



The Greeline spring newsletter August 2011

So much change has occurred since this time last year; I thought that some comment is appropriate.

The good news is that returns from sheep for both meat and wool have improved dramatically. Apart from the terrible week in September for lambing and a dry period in December last year the summer and autumn have allowed for excellent grass growth.

The change in the meat schedule from previous years which has no discount per kg for weights up to 23kgs has opened up a new window of opportunity to improve returns. It seems that this is a permanent shift from the previous meat companies' target of 17kgs to 19kgs which has prevailed for some years now. I guess that we should be mindful that research has shown, as does common sense, that once a lamb reaches 35kgs liveweight the amount of grass for maintenance increases significantly. If you farm in an area which is subject to summer drought in some years the cost and risk of taking lambs to 45kgs liveweight for slaughter has to be considered.

Wool. What a welcome relief after twenty years of declining crossbred wool prices we have witnessed in six months a lift from less than \$2.50 to more than \$5.50 per kilo greasy. Is this improvement going to last? I certainly hope so.

To keep the improvement in context we would need to receive at least \$16.00 per kilo to compare with the returns of twenty years ago.

Meat compared to wool as a net return from sheep for the last three years

Every farm will vary depending on the physical performance.

If we achieve a ewe lambing of 150%, ewe hoggets 100% and wool at 5kgs per head from ewes and ewe hoggets and take off the direct shearing and selling expenses we have this comparison.

	Lamb	Wool	Meat%	Wool%
2008-09	\$103	260cpk	94%	6%
2009-10	\$85	267cpk	93%	7%
2010-11	\$110	510cpk	88%	12%

You can see from this that wool at over 500cpk is still the junior but a worthwhile partner.

Beef+Lamb Central Progeny Test. 2010-11

We are pleased to report that Greeline rams have performed very well in the CPT results.

The main objective of the CPT is to identify sources of high performing rams by extending and strengthening comparisons across flocks and breeding groups. It is not set up as a breed comparison, but rather as a ram comparison.

It began in 2002 and through artificial insemination at least 30 progeny per sire used are born on one of three sites. Woodlands near Invercargill, Lincoln in Canterbury and Poukawa near Hastings. Link rams are used to create across year and across site comparisons. Since 2004 female progeny have been retained from the dual purpose sires. They are not lambed as hoggets but since 2006 2th daughters have lambed to provide reproductive information.

The results from the 2010-11 Central Progeny Test report show that Greeline 1645/07 ranked 3rd for dual purpose meat and growth, 4th for dual purpose growth and also 4th for meat value.

Greeline 1560/03 was used in 2006 and his daughters performance rank him 5th for number of lambs born. He still ranks 2nd for eye muscle area and on SILACE he was 1st for overall production and parasite resistance two years ago.

With the use of ram hoggets each year we are now eight generations on from 1560/03.

For this year's mating we have used two exceptional ram lambs 349/10 and 415/10 which have since been to the Woodlands AB

centre for semen collection. They are by different sires but they both have outstanding growth rates from weaning to eight months of age. Their BVs for liveweight at eight months are 9.14 and 9.98 respectively. They are very sound rams with a fleece more like Coopworth wool than Texel wool.

We have CT scanned the top 30 ram hoggets this year to improve the accuracy for selecting animals which produce a higher yield of meat.

It is more than ten years since the 3/8 Texel, 3/8 Coopworth, 1/4 East Friesian was stabilised to form the Greeline Composite. We are still prepared to introduce other genes by exchanging sires with other breeders or through using AI.

Our aim is to maintain the position of Greeline sheep as having genetics equal to the best in New Zealand.

Texels. Hayden has used AI again over his Texel ewes which will ensure that there will be ram lambs which have genetics equal to the best in New Zealand for terminal sire production.

We wish you all the best for the 2011 lambing and may last year's prices continue.

Regards,
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