

DEER INDUSTRY NEWS

Incorporating **STAGLINE** and Market Report

Issue 1 • October 2002 • Official magazine of Deer Industry New Zealand



No-fuss launch for industry organisation: p3

Also in this issue:

- Nationwide standards proposed for velvet competitions
- Gisborne/Wairoa Pasture to Plate competition and field day
- Europeans taste NZ venison at SIAL 2002
- Massey nutrition research highlights secondary compounds
- Grass-roots research group drives Johne's Disease work
- Geomorphology and sustainable deer farming



**DEER INDUSTRY
NEW ZEALAND**



AVADON @ 3yrs
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It's come together nicely

It is with pleasure that we introduce our first issue of Deer Industry News, and with a great deal of pride that we recognise the significant effort that everyone involved has contributed to make Deer Industry New Zealand a reality.

That includes you the industry for recognising so strongly the concept and all those at Deer Industry New Zealand (ex NZGIB) and the NZDFA who have turned the concept into a working reality.

As promised, the transition to Deer Industry New Zealand has been low cost and no fuss and with the NZDFA levy set at zero effective 1 October, the budgeted savings for the next 12 months will be approximately \$700,000.

Many significant changes have been implemented since the proposal was agreed. The Game Industry Board Executive has provided the secretariat for the NZDFA from March and post-conference took over full administration duties of the Association.

The AGM ratified the changes and a key component of the new structure was the appointment of Tony Pearse as Producer Executive in August. Tony has hit the ground running and has not only achieved an enormous amount of quality activity, but generated a lot of goodwill at many Branches around the country already.

It is of course the Branches that are the heart of the NZDFA and therefore the activity level delivering real benefits to producers is a core part of the reforms.

The NZDFA Council moved to a four-person Executive Committee with Errol Croad appointed Chairman and two new Deer Industry New Zealand board members appointed: John Scurr (nominated by the DFA) and Stewart Barnett (nominated by the DIA).

Effectively Deer Industry New Zealand now operates as a true representative single industry organisation funded by one levy.

All that now remains of the original NZGIB reforms of three years ago is the introduction of the 50/50 levy and board composition which will come into force when the GIB Regulations are changed (likely in the New Year).

These reforms, based on industry partnership, have been complemented by the latest round of restructuring which has achieved a unique unity and harmony in the industry.

This partnership and unity is how the industry will work together to get through the difficulties we currently face in Europe for venison.

While Germany's slow economy and mild autumn are contributing factors to slow demand, our exporters report that probably the market is seeking to reverse the losses incurred last season as a result of unsustainably high prices.

The unique circumstances that created the artificial scenario of last year are well documented.

What is crucial, now more than ever, is that all sectors work together to manage future production to give the industry the best chance of a sustainable and profitable recovery.

Rest assured that companies are very active and Deer Industry New Zealand is right there with them assisting all companies with joint promotional activities focused on demand creation, especially moving venison into new sectors outside the game season.

In line with our representative structure, future editorials in Deer Industry News will be provided by different industry participants and we look forward to your feedback.

Deer Industry New Zealand is a truly pan-industry focused organisation – your organisation – and its Board and Executive will continue to focus on promoting the interests of all sectors of the industry.

Best wishes
Clive Jermy
Chairman
Deer Industry New Zealand

Deer Industry News is published by Deer Industry New Zealand and incorporates the former *Stagline* and *Market Report*. Deer Industry News is published five times a year, in the months of February, April, June/July, October and December. It is circulated to all known deer farmers, processors, exporters and others with an interest in the deer industry.

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Notes from Branch Chairmen's meeting: 9-10 October

An almost full turnout of Branch Chairmen met with the Executive Committee for a full session run over two half days at Wellington's Brentwood Hotel in early October.

This first meeting under the new structure combined reporting on the last 6 months of settling in with its attendant ups and downs, but lead to an open session that concentrated squarely on the venison market.

Deer Industry New Zealand staff presented Chairmen with a detailed background on both venison and velvet markets after an overview of events at home and abroad by CEO MJ Loza.

Free and opening questioning included discussion from Cervena Trust Chairman John Parker and a wide ranging Q&A session with Deer Industry New Zealand Chairman Clive Jermy.

Highlights from Day 1 included:

Finance and structure

- Soaring production figures of 62,000 animals for September saw NZDFA reserves reach \$95K based on the current budget spend, and an estimated year-end surplus of \$13K.
- NZDFA subscriptions continue to arrive. Current figures are on target at 2575. Capitation fees will be paid this month.
- Legal and associated fees involved in challenges to restructuring have consumed the equivalent of 550 capitation fees.
- A strong vote of confidence in the role, activities and function and the people involved in the new look NZDFA structure was passed unanimously from the floor.
- Conference 2003 was confirmed for South Canterbury/North Otago Branch. Timaru will host a 2 day event based on the AGM/FGM/Technical day formula on the 28th and 29th May 2003. Branch Chairmen will meet on the 27th.
- Total support for the process of the SAP and constructive suggestions to add to the operating codes of practice to further aid transparency in function and to allow a better understanding of the SAP requirements and function.
- A comprehensive draft rewrite of the "Functions of the Branches" Handbook has been produced for review by Branch Committees. This covers a new focus on support and activity at Branch level, constitution, meeting procedure and the form and concepts behind the other industry working bodies.
- Ongoing rationalisation of the Branches was discussed. The consensus was that inevitably a co-operative regional approach and a slow amalgamation will evolve. Boundaries of regional councils were suggested as a potential common basis for regional groupings.
- The NZDFA logo has been to the gym. A new look and modern style deer head will be available to add to head office and Branch communications and stationery (page 6).

Highlights

- Trevor Walton's reflections and review of the tour to China and Russia. There are genetics in the world we can still only wonder at.

Discussion issues

- The meeting will develop a series of points and questions on the European venison market and recent history to continue the discussion on events, orderly market growth and marketing programmes.
- Active and targeted surveillance to conclusively demonstrate New Zealand's continued freedom from CWD. The meeting also had an in-depth presentation on the disease and its impact in North America from MAF Biosecurity.
- DEEResearch programme and reviews available on the DEEResearch website. Extensive research programme and system to consult on research needs introduced.
- Animal Health Board. Infected herd numbers now down to a record low of 69. AHB Chairman, new CEO and technical manager attended for presentations and very positive question and answer sessions.
- Good communication was confirmed as the life-blood of the NZDFA Branches. Chairmen left the meeting with a comprehensive background to many of the emerging issues and a clear message that they are enjoying a new higher level of information and consultation.

Thank you Chairmen and Executive Committee for a positive, constructive and enjoyable meeting.

Errol Croad, Chairman, Executive Committee NZDFA

Deer Industry New Zealand contact details

Phone and postal contact details for Deer Industry New Zealand staff remain the same as previously for the Game Industry Board. The only changes to note relate to email and website addresses. Staff email addresses will now be <firstname.lastname>@deernz.org and Deer Industry New Zealand's website is being developed at the address www.deernz.org. Please note that a .nz suffix is not required and that these email and website addresses differ from those previously published in Market Report.

Office contact details are:

PO Box 10-702, Wellington, Phone (04) 382 8626,
Fax (04) 382 9143, info@deernz.org

Contact details for individual staff are:

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Sue Lindsay, Quality Systems Executive,
Direct Line (04) 381 6014, sue.lindsay@deernz.org

MJ Loza, CEO, Direct Line (04) 381 6012, mj.loza@deernz.org

Mat Moyes, Venison Marketing Services Manager,
Direct Line (04) 381 6011, mat.moyes@deernz.org

Mark O'Connor, Velvet Manager, Direct Line (04) 381 6013,
mark.oconnor@deernz.org

Tony Pearse, Producer Executive, Mobile (021) 719 038,
tony.pearse@deernz.org

John Tacon, Quality Manager, Mobile (027) 242 2873,
john.tacon@deernz.org

Susan Watson, Finance Manager, Direct Line (04) 381 6015,
susan.watson@deernz.org

Nationwide standards proposed for velvet competitions

The following article by the Southland Deer Farmers Velvet Committee, Tony Pearse and Andrew Fraser proposes nationwide standards based on criteria used at the National velvet antler competition. The article is an edited version of a paper prepared for the recent Stanfield's Bushey Park Velvet Antler Seminar.

A full version, including details of the proposed criteria, is available on the Deer Industry New Zealand website or you can request a copy through the Deer Industry New Zealand office on Phone (04) 382 8626, Fax (04) 382 9143, info@deernz.org

Why standardise judging?

- Present the best velvet grown annually.
- Develop a standard, objectively based (where possible) scoring system that rewards quality.
- To develop a consistent judging system for all competitions.
- To enhance individual animals' genetic value relative to age by recognising excellence in velvet antler quality and, by inference, the deer that produced them.
- To encourage better understanding of velvet antler quality.
- To encourage development of judges and increase farmer knowledge of criteria and results.

Competition proposals

Generally based on age groups with separate competitions for red deer and elk/wapiti velvet. Suggested sections are:

- Open
- 2 y/o (if competition timing allows)
- 3 y/o
- 4 y/o (Nationals Red Deer only – major feature of North Island competition)
- 5 y/o (usually optional based on entry numbers – National Competition Red only)
- "Champion of Competition" – from all age group classes.

Subjective agreement of judges. Velvet antler head that is most outstanding for its age, quality and growth in that year. Generally selected from all winning heads across both breeds. Individual breed champions are also selected.

Suggested rules

1. Certified age declaration.
2. Current season's velvet antler.
3. Judging to Industry Agreed Velvet Grading Guidelines, but each antler considered on its own merits or growth characteristics (judge's decision final).

4. All velvet individually identified, at owner's risk. Official NVSB velvet tags must be attached.
5. Entry fees must accompany entry form.
6. Consignment, insurance and return details clearly stated.
7. Broken, damaged or velvet that shows disease or unacceptable hygiene and quality aspects disqualified.
8. Velvet that exceeds guidelines for premium grades and is overgrown will not be accepted for competition judging.

Suggested judging criteria

Aim: To judge velvet antler by age and within breed that accurately records:

- Superior weight (judged in relative terms).
- Antler Circumference – grade measured at the standard Industry Agreed Grading Guidelines points of mid beam and above trez measuring points.
- Optimal cutting time – lack of calcification, no indentation or overgrown bulb development.
- Style – including symmetry, tine placement and evenness.
- Cutting, storage and presentation quality.
 - (a) velvet antler as a product – market conditions, presentation, value.
 - (b) antler as represented by animal excellence.
 - (c) harvest management.

Scoring and judging

The scoring system works by an accumulation of points for faults. The perfect head in each category would have no deductions. In broad terms the weighting for points is 35% for weight, 15% for circumference, and 50% for quality points including the subjective (judges' discretion) "wow" factor. The potential extra 10% fault points for overgrown heads is an additional penalty as needed.

By judging for faults and accumulating points, judges have the ability to use the full range in each category to separate quality heads on the basis of their velvet antler potential and the assumed genetic expression of the antler.

Note however, velvet judges don't see the animal and while there is an element of merit implied, those aspects belong to the breeder. Antler traits are highly heritable in terms of weight, circumference and some aspects of style but these are not guaranteed.

Describing specific aspects of velvet quality as a product and also as the expression of the stag's genetics, reduces the absolute dominance of weight, and the temptation to overgrow the product particularly at young ages.

INGOR DEER FARM

STAG SALE • 15 JANUARY 2003 • 6.30pm

ENGLISH
Furzeland

GERMAN
Shultzwrede



Henshaw 6.8kg SA2 @ 5yr



Devon Woburn 9.1kg SA2

ENGLISH
Woburn
Abbey
Warnham
Park

Contact: Allan & Joe Wilson, Waimatua, RD11, Invercargill, Ph/Fax 03-216 7999 • Mobile 025-748 901

Branch Chair profile: Richard Broughton – Northland

Richard and Jackie Broughton run 100 hinds, 91 two-year-olds and 91 weaners on their 40 hectare property at Purua in Northland. They are also hands-on in a sheep and beef unit run in partnership with Richard's parents.

Richard also works off-farm as a contractor for a local construction company and, to add to his responsibilities, he is in his third term as Chair of the Northland Branch of the Deer Farmers' Association.

As with the Otago Branch, the Northland DFA covers a huge geographical area. "We have 55 Branch members spread from Te Hana in the south, to North Cape. This represents roughly the same distance as from Auckland to Turangi so getting all DFA members together is nigh on impossible."

With deer farmers scattered far and wide it can take four or five hours to travel between north and south and, because the deer properties are scattered in four groups instead of one, it makes group activities difficult to organise.

Weather conditions vary widely within the Branch region. Summers can be dry or on the other extreme deluged with constant rain, which presents farmers with lungworm problems. But Richard can happily report they remain Tb-free, which is the way they intend to keep it.



"It is important to keep reinforcing the message that we don't want Tb up here. The Animal Health Board movement control regime is embraced and we are very watchful when it comes to moving stock into and around the region.

"We have a Branch committee of five here and they are very dedicated. We are very pleased to receive input and support from our new Producer Executive Tony Pearse and I think he'll make a big difference to all Branches. We see his appointment as a very positive step forward in maintaining good communication right across the industry."

Richard says if anyone out there has any good, innovative ideas for Branch activities he'd be interested to hear them. In the meantime, the group will be putting their heads together for ways to ensure the Northland Branch keeps in touch with all its members.

New look NZDFA, new look logo

With the official launch of Deer Industry New Zealand and the new-look NZDFA this month, the time was right to update the Association's image.



New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association

The new logo was presented to the Branch Chairmen's meeting earlier this month and the meeting endorsed the change although not without some discussion on need, history and meaningful nostalgia. Executive Committee Chairman Errol Croad says there was strong support for an updated image that will retain a separate identity to complement that of Deer Industry New Zealand. "But there was also a strong desire to retain a link with the past – and to make the change a cost conscious one."

The result which you'll see in this issue of *Deer Industry News* is a refined and slimmed down version of the old logo. Colours and typesetting have also been updated to give a more contemporary look.

Errol says the new look will be gradually incorporated into NZDFA material as the need arises. "We will also make the

Wanted

Motivated reliable person to manage 220ha 1000 deer plus drystock, developing property in Rotorua area. Applicants must be experienced with deer and be capable of sole charge. Drug licence for velveting an advantage. Owners live on property.

Replies please Ph/Fax: 07 333 2720

Fallow experience sought

Dear Sir

I am looking for an opportunity to work with Fallow. I have a qualification in deer management and experience with park and farmed deer. I lived in New Zealand from 1972 to 1976 and would be interested in a working extended break in New Zealand if that was possible. Three months would not be impossible.

The UK offers very little opportunity to get started with deer.

Yours sincerely

Mike Gibson

mailto: Roebuck@cervidae.fsnet.co.uk

logo available to Branches so that it can be incorporated into their own signage, stationery and newsletters as required.

"It's important we present a professional and unified image at both national and local level. The Branches certainly seemed to be moving strongly behind the new structure and attitude that is developing. A positive image is just an extension of that."

Branch Chair profile: Mandy Bell - Otago

Vet and deer farmer Mandy Bell is Chair of the Otago Branch of the Deer Farmers' Association.

Mandy and Jeremy run a breeding and finishing deer operation and are in the process of further developing their property Criffel Station at Wanaka. She has been a member of the Otago Branch for a number of years and has been involved in research in perinatal calving losses over the past year.

She says the Branch has an interesting mix of faces – some very new and some very experienced. So far she's really enjoying the challenge with the Branch facing similar issues to other Branches in the lower South Island.

"The Otago Branch covers a wide geographical area which brings its own difficulties. We encompass some quite different climates and deer farming operations from coastal climates right through the range to the dry Central Otago basin and everything from straight deer properties to studs and a growing number of trophy parks.

"We also have AgResearch Invermay right in the middle of our patch which adds to the mix."

Mandy is involved in the recently established John's Research Group (JRG) which she sees as a positive step



forward in dealing with a disease that needs to be taken seriously.

With a busy timetable to manage Mandy says she has narrowed her veterinary field to focus solely on the deer industry and, together with a busy work load at Criffel Station she says it will just be a matter of managing her time to fit in all she wants to achieve.

Important Notice to Velvet farmers:

CK Import Export (NZ) Ltd

are now offering competitive prices for

Deer Velvet – All grades, Elk/Wapiti & Red

Cast Buttons & Hard Antler [Farm collection and payment on the spot]

Please contact:

North Island:

Don Bennett (Rotorua)	Ph 07 332 3264 Fax 07 332 3265	Mob 025 955 007
Barry Mackintosh (Waikato)	Ph 07 824 1868 Fax 07 824 1868	Mob 025 721 796
Neil Mercer (Pahiatua)	Ph 06 376 7035 Fax 06 376 7035	Mob 025 476 600
Stuart Gudsell (Te Awamutu)	Ph 07 871 4154 Fax 07 871 5485	Mob 0274 951 737
Colin Graham (Taumarunui)	Ph 07 896 8687 Fax 07 896 8687	Mob 025 200 0172

South Island:

Charlie Ford (Christchurch)	Ph 03 342 5160 Fax 03 342 5162	Mob 021 425 160
Kelly Bennett (Geraldine)	Ph 03 693 9788 Fax 03 693 9786	Mob 025 324 215
Owen Grooby (Motueka)	Ph 03 526 8885 Fax 03 526 8882	Mob 025 322 743
Dave Huges (Te Anau)	Ph 03 249 7581 Fax 03 249 7589	Mob 025 344 016

CK Import Export (Te Awamutu)

Ph 07 872 2543, Fax 07 872 2546

To discuss pickup and payment details

KAIMAI DEER FARM

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6th January at Kaimai Farm

- 2 & 3 Year Stags
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Includes progeny of Alfred
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or Stuart Gudsell 025 951 737

NORTH ISLAND VELVET COMPETITION

Enter at
Wrightson
today!

Hamilton

28 and 29 November 2002

Thursday 28 November

Judging Icepak Coolstores, Tamahere.

New class in Commercial 5 Heads.

Now two sections up to 25kg and over 25kg.

Friday 29 November

Inspection 4.00 – 5.30pm Icepak Coolstores, Tamahere.

Awards Dinner 6.30pm Narrows Landing, Airport Rd, Tamahere.

Friday 29 November

Waikato Stag Walk

11.00 am	Kaimai Deer	Tauranga
12.00 noon	Raroa Deer	Cambridge
(light refreshments supplied by breeders and auctioneers)		
1.15pm	Tower Farm	Cambridge
2.30pm	Windermere	Hamilton
4-5.30pm	NIVC Viewing	Icepak, Tamahere

Saturday 30 November

10.00am	Pampas Heights	Rotorua
11.30am	Beaufort Stud	Ngakuru

Entries

Velvet must be in Icepak by Tuesday 26 November, or Wrightson Grading Centre, Hastings by Monday 25 November.

Entry forms

Available from all Wrightson Velvet Depots and AgriCentres.

Accommodation

Airport Motor Inn, Airport Rd, Phone 07 843 8412.

For further information call Philip Irwin **0274 933 763**



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Events Calendar

GENERAL EVENTS

03 November 2002 – Sunday

New Zealand Fallow Deer Society Annual Meeting at the Feilding Venison Plant. Formal meeting, 11 am till noon lunch. Speakers and discussion. Lunch will be supplied.

Contact: Ken Swainson, Ph 06 329 3494 Fax 06 329 3751

06 November 2002 – Wednesday

Southern Deer Farmer of the Year 2002 Awards Dinner (sponsored by Duncan & Co) to be held at Croyden Lodge, Gore. Tickets available from organiser Mike Stephens at (03) 418-4703 or mikestephens@telford.ac.nz

08 November 2002 – Friday

New Zealand Grassland Association – Special Deer Symposium: Lincoln University

Day 1: Latest information about feeding requirements and grazing management of deer from conception until slaughter. Papers from New Zealand's leading deer researchers in pasture and nutrition as well as a key paper on Chinese experiences with velvet antler nutrition, copper requirements in New Zealand, special purpose plants and drought feeding for deer in Australia.

Day 2: Looking at large scale properties including finishing on intensive country and breeding in hill country. Check out the Grassland Association's website for updates: <http://grassland.org.nz>.

30 November 2002 – Saturday

Stag Walk

Waikato – Bay of Plenty. Contact Ian Clotworthy Ph 025 933 283

14 December 2002 – Saturday 1 pm

Wairarapa Branch Day – Velvet Competition, Stag Walk, Xmas BBQ

Velvet Competition (Wairarapa Branch), Stag Walk, Christmas BBQ – all welcome, bring a plate and bottle/cans!

Contact Rachael Mitchell Ph 06 370 1051, or email Rodway@xtra.co.nz

VELVET COMPETITIONS*

22 November 2002 – Friday 3 pm

Manawatu/Horowhenua/Wellington Combined Velvet Competition and Christmas Dinner

Otaki Coolstores, Otaki Gorge Road. Classes include Red and Wapiti, 4 year old, Open, 3x Commercial heads. Conditions of entry similar to nationals. Dinner 6pm, Rotary Hall, Aotaki Street .

Contact Vince Connolly, Ph 06 293 2145, huiahills@actrix.co.nz

22 November 2002 – Friday

Hawke's Bay Branch Velvet Competition

22 November 2002 – Friday

Waipa Branch Velvet Competition

23 November 2002 – Saturday

Wairoa Branch Velvet Competition

27 November 2002 – Wednesday

South Otago Deer Group Velvet Competition

6.00 p.m. Greenfield Tavern, Clydevale.

Contact Ken Harrex Ph 03 485 9514 or Barry McCall Ph 03 415 9252

28 November 2002 – Thursday

Taranaki Branch Velvet Competition

Contact Jo-Anne Huesser Ph (06) 758 1292.

29 November 2002 – Friday

South Canterbury/North Otago Branch Velvet Competition

6.00 p.m. Poplars Reception Centre, Pleasant Point. Classes, entry arrangements to be published closer to competition date.

Contact R Hudson, Ph 03 686 1967

29 November 2002 – Friday

North Island Velvet Competition

Icepak Cool Stores, Hamilton

Contact Philip Irwin Ph 027 493 3763

North Island Velvet Competition Dinner

Narrows Landing Restaurant – Hamilton.

Contact: Bob Atkinson 07 827 9446 or Stuart Gudsell 07 871 4154

5 December 2002 – Thursday

Wanganui Branch Velvet Competition

6 December 2002 – Friday

Gisborne Branch Velvet Competition

12 December 2002 – Thursday

National Velvet Competition and Awards Dinner

Ascot Motor Lodge, Invercargill. The premier annual event. Entries to Wrightson's Invercargill Branch by midday 10 December. Judging 11 December. Awards dinner 12 December.

Contact Bill Taylor, loravalley@xtra.co.nz or Phone 03 236 0940

14 December 2002 – Saturday 1 pm

Wairarapa Branch Velvet Competition.

Contact Rachael Mitchell Ph 06 370 1051

25 January 2003 – Saturday:

Elk/Wapiti Society of NZ Velvet Competition

Lincoln College, Christchurch.

Contact Tom May Ph 03 236 7035or email tom@mayfieldelk.com

February 2003 – date to be advised

National 2 Year Velvet Competition, Masterton.

All entries will be scored and a certified photo, with the weight and grade of antler will be sent to the owner as a permanent record of the entry. So don't hold back. Let's show the world how next generation of velvet stags is shaping up. Grab the entry form enclosed with the December issue of Deer Industry News and help make the 2003 National Two Year Velvet Competition the best ever.

Contact Rachael Mitchell, Rodway Park Deer Stud, RD7, Masterton. Phone 06 370 1051.

*These listings are based in information supplied to Deer Industry News by 18 October. As dates for competitions were still being finalised in some cases we recommend that you confirm details with your local branch.

Gisborne/Wairoa "Pasture to Plate" competition and field day

East Coast North Island deer farmers have just completed a far sighted 18 month venison production programme and competition that captured all the best elements of NZDFA Branch activity and farm production.

Fundraising, public visibility, generous sponsorship, a technical seminar, well planned field day, social event and Branch members' plain hard work were all ingredients of a highly successful and well run activity. Vision and leadership were provided in abundance through Poverty Bay Branch Chair Paul (Pip) Rutland and his wife Giselle, the typical tireless Branch Secretary.

The event combined fundraising with a competition. Thirty weaner hybrid stags were purchased at weaning in March 2001 and distributed at random in groups of 3 each to 10 properties that covered the complete farming diversity of the East Cape from fertile finishing properties to extensive hill country blocks.

Farmers integrated these animals into their own venison production systems, recording growth and finally carcass yield, weight and conformation. Williams and Kettle helped the Branch finance the project with venison profits returning to aid the activities of the NZDFA in the area.

More than 70 farmers arrived at the Venex plant in Wairoa in late September at the peak of this year's schedule returns, to view the chilled venison carcasses grouped in their threes, displaying growth, weight and yield data. Visitors were able to get a unique insight into the skills and quality standards applied at the processing stage, to ensure animals continue their journey to market in top condition. Duncan and Co as marketers provided strong support.

MAF veterinarians were on hand to reinforce the message about on-farm quality and transport standards. It was a very useful learning experience. Wairoa Branch Chairman, Paul Mucalo was on hand to emphasise the need for correct spike removal and conditions pre-transport.

The Pasture to Plate competition focused on liveweight gain from March 2001 until pre-slaughter, yield (dressing %) and carcass weight in September of 21 months of age.

Animals were a typical New Zealand wapiti cross red hind mix of young stags. They also represented the dilemma that all producers have faced as the schedule dropped. These animals peaked in weight in March, yet needed the higher return of spring's peak schedule to make the project profitable. It would be interesting to add costs of a second overwintering into the equations.

All animals were taken to the A&P show in October 2001 to demonstrate the project publicly. It's been suggested that future competitions might incorporate the developing industry production benchmarks and contrast that growth curve with a district and other regional averages. Another suggestion was to bring three weaners from each property to



Local deer industry stalwarts Cecil Brown and Giselle Rutland keeping warm in the chillers.

the winner's farm and compare the performance of the different genetic backgrounds under common management – the flipside of the Pasture to Plate competition which compared different management systems across a common genetic background.

The day also featured a presentation on the limitations of seasonality and deer biology on growth and production and promoted strategic feeding – power nutrition when the animals can grow to the maximum – from Jim Webster, AgResearch's deer growth expert. Recently he has moved into the Animal Welfare and Behaviour Group, and he gave some insight into the research and welfare required for new technology for velvet removal and continuing stag welfare.

Geoff Powell of Duncan & Co pulled no punches in re-emphasising the importance of communication with your marketer, understanding market signals, managed growth and commitment to supply to a time and specification.

For the record the competition results were:

Combined liveweight gain		
1st	Don Jobson	203.0 kg
2nd	Cecil Brown	155.5 kg
3rd	Jodie Hume	153.5 kg

The average weaning weight of the weaners at the end of March 2001 was 58.18 kg. Average show weight in October 2001 was 82.75kg – a 24kg gain over autumn and winter. Don Jobson's animals at slaughter were a fasted 125.2kg with an average carcass weight of 75.4kg (62.2% yield). These quality animals were well muscled, GR score of 6mm. At an estimated \$7.00/kg at peak, this was a \$527/head gross return, some \$332 ahead of the next finisher over the 3 animals. Certainly a challenging result!

At a theoretical \$4.50/kg a weaner (\$261/head) a \$266 margin is achievable by the best, but the range is enormous. High ingoing weaner prices can be offset to some extent by excellent growth conditions, but success requires a balance of timing, growth and market perception. We look forward to this concept being further developed and adopted in other areas.

Pioneer of Rakaia Reds bowing out of industry

It will be the end of an era on 18 January 2003 when industry pioneer Warwick Gregory puts his stags under the auctioneer's hammer at Norm Parkes' selling complex in Nelson. The dispersal of the Springlands Deer herd will be completed in mid-2003 when up to 160 in-fawn hinds will be auctioned.

Originally from Westerfield in Canterbury where he had a sheep stud, cattle and cropping operation, Warwick started experimenting with deer in 1968, picking up the occasional feral fawn here and there. The turning point in 1973 came when he hired a chopper and in one productive day captured a dozen Red deer from Glenariffe Station.

The six hinds, five stags and a weaner included one exceptional stag. The prosaically named "Number 1" cut what was then an outstanding 6.4kg at 11 years, and his genes dominate Warwick's line of Rakaia Reds.

In 1981 he moved up to Redwoods Valley near Richmond, and established Springlands Deer.

"They have a tremendous beam and trez tine up the shaft where it should be," Warwick explains.

He hasn't been distracted by the trophy market and has stayed strongly focused on velvet production over the years

as he developed his bloodlines. He's unimpressed by what he sees as manipulation of velvet judging criteria to reward good trophy heads, through the hard antler section for the trophy style head.

Warwick says he leaves the industry with no regrets. Being a relatively small player, the occasional slumps in the velvet market have hurt him more than the bigger operators who have been able to rely on volumes to carry them through the troughs.

But he's proud of what he's achieved, and it gives him some satisfaction seeing his Rakaia Reds achieving a following throughout the country. He's hoping the unique genetics – they originated from the Stoke Park herd of Wilberforce Bryant (of Bryant & May fame) – will be maintained as a distinct line after the dispersal.

Exit the Icon Dispersal Sale

June & Warwick Gregory
SPRINGLANDS DEER

Punawai Sale Complex, 88 Valley, Wakefield
Saturday 18th January 2003, 1.00pm

Stock:

Approximately
30 Spikers
36 2yr Olds
18 3yr Olds
16 4yr Olds
12 5yr Olds



A limited number of older stags will be offered.
Weights and Records available

Contact: Warwick Gregory, 03 544 2826 or 025 221 9456
Owen Grooby, 03 526 8885 or 025 322 743
Allen White, 06 342 6839 or 027 442 2944



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Venison

The industry is experiencing a market correction following last year's record prices. Importers are reporting concern at pricing, stock levels and future expected production. These pressures are causing the schedule to drop earlier than usual.

While the warm European autumn and sluggish German economy are undoubtedly factors, exporters report that the slow chilled season is primarily due to importers' reactions to last year's difficult market conditions.

Production

- September production lifted from previous months. Full year production of 450,000 animals is 11% down on last year's production.

Schedule

- The schedule improved from the June lows, but looks to have peaked several weeks earlier than normal at \$6.68 (week 37 in early September).
- At week 42, the schedule was \$6.01 (down 24 cents from the previous week). This is 16% below the five-year average for the same week (\$7.14).

Exports

- Exporters report a very slow start to the chilled season with importers claiming concern with pricing, stock levels and future production.
- Exporters are expressing caution regarding very uncertain market conditions after the end of the chilled season.
- Producers should be making supply arrangements in close collaboration with their processing/exporting partners.

New Zealand Venison in Europe

Executive Chef Graham Brown is hard at work on the European and North American continents. His packed itinerary includes:

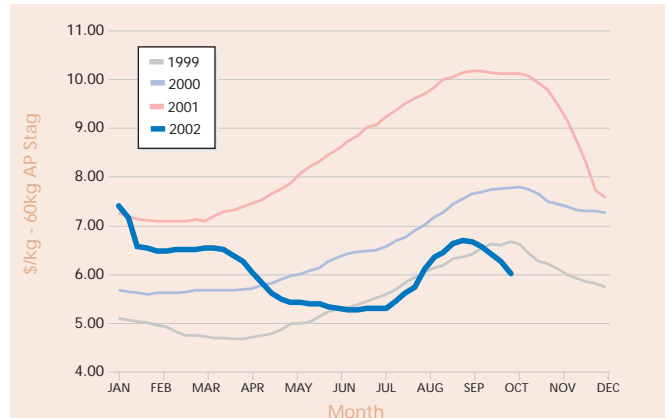
- Demonstrating and presenting information about New Zealand venison to sales staff at cash and carry fairs throughout Germany, enabling them to confidently offer New Zealand venison to their customers.
- Giving chefs innovative ideas about New Zealand venison presentation through a series of chef events, typically formal luncheons or dinner events. The format includes a presentation on farming practices, product fabrication, yield demonstrations and a meal for guests.
- Presenting product to European trade buyers in October through demonstrations at Intercool 2002, in Düsseldorf, Germany and SIAL in Paris. Intercool is a five-day food trade fair attracting wholesale and retail food professionals from throughout Western Europe. It includes a specialised meat area, Intermeat. The huge biennial SIAL food trade fair attracted over 132,000 food and drink trade visitors to its 5000+ stands in 2000.
- Media presentations in the US to national and regional press at the International Foodservice Editorial Council (IFEC).

MARKET INDICATOR PRICES (BONE IN HAUNCH)



Source: Mair Venison

WEEKLY AVERAGE SCHEDULE - 60KG AP STAG



Source: Agrifax

Market Talk

Professor Doctor Franz-Theo Gottwald is Chairman of the Schweisfurth Foundation, one of Germany's largest private foundations, and a writer on environmental ethics and the culture of agriculture. He talks to Market Report about European consumers' attitudes to animal welfare and the environment.



The aim of the Schweisfurth Foundation in Munich is sustainable development of rural regions focusing on ecological food processing and distribution and a major issue in its work is animal welfare.

Velvet

As the velvet season begins, it is worth giving thought to some of the factors that may impact on it. This issue we focus on the outlook for our biggest market, Korea, in the coming year and look at long-term prospects for traditional Asian markets.

Korean Market Update

- *The Korean Economy* is stronger this year, compared to 2001, and consumer confidence remains positive following the soccer World Cup. This is positive for sales of velvet and visits to the Oriental Medicine Doctor – both of which are discretionary expenditure items.
- *Demand for Canadian velvet* has been relatively strong. Although it is banned from Korea, it has been traded through Hong Kong and also directly into China.
- *Stocks* – The good news is there is little unsold velvet in New Zealand providing a clear New Zealand pipeline into the new season. Stocks of Canadian velvet are reported in China.
- *Production* – The lower venison schedule may encourage producers to retain stags, increasing New Zealand's velvet production. However, retained animals will be young and represent lower average weights per animal. Demand is reasonable at present but if production gets too high and out of line with demand, prices to producers could be affected.
- *Exchange rate* – The value of the New Zealand dollar has appreciated by about 14% (from 0.42 to the US\$ to 0.48) since October last year, making business with the Korean market less economic for exporters. More positively, the Korean Won has increased in value from 1,260 Won to the US\$ to 1,200, implying that importers should be able to pay more US\$ for velvet. However, in the past, probably because of the supply-demand imbalance, this has tended not to occur.
- *Risks* – Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a significant threat for the New Zealand deer industry. It has the potential to impact consumer confidence in velvet in Korea and is also a factor in new US markets for velvet where CWD is getting a lot of publicity. In addition, possible stockpiles of reindeer, built up over the past year, could enter the market if it becomes economic.

Professor Doctor Gottwald explains that its work is highly prized by farmers, seeking practical ecological and economical agricultural methods, and also by representatives of regional and national governments.

Awareness of ecological problems and/or health issues, plus food safety are just some of the issues driving some groups of European consumers to increasingly demand organic products, Gottwald says. "However a majority of consumers are price driven. There are big differences within Europe: France is quality oriented but not so much for organic. In Germany, we have a growing demand for organic but at the same time discount supermarkets are highly frequented. In Italy, Denmark and Austria the growth rate of the organic industry is with two digits."

Today's consumers are much better informed than they were ten years ago, he says: "For issues like animal welfare, slaughtering practices, genetic engineering both for plants and animals as well, breeding goals, the global logistics of feed and fertiliser, they demand total transparency of production.

Longer-Term For Traditional Markets

Asia

- Wealth in Asia is increasing and the region's tendency towards an ageing population, traditional consumers of velvet with more health care needs, could boost demand for New Zealand velvet.
- There are opportunities to move further up the value chain through further-processing beyond drying.

Korea

- Long-term success in this market will depend on New Zealand's ability to negotiate the removal of structural constraints, such as the Special Excise Tax, and removal of non-tariff trade barriers including access for sliced velvet. This will allow movement up the value chain and will give more effective control over the selling and distribution of velvet in different forms.

People's Republic of China

- Chinese consumers have a strong interest and belief in traditional Chinese medicine. GDP is growing at around 6-8% per annum. If China is able to continue growing and remain stable, new opportunities may emerge for New Zealand velvet.
- Increasing quantities of New Zealand velvet are being exported and dried in China for re-export to Korea.

Republic of Taiwan

- Gaining better access to this market for frozen velvet and opening up new supply and distribution in Taiwan is critical for its development.
- The Taiwanese Government has shown some interest in a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with New Zealand. If this agreement includes agricultural items, the FTA would be particularly important for the New Zealand velvet industry.

Regional products seem to be more trustworthy. Issues of transport and energy consumption with respect to cooling and shipping are also seen in this context."

Gottwald believes that the major public demands in the future for food safety and animal welfare are for reliable, governmentally controlled quality marks and for strong penalties in case of fraud.

In order to meet the demands of tomorrow's consumers, Gottwald believes that deer farming methods need to be as close as possible to the natural need and habits of deer: "All on-farm practices which aim at maximisation of yield but at the same time hinder the natural ways of breeding, feeding and mobility will harm the image of the industry. Any activities that could create confrontation with animal welfare activists need to be avoided.

"All measures that enhance and secure the so called health value of venison will help to develop the business," he says.

Food manufacturing unit at AgResearch MIRINZ Centre

Venison producers working on new products from small-goods and cuts to ready meals will be interested to learn of the AgResearch MIRINZ food manufacturing unit (FMU). Situated in Hamilton, the 490m² USDA and MAF-export licensed unit is fully equipped with a range of food processing, packaging and preservation technology. Available for lease at between \$250-750 a day, dependent on the use, it provides a place for new companies to try out new ideas, without expensive investment in equipment, or for existing processors to try out new lines without disrupting plant operations. Meat science expertise is on hand also.



Making jerky in the AgResearch MIRINZ Centre Food Manufacturing Unit.

For further information about the AgResearch MIRINZ Centre FMU contact: Terry Braggins, Team Leader Product and Consumer Science, AgResearch Limited. DDI: 07 838 5247. Email: terry.braggins@agresearch.co.nz

Europeans sample NZ venison at SIAL 2002

New Zealand venison has been on show this month at the world's second largest food trade fair SIAL in Paris (20-24 October).

Visitor numbers were expected to exceed 130,000 this year and included buyers from retail, manufacturing and HRI, making it an important launchpad in Europe both for new products and for building new customer relationships.

Alliance, PPCS and Richmond included venison in their product ranges promoted at the show and buyers sampled New Zealand venison prepared by Deer Industry New Zealand's Executive Chef, Graham Brown at the PPCS stand.

PPCS venison marketing manager Glenn Tyrrell says his company is pleased to have Deer Industry New Zealand support as part of its European promotional strategy. He explained PPCS's focus at the show is the promotion of chilled and frozen venison and lamb to the French retail and foodservice markets and he expected most of the major French supermarket buyers to visit its stand during the five days of the show.

"It provides a great opportunity to introduce or reinforce New Zealand farm-raised venison direct to key buyers in specific and new retail formats," Glenn explained, adding that future success for the product is linked to expanding the retail market and tailoring cuts to meet the needs of the modern consumer.

"This can be achieved by building on existing relationships with major retailers that are already familiar with our lamb and exposing them to the attributes of our venison."

This is just one of a range of activities for Graham Brown during his current European market mission. He is working with seven different importers in four European markets and the USA.

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BLACK FOREST ANTLER GENETICS VELVET/TROPHY



*Berwick NZ Velvet Champion 2001
8.4kg SA2*



*Neskey 2nd NZ Velvet
Champion 2000 9.1kg SA2*



*Randel NZ 2yr Champion 2002
3.7kg SA2*



*Aleksin 2nd NZ 2yr Champion 2002
4.4kg SA2*



*Laszlo sons Karlov 440 SCI and Cobalt 484 SCI 2002
(official scores)*

Contact: Trevor Currie
Ph/fax 03 486 1148
Mobile 0274 326 466
email:
trevor@blackforest.co.nz

Adam Whaanga
Farm Manager, Clinton
Ph/fax 03 415 7662
Mobile 027 238 8956
email:
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or Peter Crowle
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Massey researcher highlights role of secondary compounds

Nothing is truer than the adage 'we are only as good as the food we eat' according to Dr Simone Hoskin from the Institute of Food, Nutrition and Human Health, Massey University. She has been able to identify a series of compounds which have extra benefits for ruminants, most especially deer.

Simone has been studying the beneficial effects of secondary compounds in forages. She has discovered that while secondary compounds have been considered a negative trait, the opposite can be true in some forages suitable for New Zealand conditions.

Simone's studies have focused on a group of compounds called condensed tannins. While tannins perform a number of different roles in plants, it is their special ability to bind proteins in ruminant animals that has caused the most excitement.

It is the protein binding ability which enables the ruminant to more efficiently use the food they consume. The good news is that the tannins bind protein in the rumen so it is not lost in the urine and an animal is able to absorb and use this protein most efficiently.

"New Zealand has high quality pastures that are very high in soluble protein. We've looked at how we could best use plants containing low to medium levels of condensed tannins – such as legumes, lotus and sulla, and herbs such as chicory. Tannins can also bind to internal parasites and bacteria."

She says she believes sulla – which has a startling red flower – is unbeatable for promoting the efficient use of protein and has some particular benefits for use in deer.

"While sulla has a reputation of being not particularly easily to grow and is best suited to lighter, free draining soils I've grown it successfully here on a research block at Massey which has a heavy, clay soil type."

Simone got interested in secondary compounds from a deer point of view after seeing the great benefits of Grasslands Puna chicory and Necton sulla for weaner growth. She also looked at the benefits of chicory, which contains lactones (as well as tannins) for reducing internal parasitism in weaners. Together with Dr Abdul Molan (AgResearch), she saw the direct effects it has on inhibiting deer gut and lung parasites in the lab.

"We have had good results with Grasslands Puna chicory reducing parasitism and, since it is relatively easy to grow, deer farmers have had success in getting it established. Our trials on parasites have generally involved weaners during their first autumn period because this is the time of greatest risk and farmers are usually actively drenching at around four weekly intervals."

She said the trials involved grazing a mob of weaners on



Simone Hoskin has identified parasite control capabilities in the secondary compounds found in forage plants like Puna chicory. Photo: Leigh Dome.

conventional perennial ryegrass-based pasture compared to a Grasslands Puna chicory crop – one mob was drenched and the other was left untreated and so there were four mobs altogether.

"The results were quite amazing. There was no difference between the mob that were untreated and treated on Grasslands Puna chicory, while the untreated mob on the ryegrass pasture were clinically affected by parasites and exhibited symptoms such as coughing, weight loss and general ill thrift."

Simone says this showed that weaner deer grazing Grasslands Puna chicory didn't seem to suffer the same bad effects from parasites during autumn and, when post mortem tests were carried out, there were twice as many lung worms present in the untreated deer that had been on pasture, compared with those on chicory.

"Ideally industry would like animals that quickly become resistant themselves, but while we use drenches to stop infection we also hamper the ability of the animal to develop resistance themselves."

She says her work is an on-going study that, despite its relevancy by reducing chemical inputs and hence slowing development of drench resistance, is still facing difficulties getting funding.

"The results to date have been achieved by a team effort between the Massey University Deer Research Group and AgResearch Grasslands scientists with a valuable contribution from postgraduate students. The Game Industry Research Trust, Wrightson Seeds Ltd and Agricom Ltd have supported our research and have been very generous in helping us get this far and new supporters include Pyne, Gould and Guinness Ltd."

But Simone says work is far from over, and next she wants to tackle greater understanding of how the secondary compounds work, new plants containing secondary compounds for deer and studying the early winter period when chicory is dormant and parasites are still a threat – but that will be another story.

Promise of faster Tb test results

Spin-offs from medical research usually become quickly available for veterinary use and this has proved a bonus in the detection of bovine Tb in livestock.

Medical Laboratory Scientist John Aitken, from Southern Community Laboratories at Princess Margaret Hospital in Christchurch, says advances in testing procedures for detection of Tb in humans have had a direct spin-off for animal use.

“In the past it has taken up to eight weeks to detect Tb in infected tissue. Because Tb was slow to grow, it was necessary to kill all other bacteria in a specimen before attempting to culture it. Because Tb has a thick waxy outer wall, it remained unaffected by the disinfection process which killed off all other bacteria.”

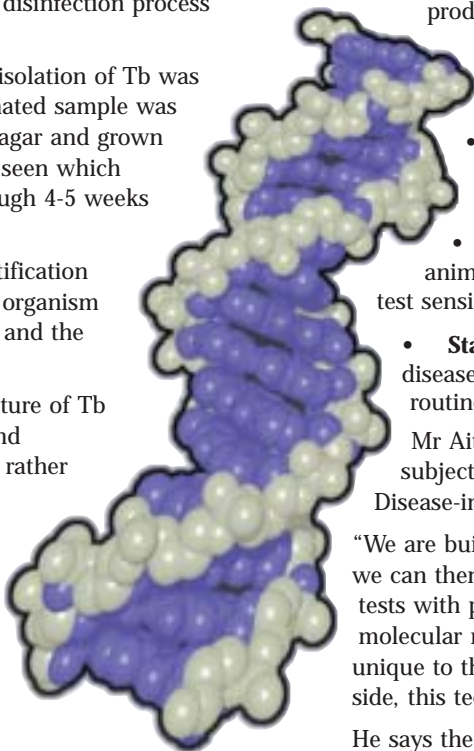
Mr Aitken says the best method of isolation of Tb was by culture. Some of the decontaminated sample was spread over the surface of nutrient agar and grown to a stage where a colony could be seen which could take up to eight weeks, although 4-5 weeks was more common.

“Using conventional methods, identification can take some months because the organism must be re-grown on special media and the reactions carefully studied.”

An understanding of the DNA structure of Tb has revolutionised this process, and identification takes only hours now rather than weeks.

“The isolate is broken up to release the DNA which is then tested to see if it is identical to the DNA found in Tb. Since each species of mycobacterium has its own DNA pattern, it now takes only a matter of hours to find the answer.”

He says availability of medical technology has enabled veterinary labs to source and develop some of the new tests. As newer tests become more accepted, usage increases and the test cost falls.



While research on molecular detection of Tb in humans has been progressing for an extraordinarily long time, its application to high volume Tb testing in animals has only been possible for the last five years.

The new research, which is to begin soon, should take around two years and is funded 50% by the Animal Health Board (AHB) and 50% by DEEResearch. It will be conducted in four parts:

- **Stage one** will find the best mix of tests which will produce the highest sensitivity to Tb. Commercial tests available for rapid Tb diagnosis will be modified and compared to find the one that works best.
- **Stage two** will sort out a method to give the best possible results from molecular detection and culture methods.
- **Stage three** will trial the test against animals from Tb areas and non-Tb areas to establish test sensitivity and specificity.
- **Stage four** will apply the test in all stages of the disease to establish the robustness of the technology in routine use.

Mr Aitken says DNA testing is very specific and is not subject to ‘grey zone’ results when dealing with Johne’s Disease-infected animals.

“We are building a simple, basic technology platform which we can then expand to investigate other commercial medical tests with potential animal diagnostic applications. The molecular method identifies a small piece of DNA that is unique to the disease we are looking for. On the medical side, this technology is revolutionary.”

He says the outcome for deer farmers will hopefully be a validated test that will quickly confirm the presence Tb in the herd, so they can then take the necessary infection control steps to deal with the problem. “There will be no delay and waiting around wondering what to do next.”

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Johne's and Tb centre of attention

Mandy Bell, convenor and Otago Branch Chair said the seminar 'Protecting your herd's health' attracted a good turnout of over 80 people with much interest from industry representatives.

The seminar focused on raising awareness and knowledge on Johne's Disease (JD) and Tb with Frank Griffin and Chris Rodgers from Otago University, and Colin Mackintosh from AgResearch presenting on these subjects. Brent Patterson from AgriQuality NZ Ltd spoke on managing possums and ferrets on farms with farmer focus on vector control becoming even more important with the declining incidence of Tb in Otago. Anthony Oswald from Central Vets covered trace elements, vaccine and drenching and Phillippa Hodges spoke on ZINPRO Animal Nutrition and trace element needs and supplementation.

Mandy said she received very positive feedback from attendees with particular interest shown by those keen to be updated on information regarding JD.

Colin Mackintosh said it was important for farmers to have information relating to the detection and effects of JD. He said concerns had been raised over the fact that Crohn's disease in humans has some similarities to JD in animals, although this did not mean Johne's is the cause of Crohn's disease.

"JD is caused by *Mycobacterium paratuberculosis* (*M. ptb*) and can produce almost identical lesions in the gut lymph nodes to animals affected with Tb. Deer can pick up JD from both sheep and cattle and, as many deer farmers use sheep and cattle as clean up gangs, cross infection is likely to occur."

Mackintosh says JD affects deer in a different way from either

The Otago Branch of the New Zealand Deer Farmers Association held a successful seminar on factors affecting herd health on 29 August in Alexandra.

sheep or cattle. Firstly it drastically affects young animals between eight and fifteen months (as well as adults) and secondly, most cases are diagnosed as suspect Tb lesions at slaughter. Work is being carried out to find a suitable vaccine for JD as well as a method to

detect the disease in herds.

"At the moment it costs around \$50 to sample faeces from a single animal, which is very expensive, and an unreliable test on a single animal. We are investigating a technique which identifies JD from a sub sample of pooled faecal samples, using the BACTEC culture system at Wallaceville. The new test will be less expensive, which will please farmers."

Frank Griffin spoke on progress with his Tb work as well as JD. He said JD was causing some confusion with diagnosis and this was of concern to the industry.

"Since JD and Tb were closely related JD results were throwing up false positives for Tb. JD-infected gut lymph nodes are indistinguishable from Tb lesions and this causes all sorts of problems for deer farmers and quite apart from the nuisance factor, false Tb results leave the industry open to scare-mongering regarding our Tb status."

Frank said work was progressing on the pooled faecal tests which would prove much more efficient and cost effective for farmers and a new test, the G1 ELISA test is being trialed on infected herds from Canterbury and Otago.

"Recent outbreaks of JD in Otago and Canterbury have resulted in serious losses in weaner numbers so determining a test for JD in the herd has become more urgent."

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Grass-roots group helps drive Johne's research

Johne's Disease is nothing new in this country but the problem has remained on the back burner for too long according to the convenor of the research group recently set up to look at how best to deal with a problem that seriously affects all livestock groups.

Johne's Research Group (JRG) Co-ordinator Peter Aitken says a high percentage of New Zealand's sheep and dairy cattle are thought to be infected with Johne's Disease (JD) and, with deer cases on the rise, the most worrying aspect is that there is no procedure available to rid their herds of it.

Under normal conditions sub-clinical JD is undetectable in the herd but bad weather and stress brings the disease to the surface and it can manifest itself in many ways – weight loss, rough dull coat, diarrhoea and eventually death.

Recognising that quick action was needed, the deer industry responded with the establishment of the JRG Committee.

“The JRG consists of the neighbouring DFA Chairs of Canterbury, Otago, Southland and South Canterbury/North Otago, local vets, deer farmers and agricultural scientists. After preliminary planning we have formed a three-tiered structural body of executive, management and technical advisory committees,” Peter explains.

The group has identified and, working with Deer Industry New Zealand, will concentrate efforts on, four focus areas:

- To provide, on a continuing basis, up to date information to deer farmers on how to deal with JD
- To develop an acceptable vaccine
- Developing a cost effective test for detection of JD
- Extending the epidemiology to better understand what triggers the disease.

While DFA Branches have committed to supporting the group through seed funding, the JRG is also preparing a submission to AgResearch, to seek additional funding through the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology (FRST).

“There will be no gaps, no duplication of effort and most importantly we will be looking for practical solutions to benefit all deer farmers. They will be kept in the loop with all information distributed through Branches.”

Mandy Bell, Otago Branch Chair and JRG member says the research group is a very positive step forward in raising awareness of JD and assisting farmers to manage a problem which has a wide range of effects on their core business.

“The research group aims to provide fast, efficient information to the growing number of deer farmers who are already facing significant production losses and big issues as to identifying and managing JD in their herd.

“Farmers are already facing management decisions regarding JD and they don't have the information to assist them. The research group will provide the tools to enable farmers to make those management decisions in an informed way.”

Deer Industry New Zealand CEO MJ Loza says the JRG will complement work currently being funded by DEEResearch.

“DEEResearch's projects are working towards two targets: firstly to develop a diagnostic tool to detect the general level infection within the herd, and secondly the development of an approved vaccine for herd protection.

“The two programmes (JRG and DEEResearch) are

complementary and they will collaborate to find solutions. DEEResearch is very supportive of the direction of the JRG and we are looking to co-operate in all ways possible.

“JD is not just a deer industry problem. I have been involved in recent discussions with the dairy industry and Meat and Wool Innovation where we are working to develop a consortium to look into JD. It's a big issue for all of our industries and hopefully we will be able to identify common needs and interests and work on the issue collectively as we have on such issues as clover root weevil and mitigating ruminant greenhouse-gas emissions.”

He says that with deer being susceptible to both ovine and bovine strains of JD and being more sensitive to JD challenge, they are likely to be a very useful research model for vaccine development. With JRG and DEEResearch collaborating, and with a pan-industry approach, the deer industry will be at the forefront of new developments.

“JD affects many deer farmers directly and also has wider industry implications. DEEResearch and the JRG's commitment is a good start to finding out more about the disease and developing solutions.”

Three kiwis fly our flag

The fifth International Deer Biology Congress was held in August in Quebec, Canada. This follows on from the first congress in Dunedin in 1983. There were only three New Zealanders among the 200 delegates: Geoff Asher, AgResearch Invermay, Peter Wilson, Massey University, and Dave Forsythe, Landcare Christchurch. This perhaps partly reflects a change in emphasis away from a programme relevant to deer farming.

The scientific programme was broad ranging, including behaviour, nutrition, taxonomy/genetics, reproduction, antler biology, population dynamics, meat science, health/disease and conservation. Of particular emphasis were issues of deer (mainly white-tailed deer) over-abundance in North America, hunter/game interactions in USA and Canada, and the conservation status of endangered cervid species in South America, Latin America and Asia.

There was very little focus on deer farming, although plenary papers included seminars on reproductive technologies (mainly related to farmed red deer) by Geoff Asher, nutrition of farmed deer by Bob Hudson (Alberta, Canada), venison production by Eva Wiklund (Sweden) and deer diseases by Peter Wilson.

Field trips included a visit to various national parks. Le Parc de Jaque Cartier and Le Parc de Grande Jardin were fine examples of fir and spruce dominated forests rich in fauna such as moose, caribou, bear and wolves. However, even high population densities of these species by Canadian standards are measured in animals per 10 square kilometres!

Geoff Asher, AgResearch Invermay

100 hits a day for DEEResearch website



The DEEResearch website (www.DEEResearch.org.nz) has been online since the start of August and after two months' operation is attracting more than 100 visitors a day.

Access to the site is open to all, but a user ID and password are required to access research papers and other protected information. At this stage, user IDs and passwords have only been issued to deer farmers, processing/exporting companies and other industry stakeholders. These details were posted out in a letter enclosed with *Market Report* but if you can't easily locate these details, please call Deer Industry New Zealand on (04) 382 8626.

Access for non-industry participants is not currently available, but is being considered for the future on a paid-subscription basis. It is hoped that subscriptions will meet the costs of maintaining the website, freeing funds for more research.

Key features of the site are:

- **DeerSearch Research Database.** There are currently more than 350 research papers, conference proceedings and articles online. More are being added weekly so keep visiting. Eventually the database will contain an estimated 3,000 documents. The newest research papers are listed on the homepage to make finding the most current information easy.
- **Search.** Basic searching enables users to search for papers based on subjects' keywords. More advanced searching enables users to search by author, document type, publication name and date. These search tools are easy to use and were developed in consultation with farmer-users.
- **Project Status Reports.** In this section authorised users can access information on the current status of projects.
- **Links.** This section provides links to other deer research sites and DEEResearch 'sponsors' including *The Deer Farmer* magazine and the Deer Branch of the New Zealand Veterinary Association who have kindly agreed to make their articles and proceedings available on the DeerSearch database.
- **Other DEEResearch information** including DEEResearch publications and Directors' contact details.
- **DEEResearch Email Updates.** By providing your email address when you log in you can sign up to receive updates from the DEEResearch site. DEEResearch will then email you information about new features and new research papers available on the DEEResearch website.

If you have any problems accessing the DEEResearch website or any of the information it contains please don't hesitate to contact the Deer Industry New Zealand office (04) 382 8626 or email DEEResearch@deernz.org.

Origin Sire Stag Sales 2002/3

December 2002

Tuesday	17th	5.00pm	Neville Hogg, Te Puke
Wednesday	18th	1.00pm	Taihape Red Deer, Taihape
Thursday	19th	3.00pm	Rockvale, New Plymouth

January 2003

Monday	6th	12.00pm	Kaimai Red Deer, Tauranga
		4.00 pm	Raroa Red Deer, Cambridge
Thursday	9th	11.00am	Alexander Deer Stud, Masterton
		5.00pm	Rodway, Masterton
Saturday	18th	1.00pm	Springlands Deer, Richmond
			Dispersal Sale

Contact: Allen White; 0274 422 944
Stu Gudsell; 0274 951 737
John Cusdin; 0274 444 720

StagWalk 2002

Thursday 28th November

1.00 pm Deerfarmers Field Day, Tower Farm
The Oaks, Discombe Rd, Cambridge

Friday 29th Stag Walk

11.00am Kaimai Deer, Tauranga
12.00am Raroa Deer Stud, Cambridge
1.30pm Tower Farm, Cambridge
2.30pm Windermere, Hamilton
4-5.30pm N.I. Velvet Competition Viewing
IcePak, Tamahere, Hamilton

Geomorphology: Deer farmers face big challenges

Most of the major environmental issues currently looming for all land user sectors relate primarily to maintenance and improvement of water quality.

In the August 2002 issue of *Stagline* we looked at wallowing and surmised that wallows on deer farms may contribute positively to deer contentment and, with some strategic control on the location and number, wallows need not be a major issue to sustainable deer farming.

Geomorphology is basically the science of landforms and the two biggest basic factors at work in landscapes are gravity and water through erosion and transport.

The faster the stream the bigger the particle size it can carry, and when the stream slows these particles start to drop out, the heaviest ones first (sedimentation). Creeks and rivers slowing in velocity as they come out of the hills drop some of their larger particles, forming plains.

At lake edges they drop further sediment creating fans and deltas and, when the water stops movement altogether, further sedimentation occurs with the finest particles dropping out to form the mud common on lake and sea floors.

Any particles of substrate or soil leaving your farm are taking part in this natural geomorphic process. These particles will take up residence somewhere else downstream and may have nutrients attached.

All land above sea level is under attack from the elements which, aided by water and wind over millions of years, reduces alps and hills to flat penepains or ultimately, sea floor. Working against this giant natural levelling process is the earth's incessant crustal activity – global motions of plate tectonics create land masses that are thrust up and new material spewed out via volcanic eruption. We can not affect these huge natural forces but we can influence the local rates of effect and it is these rates that are crucial.

Take care of your soil and it will be there forever. Any small losses will be made up by the very slow natural processes of soil creation through thousands of years

of chemical, physical and biological action. Neglecting your soil will mean you will lose it faster than it can recreate itself.

Ideally flat land without swamps or streams presents fewer land use challenges for deer farmers. Such flat ground classes are competitively sought after by all agronomic sectors from vegetable growers, horticulturalists and other pastoralists such as dairying.

Analysis of the complexity of landforms belonging to those deer farmers involved with the Landcare Manual has revealed that the average deer farm presents a considerable number of potential environmental challenges related to topography.

Results gathered so far show the average deer farm (survey one – sample of 93 farms) contains about 50 percent rolling land with the balance divided between similar percentages of steep and flat land.

In addition, many (28 percent) have a large proportion of steep land that occupies 20–40 percent of total farm size.

Couple this with the frequency of naturally occurring water (an average of 3 creeks and 7 springs per farm) plus lakes or dams with at least one swamp area per average deer farm and we have all the ingredients for major environment conflict if we're not very careful.

We will need to advocate our right to continue to have access to **all** classes of land for deer farming. Naturally, hill country is most sensitive to an accelerated rate of soil loss through unsustainable farm management practices followed by rolling country. Deer farmers must take care in these areas. If we don't, we could lose the right to farm it.

The Landcare Manual will provide deer farmers with innovative solutions

to inadvertent damage and highlight a preventative management approach.

John Paterson: Landcare Manual Project Convener.



The steeper your land, the greater the pressure of the elements on the environment. Photo: Gilbert Van Reenen, 2002 Warnham & Woburn Society Photo Awards.

<p>NEW DEVELOPMENTS FOR DEER SHEDS</p> <p>WEIGH BOXES STAG MODEL / WEANER MODEL with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RubberDec – Non-Slip Floor • 3 Exit Doors – Anti-rattle Catches • Manual or Remote Air Operation <hr/> <p>NEW Methods of Constructing Deer Sheds</p> <hr/> <p>NEW FLOORING MATERIAL for existing sheds or new <i>It's non slip - super quiet and just hose to clean</i></p> <hr/> <p>NEW Methods of Constructing Deer Sheds</p> <p>farmlab</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add-on to your existing deer yards for harvesting velvet. • Easy to clean and sanitize. 	<div style="text-align: center;">  Heenan WORKROOM <i>The Ultimate Deer Handler</i> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works so quickly we recommend the operator controls it from the still platform • The only deer handler to successfully hold comfortably and restrain securely both large and small deer • Designed for easy cleaning • Just Simply the Best • Options include - Hydraulically controlled Wedge Wall - Semen collection facility
<p>Heenan Engineering Company Limited phone / fax: 64-3-442 2001 N.Z. Freephone : 0800 502 337</p>	
<p>FREE : 15 DEER YARD DESIGNS AND INNOVATIVE IDEAS</p>	
<p>Through our association with leading experienced deer farmers we have accumulated money saving ideas for creating efficient and safer deer handling facilities.</p>	

Deer Farmers' Landcare Manual Project – Survey 2 (update)

The second survey has been with contributing deer farmers since early July and data input from this is now nearing completion with some excellent value apparent in the returns.

Identifying risk in land use was one of the subjects covered in this survey and it appears many deer farmers have developed automatic rules of thumb for managing various parts of their farms in different ways according to the capability of particular paddocks.

Two good examples of this policy were identified as:

- selecting flat paddocks and dry weather for weaning
- keeping young stock off sensitive hill paddocks where their playful behaviour can exacerbate bare patches and soil erosion.

While it is apparent many deer farmers automatically adopt these good land use practices, not many see any need to take this risk identification process, together with differential management methods, and formally represent them on a farm map/management plan.

This is likely to be a recommendation in the Landcare Manual: that deer farms are mapped, with various zones identified according to land use risks (e.g. low, medium, high) and that the best practice methods employed in the various zones are recorded in a land management plan.

Survey Two also looked into remedial methods required to both prevent and repair some of the effects typical on deer farms, i.e. focusing on repair of fence line erosion, protecting troughs and preventing adjacent wallow damage.

The challenge now for the Landcare Manual Project is to convert this freshly accumulated and comprehensive deer farmer knowledge resource into a logical and readable text for all farmers.

John Paterson: Landcare Manual Project Convener.



Sheerwater, the 2002 premier winners of the Deer Farmers' Environment Awards is hosting a Deer Industry Environment Fieldday on Saturday, 15 February 2003.

In your last issue of *Stagline* you received a complimentary brochure which profiled this exceptional winner of the Premier Sir Peter and Fiona Lady Elworthy Environmental Award together with several merit award winners.

There has already been interest from deer farmers all over New Zealand to come along and see what constitutes an award winning property of this calibre.

This February weekend coincides with the first race in the challenge for the America's Cup and provides the unique opportunity to travel to Auckland and combine both a business trip to New Zealand's best environmentally friendly deer farm and visit to the stock pen and paddocks of the world's top stud yachts.

Sheerwater deer farm owners, Brian and Brigitte Richards together with farm manager Richard Morris, farm consultant Will Wilson, Wilson & Keeling Ltd, Palmerston North and a team of invited environment specialists will guide you around the farm looking at the key factors that constitute sustainable deer farming.

The farm visit will commence at 11.30 a.m. with a catered BBQ lunch. Outside Cuisine's [Veniburger] Venison specialities and beverages will be for sale. The farm tour itself will commence at 1pm sharp till approximately 4pm.

Further details including location directions and programme will be printed in the next issue of *Deer Industry News*.

Enquiries: Producer Executive Tony Pearse, 021 719 038, or Awards Convenor John Paterson 07 332 2093.

letters

RD6, Warkworth

To The Editor

Yes, '**Border Disputes**' (*Stagline* April, 2002) can be a problem. We have had minor hassles with roadside shelter plantings. However we are pleased to report it can go the other way, as well.

For years we adjoined the biggest possum/gorse/ragwort production unit imaginable, about which the absentee owners (and the old RDC Council) did next to nothing.

This block was purchased by a development company several years ago for subdivision. Noxious animals and plants have substantially vanished; massive plantings have gone in along our common fence line, as has a pond and managed wetland.

One of the new owners on a site overlooking one of our paddocks has even asked if we thought the deer would come up for apples – we assured them with time and patience they would line up, salivating, whenever they heard the back door open! We suspect that there is a big element of "luck of the draw" here, but councils can, and should, have an important role in guiding and mediating how development is to occur.

Yours sincerely,
Eric and Betty Terzaghi



*One of the Terzaghis' deer demonstrates a taste for apples.
Photo E&B Terzaghi, Warnham & Woburn Photo Competition, 2000.*

Live sales market report

As an expanded service to readers of Deer Industry News we will carry regular live sales reports from Origin National and Wrightson. Our thanks respectively to Stuart Gudsell and Ian Clotworthy for furnishing the following reports, which were supplied by our press date of 3 October.

Origin National live sales report: Spring 2002

Farmgate venison prices are heading in the opposite direction to which we are accustomed for this time of year. This makes live sale trading very difficult, because finding a level to trade at is a moving target.

But we box on. Small volumes of mainly in-fawn hinds have been moving in the north, with perhaps greater numbers moving in Canterbury and Southland. A few late sales of velvet stags have happened. Feed conditions in general are improving rapidly.

Quotes for commercial type deer:

MA breeding hinds \$425.00-450.00 (young); very good quality \$475.00

Others \$380.00-400.00 (low mouthing)

Rising 1st calvers \$375.00-400.00; very good quality \$425.00-430.00

Velvet stags \$800.00-850.00; herd ave. 3.5kg min

Two year old \$550.00-600.00 good quality

Live sale prospects from now on will be limited until the December-January period when yearling hinds and stags will trade, plus copious quantities of sire stags.

Wrightson Livestock market report: September 2002

		North Is. (c/kg)	South Is. (c/kg)
Weaner hybrid stags	Top	2.80	3.30
	Medium	2.70	3.00
	Small med	2.50	2.50
Weaner Red stags	Top	2.60	3.00
	Medium	2.50	2.80
	Small med	2.20	2.40
Weaner hybrid hinds	Top	2.60	3.50
	Medium	2.50	3.00
	Small med	2.00	2.50
Weaner Red hinds	Top	2.50	3.50
	Medium	2.30	2.80
	Small med	2.00	2.20

		North Is. (\$/head)	South Is. (\$/head)
Rising 2yr stags velvet potential	Top	450	450
	Medium	425	425
Rising 2yr hinds hybrid	Top	420	450
	Medium	380	400
Rising 2yr hinds Red	Top	380	450
	Medium	340	400
	Smaller	260	250
Mixed age stags velveters	Top	N/A	-
	Medium	-	-
Mixed age hinds hybrid	Top	420	500
	Medium	370	420
Mixed age hinds Red	Top	400	450
	Medium	350	380
	Smaller	240	250

Seasonal comments:

Spring growth slow as cold weather and high winds prevail. Sliding venison schedules flowing through to lower prices for private treaty sales.

Introducing the PIC

The Primary Industry Council (PIC) consists of the Chairmen and CEOs of Dairy, Deer, Kiwifruit, Meat, Pipfruit and Wool industry bodies as well as Federated Farmers. The group has been meeting for several years to progress issues that are common to all industries.

An example of recent activity has been the pooling of resources to develop submissions and to lobby against government moves to ratify the Kyoto protocol. The Government's headlong rush towards ratification highlights the need for a strong and unified voice for agricultural interests.

Increasing co-operation between industries in relation to research and other activities points to a stronger and more visible role for the PIC in the future.

Primary Industry Council Kellogg Rural Leadership Programme

Applications are now open for the 19th intake of the Primary Industry Council Kellogg Rural Leadership programme. This prestigious course is run at Lincoln University and aims to provide broad-based training for New Zealand's future rural leaders.

Information and application forms available from Deer Industry New Zealand. Ph 04 382 8626. Email: mj.loza@deernz.org

Deerfarmers Field Day

**Tower Farm, The Oaks
Discombe Road,
Cambridge
28th November 2002,**

1.00pm Registration
Lunch

2.00pm Velvet Judging
Demonstration
by; National Velvet Judge

Hard Antler Trophy Scoring
by; Paul Banber

3.00pm Venison and Markets
by; Matt Moyes

3.30pm Inter-Island Transport
by; GIB - Tim Coombs

4.00pm MAF-AHB Rules and Regulations

4.30pm Carcase Boning Demonstration
by; Venison Rotorua Ltd

5.30pm Barbeque and Refreshments

Registration: Please register prior to 20th November -
\$10.00 p/h payable on the day



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Before



After



This is a true story. Only the landscape has been changed.

Te Kiri farmers Neville and Beverley Ardern didn't just have a rocky road ahead of them, they had rocks everywhere.

Most of their 180ha property was once so peppered with volcanic rock that it looked more like the surface of the moon than something they could farm.

Add to that no water, no fences, no races and nearly every weed in the book, and you've got land most contractors wouldn't touch.

So they've decided to tackle it themselves.

A project this daunting can't be rushed, especially when there's a busy dairy farm to run, so Neville and Beverley are taking it one paddock at a time.

They start by digging drains and spraying for weeds. Next, they strip away topsoil and put it in piles ready for

spreading. The rocks are removed and the paddock is ploughed and levelled. One long, hard month after work has begun, a paddock is ready for grassing.

While they're attending to the hard work, we help to make sure Neville and Beverley don't have to sweat over finance. An ANZ loan has been used to buy land and allow for development expenditure, with interest only paid for the first two years (a feature of an ANZ Farm Finance Loan).

So far, about half the property has been turned into lush green paddocks. We're thrilled to have played a small part in this amazing story of dedication, knowledge and teamwork.

If you've got a great farming idea and need a smart financial plan, call your local ANZ Rural Manager on 0800 ANZ RURAL (0800 269 787).

www.anz.co.nz

ANZ lending criteria apply to all applications for credit. Full details of terms and conditions for ANZ Farm Finance Loans are available from any branch of the ANZ Banking Group (New Zealand) Limited.

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