

Hello Members,

A Big Thank You to all those who sent written and photographic contributions for the newsletter; especially Ian McCall, for his continuing supply of show photos.

How many watched the Country Calendar programme on Sunday 12th November? It featured Simon and Caroline Marriot who run a citrus orchard as a business enterprise in conjunction with their *Omahu Valley* Suffolk Stud Flock # 967 near Paeroa.

Caroline has been a dedicated show entrant in the North & a very active member of the Northern Suffolk Breeders Club, being past secretary. She puts her 'ALL' into everything she does and has won several medals overseas for her citrus products. *(Thanks to SUFFOLKNZ newsletter editor, Debbie Holmes, for this info)*

How big is too big? Research has proven that the biggest animals are not always the most efficient. A big frame tends to be later maturing and takes a lot to fill. If you have dry weather at weaning it may be that lambs have to be sold store rather than prime to the processors. With the ever present catchphrase "Climate Change" perhaps we should be looking at reducing the size of sheep back to a more moderate weight and frame, with earlier maturity and the retention of some fat on the carcass rather than huge lean bodies that equate with the commercial Landrace pig look - long and lean - and tending to lack that good old fashioned flavour.

Some breeds are getting into the 120 – 140 kilo mature ram weight. In these days of Work Safe and OSH it is becoming a safety issue having to manoeuvre these big animals at shearing. Dystocia at lambing can also be problematic.

Showing is another thing – sheep need to be adaptable. Once upon a time stud sheep breeding and showing was about getting the sheep "in show condition", hard feeding or saving the best paddocks for them which of course meant that when they later hit the hills as breeding animals, whether male or female, they were unlikely to thrive. Show animals should be fed the same as your flock animals but reflect the best type of their breed. Overfed animals at the show are not a good ad for your flock rams.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas & a Prosperous New Year.
Helen McKenzie
Editor

☎ (06) 372 7842 or

Email rosemarkie@wise.net.nz

ASSOCIATION NEWS & VIEWS

From The President



Well the end of another year is nearly upon us and I suppose we all look back on the past year that has gone so quickly and think what we have achieved in that time.

The weather has been good lately after a wet spring for many farmers but now the dry is threatening a lot of farms. Stock has done very well and with a lift in commodity prices it is more encouraging for the sheep industry. Record, or near record, prices for cull ewes have been paid and good prices for lambs have given farmers a boost and hopefully will bring better prices for the stud industry which needs a good kick along after many years of struggling to get their share.

The annual Sheepbreeders' Association meeting in Christchurch had the lowest attendance that I have ever seen. Let's hope this is just a one off.

I attended the Ashburton A & P show recently and the quality of the sheep exhibited was very good for all the breeds.

The ram sales are just starting. Congratulations to Dave Robertson who topped Christchurch sale with his Southdown ram at a healthy \$16,000 tag. I wish you all the best of luck for your ram selling season and remember to keep the quality standard up!

Best wishes for the festive season and may you all have quality time with your families.

Jim Berney
President NZSBA



From The General Manager

The Office staff wish all our members a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

In Canterbury we have just had our Canterbury A & P Show. The weather for 3 days was superb and the public came in droves. Superb stock on show, lots of talk (some true!), and laughter. I usually lose my voice by Thursday.

What is unique with our show is the Canterbury Sheep Exhibitors' Club. There is no place like it in Australasia. We have premises, a building and a great outside area beside the sheep pavilion where food and beverages can be purchased. Just nice to be able to sit down in a lovely grassed area.

On the Thursday evening the club provides a BBQ for members and guests, and a tremendous array of food such as bacon, French racks, lamb medallions, and white bait is served free to all.

Every year people say the club is the reason why they attend the show and this year's Canterbury A & P President said he would rather be at our BBQ than at the President's Cocktail, as these 2 events are held concurrently. The Club's founding members who had the foresight to buy a house on the old Showgrounds should never be forgotten.

A number of new breeds have made overtures to the NZSBA regards forming a society. Our rules state there initially should be 3 or more flocks of a breed before they be admitted to the NZSBA.

I would therefore welcome all those new breeders to the Association to partake in Club activities and national tours if they can, as the camaraderie is fantastic; it is always an opportunity to learn about your particular breed of sheep from wise 'old hands', plus included on these tours are many local points of interest that you may not have access to otherwise.

This year's gone fast, but I am informed that has something to do with ones age!

Take care on the roads over the Christmas and New Year period – there are a lot of sheep who rely on your well-being throughout the year!

I welcome the addition of new sponsors AgriHQ and Farmers Weekly. Please support them.

The office will be closed over the Holiday Period from December 22, 2017 to January 23, 2018

*Greg Burgess,
General Manager, NZSBA*



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Feature Breed

SUFFOLK SHEEP

ORIGIN & HISTORY

The original Suffolks were the result of crossing Southdown rams on Norfolk Horned ewes. Apparently the product of this cross was a great improvement over either one of the parents. Although the Suffolk was a recognised breed as early as 1810, the flock book was not closed until much later.

In 1930, Southdowns were described as large sheep without horns; dark faces and legs, fine bones and long small necks. They were low set in front with high shoulders and light forequarters; however, their sides were good, rather broad in the loin, and were full in the thigh and twist. Today's Suffolk derives its meatiness and quality of wool from the old original British Southdown.

The Norfolk Horned sheep, now rare, were a wild and hardy breed. They were blackfaced, light, fleeced sheep. Both sexes were horned. The upland regions of Suffolk, Norfolk and Cambridge on the southeastern coast of England are very rugged and forage is sparse. It was this dry, cold and windy area in which the Norfolk breed adapted itself to travelling great distances for food, thereby developing a superbly muscular body.

It was said at that time of the Norfolk Horned, 'their limbs are long and muscular, their bodies are long and their general form betokens activity and strength.' This breed and its crosses were valued highly both by farmers and butchers. However, sheepmen of that day did not like the long legs, flat sides, nor wild nature of the Norfolk Horned. They noted that Southdowns crossed with Norfolk produced a progeny that reduced most of the criticisms of both breeds.

Fertility, hardiness and activity were inherited from the Norfolk, and the excellent conformation came from the Southdown. Although originally known as 'Blackfaces', in 1859 the new breed was recognised by the Royal Agricultural Society of England and called 'Suffolk'.

In 1913 one ram and six ewes were imported into Canterbury by Mr George Gould to meet specialist requirements in the meat trade of fast growth and high flesh to fat ratio. Steady growth in popularity has seen a rapid progression in flock numbers from 176 ewes in 9 registered flocks in 1940 to 360 registered flocks and 17,168 ewes in 1983, and in 2000 there were 240 registered flocks comprising 19,000 ewes.

Suffolks are now the most dominant sheep meat breed throughout the world. Suffolk cross lambs are ideally suited to today's trade requirements. They have an excellent lean

meat ratio, large eye muscle, well-muscled legs, and succulent, well-textured meat.

BREED CLASSIFICATION

Location: Found throughout New Zealand

Bodyweight

Suffolks are one of the heaviest sheep breeds.

Rams are frequently 100 kgs and more, and ewes up to 100 kgs or so.

Meat

Fine grained, low fat.

Breeding/Lambing

Suffolks are inherently fertile and virile producing excellent percentages.

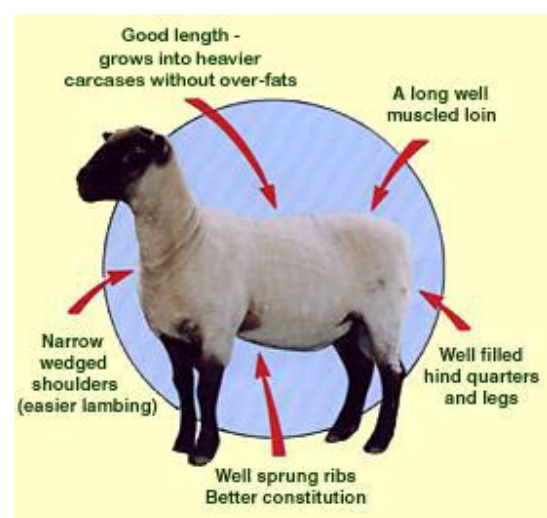
Numbers

Approx. 10,000 stud ewes [2017] plus commercials.

Wool

- Short fine Down type
- 25 - 33 microns
- 48 to 58 spinning count
- Staple length 5 to 8.75 cms

Wool has more bulk than most breeds, and has excellent properties for thermal fillings in garments and bedding.



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SUPERIOR MEAT CONFORMATION
UNUSUALLY PROLIFIC
FAST GROWING LAMBS
FAMOUS FOR LEAN MEAT
OVERFATS ELIMINATED
LARGE IN SIZE
KNOWN TO BE HIGHLY PROFITABLE
SUPERB MUSCLING

The Suffolk Trinity

In 2011 I [Editor] was fortunate to attend the Suffolk show (UK) as part of a Red Poll cattle international tour group. The show is held at Trinity Park. The “Trinity” in the name comes from the three renowned livestock breeds from Suffolk – the Suffolk Punch horse, the Red Poll cow (bred from a cross between the Suffolk Dun and the Norfolk Red (both these breeds now extinct) and the world renowned Suffolk sheep.

To celebrate these breeds in perpetuity three sculptures were commissioned for the entrance to Park. The sculptor is Harriet Mead. She was born in 1969.

[I quote from Wikipedia], Harriet Mead was elected a full member of the Society of Wildlife Artists, SWLA. In 2004, she was elected to Council of the SWLA and won the Society's Capmark Award in 2007 and was runner-up in 2006. In 2009, she was elected as the Society's President, making her the youngest and first woman to hold the post in the Society's 47-year history.'

I received permission from Harriet to use her website photo of her Suffolk sheep sculpture in this feature.

This Suffolk is of course based on the British Suffolk sheep, a heavier boned thickset, animal when compared with the NZ animal.

Do check out Harriet's website to view her other amazing works of art.



STUD PROFILE # 1

Tawhai Suffolk Stud, Flock #717

Established 1988

Owned by Penni Loffhagen



Tawhai Ram Hoggets 2017

Photo: Penni Loffhagen

Tawhai Suffolk Stud was founded in 1989 by Penni Loffhagen, a third generation stud sheep farmer. Originally run in conjunction with her parents Suffolk, South Suffolk, Romney and Halfbred Stud Flocks on their farm in Culverden, North Canterbury.

In 1995 the family sold the Culverden newly irrigated farm to the starting wave of dairy conversions and moved to their current farm in Hawarden, North Canterbury. The farm consists of 650 acres dry land farm, with a balance of hill and flat land. The conditions can be harsh, particularly the droughts, the sheep *Tawhai* produce are resilient and shift well as a result.

sheepPenni Loffhagen and Rocci Scott have worked to grow *Tawhai* Suffolk Stud to now be one of the largest Suffolk studs in New Zealand, mating 650 purebred, registered Suffolk ewes in 2017. This large number allows us to cull hard, we sell a number of our top quality surplus ewe lambs for breeding and carry over 125 ram hoggets for sale as two tooth. *Tawhai* Suffolk Stud pride ourselves in producing early maturing progeny with longevity as well as vigour. We have been working on footrot tolerance scores within our flock and our sires are selected with this in mind.



Tawhai ewe hoggets 2017

Photo: Penni Loffhagen

For any enquiries don't hesitate to contact us.

Penni (021) 1494413

Our web site: www.tawhaisuffolkstud.co.nz

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STUD PROFILE # 2

Torresdale Suffolk Stud, Flock #208

SIL Number 35

Established 1970

Owned by Alasdair & Judith Lindsay

Our stud was established in 1970 by E R A Lindsay on 30 ewes by Alan Grant (F.56). In 1986 the flock transferred to A R Lindsay and in 2011 to A.R. & J Lindsay.

In 2014 our daughter Charlotte Dykes started a Suffolk stud at Middlemarch with 21 Torresdale ewes. This autumn Charlotte mated 60 Suffolk ewes to the ram.

While our breeding programme has followed sheep breeding trends and fashions over the last 30 years our number one focus has always been on fast growth rates followed by muscling and conformation.

A number of years ago we joined SIL and it has helped us to identify early maturing well-muscled sheep but we have found we still have to be very hands on regarding conformation. The last 10 years we have been trying to breed reasonably sized rams with better muscling and higher yielding carcass while still maintaining high growth rates.



Torresdale 211/16

Photo: A Lindsay

Our family has another property (Stoneburn Station) in the Nenthorn Valley which is in East Otago, 30 km inland from Waikouaiti. Our youngest son James manages Stoneburn Station. Last year he tailed 2036 Suffolk Romney cross lambs. These lambs were born from the 20th Sept onwards. On the 21st December James drafted the singles and killed 433 lambs at 17.8 kgs. On the 8th January the twins were drafted and because he had not booked enough space, 833 lambs were killed on the 9th January at 17.9 kg and 320 lambs had to be put back with all the ewes and killed on the 18th January at 18.3 kgs.

So a total of 1556 lambs were killed straight off mum which was 76% of our Suffolk cross lambs.

It is interesting to see lamb processing companies starting to show interest in taste and eating quality, and they now want

lambs with more intramuscular fat and fat marbling throughout the whole carcass.

*Torresdale ram
hoggets*

Along with 4 other Suffolk breeders in the Southern area we have taken DNA samples from ram hoggets to try and identify



marbling genes. These samples have been sent to Invermay and in our case 12 samples were sent mid-October but as yet we haven't received any information back yet.

At Torresdale we are continuing to look for sires to improve our stud performance, and two weeks ago we bought a stud ram from Norm Carr (N.L. & G.M. Carr F.336) as we consider the ram has a very good carcass. Hopefully this will lead to better results for us and our commercial ram buying clients.



STUD PROFILE # 3

Phoebe Suffolk Stud, Flock #820

Established 1994

Owned by Grant & Di Beckett

Having established Phoebe Suffolk stud in 1994 on the family farm in Cheviot, north of Christchurch, we relocated our family 2 years ago to a new base at Broadfield, just south of Christchurch. With the family having owned the property at "Phoebe" 10kms north west of Cheviot for 120 years this was not an easy decision to make, however family and animals have settled into their new home very well and although now only on a 17 acre lifestyle block, we lease a 40 acre block nearby and have retained 120 acres in Cheviot.

The Suffolk ewes, currently numbering about 140, spend the winter/spring at the new location while returning to Cheviot for the summer and mating. We aim to produce a medium sized meaty sheep and pride ourselves on having a high scanning stud, something we were able to establish in the very early days.

Having sold our rams at auction for the last 9 years this year sees us return to private sale with a smaller number of rams. With our dual location we feel it will work better for us at this time. Our "B" mob which we bred to the Texel was sold when we moved but we are still mating hoggets to the Texel to supply the Sufftex market.

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Without doubt last month's success at the CHCH Show was an absolute highlight, not only winning the single ram hogget class, but also the Production Pairs class. After a lot of thought we have decided to keep the winning ram Phoebe 55/16 ourselves and can't wait to see his progeny. He is without doubt the best ram we have bred and even though he was also judged Best Meat Breeds ram hogget, I am amazed at how he has gone on since the show!! All four of the rams we entered in the show were sired by Phoebe 59/13, a homebred ram, two have already been sold at Christchurch Elite Ram Fair last week & one is entered in the Feilding Ram Fair on December 12th, and of course we are retaining Phoebe 55/16.



Grant with Phoebe 55/16

Alongside our Suffolk stud our other passion is breeding trotters. We have been breeding from half a dozen mares for the last few years, with our biggest success being breeding dual Group 1 winner "Quite A Moment". This year we have taken this part of our operation to another level with the chance to stand 2 trotting stallions. Outside mares are being taken in, as well as increasing our own numbers to give the stallions their best chance.

Stallions standing at
Phoebe Stud.

"Imperial Count"



"Royal Aspirations"



Between them, these 2 boys have won a million dollars on the racetrack (not for us unfortunately), and only time will tell if they are a success at stud. We collect semen every second day as required and are able to chill it and send it all around the county. A big learning curve but we are getting the mares in foal. We as Suffolk breeders can learn a lot from the line breeding that happens in the horse breeding game.

For more information and to keep up to date with what we have racing & our Suffolk's, visit our website www.phoebestud.co.nz



STUD PROFILE # 4

Studholme Suffolk Stud, Flock #955 FTN

Established 2003

Owned by Brian & Debbie Holmes



Studholme Ewe Lambs

Brian & I are speaking from a 'lifestyle blockers' perspective in the North Island. We established our Studholme Suffolk Stud in 2003 after breeding purebred Suffolk sheep for more than 25 years.

Our Flock is bred on steep, windy coastal hills at Karioitahi Beach, 5 minutes from Waiuku, south of Auckland. Being terminal sire breeders, we are aiming to breed rams that are medium framed, structurally sound, fast maturing, with meaty hindquarters & a good temperament.

Our foundation ewes were small nuggety type Suffolks & not quite the phenotype we were aiming for, but they were the only ewes available at the time our Stud was established. We now have a good medium style of phenotype. Currently, our Stud comprises 90 Suffolk ewes plus replacements.

Each time we have purchased a new Stud Sire we have done so with the aim of improving our breeding stock. All the Stud Sires we have purchased have been from some of the

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top New Zealand Suffolk Studs - Goldstream & Woodbine from the North Island & Camshorn, Coleford, Courtenay, Idaview, Mornish, Omagh, Phoebe, Stoneylea, Waterton, Waimotu in the South Island. They are all top studs & have many years of breeding behind them. The investment in these genetics has paid off & they have certainly have put a big OOMPH into our Stud. We have been very pleased with their progeny. This year we had the privilege of using Phoebe 59/13 as a stud sire (the sire of Phoebe 55/16 that has just won majorly at the Canterbury Show). He has produced some very nice lambs and we will be using him in the stud again in 2018.

Our flock is one of a handful in New Zealand that has FTN status for Spider Syndrome, and although the requirement to have Stud Sires tested has now been removed, our stud will remain an FTN stud. Our Stud was also involved in the Lincoln University Cold Tolerance trials recently and we had very favourable results.

Studholme Stud is recorded on LIC MINDA – the same programme as all Dairy cows in NZ. We do performance recording within our own flock with lambs being weighed regularly. We cull the lambs ‘hard’ at weaning & the remainder are EMA scanned in autumn. All sheep that do not have the phenotype or temperament that we are aiming to breed are dispersed as lambs so only the top percentage of our lambs are retained for breeding. There is a huge ready market of small block holders in our district wanting to buy any lambs that are surplus to our requirements.



THE BOTTOM END...CHOCKA FULL OF MEAT

Phoebe 44/11Trp, Mornish 26/12Tw, Coleford 244/12Tw

We show our Sheep in many local A & P shows & have ventured as far away as Whangarei & Waikato. We have had success at these Shows & love the camaraderie that goes with showing our animals and the Suffolk section at most shows is highly competitive. We have had several highlights on the showing circuit including winning ‘Sheep of Show’ at Auckland Royal Easter Show on our first outing & winning the meat breeds ‘Miss Waikato’ in 2009 & 2012 and the

‘Supreme Champion Suffolk’ with our homebred ram Studholme 80/11 at the Waikato A & P Show in 2014.

Brian is past Chairman of the Northern NI. Suffolk Breeders Club & I have been past Secretary/Treasurer of the Club.

I am one of the Northern NI. SUFFOLKNZ Breed Committee Representatives.

I am also the Editor/Compiler of the National SUFFOLKNZ Newsletter published by the NZ Sheepbreeders’ Assn.



Check out my newsletter at www.nzsheep.co.nz/Suffolk
In 2015, I was awarded the SUFFOLKNZ Ambassador Of The Year for my work in compiling the SUFFOLKNZ Newsletter.

Our website is: www.studholmesuffolks.co.nz
Debbie & Brian Holmes, Studholme Suffolk Stud



Another Canterbury Show Champion photo
by IW McCall



Speed & Paula McIlraith's Supreme Champion Poll Dorset

NORFOLK HORN SHEEP TODAY

Supplied by UK Norfolk Horn Sheep Society



Modern Norfolk Horn ram

Photo: Suzannah Coke

The plight of the Norfolk Horn in 1973 was the catalyst needed for the foundation of the Rare Breeds Survival Trust (UK). So many breeds had already disappeared but the Norfolk Horn was to become a success story.

The Norfolk Horn type had been recognised for more than 380 years, being mentioned in the Beauties of England, Cambridgeshire by Robert Reyce, in 1610. It was a hardy, active sheep, bred to graze the healthlands and the poorest soils; lean, long-legged and often bare-bellied. It was described as a 'restless' breed and very agile. Some early flock masters turned to other breeds because the Norfolk jumped hedges and walls like goats. But the mutton was renowned for its flavour, leanness and succulence, said to be more like venison.

In the eighteenth century the breed began to lose favour in East Anglia; Southdowns and Leicesters gradually replaced them. Norfolks were crossed with Southdowns in an attempt to improve the confirmation and the Suffolk sheep was the result. This was recognised as a breed in its own right in 1859, with the Suffolk Sheep Society being formed in 1886.

Sadly the Norfolk breed was not considered of sufficient merit to warrant improvement by selective breeding, all enthusiasm being centred on the more modern breeds. It is probable that the Norfolk Horn never reached its full genetic potential, as it was bred to make use of the very poorest land and was probably always in poor condition. Along with the gradual changes to farming systems in East Anglia - the Norfolk "four course rotation" and new arable crops - came winter feed of quality and quantity and the need for fast-maturing sheep. So around 1800 the Norfolk lost its dominance and by 1846 David Low in Domesticated Animals of Great Britain commented on the decline of 'perfectly pure Norfolk' and stated that 'it is now becoming rare and will soon cease to exist'.

It continued to decline in number for another century. In 1907 there were 10 or 11 flocks in Norfolk and Suffolk. By the end of the WWI there was only one flock remaining. By 1930 the Norfolk flock had halved. In 1948 only two rams remained. The remains of the flock were donated to Whipsnade Zoo in 1959. In 1965 the flock consisted of 6 ewes and 7 rams and in 1968 the flock moved to the National Agricultural Centre at Stoneleigh. These sheep were by now so inbred that the expansion of the flock was extremely difficult. In 1973, 7/8 and 15/16 Norfolk Horn rams lambs were being produced [*backcrossed to the Suffolk I believe - Editor*], and then the last pure Norfolk ram died - after serving his ewes.

In 1979, with advice, four breeders agreed to a total breeding programme. There were strict rules in place in order to strengthen each group by line breeding, while the cyclic crossing minimised overall inbreeding. These original breeders - joined later by a few more elite flocks as sheep became available - moved ewes and rams all over the country at tupping time in order to achieve the matings deemed most suitable. The aim was to use the high percentage ewes to achieve a minimum 80% purity throughout the flocks. This was believed to have been Norfolk Horn ewe achieved in 1985, but it was not until the following year that the breeders felt sufficiently confident to apply for recognition by the trust. It was put on the priority list, category one (critical) in that year.



Norfolk Horn Ewe at Suffolk Show Photo: Suzannah Coke

From this time new breeders were able to buy Norfolks, though the numbers available were limited. Gradually they increased in number, and the relatively high level of inbreeding appeared not to have caused any undue problems. Breeders were encouraged to notify the trust of anything unusual so that a close watch could be kept - and this applies today.



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2017 CANTERBURY SHOW

Phoebe Ram Scoops Suffolk Prize Pool At 2017 Canterbury A & P Show

Contributed by SUFFOLKNZ newsletter editor, Debbie Holmes



Grant & Di Beckett were absolutely elated when their Suffolk Ram **Phoebe 55/16** won every class he was entered in at the recent Canterbury A & P Show and almost every Interbreed class he was eligible for.

In the Suffolk section, rams were judged by SUFFOLKNZ Chairman, Chris Hampton & he was

assisted by Junior Judge, Elizabeth Hampton.

Chris said “the ram is a great example of the Suffolk breed. He is a very well-balanced ram who stands well on his legs. He has a very good Suffolk head and his neck flows smoothly into his shoulders, with a good loin and well filled hindquarters.

He is a true modern-day Suffolk.”

Phoebe 55/16's achievements:

- 1st Suffolk Ram Hogget
- Champion Suffolk Ram
- Supreme Champion Suffolk
- Best Suffolk Carcase
- Supreme Interbreed Ram Hogget Canterbury Show
- Runner-up up Supreme Champion Meat Sheep of the Show

Chris Hampton, Chairman, SUFFOLKNZ, judging the Ram hogget trifecta



The Becketts also won the Ram Hogget Pairs class that was sponsored by Silver Fern Farms and two of their representatives judged this class.



Warwick Seaton Judged the Suffolk Ewes & was assisted by Junior Judge, George Bedford.

Penni Loffhagen won both the shorn Ewe classes – the over 30 months & Ewe 18-30 months with their suckling lambs. The older Ewe went on to win Champion Suffolk Ewe & was exhibited in the Interbreed Pair class with the Phoebe ram. They came 2nd... a great feat, as there was fierce competition in this class.



The highlight of Andrew & Jacqui Adams day, was winning the shorn Ewe under 18months.

This Ewe then went on to win the “Miss Canterbury” title.



PGG Wrightson Livestock

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For those of you who are more recent (and not so recent) members but do not know Greg Burgess, NZ Sheepbreeders' Association General Manager, I asked him for some personal background - Editor

GREG BURGESS

I have been with the NZ Sheepbreeders' Association since 1989, when the administration's building was on the 'old Canterbury Showground' in Addington.

In 1991 the office was shifted to its previous location at 74 Kendal Avenue, closer to Christchurch Airport.

After the retirement of Tom Burrows in 1998, I assumed the role of General Manager.

I am Christchurch born, having grown up in the seaside suburb of Sumner. I attained a Bachelor of Agricultural Science from Lincoln College as it was known then.



I am married to Lydia and have two grown up children.

I am always overwhelmed with the resilience and resourcefulness of our stud sheep breeders, who have endured droughts, flooding, earthquakes, fluctuation and downslides in prices, alternative land uses and animal diseases etc amongst the other array of challenges that our breeders are faced with everyday.

Breed tours and meetings allow me to meet breeders from all over the country who each operates in totally different environments, such is the geography of New Zealand, and the geographical spread of our membership.

On a personal note, I'm looking forward to spending some time with my family as we are off overseas in December for 4 weeks.....visiting Miami, cycling in Cuba, Jamaica, Mexico, and watching an NBA game in Houston.

All the best for 2018.

Greg Burgess





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NZ ROYAL SHOW, HASTINGS, 2017

Supreme Sheep of the Show and **Supreme Champion South, Suffolk Rocklea 139/13** exhibited by Simon & Fiona Prouting, Dannevirke



Photo: Royal Agricultural Society

Left: Mr David Dodge representing sponsor, Boehringer Ingelheim

Right: Simon Prouting, *Rocklea South Suffolk Stud*

CORRIEDALE FLEECES AT THE ROYAL SHOW HAWKES BAY



Photo: H McKenzie

1 & 2nd prize fleeces in the Corriedale Woolly Hogget Fleece Wool section at the Royal Show in Hawkes Bay 19th & 20th October, 2017.

The exhibitor for both fleeces was “Timahanga”. This station is owned by the Roberts family who farm on the Napier-Taihapa road.



Photo: H McKenzie

Some of the well-supported Dorper Section at the Royal Show. Supreme champion Dorper went to Valhalla Dorpers Ltd, Auckland.

Some Canterbury A & P Show 2017 prize winners

Thanks to I W McCall for the photos

Keith & Ruth Berry's, Waipara Downs champion Texel ram.



Collie Hills Partnership's Champion Corriedale Ram and Supreme Champion Corriedale



National Suffolk Tour

Hosted by the Northern South Island
Suffolk Breeders Club.

It's our turn to host the National tour for NZ Suffolk Breeders. This tour will visit many of the Suffolk Studs in our region, providing the opportunity to view a large number of top class sheep in their home environment and showcasing our beautiful region along the way. There'll be a little something for everyone!

The tour departs from Christchurch 16th May 2018 and returns 18th May 2018; it will cover Central and North Canterbury.

A ewe hogget trial is being held in conjunction with this tour and these hoggets will be up for sale on the 17th May at the Loffhagen property, while the tour visits. This will provide the opportunity to purchase well bred quality ewe hoggets from many different studs.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Penni Loffhagen,
President
Northern South Island Suffolk Club

**FARMERS
WEEKLY**
farmersweekly.co.nz

A BIT OF HISTORY

SUFFOLK SHEEP EXPORT

A Worldwide Trade

Ellesmere Guardian 24 June 1930, *Nat. Library Papers Past*
[Note I believe this article would have been reprinted from a UK paper- Editor]

With the fifty two head of Suffolk sheep now in quarantine for export to South Africa, there will have been exported already this year, over 200 head. The worldwide character of this trade for Suffolk sheep is seen in the following figures: South Africa, 3 rams and 50 ewes; Australia, 1 ram and 2 ewes; United States of America, 32 rams and 110 ewes; Chile, 2 rams and 2 ewes; Canada, 2 rams; and Irish Free State, 1 ram and 2 ewes. These considerable numbers are likely to be augmented through further exports to South Africa, which are likely to bring the total up to over 300 head. This increasing demand for the Suffolk breed has been occasioned, as is freely conceded by overseas buyers, to the high-grade mutton qualities of the Suffolk sheep, in combination with the breed's outstanding merits in respect of early maturity and prolificacy. Closely connected with these distinguished figures of the Suffolk sheep have been its record of successes at the Fat Stock Shows in the last two years. These results, as events have shown, have played no unimportant part in bringing the breed into prominence.

It is interesting to mention that in 1928 and 1929 pure-bred Suffolks were supreme champions at both the Smithfield and Norwich Fat Stock Shows, while in 1929 they were reserve champions at the Scottish National. In 1928 the Suffolk cross furnished the best of the crossbreds at the Smithfield show, while the best crossbreds at the Scottish National, Norwich and Birmingham shows in 1928 and 1929 were of Suffolk cross. In the carcass classes at Smithfield the Suffolk cross not only furnished the champion at both the 1928 and 1929 shows, but also the best wether lamb in the same two years, as well as the first cross bred lamb in 1929. The consistency with which the breed has maintained its position at the leading fat stock shows, has fully justified the claims of its mutton qualities.

Some interesting details appearing in a south of Scotland paper on the 1930 lambing result, point to the increased popularity of the Suffolk and Cheviot cross, and it is mentioned this cross dropped in the early months of the year and sold at Easter was 70/-. It is also pointed out in the same Journal that on farms where the Cheviot ewe was crossed with the Suffolk the yield of lambs was 175% and in the case of half bred ewes crossed with Suffolks it was 190%. This compares with the highest returns of about 150% and 160% in the case of crosses with other breeds.



Stewart Island Sheep

The Forgotten Breed

The Stewart Island sheep are one of the rarest sheep breeds in New Zealand with less than 60 sheep remaining with only 3 breeders.

This breed originates from a mix of genetics starting with a possible introduction of Norwegian sheep from the Norwegian whaling fleet. Evidence of this is very sketchy and to some livestock historians the idea seems very unlikely, but to counter this one of the flocks in the North Island bred as a closed flock have points different from other wild populations of sheep around NZ. These sheep have the look and stamp of some original Norwegian sheep. The main colour is a grey reverse mouflon with shorter tails, with more bone and greater bulk than a wild merino. *See photo below.*



These sheep will naturally shed to some extent and are reported to lamb twice a year. A very important point is that they have a very high level of internal parasite resistance. Pinkeye has never been seen in this flock with all surrounding sheep infected.

We do know that over the years many breeds have been put on the Island for farming purposes. These breeds include Merino from Hokanui; Perendales and Romney's. We have totally no idea how many of these sheep and the crosses ended up in the wild population. Given the location, terrain and scope many must have, but how long those genetics lasted is unknown, given that fully domestic breeds need a farmer to farm them or will end up flyblown or non breeding due to wool cover and dags - not to mention parasite control.

What we do know is that the wild population has been noted on the Island for a long time and these sheep have

formed the breed on the mainland and these sheep have attributes that are valuable.

After Christmas this year 2017, a flock in the North Island is going to be dispersed. This flock comprises of 35 ewes with lambs and 2 rams. The NZ Rare Breeds Conservation Society have been asked to find homes for breeding groups to continue the breed.

If you are interested in becoming a breeder of these interesting sheep please contact:

John Earney ☎06-7627992

Or avonstourisland@gmail.com

- They are not free but not expensive
- You need to be a member of the NZ Rarebreeds' Conservation Society
- You need to pure breed the ewes and keep that recorded
- We would encourage you to get others started with the breed.

Taken from the Rare Breeds Conservation Soc of NZ website:-

The first large-scale sheep farming venture on Stewart Island was commenced in 1874 on what proved to be unsuitable terrain at Scott Burn. Within a few years other sheep runs were taken up on drier land at Island Hill and Kilbride in Masons Bay on the western coast. Prior to this only small numbers of sheep had been kept on the island for household supply, mostly at The Neck (on the east coast). Sheep farming was never greatly successful on the island, although it did continue until the 1990s.

Sheep that escaped from farming operations formed a feral population and some have been recovered in recent years and maintained on the mainland. These are described as being very like those from Arapawa Island in size (i.e. relatively small) and general appearance – the rams having particularly fine horns. They are mostly black and often have a patch of white on the nose and between the eyes, and a white tip on the tail.

In behaviour they are very alert and aware of what is going on around them. In a group, a female will often act as a 'lookout' for the approach of strangers. The ewes are very protective of their lambs. They don't need drenching and don't get daggy. On lean feed they tend to hold their condition better than commercial breeds.

Sheep from Stewart Island



(Photo by David Tuart)

Since the cessation of farming, the Department of Conservation has taken steps to eradicate feral sheep (and other feral animals) from Stewart Island to prevent them damaging native forest and the habitat of native wildlife.



Shearwell's display stand at the recent Royal Show held at Hastings. The staff member was demonstrating the versatility of the sheep tags making them into key rings to give away.

It was good to be able to make myself known to them and say that we appreciate their continuing support for the newsletter and website – *Editor*



Shearwell New Zealand Ltd - Advertorial

The best-selling RFID sheep tag in Britain and Canada, known as the SET tag, is now available in New Zealand.

Shearwell New Zealand supplies direct to farmers and offers livestock tags, EID readers, software, weigh crates and drafters.

The one-piece sheep tag has a wrap-around design that's light enough to be inserted into new-born lambs and strong enough to last for life. It was designed to give the best possible retention. The latest trial work in Canada shows 99% retention in 50,000 tags over a 3-year period. With these exceptional retention rates, SET tags are gaining popularity in Australia, Brazil, USA, Canada and now New Zealand.

Shearwell's revolutionary tag design allows this lifetime tag to be used as both a visual identification tag and a low-cost method of electronically identifying sheep. The tags can be applied to sheep at any age, and are also suitable for identification of other species. They are available in 11 colours (yellow, green, white, orange, grey, blue, purple, pink, black, red and brown).

Another useful tool is the Shearwell Stick Reader which has been developed for speed of use and accuracy. One of its helpful features are the green and red lights, green to show the animal is being read for the first time and red if it has already been scanned which is a real plus when pen reading.

This is the ultimate farmer-friendly tool – simple to use, rugged and versatile. It reads all types of EID ear tags and boluses, and can hold up to 16,000 records! It links by Bluetooth to mobile printers and weigh-heads. Another unique feature is the ability to interface with both android and iOS apps, which means it will greatly assist farmers to meet their NAIT requirements.

The Shearwell Weigh Crate or Automatic Drafter takes the pain out of handling large groups of sheep. The race reader and digital weigh-head are linked to a handheld stock recorder so data collection is easy, fast and accurate.

Knowing the pressures on costs, Shearwell is committed to bringing value for money to the marketplace. Talk to us about the best solution for your farm.

For more information go to www.shearwell.co.nz or call 0800 79 99 89.



AUSTRALIAN NEWS

Hampshire Breed Show Success



Photo: Fairfax Media

Heidi, Rex & Matt Sherwood pictured with “Wollondale” Hampshire stud’s Supreme Australian Prime Lamb group of one ram and two ewes.

Excerpt from *The Muster* #100, August 2017:-

‘Bendigo Sheep & Wool Show in July [2017] is unquestionably one of the very top sheep shows in this country [Australia]. There are numerous trade sites as well as the wool show, and judging competition for more breeds than seen at any other show in the country. This included 15 of the 19 breeds under the ASSBA banner.

Although small in number in this country with just 32 registered studs in the last flock book, it was a triumph for John Cordukes’ Wollondale stud, Towrang, NSW.

In a rare feat for Hampshires, Wollondale took out three interbreed broad ribbons. Their ram, wollondale Bill 780-16 emerged from the Hampshire Down ram under 1.5 years class to be sashed champion Hampshire ram, then champion heritage breeds prime lamb exhibit, and finally supreme Australian prime lamb breeds exhibit.

The stud’s winning streak continued in the prime lamb group interbreed judging with another supreme sash when the ram teamed up with champion and reserve ewes in what proved to be an unbeatable trio.

Matthew Sherwood said it was “awesome” to have this amount of success in the interbreed judging, and he hadn’t expected it.’

Perth To Host LambEx 2018

(Thanks to The Muster, #100, August 2017 for the following information)

Perth has been revealed as the next host of Australia’s largest national sheep and lamb event – LambEx- with the Western Australian capital set to host the showcase the event in August 2018

The biennial event brings together producers, processors, researchers and service and education providers, from all over Australia as well as internationally, to discuss all facets of the industry and showcase latest industry developments.

WA sheep producer and sheep Alliance of WA director Bindi Murray, Woodanilling, has been appointed chair of the LambEx 2018 Organising Committee.

LambEx is the country’s largest sheep industry conference and plays a key role in helping the Australian industry maintain its position as one of the world’ leading lamb producers and exporters.

More Canterbury show pics by IW McCall



Windermere Stud’s Champion Poll Dorset ewe and 1st All Breeds Super Ewe with 107 kg of lambs



Champion Texel ewe and Supreme Champion Texel of E J & B R W McEwan; also took 3rd place in All Breeds Super Ewe

“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.”

SUFFOLKS... CANADIAN STYLE

Contributed by Debbie Holmes – editor of the Suffolk NZ newsletter. Reprinted from the October 2017 issue.

While visiting Canada in June, Brian & I had the pleasure of visiting 3 Suffolk breeders in Nova Scotia & Prince Edward Island. We totally enjoyed seeing how sheep are farmed in the cooler Northern regions, where temperatures can plummet to -40°, and our Canadian hosts were all very interested in how we rear our sheep in NZ. Equally, we were keen to find out how they raised theirs. The sheep we viewed were nearly all of British ancestry, but appeared to be not quite as short as the British types. They definitely have the British head shape though, with a different ear setting & more length to the ears than what we are used to.

Their major challenge was the necessity to house their sheep over winter while the snow is on the ground. The ewes are housed in a barn for the winter months, with hay being added every day for food & bedding. Grain is also fed of course. When the ewes have lambed and the lambs are big enough, they are trained to eat grain as well & wander freely to help themselves through a small gate in the wall that the ewes can't get through. The lambs can spend up to 8 months in the barn. All stock appeared to be in good health despite being locked up in the barn for such a long time. The 3 breeders had all used AI semen from UK, to a varying degree of success.

George & Melaney Matheson, Prince Edward Island

They are what we would call lifestyle farmers & had a cottage industry operating from their home. They processed & packaged homegrown lamb and tanned skins for sale in their farm shop and at their local farmers market in Charlottetown, PEI. They also sold other produce from their farm which helped offset the cost of purchasing grain for their sheep. Their Suffolk's were mainly Canadian bred of British origin.



*At George &
Melaney
Matheson's farm*

John MacDonell, Enfield, Nova Scotia



John & his wife had just recently retired and were living on a part of his grandfather's farm in a log cabin that he'd helped build with logs & timber milled off their property. Being a Minister of Agriculture

in a previous government before retirement, John was extremely interesting regarding sheep importation & agricultural systems in Canada. We learned all about the area that they lived in as well as all about his Suffolk's. Both were very keen outdoors people ie. hunting & gardening. AI had been used to improve his flock and of course was of all British origin.



Bill & Joan McNeil, Windsor, Nova Scotia

Suffolk's were a sideline to their family's very successful Horse Stud. Bill & Joan were helped by their daughter & son in law on the farm & had the largest flock of Suffolk's that we viewed. Bill gave us an extended tour around his farm & district, gave us very interesting history of the area & talked passionately about his sheep. He definitely was a 'figures' man & he used AI extensively with all semen coming from UK. A vet was employed from the other side of Canada to do the inseminations, so major expenses were incurred, both in travel & purchase of semen doing the AI. Bill's goal was trying to breed all ARR/ARR sheep.





Eastern Canadian farming challenges are snow, coyotes Barbers Pole Worm & ticks that carry Lyme Disease. We were warned at one property to check our shoes & legs for Ticks, as Lyme disease can make humans extremely ill.

We had a wonderful time discussing Suffolk sheep in general, taking in the scenery & visiting these very hospitable breeders. Many thanks go to the Matheson's, MacDonnell's & McNeil's for the wonderful hospitality that we received.

Many thanks also go to Cathy Gallivan, Editor of 'Sheep' Canada Magazine & Stacey White, Canadian Sheep Breeders' Assn. for helping us make contact with these Breeders.

Bill & Joan McNeil's



"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."

Don't be Kodak!

September 11, 2017 *(Reprinted with permission)*

Nathan Scott

[While written for Australia many of the points raised are reflected in NZ as well – thought provoking!-Editor]

Let's face it there is some weird shit going on in our livestock industries at the moment. We have heads in the sand over issues such as mulesing, people covertly watching discussion groups through one-way mirrors, arguments over whether there should be only one Research and Development Corporation (RDC) rather than two (MLA & AWI), and then more arguments over whether it is right that one RDC covers both northern and southern beef industries. The industry has its fair share of dysfunctional activities happening at the moment, and plenty to get frustrated about as a producer. But don't let that distract you from the excitement!

While all of that crap goes on in the background, we also have record prices, and staggering results being achieved in the paddock with –

- Great conception rates consistently being achieved in both sheep and cattle
- Lamb survival rates reaching levels we haven't seen before under commercial conditions
- Lamb and calf growth rates that amaze us more and more every year

We have technology coming like a freight train with –

- Electronic ID (EID) now becoming a normal part of management, allowing us to see, and capitalise on the variation in performance that exists within a mob of sheep or cattle.
- Carcass feedback including the use of DXA for measuring lean meat yield in both beef and sheep carcasses,
- Objective measurement of meat eating quality for individual carcasses in both sheep and beef

- Proximity & GPS tags or collars being commercialised for matching lambs to ewes, or calves to cows, and even tracking grazing behaviour across a paddock.
- Pasture monitoring technology that allows objective measurement of feed quality in real time
- Drones that will provide autonomous pasture monitoring, stock checking, and who knows what else
- Development of alternative shearing methods back on the agenda, and actually being used
- Independent pasture variety trial results finally available to everyone (<http://tools.mla.com.au/ptn/#/home>)
- Online livestock selling platforms allowing genuine "marketing" opportunities for producers

That is just to name a few, and I am sure that there are plenty of other things I have missed, or that are still on the horizon. My honest opinion is that we will see more change in our industry in the next 10 years, than we have seen in the last 50. The big question is, are you ready for it? Are you part of it? Or are you going to be the person still using a VHS video while the rest of the world is streaming movies straight from the internet?

As I see it, there will be people, jobs, and organisations that could easily find themselves being left behind while the industry just gets on with adopting new technology, being progressive, productive, and having a crack. Never forget what happened to KODAK. They were blissfully unaware of the disruption that digital technology would bring. What seemed like overnight (was actually 10 years from the first warning to management, to actuality), they went from owning the photography market, to not having a market at all! So my message to every person, business and organisation in our industry - Don't be KODAK!

There will be challenges, not doubt. But no challenge, would in my book, mean no progress. We must expect challenges, and embrace them. If we keep doing the same things, we will keep getting the same results.

Don't just jump into new things simply because they are new. Assess each on their merits, and work out

how it can help you be better at what you do. Some will make you more money, others will simply make life that bit easier. And some will achieve bugger all. But all, are new developments, and offer potential opportunities for your business.

Should you just look for progress within your own business, or also contribute to improving the industry as a whole?

Hopefully both, but one of the greatest challenges for industry, is that often the most progressive thinking farmers, achieving the best results, just simply can't be F%&*# with the AgriPolitics. They would rather

just get on with being successful. There is nothing wrong with that, but while ever that is the case, the current agripolitical scene will remain the same. But that is a topic for another day.

In the meantime, embrace the change coming in our industry. Our livestock industries are set for a major shakeup. You have a chance to be part of it, or you can choose to be KODAK. Don't be KODAK!

GET EXCITED!



Note:

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Free advertisements are available for member breeders with surplus stud ewes for sale.

Let others know that you have spare ewes. Maybe enable a new flock or two to start.

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 nzsheep@clear.net.nz

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

For Sale: Shropshire Ewes & Rams



Starter flocks – three ewes and a ram for \$1000 plus GST. All registered, transfers included.
'Rosemarkie' Flock # 287 established 1982.

Contact: Helen McKenzie,

 06 372 7842

Email: rosemarkie@wise.net.nz

BRUCELLOSIS TESTING

Remember to book the Vet for Brucellosis testing before selling and/or using your rams in the flock.

Accreditation is a requirement of NZSBA membership!

Wallplanners & Sheep Breeds posters are available at the Office.

Contact: greg@nzsheep.co.nz

The **closing date** for next issue of the newsletter will be **20th February_for the March 2018 newsletter.**

Next **"FEATURE BREED"** will be **Poll Dorsets/Dorset Horns**

If you would like to be part of this section, **photos and stud histories of all breeds are accepted at any time.**

Email or post to the Editor – see front page for address details.

Published by NZ Sheepbreeders' Association

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