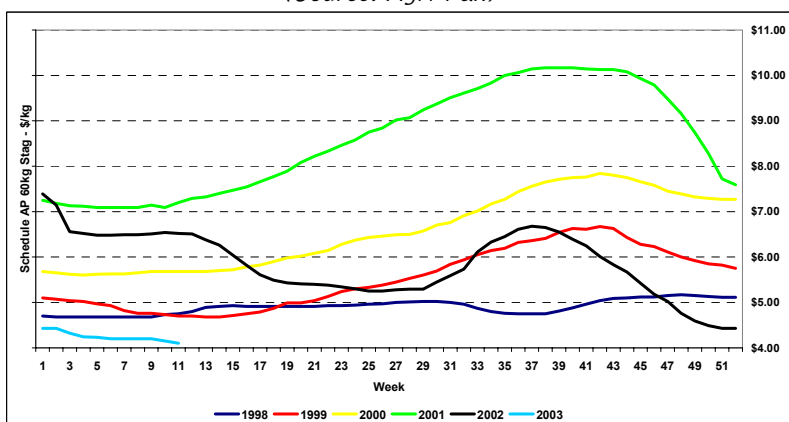


>>> VENISON

VENISON SCHEDULE

This week (week 11): \$4.10 (down 5 cents on last week)
Down 26% on the 10 year average for this time of year (\$5.53)

*60kg AP Stag – Published National Average Schedule.
(Source: Agri-Fax)*



Recent comments from exporters are that prices throughout Europe remain at very low levels, though positively is translating into reasonable demand. The slight recovery seen in leg prices in March seems to have slowed in March and there is moderate demand for manufacturing cuts with some exporters reporting shoulders and necks selling well.

IN THIS ISSUE

1. Venison Schedule
2. Velvet Pool Prices
3. Andrew Orbell
4. Transport of Weaned Animals
5. DEER Research Consultation
6. New Recipe: Moroccan Spiced Venison On Falafel Cakes With Sun-Dried Fruit Sauce
7. NVSB Bulletins and Reminders
8. Presidential Hearing For Korean Deer Farmers Against Sliced Access
9. Exchange Rate Update
10. Cervena Features In L.A. Film Event

Special Report: Transport of Weaned Deer

11. A Word From MAF Animal Welfare
12. Reminder Of Requirements

>>> VELVET

VELVET POOL PRICES

Pool prices for this week as compared to last season's total weighted averages are shown below.

	Current Season		Last Season's Weighted Average	Approx. change from last season
	This week			
SA	105	141	\$132.64	-7%
A	112	125	\$116.41	2%
B	109	125	\$112.18	4%
C	96	110	\$107.47	-4%
D	80	97	\$84.23	5%
E	60	70	\$70.12	-7%
RG	57	115	\$87.67	-2%

Comments indicate volumes have slowed. While the dollar and tensions with North Korea remain issues, demand appears relatively stable.

ANDREWORBELL

We would like to recognise the tragic death of former DFA President Andrew Orbell of Clayton Station, Fairlie and pass on our deepest condolences to Ruth and family for their loss.

Andrew's funeral on Tuesday was attended by an estimated 800 people – a testament to the way in which Andrew touched and contributed to the lives of so many.

>>> UPCOMING EVENTS

Wairoa Branch AGM Fraser Town Tavern 6.00pm meal, Meeting at 8.00pm	19 March
Tongariro Branch AGM Wairakei Resort	20 March
Wairoa Branch Feilday Steve Aldridge's property Tuai - For further details call Ian Pickering on (06) 837 5977	26 March
Rotorua Branch AGM	8 April
Canterbury Branch Committee Meeting and AGM	30 April
South Canterbury/North Otago Branch AGM Poplars Reception Centre, 5.30 pm	1 May
Wairarapa Branch AGM Branch AGM at Gladstone Inn, Gladstone.	5 May
Manawatu Branch AGM	6 May
Hawke's Bay Branch Field Day and AGM	7 May
Waikato Branch AGM	8 May
Southland Branch AGM	14 May
Otago Branch AGM To be held in Alexandra - Venue and times to be advised.	15 May
Deer Industry Conference Caroline Bay Hall – Timaru See the February Issue of Deer Industry News for more details. The Conference Registration form can be downloaded from the Deer Industry New Zealand website: http://www.deernz.org.nz/?id=37	27 to 29 May

>>> OTHER NEWS

TRANSPORT OF WEANED ANIMALS

There has been talk of some weaner sales being bought forward because of the weather or near drought conditions that have prevailed around the East Coast regions of both Islands this season.

While the Transport Code of Welfare allows for the movement of animals in emergencies such as drought conditions, it requires veterinary advice and supervision of any drought affected stock. Veterinary or a MAF inspector's advice should be sought and adhered to in any of these situations.

For more information: John Tacon, Quality Manager (027) 242 2873, john.tacon@deernz.org Also, see the Special Report on Transport of Weaned Animals later in this issue.

Welfare issues associated with transport of weaned animals.

Deer Notes

DEERESEARCH CONSULTATION

30 Expressions of Interest were received from researchers wanting to undertake work with DEEResearch in the 2003/04 year which starts on 1 July 2003. A summary of these research ideas is available on the Deer Industry New Zealand website.

In total, Expressions of Interest represented \$2.2 million worth of work over 4 years – well beyond DEEResearch’s current budget of around \$450k per annum. This highlights the need for DEEResearch to correctly prioritise projects and develop an effective portfolio of projects. Industry feedback on the relative importance of the projects proposed is welcomed by the DEEResearch Board. DEEResearch will be meeting on 8 April to consider funding proposals.

Research already planned for 2003/04 includes:

Johne’s Disease: diagnostic tools and vaccine development	\$75,000
Heritable resistance to Tb in deer	\$75,000
Leptospirosis	\$71,000
Effect of genotype on reproductive performance of young hinds	\$50,000
Improving spring growth through supplemental roughage	\$37,650
Contribution to Pastoral Genomics Research Consortium	\$30,000
Development of a new Tb test	\$27,500
Contribution to Methane Mitigation Research Consortium	\$25,000
Effect of Molybdenum on copper status	\$5,000
Impact of forage herbs on methane production	<u>\$4,390</u>
	\$400,540

Feedback welcome on research proposals received by DEEResearch.

NEW RECIPE: MOROCCAN SPICED VENISON ON FALAFEL CAKES WITH SUN-DRIED FRUIT SAUCE



As part of his regular programme of recipe development, Graham has created a venison medallion dish with North African and Middle Eastern flavours. The recipe is online at <http://www.nzvenison.com> and Venison Manager Mat Moyes guarantees it is simple, quick, easy and delicious.

Graham recently had 5 other new dishes photographed and these will appear in future issues of Deer Notes for you to try.

New Moroccan Spiced Venison recipe.

NVSB BULLETINS AND REMINDERS

Bulletins from the National Velveting standards Body (NVSB) will be in the post in the next few days to all farmers and veterinarians involved with the NVSB Programme.

Some key points from these Bulletins are listed below:

- Reminder: completed drug books to be returned to Supervising Vets by 31 March.
- Unused velveting drugs, including local anaesthetic, must also be returned to Supervising Vets
- Please report any stag deaths during or associated with velvet removal to the NVSB
- Audits identify that more effort to improve compliance is necessary and critical
- Non-compliance with the requirements of the programme and especially velveting outside the programme puts the entire velvet industry at risk.

Important NVSB reminders.

Deer Notes

PRESIDENTIAL HEARING FOR KOREAN DEER FARMERS AGAINST SLICED ACCESS

The Korean Deer Breeders' Association (KDBA) has filed a submission with Korea's Food and Drug Administration (FDA) against moves to allow access for imports of sliced velvet products. The KDBA claims that if sliced velvet is allowed to be imported the Korean deer industry could collapse as imports of low quality velvet would increase.

The Nognmin Shinmoon (a Korean agricultural industry newspaper) reported that the President of the KDBA met with Korea's President elect Roh, Moo-hyun requesting that access for sliced imports be postponed for over 5 years and then opened gradually.

Deer Industry New Zealand has been lobbying Korea for well over 5 years already to allow access for sliced velvet. This latest opposition from the KDBA comes in response to the announcement of draft sliced velvet quality standards in Korea – a prerequisite to allow access for sliced velvet.

Deer Industry New Zealand's Chairman Clive Jermy and Velvet Manager Mark O'Connor will meet with FDA in Seoul in April to argue in favour of sliced access and support the proposed domestic standard. They will also meet with KDBA representatives to discuss their concerns and opposition. "Allowing access for sliced imports does not necessarily mean an increase in NZ's market share or a decrease in quality." said Velvet Manager Mark O'Connor. "If proper standards are implemented and enforced, sliced access will improve quality by allowing exporters to send in quality assured product that can't be tampered with and labelled correctly with country of origin to discourage misrepresentation. The biggest benefit to the New Zealand industry would be the ability to ensure New Zealand branding right through to the final consumer."

Deer Industry New Zealand is also working with lawyers in Korea lobbying for a reduction in the Special Excise Tax on velvet imports to make eventual exports of sliced velvet more competitive and to encourage official trade.

President elect Roh, Moo-hyun who has been approached by Korean deer farmers to oppose access for sliced deer velvet.>>

Korean deer farmers are lobbying hard against access for sliced velvet – including a hearing with Korea's President-Elect.



EXCHANGE RATE UPDATE

The movements of the most important currencies for the New Zealand deer industry are described below. A strengthening NZ dollar makes our exports more expensive when purchased in foreign currencies. Alternatively it reduces the NZ dollar return of sales in foreign currencies.

Currency	Exposure	NZD 1 year ago	NZD this week	Change
Euro	83% of venison exports (by value) are destined to Europe (year end Jan 03)	0.4910	0.5025	+2%
US Dollar	12% of venison exports (by value) are destined to the USA (Year end Jan 03). Almost all of the velvet trade is conducted in US dollars.	0.4297	0.5546	+29%
Korean Won	Korea remains the final market for an estimated 80-90% of all velvet exports. Korean buyers use won to buy velvet sold in US dollars.	566.6	679.9	+20%

Export Statistics from Statistics New Zealand, Exchange rates from www.oanda.com

Update on exchange rate movements.

Deer Notes

CERVENA FEATURES IN L.A. FILM EVENT

For the last two years in Los Angeles, an event has been hosted to celebrate the wealth of New Zealand Film Making and Creative Talent. It's an exclusive show, held last year at the Beverly Hills Hilton and next Friday at the Four Seasons Hotel, also in Beverly Hills.

The invite list will include selected music and film executives as well as chefs and food media. The 280 guests will be treated to a sit down dinner showcasing the finest food and wine New Zealand has to offer. Cervena® venison will feature as the main course. The dish, prepared by Chef Conny Anderson, is a "Roasted Cervena Rack with Manuka Honey Glazed Yams, Grilled Asparagus and Tamarrillo Sauce".

Cervena® venison features at New Zealand film and creative showcase in L.A.

>>> SPECIAL REPORT – TRANSPORT OF WEANED DEER

TRANSPORT OF WEANED DEER – A WORD FROM MAF ANIMAL WELFARE

David Barbour, an Animal Welfare Investigator with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry's Special Investigation Group, who administer the Animal Welfare Act 1999 comments that all farmers and their agents have an obligation under the Act to ensure they only select fit and healthy animals for transport.

Animals must be able to stand and bear weight on all limbs and be fit enough to be able to withstand the intended journey without suffering unnecessary pain or distress.

It has been well documented that unweaned deer pose an unacceptable risk during transport and hence the reason for the amendment to the minimum standards introduced in May 1996 to the existing Code of Recommendations and Minimum Standards for the Welfare of Animals Transported Within New Zealand.

This amendment states: "Deer that have been weaned in the last 10 days must not be transported unless they are transported directly from farm to farm immediately following weaning and the total duration of yarding and transport does not exceed 6 hours. These deer when weaned less than 10 days, must not be transported on the same unit as their mothers".

Deer farmers must not only protect the welfare of weaner deer through compliance with the minimum standard but they must also respect the position of transport operators and drivers who also must comply with the minimum standard if they are to avoid liability under the Animal Welfare Act 1999.

The driver of a road vehicle is responsible for the care and welfare of animals during transport. Transport operators have the right to refuse to transport animals they consider unfit whether for health reasons or that the condition of the animals; for example stressed or fractious animals, indicate transport cannot be undertaken without inflicting unreasonable or unnecessary pain or distress.

Failure to comply with this minimum standard may result in an offence under the Animal Welfare Act 1999. Liability is not limited to the transport operator but may also extend to the Agent and the owner of the animals who presented unfit animals and allowed them to be transported in the first instance.

Mr Barbour said the 6 hour farm to farm provision was included to provide some degree of flexibility for deer farmers however as transport operators point out if this option is being abused then it is likely the minimum standard would be tightened.

Deer farmers must plan for weaning well ahead of scheduled weaner deer sales and ensure their weaner deer are weaned a minimum of 10 days before the sale of their choice, Mr Barbour said.

The 6 hour farm to farm provision should only be regarded as a second option or last resort where the circumstances will still ensure compliance with the minimum standard.

Deer Notes

TRANSPORT OF WEANED DEER - REMINDER OF REQUIREMENTS

Once again it's that hectic but exciting time of year when the weaners are yarded and tagging, sorting and actual weaning begins. It's also the time of year when the weaner deer sales are due to begin. With a greater than ever emphasis now being placed on Animal Welfare right across the board it's timely to look at the issues involved with these processes.

The weaning of deer along with the activities such as being handled for the first time, ear tagging and sometimes drenching is, according to scientific data, the most stressful time in that animal's lifetime. Transport is the second most stressful time. With that in mind it's important to recognise why both the Animal Welfare Codes of Practice and the DeerQA Transport Standards stipulate that for both hinds and fawns, weaning should take place at least 10 days prior to transport. There is provision to transport unweaned deer directly to farms provided that a timeframe of 6hrs is not exceeded from actual weaning until delivery at the farm. It is also prohibited to send unweaned deer directly to saleyards and/or hold on-farm sales of unweaned deer and transport them within 10 days.

These minimum standards were put in place to protect the welfare of the animals. In the earlier days of the DeerQA Transport Programme transport operators clearly identified that the area of most insurance claims against them were for losses with weaned deer. It was also identified that in some instances these deer were being subjected to stressors like transport, saleyards and going without food or water for anything up to 48 hours or more after being weaned off their mothers to final delivery onto a new farm.

The implementation of the new transport standards in 1993 dramatically changed the situation and insurance claims dropped to a very low percentage for losses. Although the system didn't suit everybody it certainly worked and animal welfare certainly benefited.

In the past couple of seasons these standards have been stretched out beyond the limits. Transporters are now concerned that they are in some instances being coerced into transporting unweaned deer for greater distances and times than the standards allow. They are reporting increased insurance claims for losses incurred both in transit and after delivery. They are aware of unweaned deer being sent to saleyards and they are unhappy with being put in compromising situations where they seemingly have to play the policing role in advising farmers of the requirements for weaned and unweaned deer.

In the past few seasons animal health issues with weaners in some regions have compounded this situation - particularly bacterial infections involved with the complex issue of foot abscesses (Septic Arthritis), Yesiniosis and the accuracy of claims that animals have been vaccinated.

Unless things improve with compliance in relation to the 6 hours maximum timeframe for farm-to-farm transport of weaned deer transporters have indicated they will be forced to give away farm-to-farm transport altogether for weaned deer within the 10 day period.

The laws work in strange ways at times and irrespective of whether a farmer accepted liability for losses incurred during transport the farmer, agent and the driver or transport operator could still be held liable for any welfare issues that may arise because they knowingly put the animals at risk in any situation.

As an industry we are always looking to move forward and to achieve quality improvement in everything we do. This is no exception and to achieve the quality improvement, we need to make changes so that animal welfare is not compromised.

As I see it, as an industry we have two options:

1. we can accept transporters' call for removing the ability to transport deer within 10 days of weaning within a 6 hour timeframe, or
2. we can accept responsibility for the situation and make the necessary changes to individual farm operations, sale yard situations, stock agent procedures and transport operations that in turn will bring the situation back to an acceptable level of compliance that shows that welfare of weaned deer is not compromised.

In other words: we either stick to the 6 hour limit for transport of deer weaned with 10 days or lose the benefit of this exemption.

The Transport Operators Technical Committee is calling for submissions or comments on this issue and these may be forwarded to DeerQA Transport Technical Committee, c/o PO Box 10-702 Wellington, Fax (04) 382 9143.

John Tacon, Deer Industry New Zealand Quality Manager

	Deer Notes is published by Deer Industry New Zealand PO Box 10-702 Wellington, New Zealand	Tel: +64-4 382 8626 Fax: +64-4 382 9143 www.deernz.org www.velvet.org.nz www.nzvenison.com	While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of its content, Deer Notes alone is not to be substituted for direct advice on any matter addressed.	Deer Industry New Zealand is the operating name of the Game Industry Board.
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