

“Making the DIFFerence”
DEER INDUSTRY FOCUS FARMS PROJECT

Central Regions Focus Farm

**“Feeding something other than
Grass to your deer”
and
“Dealing with Devastating Deer
Disease”**

Tim Aitken and Lucy Robertshawe
“The Steyning”
Makaroro Road
Tikokino

11 February 2009

Principal Local Sponsor:



Programme

- 10.30am Introduction: Mike Holdaway, Chairman
Tony Pearse, Producer Manager, DINZ
- 10.45am See summer cropping programme in action...
- Principal Sponsor: Gerard Hickey, Firstlight, introducing
Christian Klughardt
- Farmax situation: Peter Swinburn, Firstlight
- Summer crops: Dr. Simone Hoskin, Massey University
Dereck Ferguson, Agricom
- Financial report: Adam Stoddart, National Bank
- 1.00pm Lunch on Farm: \$10.00 to Tikokino School for boxed lunch + drink
- 1.30pm Drive to Tikokino hall (now with curtains!) for technical session...
- 1.45pm Introduction to Afternoon Programme...
- 1.50pm The Year ahead: Richard Hilson and Tony Pearse
- 2.20pm GHG working group: Tom Fraser, AgResearch, Climate Change Group
- 2.30pm Dealing with a Devastating Deer Disease- stuff you need to hear!

Jaimie Hunnam, JML
Frank Griffin, DRL
Richard Hilson and Tim Aitken

Please feel free to ask plenty of questions and participate in discussion.

- 4.30pm Wrap-up and Firstlight product with refreshments – fundraiser for DFA Branch.

The Steyning Farm Summary

Land Resource

Farm Area:

105ha	Flat
77ha	Low easy contoured hill country
82ha	Medium contoured hill country
32ha	Easy contoured north facing hill
7.6ha	DoC Reserve
10ha	Lanes, Yards, Wetlands, Shelterbelts etc
317ha	Total

Labour: Tim and Lucy.

Rainfall: approx 1100 to 1300mm.

Soils: Kapua and Raumati silt loam.

Fertility pH 5.8 to 6.3 and Olsen P levels 9 to 20.
Predominantly used RPR based fertilizers.

Phosphate Retention ranges from 95% on the flats to 38% on the Hills.

52 main paddocks.

Water pumped from spring and reticulated to 33 troughs and main dwelling, rest of farm springs, streams and dams.

Livestock

Deer policy: 620 head breeding hinds producing replacements and weaning late February.

290 Weaner stags (65%) slaughtered Sept/Oct/Nov and balance in autumn or second winter.

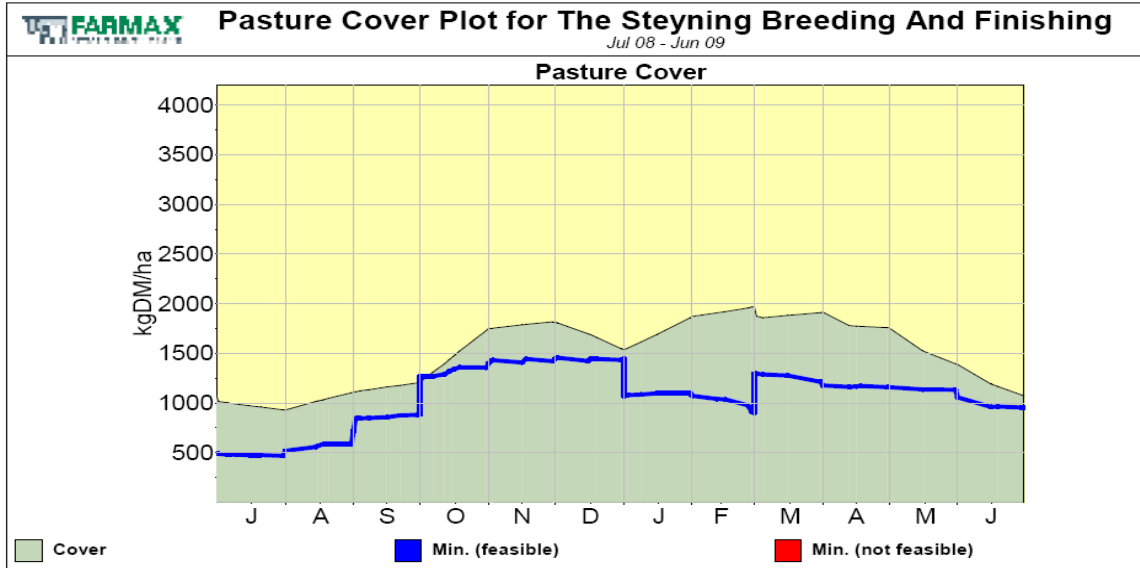
Cattle Policy: Bulls traded as required to maintain feed quality.

Stock Numbers 2008/09

		30-Jun-08			30-Jun-09		
	Class	Number	Su	Total	Number	Su	Total
Cattle	Bull calves	95	4	380	80	4	320
	A Born calves	0	4.5	0	51	4.5	230
	Total Beef	95		380	131		550
Horses		16	7	112	17	7	119
Deer	R1 Hinds	296	1.5	444	263	1.5	395
	R 2 year Hind	164	2.0	328	164	2.0	328
	MA Hind	502	2.2	1104	513	2.2	1129
	R1 Stags	287	1.7	488	267	1.7	454
	R2 - Year Stag	63	2.1	132	25	2.1	53
	Sire Stags	17	3.0	51	17	3.0	51
	Total Deer	1329			1249		
	total stock units wintered			3039			3079
Effective area		299	ha		299	ha	
su/ha wintered		10.2			10.3		

Based on DIFF's new Standard Stock units

The Steyning Pasture Cover Jan 2009



Date	Cover kgDM/ha			Growth kgDM/ha/d
	Minimum	Forecast	Actual	
Start	489	1073	1073	
31 Jul	521		930	3.4
31 Aug	717		1112	14.3
30 Sep	889		1207	15.8
31 Oct	1398		1749	39.1
30 Nov	1444		1819	27.7
31 Dec	1444		1537	14.5
31 Jan	1072	1870		30.0
28 Feb	900	1970		20.0
31 Mar	1177	1917		25.0
30 Apr	1159	1757		15.0
31 May	1057	1388		8.0
30 Jun	955	1072		6.3

Key Points

- Lower than expected Pasture Growth Dec - 14.5kgDM/ha vs 35 budgeted due to dry conditions
- June cover 1072 – 500 hinds on silage, with all cattle on Chou for July/Aug
- July/Aug stock on grass - 274ha
 - 560 weaners - 1120kg/day
 - 155 R2 in fawn hinds 465kg/day
 - Total consumption/ha on grass 5.8kgDM/day – matches growth

Crops on The Steyning for Summer 2008-09

As a result of a small Technical group meeting in September the following summer cropping programme was put in place.

Given that the aim of the DIFF programme is heavier weaners (which we felt we could influence) as well as more of them (and with nearly 100% scanning and all early pregnancies we couldn't influence much more on The Steyning) the aim was to improve lactational performance and hence weaning weights...

Winifred Rape: summer feed for R2 hinds. Went in too shallow, got heaps of fatten and was re-drilled. Good strike second time around with 6mm rain. This was in a winter crop for R2 stags earlier this year.

Chicory and rape: sown with half rate SusCon in a worn-out grass paddock full of grass grub. Direct drilled by Tim and got off to a very good start. No plantain in this mix which should allow a couple more spraying options for weed control. Will be halved with a semi-permanent electric fence and temporary electric subdivision.

Lucerne: 27 bales wrapped off 4 hectares in late October. Had to be sprayed for aphids in mid November and the growth in the next three weeks had to be seen to be believed. More cut in January. This crop is undergoing something of a resurgence in CHB at present.

Summer feed rape: this paddock had oats in it over winter and was fed to R1 bulls on twice-daily breaks. This was a bit patchy at the time but has come away well. The paddock was pugged so a crop seemed the best option to get it leveled somewhat. The other option considered was to DD a short term grass in and take a punt on the weather. This will be direct drilled into Samson AR1 in autumn.

Existing chicory: This is that stunning paddock that you saw at the April (drought!) Field Day. There were 75 R1 deer on it through early spring and the paddock was halved with a three wire electric fence. It got away so 50 bulls went on and ended up being topped. There was quite a bit of leaf die-back which looked a bit wasteful and it continues to try to go to seed!

An important message that seems to be coming from the cropping programme is to get good advice, do things properly and to seek help or advice sooner rather than later.

An interesting aside is that the sales of Chicory in CHB more than quadrupled in spring- the DIFF project is definitely having an effect!

Cropping options comparing yearlings with lactating hinds

Yearling deer on crops...

Yield	56%						
	gms/hd/day	100	150	200	250	300	350
	CW/hd inc	3.2	4.9	6.5	8.1	9.7	11.4
	Intake kgDM/hd	2.1	2.2	2.4	2.6	2.8	3
		c/kgDM					
Schedule	\$5.50	\$0.15	\$0.21	\$0.26	\$0.30	\$0.33	\$0.36
\$/kg/CW	\$6.00	\$0.16	\$0.23	\$0.28	\$0.32	\$0.36	\$0.39
	\$6.50	\$0.17	\$0.25	\$0.30	\$0.35	\$0.39	\$0.42
	\$7.00	\$0.19	\$0.27	\$0.33	\$0.38	\$0.42	\$0.46
	\$7.50	\$0.20	\$0.29	\$0.35	\$0.40	\$0.45	\$0.49
	\$8.00	\$0.21	\$0.31	\$0.37	\$0.43	\$0.48	\$0.52

Note Assumes no schedule change over the period

Lactating hinds on crops...

	1-Jan	to	28-Feb			
	58 days			Hind and fawn intake	4.7 kgDM/hd.day	
				Total consumption	272.6 kgDM/hd.day	
				LWG/hd/day		
	gms	200	250	300	350	400
	LW/hd inc	11.6	14.5	17.4	20.3	23.2
		c/kgDM				
Store value	\$3.00	\$0.13	\$0.16	\$0.19	\$0.22	\$0.26
\$/kg/LW	\$3.50	\$0.15	\$0.19	\$0.22	\$0.26	\$0.30
	\$4.00	\$0.17	\$0.21	\$0.26	\$0.30	\$0.34
	\$4.50	\$0.19	\$0.24	\$0.29	\$0.34	\$0.38
	\$5.00	\$0.21	\$0.27	\$0.32	\$0.37	\$0.43

Note: No value for hind condition or improved conception rate

On-farm happenings- an update...

- It has not been an easy summer- low rain fall and scorching days have seen grass growth rates plummet. 250mm last six months
- 400 tonnes silage made and filled the self-feed stack to the brim. Three cuts of Lucerne baleage also made - (120 bales) this is to be ad-lib fed to weaners over winter.
- Early start and finish to fawning, as predicted by scanning- R2 hinds in particular.
- Fawns tagged and sampled weighed in mid-January. R2 hinds and fawns have been on the rape/chicory crop but low rainfall is putting the crop under stress.
- Weaning may start soon- it is staying too dry and with so many early born fawns this is a good option. Or is it?
- The yearling hinds have been tested for worm burdens, which were very low. They will be re-tested in later February and will probably be drenched pre-rut.
- The yearling hinds have been split into two mating mobs for ease of management and stags joined in mid-January. Fifteen spikers went to 100 hinds and five two year stags went to the remaining 70 hinds. One of the two year olds is a smaller cull animal to act as a diversion for the more socially active two year old stags.
- About 150 hinds will be AI'd with DIL semen. DIL have donated 25 straws of stag semen to The Steyning, as they did last year.
- That leaves about 250 MA hinds to naturally mate. There will be 100 run with two Peel Forest B11 stags (see page 9 of handout) to continue the terminal sire 'trial' and the balance of 150 to be single sire mated by European sires.
- We will weigh and condition score samples of the hind age groups at weaning and will scan for conception date as we did last year.
- We have a few farms enlisted in the yearling hind mating plan discussed at the last field day and will look to scan a couple more local herds for conception date as well- so there will be plenty to discuss after the scanning season ends!
- Faecal egg counts and lungworm counts later last year resulted in Tim avoiding at least two drenches he had planned to give. Similarly, FEC on some bull groups also resulted in significant drench and time savings. We will do a FEC Reduction test this winter (in deer) and report the results. We will continue to monitor the need to drench in young stock as well as mature animals.
- Copper tests pre-fawning (done at the last minute!) were very low. With no time to really rectify in a practical sense, nothing was done and there is no evidence of animal health issues (light hinds, arthritic fawns) but this will need more monitoring and in better time in 2009.
- HBRC grants will assist in the fencing of the area below the silage stack (underway) and the development of a sediment trap and a large wetland below the hill. Watch this space...

INAUGURAL BLOODTEST AUCTION

in association with
DIFF CENTRAL REGION

11 February 2009

- Up to 200 Top Quality Paralisa Blood tests, technical advice and veterinary collection on offer.
- Blood test your in-fawn yearlings, or your MA hinds. Anything!
- Orientate your breeding herd and make the right breeding decisions.
- An original and special offering...

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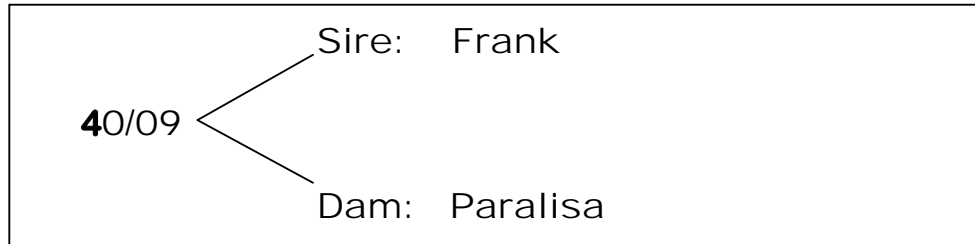

PGG Wrightson

NOTE:

- Three lots offered, including Paralisa blood tests and technical advice from DRL as well as collection of samples and input from Vet Services (HB) Limited.
- Funds raised will be donated to local DFA branches to assist with projects within the DIFF programme.
- Total retail value of offering is \$3,400 plus GST.
- If funds raised for each lot surpass 50% of normal retail value, DRL will donate to the winning bidder and to the under bidder additional Paralisa tests at no cost (see last note).
- Vet Services will donate time and travel to collect the samples of all winning bids but not those of the under bidders. VSHB will pay local vets to do sampling for real “out-of-towners”!
- Testing for successful bidder/under bidder to be done at a mutually suitable time for purchaser and vendor.
- Lot 1 passes \$400- winner gets 60 tests plus collection; under bidder gets 20 free tests. Lots 2 and 3 pass \$300- winner gets 45 tests plus collection; under bidder gets 15 free tests.

LOT 1

40 Paralisa blood tests, technical advice and sample collection



By herd sire Frank, our original Irish import. He has high BV's for body size and is the original sire of thousands of outstanding test results.

He is also one of our favourite stud sires with his very loud and captivating roar!

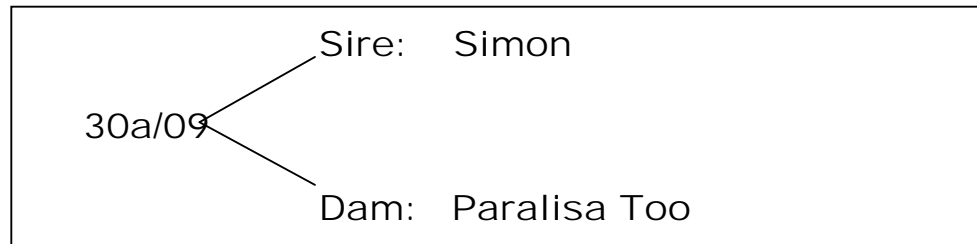
Dam Paralisa is our most reliable dam, currently top ranked over all other dams in the industry.

This is a highly recommended pairing of real value to any serious deer farmer.

Retail Value incl. Bonus Tests	\$1200.00
Reserve to receive 60 tests	\$400.00

LOT 2

30 Paralisa blood tests, technical advice and sample collection



Our young sire Simon is outstanding in his field. While Simon is not as big as Frank, he is a very reliable performer and our Go-To Man on any job. We value him highly and he is our choice to succeed Frank (if and when Frank gets put out to pasture).

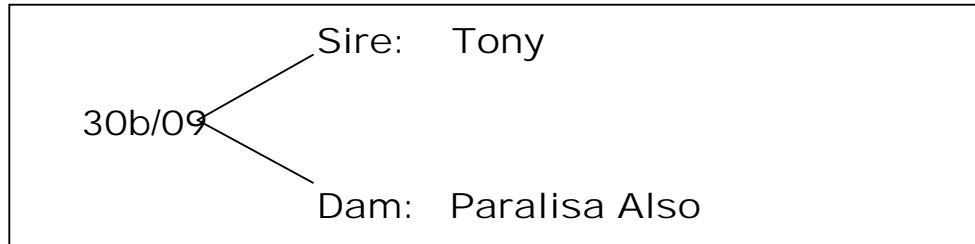
Dam Paralisa Too is our latest breeding, full of Johnin, PPA and EVA lineage. Her results are so reliable that we intend using her as long as possible.

New breeding but super good!

Retail Value incl. Bonus Tests	\$900.00
Reserve to receive 45 tests	\$300.00

LOT 3

30 Paralisa blood tests, technical advice and sample collection



Our senior sire Tony is an Industry Great and we have only been able to make this special one-off offering by the use of AI. Super Sire Tony was long ago put out to pasture and we felt that an opportunity for a natural mate would be detrimental to his health (we are quite attached to him and we enjoy having him around!).

Dam Paralisa Also is however a young thing and will more than offset the use of such 'old' sire genetics.

An interesting mix of old and new but a serious offering nonetheless!

Retail Value incl. Bonus Tests	\$900.00
Reserve to receive 45 tests	\$300.00