



FERNLEAF Newsletter - August 2016

Greetings from FERNLEAF and a warm welcome to all our new contacts

Hasn't it been a warm winter so far - apart from a few cold snaps here and there. And the rain and water - we can't believe how much we've had in the King Country and, with the warmth, the grass hasn't stopped growing that much.

Road trip to the South Island

In May Carolyn and I took a road trip to Nelson to visit Dave and Judy McGaviston, who have been buying rams off us since 2010. It was really nice to see some different scenery and spend some time with their family.

I was struck by the devastation of FE in the area - a friend 5kms away from Dave and Judy had just had to destroy 120 ewes - truly a gutting experience for any farmer to have to deal with.

On the other hand, Dave has informed me that, on checking closely none of the progeny from the sires bought from us, are showing any clinical signs of FE.



National and Central Districts Fieldays

Feilding started off very wet and cold and then was very pleasant. It was encouraging to have a huge interest in what we're doing and achieving and many new contact were added to our ever expanding mailing list.

National Fieldays

From Wednesday the 15th to Saturday the 18th of June we were at the National Fieldays in Mystery Creek.

It was a busy couple of days but an excellent opportunity to be able to catch up with many of our present clients and make new contacts. Ian and I went up on the previous Saturday to set up our display and prepare the section where we kept our sheep. That was great and meant I just had to do a few things when Carolyn and I went up the following Tuesday afternoon. Anyway, Carolyn helped me out on the Wednesday and Thursday and Ian came in on the Friday and Saturday.





Is this a potential customer??



2th's almost ready to lamb

One of the key points we wanted to get across this year at this event is that one of the biggest things we are taking into account when breeding is resistance to facial eczema (FE) - whilst our main focus is resistance to worms and parasites the sires we sell are out of many rams that have been tested to .6 and proved to be FE free. The other thing we did was to advertise that we have in-lamb ewes available for sale. Given that we have been working on worm resistance for many years now, buying ewe and ram stock is an excellent way of getting a big jump into resistance for farmers and this approach seemed to be very attractive for farmers.

Facial Eczema

Hasn't it been a horrendous season for FE and what I witnessed in the South Island was very distressing. One new contact said he'd been buying FE-tolerant rams for 23 years and yet doesn't believe he had one ewe that was unaffected.

The good news is that our friends at Kiwi Fertilizer, who share our National Fielday site tell me that they don't know of any of their established clients (including us) with any clinical signs - they say it's all about managing the microbes in the soil and they seem to be helping farmers do this with the product they are providing.

However, they're being very careful not to be making wild claims.

I have to say looking on that it's the best FE news I've ever had and if you'd like to talk about it give me a ring.

Wormwise

In early June I attended a wormwise day at Mapiu. It's good to see that the work they are doing is still being kept going especially as it was being presented by a local Veterinary Clinic staff and they seem to be sponsoring it. The attendance and participation was excellent and I would encourage anyone who has had the opportunity to go along to one of these days. Don't forget to remind the presenters that it's now in their official statement that it's possible to breed for resistance to parasites. They tend to neglect that bit as they focus on other ways to overcome the problem.

New seasons Rams

It's nearing time to make contact with clients and those on our mailing list. Initially we won't be looking for numbers just whether you'll be looking to buy this year or not. With a lot of newly interested folk from both Fieldays and the Internet it all takes a bit of fitting together. Of course we always give priority to those who have bought before.

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