

NEW ZEALAND STUD MERINO BREEDERS' SOCIETY

President
Ron Small
Blairich Station
Private Bag 1215 Blenheim 7240
Ph/Fax (03) 575 7257 Fax 03 575 7357
e-mail blairichstation@xtra.co.nz

General Manager
Greg Burgess
74 Kendal Avenue
P O Box 20094
CHRISTCHURCH 8543
Ph (03) 3589-412; Fax (03) 3589-402
Email greg@nzsheep.co.nz

4 July 2017

Dear fellow stud breeders and commercial growers.

As a way of making the Stud Merino Breeders Society more representative of the industry it was moved at the AGM to co-opt onto the Committee a commercial grower from each of the regions.

As we all know growers are divided between different commercial entities and as such have no longer an independent voice on industry matters that may be of concern. The stud breeders felt that, with a wider representation, this committee should fill this role. Being independent, non commercial, this expanded committee is an ideal vehicle to lobby, maintain databases and standards vital to the breed. We have offices in Kendal Street, Christchurch, and a secretariat through the NZ Sheep Breeders.

The role of the Stud Breeders is to maintain the stud book and so the purity of the breed, transfer of information, education, among other things. With the development of a "hybrid merino" there is concern that this fibre could be presented at the point of sale as merino. This is of concern to us as breeders and also the manufacturing end as expressed to me recently. Purity of the fibre at point of sale is of paramount importance to the integrity of us as breeders. The Merino Co has the ZQue program which is excellent, and to be commended, but is not a guarantee of the fibre content as I understand it. Examples such as Angus Pure and Hereford Prime come to mind as a means of branding bales at harvest. An independent body such as is being proposed in this letter could introduce such an initiative. There are other issues such as the importation of germplasm from the EU that has risks to the sheep industry and has already seen a ban put in place for the export of genetics to Australia. A united voice from the merino fraternity will be essential to lobby MPI and its Australian counterpart to reverse this ban.

World Federation of Merino Breeders

Attached is a letter of invite to attend the World Merino Conference to be held in Uruguay 12 and 13 April 2018. Pre and post conference tours are being put together taking in merino operations and scenic attractions in Uruguay and Patagonia Argentina. Those interested in travelling please Greg know as it is proposed that a NZ group will travel together saving on costs etc. More information can be found on the conference website <http://www.merinouuguay2018.org>

Kind regards,

Ron Small

Chairman