

MARLOW COOPWORTHS

November 2017 Newsletter

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Stories in this newsletter



Off to save the world



Hinenui 553/14
getting to know a
Marlow ewe



A litter of puppies
arrived seemingly
by divine intervention



An old photo but a good
one

Welcome to news about Marlow and what has been happening over the last few months. As with many of you, it has been quite a season. By mid February it was very dry with little feed and stock were starting to struggle. Then at the beginning of March, the heavens opened and it pretty well rained all the time until the end of July. We grew more feed than I've ever grown through autumn and winter.

Hawkes Bay and Gisborne got lucky unlike the rest of you when the rain stopped through August and September and we had half our usual rainfall resulting in excellent lamb survival and clients reporting record lambing %'s. Some in the mid 160's lambs docked from ewes to the ram.

Farmers under scrutiny

Over the last couple of years, our sector has come under increasing scrutiny about what we do and how we do it.

This is not going to go away so we have to get used to it and respond. Often that response is not even voluntary. Here in CHB we are getting to grips with Plan Change 6 which is not dissimilar to One Plan that those of you in Horizons are already dealing with. Other regions will see similar environmental plans and constraints being brought in by your regional councils.

The picture shows me with a ute load of cabbage trees off to plant in one of my wetlands. I collect the seed off my own 150 year old trees who have stood the test of time and abuse, pass them to my friend Maire Taylor at Plant HB and she sells the plants back to me. This is called eco-sourcing as the local genetics will have subtle differences to native plants from elsewhere.



Marlow Genetics

The 2th rams have just passed the annual B. Ovis test and vet scrutiny. Despite being very average in February they are now as good as they've ever been. Nothing like the ability to feed stock properly.

You will see a few changes from SIL on the selection sheets. The main one is the new reproduction sub trait. It is now called DPCR instead of DPR and stands for Dual Purpose Capped Reproduction. While increasing the number of lambs born in less prolific flocks increases revenue per ewe, at high numbers of lambs born, ewe and lamb deaths may increase, ewes may not be able to rear all lambs and additional feed and labour are required. Therefore, in practice, profit per lamb per ewe decreases with increasing NLB and there is an optimum NLB above which increasing the number of lambs born becomes unprofitable.



A good example is this year's Marlow MA ewes who scanned Vet Services highest ever scanning at 248% with a ridiculous 55% triplets, 34% twins, 11% singles and 0% dries and this with single mating. They still ended up with an impressive 184% ewes to the ram at docking but even with perfect lambing weather this was 17% lambs born dead and a further 4%-5% died after tagging for a total of 22% deaths. Mostly triplet lambs.

So the change for us this year means that the overall index will reward less for reproduction with relatively more weight on traits such as growth, survival and meat.

The ram in the picture is Hinenui 553/14 and is currently the top Coopworth ram. He produced nearly 100 progeny in the few days he was here which we will see next year. Look at the grass on hand. It all grew in the first few weeks of March from nothing and is the most remarkable turnaround I've ever seen.

Dog Shenanigans



When Gin my mainstay was on heat I made very sure she was kept locked up even with her door wired shut as Ditch is quite capable of opening it himself.

Apparently most cockies are aware the deed can be done through netting but none of you thought to tell me.

Ditch was a tiny pup I found dumped in the watertable of dubious parentage.

As it happens, the father was my son's sneaky heading dog who spent a few days here while Jason was away.

Ram selling December 2017



The picture is an old one but a favourite. Matt our youngest son out helping on the tagging round 20 years ago.

He is now a drone operator and cameraman in Auckland.

This season I tagged 800 lambs as the 340 stud ewes performed admirably and the single mated ewe hoggets also did very well.

The index numbers on this year's sale rams are all over 2100 despite the reduction in the reproduction index.

The advertising by SIL indicates that my lowest ranked rams are in the top 20% on index across all breeds and my average indexes are termed 'exceptional' and are in the top 5%.

FE continues to be a breeding focus for Marlow. All sale rams are bred by sires who passed Ramguard nil at .6 and all of their dams are sired by rams who also passed nil at .6.

Could you please email me if I haven't already heard from you, roughly your ram requirements as I've had some recent inquiry from potential clients. Also a new client is wanting to buy ewes bred from Marlow rams so if you have any coming up for sale, let me know and I'll put you in touch.

Thank you for your custom and support over the years.

Once I've weaned the stud towards the end of November, inputted the weights and got an updated ram selection list, I'll email it out to you and arrange a visit during December.

Steve