

DEER INDUSTRY NEWS

Issue 28 • February 2008 • Official magazine of Deer Industry New Zealand and the NZDFA



Velvet: walking a fine line in uncertain times

Also in this issue:

- 2008 conference preview
- Friends from the North help out at velvet nationals
- Newcomer to elite team powers away on velvet
- Cervena® farmer ambassador wanted for Big Apple
- Sire sale roundup
- National pest management strategy review update
- Profile: Goodwin McNutt, industry pioneer



**DEER INDUSTRY
NEW ZEALAND**

NZDFA
New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association





Velvet treads a fine line

This velvet season has been unique – to say the least. Pre-season, the outlook had generally been positive although there were some signs of cloudier skies which DINZ reported to Branch

Chairmen in October. As the season began, there were signs of higher stocks in Korea and China, slow oriental medicine sales and a weaker Korean won against the New Zealand dollar. Producers were expecting generally reasonable prospects, but these have not transpired.

Bids in the first couple of pools at good price levels were on low volumes and did not reflect the market. Real demand for Korean-grade velvet at reasonable prices did not eventuate prior to Christmas. Prices offered dropped away, and buyers lost confidence. There was significant risk to them if they bought and prices kept dropping, and Korean-based buyers were only ordering small volumes at irregular intervals.

What has made this season unique has been the firmer stance shown by PGG Wrightson, which did not flood velvet onto a weak market. In the past, with two pool operators (Wrightson and Velpool), one of the pools would have likely met the market. This would have forced the other operator to join in – prices would have kept dropping until buyers were confident that they could not lose. Now that there is only one pool operator, it is possible not to sell if the price is going to result in a loss to producers.

There should be absolutely no inference that PGG Wrightson has been trying to ‘squeeze the last dollar out of buyers’ for the benefit of producers. Holding a line at a fair price will help buyers to purchase with more confidence because there is much less chance of them being undercut by lower purchase prices. These decisions have been made by PGG

Wrightson alone, to bring stability to the velvet market for clients and velvet buyers. DINZ supports their stance.

Further, it would be more useful to think in terms of price ‘bands’. While much less than \$95-100 per frozen kg for A Short is too low for most producers, prices above \$120 are too high for most buyers (exchange rates, market and economic conditions aside). This, in turn, comes back to bite producers, when the market subsequently drops.


PGG Wrightson’s fortitude should be applauded. Their income from velvet is driven by volume and throughput, not value. By maintaining and prioritising value, they help bring stability to the New Zealand velvet industry. This involves a step away from the spot market.

There has been another ‘first’ this season, with PGG Wrightson implementing a back-to-back contract between its clients and a large buyer. The contract was for a significant quantity of Korean- and Chinese-grade velvet. The arrangement is reportedly proceeding well. PGG Wrightson indicates it will seek similar deals to augment pool offerings.

Velconz – the joint venture between PGG Wrightson and suppliers – is coming together well. Velconz Holding Limited (VHL) is close to finalising its legal personality and a shareholders’ agreement is being worked on between the two entities. This needs to be completed by the end of the velvet season, as agreed by PGG Wrightson and VHL.

Korean importers continue to report difficult conditions for deer velvet: consumption has been low since September/October and they continue to hold stocks of New Zealand and Russian velvet; visits to Oriental Medicine Doctors have dropped by 10-20%; and the wholesale price of New Zealand velvet has dropped by about 10%.

These are uncertain times, but uncertainty is not new to the velvet industry. The unwillingness to sell at any price reflects the reality that most producers cannot sustain selling for weighted average prices of \$45 to \$50 per frozen kg as done in the recent past. Producers must act cooperatively, with good information, to avoid this happening.

The **venison schedule** price remains strong, at an average of about \$6.50 per kg for the benchmark 55-60 kg stag, with even a rise in the off-season schedule price by one company. The next game season in Europe will be the first test of higher venison prices in Europe. All participants in the value chain should keep a very close eye on market conditions to ensure that venison prices do not reach the point where venison is replaced on menus and supermarket shelves by lower-priced protein alternatives. There will be an element of procurement pressure for venison marketers, but if prices reach a point where venison is dropped, no one will benefit. 

Mark O’Connor, Chief Executive, Deer Industry New Zealand

Deer Industry News is published by Deer Industry New Zealand six times a year in February, April, June, August, October and December. It is circulated to all known deer farmers, processors, exporters and others with an interest in the deer industry. The opinions expressed in *Deer Industry News* do not necessarily reflect the views of Deer Industry New Zealand or the NZ Deer Farmers’ Association.

Circulation enquiries: Deer Industry New Zealand, PO Box 10-702, Wellington, Ph 04 471 6114, Fax 04 472 5549, Email info@deernz.org

Editorial and advertising enquiries: Words & Pictures, PO Box 27-221, Wellington, Ph 04 384 4688, Fax 04 384 4667, Email din@wordpict.co.nz

Cover: Retail assistant measuring out ingredients for a prescription in the oriental medicine district, Taipei. The performance of this and other markets will be under close scrutiny in 2008. Photo: Vanessa Crowley.

Contents

Editorial: Velvet treads a fine line	3
Stagline Supplement: Conference preview: welcome to Southland!	4
NZDFA Annual General Meeting and award entries	5
NZDFA and DINZ nominations: 2008-09 year	5
Obituaries: Peter Ryan and Dick Valentine	7
North-South cooperation at 2007 Velvet Nationals	8
Velveting or velvetting – the last word	8
DINZ news: Profile: Keith Neylon	9
Annual report published	9
Industry news: Racing ahead on New Zealand velvet	10
Best Cervena recipes sought	11
Spotlight on velvet in Seoul; Carry on impressing	12
Silberhorn: a Southland velvet success story	13
Pet promise in China	14
Taking the pulse of animal welfare in Europe	15
Win a trip to New York; Raising the bar on instant meals	16
Recipe – Barbecue Leg Steak with Grilled Vegetable Kebab	17
Market Report: Venison and velvet updates	18
General news: Sire sale reports	20
Extending the net: web access starts to gather pace	22
Profile: Goodwin McNutt – Part 1	24
Sample Tb testing to remain: rethink on TEP	26
Coming events	26
National Pest Management Strategy Review	27
Research: Early calving: it’s in the genes	29
Johnne’s research consortium under way	30



Welcome to Southland: the heart of deer farming

"Spirit of a Nation"

– the 2008 Industry Conference,
Destined for Invercargill from 13-15 May 2008



Theme for 2008: **Positive Action** + positive product + positive people + positive places

The NZDFA, host branch Southland and Deer Industry New Zealand warmly invite you to the 2008 New Zealand Deer Industry Conference, to be held at the Ascot Park Hotel, Invercargill.

Themed *Positive Action*, the conference will build on the "spirit of a nation" southern theme. With an opening welcome evening featuring venison versatility on display through the locally invited chefs and introductory technical sessions, this year's conference will be full of positive highlights for the New Zealand deer industry. Topics of interest will include advancement of the productivity strategy and Focus Farms and a review of the AHB national pest management strategy. It will also feature the DINZ FGM and NZDFA AGM along with the annual awards dinner and entertainment.

Programme outline

This year's conference starts with a seminar session from 3.00-5.30pm on 13 May focusing on *Positive Action*, topical issues and providing a technical update. Plans include a review of the national pest management strategy with the AHB, a Focus Farm and productivity update session, a presentation from Rabobank's Hayley Moynihan, and a wider global outlook on other topics (under development).

The broad programme is:

Tuesday 13 May

- Branch Chairmen's luncheon 12.00-2.00pm
- Elk and Wapiti Society AGM 12.30-3.00 pm
- Registration 2.00-6.00pm
- Topical *Positive Action* seminar 3.00-5.30pm
- *Positive Product* welcome and opening function 7.00-11.30pm

Wednesday 14 May

- DINZ Formal General Meeting (8.30am-1.00pm)
- 33rd NZDFA AGM (2.00pm -5.30pm)
- Annual awards dinner, featuring 2008 Deer Industry Award, Warnham and Woburn Society Photographic Award and the Matuschka Award (7.30pm)
- 2008 Deer Industry Environmental Awards

Thursday 15 May

- Southland branch-hosted field day – *Positive Places*. Visit the Southland Focus Farm (John and Jacky McLean), Deer Improvement's Balfour research farm for a catered lunch, and then for those not travelling home straight away, join us at *Netherdale* (David and Lynley Stevens) for a conference wind down social function.

Participation is the key

As always, industry issues will be debated on the conference floor. The emphasis is on an inexpensive and effective meeting that allows the industry to inform, delegates to participate in debate, questions and answers from industry leaders, and a balance of good innovative social events and entertainment. If you want to extend this pre-winter visit, why not consider an excursion to take in the breathtaking sights of the Central Otago, Queenstown or Fiordland areas after conference, and return to Bluff on 24 May for the famous Southern Oyster Festival.

Positive industry partners' support

As always, we appreciate the loyal inputs of our industry partners and sponsors, and are proud to have committed support of industry partners such as **Rabobank, Ravensdown, Alliance Group, Telford Agricultural Polytechnic**, along with the strong support of many of our trade companies.

Registration/contacts

Registration will be handled through Dunedin Conference Management (pat@dcms.co.nz), 03 477 1377, or through the DINZ office with Natalie Fraser 04 471 6110, natalie.fraser@deernz.org. A registration form will be available electronically from the end of February on www.deernz.org and also from your local Branch or from the Deer Industry New Zealand office. Details are being finalised with the local Southland Conference Committee at present, but in general the conference will repeat the successful style and format from Hamilton last year and the Te Anau event of 2005.

Accommodation requirements for the Hotel must be coordinated through Pat at Dunedin Conference Management (see contact details above), and can now be booked on request.

Travel options also include the new direct Wellington-Invercargill or Invercargill-Wellington flights, or alternatively consider a flight to Dunedin and travel by car or in a group and see the dairy transformation progressing in this region. Apart from the hotel, there is considerable motel accommodation also available from Pat at Dunedin Conference Management or alternatively, you can make your own arrangements.

Registration cost for Conference will be close to \$200. 

- For further information please contact **Tony Pearce** or **Natalie Fraser** as above.



AGM, constitutional and other matters NZDFA Annual General Meeting: Invercargill, Wednesday 14 May 2008

Remits, tight timelines, plenty of discussion areas

In 2007, the Branches responded to a call for early remit submission and discussion. This allowed time for discussion around the Branches prior to the conference and led to a very productive, informed and active AGM. This year, the Executive Committee will lead the Branch Chairmen in three separate regional meetings prior to conference to further that discussion and preparation, much as they did before the Velconz development. Remits to the AGM are customarily submitted through Branches. Branch members are urged to submit all remits to the Association offices by **Wednesday 2 April 2008** to enable them to be published in the pre-AGM *Deer Industry News* and meet our constitutional demands, which have a 30 day window prior to the AGM. Time lines are particularly tight this year with the earlier conference dates and will require consideration in February and March.

This provides the opportunity to develop remits in advance of your AGMs and have time during April/May to meet again locally and fully discuss remits and other industry issues to bring forward at this important conference. Discussion of remits that arrive late and have not had a Branch input, irrespective of the wisdom of your Chairman and committee, is not encouraged.

It is to **everyone's advantage** for them to be published and circulated to all members. Remits will be posted on the website and circulated to Chairmen as they are received and there will be a final session with the combined Branch Chairmen on Tuesday 13 May.

Matuschka Award 2008

Nominations are called for a farmer or farming entity who or which has made a significant contribution to deer farming and the NZDFA in particular at Branch level.

The award recognises the grass roots farmer and unsung contributor to local area activities, functions and core spirit of deer farming. It will be announced at the 2008 Deer Industry Conference dinner on the evening of Wednesday 14 May 2008 at the Ascot Hotel, Invercargill.

Given the nature of the Award that recognises the unsung heroes at Branch level, the Award itself will be presented at a special mid-winter function in the Branch of the recipient.

Nominations should be made through the appropriate Branch. It is not a requirement of the award that the nominee be aware of the fact that a nomination has gone forward. Nominations must be submitted to the NZDFA

no later than **5.00pm on 1 May 2008**.

Rumpole Cup

Entries are invited for the 2008 Rumpole Cup, which is awarded to the best Branch or Associated Society newsletter. Newsletters submitted routinely to the NZDFA office will be entered. The inaugural competition for this trophy was held in 2000. Past winners have been:

2000	Coastal Bay of Plenty Branch
2001	Tongariro Branch
2002	Hawke's Bay Branch
2003	Wairarapa Branch
2004	Otago Branch
2005	Waikato Branch
2006	(Award not held)
2007	Central Regions

The award is to promote good communication at grass roots level. Newsletters are professionally judged on: variety, topicality, quality of writing/editing, effective communication, originality and presentation. Smaller Branch newsletters which cannot afford more expensive printing (e.g. more colours) are not disadvantaged.

Please submit your entry to the Rumpole Cup, NZDFA, PO Box 10-702, and Wellington by **Thursday 1 May 2008**. You can submit either one or a number of issues of the newsletter, provided it was published during the previous 12 months.

2008 Deer Industry Environmental Awards

The winners of the 2008 awards will be announced at the Conference Annual Awards dinner and include the Premier Elworthy Award and its prize package. As advised earlier, this year's premier and sector winners along with the winners of previous years' awards will be considered by an industry panel to select a representative to present a farmer-based view on sustainable venison production in New York at the **International Chefs Congress**, New York, 14 – 16 September 2008. (See separate article in *Industry News* section). Also eligible for consideration will be any Ballance environmental award winners, or farmers who have been recognised in their regions for outstanding environmental and sustainability actions.

Entry forms for the Biennial Deer Industry Environmental Awards are available from:

- your local Branch
- the website www.deernz.org
- the DINZ Office:
Natalie Fraser 04 471 6110,
natalie.fraser@deernz.org, or from
the Producer Manager, Tony Pearce,
021 719 038, tony.pearce@deernz.org

NZDFA and DINZ nominations: 2008-09 year

A) Executive Committee Nominations

Members of the NZDFA Executive Committee (two members representing the North Island and two representing the South Island) are elected for a two-year term. Members retire by rotation.

Nominations are now called for the following positions:

- Executive Committee member, North Island, one vacancy. (Current Member **Tim Aitken, Tikokino, Hawke's Bay** retires by rotation and will not seek re-election.)
- Executive Committee member, South Island, one vacancy. (Current member, **Mark Hawkins, Sutherlands, South Canterbury** retires by rotation and will not seek re-election.)

Nominations are invited for both positions. A nominee need not be resident in the Island of nomination.

Each nomination must:

- be in writing and specify the Island which the nominee seeks to represent
- be moved and seconded by two other full members or levy-paying members of the Association **resident in the same Island as the vacancy**
- be signed by the nominee
- be delivered to the Association's office by **5.00 pm on Friday 28 March 2008**.

All nominees are entitled to submit a statement of about 150 words in support of their election. This statement must be sent to members at the same time as the ballot papers.

Should an election be necessary, details of postal voting and procedures, candidate profiles and the confirmation of time lines will be sent with the April edition of *Deer Industry News* or by separate post to meet deadlines. Postal voting runs for 21 days and must close 7 clear days prior to the AGM on Wednesday 14 May, 2008 (i.e. **voting opens on 18 April, closing on 6 May 2008**).

B) Selection and Appointment Panel (SAP)

The role of the SAP is to make producer representative appointments to the Deer Industry New Zealand Board and to meet with those appointees at least once a year to discuss industry matters and their roles as Deer Industry New Zealand representatives.



The 8-member SAP is made up from:

- Four Executive Committee members
- Four non-Executive elected members. Two farmer members from each of the North and South Islands.

The elected non-Executive Committee members whose terms expire at the forthcoming AGM are **(NI) Mike Holdaway**, Manawatu (retirement by rotation) and **(SI) Bob Kingscote, Waiau North Canterbury** (who has advised he will not seek re-election)

Nominations are now called for the following positions:

- SAP member, North Island, one vacancy
- SAP member, South Island, one vacancy.

Each nomination must be in writing and moved and seconded by two full members or levy paying members, signed by the nominee and delivered to the Association offices by **5.00 pm Friday 28 March 2008**.

The nominees must be full members or levy-paying members.

Further, nominees:

- must **not** be a member of the Deer Industry Association
- **can not** hold more than a 20% interest in any organisation which is a member of the Deer Industry Association
- **can not** be a candidate for membership of the Deer Industry New Zealand Board, or a current member of the Deer Industry New Zealand Board.

[The voting procedure and timing of the process is the same as that for the positions on the Executive Committee.]

C) NZDFA Appointments to Deer Industry New Zealand Board

The Ministerial approval of the Regulations to allow a 50:50 levy share from producers and the processor/exporter sector was formalised in October 2004.

The Deer Industry New Zealand Board comprises four producer representatives and four representatives from the processing/exporting sector. The producer representatives are selected by the New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association, and have been appointed for a three-year term on recommendation by the NZDFA's Selection and Appointment Panel according to its detailed operating Code of Practice and then advised to the Minister. Successful appointments who retire by rotation are eligible for further terms.

Nominations are now called for the following NZDFA-appointed position on the DINZ Board:

- 1 vacancy : Deer Industry New Zealand Board member retiring by rotation (**Graham Carr, Peel Forest, South Canterbury**).

The nomination must be moved and seconded by two levy-paying members, signed by the nominee and delivered to the Association's offices before **5.00 pm on Friday 28 March 2008**.

The NZDFA Constitution (2004) refers:

37.10 Nominations for Deer Industry New Zealand

The Selection and Appointment Panel shall appoint a Returning Officer who shall publicly announce, in writing, the names of the retiring deer farmer nominees of Deer Industry New Zealand and call for nominations for their replacement, prior to the end of March each year. Nominations shall be:

- made by any two Full Members or Levy Paying Members
- in writing; and
- in the hands of the Returning Officer at a date to be specified which will be before the Annual General Meeting of the Association each year.

37.11 Eligibility for Selection as Nominee to Deer Industry New Zealand Board


All persons interested or engaged in the deer farming industry shall be eligible for nomination, with the exception of employees of Deer Industry New Zealand or of the Association. Each nominee for selection shall be required to make a written declaration of any office held or managerial position or financial interest that either the nominee or any of the nominee's immediate family or any partner or fellow shareholder in any deer farming project has in any organisation which deals directly in the products of or materials for the deer farming industry. The products of the deer farming industry refers to the commercial processing or commercial trade in venison, velvet, co-products and similar products but excludes live animals and velvet sold from the farm.

Nominations for the positions will be considered by the Selection and Appointment Panel following the 2008 AGM within 21 days of that meeting, with recommendations and appointment to the Board being advised the Minister of Agriculture at that time subject to the Operating Code of Practice procedures.

Nomination forms

Nomination forms for the Executive Committee, SAP and Deer Industry New Zealand vacancies can be obtained from the Association's office, Phone: 04 473 4500; Fax: 04 472 5549; email: info@deernz.org or natalie.fraser@deernz.org or tony.pearse@deernz.org

Nomination forms are also available through your local Branch Chairman, Secretary or the Producer Manager and will be posted on the website: www.deernz.org at time of publication of *Deer Industry News*, Issue 28, February, 2008.

For further information please contact the Returning Officer, Tony Pearse at the Deer Industry New Zealand office or 021 719 038 or tony.pearse@deernz.org 

Stop Press: Numbers down – but manageable

The provisional results from the 2007 Agricultural Production Census, released as we went to press, indicate total deer numbers have fallen to 1,396,000 – a drop of 190,900 on 2006. Provisional figures for June 2007, with 2006 figures following in brackets, are:

Female deer mated:	681,000	(738,100)
Total deer:	1,396,000	(1,586,900)
Fawns born	538,100	(595,800)

DINZ Chief Executive Mark O'Connor says these figures are close to the industry herd model being used by DINZ, but comments that other factors such as the current drought may have an impact during the year.



Obituary: Peter Ryan

Last December, the industry said goodbye to pioneering Southland deer farmer, Peter Ryan.

Peter entered the world of deer farming very early in its history in New Zealand, and paved the way for many major changes throughout his career. In the 1970s he was part of a group that campaigned for the farming of Wapiti, lobbying Members of Parliament, meeting with then-Minister of Agriculture Colin Moyle and finally securing the legal right to farm the breed.

Peter was a founding member of the New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association in 1976, and in 1980 was made the first chairman of the Southland NZDFA. He went on to become the Southland Branch's first life member. He served with distinction on the NZDFA Council throughout the 1980s.

Passionate about velvet, Peter helped establish the National Velvet Awards and

Competition over 25 years ago.

He saw some significant changes in deer health management during his deer farming career, and contributed a lot to research himself.

"Peter's biggest contribution was in the area of Tb," says friend and fellow life member of the Southland NZDFA, Walter Somerville. Peter was unsatisfied with the mid-cervical test as the only option for Tb testing, and a strong supporter of finding a Tb testing scheme that was appropriate for the industry.

"Peter by nature would accept nothing – there had to be a better way," Walter says. Peter collaborated with AgResearch at Invermay and their research into Tb in deer, providing a home on his Gladfield farm at Otautau to some of their early work. He was also very involved with the development and implementation of new blood testing technology at Frank Griffin's laboratory at Otago University.

"Without such a desperate, rugged individual, it might have been a lot longer getting off the ground," Walter says. "He wanted results; he never minded if he got kudos or not."

In the later years of his life, Peter spent six months of each year on the Gold Coast of Australia, enjoying his retirement. But he never strayed far from the deer industry and fellow farmers if there was a problem or an issue of interest to him, says Walter. "Even when he was out of it, he'd ring us up and give us a good dressing-down."

Southland NZDFA secretary Janet Horrell also remembers the great positive impact Peter had on the industry. "He was a very special deer farmer," she says.

DINZ and the NZDFA extend their sympathy to Peter's sons David and Quintin, daughters Kathryn, Melanie and Elizabeth, and all of Peter's extended family. 

Obituary: Dick Valentine

Last November, the New Zealand Fallow Deer Society farewelled its long-serving president, Dick Valentine.

Remembered by friends and Fallow Deer Society members as a committed family man, faithful Seventh Day Adventist, battler for what was right and all-round good mate, Dick lost his own battle with oral cancer on 25 November 2007.

He first encountered deer while hunting with his uncles as a lad in Wanganui. Later, while working at the pulp and paper mill at Kawerau, he purchased a 10-acre block. As soon as he could afford to, he sold the block for a larger, 72-hectare block at Manawahe, near Whakatane. This higher-altitude farm meant Dick's Fallows were protected from ticks, facial eczema, foot rot and fly strike.

In the later part of his life, he was moving from farming Mesopotamian bloodlines to Hungarian bloodlines. "He was looking more at providing animals for the trophy market," says friend and New Zealand Fallow Deer Society vice-president, treasurer and secretary Ken Swainson. All this time, Dick continued with his job at the mill while farming Fallow and, in later years, working with

his sons running 450 beehives near Wanganui – back in the heart of Fallow country.

A strong commitment to the Seventh Day Adventist faith saw Dick challenge his long-term employers at the pulp and paper mill to allow him to observe his Sabbath on Saturdays. Friend Colin Perrior says, "He worked for them for 30-something years, and for more than 20 years of that, he had great difficulty getting cover on the Sabbath. For his faith, he put up with a lot of ridicule and inconvenience, until we sorted it out through the Human Rights Commission. This was not only a victory for Dick but




also created a most important precedent for all religious faiths." Colin provided legal representation to help Dick fight this battle.

Fighting for what was right was very important to Dick, friends remember. He was "a very forthright, very straight up and down sort of a guy...he ruffled a lot of feathers in the industry," says Ken. "He was very keen on etiquette and doing things right." Colin Perrior wholeheartedly agrees. "There were no sacred cows as far as Dick was concerned. If someone deserved a pop, he'd have a pop at them! But he was never, ever malicious – that's pretty rare."

Dick was a great contributor to the Fallow Deer Society, even while he was convalescing with cancer. "He was acutely dyslexic, and yet single-handedly, he put out certainly the longest newsletter of any Branch in the deer industry," Colin says.

"He was a really good friend. Nothing was ever too much trouble for him. He was a one-off. I've never met anybody like Dick. I'm very much better for having known him."

DINZ and the NZDFA extend their sympathy to Enid and family. 



Our friends from the North **Benefits from North-South cooperation at 2007 Velvet Nationals**

Last December's National Velvet and Trophy Antler Competition went ahead with some extra North Island hands on deck.

Rotorua-based NZDFA Executive Committee member Sharon Love and Central Regions DFA Branch Chairman Wilton Turner were invited by competition organisers to take part in the event, to provide hands-on help to the organising committee and learn how the Invercargill-based national competition is run.

"It was an excellent experience," Sharon says. "We were very warmly welcomed down there and we got involved in the whole process – from when the heads first arrived, right through to the awards dinner. It was really neat to see such a well-oiled machine. They've been doing it for a long time, and it was good to the size and complexity of the competition and the processes which they used."

Competition organiser Peter Allan says the benefits were mutual.

"We certainly put them to work and used their skills. The invitation was to show them how we run the competition, but also to build closer working relations with everybody. It was all very positive.

"They had an opportunity to see a greater variety of velvet. There is a lot of velvet in the top echelons that they never get to see because it's never entered in the North Island [competitions]."

At the NZDFA Branch Chairmen's meeting last October, Wilton raised the idea of shifting the competition to another location.

Opinions have been mixed over the idea.

"There are people on our committee who say they would like to keep it here, and there are others saying let's look at the bigger picture, for the betterment of everybody," says Peter.

While Peter is open-minded about the possibility of moving the competition northward, "I think the overwhelming opinion now is no – keep it here." The time of year, free frozen freight of velvet by sponsors PGG Wrightson and well-established local sponsorship for prizes all point to keeping the status quo, Peter says.

"Having such a large group of people really dedicated and all working really well together is something quite unique and I think that would be a challenge finding that somewhere else," agrees Sharon.

On the flipside, she says, "It would be quite neat for other people to get closer to it, to experience seeing all that velvet and to be involved behind the scenes of a competition that size."


Motivation for a possible move all comes down to the desire to show New Zealand's highest quality velvet and trophy antler heads to a wider audience.

"We're actually shifting winning heads from the Star Class national 3-year-old competition up to Hamilton later on this



Judging the Elk/Wapiti section at the 2006 nationals are (from left): David Hughes, Te Anau, Brian Cribb, Winton, Lloyd Morgan, Dunedin.

month [for the national 2-year-old velvet and 1, 2 and 3-year hard antler competition] and showcasing it there. That's the whole angle people were getting at – people in the North Island don't get a chance to view it. And that's doable, so we're trying that this year," Peter says.

"That's something that's come out of our trip down there," says Sharon. "It was an experience that we need to expose other people to one way or the other – the more people that we can expose to the quality of velvet we are producing, the better." 

I say tomahtoes, you say tomaytos...

Deer farmers have a reputation for bloody-mindedness and doing things their own way – spelling included. The dictionary says tines, but we call them tynes. English style guides say velvetting, DINZ says velvetting.


There are many pressing issues facing the industry right now, and the use of a single 't' or double 'tt' isn't one of them. But for the record, and for those who care about these things, we've decided to clear up the issue.

When the National Velvetting Standards Body was set up and the Farmer Velvet Antler Removal Manual developed, 'velvetting', 'velvetted' and 'velvetter' were spelled with the double 'tt'. This spelling is technically incorrect, but has taken hold in official documentation. It is also commonly used in other places.

In the meantime, industry publications including *The Deer Farmer* and *Deer Industry News*, have continued to doggedly use the technically correct single 't' forms. This has pitted small numbers of single 't' and double 'tt' advocates against each other. Opponents are whipping themselves, and each other, into unhealthy levels of grammar rage. *Deer Industry News* says this madness should stop now.

English is a robust, complex language, full of anomalies and exceptions. And it's in a constant state of change. There are times when common usage changes and overwhelms whatever the rule books say is correct. This 'velvetting' business is a case in point.

While this may offend editors and other purists (you know who you are), and is a change to our editorial policy, we accept the industry should own this part of its language. Velvetted. Velvetter. Velvetting. That's official. There, that didn't feel so bad.

(Now I think I saw 'venyson' on a menu the other day....) 

Profile: Keith Neylon

With a broad professional background and wide variety of business interests, Keith Neylon brings a lifetime of diverse experiences to his newest role on the DINZ Board.

In mid-2007, Keith joined the Board as a producer appointee.

Keith has direct experience right throughout the production chain – literally from farm to fork. “I’m a farmer who’s been involved in processing and also in the marketplace with other commodities and products.” Based in Winton in Southland, Keith runs sheep and cattle in addition to deer.

His career in agriculture started in his late teens, as a farm worker and shearer. But that wasn’t all. He also worked as a coal miner, and by age 20 he’d gained his commercial pilot’s licence, a qualification which led to a 13-year career in aviation, before a return to farming.

He remained close to agriculture during his aviation career, however, working first as a topdressing pilot before switching to helicopters. As a helicopter pilot, he spent time as Chief Pilot and Operations Manager with Mountain Helicopters Ltd.

Keith also has a long-standing interest in thoroughbred horse-racing, with considerable involvement as an owner, breeder and administrator of New Zealand racing, including his role as Director of New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing from 2003 – 2007.

In addition to farming, horse-racing and aviation, he has been involved in the seafood industry, in marine farming, fish processing and marketing, and importing, exporting and distribution.

Keith says his own diverse background is reflected in the membership of the DINZ Board.



Keith Neylon: advocates keeping the Board fresh.

“It seems to be a nice mix of farming, processing and marketing, and that’s an incredibly hard marriage to make work, but it seems to function quite well.”


He thinks the range of industry types involved helps to keep the Board relevant to people all across the deer industry.

“Keep your Board fresh, that’s what I would advocate. We all have different skill sets. Everybody that’s in there at the moment certainly adds to the decision-making process.”

Keith was a key player in creating a more representative organisational structure in the deer industry through his role as President of the now-disbanded New Zealand Deer Farmers Levy Payers Society in the 1990s. The society helped encourage change in a fragmented industry, he says.

Keith is no stranger to shaking things up and striving for increased awareness and debate, tackling the problems that can arise from an industry made up of people and groups with varying interests.

“It’s like a relatively big ship. If you get frustrations at one point in time, those frustrations can’t be solved at the drop of a hat or at a whim. What you have to do is work on them, get in place the strategy that resolves the problem and hold it, keep it in place. I think that’s the Board’s role.

“You can’t keep 100 percent of the population happy, but as long as you’ve got the majority heading in the right direction, you’re winning. That’s all we’re trying to do.” 

DINZ annual report highlights role of promotional work

The role of collective industry marketing in recently improved venison returns should not be underestimated, said Chairman John Scurr in the 2006-07 Deer Industry New Zealand annual report.

He said that, while the decrease in venison exports of around 5,500 tonnes had undoubtedly played a part, joint promotional projects and generic campaigns had effectively positioned New Zealand venison in the market. With a greater number of people having experienced the product over the past four years, there is opportunity for market-led growth, he added.

A highlight for the 2006-07 period was the continued strong growth in chilled sales. Volumes over the past two seasons have increased by 73 percent, John said.

“I am confident that the industry’s Strategic Intent has served the industry well over the past three years. It will need to be adjusted as the shape of the venison industry changes.”


Turning to the velvet sector, he noted that the doubling of returns on a weighted average basis during the year to September 2007 had been driven by perceptions of lower supply and an element of speculation in Korea – drivers that were unsustainable. John reiterated the Board’s position that Velconz will help create a more stable marketing platform for New Zealand velvet.

The Board was also strongly committed to the Productivity Strategy, exemplified by DINZ providing 100 percent funding for four new Focus Farms.

DINZ remains in a sound financial position, John said. Reserves of more than \$4 million had been built up over the past three years to ensure consistent operating budgets in spite of a likely fall in venison levy income.

In his CEO’s report, Mark O’Connor said implementation of the Venison Industry Strategic Intent was proceeding well, with good support from New Zealand marketers. The industry Velvet Strategy was more of a challenge, he noted. Factors affecting this included a lack of commercial leadership in the industry, a trading rather than a marketing ethos, inadequate financing for the velvet processing/export sector and the various trade barriers that exist.

On the research front, Mark reported that \$1.5 million of funding per annum for six years had been secured by AgResearch and DINZ for the “Growing Sustainable Venison Production Systems” programme. This will be supported by an industry contribution of \$400,000 per annum, with \$100,000 per annum committed by Landcorp Farming.

In conclusion, Mark said the macro environment for food production was generally good, but that good management by industry and successful implementation of its strategies were more important than ever as confidence and investment are rebuilt. 

- All *Deer Industry News* readers were mailed a copy of the 2006 – 2007 DINZ annual report during the first week of this month. If you did not receive a copy and would like one, please email DINZ on info@deernz.org, or call the DINZ office on 04-473-4500. The full report can also be accessed on our website: www.deernz.org/annualreport.

Julia Grant, the latest high-powered addition to the Powered by velvet.org.nz team.

Racing ahead on New Zealand velvet



New Zealand athletes Powered by velvet.org.nz are racing ahead of the pack in their various disciplines.

Newcomer to the athletes' programme is up and coming 22-year-old duathlete/triathlete **Julia Grant** from Methven. She joins swimmer Willy Benson, covered in the December 2008 issue of *Deer Industry News*.

Julia has already been competing for over seven years and represented New Zealand as a runner during her school years. Following an injury which meant she could not run for nine months, she was introduced to triathlon because she could still bike and swim.

"I fell in love with triathlon because of the variety of all three disciplines and the amount of training involved. A usual week will involve about five 1.5-hour swim sessions in the morning, two gym sessions, four bikes for two to four hours and six runs of 40 minutes to two hours."

Described variously by her coach, Rolly Crichton, and manager Jonny Collett as having "breathless exuberance", "nerves of titanium" and "a personality that melts polar ice caps", the former student of PE at teachers' training college is now working part-time and training at QE11 in Christchurch to achieve her goals.

"I competed in the national triathlon series this season in my goal of reaching the under-23 elite team for New Zealand. If selected, I hope to go to France to train at the New Zealand base before the 2008 ITU World Triathlon Championships in Vancouver. My long-term goal is to represent New Zealand in 2012 London Olympics."

Julia places well in her events and will be a force to be reckoned with in years to come. In the elite women's race of the 2007 Richmond ITU long distance duathlon world championships in the United States in October, she placed a very creditable 18th in hot conditions with four hours four minutes and 33 seconds against an international field. Earlier in the year, she placed third in the women's race in the New Zealand duathlon championships.

Julia was recommended to DINZ by fellow team member and triathlete Jonny Collett who is taking a break from his hectic

competition schedule. "I have known Julia for four years now and have seen her rise through the ranks. She is incredibly competitive and determined to succeed. Don't let her pretty face fool you – this girl is as hard as nails!" he says.

DINZ Velvet Marketing Services Manager Vanessa Crowley says, "We are very excited to have an athlete of her calibre on the team. With 65,000 active age group participants, sponsoring Julia will help us to expose New Zealand velvet to competitive athletes both here and on the world stage."

Julia says velvet helps her training by stabilising her moods. "I used to get pretty tired at nights after my day's training and work, but with the velvet I have enough energy to get me through."

She will need the energy to complete all of her goals – and we'll be watching, Julia!

Taupo trek triumph

Meanwhile, adventure racing team Powered by velvet.org.nz recently came out on top by nearly an hour in the Kiwi Summer Adventure Race in Taupo.

The first outing for the new combination of the Powered by velvet.org.nz endurance racing team – Rhys Burns, George Christison, Sonya Clark and Chris Morrisey – was the first of a new format of adventure racing offered by the Madeventz team organisers (www.madeventz.co.nz).

Held on 15–16 December, "Experience Taupo" drew 19 teams from all over the North Island. From Rhys Burns' perspective, one of the features of the race was the high number of young participants, which he says indicates a bright future for adventure racing in New Zealand.

Highly technical orienteering, a speciality of the organisers, formed the theme of the event which kicked off at Whakaipo Bay, Lake Taupo. The competition features navigating to set checkpoints – including the only kayaking section of the whole weekend. The team polished that leg off in 40


minutes before moving on to the next section, a trek involving running, swimming and clambering over slimy rocks over to Kawakawa Bay and along the Lake Taupo foreshore to the picturesque Boat Harbour. After a special stage, in which they had to swim across the harbour, swing off a rope and then find some submerged checkpoints before a run off across farmland, the team moved to the last transition of the day – mountain bikes.

“This leg was quite technical – we had to navigate to half a dozen checkpoints distributed on a challenging orienteering map, in the intricate and confusing farmland of the Waihora Station,” Burns says, adding they finished it two hours ahead of the expected eight, much to the organisers’ disappointment. They arrived home a comfortable 45 minutes ahead of the next team, Opotiki Wanderers, with the Vasque Under-23 team just over an hour behind.

After relaxing by their tents in the hot sun, “and taking a few more velvet supplements”, Burns says the team were ready for another new event to New Zealand adventure racing – night relay orienteering, a great spectator sport.

After starting the next day with a two and a half hour mountain bike rogaine (a long-distance cross country event), the final trek involved a run, then a sprint, to emerge at Kakaho Campground, just ahead of a young team from Auckland Grammar School, to take the stage win.

“Overall, it was a great event, one of the more navigationally challenging I have done in a short-course adventure race in New Zealand, reflecting the orienteering background of the organisers,” Burns says. He says the team went very well in its first outing as a unit, and they’re all back into some hard training for the next race, Adventure Racing Coromandel in March.

“The velvet supplements are going down a treat and seem to help recovery and increase our stamina. It is a great product to use and promote. A lot of athletes are expressing an interest in trying it out as it seems to be working so well for us.” 

- **All of the athletes are supported with supplies of New Zealand velvet for their endeavours by their sponsor, Deer Industry New Zealand. More information at www.velvet.org.nz**

Best Cervena® recipes sought

Professional chefs in North America are pitching their culinary skills against each other in the rejuvenated 2008 Cervena Plates Competition.

The best overall Cervena Natural Tender Venison recipe will win its creator \$2,500 for the best overall recipe, and winners in each of the four categories will receive \$500.

The categories are:

- The Duncan & Co. Best Cervena Appetizer award
- The Four Season Best Cervena Salad
- The Mountain River Most Innovative Cervena Recipe
- The Broadleaf Best Cervena Entrée

Organised by Deer Industry New Zealand, the competition opened on 15 January and is sponsored by four US-based distributors, each offering prizes for the best Cervena recipes received before 31 March. Run to encourage professional chefs in North America to think about innovative ways to use Cervena, the results will be publicised through the food media and chefs’ websites. The winning chefs, to be announced on 14 April, will also be used to promote Cervena at public events in the year to come.

The competition has already received publicity in North America’s two leading food service publications, *Food Arts* and *Nation’s Restaurant News*. DINZ says the response from the distributors to the recipe contest has been very encouraging.

“We are aware of the difficult trading conditions being faced by US importers at the moment with the depreciation of the US dollar and concerns about the restaurant business due to the state of the US economy,” DINZ Venison Marketing Services Manager Innes Moffat says. “Therefore, it is heartening to see that they remain committed to supporting the positioning of Cervena.”

Several of the distributors will be using the competition to arrange their own incentive programmes through their distribution network of sales staff and chefs.

“While the activity may not sell more venison when supply is lower from New Zealand, reinforcing the core attributes of the product to the fine dining chefs remains important.

It is also important to show chefs that alternatives to the shortloin and tenderloin exist. Getting chefs to

consider using other cuts, and showing them some more cost effective options such as leg fillets or smaller portions for appetisers will keep Cervena on menus as prices rise and availability falls in the short term,” Innes Moffat says.



Spotlight on velvet in Seoul

New Zealand velvet has been placed second only to Korean velvet in an informal survey of about 800 diners at the Millennium Seoul Hilton Hotel, during the second month-long 'velvet as a healthy food' promotion at the hotel in December.

The survey asked diners about their perception of New Zealand velvet in general and its place as a healthy food in Korea. While 65% of the 886 responding had not tasted New Zealand velvet before, 42% of respondents to the question asking them which of Korean, New Zealand, Russian and Chinese velvet they thought was good, ranked New Zealand velvet well above Russian (9%) and Chinese (1%) as their preferred velvet. Only three percent more (47%) placed Korean velvet as their favourite. Results also revealed that the majority (72%) had taken oriental medicine with deer velvet, with only 42% showing their preference of deer velvet to the doctor.

Placing the spotlight on New Zealand velvet, the promotion ran for the whole of December – twice as long as last year – during the hotel's busiest month. At least 15,000 diners were catered for during the period.

The hotel's Executive Chef Park reports that the promotion was very popular and generated more revenue than last year.

Fifteen thousand regular customers were advised of the promotion via email and 5,000 promotional flyers were distributed to guests staying at the hotel. In addition, two large lamppost banners were erected outside the hotel for the month to promote the event, while posters and DVD presentations were shown inside. 📺



Executive Chef Park holding the velvet-based sauce that was sold as a marinade with Australian and Korean beef during the Korean Chusok (Thanksgiving) holidays.



The Millennium Seoul Hilton's Orangerie Restaurant, where diners enjoyed New Zealand velvet in seven dishes during the promotion. While the offerings in the Orangerie were more Korean-based than last year, a French-styled velvet soup was also included in the well known 'Gourmet Circle' dinners in the Seasons restaurant.

Impressing guests in Munich

A prominent New Zealand venison billboard at the entrance to a Metro Cash and Carry in Munich during December.

The 2007-08 'Impress Your Guests' campaign continues to encourage German consumers to try New Zealand venison. Billboards, in-store tastings, a radio feature and a new focus on nutrition are helping to position New Zealand venison to German shoppers as a high-quality food. Promoting New Zealand venison as close to the point of sale as possible, DINZ has arranged more than 70 days of tastings in supermarkets across Germany in the last three months.

A radio feature was produced and distributed to commercial radio stations across Germany. An estimated audience of 700,000 listeners heard a well-respected nutritionist espouse the virtues of including New Zealand venison in a healthy diet.

The low-fat, high-iron, high-quality protein composition of New Zealand venison was also central to a five-minute feature produced in cooperation with a daytime, lifestyle television programme and broadcast to an estimated audience of two million viewers.



Silberhorn: a Southland velvet success story

Sir Bob Charles, 68, along with Colin and Verna Meads, has been prominent in Silberhorn's high profile, successful marketing campaign over the last five years. The outcome for the industry, and for the many who benefit through taking the product, has been positive.

Behind Invercargill-based Silberhorn lies a real Southland, Burt Munro-type story as company director Ian Carline relates.

According to Carline, it all started over 25 years ago when Southlander Albert Beadle was suffering very bad joint and mobility problems through arthritis. Unable to play bowls, he had tried drugs, chemicals and surgery without much success.

"He and his son, artist Peter Beadle, did some more research and teamed up with a Chinese doctor who had knowledge of traditional Asian tonics. Peter was shown how to prepare a deer velvet tonic," Carline said.

The results were spectacular. Back playing bowls with a spring in his step, Beadle's friends at the bowling club were so impressed they asked him about the dramatic turn around; many of them had the same health issues. It wasn't long before Beadle Junior had to sideline his art as he was so busy preparing the tonic for Southlanders. Word spread throughout New Zealand, especially the rural community who understand the benefits trace elements, minerals and amino acids had for livestock.

The product is now sold throughout New Zealand, Australia and the world. Germany is a particularly big customer.

After Peter Beadle sold Silberhorn to return to his passion – New Zealand landscape oil painting – Silberhorn became part of listed New Zealand Company Pure New Zealand, and control passed to Australian owners. The company's fortunes, already in decline, began to slide further. This was about when Ian Carline was introduced to the product.

Carline, who had retired in the mid-90s aged 46 to go off round the world sailing and working, had no experience in the deer industry. His background was in engineering, power stations and materials handling systems. He was the founder and owner of the second biggest pre-stressed, pre-cast concrete business in the Auckland area, specialising in flooring systems for multi-story buildings. Retirement was not what he wanted, but wear and tear on his body, including accidents and sporting injuries resulted in many trips to the doctor and specialists in search of a remedy for his joint problems.

After being introduced to deer velvet by Noel Surrey, a well-known policeman in the Franklin area, he says he was so impressed he introduced a number of his friends to the product. "Soon, the store we were buying it from was having problems supplying us, so I tracked down Silberhorn in Southland, which organised ongoing deliveries."

In the process, Carline had a number of discussions with the manager and deduced that the company was being starved of direction and capital, resulting in its accelerating decline in fortune. "I suggested that the owners contact me in the event they needed a hand."

The phone rang a few weeks later. The Australian owners wanted to sell – not quite what Carline had in mind, but his faith was such that he came out of retirement and bought the entire company.




Ian Carline putting for Silberhorn against New Zealand golf legend Sir Bob Charles, the face of Silberhorn's television campaign and user of deer velvet supplements for more than twenty years.

Once he took over, the first thing he did was to re-establish a relationship with the founder of the business, Peter Beadle. "Peter and I hit it off straight away and consider each other very good friends. As I had had no experience in the dietary supplement industry there was a lot to learn."

Ian Carline says the combined efforts of the team at Silberhorn, plus Peter Beadle and himself, have normalised the use of deer velvet as a health maintenance tonic for men and women, especially those with joint problems.

"Prior to this, deer velvet was something discussed at a whisper and thought to be for men only to sort out virility issues," Carline says.

"Silberhorn has never marketed the product in this way. The company's experience over many years is that your love-life may improve, but it is probably because your joints have stopped aching, you're keeping better health and you're more fun to be with, so your relationship with others – especially loved ones – will become more normal." 

Now we are six!

Deer Industry News has now turned into a full bi-monthly magazine, with six issues (previously five) scheduled for each year.

The extra issue will slot into August, filling the previously long gap between the mid-year (June) and October issues.

DINZ Chief Executive Mark O'Connor says the additional issue will help provide greater continuity throughout the year for industry communication.

"This extra issue of the magazine, combined with the Stagline-online electronic newsletter for NZDFA's voluntary subscribers, will help ensure the industry is kept well informed and up to date right throughout the year," he says.

"We are confident this move will be welcomed by readers and advertisers alike."

Pet promise in China

China's pet product market is forecast to match the rapid growth of its economy, which is enhancing its people's standard of living. One Hong Kong company is targeting the burgeoning market with a New Zealand velvet product and starting to see results.

Hong Kong-based Evergrow Health Supplies Ltd is a cardiology and radiology product specialist, which also has a presence in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou. A new avenue for the company is its representation in Greater China and most of South East Asia for South Island-based processor exporter UB-Bio for its QQ Superflex deer velvet tablet format supplement for pets. But it's not an easy task, as Assistant General Manager Wilson Lau explains.

In the Chinese community, deer velvet has been regarded for thousands of years as a premium and precious supplement for humans, he says.

"Chinese society is very used to taking deer velvet as a supplement to improve their health and vitality, but deer velvet for pets is still a new concept both in China and in Hong Kong, so it requires effort to introduce it and promote it in the pet supplement market."



China's rapid economic growth has vastly enhanced standards of living, Lau says. "Gradually pets have become closer and closer to Chinese people's lives, which has resulted in the development of a pet products market."


Economists predict that this year, sales of pet-related products will achieve 60 billion yuan (about \$NZ10 billion) and reach its climax, potentially forming the most beneficial business environment ever for pet-related products, according to Lau.

To penetrate such a vast market, Evergrow Health Supplies' offices in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou recently recruited more than 10 sales personnel to help promote QQ Superflex, simultaneously inviting sub-distributors in other provinces and cities to more efficiently cover the Chinese territory.

In Hong Kong, the pet product market is considered quite mature, Lau says. "Our ongoing advertising and promotion schemes include bus and TV advertising, advertisements in Hong Kong's leading pet magazines and participation in all pet exhibitions."

As a result of the activity, which was supported in a joint promotion between Evergrow, UB-Bio and Deer Industry New Zealand (DINZ), there has been a gradual increase in sales of QQ Superflex over the past four months. Wilson says with the short time frame and a team effort, this result is very encouraging and satisfying for his company.

In addition, DINZ support aided communication with the processor and, in exploring the market, DINZ also provided extra information that proved very useful, for which Evergrow is highly appreciative, Wilson says.

DINZ Velvet Marketing Services Manager, Vanessa Crowley, finds it "very encouraging to work with a company which shows extraordinary passion and commitment to professionally market this New Zealand velvet product. Although Hong Kong and China are traditional markets, it is a non-traditional product so fits in well with velvet strategy." 

- **For more information about the Evergrow visit www.petsuperpet.com**

Evergrow's Wilson Lau pictured in Taranaki during a recent visit to New Zealand.



ANTLER & VIEWS
Kaikoura



Kingswood @ 3 yr old
Massive 63 1/2" Spread

Semen - \$275 + gst/straw
BUY 10 - GET 2 FREE

"Kingswood" @ 3yr
412 SCI @ 3 Yrs
28 PTS
12.62kg HV

Kingswood Y202

- Festi King — Festi Colin
- 67.5"
- Brusnik Sls — Brusnik Darn
- Laszlo

Enquiries to: Dave Mackie . Antler & Views . 1037 SH1 . RD1. Kaikoura . Ph/Fax: 03 319 7454 . M: 027 4 331 898 . dave.mackie@xtra.co.nz

Taking the pulse of animal welfare in Europe

The pulse of the European people has been taken and shows that consumers in that region rank animal welfare highly. Three-quarters of them believe their purchasing decision has a direct impact on welfare.



Dr Andrea Gavinelli.

A visiting official from the European Commission's Health and Consumer Protection directorate, Dr Andrea Gavinelli told an audience in Wellington in late November that the study published last year was the first EU-wide 'Eurobarometer' – a major Europe-wide market research study – to include questions about purchasing habits and animal welfare. The 'Attitudes of EU Citizens towards Animal Welfare' survey questioned 29,152 EU citizens across 25 member states and four accession and candidate countries in 2006.

"Animal welfare is an issue which EU citizens rank highly, given 8 out of 10 in terms of importance," he said. Eighty-nine percent of respondents think that imported products should be produced in similar conditions to those in the EU.

The Eurobarometer showed that animal welfare is a consideration at point of purchase in all 25 of the nations, with an average of 43% of consumers saying it affected their buying behaviour. At the top of the scale, over two-thirds (67%) of Swedes cited it as a buying point, while at the bottom only 21% of Czechs said they think about animal welfare when purchasing. Animal welfare is also of concern in major European markets for New Zealand venison: Germany was ranked sixth (52%), the United Kingdom ninth (47%) and France thirteenth (40%) in the table.

When it comes to buying eggs, an average of 57% of EU consumers were prepared to pay more for eggs produced in welfare-friendly conditions. The Swedes were again the most welfare sensitive about layer hens (81%), with Germany (69%), the United Kingdom (64%) and France (55%) not too far behind.

Across the EU, the study showed an average of 74% believed their purchasing decision had a direct impact on animal welfare.

DINZ Venison Marketing Services Manager Innes Moffat warns that, while the Eurobarometer gives a good indication of European consumer perceptions of animal welfare, whether that translates to consumer behaviour is another matter.


Five year plan: faster route to action

In a faster route to action than prescriptive legislation that could take years to come into action, Dr Gavinelli explained that the five main areas within the EC's proposed 'Community Five Year Action Plan on the Welfare & Protection of Animals' from 2006

to 2010 cover not only farm animals, but also laboratory and wild animals. The plan takes a "fork to farm", rather than the traditional "farm to fork", approach and aims to bring societal concerns and market demands together to develop reliable on-farm monitoring systems, product information systems, and practical species-specific strategies to improve animal welfare.

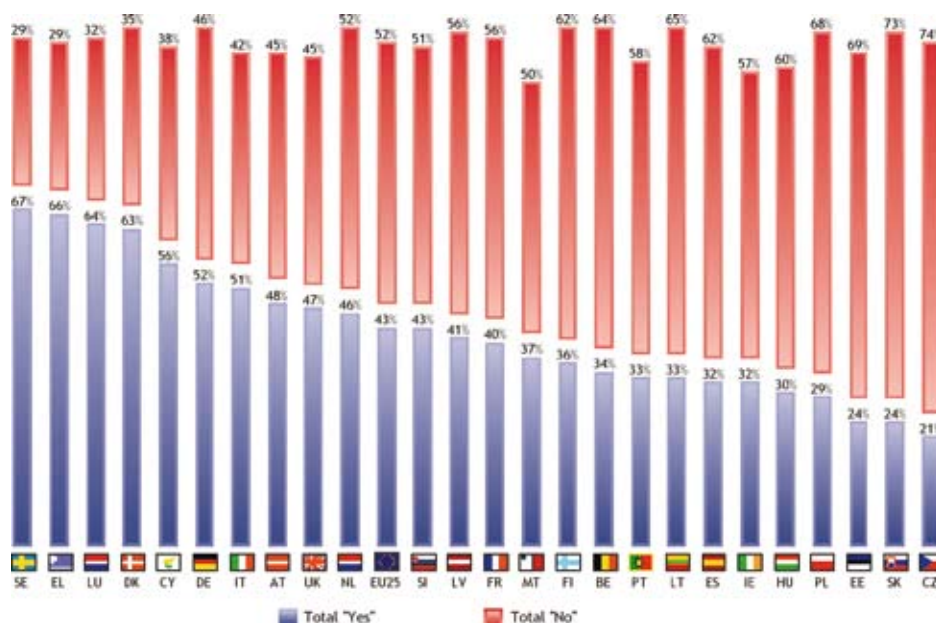
"The key is to link informed animal product consumption to animal husbandry practices on the farm."

He pointed to the introduction of standardised animal welfare indicators – not an easy task across 25 nations at differing stages of integration into the EU.

Researchers are taking the first steps in risk assessment of animal welfare. An integrated approach to the food chain is also proposed involving an informed keeper and general public – the best advocates for animal welfare, according to Dr Gavinelli – and the establishment of a specific information platform on animal welfare Europe-wide. 

- **For more information on the EU's Five Year Action Plan see http://www.ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/actionplan/actionplan_en.htm. For a copy of the Eurobarometer study visit http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/survey/sp_barometer_aw_en.pdf**

- **The next 'Global Trade and Animal Welfare' conference organised by the EU Commission in conjunction with the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) and the British-based Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) will take place in Brussels in April 2008.**



Percentage of consumers who think about animal welfare when purchasing – country by country. (Source: European Commission's Eurobarometer survey, 2006.)

Start spreading the news!

Win a trip to
New York,
New York

Photo © iStockphoto.com



Want to be the face of New Zealand's sustainable deer farming? Deer Industry New Zealand is seeking an ambassador for New Zealand deer farming to teach American chefs in mid-September why Cervena® is the best meat in the world.

An outstanding farmer is sought to represent the New Zealand venison industry at the Star Chefs International Chefs Congress, New York City from 14 – 16 September 2008.

“Provenance, sustainability, and local food are emerging themes among American chefs. These themes provide opportunities for New Zealand venison in North America, but also challenges,” says Venison Marketing Services Manager, Innes Moffat.

“Our industry has an enviable record for producing a quality food with a low-impact system and for developing systems and resources to assist farmers to improve their environmental performance. This message underpins the positioning of Cervena Natural Tender Venison in the North American market, and it needs to be constantly reinforced to the US restaurant industry.”

The three-day International Chefs Congress in September will feature chefs from around the world, sharing their techniques and experiences with up to 2,000 other professionals.

Cervena will be highlighted through:

- sponsorship of a Sustainable Cervena Venison workshop where a New Zealand farmer and a top New Zealand chef will present the New Zealand Sustainability Case Study and a hands-on workshop on working with venison
- participation in a panel tentatively entitled *Modern Farming: Where does our food come from?* featuring a New Zealand farmer to discuss sustainability and grass-fed venison.

MARKET TALK:

Meet Veni Ltd – Raising the bar on instant meals

Waipukurau deer farmer Carl Lynch's search for the perfect market led him to a surprise discovery, resulting in new cuisine and a new customer base, he tells Market Talk.

Carl Lynch started by marketing venison ham and salami cuts to local restaurants and delis. The innovative products impressed chefs but most were unsure how to incorporate them into dishes. Not one to take ‘no’ for an answer, Carl continued to bang on doors and came across Wil Mulders from St George’s Winery Restaurant. Sensing a gap in the market, Mulders suggested they work together to create premium venison ready-to-eat meals.

Meet Veni Ltd was born to provide affordable restaurant-quality meals with supermarket convenience. The company promises fresh ingredients without artificial flavours, colours, preservative or additives.

“I supply the meat, find customers and handle the marketing, and Wil cooks,” Lynch says, adding that selecting the dishes was easy. “Venison Goulash is a winter best seller at St George’s and we’ve added rice on the side. Venison Chasseur and Venison Lasagne have rich sauces and aroma: real comfort food. All meals have a high ratio

of top-quality meat. As far as I know we have the only pre-made venison meal on the market.”

Formed only six months ago, Meet Veni Ltd is quickly securing a place in the local market with busy professionals. The range is stocked at Hastings New World and Lynch conducts regular taste tests to grow the product customer base. Lamb, beef and pork variants have recently been added, taking the total meal range to eight. Lamb Mediterranean with red wine, garlic and herb sauce and sumptuously spiced Coconut Cashew Lamb are best sellers.

The single portion pre-cooked chilled meals are presented vacuum packed in trays, with accompanying rice or potato mash. Consumers simply need to microwave for three minutes and let the dish rest. The goulash and chasseur come in 400g portion sizes, while the lasagne is sold in a 500g pack. All sell for \$10.99 in New World stores.

The journey has not been without its trials. “Packaging and branding are challenging and we’re still nailing the

recipe

Barbecue Leg Steak with Grilled Vegetable Kebab

Make the most of summer! Try this recipe for Venison Leg Steak with Grilled Vegetable Kebab for the perfect weekend barbecue.

Serves 4

Ingredients

4 thick venison leg steaks (150 g each).

Selection of seasonal vegetables suitable for grilling such as capsicum, red onion, courgette and mushrooms.

Method

1. Trim off any visible silverskin from the leg steaks.
2. Season the venison steaks with a barbecue spice rub or cracked four pepper mix and a little salt.
3. Let the meat come up to room temperature first – this is the best way to cook thick leg steaks.
4. Heat the barbecue plate or grill pan very hot.
5. Apply oil and seasoning just before putting the meat on the plate/grill.
6. Cooking time will depend on the thickness of the steak and the temperature of the BBQ. But, it is always best to err on the side of underdone rather than cooking venison past medium, as the steak will continue cooking once it's been taken off the heat.
7. Once it's on the sizzling hotplate, don't mess about with it, don't prod it with a fork or flip it repeatedly. The steak will stick to the hot surface, but as the meat sears, it will release again without being scraped off.
8. For an inch thick steak, cook the meat three minutes each side for medium-rare and rest for 3-5 minutes.
9. For very thick steaks it's best to sear the steaks for a minute or two each side and then finish in a moderate oven (150°C) for 5 minutes, before resting for five minutes. The heat from the grill will tend to dry the meat if it's left on the grill.
10. Thread summer vegetables onto soaked bamboo skewers and brush with a herb-infused oil and cook alongside the meat to pick up the meat flavours.

To serve

Serve with a spicy BBQ sauce, or a fruit relish.



DINZ needs a farmer who can talk persuasively about:


- the efficiency of New Zealand pasture-based agriculture
- national and individual systems to farm deer in an environmentally sustainable manner
- producing a quality food for the international market.

Travel, accommodation and conference expenses will be funded by Deer Industry New Zealand and there is also an opportunity to feature at culinary promotion events either side of the conference with Graham Brown.

The selection process

The successful candidate, selected by DINZ in conjunction with the NZDFA and the Environment Awards, will be a farmer who has been recognised in New Zealand for their commitment to environmental management and sustainable deer farming. In addition, you must supply deer which qualify for the Cervena appellation. You will be representing the industry as a whole, not an individual venison processing company.

The Deer Industry Environmental Awards premier and sector winners from this year (and past years' competitions) will be eligible for consideration.

If you'd like to be considered for this wonderful opportunity for a trip to New York, to put a face to New Zealand's sustainable deer farming systems and to promote your values and skills to the most influential audience around, contact Innes Moffat on innes.moffat@deernz.org or telephone 04 471 6111 **before 29 February**. 



right colours. The meals must be eye-catching and stand out against the sea of other chilled products. Next on our plan will be more taste tests in Hawke's Bay and then Wellington and Auckland. We're aiming at nationwide delivery in a year in supermarkets and introducing larger packs for the catering market," says Lynch.

Venison

Strong post-Christmas chilled venison sales and high prices for frozen venison mean the schedule is 36% higher than last year. Currency volatility creates challenges for exporters in North America, but demand remains strong in all major international markets. Production is down 18% year on year.

Production

- For the 12 months ending October 2007, venison production fell to 604,000 deer – down from 737,000 the year before.

Schedule

- At the time of writing, the national average published schedule for 55-60kg AP stags rose fractionally to \$6.50 – 36% higher than week 6 in 2007 and only 4% down on the peak. Strong chilled sales post Christmas and continued high prices for frozen venison contribute to the continuity of venison returns.

Currency

- The New Zealand dollar has had a period of relative calm over the past few months. Since early September the NZ\$ has averaged around 0.525 Euro and traded between 0.504 and 0.542 – only slightly above the 10 year average exchange rate.
- Exports in US dollars continue to suffer the consequences of the weakness and volatility of the greenback. The NZ\$:US\$ rate has fluctuated from 0.69 to 0.795 since September and at 0.77 is 34% over the 10 year average (1998-2007).

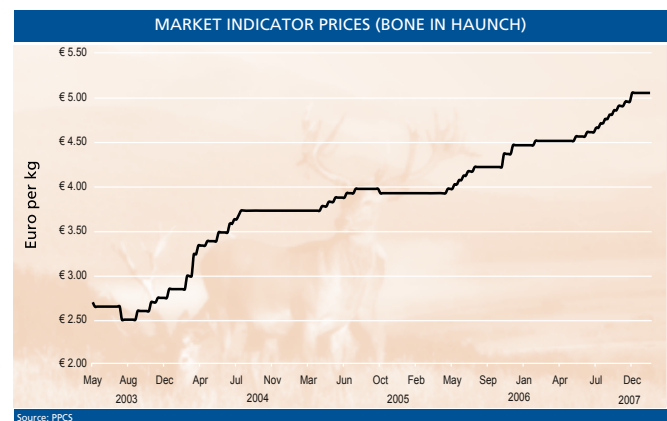
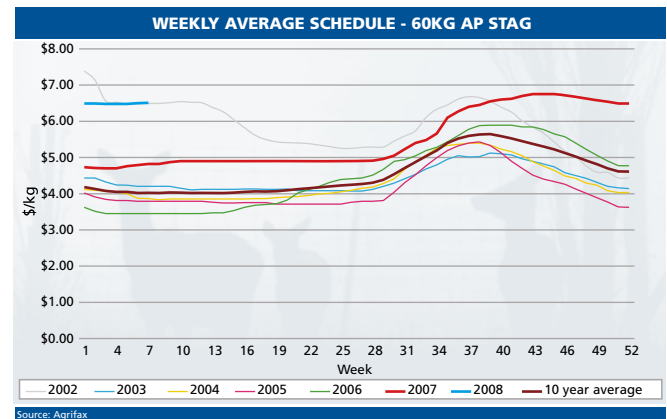
Market Conditions

Europe

- Marketing companies observe the game season has concluded with good consumption of New Zealand venison. DINZ Executive has not heard reports of any stocks in the market still seeking buyers.
- The current pricing situation is complex. CIF prices for frozen venison cuts are on a par with the frozen spot trade last year. Given the spot market was mainly dealing with small volumes of product to make up orders, the average price of venison consumed in Europe during the game season last year was substantially lower than the spot prices reported at the end of the year. Therefore, the full CIF price increases were unlikely to have been passed on to food service customers, or final consumers.
- While importers are accepting the price increases, due in part to the expectation of reductions in availability from New Zealand, some are wondering if the restaurant sector will accept the full increase in prices from the beginning of the year.

United States

- The volatile New Zealand dollar continues to make the venison business tough for exporters to the United States. Reports suggest the CIF price for venison in the United States has been increased by some parties to ensure that prices received from the United States remain competitive with returns from Europe. This has created some resistance among buyers.



Promotion

Germany: Impress Your Guests

- In total, about 70 days of 'Impress Your Guests' tastings were undertaken in the October to December period (91 in 2006) with seven importing companies. At the time of writing, another 20 days are planned in the February – March period.
- New promotional material, a radio advertorial and a TV feature have been produced and distributed in the last couple of months.
- The New Zealand venison TV feature was produced with the *Vita* lifestyle programme and broadcast on regional television stations 39 times in November and December. The feature promoted the retail availability of New Zealand venison and its ease of preparation and good flavour, with supporting comments on the nutritional excellence of venison by the spokesman Dr Nicolai Worm.

United States

- The Cervena promotion programme for 2008 is underway with agreements signed with Star Chefs to continue the promotion at regional chefs' events. DINZ is offering distributors the opportunity to join these regional promotions to increase Cervena's presence and provide direct brand exposure.
- Four US distributors have joined DINZ in funding the 2008 Cervena Plates Competition, which is now underway (see also *Best Cervena recipes sought* on page 11). Alongside the first prize, four 'best of' prizes are being offered by individual brands of Cervena.
- The co-sponsorship takes the form of naming rights for the 'Best of' prizes. They are:
 - The Duncan & Co. Best Cervena Appetizer award
 - The Four Season Best Cervena Salad
 - The Mountain River Most Innovative Cervena Recipe
 - The Broadleaf Best Cervena Entrée.

Velvet

While competition and price are beginning to firm in the velvet market, the Korean oriental medicine market is still experiencing a down-turn. Export volume is down slightly but value is up. Promotions in Korea, Taiwan and China are underway, along with discussions with the Australians about registering velvet for use as an ingredient in complementary medicines.

New Zealand

- An uncomfortable start to the season saw a decline in demand, especially for Korean grade, but competition and price now tentatively appear to be beginning to firm.
- New Zealand exporters and Korean importers report, however, that the Korean oriental medicine market is still experiencing a down-turn in general trade of ingredients and also in patient visits.
- A PGG Wrightson fixed-price contract with a significant buyer may have a positive effect in creating some competition for Korean grades. One velvet manager commented that this type of contract is a good way to establish longer-term contractual relationships with buyers and that certainty, with better price signals, is what both sellers and buyers require.

Exports

- Export volume for the 12 months ending November 2007 was 224 tonnes dried equivalent – a decrease of 4% over the 12 months ending November 2006 (234 tonnes dried equivalent).
- Export value for the 12 months ending November 2007 was NZ\$30 million – representing a 33% increase over the 12 months ended November 2006 (\$22 million).
- The Korean won/New Zealand dollar exchange rate is currently 741, above the five year average of 675 and also last year's average of 643. This makes it more expensive for Koreans to buy New Zealand velvet. Velvet exporters report that the strong New Zealand dollar is affecting the price that both New Zealand and overseas buyers are prepared to pay for velvet.
- The last samples (from Russia and Korea) for the isotopic signature project are expected by the end of February, with results due by the end of March.

Korea

- The third "Velvet as a Healthy Food" promotion was held at the Seoul Millennium Hilton Hotel in December. "Velvet Vitality", as the promotion was called, went "extremely well", according to DINZ's PR consultant, and the Hilton's Executive Chef reported that the revenue generated from this year's event was "far higher" than last year's.
- While a special dinner for food processors is planned for March, the December promotion resulted in interest from a Korean company keen to import New Zealand velvet and include it in both drinks and supplements for children.
- Communications have begun with two research institutes in Korea in an effort to explore collaboration opportunities and the potential to conduct research that would enable velvet to be registered as a functional food in Korea.

- Over 11,000 brochures entitled *Velvet with a Difference* are being distributed to oriental medicine doctors in Korea, Taiwan and China. The brochures outline the many attributes that make New Zealand velvet different from that of other countries.

Taiwan

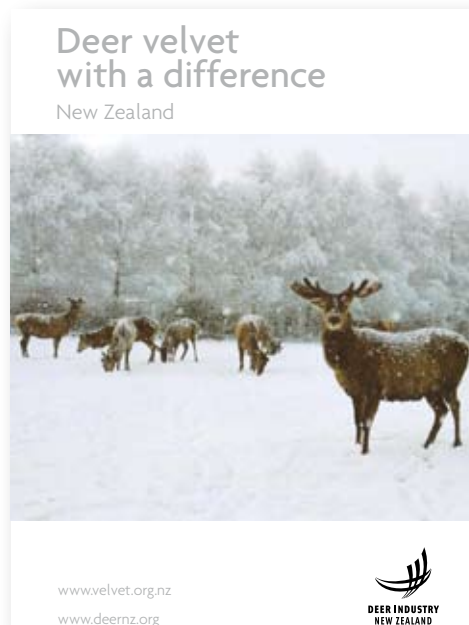
- Following a trip to New Zealand by the executive of Taiwan's largest home shopping network, Eastern Television (ETTV), the company will soon be selling a velvet-based drink via the national channel and has secured the endorsement of a Taiwanese male movie star.
- As a result of a submission made to the Informal Economic Consultations between the New Zealand and Taiwanese Governments in October, the Vice Minister of the Council of Agriculture (COA) (equivalent of New Zealand MAF) met with DINZ during December. Highlighting New Zealand's current issues with Taiwan (including the five-tonne frozen quota) and also potential opportunities for the two industries to work together in the future, the meeting resulted in an informal agreement to form a working group to meet bi-annually to discuss issues and opportunities for both countries.

China

- Deer velvet pet supplements are being marketed through Hong Kong pet stores, a website based selling platform and at pet expos in a joint venture between a Chinese distributor, a velvet exporter/processor and DINZ (see page 16). The new promotional plan for 2008 has been expanded to include advertisements in pet magazines, a new website www.petsuperpet.com, sponsorship of a pet question and answer column, features on additional pet websites, attendance at further pet expos, newspapers, bus advertising and television.

Australia

- Work to have New Zealand velvet registered as an ingredient in complementary medicines and health supplements continues with an Australian specialist complementary medicines consultancy in regular communication on DINZ behalf with the Office of Complementary Medicines and the Regulatory Policy and Governance Division (RPGD) within the Department of Health. The RPGD will not negotiate with a private consulting firm, but the Complementary Healthcare Council of Australia (CHC), which is also lobbying on similar issues, is pushing for action on New Zealand velvet on DINZ's behalf.



New Deer velvet with a difference brochures are being distributed in Korea, Taiwan and China.

Sire sale report

Buyer attendance was strong at most sales once again this year, with many studs commenting on the great atmosphere and exceptionally high numbers, including many new buyers. Despite the numbers, the buying activity didn't always match the turnout, indicating buyers were more cautious than last year.

Stanfield's Bushey Park gained the highest top price once more, selling an English stag for \$80,000, just below their 2007 top price of \$82,000. Other top prices went to Windermere Red Deer Stud with \$43,000, and Tower Farms with \$30,000. Lower top prices compared to last year were also reflected in lower average prices. However, clearance remained high this year, with an average clearance rate of 82 percent.

Deer Industry News invited all known studs and significant breeders to submit a sale report again this year and we thank the many who responded. This great response has enabled us to give our readers a more comprehensive sale report than ever before. If you didn't hear from us, please contact us with your up-to-date details so we can ensure you don't miss out next time. The following is a summary of the reports we received by press time:

ARAWATA	14 January at Pine Bush
Stags sold:	30 of 38 on offer
Top price:	\$13,000 (2 year old Austin son)
Average:	\$4,500
Sales compared with last year:	Up on last year.
Comment:	The line up of two-year-old sire stags had an average weight of 193 kg and cut velvet up to 4.95 kg SA2. A good gallery of buyers attended, with stags sold to buyers from all over the country. Other animals sold: 19 yearling hinds including one for \$5200 (King X Motsumi), the rest averaging \$550; 50 X 2-year and 8 X 3-year velvetting stags sold for an average of \$550.
BLACK FOREST PARK	12 January, Outram, Otago
Stags sold:	55 on offer, 80% clearance.
Top price:	\$18,000
Average:	Just under \$5,000
Comment:	The main interest was in growth rates and trophy. We had a large numbers of stags available, which have been very affordable this year. We had some very good growth-rate stags selling for prices that made ownership of these high-performing deer achievable and a good economic option for venison farmers. Velvet traits did not attract much interest this year.
BROCK DEER	15 January, Merino Downs Road, Gore
Stags sold:	15 of 16 on offer
Top price:	\$11,000
Average:	Hinds: \$550; Stags: \$4,100
Sales compared with last year:	Miles better.
CANTERBURY IMPORTED RED DEER STUD	13 January, Cossars Road, Christchurch
Stags sold:	Full clearance of Eastern Stags, three Warnhams unsold.
Top price:	\$14,000 for a 20-point Craigie son.
Sales compared with last year:	Doubled the turnover of last year.
Comment:	Excellent result. Sale animals spread from Waikato, Hawke's Bay, and down as far as Invercargill. Other animals sold: Full clearance of yearling hinds.

FOVERAN DEER PARK	10 January, on farm, Hakataramea
Stags sold:	80 of 100 on offer
Top price:	\$23,000
Average:	\$5,000
Sales compared with last year:	Sold more stags than last year.
Comment:	Very pleased. Good demand for good genetics and trophy-type sires. Other animals sold: 11 yearling hinds; 6 lots of semen.
GLORIAVALE DEER FARM	17 January, Insignis Park, Christchurch
Stags sold:	28 of 37 on offer
Top price:	\$15,000
Average:	\$2,810
Sales compared with last year:	Up compared with last year
Comment:	PGG Wrightson were not working so well for us. We had poor in-the-ring clearance. However, there was a great atmosphere at the sale, and our two free 'Mystery Stags' were a great success. Other animals sold: A little bit of semen and some hinds as well.
INGOR DEER FARM	14 January, on farm at Waimatua, Invercargill
Stags sold:	22 of 24 on offer
Top price:	\$4,000
Average:	\$2,400
Sales compared with last year:	Average price slightly up this year.
Comment:	Everybody present seemed reasonably positive. Other animals sold: 31 yearling hinds – full clearance.
LITTLEDALE DEER PARK	17 January, Insignis Park, Christchurch
Top price:	\$8,800 for 2-year-old son of Kingston.
Average:	\$4,000
LOVE RED DEER	6 January, Kaharoa, Rotorua
Stags sold:	20 x 2 year old Red stags offered, 60% clearance.
Top price:	\$20,000
Average:	\$6,600
Comment:	A mixture of commercial and other stud breeders from both the North and South Island attended. We had strong interest in the lots that sold and a good response to the semen from Beckham, our Awesome/Carbine 4-year-old. It was great to see so many people and some new buyers; thank you to all who came.
MARANOA DEER	20 December on farm at Takapau
Stags sold:	26 of 26 on offer.
Top price:	\$5,400
Average:	\$3,100
Sales compared with last year:	Up 11% on last year.
Comment:	Strong enquiry for further sales of other animals.

NETHERDALE DEER FARM	12 January, on farm, Balfour, Southland
Stags sold:	25 Elite Sires, 80% clearance.
Top price:	\$12,000
Average:	Sire stags: \$4,300; 2-year-old velvetting stags: \$733; 13 month hinds: \$611
Sales compared with last year:	Our stud places strong emphasis on velvet. The elite sire prices were down a third on last season, due to the difficulties being experienced by farmers in selling their velvet.
PAMPAS HEIGHTS	8 January, Rotorua
Stags sold:	19 of 25 on offer
Top price:	Declined \$40,000 offer for Lot 1 – retained for breeding.
Average:	\$5,054
Sales compared with last year:	Overall, well behind 2007 sale.
Comment:	We had a lot of enquiry after the auction. Top lots have been retained for breeding, and we declined a number of offers for top lots after the auction, including multiple offers for \$40,000 on Lot one. Results were disappointing considering the quality of the animals on offer. Most interest in the top lots came after the auction, but we are reluctant to sell top lots by treaty, preferring to use them in our own breeding programme. Other animals sold: 20 one-year-old hinds offered and all sold averaging fractionally over reserve prices of \$1,000 (average).
PEEL FOREST ESTATE	9 January, on farm, Geraldine
Stags sold:	40 of 42 on offer
Top price:	\$18,500
Average:	\$6,100
Sales compared with last year:	In line with other sales, our average sale price was back. However, the sale was strong with good demand for the excellent line up of Eastern sires. These included stags with DBV for 12-month weight from 18 – 21, the highest ever offered to the industry.
RAROA RED DEER	7 January, on farm, Cambridge
Stags sold:	19 of 28 on offer
Top price:	\$8,500
Average:	\$4,100
Sales compared with last year:	Lower clearance than last year, average prices about the same, lower top price than last year.
Comment:	It was the biggest turnout we've seen for years, but not the expected activity to go with the larger crowd. Other animals sold: 15 of 16 yearling hinds on offer.
RODWAY PARK AND SARNIA DEER	8 January, Rodway Park, Rotorua
Stags sold:	34 of 35 on offer. One didn't make reserve, being retained for sire stag duties.
Top price:	Stag: \$14,000 for York ex-Hamish; Semen: \$900 for Achilles semen.
Average:	Stag: \$4,632; Semen: \$450
Sales compared with last year:	We are extremely pleased with this year's sale. The animals have all improved on last year and we had nearly complete clearance.
Comment:	There is a lot of interest around the industry in our stags and deer at present. They are truly farmed commercially, are moving well and are getting good buyer interest. We are very happy with how the three-year-olds presented themselves, and with the two-year stags on view, people could see that there is a lot of strength in next year's line up. No maiden hinds were offered at the stag sale; our first maiden hind and semen sale was held on Saturday, 16 February, in advance of the National 2-Year Velvet and Hard Antler competition. Other animals sold: 5 lots of semen offered, all sold.

STANFIELD'S BUSHEY PARK LTD	11 January, Palmerston, Otago.
Top price:	English: \$80,000; Eastern: \$28,000
Average:	English: \$13,994; Eastern: \$8,960
Sales compared with last year:	The Eastern average was up \$2,000 per head, reflecting the strength in venison and current issues with velvet.
Comment:	We learnt of Sir Ed's passing a few moments before the sale, so re-named our best stag 'Sir Edmund' when we announced Sir Ed's passing. Stunning antlers up to 11.4kg, a record for us.
TAIHAPE RED DEER	19 December, Waiouru Deer Sale Complex
Stags sold:	All 32 on offer
Top price:	\$4,800
Average:	\$2,780
Sales compared with last year:	Up significantly on last year.
Comment:	Good local support and quite a few new buyers. Significant improvement in velvet – top was 4kg of Super A.
TIKANA	19 January, on farm, Browns, Southland
Stags sold:	18 of 24 on offer
Top price:	Top sire stag price: \$15,500 – 3yr Wapiti Bull cutting 9.7kg velvet
Average:	\$5,840
Sales compared with last year:	Average up \$1,600
Comment:	This was our fifth and best sale to date, exceeding expectations. Good buyer interest before the sale with purchasers on the day from Rotorua, Matamata, Masterton, West Coast, Canterbury as well as local. There appeared to be no effect from lack of velvet sales. Buyers with trophy, velvet and terminal sire focus all found suitable bulls. There were some exceptional growth rate bulls on offer but unfortunately Deer Improvement did not accept our invitation to attend. Other animals sold: 12 yearling Wapiti cows sold from \$900 to \$1350; 10 straws Kobe \$300 each; 10 straws Trilogy \$500 each.
TOWER FARMS	7 January, Cambridge
Stags sold:	24 of 35 on offer
Top price:	\$30,000
Average:	\$10,458
Sales compared with last year:	Average sale price \$2000 down on last year.
Comment:	Top attendance and support from Whangarei to Gore. Conservatism prevailed in safari and velvet purchases with top price being paid for a Watson son cutting 5.45kg SA2 velvet, \$30,000 by Jackie and Brian Wellington. Other animals sold: A 44-point spiker sold post-sale.
UNFEHLBAR ENGLISH RED DEER	9 January, on farm, Christchurch.
Stags sold:	15 of 18 on offer.
Top price:	\$10,000
Average:	\$3,100
Sales compared with last year:	Down 30%
Comment:	It was local farmers buying stags for \$3-5,000. Money for buying stags still in velvet freezer. Excellent display of spikers for January 2009; a lot of interest for 2009.
WINDERMERE DEER	7 January, Windermere Sales Complex, Hamilton.
Stags sold:	20 of 35 on offer.
Top price:	\$43,000
Average:	\$8,790
Sales compared with last year:	Average \$9,800 last year.

Extending the net: web access starts to gather pace

The recent launch of NZDFA's electronic newsletter, Stagline-online, now received by more than 1,000 paid-up members, is just one sign that the internet is extending its reach within our industry. By and large, deer farming hasn't been an early adopter of web-based technology, but the momentum for change is gathering pace. A number of innovators are helping to bring deer farmers up with the times, as business and information sharing online starts to overcome geographical barriers to communication.

Several websites dedicated to deer farming are proving to be a popular way to share information and expand business. *Deer Industry News* looked at three of them, and investigated the problems experienced by many farmers getting access to high-speed internet connections. (*Deer Industry News* will feature other industry websites in future issues.)

www.tradedeer.co.nz

The site www.tradedeer.co.nz is a directory of studs, stud animals, upcoming sales and some general deer-related products and services. Director Sharon Love says the site was created out of a need for access to better marketing tools.

"In this industry, we're limited as to how we can promote our products," says Sharon. "If people can market more cost-effectively, we can make more out of what's going out our front gate." The site is continuing to grow, with the recent addition of a semen sales list, and an online auction facility planned.

With several years of deer farming experience, Sharon says often-isolated deer farmers will benefit from greater unity by accessing TradeDeer and other industry websites. "It's going to make it easier for us to unite as an industry. It makes the country so much smaller."

www.newzealanddeer.co.nz

Similar in concept, the website www.newzealanddeer.co.nz has provided an avenue of free advertising for studs running their sales through PGG Wrightson. Launched late last year, the PGG Wrightson-run site features profiles of studs and individual stags. PGG Wrightson Stud Co-coordinator Graham Kinsman says the initiative has been well received by farmers situated far away from sale locations, who are now able to view animals prior to attending sales.

"The site is an ideal way of displaying animals to those involved in the industry throughout New Zealand." Another feature is the searchable database of stock. "If one is looking for particular animals throughout New Zealand, they can use that search engine."

While the site has been designed to be simple and user-friendly, Graham says farmers need to become more web-savvy. "It's amazed me that some stud breeders are certainly not totally au fait with it [the internet]. It is definitely a fantastic way of marketing stock," he says.

www.agridata.co.nz

Making market information more accessible to farmers and industry insiders is the goal of www.agridata.co.nz, run by former NZDFA Councillor, Tony Chaston. The site brings together price information from processors, agents and stock companies. Information is available for the deer industry, in addition to beef, dairy and sheep. Tony, who is site editor, says farmers require – and should have – access to market

information, just like businesses in other industries.

Although the site has proven popular with farmers, there has been some difficulty obtaining schedule information from processors. "When processing companies wouldn't give us their schedules, we said to the farmers 'if you're prepared to share killing sheet info, that will give us a feel for what is happening on the market'," says Tony. While some farmers have been forthcoming, many more are yet to share what they know. Tony hopes to see more in the industry sharing information and taking advantage of the website to create a greater flow of information for greater transparency. "There isn't a lot of trust between the farmers and the processors. We think the way to break down that lack of trust is transparency in the marketplace."

Age a factor?

Tony says age may be a factor in the slow uptake of online services by deer farmers. "Those who are a bit older are not as conversant as the younger ones." Although industry groups and businesses are moving online, many rural people are still using impractically slow dial-up connections at home. The idea amongst farmers is that the service in this country is not as good as it could be, Tony says. "A lot of people say, 'We'd love to use your site but we have to sit around waiting for dial-up – we don't have broadband'."

Broadband access a barrier to uptake

Internet providers say that the perception broadband is not widely available is keeping many farmers from using the internet to its full capacity. Telecom New Zealand says that about 93 percent of the country can access a broadband connection through their phone line, with the remainder able to connect using wireless or satellite services. "It is pretty widely available. But take-up is only about 38 percent," says Telecom spokesperson Brett Jackson.

Katerina Tiscenko of rural broadband provider Farmside says, "If the phone lines serving your home are not broadband capable, all this means is that you can't get broadband down your phone line. Satellite broadband access covers virtually the whole of New Zealand. All you need to enjoy high-speed internet is a clear view of the western sky, a broadband-capable PC and a socket to power the satellite equipment. We deliver broadband every day to people who thought they could not get fast internet because of where they live."

Deer farmers fed up with slow dial-up connections are beginning to take advantage of satellite broadband services. Barry Gard, Stud Manager of Foveran Deer Park now has broadband access at his farm in Kurow. "Running New Zealand's largest Red deer stud means that on a daily basis we are sending and receiving photographs of stags by email – and on dial-up this was a frustratingly slow process."



Barry has now switched to a satellite broadband connection provided by Farmside. "It has provided a definite business advantage for us, which will be further increased when more of our customers also move onto broadband, as then they will easily be able to download our sale catalogue from our website, or have it sent to them by email."

Satellite solution – eventually

However, connectivity problems are not so easily resolved for others. Mark Hawkins, NZDFA Executive Committee member and owner of Sutherlands Deer Farm in Timaru, has long used slow dial-up. "The speed is just terrible. In terms of receiving information from staff at DINZ for example, it's a nightmare. It's literally quicker for the sender to post it.

Anything even approaching a megabyte you can totally forget. Pictures are almost a no-no."

Mark first attempted to get broadband through Telecom, but after a few checks and acquiring all the equipment, when it was time to install the connection it didn't work. "When they actually physically came out, they said we were too far away, and could never have it. We're in a dodgy area for cell phone coverage as well so we can't get it through wireless, and Telecom didn't suggest a satellite solution. Telecom tried, and they ended up paying me quite a lot of money in compensation."

Choosing to go with a Farmside satellite connection, Mark then experienced delays. "It's difficult just getting them to even come and install it. We're only 27 kilometres away from Timaru where they're based. I'm expecting Farmside to get their act together, but the way they're going at the moment isn't too impressive."

But there is a happy ending in this case. When *Deer Industry News* alerted Farmside to Mark's frustration, the company was quick to apologise and sort out the problem.

"Unfortunately, miscommunication with respect to installation processing in this case resulted in unnecessary delays and frustration. Since the situation was brought to our attention, the installation has been completed as a matter of urgency and procedures have been tightened to avoid this in future," Katerina says.

Now connected, Mark says broadband is significantly better. "Our actual [dial-up] download speed was approximately 4Kbps. The jump from 4Kbps to 512Kbps was rather noticeable!" 📶

International Deer

The Best Velvet Genetics From Australia

Semen

now available in NZ



Normy @ 7yo 11.6 kg SAS English



Yanek @ 7yo Eastern



Kayden @ 9yo 14 kg SAS English

Contact

Selling Agent: Steve Lamplough

Ph +00 61 3 55784274

Email: oakparkdeer@bigpond.com

Profile: Goodwin McNutt

Part 1: Industry pioneer staying ahead of the crowd

By Phil Stewart

As New Zealand's venison recovery and deer farming pioneers blazed their path through the 1950s, 60s and 70s, many were in fact following in the footsteps of someone else. Goodwin McNutt – restless, inventive and with uncanny eye for new opportunities – saw the potential in deer when most farmers were still happy to live on the sheep's back. And throughout his career, once the crowds moved in, he had already moved on. Age has not dulled his passion for new ventures and new ideas. Now in his late 70s, Goodwin's focus has shifted to tahr, as he battles bureaucracy for the right to farm them outside what DOC seeks to define as their feral range. Deer Industry News editor Phil Stewart caught up with Goodwin McNutt at his base on his son's 10-acre block at West Melton, near Christchurch. In this, the first of a two-part series, we look at his early days in aviation, hunting and deer recovery.

With a small herd of Fallow running outside, the link with deer is still there. In the combined hangar, engineering workshop, museum, office and living quarters, Goodwin looks after the memorabilia of his family and forbears – and the mementos of a lifetime's work in aviation, deer recovery and farming, and tourism. Centrepiece is his beloved FH1100 turbine helicopter, imported in 1968 and still immaculate and operational. (Wife Mary lives nearby in Akaroa. While Goodwin pops over regularly, his preferred home is “under the stars”, not in a suburban environment.)

The association with deer, and the chafing to get into the outdoors, date back to Easter 1945, when the 15-year-old Goodwin shot his first deer on a trip into the Matea Forest. The antlers are still mounted on his wall.

After four years at Wanganui Collegiate – a life in “prison” endured for his father's sake – the young Goodwin was expected to join his father on their 4,000-acre family farm at Wanstead in Central Hawke's Bay. Carved out of the bush by his grandfather, the large farm was still not big enough to contain the restless teenager – by now a passionate hunter.

Despite being able to get away at the weekends for hunting, it wasn't long before Goodwin made his first real break for freedom, hitchhiking to Wellington and scoring a job as a deer culler in Nelson. But he never made it into the field, overruled by a father determined to keep his wayward lad on the farm.

“I came to an arrangement with my father that I'd work Monday to Friday on the farm, but the weekends were mine to go shooting up in the Ruahine tops. My mate and I would hump out the skins, which we sold for about 10 shillings. At that stage they were still being used for lining aircraft fuel tanks, and the hair was used in life jackets. We also sold off tails and any velvet.”

He soon found another means of escape: flying. After a chance visit to Central Hawke's Bay airfield and a flight in a Piper Cub, Goodwin was hooked. Training in Tiger Moths, he'd achieved his 'A' Licence by the end of 1949 (the early equivalent of a Private Pilot's Licence).

Keen to get his own Tiger Moth, Goodwin was lining up one of the many post-war surplus aircraft which were available for £200, only to be stymied by the advent of aerial topdressing. The sudden demand for aircraft pushed the price out of reach, up to about £1,000.

Undaunted, Goodwin eventually purchased an Auster from the United Kingdom on the strength of a £200 deposit – his long-suffering father agreeing to put up the balance. “The old man knew I needed something to keep me happy on the farm.”

Flying the Auster out of Wellington at the end of 1951, his newly acquired wings opened up a whole new world of possibilities.

Initially he would fly up and land on a “rabbit patch” in the



Goodwin McNutt has kept meticulous records of his activities over the years. This log from the 1950s records everything down to the amount of ammo used, to personnel on the expedition – even the dog.



The first helicopter, a Hiller, was underpowered but a vast improvement on fixed wing aircraft.



Goodwin McNutt (left) in the 1950s with hunting companions at his "Northern arm" camp in the central North Island, two hours' walk from the Boyd airstrip.



Unloading a deer carcass from the Taylorcraft at Rangitaiki airstrip.

Whakatane Paper Mill's Matea Forest in the Bay of Plenty, where a contact – the caretaker – gave him hunting access to the forest's 120 miles of pumice road. "You could shoot the buggers out of the vehicle."

The Auster, with an airspeed of up to 130 mph and a stalling speed of only 25 mph was an ideal back-country plane for its time. "You could just waffle in over the fence and land in about 100 yards. I wonder now how I did it," Goodwin recalls.

One weekend he decided to cut across the central North Island instead of following his usual route along the Napier road. It was then that he spotted an area near the Boyd Hut on a Crown Block at the source of the Ngaruroro River, in behind the Kaweka Range. It was to shape his life for the next few years.

"I saw this flat just covered with deer, and I thought: Why not go and get them for myself instead of giving them away?"

In August 1955, Goodwin flew back there with friend Mick Fogarty and picks and shovels to start clearing an airstrip. The plan was to drop the tools out the window and land the plane at nearby Poronui station, walking back to the site.

"We flew in and saw about 14 deer there. Mick's eyes were out on stalks. I thought, we could damn near land on that, so we did." Cutting the motor and bouncing through the tussock flats, Goodwin managed to bring the Auster down safely, the horizontal prop setting keeping it out of harm's way. "I set to with the shovel and cleared about 100 yards of strip while Mick went off chasing deer."

Over the following months Goodwin gradually extended the strip to 400 yards, clearing tussock and filling in the holes in the pumice soil. He also built a hangar for the plane and later, when he started flying out carcasses for the venison trade, a pumice-lined meat safe.

They didn't have the area entirely to themselves, with cullers making regular trips in by horseback. "We had an agreement that they would stay in the hills and we had the flats. They didn't mind – we were killing deer."

After a year or so, Goodwin negotiated permission with one of the owners to build a hut on Maori land about 2 hours' walk further north, all of the timber and materials flown in five-foot lengths in the Auster.

Initially the deer recovery continued to be based on skins, dried under the trees before being packed out in the plane, and some velvet. But by the early 1960s, trade in venison had started, and about this time Goodwin started making the switch to helicopters. (He had seen the potential for helicopters much earlier, and had been making enquiries about buying one as early as 1952.)

He had bought a Taylorcraft fixed-wing aircraft in 1962, and his first helicopter was a piston-engined Hiller, purchased in 1964. Costing £7,250, it was the first privately purchased helicopter in New Zealand. Goodwin recalls he had shot deer from a helicopter as early as 1962, when friend Mike Alexander took him for a fly around his central North Island patch. "I believe that was the first time anyone in New Zealand had shot deer commercially from a helicopter."

With the helicopter kept at the Boyd airstrip base and the Taylorcraft used for commuting in and out from Hawke's Bay, Goodwin was well set up to supply the fledgling feral venison trade. He began flying carcasses out to the Rangitaiki and supplying River Ridge Game Meat Packers in Taupo, a company started by Sonny Rivers and Norm Ridge, and later taken over by Consolidated Traders. He had also approached James Wattie to see if he was interested in a supply of venison for canning. Wattie was interested, but the 40 tons he needed to justify a canning line was well beyond their capacity to supply.

His shooters mainly worked at night by spotlight and would take their kill by horseback to depots on the river flats, which they would mark by red flag for the chopper to pick up.

The three-seater Hiller was underpowered and had to be rack loaded. Requiring a running take-off and landing, it was better than a fixed-wing plane but not ideal. Earlier, a direct appeal to the Director of Customs for a licence to import a more suitable machine was "laughed out of office" and the first of a series of niggles with bureaucracy over the years. "He wasn't going to let us import a helicopter to go chasing deer. Twelve months later they were dishing [licences] out like lollies." 📺

- **Part 2 of this profile will appear in the April issue of Deer Industry News. In this second part, Goodwin McNutt buys a bigger helicopter, starts keeping deer behind wire on his farm, moves into aviation tourism and begins his long battle for the right to farm thar.**

Auctions on NOW



trade deer.co.nz
TAKING DEER ONLINE

Contact Sharon or Rebecca Phone: (07) 332 5892 Mobiles: Sharon(027) 486 4341 Rebecca (021) 146 7383
Email: tradedeer@xtra.co.nz

Website: www.tradedeer.co.nz

Sample Tb testing to remain: rethink on TEP

Falling Tb levels have led the Animal Health Board (AHB) to a decision to allow sample Tb testing to continue in Tb surveillance areas with three-year testing. This has implications for earlier plans to introduce Testing Equivalence Programmes (TEP) for low-risk breeding herds in those areas.

During the last review of the National bovine Tb strategy, the AHB introduced policies to replace 250-head sample Tb testing in three-year surveillance areas with Tb testing of all eligible animals in deer and cattle breeding herds. This meant that where a herd contained more than 250 head of eligible animals for Tb testing, all those animals would have to be presented for testing.


At the same time, policies were introduced for a TEP. The purpose of the TEP was to give the owners of breeding herds of C5 status or greater in a surveillance area the option of signing up to a quality assurance programme in place of full Tb testing for the whole herd.

But AHB Operations Manager, Keith Lewis, says that when the Board started to plan the introduction of TEP in earnest, "it became apparent that the entry criteria meant that the TEP would not be an attractive option for many herd owners".

"Also, with falling herd infection rates, the need for replacing 250-head sample testing of eligible animals with whole-herd testing came into question.

"As a result, we have decided to retain sample Tb testing. This in turn has led us to re-think the criteria for TEP."

Keith says the AHB will now discuss options for revised TEP criteria with DINZ and with a number of owners of larger cattle and deer herds.

"If, after those discussions, the Board still considers the concept of TEP worthwhile, we will finalise a revised set of criteria and offer the TEP to eligible breeding herd owners in three-year testing surveillance areas." 

Coming events

27 February 2008	Focus Farms Field Day: Ross and Sally Stevens, Whiterock Station, Rangitata Gorge, Canterbury.
1 March 2008	Closing date for Deer Industry Environmental Awards
9 April 2008	Focus Farms Field Day: Tim Aitken and Lucy Robertshawe, The Steyning, Tikokino, Hawke's Bay.
13-15 May 2008	Deer Industry Conference: NZDFA Annual General Meeting and DINZ FGM. Ascot Park Hotel, Invercargill (see further details this issue).
13 May 2008	Elk and Wapiti Society AGM, 12.30 - 3.00 pm, Ascot Park Hotel, Invercargill
14-16 July 2008	Deer Branch NZ Veterinary Association Conference; Clearwater Resort, Christchurch. Contact Peter Wilson, Massey University 06 356 9099 Ext 7619, P.R.Wilson@massey.ac.nz, or Adrian Campbell, 03 308 5095 (A/H 03 684 9996), adrian@vetlife.co.nz
14-16 September	International Chefs Congress, New York. (See Industry News section for article on selection of a farmer to represent Cervena® at the congress.)
8-10 December 2008	National Velvet and Trophy Antler Competition, Ascot Park Hotel, Invercargill. Contact Janet Horrell, 03 236 8720.

National Pest Management Strategy Review

A review proposal under development by the Animal Health Board (AHB) for the National Pest Management Strategy (NPMS) for bovine tuberculosis includes possible options to maintain or even increase the pressure to contain or eradicate the disease from New Zealand.

Under the current NPMS, which seeks an annual period prevalence for bovine Tb of 0.2% in our deer and cattle herds by 2012/13, the Minister of Agriculture must be notified of a strategy review by September 2009.

The AHB is wasting no time with the exercise and plans to have a proposal to the Minister well in advance. At the October 2007 NZDFA Branch Chairmen's Meeting, the Board presented four scenarios which will shape the final recommendations:

1. No Tb control
2. Ad hoc control, but no formal strategy
3. Continued NPMS with a containment objective
4. Continued NPMS with an eradication objective.

The AHB is analysing the impacts of

these four approaches on New Zealand's bovine Tb status, the costs and the likely economic impacts.

1. Doing nothing is not an option.

The AHB quickly dismissed the 'do nothing' option, noting that our livestock industries would be severely affected within 20 years, with up to two million deer and cattle infected. This option is not being taken seriously.

2. Ad hoc control

Under this scenario there would be no formal NPMS or central planning but some vector control work would continue at farm level and regional level by farmers or under regional pest management strategies. There may be some Tb testing under QA schemes..

However, the AHB concluded this piecemeal strategy would fail to prevent the disease spreading out from its current zones. There would be impacts on our markets and production losses. By 2030 there would be at least 2,900 infected herds, 59,000 infected animals and carcass losses to the value of \$12 million per annum.


3. NPMS continues with containment strategy

This option most closely resembles the status quo. Under this scenario the number of infected herds would level out at about 50-60, and the period prevalence would be manageable below the 0.2% threshold we need for official Tb freedom status.

Tb-infected wildlife would be contained within vector risk areas, and containment zones would be pulled back to match geographic boundaries. Buffer zones would be created and testing would continue, although eventually at a reduced level. Costs of infection and production losses would be minimal.

4. NPMS with eradication strategy

This is the most ambitious of the four scenarios. Under this scenario, Tb would eventually be eradicated in wildlife and the number of infected animals and herds would decrease to zero. Testing would gradually reduce to zero once eradication was confirmed.

AHB is continuing work on the options and their likely costs and benefits, and is seeking further direction from the industry and government on where to focus their efforts. Once that direction is clear, detailed work can start on policies surrounding movement control, game estates, testing, vector control and so on, prior to wider consultation with farmers later in the year. 

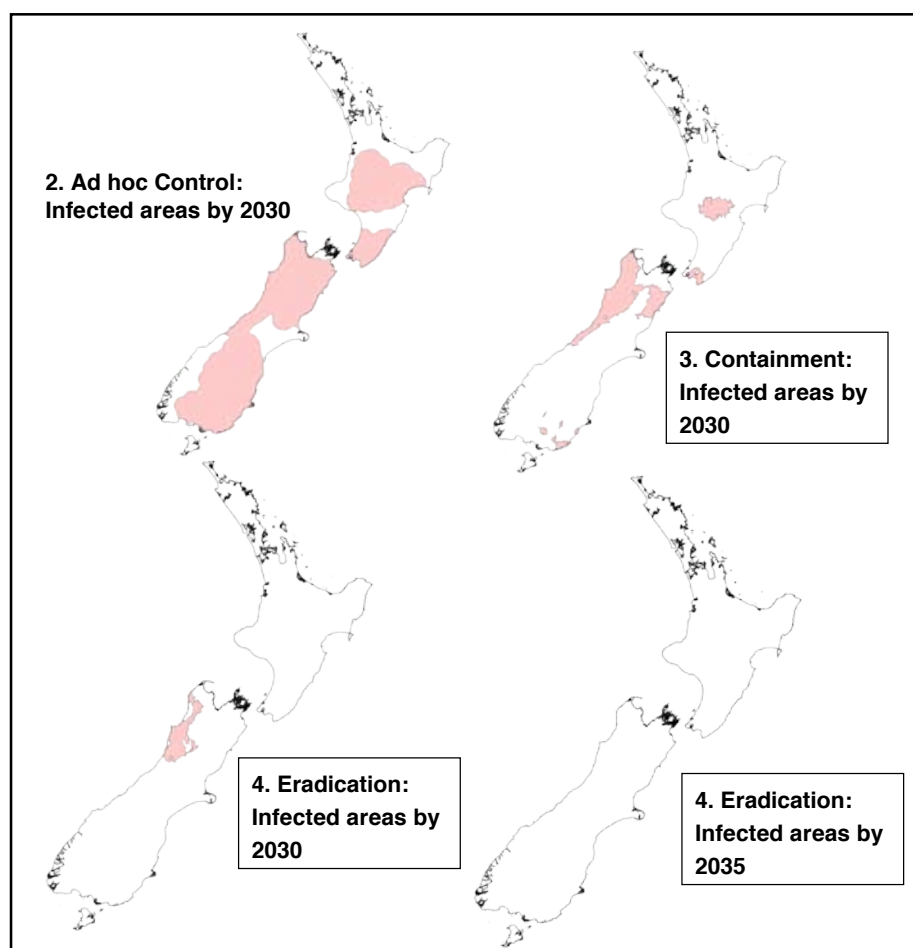


Figure 1: Impacts on Tb infection with Ad hoc control, Containment and Eradication strategies. Source Animal Health Board



Early calving: *It's in the genes*

Don't over-pamper your hinds with tucker if you're trying to get them to calve earlier – their genetic makeup will always have the biggest say.

That's the conclusion emerging from a DEEResearch-supported three-year programme at AgResearch Invermay, looking into the key drivers for calving date. Achieving earlier calving is one of the keys to the productivity strategy for more calves on the ground earlier and heavier.

The scientists, led by Dr Jason Archer, are assessing the impacts of management practices and genetics on attempts to advance calving date. In addition to genetic influences, the practices being assessed are:

- nutrition and management of the hind around weaning
- hind nutrition in the third trimester of pregnancy
- utilising the 'stag effect' to induce cycling in hinds.

While individual hind weight influences conception date, nutrition around weaning and the stag effect had no consistent effect on the date. Hind genetics was the main player here, with DNA analysis showing Eastern-dominant hinds conceiving earlier than their English-dominant herd-mates.

Calving date did not appear to be affected by varying nutrition regimes during the third trimester, although conception date and gestation length seemed to be linked. The research showed that early-conceiving hinds tended to have a longer gestation than the later conceiving hinds. What it means is that any gains made through earlier conception date are partially lost through the hind extending her gestation length.

To date, the researchers have concluded that on well-managed farms, the practices of early stag introduction, early weaning, and enhanced hind nutrition around weaning and late pregnancy have a minimal effect (less than five days) on advancing conception and calving dates in Red hinds. (Where hinds have been under-fed, a greater response might

be achieved.) This is not to downplay the importance of good feeding for other reasons – it is quite clear that well-fed hinds support higher calf growth rates in late lactation.


Where nutrition is already adequate, the biggest gains for early calving are available through herd genetics, with the Eastern genotypes offering significant opportunities to advance both conception and calving date, the researchers conclude.

Jason Archer says early indications are that there is high heritability for early calving, and new data on this should be available later this year. Ultimately, early calving could be included as a DEER Select index.

He cautions that most traits involve multiple genes, and the DNA of thousands of animals will need to be analysed to narrow down the focus to the gene markers – perhaps up to 100 of them – involved with calving date.

Genetics is a fast-moving field, he says, and the human genome project, costing \$US1,000-3,000 million, is driving developments in gene mapping for livestock species. Sequencing the genome is essentially “reading” the entire genetic code, and is a step which helps greatly in the subsequent search for gene markers.

“The cattle genome has been sequenced at a cost of around \$US60 million, and the results are now being applied in their genetic improvement, particularly by dairy industries in many countries. The sheep genome has been sequenced by an international consortium (including AgResearch) at a cost of around \$US2 million. It's possible the deer genome could soon be sequenced on the back of these developments for less than \$US1 million.

“That would be a major step forward for research into heritable traits such as calving date.” 

Johne's research consortium under way

The newly established Johne's Disease Research Consortium (JDRC) is combining industry and government involvement and working to unite and accelerate research into the bacterial disease, which heavily impacts animal health and costs up to an estimated \$88 million in lost production each year.

In a pan-industry approach to Johne's disease, the JDRC brings together Meat & Wool New Zealand, DairyNZ, DEEResearch, Massey University, Livestock Improvement, AgResearch, the University of Otago and the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology.

The Meat Industry Association and Dairy Companies Association of New Zealand are associate participants.

For each of the five years it will run, the JDRC will invest \$2.2 million into the project.

Research focus areas include epidemiology, pathobiology, vaccine development, diagnostic tools and genes and gene markers.

Manager of the JDRC Jessie Chan says, "We'll deliver on whichever outcomes from those five programmes best achieves the goal of controlling or eliminating the disease."

Research into the different areas will be provided by various organisations. "We want to bring together the best skills in each of those areas," says Jessie.

"Our first priority is to develop the science plan, to review it, and make sure it's going to help us reach our goals."

This reviewing process is important, says Intervet General Manager and Animal Health Board Director Dr Andrew MacPherson, Independent Chair of the JDRC.

"We're trying to minimise the chances of us going down dead-end research areas," says Andrew. "We're engaging with the best scientists both within New Zealand and globally for guidance on where our research and development money should be invested.

"We're trying to scan the whole science arena. We want to look at this disease from its most basic elements – genes

and markers – right through to what actually happens as the organism interacts with an animal in a given farming situation," Andrew says. "Johne's Disease gene-markers would be the final long-term solution for farmers.

"It's a modest amount of money we've got to work with, but we'll give it our best shot. We're absolutely driven by giving farmers cost effective tools to control or eliminate Johne's Disease," he says.

Representing the deer industry, DINZ Chief Executive Mark O'Connor has been appointed a director of JDRC by DEEResearch.

"I can help ensure that the industry's unique needs are heard and understood," says Mark.

"We want the JDRC to develop better diagnostic tools, better herd control procedures, appropriate vaccines and find a gene marker for Johne's Disease resistance – all in the shortest time possible and at least cost."

Financially speaking, joining the JDRC rather than pursuing independent research is a smarter solution for the deer industry, says Mark. "Rather than spending \$100,000 per annum on our own, the deer industry is now part of a programme which invests \$2.2 million per annum – this improves the chances of success significantly."

The JDRC requires researchers to work together, providing better sharing of ideas. This is true on a national and international scale, says Mark. "Having a single consortium in New Zealand will make it easier to form collaborations with other national consortia such as the ones in the EU and United States. This also improves the chances of success." 📄

Semen
Select from
the best @



trade deer.co.nz
TAKING DEER ONLINE

Contact Sharon or Rebecca Phone: (07) 332 5892 Mobiles: Sharon(027) 486 4341 Rebecca (021) 146 7383

Email: tradedeer@xtra.co.nz

Website: www.tradedeer.co.nz