



# Sheep NewZ

#38 Autumn 2025



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Hello Members,

The Highley Shropshire flock is being downsized and in a year or two we will be doing the same with our Shropshires (imp 1864) and Ryelands (imp 1903) which we have bred for over 40 years. Our flocks are ‘cornerstone’ flocks as with the recent dispersal of the Cleardale Station English Leicester flock (imp. 1853). Lincolns (imp. 1862) are another breed in dire need of support both in NZ and internationally.

How do we get existing stud breeders or newcomers to take over and register some of these sheep?

These breeds all have a contribution to make to the ovine economy in New Zealand; attributes such as a unique wool type or thriftiness and hardiness.

Certainly, the collection and saving of embryos may be one avenue to keep their genetics but someone has to pay for this not inexpensive method of preserving the breed in NZ.

If you are a current stud breeder of a more numerous breed please entertain the idea of running a second flock. 25 -30 ewes – it does not have to be a big flock. The more breeders we have, the better the chances of retaining a diverse genetic base.

*Helen McKenzie*

*Editor*

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**Front cover photo:** Armidale Merino stud’s Champion Merino Ram & Supreme Sheep at Wanaka Show 2025

## ASSOCIATION NEWS & VIEWS

### From the President

Hello to all members and welcome to the Autumn edition of Sheep NewZ.



Summer in the Central South Island seemed to start with a hiss and a roar about the beginning of November with traditional NW winds, and on some days, very intense heat. This lasted to the middle of December with just 8mm of moisture. However, from that point onwards a complete turnaround, with 200mm falling to the end of January, setting most areas up with an abundance of feed. Understandably, there are still areas struggling, having missed a lot of this weather.

Lamb & Mutton schedules have maintained themselves since the Spring with even an upwards side at times. Some companies have recently lifted lamb to over \$8 a Kg which reflects a 30% lift on twelve months ago.

With the strength in the lamb sales have lifted to extreme highs with a lot of emphasis being placed on hopefully higher spring prices. At least the commercial breeder is receiving payback for their efforts at this point but unfortunately, I don’t think that many of the Maternal Stud ram breeders have seen this reflected in their sales, with it being very slow for some breeds.

Mating time is upon us with young and potentially good sires being readied along with their older counterparts. This is usually a good time of the year with a lot of potential being seen for the future.

Good luck to those that participate in Autumn shows.

**Mark Copland**  
President NZSBA



## From The General Manager

### TIME TO SAY GOODBYE -

It's hard to believe that after 36 years, the time has come for me to say farewell. This is a bittersweet moment as I reflect on the privilege and the responsibility in managing the Association and the many people I have met who have made it so rewarding for me.



I have enjoyed working for the Association and still look forward to work every day, but I feel it is time to pursue other adventures.

I was fortunate to be given this position and have never taken it for granted as working with the rural sector has been more than just a job—it has been a privilege.

Over the years, I have had the honour of working alongside 11 Presidents, each bringing their own leadership and personalities. I have also worked with many dedicated breeders on breed committees and have been continuously inspired by their commitment and passion within their own breed. The camaraderie we have shared has made this journey truly special.

During my time at NZ Sheepbreeders' I have also worked alongside two Treasurers, Peter Cosgriff – for twenty six years, who then passed the baton to Ian Stevenson. Peter was my business/marketing tutor at Lincoln University and mentored me through my early days in the role at NZSBA.

As I step into the next chapter of my life, I do so with anticipation. While I will certainly miss the daily interactions and the people who have made this job so meaningful, I also look forward to pursuing new activities. That said, I want to ensure a smooth transition for my successor. My position will be advertised in June, and I am available to work alongside the selected candidate for as long as it takes to help them settle into the role.

To members, friends, and colleagues —thank you. Thank you for your support, wisdom, and humour, and for making the past 36 years an experience I will never forget. Though I may be leaving, the connections and memories I have made here will stay with me forever.

I wish the Association continued success, and I look forward to keeping in touch. Thank you.

**Breed Committee Elections – 2025** – at this stage some breeds are still seeking members who are willing to

represent their breed for the next 3 years on their breed committee.

**Breed Conferences – 2025** – At this stage there are 4 breeds holding conferences this year. If your breed is having a conference I urge you to participate as conferences epitomizes why you belong to a breed society.

**Outstanding Debt Owed to the Association** – As we are coming to end of our financial year, please eliminate any outstanding debt you may have. Remember if you resign no resignation can take effect unless all debt has been repaid to the Association.

**NZSBA Flock Book – 2025** – the flock book has been published and circulated to those members who require a hard copy and is also online. Should you wish to purchase a copy, please contact the office.

**Annual Returns** – Now on-line but members will still receive their Annual Returns via email or post if no email address. The annual returns will be sent out soon. Please contact the office if you feel daunted by the form as all we require is the number of ewes going to the ram(s) in this breeding season.

The Flock Book is more meaningful when members submit their annual returns, and the office has been instructed to charge members a Late Fee who fail to send in their annual returns.

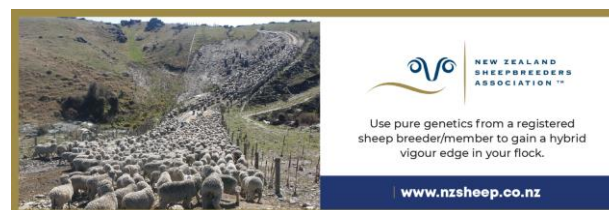
I reiterate if you need help please contact the office.

### Commemorative Jerseys - for sale –

Cost of Jerseys – Men's - \$140.00 – Ladies - \$115.00 (**reduced**) and these can be posted anywhere in New Zealand. Check out our website for more details.

**Tag Discounts - Shearwell, & Allflex** - 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 thank you for your patience.



## Feature Breed #1

### German White Headed Marsh

#### ORIGINS & HISTORY

A breed currently rare in New Zealand is the dual-purpose White Headed Marsh, a breed adapted to cold, hard, wet conditions. They first arrived in New Zealand in the 1980s (being imported from Denmark) and were released from quarantine in 1990.

‘The White Headed Marsh originated in the North Sea marshes of West Germany. Its beginnings can be traced back to the mid-1800s; when North German Marsh sheep, the local milk sheep, were crossed with imported British long wool breeds, including the Cotswold.

In Denmark and North Germany, the White Headed Marsh live outside in very wet and cold conditions. They are known for their hardiness, natural immunity, easy-care and excellent meat. They lamb at 180% in Denmark. White Headed Marsh are similar looking to Romney’s or Coopworth’s, but are much larger with meaty hindquarters and wide deep loin and rack meat (the most valuable cuts).’ (NZ Rare Breed Conservation Society Website.)

**DESCRIPTION** There are three very different lines of the White Headed Marsh/German Mutton one with particularly coarse hair, another finer wool and the third strain is somewhere in between the two. Many have hair bellies. The breed is an old ancestor of the Texel and has a very big hind quarters.

<b>Bodyweight</b>
<b>Ewes:</b> 70-80kg <b>Rams:</b> 93kg - 106 kg
<b>Meat</b>
A bit similar to Texels - have big loins so are quite big in the back end on the primal cuts. Tasty meat.
<b>Breeding/Lambing</b>
Lambing: 130-160%. Ewes are good milky dams
<b>Numbers</b>
Registered ewes (NZSA Flock book) less than 50 plus youngstock.
<b>Wool</b>
Very white and lustrous, good colour & bulk Fibre diameter microns, about 31-38 $\mu\text{m}$ & 40+ $\mu\text{m}$ ( Staple length 75mm – 125mm

## STUD PROFILE

### Makarora, Flock # 16

Established 2008

Owned by Gary Charteris, Wanaka

White Headed Marsh ewes at Gary’s. Photo: G Charteris



I first got into the White Headed Marsh sheep about 20 years ago when I was given a ram and a few old ewes to try out. I live at Makarora which is not far from the Haast Pass. With a rainfall of over 2400 mm per year the Perendales that I had were struggling over the winter in the wet and cold. I found that this small flock of sheep, although old (all over 5 years of age) did well, thrived even, and produced a very good lambing percentage.

After talking to Tim Gow (who at the time had the only remaining White Headed Marsh stud flock) I decided to set up my own stud flock in 2008. I bought a few ewes and a ram. I began in a small way. Over the years I added new genetics from Tim and grew my flock. From the beginning my aim was to have a stud flock of a maximum of fifty sheep as myself being older I decided not to make things too big.

I soon noticed that like many other breeds of sheep, some sheep tended to have no belly wool and that these sheep also had no wool on the crutch. They were often my best performing ewes. Usually with other wool breeds having no belly wool is an undesirable trait. I found that with the way the wool prices are at this time the belly wool is of little value and that these sheep were so much less work



Bare bellied ewe

Photo: Gary Charteris

not having to crutch them and at shearing time they were a lot easier to shear. I have devoted a section of my flock to breeding these bare-belly ewes and am most impressed as to how they are performing.

The White Headed Marsh sheep perform exceptionally well in a cold wet climate on hard wet and cold country. They have certainly outperformed my expectations. Their lambing percentage is normally in excess of 160%. They live to a very old age as stated earlier in the article (regularly up to or over 8yrs old). Ewes have high milk yields and make excellent mothers.

The White Headed Marsh appear to have a good resistance to internal parasites as I have not drenched my ewes and the odd one that is not doing well because of worms I always cull.

Their feet are hardy to the damp conditions we have here in Makarora, with no regular cases of foot rot. Over the nearly 20 years that I have been breeding them I have only encountered 1 case of true foot rot although I sometimes get cases of scald.

It was decided a year or two ago to change the breed's name in the flock book back to German White Headed Marsh to truly reflect the origins of the breed.

At this stage my flock is the last registered flock in the flock book, and I only have quite a small flock. It would be very good if some others became interested in the breed. I would be very keen to see this breed succeed in NZ as I see so many positive attributes for it.

- Being very fertile sheep producing a high lambing percentage.
- Ability to thrive on cold wet country with low quality pastures.
- High resistance to internal parasites.
- Good quality and quantity of wool and also that I have a line that has no belly and crutch wool is an added bonus. It saves on crutching and also the time shearing is reduced as you do not have to remove belly wool.

Over the last few years Tim Gow no longer has a stud flock of White Headed Marsh sheep so this leaves my flock as the only remaining stud flock in the country. I am getting older, and I am very keen to get someone else who is interested in starting a flock as it would be a shame to see the breed no longer exist on our shores.

I am more than happy to provide any assistance needed including providing livestock and advice to get any one into the breed.

It is an ideal breed for organic farming and has a lot of desirable traits for both conventional farming as well as organic farming.

If anyone else is interested in starting a flock of this interesting breed, please contact myself (034438341 or at [garycharteris@gmail.com](mailto:garycharteris@gmail.com) ) or the NZ Sheepbreeders' Association.

I am more than willing to provide all the assistance needed to get someone up and running with a new flock of their own.



*Ewe with lamb in the snow*

**Photo:** Gary Charteris

## Farmer Input Needed to Combat Facial Eczema

### EFEI Programme

B+LNZ is leading the \$20.75 million, seven-year EFEI programme, co-funded by the Government through the Ministry for Primary Industries' sustainable Food and fibre Futures fund. The programme focuses on:

- Improving FE risk prediction
- Developing better diagnostic tests and management strategies
- Raising awareness of FE's impact

"This is your opportunity to make a difference," says Dr Suzi Keeling.

"By sharing your experience, you're helping build tools and strategies that will support farming businesses and communities for years to come."

All responses are anonymous and will directly inform practical tools and solutions.

To complete the survey or learn more, visit

[www.beeflambnz.com/efe](http://www.beeflambnz.com/efe)

or contact

[research@beeflambnz.com](mailto:research@beeflambnz.com)

## Feature Breed #2

### Wiltshire Horn



Wiltshire Horn ewe & triplets

Photo: Wikipedia

#### ORIGIN & HISTORY *(Courtesy UK Wiltshire Horn Society website)*

Up until the end of the eighteenth century the Wiltshire Horn was the predominant breed to be found on the Wiltshire Downs. At that time the sheep were able to roam freely on the poor terrain, providing much needed manure for the soil. The countryside offered little shade or protection. The breed is renowned for its hardiness and resilience with great vitality in the lambs.

The breed fell out of favour during the nineteenth century when the economy became reliant on wool. The breed was saved from extinction by a small group of enthusiastic breeders who formed the Wiltshire Horn Sheep Society in 1923.

Although thought to be imported to NZ first in the early 1970's, the Nelson Examiner, May 1862 had a reference to Wiltshire Down sheep being shown at the Nelson Show, bred & exhibited by a Mr Saxon, from imported stock.

[Following from NZ Rare Breeds Conservation Society newsletter, issue #9, 1990] 'Wiltshire Horns were first imported to Australia in 1952. It was in Australia that the Wiltshire Horn was first polled by the introduction of the Polled Dorset then crossing back to the Wiltshire Horn. It was from these sheep that 4 ewes and a ram were imported into New Zealand by Mr Belleby of the Wairarapa. The flock was then moved to Mr David Blakely of Te Puke and from there was bought by MH Morrison & Son of Ardo, Marton.

Previously there have been up to nine flocks registered with NZSBA. Only one is now continuing with registration with only 20 ewes.

#### BREED DESCRIPTION

*(Information from the "Observers' Book of Farm Animal's, by Lawrence Alderson, 1976)*

"The Wiltshire Horn is a distinctive, white-faced sheep and both sexes are horned. Because it does not grow wool it suffers less than other breeds from fly strike. It is a robust breed, and the lambs are active at birth, while the loss of wool has been compensated by extra fleshing, especially over the back."

In NZ the derivative breeds have come into favour with the requirement for "low maintenance" breeds where minimal interventions eg crutching & shearing are desirable. More recently in NZ, Australia and Britain they have been used as one of the foundation breeds for the establishment of such commercial (mainly self-shedding) breeds as the Wiltipoll (Australia); Wiltshire, Ezcicare and (NZ); Nudies (Welsh Mountain x Wiltshire), Exlana and Easy Care in Britain.

Recently Nudies have been imported into NZ by Derek Daniell of Wairere in Wairarapa.

SHIRE® sheep may be seen on [www.organicstud.nz](http://www.organicstud.nz)

Bodyweight
<b>Ewes:</b> 60-75kg <b>Rams:</b> 110-142 kg
Meat
Good growth rate with lambs lean and heavy
Breeding/Lambing
Lambing 190-210%. Good mothers.
Numbers
Registered ewes (NZSA Flock book) 22, but some purebred flocks run commercially.
Wool
Wool is usually shed annually. Fibre is short. Fibre diameter 30-32 microns, Staple length 25-50mm

**Editor's Note:** In 2023 there were around 30 flocks registered in Australia with 767 registered ewes.

## STUD PROFILE

**Bluestone, Flock #5,**

**Established 2009**

**Owned by Anthony Meadow-Frost & Cheryl Ritchie, Auckland**



*Wiltshire Horn ram from Bluestone stud*

We moved to our lifestyle block in 2001, but soon discovered that the land was not really suitable for cattle, so we started to investigate sheep breeds. Wanting an easy-care sheep, we came upon the Wiltshire Horn and were immediately captivated by its looks, attributes and long history. We did consider some of the out crossed, like Wiltshire polled but opted for the original horned variety, a rare breed.

In 2005 we were lucky to get a few sheep from the flock of Mary Hutchinson from Gisborne when her flock was dispersed. We also got a few from Morrisons at Bulls and some, including a ram from Warkworth, and so started our flock.

Our experience with sheep was nil but we could not have got a better breed for our lifestyle block. Their meat has less fat than others. They are good mothers, and both the rams and ewes have lovely temperaments.

We do not dag, remove tails or shear our sheep and after the initial lambing drenches we only drench if Barber Pole is around. No shearing means all the birds around have fleece lined nests, a bonus for the birds.

What amazing sheep we have found they are. In dry weather they exist on very little; we have never had to buy in feed. This summer we have limited rain in the Auckland area. Grass is practically non-existent, but our sheep are as healthy and in as good condition as they have ever been and look absolutely wonderful.

In Winter, our ground is wet and slightly hilly but we have never had any trouble with their feet unlike some other breeds, which is a blessing

We have found that they do not tolerate copper very well. Coming from the chalk covered hills of Wiltshire they like more calcium which we put in their water from time to time.

They are a smaller sheep than many but are easy to handle, especially with horns. What we would do without them I do not know. My husband and I can handle all the rams and ewes. Having horns is a great help and we would never consider a non-horned breed now.

We wish there were more people willing to breed these wonderful sheep.



*Bluestone Stud ewe*



*Bluestone stud ewe group*



## Feature Breed # 3

### Oxford



*Oxford Down rams (UK). Left Shearling Ram by Twinwood Delboy. Right Shearling Ram with Astlebury bloodlines.*

#### ORIGIN & HISTORY

*(Info from NZ Sheepbreeders' Oxford website)*

An English breed developed in 1830s by crossing the Cotswold with a forerunner of the Hampshire, and to a lesser extent, Southdown ewes, and using the resulting crossbreds to form the basis of the present-day breed. It first entered New Zealand in 1906, being registered in the NZSBA Flock book until 1914 but eventually died out. It was reintroduced in the 1980's and was released from quarantine in 1990. The breed's capacity to produce a large, meaty carcass for further processing has stimulated interest from the meat industry, and it also grows the most wool of any of the terminal sire breeds.

#### BREED DESCRIPTION

Polled. Brown face. Brown nostrils. Wool on poll and cheeks. Fleece short of Down type. Wool on legs. Black hooves.

The Oxford is the largest and fastest growing of all British breeds. Wool production is higher than any other Down breed and fecundity of purebreds high, matching the Border Leicester and Cheviot.

Fast early growth combined with lean carcasses are the main productive advantages of the Oxford. Increased wool production in comparison with other Down breeds will also result in higher wool pull figures.

The Oxford is an attractive specialist terminal sire for prime lamb production. The breed possesses genes for fast growth rate, coupled with heavy, lean muscling on an above average body weight carcass.

Oxfords are renowned for producing cross-bred progeny, with a good wide loin that carries deep muscling, coupled with hindquarters that are always fully rounded.

Bodyweight	
<b>Ewes:</b> 60-80kg	<b>Rams:</b> 95 -120 kg
Meat	
Carcass large with lean meat.	
Breeding/Lambing	
Lambing 105-125%.	
Numbers	
Registered ewes (NZSA Flock book) 130 plus youngstock in 4 flocks. Also, some run commercially.	
Wool	
Longest wool of any of the Down breeds Fibre diameter microns, 33-37 microns Staple length 100 – 150mm	



*Oxford ewe lambs from Cairnvale stud of B R & C A Dalzell, Hawarden*



# Revitalising the Oxford Down

Reprinted with permission from the Rare Breeds Survival Trust 'Ark' magazine, Autumn 2024 pages 23 -24

**When RBST [Rare Breeds Survival Trust, UK] rationalised the Oven Semen Archive it offered breed societies access to some of the historic genetics it held. Oxford Down breeders of the Pauntley Flock, Holly Plante and Andrew Amor used the opportunity for their breeding programme to help revitalise the breed.**



*Judge Bob Richardson, Holly Plante and Andrew Amor with Oxford Down Breed Champion, sired by Twinwood Delboy, at Royal Welsh Show 2024.*

**Photo credit** 1st Class Images

With approximately 1,500 registered ewes in 100 registered flocks, the Oxford Down is a Watchlist 'At Risk' breed. Both purebred and crossbred Oxford Downs are renowned for producing large, lean carcasses and lambs that are hardy and vigorous at birth.

With a background in commercial sheep farming, the Oxford Down breed seemed the perfect choice for the Pauntley Flock established by the sibling team of Holly Plante and Andrew Amor who breed for pedigree and commercial use. Situated across Worcestershire and Gloucestershire, it was founded with the goal of preserving and promoting this native pedigree breed and expanding the use of the Oxford Down as a terminal sire, particularly through promoting the attributes of the Oxford Down in commercial markets, and in butchers' and carcass competitions.

The journey began in 2019, when Holly and Andrew purchased their foundation stock at the annual Oxford Down Sheep Breeders' Association (ODSBA) sale, held by McCartneys at Worcester Livestock Market. Since then, the flock has rapidly expanded through private purchases and official sales. As of the October 2023 flock returns for the Oxford Down Flock Book, the Pauntley Flock ranks as the third largest in the UK - a testament to the dedication and strategic breeding practices of Holly and Andrew.

## *A rich history of bloodlines*

The history of the breed, and the bloodlines within the flock are significant and the team is keen to preserve old bloodlines and honour the breed's longstanding history by seeking out traditional, native-bred rams that are true to type.

Among the flock's acquisitions are stock from John Brigg's now-dispersed Gorse Flock, which has a storied lineage in the Oxford Down and wider sheep breeding community. John Brigg, well-known throughout the livestock scene as a breeder of Longhorn cattle and Oxford Down sheep, as well being a highly respected judge, established his Gorse Oxford Down Flock near Warwick in 1971. For his foundation stock, he went to the oldest flock in the breed, Hugh Stilgoe's famous Adderbury Flock at Banbury, which was itself established in 1854. John later added further females from Richard Farnell's Southolme Flock in North Yorkshire, established in 1940. In the early 1970s the breed was in peril, having suffered a huge loss of flocks and bloodlines since 1955 as it lost favour, mainly to the Suffolk, in the terminal sire trade. Gorse was a key flock that helped the breed survive this low point in its history and delivered it safely into the 1980s when it enjoyed a significant revival.

Additionally, the Pauntley Flock was enhanced with ewes from Tom Boothman's entire Linton Hall Flock at Skipton, North Yorkshire. The Linton Hall foundation ewes were sourced from P V & J M Robinson's Blackden Flock in Cheshire and Henry Watson's Fridaythorpe Flock (established in 1943) from Drifffield, East Yorkshire.

Notably, the Pauntley flock also features Astlebury bloodlines. The Astlebury Flock was founded in 1985 by the late Liz Calcutt at Bicester in Oxfordshire. The

foundation stock came from Viscount Harcourt's Harcourt Flock, which was established at Stanton Harcourt in Oxfordshire in 1954 with a large draft of Adderbury ewes that had previously been agisted at Stanton Harcourt. For many years the Astlebury flock was used mainly to breed Oxford rams for home use on the farm's large commercial flock of North of England Mules. The resultant Oxford cross lambs were finished off grass and sold as hogs through the winter and spring at Thame mart. Today Astlebury is one of the oldest flocks in the Flock Book and the oldest in the breed's Oxfordshire homeland. It is now run by Liz Calcutt's grandson, Harry Bishop.

### ***Reviving and expanding bloodlines***

In the early stages of sourcing stock rams, it became apparent that the diversity within the national flock was somewhat limited, with many rams hailing from the same breeders. As owners of a relatively new flock, Holly and Andrew were eager to make their mark by introducing fresh genetic material. The rationalisation of the National Gene Bank was a welcome opportunity to revive lost breeding lines and expand the bloodlines available across the national flock.

When rationalising the Gene Bank, RBST contacted breed societies to make some semen available to breeders. Although some of the semen in the archive was collected by Defra as part of the National Scrapie Plan, the Oxford Down semen includes rams from several well-known and reputable flocks such as Barley Park, Gorse, Fleetham, Astlebury, Applewick, and Twinwood - all of which have played pivotal roles in maintaining and developing the breed. With the semen being frozen and the rams in the bank deceased, discussions with breeders and associates of the ODSBA have been invaluable. Additionally, the use of Grassroots, a pedigree and flock management tool,

has proven essential when considering the pedigrees and breeding histories of the rams.

After careful consideration, Holly and Andrew selected Twinwood Delboy, born in January 2004. Bred by Carol Watson, Delboy was used as a stock ram in the Twinwood and Sulgrave flocks. Known for his size and boldness, Delboy has a pedigree that includes significant rams such as Ribwood Ace, Haystoun Bold Lad, and the famous Pirnie Tim.

Limited straws from Balgay 33 have also been used on a handful of ewes this season, further contributing to the flock's genetic diversity. Drew Young's Balgay Flock was established in 1983 at Rait in Perthshire with ewes from a number of notable sources including Moorpark, Overgreen and Denhead. Balgay was active throughout the 1980s and 1990s, enjoying success at the Royal Highland and Turriff Shows and at Kelso Ram Sales. When Balgay was given up by Mr Young upon his retirement, it was purchased by James Hook of Barley Park Farm at Witney in Oxfordshire. The Barley Park Flock was built up with further flock purchases to become the largest flock the breed had seen in 50 years, numbering 400 ewes at its peak. Under the expert eye of shepherd Rex Vincent, Barley Park went on to become the leading flock in the breed for over a decade, enjoying great success in both show and sale ring and producing quality rams and ewes for sale as breeding stock to other registered flocks. Balgay 33 was one of the last Balgay-bred rams that came with the ewes when the flock was obtained from Mr Young.

Below:

*Linton Hall ewes within the Pauntley Flock (UK)*



### Breeding success

The Pauntley Flock benefitted greatly from their collaboration with AB Europe in Ledbury, who provided a detailed and comprehensive plan for the AI process, ensuring a smooth and successful venture into assisted breeding.



Judge Victoria Jones with Andrew Amor and the Oxford Down Breed Champion, sired by Delboy, at Anglesey Show 2024. **Photo credit:** Alison Wright

Using Delboy's semen from the Gene Bank has allowed the Pauntley Flock to revive lost breeding lines, restoring the strong bone structure required for a thick-set sheep, with good width across the shoulder and loin. Breeders who see Delboy's progeny often comment on their traditional type with broad heads and flare across the nose, features which some modern Oxford Down lines tend to lack. Given the success of this line of breeding, Holly and Andrew have returned ewes in their Pauntley Flock to Delboy's bloodline. Other rams in the Gene Bank, such as Pirnie Tim, are also of interest, with several breeders across the national flock considering their use.

The progeny from Delboy bred by the Pauntley Flock have achieved significant success in 2023 and 2024, including breed championships, rare breed championships and a Supreme Championship across all sheep sections at this year's Berkeley Show.

### *A lasting legacy*

Access to the Gene Bank has played a pivotal role in the development of the Pauntley Flock and its establishment within the Oxford Down breed. The success of progeny from the Gene Bank rams has sparked renewed interest in the breed's history and the use of bloodlines from past flocks which are now only available in the Bank.

*Written by Holly Plante, with special thanks to Alan Hambley, Oxford Down Flock Book Editor for historical information.*

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**FARMERSWEEKLY**

## DECADES of ARMIDALE MERINOS at THE GOLDEN SHEARS

*(Reprinted from the Wairarapa Times Age of February 20<sup>th</sup> 2025 with permission of Paterson's of Armidale Merino Stud).*

**Otago's Armidale Merino Stud has a solid history of going the extra mile to support Masterton's Golden Shears, stretching back to 1996.**

Allan Paterson, fourth generation owner of Armidale, is a shearer of note who has competed at Golden Shears and even judged at the competition a few times. He supports the competition however he can.

In 2004, Allan was returning from Golden Shears with his friend Justin Meikle and they were worrying about the fact that it had been a wet year – the wethers that Armidale had grazed in the Wairarapa and supplied to the competition, hadn't handled it. They hatched a plan to do it differently. Ever since, Armidale has purchased about 130 Merino wethers from Otematata Station each November, carried them for nearly 18 months, then transported 110 of them to Golden Shears just in time for the event. For Allan and his son Simon, who now owns Armidale, it's all about giving back to an industry they both love.

Simon Paterson says “providing sheep to the Golden Shears has little benefit for the stud from a financial point of view, but there's a huge benefit to the industry as a whole for supporting Golden Shears – our Merinos help to make the competition more fascinating to watch and fairer (more even) for the shearers.”

Over the years, many of the shearers that have made the final of the PGG Wrightson Vetmed National Circuit have shorn at Armidale, in appreciation of Armidale's support to the industry. Simon says he appreciates the fact that “top shearers come here to shear.”

The role of Armidale in supporting the Golden Shears aligns with the ethos of the competition as a whole – it's all about community, pitching in, giving back, and celebrating a lifestyle and an industry that has been, and remains, important to New Zealand.

“Competitions such as Golden Shears demand quality, which is also important to us at Armidale. We want to supply the best wool we can to our consumers. The shearers and woolhandlers play an important part in that process,” Simon says. “So long as our Merino are needed, and so long as we can still source them, we will send them up to the Golden Shears.”



*Some of Armidale's Merino flock*

## NZ Sheepbreeders' members assist with World of WearableArt entry

Article by Elise Mcintosh – entrant

### DREAM AWAKE 2024 World of WearableArt

Photo credits: World of WearableArt Ltd

The World of Wearable Art competition has always made my brain spark with creativity. After seeing the show for the first time in 2022, I knew I wanted to enter. Last year, I had the opportunity at university to create a garment for WOW as an elective course.

At that point in time, I was getting into wet felting after dabbling previously in crochet and knitting. Something about using wool attracted me. I tried my hand at various techniques, using just store-bought roving – but using this for a whole garment was going to get expensive.

I began to look at different options, different material, second-hand wool blankets or clothing? None of these were viable routes for the effect I wanted. It was my grandmother who led me to 'used lamb covers'. She had previously used a couple within her creative group, who all had a try at repurposing them into textile art. Re-using these wool covers also was a sustainable route, something encouraged by WOW.

In April 2024, I had a finalised design concept, a time limit of just under 4 weeks, a selected main material, but none of the lamb covers that I was so keen on using! I ended up discovering the NZ Sheepbreeders' Association website, where I found the lists of names and emails of sheep breeders. So, a huge thanks to everyone who I sent an email to who replied and then managed to send covers over to me! This couldn't have been achieved without their support.

As most of the covers I received were dirty and used, a long process of cleaning commenced, before each cover was dyed various shades of charcoal. And then the sewing began! My garment was almost sewn up 'in rounds'. I cut strips of the wool, sewed them into a ring, then attached them to the growing limb/body/head. I was also kindly gifted raw wool by some, and this was included in dyed orange ends of the sleeves and hood, and 'warts' that covered the body. Within the month of April, the whole garment was constructed, including additional LED strips that lit up the ends of the sleeves and hood.

Inspired by Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland's Lava Tubes, my garment *Beneath and Within* was a creature that dwelled within these caves. It glowed in the darkness, and its lumbering movements reflect slow moving lava.

It was unbelievably exciting when I heard the news in July that my garment was going to be in the *DREAM AWAKE* show. It was one of 90 finalist entries from NZ and international designers. It felt unreal right up to when I saw it on the stage for the first time. I was smiling so hard and soaking up every detail. The week of the Awards night was a blur. I met so many other wonderful designers and learnt a lot just from observing and having conversations.



*"Beneath and Within", Elise McIntosh, Massey University, New Zealand.*

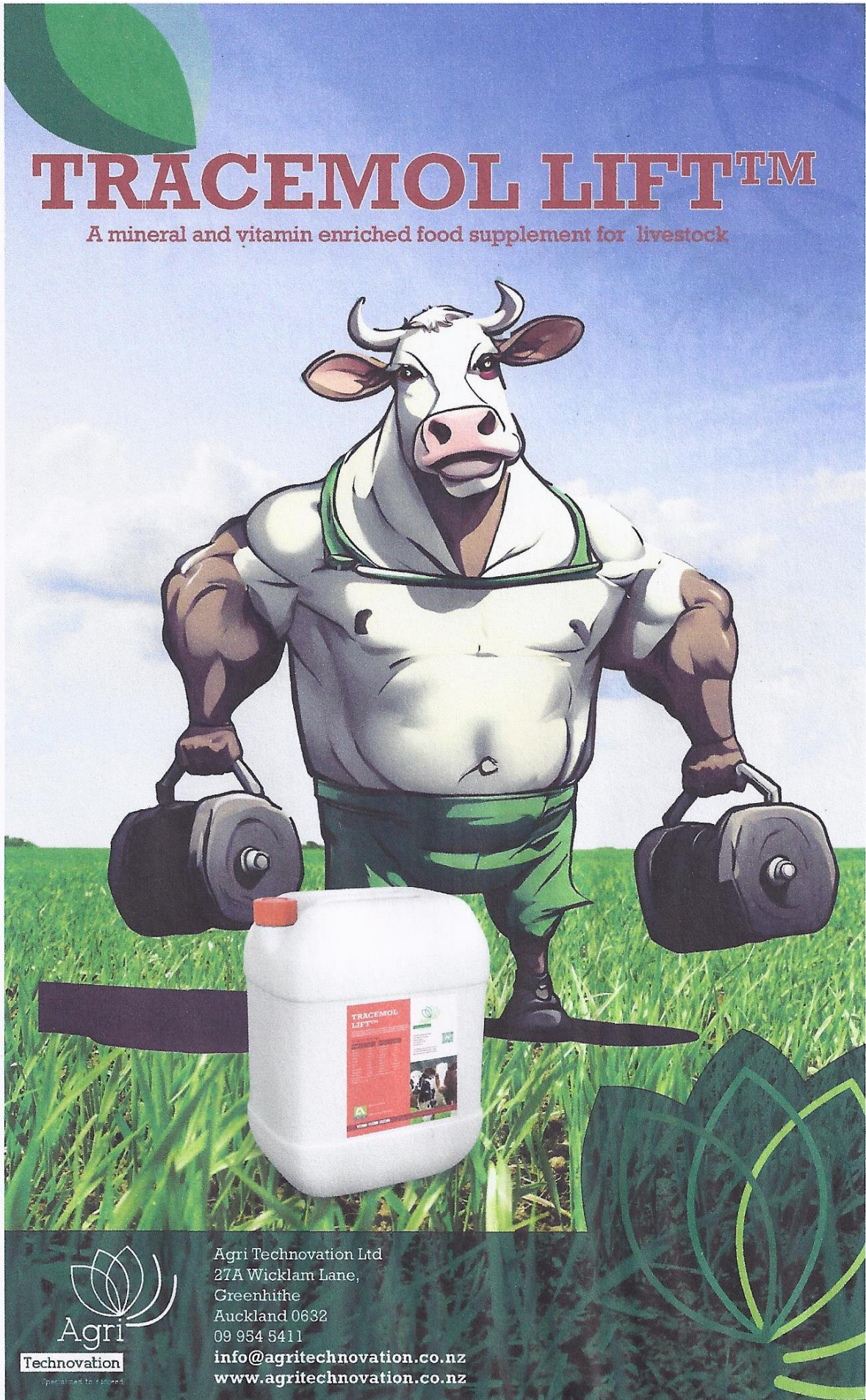


*"Beneath and Within", Elise McIntosh, Massey University, New Zealand. Close up of stitching detail.*

And now, as many longtime WOW designers describe it, I have caught the bug. I have so many ideas for further designs, including this year where I'll be using the leftover lamb covers to craft another garment!

So again, a huge thank you to all who managed to send me covers! I had so much fun, and it was a great learning experience for me. I will continue to create, and I'm sure I'll continue to use wool in its many forms!

*Elise McIntosh*



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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.”

## Those damned scientists are whinging again....

*The proposed creation of the Bioeconomy Public Research Organisation of New Zealand won't work if it further distances our scientists from their laboratories or field research project, says*



**Jon Hickford.** *It also won't work if we have no agricultural scientists left, given further redundancies have just been announced at AgResearch.*

As an agricultural scientist, if you are lucky enough to still have a job, then ever-increasing managerialism and bureaucracy will destroy any zest, creativity, joy or curiosity you might have. The first few hours of any given day can be wasted dealing with paperwork, form-filling and responding to people who have no idea what you do or why it is critically important to New Zealand's economic wellbeing. That probably sounds all too familiar to farmers. Accordingly, "rearranging the deckchairs", or CRIs as is proposed, may not deliver any real change in the system unless the scientists themselves are genuinely valued. Put simply, we need to empower them, trust them and support them to get on with their jobs. That too could be said about farmers!

We also need to ensure scientific researchers don't spend a large amount of their time repeatedly applying for small amounts of money to do what they want to do. That does not make research careers attractive, especially when the failure to get what is typically hotly contested research funding can lead to redundancy. Research funding stability is needed, and while it might be hoped that it will be increased, that seems unlikely given the current state of the country's books. This despite Sir Peter Gluckman claiming that it is needed in the recently released government SSAG review. In that respect, it was pleasing to see the review citing a "*Treasury analysis (that) suggested that investment in SI&T by New Zealand in that sector between 1927 and 2001 had an annualised 17% rate of return*", a report that I have also regularly fallen back on to illustrate why the investment in agricultural and horticultural science is so pivotal to our well-being as a country.

Another small positive thing with the SSAG report was that the proposed restructuring suggested that we need to

boost our commercial research output and reward scientists who develop innovations by enabling them to own their intellectual property (IP). Guardedly, I think this might be a good thing. For many years I have watched institutions tie themselves in knots over IP allocation, and they rarely recognise the importance and sweat of the individual inventor or scientists, let alone the farmer or orchardists who are also potentially involved. It should be a strong motivator if you as the researcher "do it right", and subsequently get to put dollars in your pocket, especially if those dollars come from increased export earnings. I have some understanding of this as I work in both pure and commercially applied science, with both published peer reviewed papers that influence international thinking, while also directing the operation of the Lincoln University Gene Marker Laboratory, a business that offers commercial gene tests to livestock breeders globally.

But will a commercial focus mean less 'blue sky' research is done? Some scientists are worried about that, but I think it may be a flawed assumption by those who are less interested in indulging commercial opportunities. This reflected in the response to recent changes to the Marsden Fund, where new proposals will in many cases have to show a commercial or applied benefit. Good I say, but you might have noted that university Vice-Chancellors and other scientists started whinging. I guess it is because they might miss out. Given some of the more outrageous projects that Marsden funded, it might also be because most people thought it was a waste of the taxpayers hard-earned money. I am most certainly in that camp.

In that respect, while not proving my argument, over the summer I have been reading a new biography written about Nobel Laureate Marie Curie. Arguably the "mother of nuclear physics", she not only unpicked the nature of the emanations from radium but saw to commercialising the use of that property (Health and Safety wasn't a big thing back then!), including setting up the first X-ray machines for use during WW1. One of the world's most gifted scientists (her husband and daughter were also very good – a family affair), she knew how to use science to make money, and further fund her amazing fundamental research.

This stated, not all-important research can be commercialised, and I don't want to detract from the agricultural and horticultural scientists who devote their careers to reducing the impact of agricultural and

horticultural production on the environment. Those researchers are just as important to us and our well-being.

In summary, please hurry up Government and sort out the disaster that is occurring with our agricultural and horticultural science system. Without agricultural and horticultural scientists, we won't have agricultural and horticultural science. In no short time that might mean we no longer have efficient and productive agriculture and horticulture, and I like many other people in my profession suspect that will send New Zealand rapidly down the path to being a third world nation. Is that the plan?

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# FARMERS WEEKLY

## A BIT OF HISTORY

### Jottings From Overseas

Press 22 June 1957 National Library *Papers Past*

Wool upholstery for cars is gaining popularity in America. Chrysler announced last Autumn that it was to offer wool fabric in three of its 1957 models, and now the president of General Motors, who said recently that wool upholstery was now available in Buicks and Cadillacs.

\*\*\*\*\*

A Basuto named Samson is reported to have established a new South African shearing record. Using hand shears, he shored 111 sheep in eight hours on a farm in Transvaal. He cut about 1000lb of wool, or somewhat more than 3 bales. An average of 40-50 sheep a day for hand shearing in the Union is regarded as good.

## Wanaka Show -Merino Section

Thanks to Simon Paterson for the photos.



Ron Small receiving Life Membership Badge for services to the Stud Merino Industry:



Supreme Champion Fleece: Armidale Merino Stud



Grand Champion Merino Ram: Armidale Merino Stud

Supreme Champion Merino: Armidale Merino Stud

“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.”



Wanaka Show Merino results continued...



**Grand Champion Merino Ewe: Malvern Downs**



**Winner Merino Pair: Blairich Station**



**Winner Group of five (Woodchester Cup): Malvern Downs**



## Gore Show Results

Thanks to Nikita Woodhead for the results and photos



*One of the Youth classes*

### NZ SHEEPBREEDERS YOUTH CLASSES

- 1201 Ram Lamb**  
 1st Lawlor Family  
 2nd Hannah Busby  
 3rd Ben Anderson  
 4th Bella Marshall

- 1202 Ewe Lamb**  
 1st Denby Lawlor  
 2nd Lawlor Family  
 3rd C & G Hazlett  
 4th Ben Anderson

- 1203 Ewe, any age**  
 1st C & G Hazlett  
 2nd Bella Marshall  
 3rd Denby Lawlor  
 4th Bella Marshall



*Judging the Supreme Sheep of the show*

### SUPREME CHAMPION SUFFOLK AND SUPREME SHEEP OF SHOW

Ross and Tracey McCall

“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.”

*Gore Show results continued...*

**Supreme Champion Texel**  
DC & CM Graham

**Supreme Champion Romney**  
Hamish MacKay

**Supreme Champion South Suffolk**  
Duane Davis

**Supreme Champion Poll Dorset**  
Pete Gardyne

**Supreme Champion Hampshire**  
MJ & JF Mouat

**Supreme Champion Dorper**  
Rachelle Keen

**Supreme Champion Charollais**  
Lawlor Family

**Supreme Champion Valais Blacknose**  
Karen Thompson



*Karen Thompson and her Supreme Champion Valais Blacknose*

“The trouble with the voice of experience is that it won’t keep its mouth shut.”



**STUD PROFILE**

**Kellandale Valais Blacknose NZ**  
**Flock # A120**  
**Owned by Nicola Wilson, Waiuku**



Instagram: [kellandale\\_valais\\_blacknose\\_nz](#)  
Facebook: Kellandale Valais Blacknose Sheep NZ  
Email: [kellandalevalais@gmail.com](mailto:kellandalevalais@gmail.com)  
Phone: 021563834

Photos of Nicola’s sheep from her.



I am a small-time lifestyle block sheep enthusiast! I currently have 6 ewes and 6 lambs on my small block near Waiuku out on the West Coast south of Auckland. This will be my fourth year in the breeding up program. If I had more land, I would definitely have more sheep!



I love their individual personalities, and how friendly and affectionate and of course adorable they are. They are big woolly dogs really! I am loving the breeding up program, there is so much to learn, and it is really satisfying seeing the outcomes of your breeding choices made at mating time. The other thing I have really loved about breeding Valais sheep is the people! I am so lucky to have the met the most supportive people through my sheep, especially my mentor Carol from Caley Glen Valais where my sheep go each year for her ram services.

Carol and another local breeder Deanna and I have monthly catch ups on rotation at each other's farms which is a great support and a lot of fun - we have dubbed ourselves 'Crazy Sheep Ladies'! I have enjoyed some travel around the country attending the AGMs and also a 'sheep trip' down to Dunedin to visit some studs down there and swap stories and tips with some amazing sheep breeder friends.

I also think we are extremely lucky to have the Grassroots software for our breed - a one stop shop for all registered

Valais animals in NZ which is extremely helpful leading up to mating checking ram genetics against your ewes.

**Do you have any tips that you have learned along the way?**

Yes! Feet!! There are so many things to love about Valais Blacknose but in my experience so far, their feet are not one of them!

Some tips I have learned are:

1. Nice sharp hoof trimmers
2. Tetravet spray
3. A great vet to help you plan a regular hoof inspection and treatment plan for your sheep to keep you on track. Regular hoof care is essential and really can make a big difference. I also find feeding treats/ something yum in the yards really helps - they run themselves into the yards each time with no need to chase them in.



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Richard, Jedburgh Farms Ltd

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## Special NZSBA Men’s and Women’s Commemorative Sheep125 Jerseys For Sale



### ◀ Men’s Awakino –

Heavy weight merino quarter zip – this textured boucle knit merino jersey with nylon for extra strength is just what you need in the cooler months. This garment has rugged style – wear it to the game or to the pub with your mates. A very versatile style and a firm Wild South favourite.

### Women’s Merino ➤

Wild South product specifically designed for NZ Sheepbreeders, we have used our mid weight Merino fabric utilised by the NZ Defence force to create a durable, versatile merino pullover to keep the ladies warm without any compromise in style.



**Both styles made in NZ**

### Measurements in CM

#### WS213A Women’s Merino

	8	10	12	14	16	18
½ Chest	42	44.5	47	49.5	52	54.5
Centre Back	63	64	65	66	67	68

#### MM047 Men’s Awakino Pullover

	M	L	XL	XXL	3XL
½ Chest	56	58.5	61	63.5	66
Centre Back	69.4	71.4	73.4	75.4	77.4

### COST

Men’s Jersey ~~\$170.00~~ Now \$140 (gst inclusive)

Women’s Jersey ~~\$135.00~~ Now \$115 (gst inclusive)

Email form to NZSBA – [greg@nzsheep.co.nz](mailto:greg@nzsheep.co.nz)

Name		Email	
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	Women's Jersey	Size:	Number:
	Men's Jersey	Size:	Number:
	Women's Jersey	Size:	Number:
	Men's Jersey	Size:	Number:
	Women's Jersey	Size:	Number:

**Please pay NZSBA bank account: NZ Sheepbreeders’ Assn 03-1702-0107771-00 stating JERSEY in Code**



## **FOR SALE, ETC**

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**Note:** CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS  
*FREE small advertisements are available for member breeders with surplus stud sheep for sale.*

**Full, 1/2 or 1/4 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)

The **Closing Date** for next issue will be **May 20<sup>th</sup> for the June 2025 newsletter.**  
**Please get items in well before the deadline!!!**

**“FEATURE BREEDS” will be Australian WhitesNZ, Gotland & Isle de France**

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**

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## **FOR SALE**

### **HIGHLEY SHROPSHIRE STUD**

owned by Dr Lucy Burrows.



*Highley Shropshire ewe lambs*

In 2008 I founded the “HIGHLEY” Shropshire sheep stud based at our family farm at Horrellville, North Canterbury. As the Shropshire’s were one of the oldest breeds in the New Zealand Sheep Breeders Association Registrar, and our forebears came from Highley in Shropshire it seemed like a good fit to have a Shropshire Stud. The original ewes were purchased from Dr Lorne Kuehn (Waitangi Stud) and Helen McKenzie (Rosemarkie Stud).

As we progressed and built the stud up, to at one stage over 100 ewes, we began to appreciate the Shropshire’s great temperament, their ability to live on minimal feed, and rear great prime lambs. The Shropshire being a very old breed have great tasting meat with texture and the ability to produce intramuscular fat. They are great for hogget mating - small lambs, giving great ease of lambing and good lamb growth.

We have made the very tough decision to downsize our Shropshire operation. This has been bought about by the leasing of the bulk of the property.

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