

"Making the Difference"

DEER INDUSTRY FOCUS FARMS PROJECT

Northern Regions – DAVID AND KAY DEWAR: NGAKURU

Issue 5
November 2009

This is an update on the farm as at 7th December 2009.

To date the spring weather has been a roller coaster ride with plenty of up's and down's. After a record cold May/June period the spring looked promising with good growth in August/September. Then came the infamous October which like in recent years was cool and wet but to a greater degree this year. I still have memories of an unscheduled overnight stay in Hunterville trying to go north in early October. November was very dry until some recent significant rain early December.

David and Kaye were carrying the following stock at 30th November:

Stock Class	Number
MA Hinds	264
1yr stags/hinds	359
MA ewes	292 + lambs
Mixed Cattle	65

The stock demand for December is expected to be 44 kgDM/grazing ha/day. Pasture growth (post rain) was estimated at 40 kgDM/ha/day therefore pasture cover is expected to remain static at around 1,900 kgDM/ha.

There is currently a total of 66ha (47% of the farm) out of the grazing rotation: 55ha spray topped; 5ha swedes for next winter; 6ha turnips ex swedes. If this area were to be in the grazing rotation the stock demand would reduce to 24kgDM/ha/day and pasture cover would be increasing rapidly. The aim is to keep pasture cover in the grazing rotation under 2,000 kgDM/ha in an attempt to maintain reasonable pasture quality.

The spray topping area has been increased relative to last year and was undertaken in early November at an all up cost of \$32/ha. This is expected to return over \$50/ha in terms of improved pasture quality flowing through into improved weaner growth, especially in the autumn period.

The breeding hinds are in five mobs set stocked at the following rates:

Mob	Number	No./ha
Control (natural mated)	62	8.29
Eastern(AI)	42	7.19
Wapiti (AI)	43	5.78*
Home sire (AI)	45	7.13
Purchased (natural)	47	8.73
Total	239	7.51av.

Poorer paddock

Facilitators:

Mark Macintosh

AgFirst

Ph: 07 307 1142

Mobile: 027 449 1077

Fax: 07 307 1149

mark.mac@agfirst.co.nz

Robin Hopkirk

Animal Health Services

Ph: 07 348 3839

Mobile: 021 540 731

Fax: 07 348 1948

the.vetcave@clear.net.nz

rhoppy@extra.co.nz

Focus Farmers:

Dave Dewar & Kay Garland

376 Parsons Road

RD 1

Ngakuru

Rotorua 3077

Ph: (07) 333 1952

daviddewar@farmside.co.nz

Upcoming events

**Next field day to be held
on**

**Wednesday, 3 Feb 2010 at
David & Kay Dewar's farm,
Ngakuru**

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of its content, this newsletter alone is not to be substituted for direct advice on any matter addressed.



“Making the DIFFerence”

DEER INDUSTRY FOCUS FARMS PROJECT

Northern Regions – DAVID AND KAY DEWAR: NGAKURU

Issue 5
November 2009

To the end of November 36% of yearlings had been sold. This was very similar to previous years but at a better weight (54.5kg). Yearling growth rates from the end of July to end October were between 210-250g/day. These would no doubt be higher if we had got a half decent October.

Soil test results indicated a high need for lime therefore 165 tonne will be applied (2.5t/ha x 30ha and 1.5t/ha x 60ha). In addition 80% of the farm will receive Sulphur Super Gain at 100kg/ha.

In the short term the aim is to:

- Ensure hinds and fawns are well fed on quality pasture.
- Winter crops are established.
- Market yearlings. Aim for 60% sold by 31 Dec.

Mark MacIntosh, Focus Farm Facilitator

Report from David Dewar:

Things are getting dry at the moment. The spray topping has been too effective in the fawning paddocks so I have let the hinds have an extra adjacent paddock. I have also started giving them some palm kernel. Still have some silage to put in but it is not looking too good so Palm Kernel will be high on the deer menu again this winter.

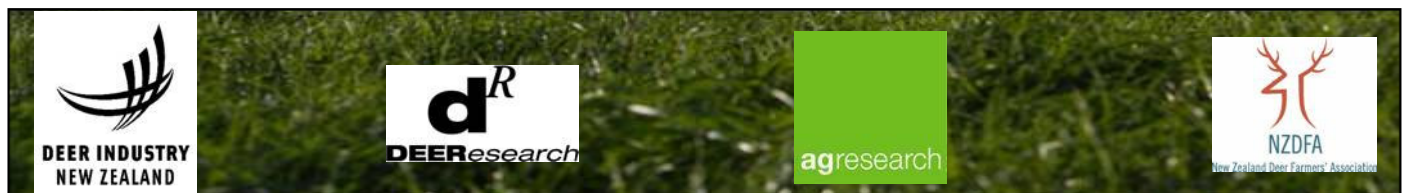
Most of the yearling stags have been got away at not very exciting prices. (Meat processors and financial advisor couldn't pick their noses let alone what they are meant to know about), Thank god a man never bought too many weaners at \$6 a kilo live weight on their prediction of \$7-50 to \$8-00 average schedule.

Put Italian rye and Plantain in one of the winter crop paddocks. It is now 'pumping' and the young stock love it.

The turnips and Pasja are looking good for the hinds and fawns to go onto in late January early February so hopefully good weaning weights (80kg? I wish) Marking will be slow this year with all the AI mobs and naturally mated mobs having to come in separately, getting an electronic tag, a numbered tag, an earmark, two jabs and being weighed. Not only will the deer be confused but Cliff and I as well. At least with their electronic tags in they will be in the database and know where their home is! I have been assured that getting a weight gain from then on will be simple (lets hope).

Bought Kay a new sprayer this year and she has the place looking a picture considering the amount she has to do. I only have to convince her that hills are only flats on a lean and the weeds won't stand a chance.

David, Focus Farmer



“Making the DIFFerence”

DEER INDUSTRY FOCUS FARMS PROJECT

Northern Regions – DAVID AND KAY DEWAR: NGAKURU

*Issue 5
November 2009*

Robin’s Report:

With the venison price falling away it is probably time to stop relying on this flat price structure and go back to chasing the early chilled market - i.e. the Focus Farm catch cry; “Heavier, earlier”.

Last month we trialed the ultra high frequency (UHF) RFID tags at the Focus Farm. These are the presently available pig tags made in China. The intention is to establish the RFID tags for deer that are commercially viable. These can all be easily read using a wand but in a commercial deer, sheep and even cattle situation reading must be quicker than is possible with a wand. Subsequently the aim is to use panel readers and push the animals through a 2.4m gateway reading 100% of the tags. UHF tags should increase the range and speed of reading over the existing low frequency tags.

The best result we got, however, was 75% of the tagged weaners herded through the gate being accurately read. We feel that with some adjustment to the specifications, and changing quality control of the tag production, the aim of accurately reading 100% can be achieved.

The stags have all had their velvet removed so I have had the opportunity to get close and personal with our new import stags. At present the Sonny Bill R2’s that the Focus Farm bought are tall and leggy. Is this due to the coldest November on record having an impact on the Central Plateau?

The copper analysis that we have been doing for the last 2 years in the weaners has shown that the copper levels have been decreasing over the year. This is interesting, considering the discussions on the effect of body levels of copper in PKE supplemented stock. These weaners the have had access to PKE. In fact, last year they were eating 0.5 kg of PKE each for 60days during the 2008 winter, the copper levels still dropped. This is largely subjective but there is some fear mongering on the dangers of PKE regarding copper toxicity. Ask your veterinarian rather than follow the press too much.

We will have some early weight comparisons from the fawns of the various trial sire groups by the February field day. They are being RFID tagged and weighed between the 18th and 20th of January.

I look forward to seeing you all at David’s on the 3rd of February. The other proposed field day dates are 2nd April at Rangitaiki and the 2nd July back at David’s.

Season’s Greetings to you all. Let us hope to have regular rain, a mild autumn, a predictable winter and a traditional spring.

Robin, Focus Farm Facilitator

