Greetings Again Suffolk Members

Well lambing is upon us again and some awful weather to boot!! We have had the year of extremes again with a drought one minute, floods & snow the next. Many farmers have gone into winter with a shortage of feed again – the second year running & animals in the North are definitely showing the effects of the drought, being more underweight than usual. At least the shortest day has passed now & the daylight hours will lengthen. Good news for some of us that work off farm, then have to go home & deal with a lambing beat after work in the dark!! Lambing starts July 1st in the upper north; the weather in my district has been awful, so one hopes that it will improve during lambing & we won’t have too many lambs with hypothermia. I don’t know how the ‘mainlanders’ cope with snow down to low levels at lambing, they sure need a medal for effort!!

Good news... meat schedules are starting to rise & that will put a few extra $$$ into the pockets of the farmers who held onto late/smaller lambs to fatten. Lamb $$$ values look pretty good in the short term & are expected to be great for new seasons Prime lambs. Prime ewes are also worth a fortune; if you have any that aren’t in lamb, now is definitely the time to market them.

With lambing upon us, don’t forget about marketing those little orphans that are surplus to your requirements. ‘Trademe’ is a wonderful tool if you don’t have the time to rear them. I know of a Suffolk breeder that sold a 2 week old Suffolk cross Ewe lamb for an unbelievable $186 last week !! Why rear it yourself, or dispatch it to sheep heaven when this kind of money is out there?

The SUFFOLKNZ National Tour was held in May held in the Hawkes Bay. It went off really well & a rundown & pictures from the Tour are later on in this Newsletter.... HAPPY LAMBING EVERYONE !!

Debbie

BREED COMMITTEE NEWS:

CHAIRMANS REPORT:

Fellow Suffolk Breeders,

This time of the year is a good time for many, a time to take a breather, catch up on repairs and maintenance and take holidays before the spring lambing rush starts the farming cycle again.

A recent highlight was the Suffolk Tour of Hawkes Bay and Wairarapa which allowed breeders to view the regions Suffolk’s, sights, and also socialize with fellow breeders. A big thank you must go to John Kyle for the organization and a big thank you for those that attended making it such a successful tour.

Having talked to breeders all over the country it appears that the Suffolk ram selling season went very well for all, with shortages of rams in some areas. If breeders are finding they still have rams left in March, give some thought to using the "Rams for Sale Database" to let people know what is still available.

With store lambs averaging $70-80 this season and finished lambs around $100, it doesn’t take much to pay for a ram. What's that old saying ‘The price of 1 ram is equal to 10 lambs.’

I recently spent two weeks throughout the country judging the National Ewe Hogget competition, of which Suffolk rams played apart on many of these farms.

Some thoughts I came away with included:
- Top farmers are top feeders.
- If you think you face challenges on your own farm or farm in a tough environment, visit other farms.
- The best of each breed we saw were as good as each other.
- Nobody has the magic bullet answer to triplet survival.
- The competition showed that lambing ewes at 150% plus, finishing all lambs to good weights, lambing ewe hogget’s at 100% plus and doing this all in different environments is now achievable for many.

If anyone has anything they would like to discuss, please don’t hesitate to contact me. (06 3285772)

Stewart Morton, Chairman, SUFFOLKNZ
SPIDER TESTING
Spider testing was discussed at length. It was moved that spider testing remains for the next 12 months, and after three clear years, Club feedback will then be required. Canterbury Club has asked that the status quo remain. Please see article below re Spider.

HISTORY OF SPIDER SYNDROME IN N.Z
It is some 22 years since the US Suffolk genetics were introduced into New Zealand, with the first lambs being born in 1992. Of these genetics used only one bloodline has been proven to be a Spider carrier. In 1994 through breeding trials it was confirmed at Massey that there were Spider Carriers in New Zealand Suffolk’s. With a DNA test for Spider Syndrome available at Massey from 2000, the breed committee placed a restriction on the transfer of rams for stud use by allowing only tested clear rams to be transferred.

In the years 2000, 2001 and 2002, some 800-900 Suffolk ewes and rams were tested every year, with just over 100 testing positive each year. In the years 2003-2008, 700 down to 230 Suffolk’s were tested every year and in that time carriers that were identified reduced to 13,13,6,3,2,1.

In the years 2009-2014, 120-160 Suffolk’s were tested every year and in that time carriers that were identified were 0, 0, 0, 1, 1, and 0. The positive test was 1 ram in 2012 that wasn’t being transferred and as part of the investigation why, its mother also tested positive in 2013.

In 2015 the Breed Committee is to decide whether to continue with the mandatory testing of rams that are to be transferred. The Spider test will continue to be available at Massey for those that wish to use it regardless of what the Breed Committee decides. B. Rapley, abridged S. Morton

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Twin lambs both showing characteristics of Spider Syndrome in 1995. Photos courtesy of Ralph Spiers, Alkoomie Stud, Warrnambool, Victoria, Australia.

NATIONAL ADVERTISING
A discussion took place regarding National & Club advertising. It was decided that a portion will be divided to each, with Clubs being allocated $30 per member & $10 per member going to a National advertising programme, together with $2000 left over from last year’s promotion levies.

BREED LEVY/ PROMOTIONAL LEVY
These are to remain the same
Breed levy – $25 per flock & 30 cents per ewe
Promotional levy – 0-50 ewes $20 + gst
51-100 ewes $40 + gst
100 ewes + $60 + gst

CANTERBURY RAM & EWE FAIR
A decision was made by the sale committee that the Breeds Order of Sale will be rotated annually.
Ram Transfer price ($2000) was discussed & it was decided that this should remain at $2000. A letter was also sent to the Feilding Sale Committee asking that the breeds be rotated in the order of the sale.

RAM SALE DATABASE
This has been very successful & is to continue. Ram sales - it was agreed that there was a good clearance of Suffolk’s overall. The agent list for the database is to be reviewed.

NZSBA COUNCIL NEWS:
PRESIDENTS REPORT:
As sheep numbers have decreased in all areas of New Zealand at quite a rapid rate over the last twenty years, I think that Breeds & breeders need to be analysing constantly who is purchasing their rams, where they farm their flocks, & what genetics these rams need to have to maintain soundness for a good number of years & leave progeny which will generate good profits for the commercial sheep farmer in his particular environment & management system.
Some Breeds & their breeders within the Association have recommended that the minimum price for rams to be transferred be reduced. While I can understand your reasons, I do not believe this concept has any merit & does nothing to keep the values of commercial flock rams at levels where they need to be for sheep stud breeding to be a viable option. The best & most progressive sheep farmers are purchasing sires at dollar values in excess of what you want to buy your stud sires for.

If you are a serious & progressive stud breeder & wish to improve your genetics & your breed’s performance, I am sorry but you need to pay for your stud rams at a realistic level.

To smaller hobby type breeders why not form a syndicate with other small breeders & purchase a quality ram. Breeds which make the most progress & gain the most market share are those who breed the highest percentage of high quality rams, market them well & use the best genetics as widely as possible.

Ian Stevenson, President, NZSBA. Abridged D.H
SUFFOLK WEBPAGE
The Suffolk webpage attached to the NZSBA website is to be revamped. Andy Sims (Sthn. NI rep) will be discussing the design of the webpage with the web designer.

The ‘Canterbury’ Club - Penny Loffhagen is the new President. Penni has offered to create and maintain a website for the Nthn. SI Club ‘Canterbury’ Club. It is still in its infancy at this stage, but the idea is, that a page will be dedicated to each flock in the region, and members will be asked to send one page of information for their stud to be included on this website.

NEXT BREED COMMITTEE MEETING – To be held on the morning of the Canterbury Ram Fair.

2014 SUFFOLKNZ NATIONAL TOUR, NAPIER

JUDGES LISTS ARE TO BE REVIEWED
Clubs are to advise the NZSBA office their nomination of judges and inspectors, and to advise of any judges & inspectors on the list who are now too old to officiate.

NEW FLOCKS
We welcome new flock 1017 Terry & Susan Ashley from Cheviot.

ROYAL SHOW
There will be no Royal Show this year

Discussing Suffolk’s of course!!

'Pahiwi' Ram Lambs

'Mahiwi' Suptex Ram Lambs

疫情期间

Coffee Break at 'Pahiwi'

'Mana' Ewes

'Mana' Ewe Lambs

'Moore' pet ewe (Val d’Or 238/11 was SUFFOLKNZ entry in the CPT trial this year.)
2014 SUFFOLKNZ NATIONAL TOUR PARTY

We would like to thank John Kyle for organising a very successful and interesting Suffolk NZ National Tour.
Based in Napier, our accommodation at the Hotel Te Pania was top class, with excellent meals and we all had rooms with a view to the sea. We enjoyed our bus tour, through the countryside of Hawke's Bay and Wairarapa. John has a great knowledge of the areas and provided us with interesting comments. The four Studs we visited were a credit to their breeders, & we enjoyed hearing about each stud's breeding programme. The stock we viewed at all the Studs were healthy and well presented. We would have liked to have seen more ram lambs, but understand that some were being used in their own flocks or leased out. We would like to thank Pahiwi, Mana, Val d’Or & Tyanne Studs, for finding time to show us their sheep & generously providing hospitality with food & drinks on our Tour. It was much appreciated by us all. As well as visiting studs, we had the opportunity to visit Mt Bruce Wildlife Centre, Hood Aerodrome (Peter Jackson’s WW1 aircraft & history), and Napier’s Art Deco buildings, the Napier Aquarium, the Black Barn Vineyard (for an excellent lunch) & Te Mata Peak. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Stewart Morton, for his excellent Chair of Suffolk NZ & Andy Sims for their input into the tour. We (23 of us) all had a great time and wish more Suffolk breeders would support these Tours, held every two years, the next being held in the Southern South Island in 2016. It is interesting to see and hear how other breeders operate on different classes of country and a great way to see New Zealand.

Norm Carr, Nthn SI Club

BREEDER PROFILE:

KARYN MADDREN & SUE MESZAROS - STREAMLAND, FLOCK 992. SIL No. 4896

At Streamland, Suffolk’s are a natural choice for our main clientele – the smaller block holders in the northern fringes of Auckland, who want stately looking sheep that produce well, are great mothers & whose lambs are big & meaty. Our main flock consisting of 350 ewes (120 purebreds & the rest crossbred) is located at our new property at Ahuroa, about 30 minutes north of Auckland; 68ha of flat to rolling to steep hill country. It’s definitely not easy country; no rocket fuel ryegrass here! The better paddocks have been reseeded to provide higher quality feed for lambs, with a high percentage of chicory, plantain and clovers. You can’t have high producing sheep without providing the nutrition to support it, so in addition they have access to minerals via a loose salt providing the missing cobalt, iodine, manganese, sodium & selenium in particular that the soil is missing in our district.

Not only do we want fast-growing, meaty lambs from good mothers with lots of milk, but we also want cold-tolerance, worm resistance & some foot rot resistance. We have taken part in the cold tolerance gene project & tested as many sheep as possible. We have mostly ‘A’s’, a few ‘B’s’ & no ‘C’s’ at all. All ewes are scored for mothering ability at lambing & lambs are weighed & tagged at 24 hrs. old. We are not interested in flighty ewes; they must be calm and curious, therefore the Streamland flock, knows the sound of a voice calling them, rather than a dog chasing them. Lambing has already started & it’s great to see big, vigorous lambs being born, ready to drink, & ewes doing all the right things to encourage them. We can really see the results of many years of selection for good mothering in our flock now. Best of luck to everybody this lambing season!

Karyn Maddren & Sue Mezsaros, Streamland Stud
ANIMAL HEALTH:

**EWES MANAGEMENT FROM SCANNING TO LAMBING**
*by Trevor Cook, Totally Vets newsletter*

Pregnancy scanning ewes sets the potential production. How much of that potential is captured is largely management driven.

The weather is blamed too much for the losses that occur between scanning and docking, when in fact most of the impact of bad weather is very sensitive to two factors; the body condition of the ewe and the feed that multiple ewes have in the 35 days before they lamb.

It is useful to have a picture of what happens when a lamb is born. Whatever the weather, lambs will be born alive and their instinct is to get up and suckle. To encourage the ewe to be interested, those lambs will vocalise. This is an important event in the whole mothering up process. So it is not surprising that trial work shows that if a lamb stands and suckles within fifteen minutes of being born it has a 95% chance of being alive 90 days later. The vigour of the lamb at birth also has a huge effect on its survival.

In the face of bad weather, a lamb that gets up quickly and suckles is much more likely to survive compared to one that is slow to get up and does not vocalise. Of course nothing will help a lamb survive really extreme weather! It is not trace element or vitamin supplements, or giving the ewe two weeks to find a lambing site...

It is the previous two factors, body condition and pre-lamb feeding that largely determine how vigorous a lamb is at birth.

Management of ewe condition and ensuring that multiple ewes do not lose condition in the five weeks before lambing has been shown to massively lift lamb survival. To get both of these right requires intervention early on. Ideally low condition ewes will have been rescued before mating. But taking light ewes out at scanning, so they can be treated preferentially, is one of the most valuable interventions that there is. The feed needed to lift a multiple ewe of condition score 2.0 at scanning to be score 3.0 at lambing earns 35cents/kg of dry matter. Nothing else on most hill country farms earns that.

We cannot do much about the feed supply to the flock once into the spring, but we can control what they get before they lamb. But this can only happen if it is planned to be there. It is not too late to take actions to lift the feed being taken into the winter. Alongside of that must sit a feed allocation plan to ensure that enough is there when needed. Finally, enlist the person who is pushing the ewes into the scanning crate to condition score them as they come through and mark those below 3.0.

Gordon Levet, runs Kikitangeo Romney Stud on the Kaipara Coast Highway, near Wellsford, & wants research to be done to determine if calcium and magnesium deficiency is responsible for bearing trouble.

About 10 years ago I had discussions with veterinarian Trevor Cook on bearing trouble, the common term for a prolapsed vagina in ewes. I have known Trevor since he began his career at our local vet club and have maintained contact with him over the years, more particularly when he carried out embryo transfer work in my Romney stud.

Trevor believed the main cause of this frustrating problem is mineral imbalance in late pregnancy. He suggested the grass consumed by twin-carrying ewes did not contain enough calcium and magnesium to meet their additional requirements. That deficiency resulted in the relaxation of the muscles in the vagina-rectum area, which led to bearing trouble. Injecting the ewes with vitamin A, D, and E supplements could correct the deficiency and prevent bearing trouble, he said. Over the past 10 years or so I have injected my twin-bearing ewes twice with A, D, and E vitamins – the first about a month before lambing and the second when the first ewes are about to lamb.

I believe this has reduced bearing trouble by about 50%, especially early in the season, when the injected vitamins are most effective. The costs are about $2.30 a ewe, so if one ewe with twins is saved out of every 100 injected, the costs would be recovered.

Three years ago we ran a trial on four properties. We treated half the twinning ewes with A, D, and E vitamins. Trevor supervised the trial. Unfortunately, it was a year of severe drought and most ewes were in poor condition at mating. The result was few twins and virtually no bearing trouble.

The following year I left a third of my twinning ewes untreated. It was a moderate year for the problem but the first six cases of bearing trouble came from the untreated ewes. As the season wore on presumably the effects of the vitamins decreased and there was bearing trouble in both groups.

Although I believe that the boost these vitamins give are helping the mineral imbalance that leads to bearing problems, the case is not proven scientifically. However, there is strong circumstantial evidence supporting the case.

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**2014 NORTHERN SOUTH ISLAND CLUB FEATURE SHOW - MAYFIELD.**

It was a lovely day, full of sun, laughs and great sheep.

The results are as follows.

Old Ram - 1st, 2nd, & 3rd Penni Loffhagen
Ram Lamb - 1st, 2nd, & 3rd Penni Loffhagen
2shear ewe and over - 1st, 2nd Penni Loffhagen & 3rd JT.Miles
1shear ewe - 1st JT Miles; 2nd Norman Carr; 3rd Penni Loffhagen
Ewe lamb - 1st, 2nd, & 3rd Penni Loffhagen

Claire Garrett Nthn SI Suffolk Breeders Club - Secretary March 2014.
The availability of calcium and magnesium in the pasture can vary greatly from season to season, year to year, and paddock to paddock. The incidence of bearing problems also has a similar variation and most definitely from year to year. It is commonly thought a cause of bearing problems is the presence of the lambs on a ewe’s back end. However, that does not explain why ewes will pop out their bearings after lambing. In my experience this occurs 3-4 weeks after lambing and almost invariably with ewes rearing multiples. Why? Is it because the minerals in the pasture do not meet the needs of the ewe? Some other farmers have been given this option by Trevor and are enthusiastic about the results.

So what scientific research is needed? I believe that there should be two aspects to any research. First, to establish if there is a link between the availability of calcium and magnesium in pasture and the incidence of bearing trouble. Second, to carry out trials on farms that have a bearing problem to verify the effects of boosting levels of calcium and magnesium in twin-bearing ewes. If that proved successful a slow-release capsule covering six weeks – three weeks either side of lambing – might be more effective than an injection. The technology for that already exists in the facial eczema zinc capsule. Some years ago I almost succeeded in convincing a drug company, which already had the slow-release technology, to run trials with calcium and magnesium on twin-bearing ewes.

Is there a genetic factor? There could be, because I believe individual ewes could vary in their ability to metabolise the minerals that are in the pasture. Bearing trouble is a common cause of ewe and lamb deaths throughout New Zealand. There is nothing more frustrating for farmers to enter a paddock and see several ewes in distress, with their bearing protruding and unable to urinate. The cost of research should not be great and I am sure farmers would be willing to participate.

**Gordon Levet, Kikitangeo**

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**COUNTRY LAMB SHANKS**

**BEEF + LAMB website**

www.recipes.co.nz

A delicious recipe suitable for an oven casserole or the slow cooker.

Preparation time: 15 minutes
Cooking time: 2 – 2½ hours
Serves 4-6

**Ingredients**
- 4-6 Quality Mark lamb shanks, ends trimmed
- ⅛ Cup seasoned flour
- 1 tsp. paprika
- 2 onions, peeled and chopped
- 2 tsp. minced garlic
- 2 Cup beef stock
- 1 Cup orange juice
- 1 Cup chopped prunes or currants
- ½ Cup barley or rice
- grated rind one orange
- 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh thyme (½ teaspoon dried)

**Method**

Preheat the oven to 160°C.
Mix the seasoned flour and paprika, in a plastic bag, add the lamb shanks and toss to coat. Reserve any remaining flour. Heat a good dash of oil in a frying pan and brown 2-3 lamb shanks at a time. Transfer to a casserole dish. Add a dash more oil and stir in onions and garlic. Cook for 2 minutes. Add the remaining flour and cook a further minute. Stir in the beef stock and orange juice to make a smooth sauce and then add the prunes, barley, orange rind and thyme. Pour over the lamb shanks and cover. Bake in the preheated for 2 – 2 ½ hours or until the meat is tender. Alternatively cook in a slow cooker on low for 7-8 hours. Serve the lamb shanks with your favourite vegetables.

*This Newsletter is only as good as EWE make it…*

*If you have any other topics that you wish to discuss, News Updates or anything interesting pertaining to the Suffolk Breed in general, please send direct to me at email studholmesuffolks@xtra.co.nz or Debbie Holmes ☺, 459b. Karioitahi Road, RD3, Waiuku, 2683*

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DISCLAIMER: The Editor & New Zealand Sheepbreeders’ Association accept no responsibility for the accuracy of any information contained in this Newsletter.

Happy Lambing ☺