



## **ROMNEY NZ NEWSLETTER**

**AUGUST 2017**

### **Council News**

**COUNCILLORS 2017** – Malcolm Wyeth (President), Hamish Mackay (Vice-President), David Tennent (Treasurer), Hugh Taylor, John Reeves, Eric Laurensen, Ross Humphrey and Stewart Morton.

We welcome Stewart onto the Council and look forward to his input.

**TRANSPORTATION COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROGENY TEST** – All transportation costs associated with the Progeny Test will be reimbursed, and 50% of transportation costs will be reimbursed for linkages outside the Progeny Test relating to the 2017 mating. Please send your invoice into the office. Email [greg@nzsheep.co.nz](mailto:greg@nzsheep.co.nz)

**RULES OF THE ASSOCIATION** – We are looking at revising the Rules of the Association .

**ROMNEY NEW ZEALAND TO JOIN THE NZSBA?** – We are currently investigating joining the NZSBA. We would still run our own affairs and control our own funds under the umbrella of the NZSBA, and it seems fiscally responsible for our breed now to belong to the Association.

**MERIALANCARE – NAME CHANGE TO BOEHRINGER INGELHEIM** – MerialAncare is this year rebranding, but its sponsorship remains and the only thing that is changing is its name.

**PROGENY TEST-** The Progeny Test may be changing direction, subject to our meetings with South Island breeders at the end of October in Oamaru. **You will be informed once a date and venue has been organized.**

The idea is to continue with the North Island group, and to have two breeding groups in the South Island who will share rams to increase linkages. The North Island group are looking at commencing a FE breeding programme.

**BEST PRACTICE BREED RECOMMENDED STANDARDS** - As a Breed Society we would like to recommend the standards below as a guideline for breeders to refer to when collecting data to make effective evaluations for the different performance traits.

#### **Best Practice Principles**

- 1/ Build genetic connectedness across flocks, years, management mobs and ewe age groups.

- 2/ Use accurate ID systems.
- 3/ Capture accurate pedigree and birth date
- 4/ Manage sheep as larger mobs, use mob codes when groups are treated differently.
- 5/ Measure all animals at the same age and time.
- 6/ Completeness of recording, measure all key predictor traits at the appropriate times.
- 7/ Minimise data recording errors.
- 8/ Upload data into SIL in a timely manner.

With SIL now using one analysis, (standard maternal worth), breeders need to record reproduction, survival, growth, adult size and wool. If you do not record data for any of the above traits, you will not get the benefit in the maternal worth index, published in SILACE or trait leader lists.

## **Key Traits**

### **Reproduction – Capture Accurate Pedigree and Birth Date**

- Record ID of rams and ewes at mating
- Pregnancy scanning and foetal aging this is a management tool but also provides number of lambs born and lamb survival for flocks not tagging at birth (unshepherded at birth, or tagging up to tailing age)

Those hogget mating identify ewe hoggets put to ram, those lambed (single, twin, etc) and recorded dry.

- Record birth dates at lambing – this is extremely important as has major effect on accuracy of weaning and growth BV's.

If you are not tagging at birth and recording birth date, survival etc we recommend

- 1/ at scanning, foetal aging or
- 2/ using crayons on rams at 7 day intervals
- 3/ shedding out at lambing at intervals to record birth date, then tagging at docking

- DNA to identify parentage.

### **Survival**

- Record survival data present at birth/dead at weaning
- If tagging at birth dead lambs need to be allocated a tag number and recorded born dead
- Pregnancy scanning can be used to establish litter size (NLB)  
You can also record actual litter size (SNLB) which overrides the NLB value.

Lambs need to be recorded at weaning to establish they have survived to then.

### **Growth**

Liveweight of the lamb at weaning is the measure of growth due to a lamb's own potential, its mother's potential and other effects.

This data is used to estimate lamb (direct) and ewe (maternal) genetic effect (WWT and WWTM EBV)

Weaning weight is a predictor for a number of other traits. It is important all lambs are recorded at weaning. Weaning weight is also used to inform survival.

Birth date is used to adjust weaning weight hence the importance of recording this mentioned earlier.

Please enter mob codes if mobs have been grazed on different pasture.

### **Autumn Liveweight**

Liveweight measure in autumn is the key measure of post weaning growth and is used to inform carcase weight EBV.

This weight is best measured at 6 months (LW6) or 8 months (LW8).

### **Adult Liveweight**

Best practice is to measure liveweight at mating (LW mate) – 2 teeth and/or winter weight Ram and Ewe Hoggets.

If you were to body condition score this would be an appropriate time to do so.

### **Wool**

Hogget fleece weight is a more reliable predictor of genetic merit for wool production than lamb fleece weight and is preferred for best practice. Hogget fleece is preferred measurement (FW12).

Mob Code if necessary

### **Meat Yield**

Production of meat is a major source of income for the industry.

Scanning technologies can predict meat yield in live animals namely ultrasound and CT scanning. Ultrasound scanning is relatively inexpensive, however moderately accurate at predicting meat yield and fat in the carcase.

CT scanning is very accurate but expensive to measure and technology is not mobile.

The best time to measure is at autumn liveweight

Best practise is to measure 20 – 25 progeny per sire.

If breeders wish to CT scan they should CT scan their top ultrasound scanned rams to establish their elite rams.

### **Health Traits**

Health Traits are considered restricted traits that you need to register with SIL. and follow protocols. You can register on the SIL website and find registered flocks on here.

**WormFEC** – recording for parasite resistance. This requires faecal sampling and egg counting. Best carried out in late summer/autumn in lambs when there is an

expected worm challenge.

The approved operator is Techion Group ([www.techiongroup.co.nz](http://www.techiongroup.co.nz))

If you are to individually test animals it is recommended 20 progeny per sire.

**Facial Eczema (FE) – Ramguard** – Again a restricted trait that you need to register with SIL and follow prescribed protocols.

A trait attracting more attention with warm humid weather becoming more widespread over the country. There are methods of protection from the toxin in zinc capsules or drench, spraying etc, however breeding sheep with natural tolerance is the most effective solution.

it is recommended testing 5 lambs per sire group.

Animals are dosed by a veterinarian on farm with blood collected for a base GGT enzyme level plus a second blood collected 21 days later that will measure (GGT21 levels).

Elevated GGT levels indicate liver damage and used to measure response to the Sporidesmin dose.

For more information seek advice from RamGuard experts.

For further information please contact Malcolm (06 372 7875, mob 027 252 7151) or a Councillor.

This is a summary of recommended breed standards.

1. Birth date either at birth or by scanner assessment
2. Weaning weight of all lambs the day lambs are weaned
3. Autumn weight of all lambs in March so the most accurate sire information is available prior to mating.
4. Winter weight June – July of all retained ewe and ram Hgts so data of your ram Hgts at selection time is as accurate as possible
5. Pregnancy scanning data of ewe flock entered gives a better assessment of ram and ewe hogget selection lists.
6. Wool weight of ram Hgts and ewe Hgts if possible.
7. Enter lambing before 2th ram selection to increase accuracy
8. Mate Weight of 4<sup>th</sup> ewes and 2ths if possible. These will help your accuracy of selection lists.

**Articles on research into skin thickness – below links on the Romney New Zealand website**

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<http://www.stuff.co.nz/business/farming/95398932/Research-shows-skin-thickness-could-be-next-trigger-to-help-lamb-survival>

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/business/farming/95398200/Survival-vital-with-200-sets-of-triplets-expected-on-Taihape-farm>

**We thank all our sponsors for their continued support and ask that you support them with their offers for Romney NZ members.**



### **Benefits of Being a Member To Continue**

**Allflex, Tru-Test, and Boehringer Ingelheim NZ** are continuing to support Romney NZ. The discounts below are a definite advantage to being a member of RNZ. Any orders will need to be placed through RNZ; we are not including any commission on these products to allow our members the full benefit.

A number of members have already taken advantage of these offers.

**Allflex - Electronic Tags:** When you purchase Rapid electronic tags they will be sold to you at cost. These are very good tags which are well proven now.



**Tru-Test:** Members can purchase Tru-Test products via Romney NZ – at cost. Their products include Tru-Test scales, readers, and load bars. If interested contact your local Tru-Test area sales manager.



**MerialAncare/Boehringer Ingelheim NZ:** Purchase any 2 x 20L qualifying MerialAncare anthelmintic & receive a quality jacket. Send proof of purchase to the office, and a MerialAncare representative will deliver your jacket.



**Allflex Tags & Zee Tags** – These tags continue to be charged to you through Romney NZ.



Malcolm Wyeth  
President