the year of her reign finished and Gay had crowned her successor, she returned to her teaching studies and once qualified taught at a Masterton school. Gay married Tom Williams of the New Zealand-renowned Te Parae thoroughbred stud and they raised their family together.



Gay had a special mention for the woman who designed her beautiful woollen gowns and frocks. She was Peggy Wilson of the Academy of Elegance in Auckland.

◀
Photo of the stunning red wool dress:
NZ Fashion Museum

Photos of the cream gown and detail: G.Barnes

One of Gay's gowns – as beautiful as when it was made in 1965.



Fabric detail from same frock
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Kind Regards,

Graham and Joyce Bell - October 2019



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MM047 Men's Awakino Pullover

	M	L	XL	XXL	3XL
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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

The Closing Date for next issue of the newsletter will be November 20th for the December 2021 newsletter.

Please get items in well before the deadline!!!

“FEATURE BREED” will be CORRIEDALES

If you would like to be part of this section or the newsletter, **photos and stud histories of All Breeds are accepted at any time for next issue.**

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

Published by NZ Sheepbreeders’ Association

Email: greg@nzsheep.co.nz

Phone: (03) 358 9412

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PGG Wrightson Livestock