The Wool Press

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All the regular features and more!

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the first edition of the Wool Press for 2005. I'm sitting at my desk writing this editorial on another beautiful summer's day and we've already had our fair share of good weather this summer. However, what constitutes good weather for some isn't always so welcome to others and I know that most farmers and gardeners reading this editorial would really appreciate a good spell of rainfall. Wouldn't it be great if you could order up rainfall at night and sunshine during the daylight hours – perhaps scientists in the future will be able to do just that. With all this talk on the subject of weather I should draw your attention to the article on Environmental Change experiments in the Falklands by Stef Bokhorst on page 10. It will be interesting to see what his research reveals about global warming and climate change in latitudes such as ours.

Spread throughout the rest of the magazine is a variety of articles which should keep you interested. Damien has written a couple of short articles on potential problems with ram lambs and identification of grass species. Farmers should take particular note of his comments regarding the danger of marking male lambs at a relatively old age and this is before taking into consideration the animal welfare implications of such a practice. There's a very full write up about the 18th West Falkland Ram and Fleece Show by Nigel Knight and an encouraging piece about the prospects for the Wool Centre in Stanley. From my own very limited observations that business does seem to have "taken off" over the past month or two. Sue Harvey has written a very useful article on mastitis in sheep and cattle – not a major problem in the Falkland Islands but an annoying one when it occurs especially if it's in your best house cow. And finally I particularly liked the last article about the sheep in Yorkshire, which have learnt to roll "commando-style" over sheep grids to get to the better pastures on the other side. Has anyone here ever seen a sheep do something similar or are sheep grids too recent a feature in the Falklands?

Wishing everyone a very happy and healthy 2005,

Stephen Pointing

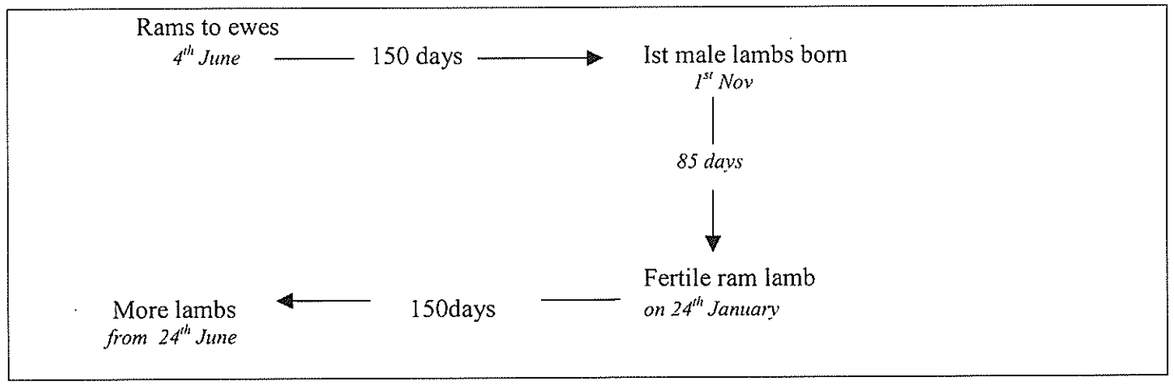
BEWARE RAM LAMBS

Damien O' Sullivan

Ram lambs can be a problem. They can cause damage to planned lambing intervals and time of lambing. It is easy to show how much of a problem they can be when we do a few simple calculations on how they can ruin breeding programs.

When we have an extended joining season and lamb marking at weaning it is easy to have a ram lamb mating with ewes before he is marked.

For example: in a flock where the rams have been with the ewes for 80 days and lambing is due to start on the 1st of November we can have the following happening:



So how does a ram lamb get to mating age? If birth weight is 3kgs and he gains 200gms/day it takes 85 days to get to 23kgs when males can be fertile.

If lambs are not marked until the end of February some ewes could be lambing again from the 24th of June through to the 24th of July. Not good in our winter climate!

With this scenario ewes that lamb out of season are likely to lose a lamb, be low in condition and only have a short period of time where they can get in lamb at the correct time. As a result of this lambing percentages can begin to fall.

The problem of ram lambs needs to be carefully considered if you lamb mark at weaning time.

RAM TESTING

Recommended for all sheep farmers, but especially anyone who could be selling breeding stock in the future. International buyers normally require a supply flock to be free of Brucella ovis for at least 3 years before purchase date. Falkland Island buyers should be aware of the consequences of accidentally introducing the disease from untested stock.

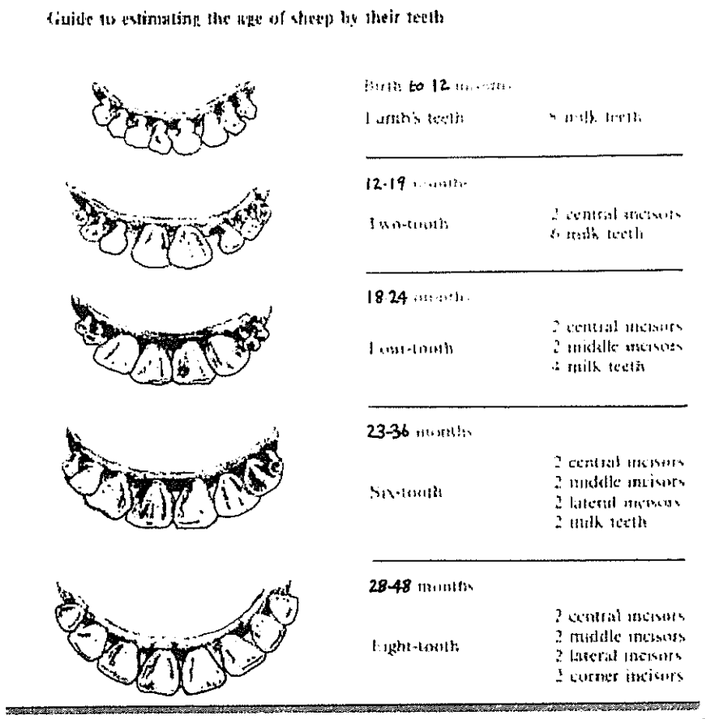
Shortly after shearing is a good time to have your rams tested, though it can be done at any time of year. All rams offered for sale from the National Stud Flock will have had a negative blood test result for Brucella ovis.

For more information about the disease refer to the October 2004 Wool Press or call Sue Harvey at the vet section (27366) to arrange your test (at zero cost).

HOW TO TELL THE AGE OF SHEEP

Source: AgFacts, NSW Agriculture

The number, condition and order of eruption of the permanent incisors of sheep are the main indicators of their age. There is, however, a wide variation in the time of eruption of the permanent incisors caused by variations in breed, strain and environment, and particularly in nutrition.



The teeth of a sheep are divided into two distinct sections, namely, eight permanent incisors in the lower front jaw and twenty-four molars, the latter being divided into six on each side of the upper and lower jaw. Sheep have no teeth in the front part of the upper jaw, which consists of a dense, hard, fibrous pad.

When born, the lamb usually has no teeth. Within a week after birth, the milk teeth or temporary teeth appear in the front lower jaw and by the time the lamb is two months olds these, eight in all, have erupted.

These temporary teeth are replaced by permanent incisors, which appear in pairs, commencing with the two central teeth, followed by one on either side at intervals, until the eight temporary teeth have been replaced. During the period the teeth are growing, sheep are referred to by the number of permanent incisors present, such as two-tooth, four-tooth, six-tooth, eight-tooth or full mouth.

The accompanying diagram sets out the development of the permanent incisors and the variation in age at which they may erupt.

Only a rough estimate of a sheep's age can be made by looking at its teeth. When estimating the age, it is important to bear in mind whether the breed is early or late maturing. British breeds, for example, mature at a faster rate than Merinos, and their teeth erupt at an earlier age.

The condition of the teeth will vary according to the type of feed and country grazed on. On long, soft feed the teeth will grow long from lack of wear, but remain in good condition. On short feed, where close grazing is necessary, particularly if the soil is sandy or gravelly, the teeth will wear down.

After the eight permanent incisors have appeared, the next stage is known as 'broken mouth'. This is a progressive deterioration, the rate depending on the condition under which the sheep was grown. Estimation of age at this stage is very difficult. The teeth gradually become longer with wide spaces, eventually falling out, or they may wear down, become loose and fall out. After the teeth have fallen out the sheep is known as a 'gummy'.

Observations at Trangie

To demonstrate the wide variation which occurs in the eruption of teeth, the result of a study on the growth of teeth in Merino sheep is given below. The study was conducted over three years at Trangie Agricultural Research Station with nine sheep until they were full mouth.

Regarding the milk teeth of the sheep under observation, two were born with two milk teeth, eight had their milk teeth up at five weeks and all nine had their milk teeth up at eight weeks.

The wide variation demonstrated by the observations at Trangie, occurred in nine sheep only, and it is possible that a greater range of variation would occur in larger numbers. The results, however, show that the sheep being studied reached the two-tooth stage in a period covering nineteen months; the four-tooth stage between the age of twenty-one and twenty-two months; and the six-tooth stage between twenty-seven and thirty-two months; and they were full mouthed, or had eight incisors fully up, at thirty-eight months.

No records were kept in connection with the change which took place in the molars, because the molars are never examined when determining age.

Age	Teeth
15 months	Only one sheep was rising 2-tooth. 16 months two were 2-tooth and a third was rising 2-tooth.
19 months	All sheep showing as 2-tooth, one rising 4-tooth.
22 months	All were 4-tooth or rising 4-tooth.
27 months	Two sheep were rising 6-tooth.
28 months	Two more were rising 6 tooth.
29 months	All sheep (eight at this stage) were rising 6-tooth.
32 months	All sheep were 6-tooth.
34 months	Six sheep were rising full mouth.
36 months	All sheep were rising full mouth
38 months	All sheep were full mouth.

THANK YOU & GOODBYE

Katherine Bryan

I am approaching the end of my time here as a Travelling Teacher and this is a good time to reflect back on the last year. The job is unique. It has been a privilege to teach in a family environment rather than a school setting. As a travelling Teacher our beat lasts six weeks, spending two weeks at a time with three different families. The other four weeks the children have telephone lessons.

I have had the opportunity to take telephone lessons, fortunately on each occasion the lessons had been prepared. I do not envy the telephone teachers' task of preparing lessons for children reception age to year six. Planning for my two weeks at each place, though essential, has been the only downside to the job. It takes as long to plan for one or two children as for a class.

Each part of my beat is different. At Johnsons Harbour I've had the opportunity to get a feel of how all the Falklands must have been like back when peat was the fuel used by all. Being able to bank up a peat stove for the night is a new skill I've mastered. Most nights I managed but I must admit the fire did go out on a couple of occasions.

At South Harbour I particularly enjoy my walks, spotting the wildlife, whales, seals and dolphins in the sea and best of all - penguins. The last part of this final beat will be at South Harbour and as well as being with the family again I'm looking forward to visiting the Gentoo colony and seeing the chicks.

My walks at Kingsford Valley Farm bring reminders of the Conflict. I found it surprisingly moving to visit the San Carlos cemetery. Surprising in that, before I came here, the Falkland Islands were a news item from the past, a long way away from England.

The best part of this past year has been working with the children. I feel I have got to know each individual's strengths and weaknesses well – and hopefully have been able to intervene and use their strengths when aspects of schoolwork have been problematic. I have enjoyed working with all the children, including the pupils at Fox Bay School. The Winter School, during Farmers Week, and Summer Camp, recently held at Port Stephens, gave me the opportunity to meet and work with more of the Camp children. What a great bunch of confident children.

I arrived as a complete stranger but each family made me feel welcome – thank you.

THE EIGHTEENTH WEST FALKLAND RAM & FLEECE SHOW
2004 REPORT

Nigel Knight

The morning of the 28th December started off dull and overcast. This contrasted quite markedly from the exuberance of the visitors to the Eighteenth West Falkland Ram and Fleece Show. The residents and visitors to Fox Bay Village were anticipating 'a good day out' and were not disappointed. The weather continued to sulk for most of the day unsuccessfully trying to jeopardise the barbecue, which this year had changed from the wooden ash pit types to Tex and Mandy Alazia's gas fired models.

Keith had already been working hard transforming the Woolshed and was helped for a while by Jason although their work was not yet over. Keith started off by taking entries, some of which had already arrived by FIGAS. When Tony and Susan arrived with their entries they also gave a hand; Doug Martin also assisted with this onerous task. Then Tony suddenly disappeared in a cloud of dust which rivalled the trail just created by the Islander Aircraft taking off after delivering Harriet Hall, the Acting Governor, to present the prizes in the afternoon. Tony was heading back to Hill Cove muttering ' I forgot something!' and 'I'll be back.'

Once the entries were all in, Doug Martin, Mike Evans and Jason Alazia set about the daunting and difficult task of selecting the Fleece having the highest Commercial Value. They did this by working out the clean weight by estimating the yield and then multiplying this by the actual greasy weight. They then estimated the average fibre diameter before multiplying this by today's prices for that micron wool. Once this had been accomplished the next task was to select from the forty-six Rams that were entered, in the three Ram classes the one they considered to have the 'Best Conformation' along with the 'Runner up' and third place. Next they had to judge the Champion

Ram and Reserve Champion from all the Rams exhibited in the Show, not a job for the faint-hearted.

A total of eighty fleeces from eleven Farms and forty-six rams from eight Farms were exhibited at this year's Show. All the entries had been carefully selected from tens of thousands of fleeces and hundreds of Rams, every one a credit to its owner.

By now the Barbecue, which this year in the capable hands of Justin, Leon and Helen, Griz and Bill plus other numerous helpers, was in full swing. This fortified all those that intended judging the three classes of Rams and the three classes of fleeces, which now awaited them back at the Woolshed. Once this task had been accomplished the time consuming job of counting up the judging slips took place, before the final results were known. These were all then competently collated by Cllr. Hansen. The sheep used in the fleece weight competition was then skilfully relieved of its fleece by Ali and both the fleece and the sheep were then weighed. This enabled the winners in the other competitions to be worked out. It was also very satisfying to see an increasing number of entries in the 'Under 21's Sheep Judging Competition', Leon Marsh kindly produced the 'Master judging sheets' to enable the results from this competition to be worked out. During the Show Marlene recorded the highlights on camera.

Promptly at six p.m. a good crowd once again assembled in the Woolshed for the Prize Giving. The Prize Giving brought this years Show to a close, after which the focus of attention now moved back again to the Social Club for more drinking and dancing into the early hours of the next morning. Thus bringing to an end another successful Ram and Fleece Show.

THE EIGHTEENTH WEST FALKLAND RAM & FLEECE SHOW
2004 PRIZE LIST

PRIZE	DONATED BY	WON BY	POINTS
CLASS 1 FULL WOOL RAM HOGGET			
1st Prize	Engraved Challenge Shield presented by Mr & Mrs Austin Davis + £100 presented by Newton Investment Ltd	Goring Station	58
2nd Prize	£75 donated by Standard Chartered Bank	Boundary Farm	53
3rd Prize	£50 donated by Cable & Wireless Plc	Goring Station	52
4th Prize	£25 donated by R.M. Pitaluga & family	Shallow Harbour	50
CLASS 2 FULL WOOL SHEARLING RAM			
1st Prize	Lyn Blake Perpetual Challenge Cup + £100 presented by Newton Investment Ltd	K Knight	68
2nd Prize	£75 presented by Cable & Wireless Plc	Coast Ridge Farm	53
3rd Prize	£50 presented by Saddle Computers	Shallow Harbour	50
4th Prize	£25 presented by the Rural Business Association	Port North	33
CLASS 3 FULL WOOL MATURE RAM			
1st Prize	Falkland Islands Wool Marketing Challenge Cup & Replica + £40 presented by Falkland Landholdings Ltd	Coast Ridge Farm	71
2nd Prize	A prize donated by the Falkland Islands Company Ltd	Boundary Farm	66
3rd Prize	£60 presented by Falkland Island Wool Growers	Shallow Harbour	48
4th Prize	£40 presented by Falkland Island Wool Growers	Rincon Ridge	44
Medallions for 1st, 2nd & 3rd places were also presented in this class by EC & PR Short			
* WHERE RAMS OR FLEECES HAVE EQUAL POINTS, THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF FIRST PLACES IS USED TO DECIDE RANKINGS			

CLASS 4 HOGGET FLEECE			
1st Prize	Silver Challenge Cup & Replica presented by Meredith Fishing Company & Falkland Hydrocarbon Development Ltd + £40 voucher donated by Falkland Farmers	Main Point	38
2nd Prize	£50 fuel voucher presented by Stanley Services	Mount Kent	33
3rd Prize	£35 voucher donated by Falkland Farmers	Boundary Farm	25
4th Prize	£25 voucher from Falkland Farmers	Horseshoe Bay	23
CLASS 5 ANY FINE WOOL FLEECE OTHER THAN HOGGET			
1st Prize	'Governors Cup'. Challenge cup presented by H.E. The Governor + £50 & replica presented by Newton Investment Management Ltd (FIG'S Investment Managers)	Mount Kent	52
2nd Prize	£75 from Newton Investment	Mount Kent	25
3rd Prize	£50 from Newton Investment	Golding Island	25
4th Prize	£25 from Newton Investment	Main Point	24
CLASS 6 ANY 'B' TYPE WETHER FLEECE			
1st Prize	Challenge cup presented by Coast Ridge Farm + replica presented by Ursula Wanglin + £50 from Port Howard Farm	Mount Kent	59
2nd Prize	£70 donated by F.I. Sheep Owners Association	Golding Island	25
3rd Prize	£50 donated by Stanley Electrical	Peaks Farm	22
4th Prize	£30 presented by F.I. Sheep Owners Association	Coast Ridge Farm	19

ADDITONAL PRIZES

The champion ram owned by Coast Ridge Farm won the 'Patricia Luxton Perpetual Challenge Cup' + replica from the Luxton family, Chartres.

The 'Cable & Wireless Perpetual Challenge Cup' + Replica presented to the reserve champion was won by Coast Ridge Farm.

Rosettes were presented for 1st, 2nd, 3rd & 4th prize winners in all six classes. A champion and reserve champion rosette was also given. These were all provided by Jim McAdam, Department of Agriculture, Northern Ireland.

A sliver challenge cup + £100 for the fleece with the highest commercial value & £50 for the runner up was presented by the F.I. Development Corporation won by Mount Kent Farm with a fleece having an estimated gross value of £13.91. Runners up also had a value of £13.91 won by Main Point.

£100 for the best conformation ram was won by Coast Ridge Farm, £75 for 2nd place won by Goring Station and 3rd place won £50 also won by Goring Station. All prizes presented by FIMCo.

A challenge cup and replica for the farm with the most points in all classes was given by Mr & Mrs Owen Summers and won by Coast Ridge Farm + £50 from Port Howard Farm.

ADDITIONAL COMPETITIONS

In the 'Guess the Sheep Weight Competition' the winner received £25 from Meredith Fishing Co. won by Marlene Marsh who guessed closest with 42.6 kilos. Actual weight was 42.5 kilos.

The winner of the 'Fleece Weight Competition' received £30 from RBC Ltd, was Lennie Ford who was closest with a guess of 5.3kg. Actual weight was 6.0kg.

The winner of the 'Micron Estimate' competition received £50 from the Argos Fishing Company which was won by Donna Evans who guessed 19.75mu. Actual mu was 19.77. Runner up won £25 from C&W Plc; this was Susie Bonner with 19.8mu.

The Department of Agriculture and Falkland Islands Wool Marketing again sponsored the 'Sheep Judging Competition for the under 21's' won by Reba Peck. Runners up were Rachel Marsh and Leigh Robertson. 3rd prize went to Erica Berntsen and Felicity Alazia.

ADDITONAL CREDITS

Warrah Knitwear kindly donated £50 for show funds.

FIGAS once again generously agreed to fly fleeces free of charge.

The Southern Cross Social Club for financing trophy engraving and the BBQ with meat supplied by Rincon Ridge and Coast Ridge (burgers, sausages and bread rolls by Shirley). Cooking by Justin, Leon and Helen, Griz and Bill with help from friends. BBQ pits loaned by Tex and Mandy Alazia.

Keith and Jason for transforming the woolshed.

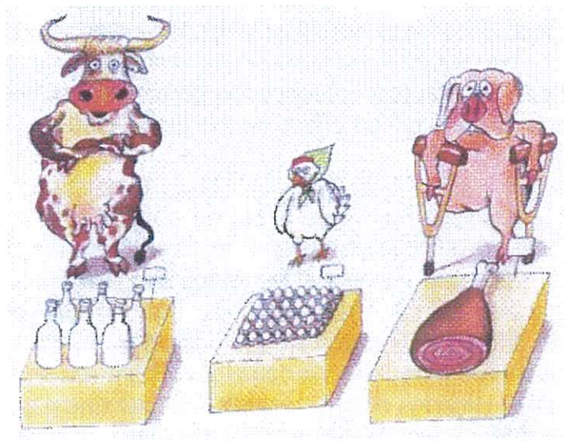
Doug Martin, Mike Evans and Jason Alazia for judging the special categories and all those who did the sums afterwards – in particular Ian Hansen. Marlene Marsh for photographs.

The Department of Agriculture for their assistance before and after the event – in particular Glynis.

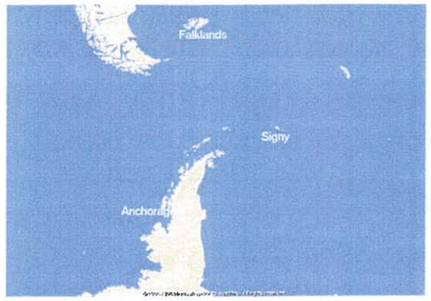
H.E. The Acting Governor for presenting the prizes.

The committee of the Southern Cross Social Club.

And not forgetting the residents of Fox Bay for being excellent hosts.



ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE EXPERIMENTS ON THE FALKLANDS

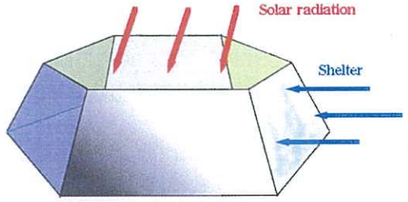


A Short Introduction

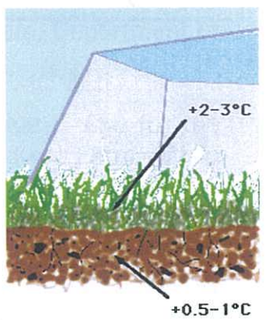
Hello, my name is Stef Bokhorst and I am a PhD student from the Netherlands. Last year (2003-2004) I visited the Falklands to set up an experiment on Saladero farm and along the Antarctic Peninsula. The main focus of my research is on the possible effects of environmental change on the functioning of ecosystems. I am looking mainly on changes in vegetation composition, soil arthropod communities (i.e. mites and springtails) and decomposition.

Environmental Change

Environmental change will affect most ecosystems on earth, but not to the same extent. Because environmental change is likely to be greatest in high latitude ecosystems, Arctic and Antarctic ecosystems may be more affected than others. The Antarctic ecosystems are relatively simple in terms of species richness, trophic structure and food web complexity, compared to the mid-latitudinal and tropic ecosystems. Next to the close linkage of organisms to the microclimate in the Antarctic make these ecosystems ideal to monitor the possible effect of environmental change on ecosystem functioning.



One of the expected effects of environmental climate change is an increase in temperature. The Antarctic Peninsula has seen an increase in temperature of + 1.5°C during the past 50 years. This is higher than the expected average of + 0.6°C of the expectations based on models. This warmer climate may have a great effect on the carbon budget in the soil and whether the soil may change from a sink to source of CO_2 which in turn could enhance the global warming process, especially since the CO_2 respiration of the soil is several magnitudes greater than the annual emission of CO_2 by human activities. The Arctic and Antarctic regions are great heat sinks and regulate the global air and water circulations and consequently the global climate. Changes in the functioning of these ecosystems may therefore possibly influence the global atmospheric carbon pool indirectly and eventually have an effect on the global climate.



Open Top Chambers

To artificially raise the air and soil temperature I placed small hexagonal tents without a roof in Diddle-dee vegetation next to Brenton Loch on Saladero farm. These tents brake the wind and by doing so raise the air temperature by 2-3°C. Inside and outside these tents the temperature and water availability is measured and there is also a weather station.

A Latitudinal Approach

A similar experiment has been put up on Signy Island (South Orkney Islands 60 S) and on Anchorage Island (Leonie Islands archipelago 68 S). This approach was taken to be able to compare the effects of the tents with natural counterparts at lower latitudes. Processes on Anchorage Island, being the coldest site I am visiting, may start to resemble Signy Island and

Signy Island may start to resemble the Falklands. In the following years I will return to monitor the changes inside the tents.

I would like to thank the Department of Agriculture for their help with this project and Brian and Diana from Goose Green and John and Vivien from Saladero for their help and hospitality during my visit.

MASTITIS

Sue Harvey

Mastitis is inflammation of the udder caused by infection. It is of major economic importance for dairy farmers, and for vets it can be a specialist subject. Mastitis is found in all classes of animals, beef cattle and sheep being no exception.

Mastitis in Sheep

This usually occurs around lambing or immediately after weaning. In the early stages the udder becomes red, hard and hot. A watchful shepherd will detect hungry looking lambs or an, apparently lame, ewe. In some cases the ewe is simply found dead. If she survives the early stages, the udder will go gangrenous - black, cold and clammy and will then slough.

Mastitis in ewes is very difficult to treat; by the time the disease is noticed antibiotics will have little effect. Even ewes with sub-clinical mastitis (a mild form that cannot be detected by the human eye) will produce lambs with significantly decreased growth rates.

Mastitis is not a problem in extensively farmed sheep but precautions like washing your hands after handling any ewes with mastitis before handling uninfected ewes should be taken. Scabby mouth/Orf will often spread to ewe's teats from the lamb's mouths leaving the udder more susceptible to mastitis. All ewes should have their udders checked pre joining as obviously those with damaged udders are unsuitable to breed from.

Mastitis in Cattle

While all types of mastitis cause the same end result (with different severity) – inflammation of the udder leading to changes in the milk - there are many different organisms that can cause the disease. Identifying which organism is causing the problem is not just academic, as different organisms are spread in different ways and respond differently to treatment. Broadly speaking the organisms can be divided into 2 groups:-

1. *Contagious pathogens* – spread between cows either directly or indirectly (milker's hands, or through the milking equipment)

2. *Environmental pathogens* – organisms that are present in the environment but either through having large numbers (dirty conditions) or by the teat being damaged allow the entry into the udder.

Regardless of the cause of the mastitis it is usually treated in the same way, by giving the infected quarter a course of intra-mammary antibiotics. This is specially designed medication that can be infused into the udder. After the use of an intra-mammary preparation, the milk should not be given to humans. It can however be given to calves/pigs etc. The length of time before the milk is clear of antibiotics varies with the preparation used. If the cow is sick in herself (off food etc.) she may need to be treated with antibiotic injections and in some severe cases anti-inflammatory

drugs and a drip. More drastic measures are often needed in chronic cases. Treatment of individual cases should be discussed with one of the veterinary officers. Cows can die from mastitis.

As there are many different organisms that cause mastitis there are many different control/preventative methods that help reduce the chances of getting the disease. Some of the more important ones are:

1. Clean, dry environment especially around calving. Cows often leak milk around calving thus the end of the teat is open to allow infection in. They are also under stress so their immune system could be compromised.
2. Milking shed hygiene – washing hands/machine between individual cows, to prevent infection between cows. Some cows can become carriers of an organism after infection. The milk can appear normal but the organism is still there and can be spread to other animals.
3. Machine maintenance – poor maintenance, function or installation of the milking machine can lead to a number of problems including damage of the ends of the teats and in some instances even forcing infected milk from another cow into the udder.
4. Teat dipping – covering the end of the teats after milking with teat dip will help seal the teat and kill off any organisms that might be present.
5. Dry Cow Therapy – cows are treated with an intra-mammary preparation when they are dried off. This decreases the number of existing infections as well as preventing new infections in the early weeks of the dry period. It is highly recommended that all dairy cows are treated in this way under intensive farming conditions. In New Zealand, for example, we would assess each cow by the count of the white cells in the milk, giving an indication to the damage of the udder. Despite the pasture grazing and seemingly spotless milking sheds about 35% to 65% of them are usually given treatment.
6. Culling chronically infected cows – this reduces the chance of other cows getting the infection.

One specific cause of mastitis is *Staphyloccus aureus* which has been isolated from a number of different cows in different herds in the Falklands over the last year. It can be one of the hardest diseases to treat. The best chance to treat the condition is during the dry period using Dry Cow Therapy. Treatment during lactation is much less successful. Even with Dry Cow Therapy the chance of success, particularly with older cows, is slim and decreases as she ages.

Any treatment infused into the quarter of the cow must be carried out under strict hygiene conditions. The quarter should be first stripped of all milk (difficult when there are multiple clots) and the teat scrupulously cleaned and washed in surgical spirit. The cannula of the treatment tube should only be inserted a short way.

This article is only a brief introduction to mastitis. Please contact me at the veterinary section if you would like to know more or to discuss any individual cases.

A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR THE FALKLANDS WOOL CENTRE

Garments made from Falklands Wool could soon be on sale as far afield as Japan, Europe, and the US, thanks to the new owners of A&E Knitwear, Myles and Karen Lee.

Appealing to the young: Funky hoodies and beanies are a hit with the kids

The Lees took over A&E from founders Ann and Eddie Chandler in June, inheriting a solid business which had supported them for over two decades.

When the Chandlers decided it was time to move on to pastures new, Myles and Karen saw the chance to expand the business, moving into new markets, introducing new products, and generally making their own mark.

They have been careful, however, not to throw the baby out with the bathwater. The shelves are still stocked with some familiar designs: The Falklander, Seafarer and Mainlander sweaters are classics which remain popular with cruise ship passengers.

Alongside the old favourites, however, a whole new range of garments has been arriving on the shelves of the Falklands Wool Centre. New sweaters have been created to appeal to a younger market, including a chunky knit design, a soft woollen hoody, and a cable-fronted v-neck. Ponchos and pashmina-style wraps in several styles and colours were under lots of ladies' Christmas trees this year.

In a bid to appeal to local shoppers, some of the new garments will be produced in limited numbers to avoid that Falklands fashion faux-pas: turning up to an event in your beloved new poncho to find that everyone else in the room has the same model, and the event is just a few cowboy hats short of a John Wayne movie.

It's all part of the Lees' plan to welcome more local shoppers through the doors as well as offering a greater variety of goods to the tourists.

To get the ball rolling, staff hosted a cheese and wine evening on November 15th, which saw ponchos, scarves and sweaters flying off mannequins and into wardrobes.

A whole new look: Cosy cardigans, trendy ponchos and glamorous shoulder-wraps have been added to the Wool Centre's classic range of styles.

There is a third market for woollen garments which the Lees feel can also be expanded. The continual turnover of military personnel at MPA means a constant flow of new customers keen to take something original and local home as a gift for friends and family.

Owner's perks: Karen liked the wool so much, she bought the business – then transformed it

The all-important word of mouth is spreading at the base, with military customers now giving locals and even cruise ship passengers a good run for their money.

The transformation at A&E has not come without hard work. Ann and Eddie stayed on for a couple of months to hand on their years of wisdom to new staff members Leona Whitney and Iris Dickson, who were soon producing garments showing the same quality that the Chandlers had themselves established.

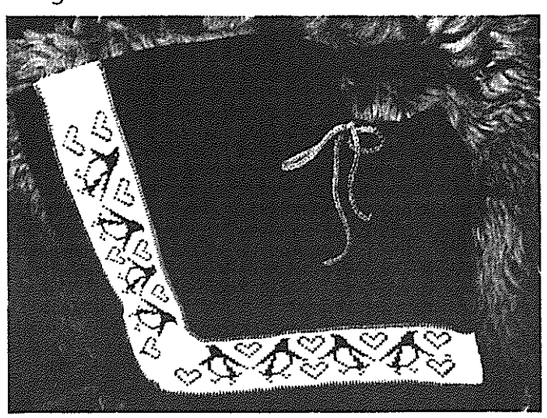
Meanwhile, Karen and Myles visited the UK and took a trip to Horsfalls Mill, where all that fine Falklands fleece is transformed into yarn. FIDC has been using the company since the closure of the Falklands Mill, and both the managing director and the operations manager were extremely positive about wool from the Falklands, which they recognise as a quality product they enjoy working with.

Next stop was hand frame knitter Brian Proctor in Grimsby. He has knitted Falkland Islands wool before and made a very good job of it. It was obvious that if the shop in Stanley was going to be a success it needed to have a large, varied range, and the newly trained staff could use some help to fill the shelves.

Brian showed Myles and Karen lots of his designs and knitted some in Falklands wool as samples. It was also Brian who opened the door to the international market, sending his samples to Europe and Japan, where they were well received.

Shops in Germany, France and Switzerland have already expressed an interest in stocking A&E products, and negotiations are underway with a retailer who owns a chain of high-class fashion shops.

Brian has also shown the wool to a children's clothes designer in America who is keen to use it in an exclusive chain of stores where she has gained a reputation for outstanding hand-knitted products.



One for the girls: Kiddies' poncho with penguins and hearts – a popular Christmas present this year

As the Lees built up their international prospects, back home the really hard work was going on. Leona, Iris, and a third new employee, Christine Mitchell, worked away at the Wool Centre, and around the Islands a whole range of industrious individuals have been working hard on their own designs.

Sheila Jones from the Head of the Bay has a huge team of knitters making a variety of items from hats, scarves and adult jumpers to kids' jumpers and mittens. Diane Towesey also uses her felting talents to make hats, scarves, pot mats, oven gloves and babies' booties. She is now working with Christine to design a new range of children's clothing.

Eileen Hardcastle spins and dyes her own wool and makes some fantastic jumpers. She has also been working felt and sheepskin. One of Eileen's products showed off its versatility when an American tourist paraded around the shop singing the praises of one hat as a "windproof" and "stylish" accessory, essential for any cruise ship traveller. After some deliberation, shop staff finally decided to break the news to her that she had actually been running around the shop with a teacosy on her head.

Rhoda McBain and Hazell Minnell have been hand-knitting for the shop, supplying a variety of jumpers and hats which are beautifully crafted, and a great hit with the tourists. They have both been asked to concentrate some efforts in baby clothes, which are in great demand with visitors, and for which the supply of local products is limited. Barbara Curtis is also busy weaving her range of scarves and other products.

The Lee's main motivation for buying the business was their part-ownership of Port Howard Farm: they hope it will give them the chance to add value to the farm's wool.

Lena Morrison at Port Howard has been called in to join the team and has knitted a jumper and a baby hat, which will be sold as kits for tourists to take away and knit on their own. Karen has also completed a scarf and hat to be sold in kit form.

The Wool Centre: Drop in and see for yourself

So what lies ahead? The Lees have asked the spinners if they can use wool direct from Port Howard and been told this is possible. So by this time next year all items knitted by A&E staff will be made out of Port Howard Farm wool.

They also hope Port Howard will supply the wool for future overseas sales and if the product is popular it may well lead to a higher price for the wool. Of course, prickle factors and other technicalities need to be considered, but for now, the future looks snug at The Falklands Wool Centre. Drop in to see the new range and don't forget to ask about the kids' range which will be on the shelves soon, including a hoodie and poncho.

Maybe there is a future for adding value to Falkland Island wool after all.

If you would like to write an article about your farming related business, then please contact Priscilla Halliday on 27355 or email phalliday@doa.gov.fk

If you would like to write an article about your farm and what you have been up to over the last year, then please do so and contact Priscilla on the above number and email address.

We would also be interested to hear what the kids got up to during their holidays on the farm.

WHAT GRASS IS THAT?

Damien O' Sullivan

For most of the human population grass is just grass. It is either long or short or needs to be mown or watered. For farmers a lack of grass can be catastrophic. Grasses range in size and stature from sugar cane right to the low short species we see eaten off on greens. Many people do not realise that our bread, our sugar and even lemon scent in some detergents all comes from the grass family. Like all botanical families there is a huge range of diversity in our grasses.

When it comes to the usefulness of particular grass species they can vary dramatically and the differences between Whitegrass and Tussock grass for sheep and cattle feed are well known. But what of the myriad of other local and introduced grasses that lie between these 2 extremes of fodder value. It is useful to know just what mix of species we have available for animals on our farms.

At this time of the year when grasses are flowering and going to seed we often see a grass or plant that is unusual. So it is an opportune time to find out just what grass it is. We hope to produce an information sheet with colour photos of the main grass species. So if you have an unusual grass or are interested in identifying what grasses you have.

Collect a good sample of the whole plant as seen below, with an intact seed head and base and we will do our best to identify it for you and add it to our collection of photos.

OPERA LOVERS FLEECED AGAIN

Source: The Guardian

Australian sheep that listen to Italian opera have set the world record price for wool.

A 91kg (200lb) bale was sold to Italian designer Loro Piana for A$227,500 (£90,800), to be turned into suits.

NEW ON THE BEAT

Wendy Reynolds

I was really extremely comfortable in my position as Deputy Head in a lovely village school in mid-Devon; I'd been there for 12 years, living in the village with good friends and colleagues. But my feet had begun to itch, the rut seemed deeper, the school was well settled, my brother (Royal Marine, Falklands veteran, Defence Attaché in South America) had retired home and could keep an eye on elderly parents..... where in the world shall I go? Leafing through the Times Educational Supplement over a cup of coffee last February the advert leapt out – Travelling Teacher in the Falkland Islands. It said the successful applicant should be prepared to join in with life on the farm. What could I offer? I am not particularly physically strong – couldn't hump sheep around; haven't any experience with animals except cats and rabbits; my hobbies are music and sewing! But I love teaching children, and here I am, with one of the best jobs ever. It is a privilege to spend quality time with individual pupils; to be able to tailor my teaching to their particular needs; to observe 'the penny drop'; to rejoice when skills are learnt; to persevere when problems arise. And on the farm – well I have learnt so much from my pupils, from their parents and neighbours, from the animals themselves. I never believed I could feed lambs, piglets, foals and goslings. The Camp Ed. team too have taught me so much about the way of life. You've all seen it before - Camp Ed. teachers come and go, but you'd be hard pushed to find one who has felt so welcomed and so fulfilled in just one term. Thank you.

CROPPING SYSTEMS INFLUENCE BIOLOGICAL WEED CONTROL

Agricultural Research Service, USDA

Boosting organic matter in soil creates a healthy environment for soil-dwelling bacteria that suppress weeds. That's according to Agricultural Research Service scientists who for the first time have determined which cropping systems provide the best home for these beneficial bacteria.

ARS scientists report that to create ideal soil conditions, farmers should rotate their crops, reduce tillage and keep herbicide applications to a minimum. The beneficial microbes called deleterious rhizobacteria (DRB), live on/or within millimeters of weed roots, and they feed on substances that ooze from those roots.

As the name DRB implies, these bacteria are bad for weeds. Although they suppress weed growth, DRB normally don't interfere with crop plant growth.

Robert J. Kremer, a microbiologist with the ARS Cropping Systems and Water Quality Research Unit in Columbia, Missouri, says many DRB keep weed seeds from germinating and produce toxins and excessive concentrations of plant growth hormones that put the life processes of weed seedlings in "overdrive." Consequently, root cells may rupture and leak, replenishing the DRB diet. Once weakened by DRB, weeds are less able to compete with other plants, and they become more vulnerable to other control measures.

Kremer and graduate student Jiamnei Li researched cultures of DRB associated with the most dominant species of weeds in six different cropping systems. In general, the highest numbers of weed-suppressing DRB came from fields where crops were rotated, chemicals and tillage were minimal, and organic materials like composts were added. DRB fared best in a corn-soybean-wheat-cover crop rotation. An organic strawberry system with compost was a close second. The researchers believe the research information can be used to modify current cropping practices or design novel ones to promote development of DRB and take advantage of their natural weed-suppressive effects.

GLOBAL SOIL DEGRADATION

Reprinted from Spring/Summer 2000 issue of Future Harvest, the newsletter of the Chesapeake Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture (CASA)

Nearly 40% of the world's agricultural land is seriously degraded, which could undermine the long-term productivity of those soils, according to scientists at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).

Cutting-edge satellite imagery was used to conduct the most comprehensive mapping to date of global agriculture. The evidence compiled by IFPRI suggests that soil degradation has already impacted the productivity of about 16% of the globe's agricultural land.

Combining the new map of agricultural land with existing expert assessments of soil degradation show almost 75% of cropland in Central America is seriously degraded, 20% in Africa (mostly pasture), and 11% in Asia.

The analysis says crop production can still grow significantly on a global scale over the next several decades. Nevertheless, the underlying conditions of many of the world's agroecosystems, particularly those in developing countries, are not good.

Areas where the capacity of agroecosystems appears most threatened include north-east Brazil and sections of Argentina, Bolivia, Columbia, and Paraguay.

FALKLAND ISLANDS MEAT COMPANY UPDATE

John Ferguson

Sheep and lambs offered are increasing, and to date 37,000+ have been offered for the 2005 export season. Present estimates are that of the above, approx. 22,000 sheep and 8,000 lambs will be produced. As always, please keep us up to date as your season progresses.

The number of farms supplying from East Falkland has increased slightly, whilst on the West farms wishing to supply has increased from 16 to 25!

Shipping dates have now been agreed with Island Shipping Ltd, and are as follows:

24th January	1-2 loads (dep on start date)
15th – 22nd Feb	4- loads (possibly 5)
15th – 22nd March	4 loads
5th – 12th April	4 loads
26th – 30th April	4 loads

As you can see, this is going to require good logistical planning, (and some luck!) therefore I would ask everyone supplying to bear with us and be as flexible as possible. We are already looking at ways to try and improve the transport chain from the West and Islands for future seasons, as the current system is vulnerable to disruption for a variety of reasons.

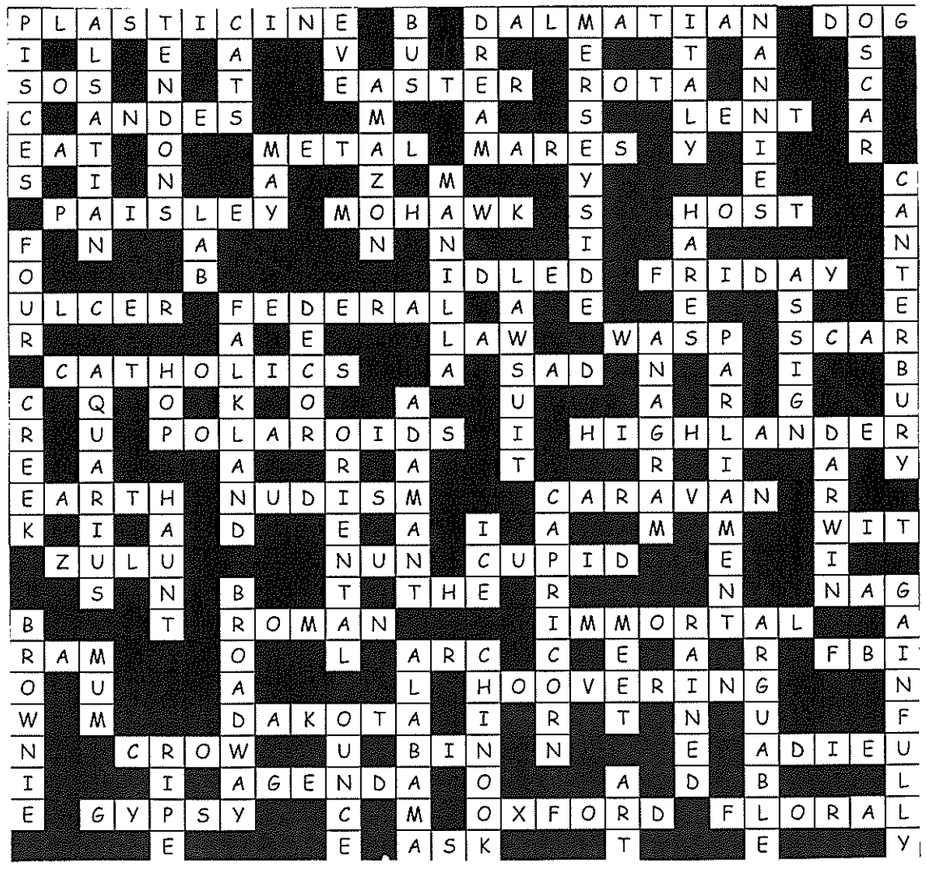
The start date remains later in January. Hopefully we will have a definite date by the time you read this. Following a brief 'shake-down' priority will be given to those farms supplying Hoggets.

All farmers will be contacted with provisional dates for the collection of their livestock. In anticipation of this, please could you send through any revised numbers – this would greatly assist our planning.

As you will have heard recently, we are getting close to solving the waste issue for the med – long term. This has entailed a lot of consultation by all involved, and much time spent looking at the options available. With an access road planned (subject to planning approval) along with a licence for sea disposal for all material (other than condemned / contaminated), this will allow us to operate much more efficiently and cost effectively. Appreciation must be given to Joe and Trudy Newell and all the local authorities for their assistance and co-operation in finding a responsible but practical solution to this difficult issue.

Work is well under way with the Blast Freezer upgrade, which is planned for completion by approx. mid January.

SOLUTION TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLE



If you are any good at creating puzzles then why not email them to Priscilla:
Phalliday@doa.gov.fk

SPICY CHICKEN

Ingredients

4 chicken portions
1 ½ tblsp vegetable oil
Salt & pepper
¼ tsp cayenne pepper
8 oz creamy yoghurt
1 large onion
1 tsp tumeric
1 clove garlic
1 tsp curry powder

Method

Make two deep cuts across each chicken piece
Mix up ½ spices and 1 tblsp oil, add chicken, cover
Leave to marinate for 1 hour
Set oven to 180°C/gas mark 4
Bake chicken pieces for 30 minutes
Fry onion
Mix spices and garlic with yoghurt, add onions and stir
Spoon mix on top of chicken and bake for 20-30 minutes

EWE DARES WINS

www.aberdareonline.co.uk

A flock of cunning sheep is terrorising village gardeners after working out how to cross a cattle grid. The sheep roll over the grate Commando-style to get out of their field and reach gardens in Marsden, West Yorkshire, where they munch their way though flowers, shrubs and vegetables. Having had their fill, they then roll back over the grid and into the field. Local councillor Dorothy Lindley said she had witnessed the astonishing manoeuvre. "It is quite clever really. They get on their back or side and just roll over and over the metal grids," she said.

"Many of the sheep treat the village as their home but they are a big nuisance to villagers. They eat plants, vegetables and flowers in the gardens. What amazes us is that they are not frightened. When you try and move them on they look at you as if to say it is their patch and you are not right in the head." A National Farmers' Union spokesman said: "Our members have not heard of this before." But a National Sheep Association spokeswoman said: "I'm not surprised. Sheep have more brainpower than people are willing to give them credit for."

IMPORTANT NOTICE

If you are planning to go abroad this year and will not be here on or before 30th June, could you please let Priscilla know on 27355 and your Livestock Ordinance Form can be sent to you early.

Thank you

The Wool Press

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All the regular features and more!

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EDITORIAL

It was a pleasure for me to visit a number of West Falkland farmers the other week to discuss farming issues. There is nothing like meeting people on their own turf and I learnt a great deal about matters that are important to farmers just when we are preparing department budgets. Thank you to everyone who spared me their time over the three days of my visit. It was impressive to be able to cover so much ground in that time. The newly completed road to Dunbar is quite outstanding and I think I was the last person to drive through the tricky little ditch by Teal River house before the road gang put in a culvert! Having the opportunity to return with Myles Lee by boat from Port Howard to Egg Harbour and then overland to Stanley was a bonus. Thank you Myles for the lift.

With the export season at Sand Bay Abattoir in full swing there are some very topical articles in this month's Wool Press. Damien has written a short article on lambs for eating and there is a useful piece on body condition scoring accredited to the Western Australian Department of Agriculture. Sue Harvey has contributed an informative article on horses and the problems caused by obesity. Steve encourages farmers to be observant and to look out for any signs of disease in livestock. He highlights the symptoms for Foot and Mouth Disease in cattle and sheep in his article.

The Department has an additional publication out this month. A report on the activities of the department over the last two years has been compiled and everyone on the Wool Press mailing list will be receiving one. If you would like additional copies, please contact the department and we will be pleased to supply them.

The rain in January has been welcome but I am sure readers now need some warmth to ensure more growth.

Best wishes

Phyl Rendell

BETTER LAMBS MAKE BETTER EATING AND MORE MONEY!

Damien O'Sullivan

Many farms are planning to consign lambs to the abattoir this season and it is important that the quality of these lambs is maximised. This not only improves farm returns but marketing a quality product is far easier. Satisfied customers will then come back year after year. There has been considerable work done on maintaining lamb and sheep meat eating quality throughout the world and it is worth looking at the recommendations that have been developed to maintain a quality product. Outcomes of work and research are:

1. Minimise stress

- Avoid using dogs or vigorously exercising animals
- Do not pull or lift lambs by the wool
- Minimise time between gathering and slaughter
- Hold animals off feed for 12 hours prior to slaughter but with access to water

Animals have a store of muscle energy called glycogen; any stress reduces this store of glycogen. With low muscle glycogen, pH rises in the meat affecting meat colour, flavour and keeping quality.

2. Provide good nutrition

Sheep on a good nutrition grow faster and can be finished earlier. Allow animals to gain at least 50g/day and finish at score 2-3. Good feed prior to slaughter maximises juiciness and flavour of meat; meat can be more tender, with better flavour and keeping quality.

3. Think about sheep breed

Breed does not generally affect the eating quality of sheep meat, but breeds such as Merinos are more susceptible to stress and hence tougher meat. Meat breed sheep have better carcass characteristics and weight gains. As a result you should consider what your best balance of income should be between meat and wool and plan your breeding program accordingly.

4. Finish as young as possible

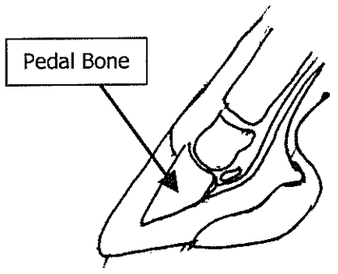
Consumer tests indicate animal age is the main factor in determining the eating quality of sheep and as a result consumers prefer lamb meat. Particular hogget and mutton cuts can also perform well.

WARNING TO ALL OVERWEIGHT HORSES – LAMINITIS

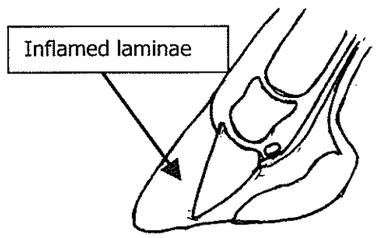
By Sue Harvey

All over the Falklands there are small groups of "retired" horses. Many of these horses share grazing with sheep and cattle but some have an almost unlimited supply of feed. Like all animals, in time, much of the feed is converted into fat. However, without having work to do (exercise) or a foal to raise, every year more layers of fat are laid down. We all know about the problems of obesity – extra weight on the joints and harder work for the heart, but horses and ponies often develop the very serious problem of laminitis.

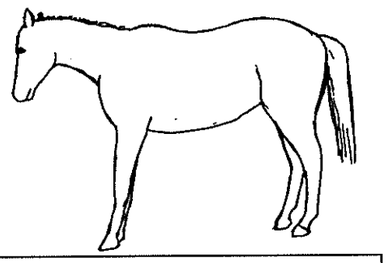
Laminitis is inflammation of the laminae of the horse's foot. The laminae bind the hoof wall to the bone inside it. When they swell the support of the bone is lost and it "falls away" from the hoof wall pressing on the sole of the foot.



Cross-section of normal hoof. Pedal bone 'flush' with hoof wall.



Cross-section of hoof with laminitis. Pedal bone rotates down and presses into sole



Horse with signs of laminitis. They will often stretch back a lot more than this.

This is an extremely painful condition for the horse. To try to relieve the pain, effected horses often adopt a characteristic pose with the front legs stretched out in front, the back arched and the hind legs underneath the body. They have difficulty lying down and when they do get down, will lie for long periods of time flat out.

Causes: There are several trigger factors that can lead to laminitis. By far the most common is **obesity,** particularly when gorging on spring grass. Retained placenta (afterbirth), ingestion of large amounts of cold water, ingestion of large quantities of grain and too much fast work on hard surfaces (trotting on roads) can also lead to laminitis. The reasons why these conditions can lead to laminitis are complicated but it is related to a decreased blood supply to the foot.

Once a horse has had laminitis it is much more prone to getting it in following years. A rotated pedal bone will never return to its correct position and so the horse will never recover. The pedal bone will have started to rotate 48hrs after the start of the condition.

Treatment: One of the Veterinary Officers should be consulted as the treatment will vary depending on the case. If the horse is out at grass he should immediately be housed and fed only a small amount of hay. Pain must be relieved by the use of drugs. Corrective shoeing can help. Mild exercise can be beneficial except in the first 24hrs of an acute case. Retained placentas need to be dealt with as a matter of urgency.

Treatment is usually unsuccessful, if the horse is not going to be intensively cared for the only option is **euthanasia**. Untreated horses will be considered a welfare issue.

Prevention: in most cases it's easy, **DO NOT ALLOW YOUR HORSE TO BECOME OBESE.**

Since I have been working in the Falklands I have seen several cases of laminitis. It does occur here and unfortunately unless many horses have their weight controlled by restricting the grazing, it will occur again. Please don't let it be your horse.

CAMP EDUCATION NEWS

Richard Fogerty

A very busy start to 2005 has meant a shortage of 'meaty' pieces for the Wool Press this month. I must admit that Priscilla's regular reminder about them had a certain inexorability rather like the old prophets of doom. They did prompt me to put together a little news item to update residents of the Camp on happenings within Camp Education.

The Term Begins

For Camp Education school terms normally start with one day of in-service training and staff meetings followed by one day when travellers and telephone teachers get together to plan the term's work. Long gone are the days when it was enough for teachers to teach and today 'accountability' and 'equity' are the key words. Like most key words they do seem to generate an awful lot of paper.

The beginning of this term was a little different because the Education Department had recruited a couple of trainers from Oxfordshire. These trainers were in the Islands for the first week of the term. The first day of the term Camp Education joined with their colleagues from the Infant Junior School and the Community school for sessions on;

a) Motivation and Challenge
b) Literacy across the curriculum
c) Speaking and Listening and
d) Target setting and Assessment for Learning

Camp Education staff are rarely able to take advantage of the expertise provided by imported trainers and on this occasion were full of praise for the content and relevance of this first day. There was obviously too much to absorb on the spot and we shall be following it up in April.

It was fortunate that most of the staff had spent their break preparing for the term and were able to make full use of a very busy couple of days. It is possible that we shall move the planning day from the beginning of the term to the end of the previous term. This would allow staff to consider what students had achieved, plan for the following term and have the break in which to obtain or produce materials. This is only a proposal at present and will be presented to parents and managers over the next month.

School Managers

School Managers are an important part of Camp Education and one of their many roles is to be a point of contact for the school, parents and the wider community. They are always keen to pass on your ideas, queries, compliments or, dare I say it, complaints.
I thought it would be useful to remind you that the Camp Education Managers are;

Mr. Ian Hansen	Main Point	Chairperson
Mrs Donna Evans	South Harbour	RBA manager
Mrs Mandy Alazia	Port Edgar	Parent manager
Ms. D. Towersey	Port Stephens	Parent manager
Ms. H. Norman	Camp Education	Teacher manager
Mrs J Courtney	Stanley House	Senior Houseparent
Mr. R. Fogerty	Head, Camp Education and Stanley House Hostel	

Thank you - On the Friday of that first week one of our travelling teachers had an accident on the Estancia road. Camp Education would like to thank the many drivers who stopped to offer help and, special thanks to Melanie Clausen and also to Tony and Ailsa Heathman for their invaluable assistance. It is reassuring to know that the spirit of helping each other out is still thriving in our community.

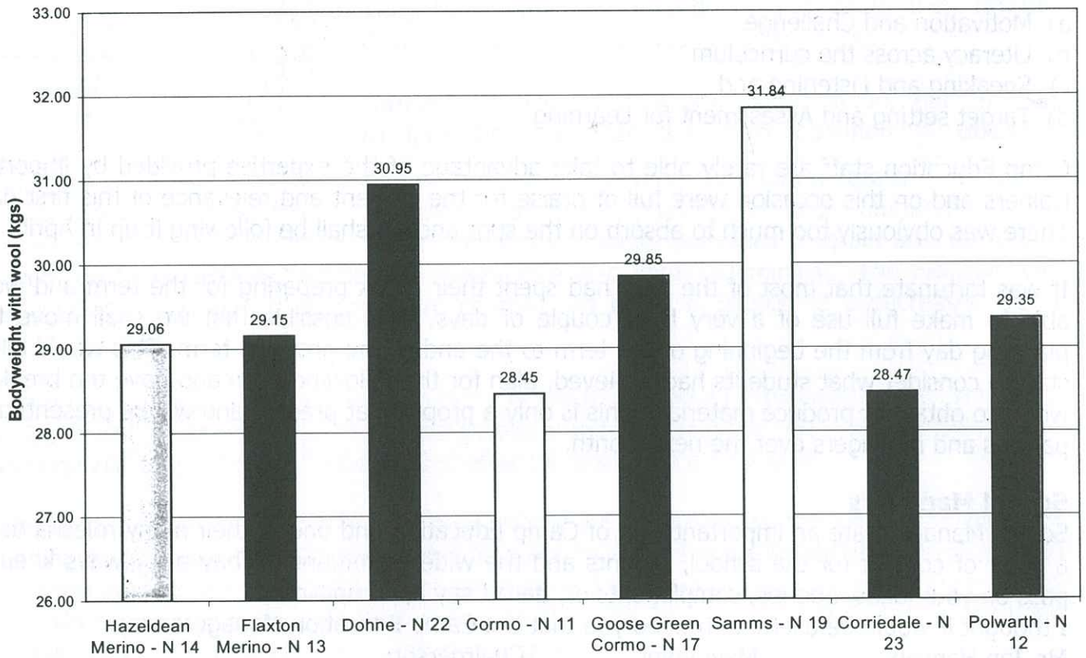
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE/GOOSE GREEN
SHEEP BREEDS TRIAL

Damien O' Sullivan

Snow and cold winds did not deter 20 interested farmers and onlookers meeting at the Goose Green shearing shed on the 27th of October to see the weighing and shearing of 8 groups of hoggets generated from the Artificial Insemination (AI) of Goose Green ewes in 2003. Goose Green flock ewes were mated by Artificial Insemination to 7 different breeds: Flaxton Merino, Hazledean Merino, Cormo, Corriedale, South African Mutton Merino (SAMM), Dohne and Polwarth rams. An extra control group of ewes were joined naturally to Corriedale rams.

Trial hoggets were weighed immediately prior to shearing. Later at shearing greasy fleece weights were recorded and all animals were mid side sampled for yield and micron measurement. It is important to remember that the trial hoggets are the result of an AI mating and as such have 50% of local Goose Green genetics and 50% of the sires AI genetics in their make-up.

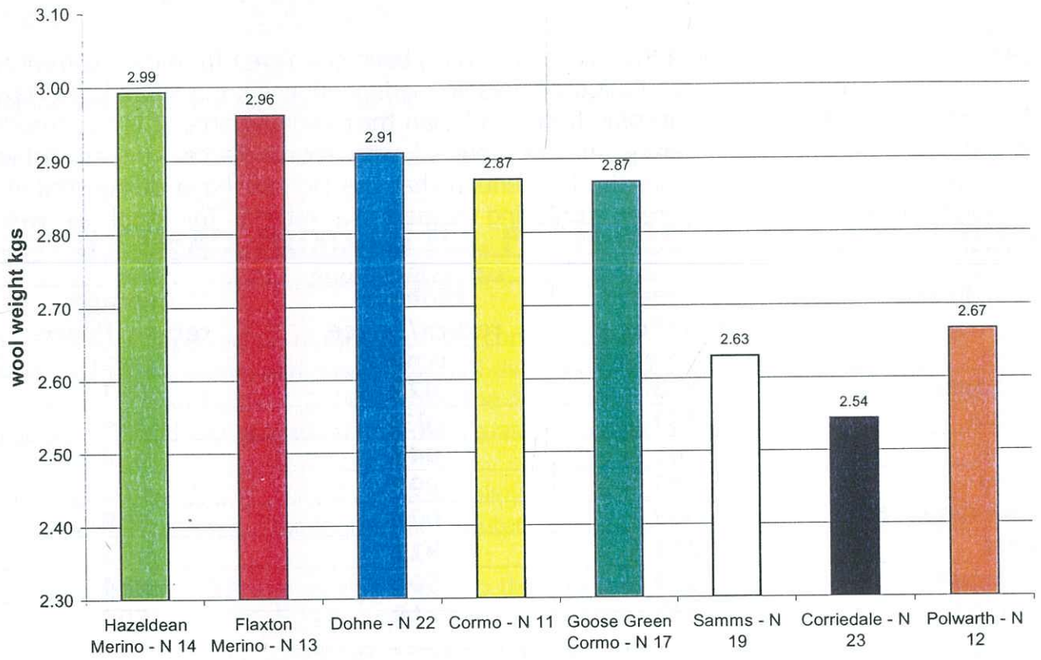
Graph 1: Bodyweight kgs



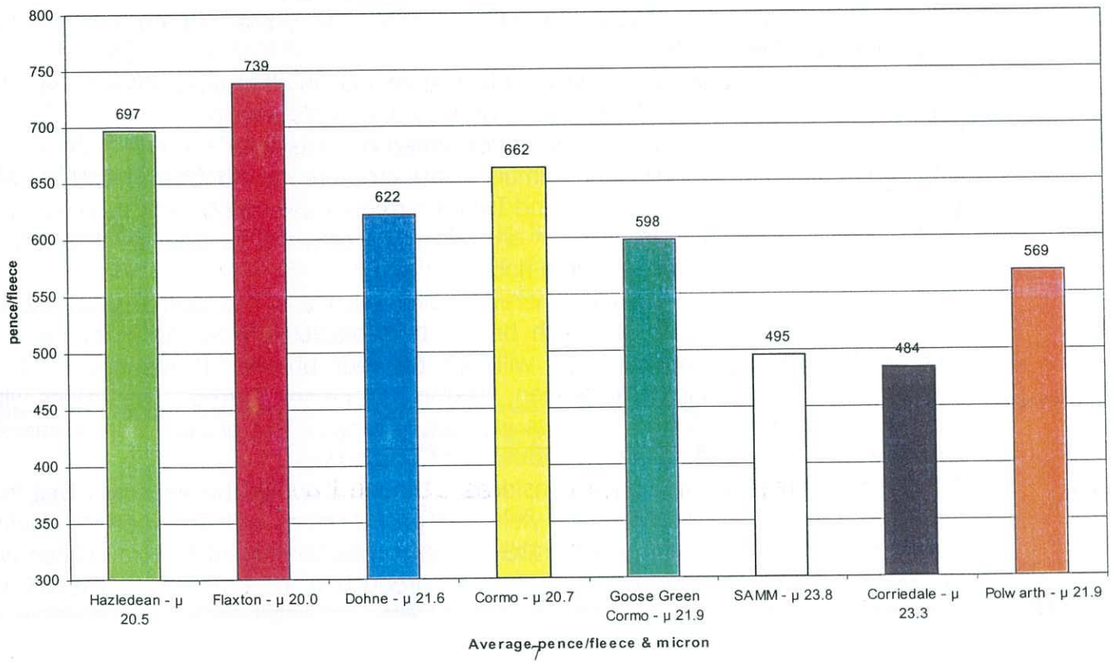
The aim of this trial is to determine how well these first cross lambs cope with Falkland Island environmental conditions and as a result their value to farmers. Obviously those crosses that perform well will undergo further evaluation. It should also be clearly recognised that the trial includes breeds that are principally "woolcutters" (Hazledean and Flaxton Merino plus Cormo to some extent) and some that are "dual purpose" breeds (Dohne merino, SAMM, plus the other Corriedale and Polwarth breeds). The trial is intended to run for several years to measure performance over a long period of time. Initial results look promising. Excellent results have been achieved both from specialist wool producing breeds in addition to the dual purpose breeds. In the body weights (See Graph 1) it is no surprise that the two "improved" dual purpose breeds the Dohnes and South African Meat Merinos (SAMM) have the highest

bodyweights. This result indicates the potential of the two breeds to add significantly to a farm's sheep meat activity, particularly regarding lamb production.

Graph 2: Greasy Wool weights



Graph 3: Income from Average fleece in group



The results in Graph 2 show that the 2 Merino crosses selected for the trial because of their history of producing high wool values in southern Australia and New Zealand have the greatest wool weights. Regarding the Corriedale results it should be noted that these sheep are pure-breds and do not have the advantage of the hybrid vigour from the crosses. In addition the Corriedales were from a natural mating and are on average 30 days younger than all the other hoggets in the trial.

In Graph 3 projected wool income from each group has been calculated (based on current wool prices). As expected the hoggets with a considerable merino influence, the Hazledean, Flaxton, Dohne and Cormo, have greater income from wool than their counterparts. It is not surprising that these groups with fine average micron, coupled with sound fleece weights, achieved highest wool incomes. It is also worthy to mention that the Dohnes have demonstrated the advantage of a dual-purpose breed achieving respectable returns for wool as well as liveweights.

Breed	Lowest return/fleece pence	Highest return/fleece pence	Average return/fleece pence
Hazledean	**503**	**979**	**697**
Flaxton	**462**	**1037**	**739**
Dohne	**405**	**947**	**622**
Cormo	**583**	**897**	**662**
Goose Green flock	**403**	**926**	**598**
SAMM	**351**	**913**	**495**
Corriedale	**369**	**596**	**484**
Polwarth	**383**	**718**	**569**

These figures and results are given as a general indicator. When comparing the graphs keep in mind the following points:

- There are not enough sheep in the experiment to be statistically significant.
- Hybrid vigour (extra production obtained after crossing two genetically different breeds) is responsible for some of the increased production.
- The pure bred lines may have appeared to perform poorly but they do not have the advantage of hybrid vigour.
- There is significant variation between individual animals in all groups.
- Results of some of the breeds are based on only one ram's semen.
- The returns per fleece in the various breeds varied considerably.
- The variation between individual animals in the crossbreeds indicates that there are great benefits to be gained by Falkland Island farmers maximising lamb numbers and achieving the ability to cull inferior animals from their flocks and identify higher performing animals for ram breeding flocks.
- The animals shorn were hoggets, therefore over the life of the animal wool micron will increase and this will vary with breed. It is expected that the magnitude of increase in micron (as animals age) will vary between breeds. It is suggested that the increase will be least for Hazledean, Flaxton, Dohne and Cormo. The breeds with a greater amount of Merino genetics in their history. The greater fibre diameter increases are likely in the Polwarth, SAMM and Corriedales.
- As yet meat yield has not been considered, though it would be expected that the SAMM would have the higher meat yield and growth rates with the merinos having the poorest meat yield and growth rates. Meat characteristics of the trail sheep will be assessed in February when the meat production of these animals will be considered.

Overall this trial gives farmers an indicator as to how these breeds may perform in the local environment. Bearing in mind the constraints of the trial, farmers can use this information as part of the bigger picture that they need to consider in planning the future of their sheep flock. This is particularly important, as farmers will be given the opportunity to select these breeds as part of the upcoming Embryo Transfer program in 2005.

Many thanks to Brian and his staff at Goose Green for preparing the sheep, Paul Phillips shearing team and the farmers who all helped on the day.

CATTLE DEAD, HUMANS ILL, FROM FOOT & MOUTH IN PERU

Source: Plant Ark. 10th January 2005

Peru on Friday reported an outbreak of the contagious foot-and-mouth cattle disease – it's the first in six months – and said nine cattle had died and 10 people were infected. Peru's National Service of Agrarian Health (SENASA) said the Sama valley on Peru's southern coast where the outbreak occurred was sealed off and the situation was under control.

"There are some 2,600 animals in the valley and not more than 60 animals are at risk," SENASA's Director Oscar Dominguez told Reuters.

SENASA has sent 4,000 vaccination doses to the valley to contain the disease and did not plan to slaughter animals. Dominguez said the new outbreak had been caused by viruses in the earth from an earlier, more serious outbreak in the valley in the 1950's.

Edgar Tejada, Director of Health Services in the southern department of Tacna, bordering Chile, told RPP radio earlier on Friday that the people who were infected were from the same family.

"Since January 3rd, we have registered 10 cases (of infection in humans) from handling tainted meat and meat products," Tejada said. Seven people have been hospitalised but their condition is improving, he said. The disease is mild in humans, typically causing flu-like symptoms and mouth blisters.

In June, Peru reported its first outbreak of foot-and-mouth since 2000 and slaughtered at least 88 cattle to control it.

Although not an exporter of beef, Peru is keen to recover its foot-and-mouth free status because the virus can be transported, for example, with exported fruit and vegetables. If unchecked it also could affect Peru's negotiations to secure a free-trade treaty with the United States, which is free of the disease.

WORK PROFILE OF THE AGRICULTURAL ADVISER (BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT)

Mandy McLeod

Priscilla has asked me to "do something for the Wool Press about what I've been working on for the last few months". "OK" I said glibly, thinking it would be a doddle and I could knock up an article in a few minutes. In the words (or word) of Waylon Jennings I was "WRONG".

There's so much happening on the hill these days, and as we all work very closely as a tight knit team, I seem to be involved in lots of things to differing levels of importance and input. However, I will endeavour to give you a glimpse of the 'the working life of an Agricultural Adviser (AKA – Mandy)'. Every day in the office starts with checking emails and responding to them, then doing the routine admin such as Pasture Improvement Programme (PIP) payments and the boring but necessary filing. After that, my tasks vary depending on which project needs my attention at the time.

In general my main involvements and responsibilities are with the Pasture Improvement Programme, Training (adult, youth, staff), Publications (Wool Press, Farming Statistics, Department Reports, Farm Management Handbook) and some data processing (Farm Accounts Summaries and Key Performance Indicators). I am ably assisted, particularly in the publications area by Priscilla Halliday who collates articles and information for the W P and the FMH. Prill does most of the data entry for the Farming Statistics too. I also assist the Treasury and the Attorney Generals chambers on occasion with land matters (arrears issues, lease agreements and land disputes). This work is often sensitive by nature, but rewarding in job satisfaction when situations are resolved.

After the heavy (manic) workload last September and October with PIP applications coming in fast and furious, November and December seemed quite subdued in comparison, with normal hours resuming. Well, that was the situation from my point of view. For the likes of Andy Pollard, contractors and farmers, the mania probably stepped up a pace because everyone was trying to get their approved plans implemented at the same time!

A prime area of my work in recent weeks has been the production of the DOA biennial report. Sounds like an easy task, but with so many people to gather information from when they are all so busy, and then putting everyone's work in some sort of semblance of order, the task proved to be not as menial as first thought. The rest of the staff will be breathing a sigh of relief now that it has gone to the printers and I've stopped the daily nagging! All people on our Wool Press mailing list will be receiving a copy in due course.

We work as a team in the Department of Agriculture and our tasks often cross or touch on other individuals' specialist areas so we help each other out. We have a focussed business plan for agricultural development, so we all know where we are heading and what we need to do to achieve the aims and objectives in that plan.

* * * GAP * * *

The GAP co-ordinator in the UK has advised me that there are 2 male students who want to come to the Falklands in October 2005. If anyone is interested in hosting a student, please contact me at your earliest opportunity.

Many Thanks

SHEEP WEIGHING – WHY, WHICH, WHEN AND WITH WHAT

Source: Michael Johns, Department of Agriculture, Western Australia

During recent field days at Mt Barker, Wongan Hills and Badgingarra in West Australia, farmers were asked to estimate the weights of sheep. 97 % of the farmer's estimates were more than 10% from the correct weight, 77% were more than 20% out with the average estimate being 18% below the correct weight.

Reasons for Weighing

Underestimating can have serious effects on sheep production and farm productivity, because sheep weights are used to determine:

- The amount of drench required – under drenching can lead to the development of parasite resistance to drenches;
- Backline lice chemical application rates – applying too little chemical is a waste of time and money,
- When to start feeding sheep and how much to feed – feeding rates could be too low or too high, supplementary feeding may start too early or too late (usually too late) leading to excessive use of supplement or failure to prevent losses in production;
- Sheep for sale – sheep may be sold for less than their true market value because of an underestimate in weight made by an agent;
- Sheep for selection and culling – sheep may be culled unnecessarily,
- Stocking rates – wrong stocking rates could be calculated because the Dry Sheep Equivalent (DSE) used to calculate stocking rates is based on a wet or dry ewe of 45 kilograms liveweight

Weighing a proportion of each flock should avoid these problems.

The correct use of sheep scales can recoup their cost from the gain saved in one period of supplementary feeding or through the savings associated with avoiding the development of worm resistance, caused by ineffective drenching.

While weighing sheep there is the opportunity to learn how to condition score them and this provides another check on how they are performing, particularly for pregnant ewes.

Body condition scoring is the best alternative when scales are not available. But, as for estimates of liveweight, the visual appraisal of body condition can be unreliable because it can be confused by gut-fill, length of fleece and the stage of pregnancy. Body condition scoring should be used and recorded along with liveweight.

Buying Scales

Points to consider before buying sheep scales include:

- The possibility of sharing scales with other farmers;
- The need for mechanical or electronic scales;
- The make which suits planned activities. (Do they need to be portable, will data other than liveweights be collected and recorded, will the data be transferred to a computer?)

The Kondinin Group National Sheep Handling Survey in 1990 found that of 1,179 farmers surveyed, 16% used scales and about ¾ of them were electronic.

Weighing Procedures

Whether electronic or mechanical, rules which apply when weighing sheep include:

- Always weigh at lest 50 sheep from each flock or of each age group or sex in a mixed flock, to get a reasonably accurate measure of the flock average weight.
- Randomly select these animals from the flock by drafting in the drafting race, not closing the gate when sufficient animals have run through the gate. For example, if 50 are required from a flock of 200 sheep, draft out every fourth sheep. If 50 are required from 500, draft out every tenth sheep. Do not only weigh the first or last 50 sheep in the flock. Make sure all 50 are weighed accurately.
- Ideally it is best to identify the sheep so the same ones are weighed each time.
- Allow for an increase in wool growth when repeatedly weighing the same flock.
- Do not weigh rain soaked sheep; wet sheep are several kilograms heavier than when they are dry. Wet sheep also spread dermo.
- Ensure the next sheep in the race is not pushing against the outside of the weighing crate because an incorrect reading will result.
- After taring, weigh yourself and use your weight for checking accuracy during the extended period of weighing. However, do not use your weight to tare the scales, as your weight can change during the day and over days.
- Position the scales on a level, firm site. A concrete base is best. Anchor the scales to the concrete or to the race end.
- Mud, gravel and rocks on the floor of the scales, transported in by the sheep, can lead to inaccurate weighing.
- Disengage the scales when transporting them to avoid damage to working parts.
- Sheep should be weighed straight out of the paddock each time because sheep continue to lose weight as they empty out after being yarded:
  - 6 hours off pasture – 3% liveweight loss
  - 12 hours off pasture – 5% liveweight loss
  - 24 hours off pasture – 7.5% liveweight loss
  - 48 hours off pasture – 10.5% liveweight loss

When to Weigh

Weighing of sheep should be considered when they are yarded for any managerial or husbandry reason. It may be necessary to weigh individual flocks for various reasons.

Weaners

- Weaning

Breeding ewes

- When lams are weaned off the ewes
- Before drenching to get the heaviest sheep and before the sale of sheep

Advantages of Electronic Scales

This type of scale is becoming increasingly popular. Data recorders and computer interface form the basis for the biggest difference between mechanical and electronic scales. Some of the reasons why 73% of farmers who use scales have opted for electronic scales are:

- They can be used to weigh fleeces, sheep wool bales and even a 2000kg trailer load of lupins;
- They give a static read out;
- Less noise and platform movement helps the movement of sheep into the scales;
- Liveweight averages are immediately available;
- Some models can be transported in the boot of a car; and

- If linked to a data recorder, the weights and other information can be loaded into the farm computer.

Correct Operation of Electronic Scales

- Load cells rely on electronic resistance measurements therefore do not use on green pasture, wet soggy ground or springy mesh floors.
- Anchor or attach the scale only by the bottom plate of the load cell bars.
- During weighing, be wary of gravel or rocks jamming or under the load cell bars.
- Keep hands off the scales when sheep are entering or leaving the crate. Automatic taring can be effected.
- If a 12 volt wet battery is used, it must be near to or fully charged.
- When transporting, do not have anything on top of the load cell bars or the scales will be in continual use.

Warnings on the Use of Data Recorders

- The data recorder is calibrated to the load cell bars supplied. Don't use load cell bars other than those supplied with the data recorder.
- Keep strong, direct sunlight off the liquid crystal display of the recorder. The display can be blacked out.

The cables that carry the measurement signals to the display or data recorder require special care. Take the following precautions to avoid damage to the cables:

- Sheep must not be held or released in the area where the cables are linking the load cell to the display or data recorder.
- Do not leave sheep unattended in an area where they have access to the cables. One bite is enough to ruin the cable.
- Store the cables, weigh cell and display/data recorder indoors.
- A damaged cable must be repaired immediately to stop moisture from entering.

Plan for a Weighing Area

When a new yard or working race is being built, consider incorporating a weighing area. It is possible to slip the load cell bars and platform into a concrete depression with two removable gates instead of attaching the scales to the end of the race for each weighing.

*** FARMING STATISTICS ***

If you are heading overseas and will not arrive back in the Falkland Islands before 30th June, then please let Priscilla know on:

Phone: 27355 Fax: 27352 Email: phalliday@doa.gov.fk

You will be sent a livestock ordinance form to fill in before you go.

Thank you

Priscilla

CATCHING UP WITH THE VETERINARY SERVICES OFFICER

Sarah Bowles

I guess complaining wasn't really an option when the email from Prill came through asking for an 'up-date' article from me. I'm pretty certain that the last time I wrote something for the Wool Press was when I put in an introduction (albeit begrudgingly) after I joined the Ag. Dept about seven years ago, so I guess it's only fair that my days of article dodging are left behind!

My job title is Veterinary Services Officer and I'm the one you find on the end of 27366. I'm here to assist the vets with anything from pinning unenthusiastic felines down whilst said Veterinary Officer looms with the thermometer, ordering and checking our stock of drugs, arranging appointment times, to issuing Wool export certificates. The paperwork side of this job takes up a surprising amount of time. It only takes a few days filled with consultations and surgery to ensure that the in-tray starts to overflow. Probably one of the things which takes up the biggest chunk of my time is the issuing of Import Permits. We issue all the permits covering all dairy products and meats coming from South America; in 2004 I drew up 233 licences (these include any live animal imports).

A 'normal' week in the Veterinary Office goes something along these lines; Mondays are probably one of the busiest days at the Vets. Any consults that have gone on over the weekend are pushed onto Monday morning, so we try and keep that day clean of any routine camp visits. Tuesday and Thursday mornings are our planned surgery times. It's good to get any ops out of the way morning time so that you have the rest of the day to keep an eye on the patients and make sure they have come round from any anaesthetics they may have had. Wednesday is the day I try and keep for camp visits, especially in the summer when camp trips are on the increase. Anything like preg testing cattle or colt castrations for example, tend to be slotted onto this day so that we have a couple of days grace in case of weather changes, and it also gives a good opportunity to check up with the owner/farmer as to how the patients are doing before the weekend.

Obviously there are times when smaller-animal emergencies creep up (dogs and cats), be it on the East or West, and then we ask that people make every possible effort to get their pets into Stanley. FIGAS is extremely helpful where West animals are concerned, and always assist us in getting any patients in to us either on the same day, or, if past flying times, the next day. Most often, ill animals will need to end up in the surgery for some treatment or other; actually having them brought into Town makes a huge difference to the Vets, as it saves travelling sometimes long distances simply to turn around (with animal in tow), and return to the clinic for further treatment.

I would like to use this article to remind anyone reading about one or two subjects which you will sometimes hear me mentioning either by phone or through the Wool Press;

Animal Movement Tags. I ask that you please try and order your tags in good time – scrambling down to FIGAS with a box of tags, screaming for the plane to wait is not one of my favourite past times, so if you know you are going to need tags over the next few weeks/months please call me and let me know what quantities you require.
My second request is that I would be grateful if everyone can take the time to check out their **Droncit/Drontal** supplies; if you're running low at all please get in touch in plenty of time so that I can send a new stock before the next Dog Dosing day.

If you have any queries/comments about the Veterinary Section please feel free to give us a shout at any time; our phone number is 27366 and my email address is sbowles@doa.gov.fk

IN THE HEADLINES

FARMERS FEAR CRISIS MAY DRIVE MANY OF THEM OFF THEIR LAND

Source: Cape Times (South Africa). 10th January 2005

Farmers in the Western Cape say that they are at a loss about how to get through a second year with scant rain and are encouraging the government to declare the province a disaster area.

They say that with crops ruined and herds reduced, their crisis is likely to deepen before the end of the summer, proving the final nail in the coffin for many farms.

This follows MEC for Agriculture Cobus Dowry's announcement that he is to speak to Agriculture Minister Thoko Didiza about declaring the province a disaster area.

The problem was so bad in some areas that farmers had run out of water. "Some farms need to have their water transported to them as they have absolutely no water for personal or animal consumption," Agri Wes-Cape's Johan van Zyl said yesterday.

"We have had to make arrangements with municipalities to take water to them. In some instances, they have had to collect it from the nearest farm."

He knew of nine farms in the Van Rhynsdorp area that needed assistance, Van Zyl said. Farmers needed about 20 litres for each person a day, while livestock's needs ranged from 15 to 50 litres a day for each animal.

Van Zyl said consideration was being given to using army trucks to transport water. Sinking boreholes had proved ineffective as there was "simply no water."

The Clanwilliam Dam was 47% full, an "all-time low", and farmers were rushing to pick grapes so their vineyards would require less water. "The difference this year is that now there is absolutely no moisture in the soil", Van Zyl said. "During winter, the soil becomes wet enough to endure the summer, but in 2003, there was not enough rain and last year there was even less."

Willem van Niekerk, a sheep farmer and Agri Wes-Cape's representative in the Van Rynsdorp area, said the area where cattle and sheep had to graze was so dry it looked "black".

Grain SA's representative in the Swartland region, Niekie Mouton, a wheat farmer, said that this year R20,000 worth of grain could not be harvested – the same quantity as had been ruined because of the lack of rain last year.

Dowry's spokesman, Alie van Jaarsveld said yesterday about 490 farmers had applied for assistance and a livestock feeding scheme had been put into operation. He said the department had spent R18m up until September last year. Also, a committee had been set up to visit the areas each month to assess the severity of the drought.

"If the Western Cape was declared a disaster area, we would be able to assist these farmers on a greater scale," Van Jaarsveld said. "The MEC is also looking to increase the amount of money spent this year as the R9m set aside will not go very far."

FMD – THE MOST FEARED OF LIVESTOCK DISEASES

Steve Pointing

Foot and mouth disease (FMD) is an acute infectious disease, which causes fever, followed by the development of vesicles (blisters) – chiefly in the mouth and on the feet. The disease is caused by a virus of which there are 7 "types", each producing the same symptoms, and distinguishable only in the laboratory.

FMD is probably more infectious than any other disease affecting man or animals and spreads rapidly if uncontrolled. Among farm stock, cattle, sheep, pigs, goats and deer are susceptible. Many cloven-footed wildlife species can also contract the disease. FMD is endemic (i.e. always circulating) in parts of Asia, Africa, the Middle East and South America, with sporadic outbreaks in otherwise disease-free areas. After being free of FMD for many years, the UK suffered a return of the disease in 2001 with over 2,000 individual outbreaks between February and September of that year.

The interval between exposure to infection and the appearance of symptoms varies between 24 hours and 10 days, or even longer. The average time, under natural conditions, is 3 to 6 days.

What to look out for in farm livestock

Sheep

The chief symptom is a sudden, severe lameness, affecting one or more legs. The animal looks sick, lies down frequently and is very unwilling to get up. Usually, the disease affects all 4 feet, and when the animal is made to rise, it stands in a half-crouching position, with the hind legs brought well forward, and seems afraid to move. Mouth symptoms are not often noticeable. There are blisters on the feet at the top of the hoof, where the horn joins the skin in the cleft of the foot. They may extend all around the coronet, and when they burst the horn is separated from the tissues underneath, and the hair round the hoof is damp. Unless complicated by secondary bacterial infection, the foot is clean and there is no offensive smell. Blisters in the mouth, when they do develop, form on the dental pad and sometimes the tongue.

FMD can be quite difficult to diagnose in sheep, as sheep can often be lame from many other causes. If you have an abnormally large number of lame sheep you should consider the possibility of FMD and check the feet more closely than is possible in the paddock.

Cattle

The symptoms of FMD are usually much more pronounced in cattle than they are in sheep. As well as getting blisters on the feet in much the same way as sheep, cattle tend to suffer much more from the "mouth" form of the disease. There is a quivering of the lips and uneasy movement of the lower jaw, with copious, frothy saliva around the lips that drips to the ground. If you open the mouth you would see blisters forming on the dental pad, inside of the lips and on the surface of the tongue. On handling, the "skin" is easily removed, leaving a raw surface underneath. Cows and heifers may develop blisters on the teats and resent any attempt at milking. Loss of condition is marked, partly on account of the fever, and partly because the mouth is so painful that the animal is afraid to eat.

Blisters develop on the feet about the same time as in the mouth, or a little later; they rarely appear first. Most commonly they occur at the bulbs of the heels, at the front of the cleft of the hoof, and in the cleft itself. They usually burst fairly quickly through movement of the feet, and then appear as a ragged tear exposing a raw surface.

Pigs

The chief symptom in pigs is a sudden lameness. The animal prefers to lie down and when made to move squeals loudly and hobbles painfully, though the lameness may not be so obvious when the pigs are on soft ground. The blisters form on the upper edge of the hoof, where the skin and horn meet, and on the heels and in the cleft. They may extend right round the hoof head, with the result that the horn becomes detached.

At a later stage new horn may start to grow and the old hoof is carries down and finally shed. The process resembles the loss of a fingernail following some blow or other injury. Mouth symptoms are not usually visible, but blisters may appear on the snout or on the tongue.

There is another disease in pigs that causes similar symptoms – it is called swine vesicular disease (SVD) and is indistinguishable from FMD on examination. However, it is caused by a totally different virus and only affects pigs. As you would not be able to distinguish between these diseases you should report any symptoms as being suspicious of FMD.

What to do if you suspect you may have a case of FMD

Don't panic! Telephone the veterinary section of the Department of Agriculture and discuss your concerns with one of the vets. Keep the infected animal or animals where you found them and don't allow anyone or any other animal on to or off your farm until the vet has had a chance to make a definite diagnosis. FMD is a notifiable disease in the Falkland Islands. If you come across a suspect case of FMD on your farm you must by law either inform the Veterinary Department or a member of the police force (who would then inform us). As a farmer you are not expected to diagnose the disease, but you ought to know enough about the disease to suspect it.

Summary

FMD is extremely infectious and only a very small quantity of the virus is required to infect an animal. The virus is present in the saliva, milk and dung. Contamination of any objects with any of these discharges is a danger to other stock. Under favourable conditions (cold and dark) the virus can survive for quite long periods. It can be spread from animal to animal directly or can travel long distances on the wind. It can also be spread by the movement of farm transport and by farm workers who might carry the virus on their boots, clothing or hands. The success of any control policy depends on the PROMPT REPORTING of all suspected cases of the disease. Delay allows the disease to get a start and once established is very difficult to overtake.

Please keep vigilant and don't feel embarrassed about calling the veterinary section if you have the slightest suspicion that one of your animals might have FMD.

BODY CONDITION SCORING OF SHEEP AND GOATS

Source: John Suiter, Department of Agriculture, Western Australia

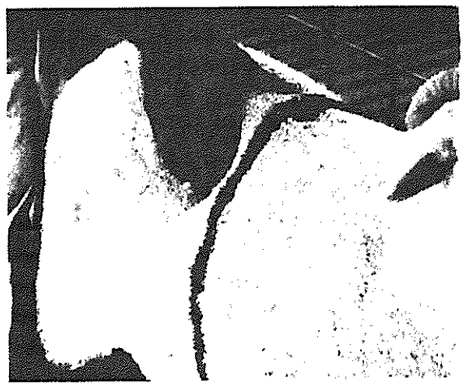
As more farmers become interested in supplying meat for the abattoir it is essential that people can assess sheep for condition score. If condition score and sheep weighing is used on a regular basis, more accurate estimates can be made of likely grading of carcasses and the time needed to finish carcasses.

Condition scoring can be used:

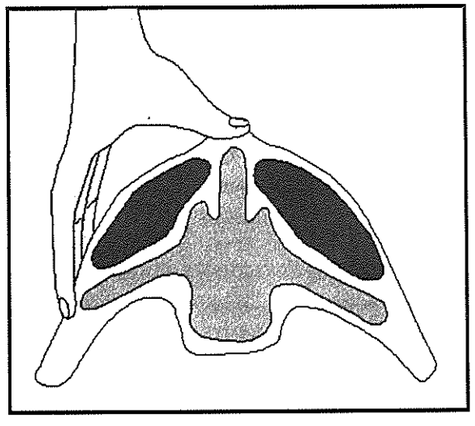
- To assess whether more feed is needed to maintain or increase condition and liveweight; and
- In meat production systems where a particular carcase finish is desired by the consumer.

In both sheep and goat meat industries body condition scores of 2 – 3 are desirable (well finished but not fat). Condition score 1 animals are unfinished; that is, muscle development is poor, while animals in condition scores 4 and 5 are over-fat and unacceptable to all known markets.

Use of Condition Scoring



Condition scoring is done by feel. Accuracy improves with practice. When feeding for maintenance of body condition during periods of feed shortage, the livestock should be maintained at a condition score of 2. Below condition score 2, wool production in sheep is likely to be affected with the development of tender fleeces. At condition score 1 or below the animal is emaciated and its long-term production may be reduced. In the breeding ewe or doe, condition scores near 3 are desirable. Lower scores will result in less lambs or kids being born, lower birth weights and thus lower survival rates.



The animal should be standing in a relaxed position. It should not be tense, crushed by other animals or held in a crush. If the animal is tense it is not possible to feel the short ribs and get an accurate condition score.

Locate the last rib (the 13th). Using the balls of the fingers and thumb, try to feel the backbone with the thumb and the end of the short ribs with the fingertips immediately behind the last rib. Feel the muscle and fat cover around the ends of the short ribs and over the backbone. Feel the fullness of the eye muscle.

The degree of roundness of the ends of the bones, the amount of tissue between the bones and the fullness of the eye muscle determines the condition or finish of the animal – the condition score.

The Condition Scores 1 to 5

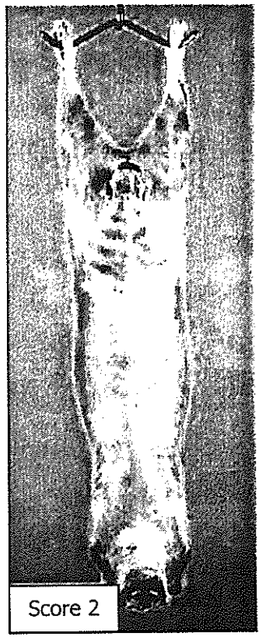
Score 0 – the animal is emaciated, in extremely poor condition and very weak (near death). The animal has no fat cover, the surface of the eye muscle feels hollow when the thumbs are run down from the backbone to the end of the short ribs and there is little tissue between the spinal processes of the backbone or short ribs.


Score 1

Score 1 – the backbone is prominent and sharp. Short rib ends are sharp and easy to press between, over and around. The eye muscle is thin, the surface tending to feel hollow.

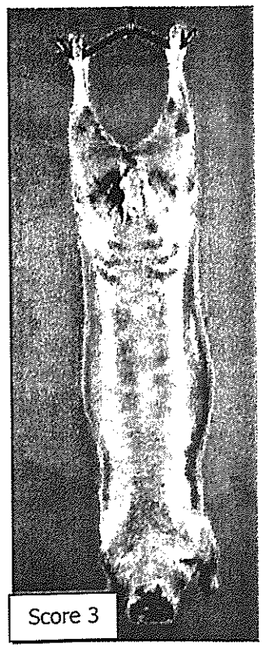
Score 2 – the backbone is prominent but smooth. Short ribs are smooth and well-rounded ends. Can feel between, over and around each smoothly. Eye muscle has reasonable depth with the surface tending to feel flat.

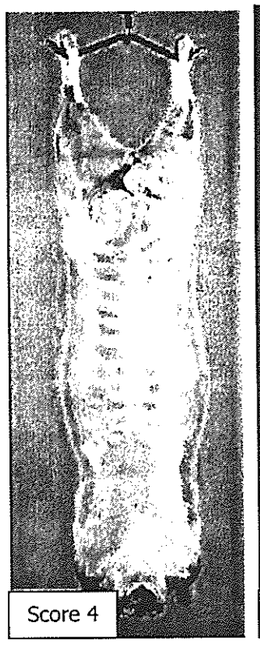
Score 3 – the backbone can be felt but smooth and rounded. Short rib ends are smooth and well covered. Firm pressure is necessary to feel under and between short ribs. The eye muscle is full and rounded.

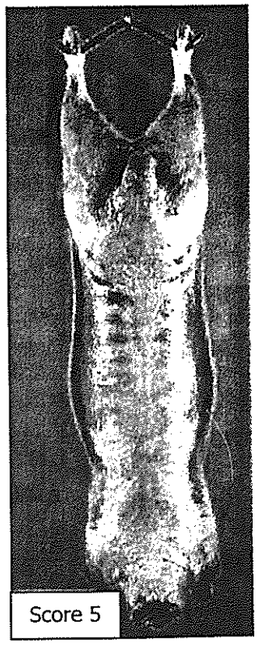

Score 2

Score 4 – the backbone is detectable with pressure on the thumb. Individual short ribs can only be felt with firm pressure. The eye muscle is full with a covering layer of fat.

Score 5 – the backbone can be felt with firm pressure. Short ribs cannot be felt even with firm pressure. The eye muscle cannot be felt due to a thick layer of fat.


Score 3


Score 4


Score 5

CORNED BEEF POTATO CAKES WITH RED ONION CHUTNEY

Source: Rob Burns, BBC website

Serves 2

Ingredients:
A little olive oil
1 ¾ oz diced leeks
1 clove garlic, chopped
14 oz potatoes, mashed
1 egg yolk
5 ¼ oz grated corned beef
A little plain flour
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

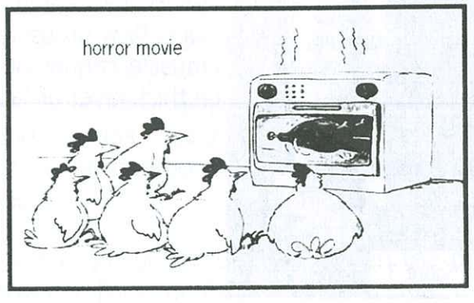
For the chutney
Olive oil
3 ½ oz red onion, diced
1 dried red chilli
1 ¾ oz tomato, diced and de-seeded
1 ¾ oz brown sugar
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Method:
- Heat some of the olive oil in a frying pan and brown off the leeks and garlic
- Remove from the heat and add the mashed potato along with the egg yolk and corned beef. Mix well
- Coat your hands in a little flour so the potato doesn't stick, and form the mixture into four equal patties, approx. 2 inches in diameter. Add salt and pepper and shallow fry the patties in a little more olive oil until golden brown on both sides
- To make the chutney, heat a saucepan with a drizzle of olive oil, add the red onion and the chilli. Cook until browned
- Add the tomato, brown sugar and seasoning and allow to caramelise for 5 minutes

Serve either hot or cold with the potato cakes and some ripped salad leaves.

COMEDY CORNER

Spot the difference



The Wool Press

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All the regular features and more!

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EDITORIAL

I am sure that everyone in the farming sector has appreciated the slight easing up in pressure that comes with the finish of another shearing and lambing season, in addition of course to the pressure associated with Sports Week!

Unfortunately, not all of the pressures associated with farming pass quite as quickly as the summer months in the Falkland Islands. Wool prices are not kind, weather conditions have not been great for growing feed and as a result, the finishing of stock for the abattoir has been more difficult than last year.

It is hoped that the current edition of the Wool Press provides something for everyone to help with the easing of these pressures, even if it is just one of the light-hearted stories.

It is obvious that 'magic bullets' able to fix problems overnight simply do not exist, but it is wonderful to see farmers such as Wineglass and Elephant Beach working somewhat, 'out of the square', to try and find solutions to their farming constraints. It is also hoped that as more volunteer farms "come on stream" with their "managed grazing" trials (such as Moss Side, Race Point, Hope Cottage, Horseshoe Bay, Bold Cove, White Rock, West Lagoons, East Bay and Saunders) that even more dynamic discussion can be generated between farmers. It is hoped that through such discussion, the Falkland Islands farming sector overall can be progressed.

Two wire electric fencing on 'Summer Managed Grazing' plots, information on finishing lambs and hoggets, comparing Gross Margins from various sheep breeds and flock structures and an update on the PIP scheme are all important issues. Articles on each in this edition of the Wool Press are highly recommended for your attention and discussion. Perhaps, somewhere in one of these articles there is something worthy of consideration in the future planning for your farm!

Thanks to our newest trainees for their excellent contributions, to Rodrigo Olave/Jim McAdam for their thorough review of 'Growing Tree Seedlings in the Islands', to Zoë for her usual literary flourish and also to Stanley House for keeping everyone up to date with what is going on at the hostel.

All the best for now,

Neil Judd
Senior Agricultural Advisor

MANAGED SUMMER GRAZING DEMONSTRATION FARMS

Doug Martin

Two Properties, Wineglass Station and Elephant Beach, have established summer rotational grazing units as part of a participatory project which eventually will include 12 farms.

In the case of Wineglass Station an area of 350ha has been split into 10 grazing blocks through which 400 shearlings, as well as 400 wethers and gimmers, have been rotationally grazed over the summer period.

The aim of the demonstration farms is to provide data over the next three years, this being as follows:

1. Long term monitoring of the effect of the impact on Camp of grazing more intensively.
2. Development or expansion of more areas of greens.
3. Productivity of the sheep grazing more intensively.
4. Effect of resting the areas normally grazed by the sheep over summer.
5. The impact on overall productivity of sheep having spelled camp available for the winter period.
6. Monthly rainfall.

In the case of Wineglass Station the area currently being rested consists of 1800ha and this will be split into 3 areas for a slow rotation over winter.
An important part of the demonstration is the use of low cost electric fencing, both two and three wire. With a current of 8000-9000 volts, combined with a good supply of feed, few sheep have escaped through these fences.

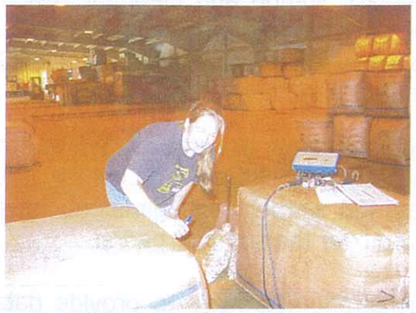
Commencing on the 9th November 2004, the sheep at Wineglass Station have already been through one rotation and are now halfway through the second.

Weights are taken on a regular basis. After an initial weight loss during the first month, in the period 13th December – 15th February, all animals have gained considerable weight. The shearlings have gained an average of 157grams per day, with the wethers and gimmers gaining 225grams per day.

In the second week of March the wethers and gimmers will be moved to another camp to make way for this year's crop of weaners. This will be an important management decision, as monitoring will continue for the next two to three months. Hoggets and Shearlings will continue to be rotated through the grazing system, depending on the availability of feed. One noticeable effect so far has been the positive effect on the sheep with the increased frequency of handling.

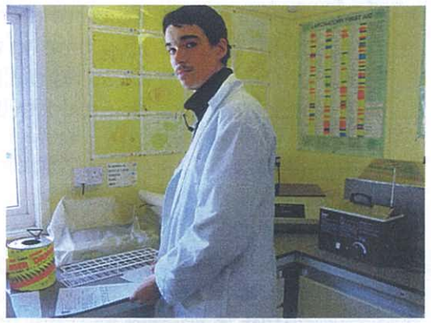
A full cost benefit will be completed after the sheep have been moved to their winter rotational system, with a further analysis completed in spring. However, for now, things look good!

INTRODUCTION FROM DoA's LATEST TRAINEE'S CATHY JACOBSEN & CHESTER CROWIE



Hi, I'm Cathy Jacobsen. I'm currently working at the Department of Agriculture on a Training Programme. I'm here for five months and I'll be covering a variety of things, such as: Grazing management, Simulated Grazing, Cropping, Collecting and Identifying grasses, Core testing wool and Sheep AI & ET through participation the 2005 programme. I am hoping to carry on further education and work in Agriculture.

For the last few years I have been working as a farm hand on the West and I've also done a lot of work in the shearing shed, mainly on the East, including all of the FLH farms.



Hi, I'm Chester Crowie. At the beginning of February I started the Department of Agriculture's Youth Training Scheme. The area that I work in is the Laboratory where the main functions are to aid the Veterinary section and test any samples that come in from around the Falklands e.g. wool samples, soil samples and blood samples.

I've settled in to life at the Department well and the staff are great. They have made Cathy and I very welcome and have helped me when I've inquired about the various tasks that I've had to undertake.

Since I've started work with the DoA I've helped with Hydatid cyst examinations, egg count slides, wool micron testing along with percentage yield testing and lending a hand with any help the Vets need with any animals that have been brought in.

The main area I've worked on is the Grazing Trials. The Grazing Trials are an experiment that will test to see if by leaving grazing pastures to 'rest', rather than hammering it down, will increase the amount of grass production.

At the end of the period in which this experiment is taking place, it will show us hopefully how leaving grazing pastures will increase the amount of grass, which in turn will increase the amount of wool that the Farmer will get from the sheep, increasing profit.

The areas I've most enjoyed are the Haematology and Microbiology and one of the best things I've helped to do is a post-mortem on a specimen that had been brought in.

I'm looking forward to the AI and ET project later this year, which I will probably have an interesting part in.

I'm looking forward to the next four months working in the Department Of Agriculture were I hope to learn more to help me in my future endeavours.

PASTURE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME (PIP) UPDATE

Andrew Pollard

All farmers participating in the 2004/05 PIP should have received a letter informing them of their current PIP status.

The letter contains several key points:

- Informs all farmers of their current seed costs sent out from DoA stocks. This cost is added to farm ledgers on a cost recovery basis.
- Provides a summary of all invoices sent into the DoA as at the date the letter was sent out. The total of the invoices added with DoA seed costs provides the farmer with a level of spending to date.
- Informs farmers of what, to the best of our knowledge, is still left to claim for.
- Finally, it informs farmers of the total amount of funding still available to them after their existing 2004/05 plans are completed.

The remainder of this article is focussed on how you can utilise these remaining funds. The following may also prove beneficial to those farmer's who are about to undertake future planning.

Crop Failures

Seasonal conditions have generally been less than favourable for the growing of forage crops this year. The season started with low Spring temperatures having an impact on seedling germination. This was followed with a prolonged dry spell. A combination of the drying out of the soil and a period of high winds saw some dramatic seedling losses (particularly brassicas) on several crops. There are of course other areas that would need to be looked at closely to determine the reason for failure.

What do we do now?

The department still has a quantity of oats available to sow these failed crop areas down to. It is unlikely that any more than one grazing will be achievable of these areas this season. It would also be worth considering sowing these areas to a mixture of oats undersown with a permanent pasture mix. The oats would provide some shelter to the young grass/legume species. The stubble left over the winter may also lead to the holding of snow for longer. The snow acting as insulation layer, increasing soil temperature. This is common practice in Alaska. The oats on a newly sown pasture may also reduce water loss, compared to pastures where soil is exposed to the wind.

An alternative, which unfortunately is not available this season, is the sowing of a winter crop. The intention of having a winter hardy cereal that establishes before the onset of winter, survives winter and consequently responds with rapid growth in early spring, providing some valuable feed to the ewe in late pregnancy and lactation. This is being investigated for future use.

Preparation for Crops Sown in 2005/06

Now is the time to be identifying possible cropping areas. Please refer to an article in the August 2003 Wool Press titled Forage Options. This will help in determining what sites are suitable for cropping on permanent pasture. Once several areas have been identified, we then need to soil sample (sample must be taken correctly, poor sampling can be costly) to narrow the site choice down. This process should lead to better site selection, eliminating some of the poorer sites that some people are faced with at present. Doug, Damien and myself can run through this with you when visiting.

For farms with 2004/05 allocation remaining it would be ideal to rotavate/disc these areas now, enabling more time to focus on the burn before sowing in the spring. Before rotavating it would be recommended to spread any planned calcified seaweed and phosphate fertilisers. This will speed up the breakdown process and place the phosphate in an area that is obtainable to the plant roots.

Low Cultivation Cost Methods

It is becoming more obvious that *Lotus uliginosis* cultivar Maku is a tremendous prospect for low cost establishment in the Falkland Islands. It is very easy to get trapped in the mind set that cultivating ground to make a fine seedbed is the only way to improve pasture. Moisture levels have been a major limiting factor on cropping across the Islands this season. Opening ground through rotavating increases the risk of the soil drying out. Direct drilling of Lotus into whitegrass flats has proved successful on a number of occasions, without the need to completely destroy the whitegrass. It is still necessary to remove the bulk of dead whitegrass leaf through flail mowing or the cheaper option, burning. Grazing with a high stocking rate will also remove this dead matter but at the cost of sheep weight loss (remember we are trying to improve the quality of feed to put weight on), so this option will not be the preferred one on most occasions. The application of phosphate fertilisers needs to be evaluated on these areas. It is still possible to sow these areas down to lotus now. One of the qualities of Lotus is that it does not seem to be preferentially grazed by geese, some people have noticed this with their sheep also. This is why it has to be fenced so that the grazing animals are forced into eating it. The lotus has fine hairs on the plant that effects it palatability, not its nutritive quality.

Fencing for the Purpose of Rotational Grazing

The nutritional benefits from rotational 'managed grazing' versus a set-stocking regime are unquestionable. A system of a graze, high stocking rate for short period of time, followed by a spell, which is determined by environmental conditions such as rainfall and soil temperature in particular, will provide more feed of a higher quantity over a season than the set-stocking regime.

Different people will have their own perspectives on what design of electric fence is required to hold their animals. The intended use for PIP fencing is not really to keep in or out 100% of the flock/herd, a bonus if it does! The intended use of the fence is to keep the vast **majority** of the flock on an area of ground to maximise utilisation of that area of feed (within a traditionally fenced area). How often on a reseed do you see the cocksfoot eaten back and the fescue untouched or the lotus remaining ungrazed where as the white clover has been grazed to the soil.

Low cost electric fence options are proving very useful in controlling large numbers of stock, getting them used to being moved, WHEN THEY HAVE GOOD FEED IN FRONT OF THEM and when they are well fed. Such low cost options would be put under too much pressure by very hungry stock in winter and by rampaging rams close to mating.

The month ahead also sees open days at Elephant Beach and Swan Inlet (22nd & 24th March) where people will be able to see managed grazing and low cost electric fencing in action. It is strongly recommended that as many people as possible attend these days. The day in between (23rd March) is the National Stud Flock sale at Saladero, hopefully making these open days an option for those who can make it over from the West.

Finally, after sports week I will start making the rounds offering assistance for next season's PIP planning. If you would like to talk about any of the above or any other issue that may need explaining please get in touch with myself, Damien or Doug here at the DoA.

GETTING LAMBS/HOGGETS UP TO WEIGHT

Damien O'Sullivan and Doug Martin

Many farms are considering the option of selling lambs to the abattoir this season and keeping those that do not get to weight, for sale as hoggets next year. Preliminary work carried out in the islands so far indicates that many, perhaps most, will find it difficult to get 2004 lambs to a satisfactory liveweight to achieve a dressed carcass weight of 13 to 16kg within the time limits of the season.

A recent experience with a group of Corriedale type lambs re-inforces this point. The lambs were in extremely good condition and were quite outstanding (for Falkland Islands Corriedale type lambs!). The lambs had an estimated average liveweight of 28 kilograms (mid-February!). If the lambs were going to be marketed this season, two choices existed, they could have been sold as-is and achieve a dreadful return for the farmer (not really an option) or they could have been managed intensively for another 80 or 90 days and then offered for slaughter. Managed grazing of spelled greens, re-seeds, oats etc could be expected to achieve liveweight gains in excess of 150 grams per day and hence liveweights after 80 days of managed grazing of close to 40kgs. Hopefully, right in the "prime" money range.

Not a bad option. However, a couple of problems existed. Firstly, a management system needed to have been ready for the lambs to go onto to ensure that they achieved the required daily growth rates and also the abattoir needed to still be operating to take the lambs in early to mid-May (or later if feed remained on the farm!). At the moment, simply because it is "early-days" with low volume of throughput and because everyone is still learning, neither requirement could be guaranteed. As a result the decision was made to hold them over the winter, shear them in spring and then offer them for slaughter next summer, hopefully as great big lambs and not as small low value mutton!

The decision to hold lambs over the winter, shear them and then sell them as lambs is also not risk free. Animals need to be well managed in order to minimise weight loss over winter, so that the vast majority survive and are ready to thrive when spring feed arrives. In addition they need to be free of permanent teeth, otherwise they become extremely low value animals indeed!

Results from a group of hoggets from the East going to the abattoir this season provide useful information on the "hogget option". It might help everyone understand the range of issues involved and perhaps, some of the risks as well!

	Sheep in group
Wether lambs born in November 2003 Average liveweight 19.6kg (Feb 2004)	700 at start
↓ Winter on camp ↓	
Moved onto reseed on the 13th December 2004 -350 above 23kg liveweight selected for finishing (estimated weight 26kg) remainder below 23kg rejected	350
↓ -40 cut permanent teeth prior to 15th January (2.3% per week) Put on oats crop on the 15th January.	310
↓ 96hd gain 2kgs in 14days on oats	
-31 cut permanent teeth in the next two weeks. (5% per week) 140 were in the vicinity of 35 kg liveweight on the 31st January	279
↓ Hoggets 35kgs and over drafted for the abattoir based on Liveweight of 35kgs to fall into 13 to16 kg carcass weight range.	201 to abattoir
↓	

At the abattoir 201 hd were killed

Average liveweight was	35.9 kgs	
Average carcass wt was	12.8 kgs	
Average price	£10.09	(range of £5.04 -£17.56)
Average dressing %	**35.6%**	**(range of 31.6% to 37.9%)**

From this we can learn that:

- Very good quality feed and management is needed to achieve adequate liveweights before eruption of permanent teeth
- A weight gain of 147grams/hd/day was made on oats
- With this group a liveweight of 40kgs + would have been needed to dress 13 to15kgs. **Remember on the current scale of lamb prices 12.9 kg = £9.68 & 13 kg = £13.00**
- For "wool type breeds" a dressing % of 35% could be used to estimate carcass weight from liveweight.
- All sheep should be weighed early in the season and regularly afterwards to plan for lambs to reach adequate weights

We are very interested in weighing other groups of lambs and hoggets to gain more information on what is happening on farms with a range of feed conditions. If you have animals that you plan to send through the abattoir, particularly lambs this season or hoggets next season, and are interested in calculating growth rates and/or dressing percentages please let Doug or Damien know.

TWO WIRE ELECTRIC FENCING, IS IT AN OPTION?

Riki Evans - Elephant Beach Farm

My first exposure to the concept of 2 wire fences was at the Grazing for Profit workshop in 2002. The course was designed to open our mind to other options and I kind of accepted that it could work but was a bit sceptical. However, I had a notion to try it in a secluded corner somewhere away from prying eyes.

That corner turned out to be the reseed at Elephant Beach. Initially the two wire fences kind of worked, but about 10% of the sheep were out each day. Hmm... not too successful but not a disaster! So we decided to adjust the wire heights to see if this made any difference and hey presto - no sheep out. The odd determined one will still escape (as they will with any fence) but they are very few. The sheep we used previously had no training with 2 wire electric fences.

The main advantages to me of running this type of managed grazing system with one mob are as follows:

- Firstly fence erection is almost a pleasure; I never want to build a six-wire fence again! Two of us were putting up a kilometre every 7 hours or so.
- From a stock point of view the sheep (ewes and lambs) are performing much better than they would in a set stock system on that land.
- The system requires much more contact with the sheep, which I thought might be a bit of a drag but in fact it's a doddle. A quick nip on the bike before breakfast each day to check everything is ok and there is still sufficient grazing and the rest of the day is yours to do other things.
- The amount of sheep I have found cast or stuck in a hole and been able to save is quite amazing just by being around often. The sheep soon get used to you and become very tame, with constant moving from day one the lambs quickly get used to being worked and lamb breaks become a distant memory.

- With careful planning and the sheep at the closest point to the settlement when shearing etc comes around gathering is much easier, one paddock one flock and home by smoko!

It's a little early to see much change in the land but it is noticeable that strange tasty looking grasses are appearing in the rested paddocks and whilst only

grazing two camps out of five the other three have now got an awesome amount of winter feed in them.

So what about costs using C posts with 2 wires and only one electrified? It works out at about £500/km in materials.

I can't think of any disadvantages as such apart from wrecking my thumb on the C post rammer and not having to swear at the dog anymore (look out kids). Maintaining a good voltage on the fence can be a bit of a pain but properly set up systems are pretty easy.

BACK TO WORK

Zoë Luxton

Well, after languishing in the (sadly rainy) FI for 3 weeks, it was a bit of shock to the system getting back to work. Luckily I haven't had anything particularly brain straining to cope with thus far. Apart from when a lady came in yesterday and when I asked what the problem was with the Labrador, she answered, "she smells". I resisted the urge to reply "I generally find madam that all dogs smell, maybe you should get a cat?" I didn't, obviously, but did have a moment's panic thinking "am I going to have to explain to this virgin dog owner that she has let herself in for 10 years of doggy breath?" Luckily she was not an idiot and the dog did have a history of getting blocked anal glands (VERY smelly). I think I found the main problem when I knelt down to give the dog a fuss (before donning gloves and heading for its bum) and managed to pat the very piece of hair that was matted with extremely pongy fox poo.

Claire did have a bit of a tricky one the other day however. The case started badly with Claire being called out during lunch break, which is only forgivable if it really is a life and death situation. Unfortunately for this little dog it really was starting to look that way. He had collapsed, was vomiting and had an extremely painful abdomen and a high temperature. Some fluids, painkillers and antibiotics did not make much of a difference and by mid-afternoon it was clear this dog was in real trouble.

Finances were a bit of an issue for the owner so Claire decided that rather than running blood tests and doing x-rays, looking for a reason to open the dog up, she would just operate immediately as the degree of abdominal pain really pointed towards a foreign body or tumour or similar.

It was a do or die situation and the owner agreed and said that the only other operation the dog had had was a few years ago when it was castrated. It hadn't been a straightforward operation, as both the dogs' testicles had not descended so the previous vet had had to open the dog right up and remove the testicles from the abdomen. So you can understand why Claire's eyebrows shot up when she opened the dog up and found... a ruptured uterus.

The presence of a penis meant that Claire certainly did not doubt the castration story. The dog was a hermaphrodite and had both male and female reproductive organs but had obviously not shown any signs of being in season and was physically male on the outside.

Not much excitement generally happens round here so this story is going to keep us going for some time. Sadly the degree of peritonitis and general condition of the dog gave a very grim prognosis so it was euthanased. The owner undoubtedly made the best decision for his pet in this case but the other sad fact remains that even if Claire thought survival might be an option with intensive nursing, the owner may not have been able to afford it. Highlighting my usual rant of "get your pets insured" or don't have one if you don't have the means of providing the very best care you can.

I know veterinary fees in England can be expensive but it was put into context the other day when we decided to get the waiting room painted. This room is about 10x20ft – not particularly huge and a basic shape so not hard to decorate. A local firm quoted us **£5000** to do the work. FIVE GRAND! For that you get several hours of life saving surgery on your pet by the best in the country and probably an MRI scan chucked in as well. So next time someone grumbles about a bill I will have a good answer for them! I am obviously in the wrong trade.

CURRENT TECHNIQUES FOR GROWING TREE SEEDLING IN THE FALKLAND ISLANDS

Rodrigo Olave and Jim McAdam

When the Falkland Islands were first settled in 1764 there was no tree cover. Since then little progress has been made with tree planting. A few hectares are all that currently exist, mainly for amenity and shelter purposes. There have been sporadic attempts to plant trees, the most successful being a series of trials that were started in 1989 by the United Kingdom Falkland Islands Trust and subsequently expanded by the Department of Agriculture in the Falkland Islands as part of an on farm shelterbelt programme. The most successful tree species to establish have been conifers such as Lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta)* and Monterey cypress (*Cupressus macrocarpa*) although smaller areas of *Pinus radiata, Salix viminalis* and *Populus alba* exist.

All of the recent reports on tree planting recognise the need for good, locally produced planting stock of appropriate origin. As a precursor to a research programme on improved tree seedling production in the Islands, a survey was conducted in January 2003 to identify the current status, practices adopted and number of trees produced within the islands. This information is important in relation to the future provision of tree nurseries in the Islands, the adoption of findings of the proposed research programme and eventual sustainability of a forestry industry in the Falkland Islands. The findings of this survey are reported in this article.

Methodology

A postal questionnaire was distributed to all (90 in total) farms in the Islands, known local nursery providers in Stanley and any local gardens/growers who wished to participate. The questions were formulated using advice from local researchers and staff in the Department of Agriculture. There were 3 sections: a) Components of tree production b) Propagation facilities and c) Types of plant raised in propagation structures.

Questions were simple, direct and as non-technical as possible. Respondents had the opportunity to provide additional information.

Results

Response

A response rate of 40% was achieved. Considering that only a few people in the Islands have ever produced tree seedlings and that questionnaires were distributed widely throughout the small (2,300) population, it is likely that coverage of tree seedling production was virtually total.

Quantities of production

About twenty-five respondents had produced tree seedlings at some time in the Falkland Islands. Of these 58%, 25% and 17% had ever produced more than 10, 100 and 1,000 plants per year respectively. It is difficult to quantify in any one year exactly how many tree seedlings are produced in the Islands as interest in production varies according to for example the price of wool (the main determinant of farm profitability) and Government supports for tree planting schemes. Moreover it is widely known that in times of financial stress farmers will concentrate on short to medium term goals rather than long term goals (of which tree planting is one). Overall the figures for annual amounts of tree seedlings produced will be relatively small.

Components of tree seedling production

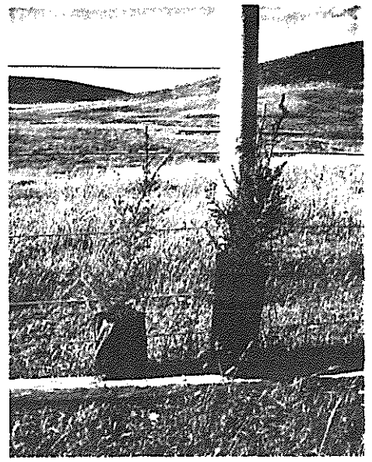
1. Seed. The quality of seed planted in a tree nursery is of crucial importance since seeds are the most basic input into any planting programme. One third (34%) of respondents did not know the source of their seed, 18% collected seed locally and the remainder 16 people (48%) purchased seed from abroad. It is likely that seed used by most of the respondents who did not know where their seed came from, probably come originally from a purchased source. Almost all the purchased seed was from the Northern Hemisphere (e.g. UK and Alaska). Probably only about one fifth of planting used local seed. This has implications for future success of seedlings due to choosing the wrong seed provenance (area where the seed has been collected) can affect growth and survival in the location where the trees are finally planted. For example, research conducted in the Falklands has shown that coastal Alaskan provenance's of Lodgepole pine seed are best for the Islands. Hence it is obviously best if the seed is collected from stands growing in a similar environment or naturalised stands. Nevertheless if this material is from seed suppliers, it is imperative to insist on the proper seed source when purchasing.

2. Growing medium. To survive in a windy environment such as the Falkland Islands, often without watering and fertilising, a plant needs a well-developed root system that depends on the substrate used. Imported, commercially available compost was used by 44% of respondents for seedling germination and 36% for growing on plants. Local soil was used by 41% and 32% respectively for the same purpose. The remainders suggested using peat and sand in their own mix for both purposes. However to produce healthy tree seedlings, mixes as these should be evaluated for the physical and chemical properties such as porosity, water holding capacity and pH. This latter is very important for healthy plant development due to nutrients becoming available for plants at different pH levels. Thus for example the optimum soil pH for conifers such as Lodgepole pine and Monterey cypress is between pH 5 and 6.

In addition, if making up your own compost it is important to process the material correctly before it can be used successfully. Organic matter needs to be well enough composted until all microbial activity is complete.

3. Containerisation and containers. As known most containers are modular in construction and their primary function is to hold a discrete supply of growing medium and ensure the development of a good root system. Over four fifths (81%) of respondents containerised their seedlings as apposed to 19% who used bareroot production in open soil. However, the vast majority used black polybags (43%), seed trays (20%), military ammunition boxes (17%), and

homemade (20%) devices. Although the former (polybags) (see figures 1 & 2) is cheaper, a common problem is that plant roots tend to grow in spiral once they hit the smooth inner surface, leading to plants with restricted growth. However few respondents (3) used other more suited containers such as rootrainer (see figures 1&2) which have ribs to guide root growth. These containers also prevent root spiralling and have holes in the bottom to create drainage, and aeration to encourage root pruning and formation of root tips at the bottom of the plug.



Figures 1 & 2: Monterey Cypress seedlings growing in polybag and rootrainer containers

In addition, containerised production can reduce transplanting shock through minimal root disturbance and also leaving seedlings in the containers offers an additional advantage for small scale planting, in cases where farmers may experience some delay between receipt and planting of trees, and for out of season planting.

4. Fertilisation. Two thirds (67%) of respondents did not use any fertiliser, 8% used it only occasionally and 25% of respondents did use fertiliser. In view of the importance of fertiliser for seedling growth this high figure for non-usage must give rise to some concern. Of those using fertiliser, over half (52%) used natural fertiliser such as yard manure and seaweed and some (7%) used urea. The remainder (41%) used purchased compound fertiliser. In most cases the fertiliser used was formulated for agriculture purposes and was supplied by either the local Department of Agriculture (56%), garden shop or Department of Agriculture in Chile. Such fertilisers are often for improving pasture growth and contain a compound of three macronutrients (Nitrogen, Potassium and Phosphorous) and do not contain the necessary admixture of macro and micronutrients necessary for tree growth. Choosing the correct fertiliser is also important in ultimately reducing costs, minimising leaching and hence any adverse environmental effects.

5. Tree seedling use. Six different uses were recorded for tree seedlings. Three quarter of respondents stated that plants were to be used in shelterbelts on their own farms particularly near their houses. A few of these (5%) had planted trees as shelterbelts around small paddocks on the farm. One fifty (20%) stated that plants were to be used as for sale, as gifts or put into a garden hedge.

Propagation facilities

Seedling growth is affected by conditions both above ground and below ground. Improving the seedling production by providing a reliable water supply and protected propagation structure can help greatly to produce better planting stock.

1. Structure. A wide range of sizes and shapes of protective structures are used to modify the environment for tree seedling production in the cold, windy and dry climate of the Falklands where late spring and summer frosts are not uncommon. Of those with greenhouse (or polytunnels) half had only one, 32% had two and 8% had 3 or more. Forty two percent had more than $40m^2$, half of respondents had 20 – 40 m^2, 8% had less than 10 m^2.

Half of the greenhouses had been purchased from the local garden shop and most of the others ordered directly from UK. A few (5 people) had made their own and 12 did not state the origin of their greenhouses. Half of the greenhouses were built of metal (steel or aluminium) and half-used wood and curved bow.

In view of the freight cost of importing materials, most growers (64%) used polyethylene to cover the greenhouse, however one quarter (25%) and 11% had used glass and venyl respectively. Fibreglass or polycarbonate had not been used.

Most (76%) of greenhouses had no floor covering (bare soil) the remainder using gravel or concrete. It is understandable that open soil floor predominate as most greenhouses were multifunctional and could be used to grow vegetables in.

However, solid floors or benches would be better (e.g. for containers, pest control and storage) if greenhouses/polytunnels were to be specifically used for tree seedling production.

2. Environment control. There is little or no environmental control in greenhouses in the Falkland Islands. Almost all (96%) had no artificial light to extend daylight and only one third (32%) of greenhouses/polytunnels had any form of heating. For optimum biological and economic levels of tree seedling production, control of as many environmental factors as possible (light, ventilation, heating) is highly advisable specially to overcome innate dormancy in plants and seeds, extend the growing season and production potential.

3. Water. This is the single most important factor in plant production. In the Falkland Islands the climate is dry and windy, especially in spring and summer and high levels of sunshine, which result in high transpiration rates with concomitant risk of desiccation to seedlings in greenhouses or polytunnels. Although there is abundant ground water available locally, the low incidence of irrigation systems in greenhouses/polytunnels is a severe limitation to production. Of those who have irrigation systems installed, most (60%) used potable water, a few (2 people) used collected rainwater and 36% did not specify any water source. In no cases was the water quality known a serious problem in planning and managing a tree seedling nursery. Water quality is important for healthy plant development since levels of suspended solids, pH, sediment, dissolved salts, conductivity, toxic ions and heavy metals can greatly influence susceptible tree seedlings.

Plants produced

Overall, 25 different species of trees were mentioned as ever being raised in the Falkland Islands, the most common in order of importance being, Monterey cypress (*Cupressus macocarpa*), Lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*) and eucalyptus (species not mentioned) in the survey. But other tree species such as willows and different type of conifers were repeatedly mentioned.

It was also asked what other types of plants were raised with the respondents replaying that potatoes, flowers, lettuce and tomatoes being the most popular. Additionally species such as blackberries and strawberries were also mentioned while important vegetables such as, courgettes, carrots, cucumbers and cabbage were also grown in greenhouses or polytunnels.

Conclusions

The survey has shown that, considering the climatic and resource limitations of the region, a wide range of tree species have been produced under controlled environment conditions. In

many cases, production of tree seedlings under such conditions and limited materials is a testament to the resources, ingenuity and determination of the local growers.

However, if tree planting is adopted on a much more widespread basis than currently - and there are indicators that the Falkland Islands government will fund an ambitious shelterbelt programme, then tree nursery production will have to be substantially addressed as a key limiting factor.

The resources to produce a relatively large number of tree seedlings exist but there is a lack of awareness of inexistence of an infrastructure to realise these production potentials.

Given the deficiencies highlighted in the survey, particular attention should be devoted at containerization of seedlings, provision of a correctly formulated locally sourced growing medium, environment control within greenhouses, particularly in relation to ventilation and water supply and facilities and structures to enable bulk handling, movement and transportation of relatively large number of containerized seedlings.

The benefits of producing seedling locally over imported stock are well known and given the Falkland Islands Government vision of having all local produce raised under organic principles of production, every encouragement should be given to establishing a sustainable local tree seedling nursery industry. It is also clear from the survey that there is tremendous local enthusiasm for tree seedling production and that this should develop on a local individual island basis at least given the transport problems within the islands.

To achieve this aim local production will have to be supplied within correct and relevant advice based on local research and experience from similar or adjacent regions of the world.

Acknowledgement

The authors thank the Department of Agriculture of the Falkland Islands, trustees of the United Kingdom Falkland Islands Trust for their important support in this and other works that we have carried out in the Islands. Thanks also are due to all those farmers and local growers that kindly responded to the survey.

FARM SITTING / WORKING HOLIDAY REQUESTS

WE HAVE RECEIVED A COUPLE OF EMAILS THIS MONTH.

AN AMERICAN (STEVEN SERANO) WANTS TO COME TO THE FALKLANDS FOR ABOUT A MONTH. HE WOULD LIKE TO WORK ON A FARM IN EXCHANGE FOR HIS BOARD. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN BEING HOST, CONTACT: stetser2000@yahoo.com

AN AUSTRIAN (TONI KNOLL), IS LOOKING FOR FARM SITTING IN THE FALKLAND ISLANDS. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED PLEASE CONTACT: anton.knoll@chello.at

NB. The Department of Agriculture is just passing these messages onto the farming community and has no other information or details than is stated. The Department of Agriculture will not be involved in any arrangements that might be necessary for you to 'employ' either of these people. Advice from the immigration officer is advised.

STANLEY HOUSE NEWS

Julie Courtney

When Richard asked me to write an article for the wool press, I wondered what I was going to write about. So I decided to bring everyone up to date with what's going on in Stanley House.

We at Stanley House do our very best to make the hostel a home from home for the children, we try to get them out most weekends or do lots of other activities in the hostel. We have asked the children to become more involved with decision making and how they would like to see things move forward in the hostel.

Phyllis is the cook here and she asked me to ask the children for a favourite food lists, and to ask mums to send in a favourite recipe. So if any of you ladies in camp have a recipe that you cook at shearing time which could be useful here, we would be very grateful. Please fax them to me on 27286.

We are having an open day on Saturday 26th March and would be very grateful for any raffle prizes, books, cakes, jams, eggs, mutton and bric & brac for our various stalls. The money raised on the day goes into the children's donation fund to help buy extra equipment and to do other activities outside the hostel.

The children have been out and about a lot this half term; they went to see the panto Aladdin and enjoyed the show very much. Other outings include the mini sports, conservation fun day and a trip to Bush Pass.

Stanley house is now on the web and our address is as follows; stanleyhouse.ac.fk you can find all information on there with some nice pictures of the children out and about.

I am enjoying being back in the hostel - no two days are the same and it's very challenging and rewarding. The children have great opportunities to develop their independence and most importantly, their Education. Hope you all enjoyed sports week

LABOUR SCHEME

Farmers are reminded that funds are available from the Labour Scheme for assistance with farm related work such as fencing, pasture improvement and farm building development. Guidelines to the scheme can be found in the Farm Management Handbook or the DoA website:

www.fiagriculture.doa.gov.fk

or

They can also be supplied from Glynis King's office: Tel 27322 or email gking@doa.gov.fk

But please note that although the labour scheme can be used for pasture improvement, it is not for works approved under the Pasture Improvement Programme, as that is already accounted for in the funding of individual farm applications.

SHEEP BREEDS, FARMING SYSTEM OPTIONS, LAMBS, HOGGETS, MUTTON, WOOL, WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

Neil Judd

It is clear that sheep farmers in the Falkland Islands are facing difficult financial times, as they are in many countries of the world. Wool prices have fallen to quite low levels across the entire micron spectrum, while at the same time, farming input costs have continued to rise.

In response to the same pressures, sheep farmers in many countries wishing to continue as specialist wool producers, have responded by shifting the emphasis of their production away from relatively low value, medium and strong wool production to finer sheep breeds/types. Little emphasis is placed on meat characteristics on such farms.

In addition, there has also been quite a massive increase in the mating of wool type ewes (mainly merino ewes) to terminal sires (Poll Dorset, Suffolk etc) where farm reproductive rates have been sufficiently high to justify the exercise. In many instances, very specialised systems have emerged where the complete breeding structure has been changed to sheep meat breeds where no importance is placed on wool production and wool value at all!

It should also be noted that in addition to the tendency for specialist production systems to emerge, there has also been quite a fundamental shift in the nature of the type of sheep making up much of the "middle ground".

The last ten years has seen the rapid emergence of improved dual-purpose types with moderate/high wool value and moderate (but varying) sheep meat capability.

Included in these types are the South African breeds: Dohne Merino and SAMM's. The Australian sheep industry is also responding by examining ways of improving the carcass characteristics of some large framed plain-bodied Merino types.

The new "Dual Purpose" types have attempted to improve on the overall profitability of the older dual purpose breeds such as the Corriedale (lower wool value) and Polwarth (lower meat capability).

It is too soon to be making any conclusions about the relative merit of any particular breed, however some general comments about farming are possible –

1. Financial pressure on sheep farmers in the Falkland Islands is highly likely to continue in the long-term.

2. Many farmers have responded to financial pressures and long term market signals by reviewing the nature of their farming operations in terms of;
   a. Type of sheep system (breeding, balanced flock, meat, wool, both, etc.)
   b. Productivity per animal and productivity per hectare
   c. Critical review of the business operation and elimination of "deadwood".

3. "One size"/ "one option" will not suit everyone!

4. All breed and system options have strengths and weaknesses but, perhaps arguably to many, one of the biggest factors determining the impact of the relative strength or weakness of the particular breed or system on a farms profitability will be the on-farm management of the breed or system.

As a result, what is best for one farm may not be best for another farm with exactly the same type of country but with a very different management style/attitude.

In an attempt to illustrate the inter-relationships that exist between the various options, a range of hypothetical scenarios has been generated. The options show the impact on farm wool income, meat income, gross margin per dry sheep equivalent and also critically, the overall Farm Gross Margin. The overall Farm Gross Margin shows how much money could be left over to pay the farms overheads (fuel, administration, farmer, etc) and can be used as a simple starting point to compare various enterprise options.

Some farmers might also find it useful to calculate their own farm's annual overheads and then review the range of options with this figure in their mind.

The range of alternatives examined includes one that assumes (option 1) that a farm has fully switched to the sheep meat breeds, (Poll Dorset, Texel etc); Balanced flocks; Full breeding flocks; coarse wool and medium wool options are also examined. Obviously every possible option has not been able to be reviewed, however it is believed possible to simply compare what has been reviewed and be able to estimate where many other scenarios would lie.

In addition, options have also been examined where a higher level of management and attention has been assumed for the finishing of lambs and hoggets than that traditionally given to such animals in the Falkland Islands. (Shift in lamb and hogget values from £10.00 to £14.00 per head).

The range of options examined are all based on a theoretical sheep farm in the Falkland Islands running about 6200 "dry sheep equivalents" (DSE). For the breeding options examined this represents around 3000 breeding ewes with sufficient young female followers retained (about 4300 sheep shorn each year). All wethers have assumed to be sold as lamb and hoggets.

Balanced flock structures have also been examined. To represent such farms, the same DSE was assumed (6200), but the number of breeding ewes was reduced to about 1850 and wethers were retained through to 7.5 years of age (except some at the higher reproductive rates, which were sold as lamb/hogget). For the balanced flock "runs" just over 5,000 sheep were shorn each year.

In all cases, levels of sheep productivity relevant to the breed and current wool prices have been used as the starting point for Gross Margin analysis. No productivity gains, with the exception of reproductive rates, have been assumed.

Table 1 appears very complex.
However careful examination highlights several critical points: -

(i) Enormous potential exists to improve overall Farm Gross Margins.

(ii) Switching from a Balanced Flock (mix of ewes and mature wethers) to a full Breeding Flock WITHOUT improving lamb and hogget finished condition and hence sale price, does not appear to offer much of an improvement over balanced flocks!

(iii) Meat breed systems with meat type ewes retained as breeding ewes do not appear to offer scope to improve Farm Gross Margins for farms with reproductive rates typical of most farms in the Falkland Islands. Such breeds/systems require very high reproductive performance or massive sheep meat prices to gain profit superiority. As shown in the attached table the "Sheep Meat" option is "close" to other options at 100% lambing rates, but appear inferior at lower rates. For farms with lambing %'s greater than approximately 70% the use of meat breeds as terminal sires (where all male AND female lambs are slaughtered) is worthy of examination. At reproductive rates less than this, farms would struggle to sustain breeding ewe numbers.

(iv) Whole system improvement will increase gains even further (reduce death rates; improve animal productivity etc).

The analysis shown is not intended to examine all available options, but is intended to highlight some of the possible consequences of on-farm decision making and breed/system options.

Breed choice, grazing management system employed; flock structure – big issues, however as everyone is very much aware, with economic times so tight, the ramifications of these decisions have perhaps never been so important to farmers in the Falkland Islands.

Any farmer who requires further explanation of the content of this article or who would like their own farm's circumstances examined is urged to contact Neil Judd at the Department of Agriculture.

TABLE 1: GROSS MARGINS ASSOCIATED WITH VARIOUS BREED/FARMING SYSTEM OPTIONS.

	Type of Flock on Farm	60% Lambing	80% Lambing	100% Lambing
1	Meat Breed 3000 ewes £16 lambs & Hoggets 6200 DSE	Wool income = £14,000 Meat income = £12,800 GM/DSE = £3.12 **Farm GM = £19,400**	Wool income = £14,700 Meat income = £19,900 GM/DSE = £4.26 **Farm GM = £26,600**	Wool income = £14,700 Meat income = £24,000 GM/DSE = £4.91 **Farm GM = £30,400**
2	26micron breeding flock 3000 breeding ewes £10 lambs & hoggets 6200 DSE	Wool Income = £23,700 Meat income = £7,800 GM/DSE = £3.87 **Farm GM = £24,000**	Wool Income = £24,900 Meat income = £12,600 GM/DSE = £4.76 **Farm GM = £29,500**	Wool Income = £24,900 Meat income = £15,100 GM/DSE = £5.13 **Farm GM = £31,800**
3	26micron balanced flock 1850 breeding ewes £4 average for 7.5 yo wethers 6200 DSE	Wool income = £28,400 Meat income = £1,300 GM/DSE = £3.61 **Farm GM = £22,400**	+ £10 for lamb & hogg Wool income = £29,200 Meat income = £4,300 GM/DSE = £4.16 **Farm GM = £25,800**	+ £10 for lamb & hogg Wool income = £29,200 Meat income = £5,900 GM/DSE = £4.39 **Farm GM = £27,200**
4	26micron breeding flock 3000 breeding ewes £14 lamb & hogget (improved lamb finishing & breeds) 6200 DSE	Wool income = £23,700 Meat income = £10,800 GM/DSE = £4.36 **Farm GM = £27,700**	Wool income = £24,900 Meat income = £17,500 GM/DSE = £5.56 **Farm GM = £34,400**	Wool income = £24,900 Meat income = £21,100 GM/DSE = £6.09 **Farm GM = £37,700**
5	23micron breeding flock 3000 breeding ewes £10 lambs & hoggets 6200 DSE	Wool income = £30,200 Meat income = £7,800 GM/DSE = £4.92 **Farm GM = £30,500**	Wool income = £31,800 Meat income = £12,600 GM/DSE = £5.87 **Farm GM = £36,400**	Wool income = £31,800 Meat income = £15,100 GM/DSE = £6.23 **Farm GM = £38,600**
6	23micron balanced flock 1850 breeding ewes £4 average for 7.5 yo wethers 6200 DSE	Wool income = £36,100 Meat income = £1,300 GM/DSE = £4.86 **Farm GM = £30,100**	+ £10 for lamb & hogg Wool income = £37,100 Meat income = £4,300 GM/DSE = £5.45 **Farm GM = £33,700**	+ £10 for lamb & hogg Wool income = £37,100 Meat income = £5,900 GM/DSE = £5.68 **Farm GM = £35,200**
7	23micron breeding flock 3000 breeding ewes £14 lambs & hoggets (improved lamb finishing & breeds) 6200 DSE	Wool income = £30,200 Meat income = £10,800 GM/DSE = £5.40 **Farm GM = £33,500**	Wool income = £31,800 Meat income = £17,500 GM/DSE = £6.66 **Farm GM = £41,300**	Wool income = £31,800 Meat income = £21,100 GM/DSE = £7.19 **Farm GM = £44,500**

QUIET CUT RELIEVES WETHER OF BURDEN

Source: Tasmanian Country, October 22nd 2004
Sent by Cameron Bell

While New Zealand celebrity Merino Shrek had his 38cm wool shorn off on international television, Tasmania's version was humbly relieved of his 40cm wool in a one-stand shearing shed in northern Tasmania. The lost sheep wandered on to the lush dairy pasture's of Evercreech in the Fingal Valley just before Christmas last year. Evercreech part owner Rudi Roodenry said he had never seen anything like it and he thought the sheep might have been in the bush for at least three years before turning up for a haircut. "He was a big round ball of wool," he said. "The wool was so long that it was dragging on the ground and he couldn't even see." Evercreech was a sheep property before conversion to one of Australia's largest dairy farms in 1999, and there was still an old shearing set-up in the shed. Mr Roodenry arranged to have the hermit shorn. "We were amazed at how clean and soft his wool was," he said. "You could feel the lanolin right through the fleece. He was pretty quiet during the shearing – I think he was relieved to be rid of the burden." The wool was packed with a neighbour's wool and sold. The wether now gets his pick of the lush pastures along with another sheep friend who also wandered out from the bush soon after.

SHEEP NEED SMILEY FACES AND FRIENDS!

A Cambridge University research team Dr Keith Kendrick has found that sheep can differentiate between 50 sheep individuals faces. In furthering the study Dr Kendrick "thought perhaps sheep could recognise emotions which are much more subtle".

And the result? "It turns out sheep can recognise humans, smiling versus angry; and sheep, stressed versus calm," explains Kendrick. The sheep guinea pigs were presented with two doors through which they could get their noses into the trough: one displaying a happy human or sheepish face and the other a rather aggressive bloke or a stressed out sheep. "They vastly preferred to press the smiling human or the animal that has just had a meal and is feeling all right with life," said Kendrick.

The team has also found that "seeing a face picture of a friend or family member would be the most effective way of reducing separation in sheep anxiety". The Cambridge sheep researchers proved this by locking their guinea sheep in a darkened barn and showing them various faces. Stress was monitored noting "the number of times each sheep bleated, its movement within the barn and its heart rate". This being real science, the sheep's levels of cortisol and adrenaline were also recorded.

The results of the experiment were apparently significant: "When the sheep were shown faces of sheep familiar to them, they became less stressed and showed fewer signs of agitation than when they were shown goat faces or triangles. The areas of the brain which control fear and the stress response also showed reduced activation," the paper reports. The researchers conclude that: "These results provide evidence that face pictures may be useful for relieving stress caused by unavoidable social isolation in sheep, and possibly other animal species, including humans." Kendrick added: "In this sense sheep may provide a comparison with us carrying around pictures of loved ones in our wallets, handbags and so on."

BAKED APPLE WITH TOFFEE SAUCE

Source: Antony Worrall Thompson, BBC website

Serves 1

Ingredients:
1 apple, cored and cut into rings
1 tsp soft brown sugar
Pinch of cinnamon
4 orange slices

For toffee sauce:
2 oz unsalted butter
2 oz soft brown sugar
1 tblsp honey
1 large chocolate toffee finger, finely chopped

To Serve:
Double cream, to drizzle

Method:
- Preheat the oven to 220°C
- Place an apple ring on a non-stick baking tray and sprinkle with some of the sugar and a pinch of cinnamon. Repeat this process, stacking up the apple rings on top of one another
- Bake in the oven for 10 – 12 minutes, or until the apple is soft
- Meanwhile, to make the toffee sauce, gently melt the butter and sugar in a small pan until dissolved and a caramel has formed
- Add the honey and chocolate toffee to the caramel and allow to melt
- Remove the baked apple from the oven and transfer to a serving plate
- Pour the toffee sauce over the apple and finish with a drizzle of cream and serve.

COMEDY CORNER

Bored Sheepdog?

RAM SALE WEEK

Tuesday 22nd March – ELEPHANT BEACH FARM

Riki Evans and Ben Berntsen are hosting a farm visit to look at and discuss what they are achieving and what lessons they have learned from their efforts.

EVERYONE WELCOME for the morning session

After lunch is specifically for Farming for Profit & Grazing for Profit participants.

- Depart Stanley (from DoA carpark for anyone wanting a lift) at 0730
- Start tour of various sites around the farm at 0930 after a quick smoko on arrival
- Lunch at 1300 (food provided by DoA)
- Depart for Stanley by 1400
- Farming for Profit (FFP) & Grazing for Profit (GFP) visitors stay to discuss the impact of the management system on Elephant Beach Farm profitability
- Depart at 1530 for Stanley

Wednesday 23rd March – RAM & CATTLE SALE

- Depart DoA car park at 0730 for Saladero
- Viewing commences at 0930, Sheep & Cattle Sale bidding commences at 1200 (midday)

SHEEP	CATTLE
Approx. 90 Polwarth shearling rams & 1 mature ex-stud sire	20 yearling & weaner steers
2 ET Dohne rams hoggets	3 cows (540 – 600kg liveweight)
1 ET Poll Dorset ram hogget	1 yearling bull
1 ET Poll Dorset ewe hogget	
9 ET Cormo ram hoggets	
7 ET Cormo ewe hoggets	
Burgers, Hot Dogs & Soft Drinks on sale throughout the day	

Thursday 24th March – SAND BAY ABATTOIR & SWAN INLET FARM

- Depart DoA by coach at 0800 to visit Sand Bay Abattoir. Sheep grading & liveweight assessment prior to slaughter
- Bring your own smoko to be had on the way to Swan Inlet
- Depart Sand Bay at 1000 for Swan Inlet Farm where visitors will view a range of low-cost pasture improvement plots & electric fencing for sheep, plus grazing management systems
- Soft Drinks & BBQ lunch on sale from 1300
- Depart Swan Inlet at 1400 for Sand Bay Abattoir to look at the selected animals after slaughter
- Depart Sand Bay at 1700

- ***Please telephone (27355) or fax (27352) Mandy McLeod to book your place on any or all of the days so that we can cater for transport & food requirements.***

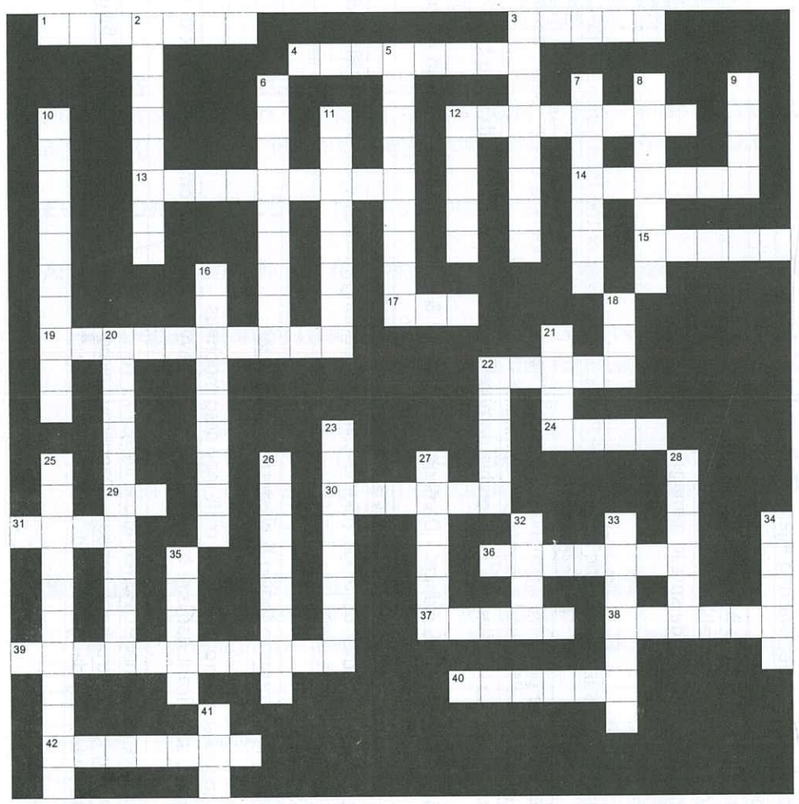
WIND SCALE DESCRIPTIONS

Beaufort Scale				
Force	**Kmh**	**Mph**	**Knots**	**Description**
0	0 – 1.5	0 – 1	0 – 1	Calm, smoke rises vertically
1	1.5 – 5	1 – 3	1 – 3	Light air, direction of wind shown by smoke drift, not by wind vanes
2	6 – 11	4 – 7	4 – 6	Light breeze, wind felt on face; leaves rustle; ordinary vanes moved by wind
3	12 – 19	8 – 12	7 – 10	Gentle breeze, leaves & small twigs in constant motion; wind extends light flag
4	20 – 29	13 – 18	11 – 16	Moderate breeze, raises dust & loose paper; small branches are moved
5	30 – 38	19 – 24	17 – 21	Fresh breeze, small trees in leaf begin to sway; crested wavelets form on inland waters
6	39 – 50	25 – 31	22 – 27	Strong breeze, large branches in motion; whistling heard in telegraph wires; umbrellas used with difficulty
7	51 – 61	32 – 38	28 – 33	Near gale, whole trees in motion; inconvenience felt when walking against the wind
8	62 – 74	39 – 46	24 – 40	Gale breaks twigs off trees; generally impedes progress
9	75 – 87	45 – 54	41 – 47	Severe gale, slight structural damage occurs (chimney pots & slates removed)
10	88 – 101	55 – 63	48 – 55	Storm, seldom experience inland; trees uprooted; considerable structural damage occurs
11	102 – 116	64 – 72	56 – 63	Violent storm, very rarely experienced; accompanied by wide-spread damage
12	117 – 133	73 – 83	64 – 71	Hurricane

Hurricane – Tropical cyclone with winds of 74 mph or more. Normally applied to such storms in the Atlantic Basin & the Pacific Ocean east of the International Date Line				
Scale	**Kmh**	**Mph**	**Knots**	**Description**
1	119 – 153	74 – 95	65 – 82	No real damage to building structures. Damage primarily to unanchored mobile homes, shrubbery & trees. Some damage to poorly constructed signs. Also, some coastal road flooding & minor pier damage.
2	154 – 177	96 – 110	83 – 95	Some roofing material, door & window damage to buildings. Considerable damage to shrubbery & trees with some trees blown down.
3	178 – 209	111 – 130	93 – 113	Some structural damage to small residences & utility buildings. Damage to shrubbery & trees with foliage blown off trees & large trees blown down.
4	210 – 249	131 – 155	114 – 135	Complete roof structure failures on small residences. Shrubs, trees & all signs are blown down.
5	>250	>155	>135	Complete roof failure on many residences & industrial buildings. Some complete building failures with small utility buildings blown over or away. All shrubs, trees & signs blown down.

Tropical Cyclone – term used for severe tropical low storms in Indian & western Pacific Ocean				
Scale	**Kmh**	**Mph**	**Knots**	**Description**
1	<125	77	54	Gales negligible house damage. Damage to some crops & trees, craft may drag moorings
2	125 – 169	77 – 105	54 – 91	Destructive winds. Minor house damage, significant damage to signs & trees. Heavy damage to some crops. Risk of power failure.
3	170 – 224	105 – 140	92 – 75	Very destructive winds. Some roof & structural damage. Power failure likely.
4	225 – 279	140 – 173	76 – 93	Very destructive winds. Significant roofing loss & structural damage. Dangerous airborne debris. Widespread power failures.
5	>280	174+	94	Sever cyclone. Very destructive winds. Extremely dangerous with widespread destruction.

March 2005



Across

1. fried fowl
3. move on all fours
4. two slices with filling
12. cooking and eating outside
13. yellow weed
14. to accumulate
15. used to light fire
17. hard shelled fruit
19. stops engine freezing
22. to rest
24. slowly turns meat
29. personal computer
30. Falkland goose
31. cola
36. suspended activity
37. American for jacket
38. swimming movement
39. method of Christ's death
40. childs horse
42. to get away for a few days/weeks

Down

2. book of months, days and the year
3. Used to help cook BBQ food
5. after school punishment
6. bears do this in winter
7. fine
8. to give in to an overwhelming desire or force
9. fence entrance
10. Mickey's home
11. used to haul clothing
12. comes in loaves
16. of highest importance
18. fizz
20. healing qualities
21. comes on every hour
22. a duelling instrument
23. high country
25. glossy pictures
26. bathing garment
27. easily carried computer
28. time for chocolate eggs
32. paper bound together
33. common herb for flavouring food
34. number of rainbow colours
35. Disney character with big teeth
41. letter sent through phone

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All the regular features and more!

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to another edition of the Wool Press. I think it is going out slightly later than planned because the compiler (Priscilla) had some difficulty in getting all the articles in by the due date. The reason for this is partly explained by Mandy McLeod's article on page 10. You will see that the last full week of March was crammed full of events involving many of the DoA staff and a week of activities such as these do not materialise without a great deal of prior preparation. Hence Priscilla's nagging for contributions to the WP fell on temporarily deaf ears. Still she won't have to worry about this in future as this is Priscilla's last Wool Press before leaving the DoA and joining the Police. Our loss is their gain and at least you can look forward now to being arrested by someone who will treat you to a beaming smile!

Many thanks Priscilla for all the hard work you have carried out within the department and in helping to make the WP such a readable magazine.

What's in the rest of this month's WP? Well the usual mix of informative and educational articles interspersed with some more light hearted pieces. You can find out all about the background of Des Humphrey – wool classer extraordinaire – and there are amusing pieces from two youngsters in Camp, Reba Peck of Shallow Bay and Ryan Poole of Race Point. On the more serious side there are articles on lambing percentages in the Falklands, the use of movement tags, the Labour Scheme, and the future eligibility for funding of sheep genetic improvement under the PIP scheme.

So read and enjoy.

Stephen Pointing
Senior Veterinary Officer

DES HUMPHREY
WOOL CLASSING EDUCATOR
FOR TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION, QUEENSLAND

I commenced working with wool in the 1970's with Australia's largest processing plant GH Michell and Sons buying wool at the Southern selling centres in Australia. This involved valuing greasy wool and purchasing suitable types for the necessary orders for overseas clients.

I worked for this company for approx 10 years before taking on a teaching role in a major Victorian wool growing region. This region was renowned for producing large framed stronger merino breed types but that had a softer wool type. These sheep would be now classified in the elite soft rolling skin category in today's language. Fortunately enough I was privileged to be at the forefront of recognising these types as it was very similar to the training associated with buying wool on visual assessment with Michell's.

After a stint at teaching I returned back to the buying game in partnership as a private buyer purchasing both sheep and wool, dealing in this commodity in the 1980's. By the 1990's because of the difficult times with the Australian wool industry and the withdrawal of the reserve price scheme (which guaranteed wool growers a minimum income) the business of dealing in wool was not very viable.

Thus I returned to teaching when a position was available which happened to be in the Queensland education system. I have been in this current position for 15 years and thoroughly enjoy all forms of wool education. My passion for the wool industry has allowed me to travel all over QLD delivering workshops for professional and owner classers, delivering a similar training programme to the workshops that I am conducting in the Falkland Islands. The emphasis of these workshops is to deliver wool training that is comparative to both Australia and New Zealand in the preparation of wool for sale, and the understanding of the requirements that the wool processors expect when opening up bales of greasy wool.

Hopefully upon completion of the training programme everyone from the absolute novice to the hardened local wool classer will have gained new knowledge that they will be able to utilise both in sheep selection and better clip preparation in the forthcoming seasons, and in addition the understanding of the Islands wool production type and its end use.

HOW LAMBING PERCENTAGES AND LOSSES AFFECT YOUR FUTURE

Damien O' Sullivan

No one needs to be reminded about the importance of maintaining lambing rates on local farms. However it is worthwhile to look at some simple figures to calculate just how important lambing rate is for flock maintenance and improvement.

Lambs

2000 ewes + 60% lambing rate = 1200 lambs/year

Assume: 600 females
600 males

Figures from the local statistics show that 1 in 4 lambs die before shearling age.

Therefore: 600 – ¼ = 450 replacement ewe lambs available/year

Ewes

If we aim to cull ewes at 7 years of age in a flock of 2000 and there is a similar age distribution. 1/7 of ewes would be culled for age every year = 285 ewes

If the death rate in ewes averages 8.5% we would loose approximately 170 ewes/year.
Therefore cfa + death rate 285 + 170 = 455 losses/year

In Summary

Losses	455
Replacements	450
	-5

We have 5 ewes less than what we need to replace the flock every year.

This gives us little option but to keep older ewes longer (increase cfa age) and we cannot cull for:

Low wool weights	Coarse fibres
Poor confirmation	Black spots
Missing a lamb	Wool blindness

So what is the effect of other lambing rates for this flock?

	Lambing					
	50%	**60%**	**70%**	**80%**	**90%**	**100 %**
Female replacements available/yr cfa	375	450	525	600	675	750
Ewe losses & culls/yr	455	455	455	455	455	455
Shortfall in numbers	-80	-5	70	145	220	295

Over the last ten years in the Falkland Islands the results for lambing percentages have been:

Top 20% of Farms	Mid 20% of Farms	Bottom 20%
81.5%	**65.6%**	**38%**

The constraints of weather and feed markedly affect our lambing. There are many farms that consistently maintain good lambing rates and there are other farms that will find it impossible to maintain numbers without brining in 'outside' sheep to the farm.

GOODBYE

Priscilla Halliday

As I'm sure you will know by now, I am trading in my beloved boiler suit for a uniform – yes I'm becoming a Police Officer.

The 4.5 years I've spent in the Department of Agriculture have been excellent. I've had lots of good times and lots of laughs. I've always loved getting out and about and meeting and working with you all. That's when I have had some of the best times. I am going to be sad to leave but I think it is time to explore a different path.

I hope that wool prices are kind to you as it is quite an exciting time at the moment what with AI & ET etc. And if finances do take a wrong turning, do not give up and do not stop striving for what you want to achieve. As someone once said, "If you don't have dreams, you don't have anything".

But remember to cherish your family, friends and loved ones and be grateful for what you have got because there are other people in the world who aren't so lucky.

I'm sure I will see lots of you about when you pop into Stanley so I'll see you around.

SPORTS WEEK AT FOX BAY

Reba Peck, 11 years old (Year 6, Camp Ed).

Last Sunday night mum, dad, Farrah, Jan and I went down to Fox Bay sports. We stayed at Helen and Leon's.

Sunday night was the fancy dress. Mum, Shelly and I dressed up as western people. I had a dress on and mum and Shelly had moustaches! Fiona and Lily went as Camilla and Prince Charles, but Camilla was a bit sick so she never got to the club!

Monday was shearing. I didn't do much, but just talk to Rachel. Tuesday was the kids sports, I won't say everything they did, just this; they did throw the boot, I hit Farrah on the head! The egg and spoon race was actually a rock and spoon race. I got first in this race! I received a personal organiser as a prize.

Tuesday was also the mechanical bull. I had a go and stayed on (well, for a bit). The mechanical bull is red and white with a black head and tiny horns. He was very slippery and that's why I fell off. Actually it was fun coming off because you bounced on an inflated pillow – like landing on wool.

Wednesday was the dog trials. Dad entered in with Bet and came second. Luch was first and Susan got third.

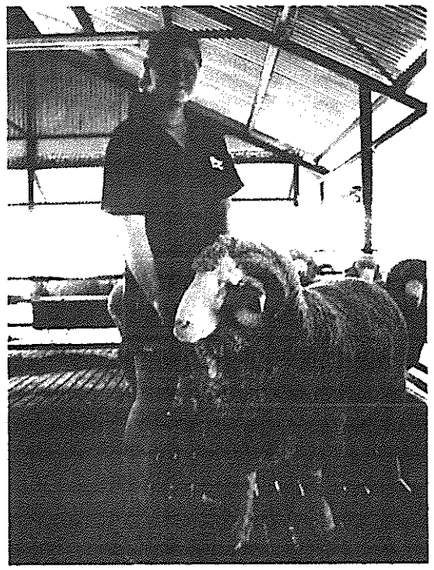
Thursday was the fun day. They had foot events, dog racing, throwing the boot, 3-legged race and sack race (they had 4 people inside). In the mile, Karl Nightingale won! Jeffrey Loftus came second and Mathew Goodwin was third.

There was a barbecue. They also did the greasy pole. The greasy pole is very rough and I wouldn't be caught dead doing it!

That night was prize giving. Some people dressed up but a lot didn't. That night strangely enough, was a dance! I think everybody had fun that day

CATCHING UP WITH SAM

Sam Davies



After a long journey on my own, I have finally made it back to Longreach and settled back in. Lucky enough for me the flies are not as bad as they were this time last year, instead we have a plague of grasshoppers and crickets. They are just everywhere!

I started my sheep & wool course at the beginning of February and I am really enjoying it. So far we have classed the college ram hogget's and started work on our show sheep team.

Last week we crutched the maiden ewes and then ultra sound scanned them. The contractor just drafted the drys off, and then getting technical to identify twin-bearing ewes. The equipment he had was very technical, leading out of the race was the three way gate system to draft, all he had to do was flick a switch and that drafted the ewes off! No man work needed! Scanning is important as out here the growers take it really seriously with their dry sheep, and they either re-join them or wait until after shearing and sell them.

Because it is so close to lambing around here, we are taking precautions from wild pigs. They are terrible pests to lambing ewes, so we are baiting in advance. Horsemeat is supposed to be the best, it is a deep rich red meat and has a very strong smell, so we used it. One of the college horses was really sick and had to be shot, so we used its meat cut up into fist sized pieces. The meat was then injected with 1080 poison which attacks the nervous system, and was placed around the paddocks. Signs have to be put up on boundary fences for health and safety reasons.

During the Easter holidays and two weeks after, I am going to New South Wales to a place called Narromine to work at an A.I. centre, for work placement as part of my course. I am really looking forward to it, and get to see a bit more of Australia!

On the social side of life, I went to a rodeo down the road from here one weekend. That was heaps of fun, watched a lot of bull riding. The kids have a calf ride and under 18's ride steers. And, just like any other two nighter or sports week, a bit of booze is involved to! Last weekend the college had a

sports weekend with Emerald Ag College which is only four hours down the road. I was really surprised at their college, the accommodation is not as good as ours by far! They might have MacDonald's, KFC and good shopping in their town but I would rather have better living facilities and be out further! Overall it was a good weekend, we won the sporting weekend, and I managed to have a shop up and indulge in MacDonald's and KFC!

UK STUDENT LOOKING FOR WORK EXPERIENCE

Jessica Collins is a first year agricultural student (17 years old) at the Duchy College in Cornwall, England. She is on a three year National Diploma course and begins a sandwich / gap year in July, during which time the students are encouraged to travel abroad to gain agricultural experience. She would like to work in the Falklands for a few months (between August and December), hence her reason for contacting me.

She was brought up on a sheep farm on the hills of Dartmoor in Devon. She has spent the last few years working part time as a shepherdess / herdswoman on a 2,000 ewe and 150 head suckler herd farm on Dartmoor. She has experience in all aspects of flock and herd management, especially gathering stock off the moors on both horseback and ATV's. She has also had some experience with the local gathering and shearing team for the past three years during school holidays (castrating, earmarking, drenching etc.) and would either like to work with a shearing gang or for a farm or two, to include shed work.

Jessica could be quite useful to those of you who like get most or all of your shearing done before Christmas. Maybe one or two farms could get together to employ her, as I know that it is often difficult to get shed help at that time of year?

Jessica met Chris May a few years ago when he travelled to England to buy her fathers boat, so if you want to know more you can give Chris a ring. I know that he and Lindsey are happy to meet and greet her and provide a place to stay whilst in town, but they just don't have enough work to keep her fully occupied for several months. Jessica herself can be contacted by emailing jessmyself@hotmail.com.

NB. Before Jess can be employed in the Falklands, permission must be sought from the Immigration Department for a work permit.

The Department of Agriculture is planning to hold another couple of Farming for Profit courses between now and the end of June. If you are interested in attending, either as a newcomer, or for a refresher, please let Mandy McLeod know by 22nd April so that the most suitable venues and dates can be organised. If you want to know more about what the course entails, give her a call, or ask someone who's already been on the course.

CERTIFICATES

Ryan Poole

Mum. Dad and I went into Stanley. They said that I was going to stay with Nanny and Grandad to see the horticulture show which was on the 12th March.

I entered ginger bread men, ginger biscuits, sweets and vegetables. I made a hedgehog out of a turnip; I painted it brown and then put toothpicks in it for spikes. The show started at 9.00a.m. Nanny, grandad and I went down to see what I had won. I won a lot of certificates plus some money (£6.50). The prizes were given out at 5.00 p.m.

I won a trophy (cup) for the flower arrangement. I also won a cookery book.

The auction was at 6.00p.m. I won my snowman cake from the auction! I won the 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes in a row. At 7.00p.m. I went back with nanny and grandad and went to bed.

GREAT TRUTHS THAT LITTLE CHILDREN HAVE LEARNED

1. No matter how hard you try, you can't baptise cats
2. When your mum is mad at your dad, don't let her brush your hair
3. If your sister hits you, don't hit her back. They always catch the second person
4. Never ask your three-year-old brother to hold a tomato
5. You can't trust dogs to watch your food
6. Don't sneeze when someone is cutting your hair
7. Never hold a dust-buster and a cat at the same time
8. You can't hide a piece of broccoli in a glass of milk
9. Don't ever wear polka-dot underwear under white shorts
10. The best place to be when you're sad is grandpa's lap

GREAT TRUTHS ABOUT GROWING OLD

1. Growing old is mandatory; growing up is optional
2. Forget the health food. I need all the preservatives I can get
3. When you fall down, you wonder what else you can do while you're down there
4. You're getting old when you get the same sensation from a rocking chair that you once got from a roller coaster
5. It's frustrating when you know all the answers but nobody bothers to ask you the questions
6. Time may be a great healer, but it's a lousy beautician
7. Wisdom comes with age, but sometimes age comes alone

OH WHAT A WEEK THAT WAS!

Mandy McLeod

It was busy, busy, busy all round in the week running up to Good Friday. Des Humphrey arrived from Australia on the Lan Chile flight on Saturday in readiness to facilitate the Wool Workshops scheduled for the next month. This had been creating much work, hustle and bustle for Lucy, Damien and Cathy in organising venues, food, equipment, workbooks and most importantly, wool for impending 'students' to test their skills on during the workshops. However, if Des thought he was coming to a calm and laid back department with time to help him prepare the last things (which could only be done when he got here), he was very much mistaken. We had a busy week ahead of us where it was a case of 'all hands on deck', so he was left pretty much on his own to find his way around, occasionally nabbing someone to lend a hand with Power Point presentations and other technical things.

Monday

Everyone getting prepared for the next three days, mainly in a calm, well prepared manner, although there was the odd headless chicken moment here and there.

Tuesday

Several of us gathered in the DOA car park at 7.30 ready for our trip to ELEPHANT BEACH FARM. Riki Evans and Ben Berntsen had kindly opened their farm gates to the group of around 20 people with an entourage of 8 vehicles, to look at the early workings of the DOA managed grazing trial and the managed grazing system that Riki and Ben have established over the last 5 months.

This is a rarity – a flip chart outside and no wind or rain! Damien O' Sullivan talks about the aims of the grazing trial.

Being de-bogged after getting bogged de-bogging someone else!

This took us on to the notorious 'Caveda' camp where boggings were plentiful. There were three vehicles bogged at the same time in one particularly soft area. There was much photo taking as vehicles were being pulled out, but those with cameras didn't escape the pull of the peat either. In all about seven boggings occurred at various stages of the tour.

Some fine grasses growing in a camp that had been grazed and then rested

Internal 2-wire electric fencing

I must mention at this point that it was a fantastic tea-berry spot which was taken advantage of whilst the de-boggings were going on!

Much discussion was had by all and Riki and Ben openly talked about their trials and tribulations, and some of the personal paradigms that they had to overcome. Early observations included the growth of fine grasses and the indication that cinnamon grass was being grazed and recovering well with rest. It was felt that the ewes were in better condition than normally would be expected at this time of year from that age class. Future follow up visits should provide a greater indication of vegetative changes due to grazing and resting. Watch this space.

After a hearty stew and lasagne lunch, those that had been on the Grazing for Profit or Farming for Profit courses stayed on to discuss and dissect (in the warmth of the sitting room), the EBF farm cash and stock flow situations. Our thanks to Ben and Riki for their openness with what many would consider private and confidential information. 'Bearing all' in this way, really helped those present to understand the importance of planning and monitoring the business in order to maintain some control over unforeseen situations that might arise. It was a good and beneficial day, with the sun shining to boot!

Wednesday

Everyone off bright and Breezy for the Ram Sale at Goose Green. Many of the staff had put a lot of work in prior to the day, moving sheep and sorting the shed in preparation.

Two farmers inspecting prospective purchases


A large crowd watching the bidding boards

An estimated 70 people turned up at the Goose Green shearing shed, with several of the visitors arriving on the Tamar and FIGAS from West Falkland. Bidding was steady and over the course of a few hours almost 100 sheep and 20 head of cattle were sold, with one ET Cormo ram lamb fetching a massive £1,750. Refreshments were available throughout the day and the movement of purchased animals at the close of sale went smoothly, with those purchased for shipment to the West being moved first to alleviate the need for the Tamar to hang around at New Haven any longer than necessary.

The Department of Agriculture would like to publicly thank Brian Aldridge and his Goose Green team for the use of the Goose Green shed and for all of the help given over the few days to make the day such a success! Thanks also to Myles Lee for 'accommodating' the newly purchased livestock at Port Howard. I would like to thank Diana for saving the day and providing disposable cups for the tea and coffee, (after I had left the supply of cups at Elephant Beach the day before). This might not seem important to you, but keeping the bidders happy with a good flow of hot drinks and a supply of burgers is essential (I have to make some importance out of my job for the day!!)

Thursday

An enthusiastic group met at the Department of Agriculture for a trip to the abattoir where farmers had the chance to grade sheep being processed for slaughter.

The group then travelled onward to Swan Inlet where some lower cost pasture improvement options were looked at.

Malcolm Ashworth was on site demonstrating the method being trialled, as a part of Andrez' PIP planning, which consisted of one pass with a tractor carrying a topper on the front and a direct drill on the back, planting a Lotus based seed mix into the newly created seedbed (see Andrew Pollards Lotus article in next months Wool Press for more information).

Andrez Short, owner of Swan Inlet and the host for the day, demonstrated the use of low cost electric fencing, and visitors had a chance to see his Dohne Merino lambs, the progeny of last year's Swan Inlet Embryo Transfer programme.

After a Bar-b-q lunch (me cooking again) everyone headed back to the abattoir to see how good (or bad) their graded animals looked after slaughter. A debrief was given by the abattoir manager, John Ferguson, using photographs of the 'graded' livestock after slaughter (access to the chillers was not convenient whilst the abattoir was in full production swing). This activity was to help farmers to assess their own livestock on farm so that animals that might not 'make the grade', don't get sent to the abattoir, thus avoiding unnecessary journeys for the livestock, and disappointment for farmers when their animals are unexpectedly rejected.

Friday

Good Friday – Public Holiday, but not for Damien, Lucy and our visitor Des, who were still preparing for the first Wool Workshop that was happening over the following 4 days. Feedback on the event has been good, but I am going to leave the detail to a full Wool Workshops report that will be in the next Wool Press and will cover all 4 venues. Here are a couple of Photos though just to tickle the taste buds!

All in all it was a good week for both DOA staff and farmers alike, even if it was a lot to cram into one week. Thanks go out to our farm hosts (Riki, Ben and Andrez), to FLH / Goose Green for letting us use the shed, and the abattoir management (and Chris 'Spud' Hawksworth, George Butler and Paul Salmon) for accommodating our request at such a busy time.

FOR SALE FROM PICKTHORNE POULTRY

The following pure bred hens all 1 year old

1 exchequer leghorn £7
1 old English pheasant fowl £7
1 black and 1 blue splash Andalusian (in moult at present) £7 each
1 Rhode Island Red £7
the following are 12 weeks old
4 Lakenfelder pullets @£15
1 Lakenfelder rooster @£15

Also

2 Silkie/Friesan cross pullets 1 year old £5 each
1 Sussex/ Rhodie cross pullet 1 year old £5
Contact S Bonner on tel no 42159

SHEARING

Shearing is no longer allowed using standard combs. Cover combs may be used until the 30th April. Shearing with cover combs can be recommenced on 15th September and full shearing from 15th October.

The only shearing permitted outside this period will be of animals which are slaughtered off the shears. The slaughter should take place within 2 hours if the animals are not penned in the building and in any case not later than 24 hours post shearing.

WANTED

Hand or machine knitters to work from home. Excellent rates. Contact Karen or Christine on 21595 or call into the Falkland Wool Centre on John Street, across from Beauchene.

WHAT IS THE POINT OF MOVEMENT TAGS?

Stephen Pointing

This is a question that has frequently raised its head during the current export killing season. And many of you can't understand the reason for putting a "movement" tag into a sheep's ear just before it leaves your farm. By rights the tag should be called an "identification" tag, as its purpose is really to identify which farm the sheep has most recently come from. The fact that it is put into the ear just before the sheep is moved is more a matter of convenience because that is the time all the sheep are gathered together to be graded and subsequently transported. The current system of identification was introduced just before the abattoir was opened in January 2003. In many ways it is a compromise and as such falls short of the "ideal" system which would probably involve you in tagging all your lambs at lamb marking with a tag that was unique to your farm. Over a period of years this would mean that all sheep on your farm would be tagged with your farm tag and this would identify the sheep throughout its life. The problem comes when sheep are sold to another farmer – does the original tag stay in place or does the new owner replace it with one of his tags or is it double tagged? The above system, while having many merits, could prove to be both time consuming and expensive so the system of only tagging sheep when they were about to be moved was introduced instead.

What is the purpose of identifying where sheep come from? Well we are exporting our sheep meat mainly into the European market and one of the conditions of accepting our meat is that the animals should be able to be traced back to the farm of origin. Ah, I hear you say, what is the farm of origin if the animal has passed through several different farms before finding itself at the abattoir. In order to answer that question I think you have to understand why the EU is asking for traceability in the first place. Basically it is all to do with protecting the consumer and the farming community in the countries buying our meat. The three main concerns of the EU are as follows:

1. To prevent the introduction of a serious disease that could affect the livestock industry of the importing country. Here we are thinking of the REALLY important contagious diseases such as FMD, Swine Fever, Sheep Pox etc – these all belong to the OIE List A diseases which are of real economic and animal health importance and would have the effect of stopping trade in live animals and their products. All the OIE List A diseases are highly contagious and have relatively short incubation periods (< 2 weeks) so it is important to know where the sheep have been in the previous 2 weeks. The current tagging system probably meets this requirement.

2. To prevent the introduction of a serious disease of public health significance such as Brucellosis or Tuberculosis. Again if any of these diseases were picked up during meat inspection it is useful to know where the animals

have come from so that further investigations can be carried out on the farm of origin.

3. To prevent the importation of meat which has high levels of certain drugs. The EU is very keen that animal drugs should not get into the human food chain so a proportion of carcasses are tested for a variety of different drug residues. Obviously it is important that if any of the samples come up positive the Veterinary Service can trace the sample back to the farm of origin so that questions can be asked. The vast majority of drugs will be at almost negligible levels after a period of 1-2 months (some will disappear in a much shorter period while a few others might be more persistent) so it is most important to know where the sheep have been in the previous 2-3 months prior to arriving at the abattoir. It is also important that farmers keep a record of what drugs they give their sheep, noting the animals concerned, the date and paying attention to the "withdrawal" period recommended by the drug manufacturers. No animals should be sent to the abattoir for slaughter if they have been treated with veterinary medicines and the withdrawal period for that medicine has not been reached. The best way of ensuring that this doesn't happen is to record the information in an "animal medication book" or even in your diary and make a note of the withdrawal period of the medicine that you have used.

So these are the main concerns of the countries importing meat from the Falkland Islands. I know that some farmers here are frustrated that post mortem findings in the abattoir can't usually be attributed to an individual animal because the head of the animal (together with any ear tags) has already been removed at the start of the line. I can understand your frustration but would just point out that it is really more important to know what diseases are present in a group of animals rather than a single individual. Sheep are flock animals and live together in large groups; if you find a particular disease condition in one animal then it is reasonable to assume that it could also occur in any other member of that group. This is particularly true of conditions such as "boils" and hydatids, which tend to go unnoticed in the live animal and are only picked up after death by the meat inspector. Because both conditions could have been picked up in the first year of the sheep's life it is impossible to know exactly when or where the infection was first contracted. The best we can do is to attribute the condition to the most recent farm of origin and, after discussion with the farmer, make a note on the records if that farmer believes that the animal may have spent some of its earlier life elsewhere.

If you've made it as far as this I'd be really interested in hearing your views on the subject of identifying sheep. Now that you know the reasons for identifying them can you suggest an improvement to the current system? I'd be really grateful for your input into this matter and please be willing to write your thoughts in a letter to the Wool Press so that others in the farming community have a chance to comment.

LABOUR – SOME CLARIFICATION

Mandy McLeod

I've had a few conversations with farmers lately in regard to labour, particularly for fencing, which has prompted me to write this brief article. As you know, FIG has two schemes that can help with labour costs for many farm tasks.

The Labour Scheme offers financial help of £5 an hour (this is under review as I write). What you actually pay someone to help put up your replacement fencing is up to you. It may be difficult to get a fencer at a flat £5 per hour if they can earn, say, £8 an hour doing something in Stanley, so it might be that the hourly rate needs to be topped up by yourselves. However, those looking for work should bear in mind that £5 an hour at a neighbour's farm is often more convenient than being in Stanley. It can even be a costly business working in town with the added living and flight costs, etc. So the higher hourly rate isn't necessarily as good as it sounds! In reality, being in Stanley short term can be detrimental to your cash flow, rather than a boost! It also doesn't get the work done that is needed on farms to support the various schemes, such as replacement fencing. For conditions of the Labour Scheme, refer to your ***Farm Management Handbook*** folder. If you have any questions about eligibility for someone who you have found to work on your farm, just give the DOA a ring and we will be able to say yes or no.

The Pasture Improvement Programme also has financial provision for labour. No hourly rate has been set. This is negotiable between the host farmer and the prospective 'labourer'. Hosts must bear in mind when setting a rate though, that the higher the hourly rate; the less you get done for your allocation. Any labour element of the PIP works, be it fencing or any other, must be provided for in your plan and will be included in the £3 for £1 calculation.

There is a lot of work out there 'on farms' to be done, which, in the longer term will make your farms easier to manage and more productive. Unfortunately, when the purse gets low, it's satisfying the short-term need that becomes a necessary priority.

Can we find a way, using these two schemes, to move things along for the long-term benefit, whilst satisfying the short term need?

For example... If you have fencing to do, and so does your neighbour, why not work together on them. At least that way you will each be getting paid for the time on your neighbour's farm and they on yours.

When the labour scheme first started up, the DOA tried to co-ordinate work that needed to be done with workers available, but lately we have left it to individuals to sort for themselves. However, if you have time this year to work on replacement, PIP or some of the DOA trial fencing, please email, snail mail, fax or phone dates of your availability to us. We often get asked if we know of anyone who wants work.

SHEEP GENETIC IMPROVEMENT ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING THROUGH PIP SCHEME FROM 2005/2006 FINANCIAL YEAR

Neil Judd

In response to a number of requests from the farming community, the Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) approved the addition of "sheep genetic improvement" to the list of activities eligible for funding through the PIP scheme.

PIP scheme planning conditions remain in place. Farmers wising to access funds for sheep genetic improvement will be required to complete the usual planning activity to demonstrate how the funds will be expected to achieve a £3 return for each £1 of FIG funds spent (or better!). In addition the PIP plan will also be required to demonstrate how the genetic material will be managed to achieve the desired result.

Farmers should be aware of the following points;

1. All Falkland Island farmers are eligible to submit a PIP plan for the 2005/2006 budget year whether or not the farm was involved in 2004/2005.

2. The same definitions as to what constituted a farm for 2004/2005 planning purposes will be applied for the 2005/2006 budget.

3. All farms will be eligible to apply for PIP funding for sheep genetic improvement activity up to a rate of approximately £2,500 per 1000 breeding ewes joined (average of the last three seasons). Farm allocation will provide a ceiling to the funds able to be utilised by any farm on genetics (or other PIP activity). The actual rate of funding available per 1000 ewes joined will be finalised after the completion of this year's ET programme. Overall farm allocations will be determined after the completion of FIG budget deliberations.

4. Farm choice will be exercised to decide the proportion of "available funding" committed to the various activities eligible for funding under the PIP scheme. (i.e. individual farmers will decide the proportion of "available allocation" committed to traditional PIP work and that committed to sheep genetic improvement)

5. Farms currently exceeding PIP funding thresholds <u>are</u> eligible for involvement in sheep genetic activity but <u>not</u> "conventional" PIP activity until farm "spending and allocations" are balanced over the next few budget years.

6. Funding will <u>not</u> be made available for genetic purchases made prior to the 2005/2006-budget year.

Obviously a wide range of genetic options (and also of course, breed options) exist for Falkland Island farmers. As follows: -

a) Propagation of the farms best ewes with its own rams
   - fresh semen AI
   - fresh embryo transfer

b) Propagation of the farms best ewes with "outside" rams (other farms or imported semen)
   - fresh semen AI
   - frozen semen AI
   - fresh embryo transfer

c) Purchase of Falkland Islands ewe genetics (NSF; Corriedale; other farms) with various ram options
   - fresh embryo transfer
   - frozen embryo transfer

d) Fully imported frozen embryos

Obviously the path which any individual farm chooses to proceed down will depend on what the individual farm is trying to achieve. Breeding plans will assist many farms in this process. A breeding plan should define the farms desired mature sheep micron, wool cut per head, conformation, liveweight, survival rate (etc). The breeding plan should also detail the path that will be used to achieve the desired change and the time that it is estimated it will take to make the change! The development of a breeding plan is a recommended starting point for farmers wishing to participate in the PIP "sheep genetic improvement" activity.

DoA staff will shortly commence a round of workshops to assist farmers with 2005/2006 PIP planning, but if you have any immediate need for assistance or clarification, I would be happy to expand on any issues raised by this decision of the AAC.

ANNUAL RAM SALE – 2005

Lucy Ellis

This year's Annual Ram Sale was a bit different from the norm and saw a few changes. Firstly was the different venue, Goose Green, and also a more diverse range of breeds, genetics and age of sheep being sold.

The change of venue, from it's traditional home of Saladero, to the Goose Green shearing shed was purely and simply a matter of room. Not only was there a more diverse range of animals up for sale but also a lot more, 150 to be precise. Over the last few years it has become more apparent that we just do

not have the room available in the Saladero shed to properly spread ourselves out and show the rams off to their best advantage.

This year, with the vast acreage of the Goose Green shed, we set up the pens for each different group of animals in a distinct area for themselves thereby allowing prospective bidders the chance to view each breed/type by itself. The wool rolling/handling area was transformed into the "Auction room" with the usual Helmsman system being used to bid for animals.

The cattle up for auction were in the Brenton Loch yards so viewers had time to travel out and eye up prospective Sunday roasts before the bidding started at midday.

Altogether, it was a successful day with most lots sold and farmers seeming satisfied that they were going home with the animals that they had hoped to purchase.

All 80 Polwarth rams went with an overall average price of £38.38 and out of the 48 Corriedale rams for sale, 19 were sold with an overall average price of £31.66.

RECIPE
LAMB CORMA

Source: Tony Tobin, BBC website

Serves 1

Ingredients:

For the spice paste:

3 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
Pinch ground ginger
Pinch cayenne pepper
Pinch curry powder
Pinch turmeric
1 tsp coriander seeds, toasted
1 tblsp vegetable oil

For the lamb:

1 ½ lamb steaks, diced
1/3 onion, diced
10 fl oz coconut milk
Portion plain boiled rice

Method:

- Put all the spice ingredients into a pestle and mortar and grind to a paste
- Heat the oil in a pan and fry the spice mix for 1 – 2 minutes
- Add the lamb and onion and fry for 3 – 4 minutes to brown
- Gradually stir in the coconut milk
- Simmer for 6 – 7 minutes and serve with boiled rice.

The Wool Press

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All the regular features and more!

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EDITORIAL

Since the April edition of the Wool Press was published, we are pleased to report that over 80 people participated in the Wool Workshops run by Des Humphreys from Australia. Damien has written an informative article in this month's publication on the courses and all readers interested in wool classing are recommended to put forward requests to him for follow up activities.

With the wool production season at an end, many DOA staff have turned their attention to the Pasture Improvement Programme, (PIP). As I write, farmers are making arrangements to discuss the results of last season's activities with staff and consider programmes of work for next spring. It is not too late to join the 40 plus farms already in the scheme, and farmers have received information about sheep genetic improvement work that can be included in their plans for next year.

All the Senior Agricultural Advisors have articles in this edition of the Wool Press and I commend them to you to read. In addition, Neil has written a comprehensive report on the Polwarth National Stud Flock and has brought together the Advisory Group of farmers to assist in planning future breeding strategies. Nyree has updated us as well on the Ovine ET/AI programme that will begin in late May.

I hope you find the articles in this month's publication informative and stimulating. We welcome comments.

Phyl Rendell
Director of Minerals & Agriculture

SHEEP COATS: DO THEY PROVIDE AN £ BENEFIT?

Damien O'Sullivan

When we look at the statistics for the Falkland Island sheep numbers we find that 1 in 4 sheep die before they are shearlings and there is an average lambing of 60%. This puts severe stress on the number of replacement sheep we have. It is of great importance therefore that we look at all options to reduce losses in production and death rates of sheep.

Sheep coats are used in some areas around the world to improve the value of fleeces.

The coats reduce the amount of dust and vegetable matter in the fleece and can increase yields. An extra benefit being promoted by the use of these coats is protection from adverse weather!

To investigate whether coats have any use for the animals and wool quality in the Falklands we will be conducting two trials this winter on hoggets and ewes.

Sheep coats come in 5 sizes this coat is one size too large

Hoggets

A group of 400 or more hoggets will be weighed and run together. 200 of these hoggets will be coated. At hogget shearing we will look at death rates, body weights, wool value, wool weights and of course overall economic return of the two groups.

Ewes

In a flock of ewes we will be coating 200 ewes over the winter/spring period. We will then be comparing the economics of these ewes with un-coated animals based on lambing %, bodyweight and fleece weight, wool value etc.

The economics of the coats is unknown, however if the "talk" of benefits being achieved through their use in other countries occurred here in the Falklands, it is possible that they may offer economic advantage to some farmers. Currently the cost of a coat for a hogget is approximately £2.80 and for a ewe £3.00. On current indications the coats should last at least 4 years. Of course, the time needed to put coats on and take them off will also need to be considered in the determination of "net benefit/cost!"

The preliminary results of this trial should be known by the end of the year. We will then have some indication as to whether coats are an economic option and worth investigating in further trials.

RBA SHEEP SHOW RESULTS 2005

Class 1

1st Pen number 3 – Goose Green
2nd Pen number 5 – Goose Green
3rd Pen number 6 – Cape Dolphin

Class 2

1st Pen number 12 – Goose Green
2nd Pen number 17 – Goose Green
3rd Pen number 25 – Mount Kent

Class 3

1st Pen number 35 – Goose Green
2nd Pen number 59 – Swan Inlet
3rd Pen number 42 – Cape Dolphin

Class 4

1st Pen number 75 – Blue Beach
2nd Pen number 72 – Mount Kent
3rd Pen number 76 – Wineglass Station

Class 5

1st Pen number 102 – Cape Dolphin
2nd Pen number 88 – Goose Green
3rd Pen number 81 – Goose Green

Class 6

1st Pen number 125 – Swan Inlet
2nd Pen number 121 – Mount Kent
3rd Pen number 108 – Goose Green

Class 7

1st Pen number 128 – Blue Beach
2nd Pen number 126 – Cape Dolphin
3rd Pen number 130 – Wineglass Station

Class 8

1st Pen number 136 – Mount Kent
2nd Pen number 135 – Mount Kent
3rd Pen number 137 – Mount Kent

Class 9

1st Pen number 141 – Fitzroy
2nd Pen number 145 – Rincon Grande
3rd Pen number 143 - Fitzroy

Class 10

1st Pen number 161 – Blue Beach
2nd Pen number 164 – Fitzroy
3rd Pen.number 163 - Fitzroy

Class 11

1st Pen number 170 – Fitzroy
2nd Pen number 171 – Fitzroy
3rd Pen number 173 – Rincon Grande

Class 12

1st Pen number 181 – Demi-Rose Greenough
2nd Pen number 183 – Zoe Whitney
3rd Pen number 177 – Kimmie Goss

Most Points Goose Green
Weight of the sheep Won by Isabella McLeod with a guess of 62 kg. Actual weight 60.0 kg
Weight of the fleece Gina Tyrell and Julie Ford with an exact guess of 3.25kg
Micron of the fleece Helen McKay with a guess of 18.37 micron. Actual micron 18.36
Champion Ram Pen 12 – Goose Green
Champion Ewe Pen 125 – Swan Inlet

Andrez Short with son Tom giving the thumb's up for their Champion Ewe (Dohne Merino)

HOW TO PRODUCE CLEAN, WHOLESOME MEAT

Manuel Sancho, OVS at Sand Bay Abattoir

There is a great deal of emphasis at the moment being applied to controlling bacterial contamination of meat in the abattoir. Studies have shown that in the five sectors of the production process from the farm to the consumer, i.e. farm, abattoir, boning room, retailer and consumer, the greatest effort is being applied at the abattoir and boning room processing levels, but the greatest risk is at the farm and consumer levels.

Consumers need better education in meat handling procedures and more can be done on farm. There are generally considered to be only eight critical control points in the process from the farm to the consumer:

- Livestock production on farm
- Transport
- Lairages at the abattoir
- Skin removal
- Evisceration
- Refrigeration
- Handling through wholesale and retail
- Handling by the consumer

The consumer expects meat to be safe no matter what they as consumers do with it.

Only awareness and education can alter this stance, so it is up to the industry as a whole, if it is to survive, to take action to limit contamination of meat by food poisoning organisms.

This is the main reason for the emphasis on control by means of HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points) both here and overseas. It is a case of putting as many hurdles in place in the process to limit the number of organisms that can get through to the consumer. If the number of food poisoning organisms is better controlled at the farm level so that the initial numbers are lower before the animal is slaughtered, then the rest of the process becomes easier. So, a great deal can be done on the farm and in the transport of animals to slaughter, to reduce stress and to reduce the bacterial load of pathogenic organisms. And, even if the best systems are put in place on farm, there is still the need for good control at the abattoir.

The following list describes briefly some of the most important methods that can be used to limit bacterial contamination of meat. Prevention of contamination during dressing, from the hide, the gut contents and the faeces, is the main method of limiting the risk of bacterial food poisoning. Personal hygiene is also an important factor since quite a percentage of the human population are symptomless carriers of salmonellae.

Salmonella, E. Coli and Campylobacter are the main causes of ill health transmitted from meat. Sanitary dressing practices are designed to limit disease from this source. The following are some sound sanitary dressing principles that should be detailed in standard operating procedures for slaughter to ensure that meat is prepared fit for human consumption:

- Animals should be adequately rested before slaughter.
- To reduce the effects of stress, stock need access to water up to 12 hours prior to slaughter.
- Ante mortem inspection must be diligently carried out to detect sick animals and reject them from slaughter.
- Sticking and bleeding should occur on a hanging rail to reduce contamination from regurgitation, and to ensure proper bleeding.
- Heads should be removed and dressed separately because they are heavily contaminated.
- The weasand (oesophagus) should be tied to stop regurgitation and spillage, preferably prior to hanging.
- All incisions into the hide must be done with a spear cut.
- The outer surface of the hide or skin should not be permitted to contact the surface of the meat during dressing.
- Any accidental contamination should be trimmed off and not washed off, washing only spreads bacteria over a wider area of the carcase.
- Knives and equipment should be sterilised in water at 82ºC periodically and particularly when contamination occurs and between skin opening and further flaying.
- Hands should be washed whenever they become contaminated, for example after handling the hide.
- Evisceration should be carefully performed to avoid accidental spillage of gut contents.
- All common contact points on the slaughter floor should be regularly cleaned and sterilised.
- The slaughter floor and all equipment must be adequately cleaned and sanitised daily to minimise contamination from this source.
- All equipment used must be capable of being sterilised, this effectively bans wood, especially in knife handles.
- Prompt refrigeration of dressed carcases ensures that any bacteria present will have little time to multiply.

The objective of chilling is to enable the internal temperature of fresh meat to be maintained at not more than +7º for carcases and cuts, +3º for offal and -12ºC for frozen fresh meat.

This is not only a legal requirement (Fresh Meat Regulations), it is the way to prevent bacterial growth. Bacteria are not killed below these temperatures, we are only preventing them from multiplying. But just reaching these temperatures is not enough; the meat needs to be stored at suitable temperatures (<-12°C) prior to being exported and during the transportation period so that it reaches the overseas market in a "sound" condition i.e. the meat does not look sticky or smelly when thawed.

The final customer satisfaction and safety will only be achieved if all the factors mentioned above are fulfilled and this task involves all of the following - farmers, hauliers, slaughtermen, meat inspectors and abattoir management.

CLOSTRIDIAL DISEASES IN SHEEP AND CATTLE IN THE FALKLAND ISLANDS

Doug Martin

Clostridial diseases are caused by bacteria of the genus C*lostridium*. Clostridia are widespread in the environment and are normally found in soil and faeces. They form highly resistant spores that can survive in the environment for very long periods. They are also present in the gastrointestinal tract of healthy animals and as spores in their tissues. Not all species of clostridia cause disease, but those that do are usually fatal. They include:

C. chauvoei	Blackleg	***C. perfringens***	type D Enterotoxaemia (pulpy kidney)
C. tetani	Tetanus	***C. septicum***	Malignant oedema
C. botulinum	Botulism	***C. novyi***	Black disease

Disease occurs when these bacteria enter the body (via cuts, abrasions or ingestion) and conditions in the body allow multiplication of the bacteria and/or toxin production. All animals are at risk of clostridial disease, but younger animals are at a higher risk than adults, because marking, castration and dehorning procedures create an opportunity for clostridial invasion.

OCURRENCE IN THE FALKLAND ISLANDS.

Pulpy Kidney (Enterotoxaemia) and Blackleg appear to be the most common Clostridial Diseases in the Falkland Islands. The exact prevalence is unknown because affected animals are usually just found dead and unless large numbers of animals are affected simultaneously the farmer may well attribute death to a variety of other causes. It is believed but not confirmed that in the recent past that both cattle and sheep from the ET and AI programmes of the last two seasons have been lost to these two diseases.

Enterotoxaemia and Blackleg tend to be diseases of young, rapidly growing animals and rarely affect animals over 2 years of age. It is useful to note it is often the best animals that are affected. Breeding females are also at a higher risk of clostridial disease if they sustain calving injuries. It is important to note that the Clostridial bacteria have obviously been in the Falkland Islands for many years and that all cattle and sheep can be affected. There is no immunity in stock that have been bred here in the past as the only way to attain immunity is by vaccination.

Enterotoxaemia (pulpy kidney) is a disease caused by the toxin of the bacteria *Clostridium perfringens (Type-D)* when it is absorbed from the intestinal tract. The bacteria that cause enterotoxaemia normally exist in small numbers in the gut of healthy animals. The disease develops when the environment in the intestine favours toxin production and bacterial numbers increase dramatically. This can be caused by increased feed intake, new or better pasture, dramatic change in diet, or the introduction of grain based diets. It is difficult to diagnose pulpy kidney as death is often the only clinical sign and it is often confused with bloat. Prevention can be achieved through careful management of the animals' diet, together with a comprehensive vaccination program.

Blackleg is produced by Spore-forming bacteria. The organisms most commonly responsible are *Clostridium chauvoei* and, less frequently, *C. septicum*. Spores produced by the clostridia can lie dormant in the soil for years without losing their potency. The name 'blackleg' derives from the fact that the site of infection is often a leg muscle, and that the affected muscle is dark in colour. The disease usually causes lameness due to localised inflammation of muscle

with heat, swelling and gas formation (gas gangrene). This is followed by a generalised toxaemia or poisoning of the animal causing rapid death. Spores are ingested from pasture by the animal; they then enter the bloodstream and lodge in muscle where they can remain dormant without causing ill effect. Blackleg in sheep is frequently associated with wounding as a result of shearing, tail docking, castration, injury to ewes at lambing or infection of the navel soon after birth. In cattle, unknown 'triggering' factors cause the organism to germinate, multiply and cause the onset of blackleg. Blackleg should be suspected if an animal aged between 2 months and 2 years:

- becomes lame with swelling of a muscle;
- stops grazing;
- looks sick and quickly goes down.

Carcass disposal - Carcasses of animals known to have died from blackleg should not be opened. It is well known in the UK for example that cattle grazing certain paddocks are more at risk of getting Blackleg – perhaps because of soil contamination. Opening the carcass can liberate bacteria which will form spores that will contaminate the ground and subsequently infect other cattle. Also, do not drag carcasses along the ground. If possible, burn or deeply bury the carcasses where they lie.

Botulism is a different story. Stock are at risk of botulism when they suffer from protein and phosphorus deficiency, as this results in the chewing of bones and decaying material, which may carry *Clostridium botulinum*. Correct nutritional management is the key to prevention of botulism. Accidental cases can occur when feed contaminated with rodent, bird or reptile carcases is fed out. If you notice this contamination do not use the feed. In situations where it is impossible to supply an adequate diet or suitable fodder, vaccination is a way of preventing botulism.

Control

All animals should be vaccinated for the five common clostridial diseases (tetanus, malignant oedema, enterotoxaemia, black disease and blackleg) with a '5 in 1' vaccine. Several makes of multivalent vaccine ('5 in 1') are available commercially and care should be taken to follow the manufacturer's instructions.

- Calves and lambs should receive two doses of clostridial vaccine. Two vaccinations 1 month apart are essential to provide the best protection.
- A booster vaccination 12 months later should provide lifelong immunity to blackleg.
- It is desirable to give the initial two doses of vaccine before young stock reach their most susceptible age of six months.

To await the occurrence of Clostridial Disease before vaccinating is unwise, as vaccines take 10–14 days before they begin to provide immunity.

Vaccination techniques for Clostridial Disease - The vaccine should be delivered just under the skin — not into the muscle. Draw up a pinch of skin and insert the needle between the skin and the muscle. The loose skin of the neck is convenient for this. Do not save unused parts of bottles or containers of vaccines for future use, as they can become contaminated with undesirable organisms and/or lose their potency. Destroy any vaccine not used within 24 hours of opening. A separate vaccine is available for protection against botulism.

Control Cost - Control is relatively cheap, however if you do feel that it is just another expense then ensure at least the most valuable stock are vaccinated, particularly rams and bulls and any other valuable breeding stock, such as ET and AI animals.

WOOL CLASSING WORKSHOPS

Damien O'Sullivan

Sixteen days of workshops, 85 participants, 31 farms, and 73% of Falkland Islands sheep represented added up to four busy weeks of wool classing. So what were some of the responses we received from those who attended;

"More time, and another day would be better"	Goose Green
"Extra time handling the wool"	Hill Cove
"An excellent and worthwhile 4 days"	Fox Bay
"I have really enjoyed the course"	Hill Cove

Many of the above comments were repeated at all the workshops and overall the response was extremely positive. I heard the comment "I learnt lots and enjoyed it" many times.

What was the aim of the Wool classing workshops?

Falkland Island wool is currently classed by people with a range of experience from those new to the industry or wool classing and those who have had many years of experience. As a result, despite all best intentions, standards of classing will vary. Our aim in having these workshops was to standardise wool classing across the Islands using current wool descriptions. To continue to compete on world markets classing of wool needs to be carried out using the best practices available with a common system used by all. The more farmers we have using a standardised wool classing system means that brokers can be confident in buying Falkland Island wool knowing that it is all prepared for sale in a manner that is free of contaminants and accurately described by the wool classer. Falkland Island wool has some unique characteristics which may be able to demand a further premium in the market place.

The workshop presenter was Des Humphreys, a Wool Classer trainer from Australia. Des spent 10 years as a wool buyer for GH Michell, a wool topmaker and he has operated his own wool buying business. He currently teaches wool classing in the technical and further education system in Australia. Des was impressed with the clean, white, low vegetable matter wool that the Islands are able to produce without the need for chemical treatment of sheep.

One of the tools Des used at the workshop was a microscope with a television camera. This enabled wool samples to be displayed on a TV screen and be measured for micron. This settled quite a few arguments about the micron of particular fleeces and also showed that the experts can be wrong!

Des Humphreys measures wool micron Hill Cove

Course content

The course covered a wide range of topics with theory and practical wool classing sessions:
Theory subjects covered were:

- sheep breeds
- quality control and management in the shed
- wool contamination and black fibres
- skirting ratios
- preparing a classers specification
- wool follicle growth
- characteristics of greasy wool
- classing strategies
- wool processing
- wool testing

Did we have the right micron? Stanley

Practical sessions covered:

- classing fleece samples into lines
- estimating fleece microns
- classing wool
- valuing fleeces
- judging fleeces

Setting classing lines Fox Bay

Outcomes of the workshops

There were many wool classing issues discussed at the workshops. For example the issue of whether stain should be removed from pieces and bellies. Elsewhere in the world stain is routinely removed from bellies and pieces giving processors extra options for processing their wool. It was left up to individual farms to decide with their brokers what strategy they would use. But ultimately stain free bellies and pieces demand a better price than stained bellies and stained pieces. Stain free pieces should be branded A/Pcs.

Workshop participants who completed the 4-day course and the assessments will gain either an Owner Classer Certificate award for those that have classed 3 or more clips or a Wool classing course completion award for those who had not done a sufficient period of practical wool classing. Those who received an Owner Classer certificate, complete a Classers specification and comply with a number of other requirements will be able to brand their bales with a Falkland Island wool classers stencil. This will indicate that the wool has been prepared to a world class standard, the contents of the bale of wool are accurately described, and the classer has ensured the clip is free of contaminants.

There was interest from some participants in Professional Wool classing qualifications. Anyone interested in this would need to attend a course in either New Zealand, South Africa or Australia. For example the course Des Humphreys runs in Australia has 3 months of theory work with extra practical components.

Where to from here?

Checking the lines Goose Green

The workshop participants will soon receive their certificates. We will be investigating a design and manufacture of a bale stencil. Currently we are investigating the possibility of running short ½ day to 1 day Wool classing refreshers for people prior to shearing this year. Any suggestions as to what people would like in these courses would be welcome. Otherwise individual farmers are welcome to contact us if they have any questions on classing, lotting of wool or would like a hand to set up their classing lines at shearing.

One of the common requests from participants was for more information on sheep selection. At Goose Green we were able to briefly look at some of their rams as Des went through the points he uses to select sheep. As result of this feedback we will be looking at conducting a sheep selection workshop at a similar time next year.

Many thanks to those who helped us conduct the workshops from providing wool samples, ensuring venues were available and catering.

FALKLAND RAMS FOR TRISTAN DA CHUNA

Reggie Ram, Roger Ram, Rupert Ram and Randolph Ram, all looking very much at home in their new environment on Tristan Da Chuna.

Reggie, Roger, Rupert and Randolph (named after arrival on Tristan da Cuhna), left the Falklands in Mid April on board the Marrianne Danica. These four Corriedale rams were bought by the Small Atlantic Island (even smaller than us). Sheep are kept on Tristan da Cuhna for local consumption and these boys will hopefully help them to produce good carcasses.

This is not the first time that sheep have been sent from the Falkland Islands. The last time was in the 1960's as part of the re-stocking process after the volcanic eruption.

Mandy McLeod

FISH SILAGE

Doug Martin

The Department of Agriculture will shortly commence trials manufacturing fish silage, which will utilise fish waste from local processors.

Fish silage can be successfully fed to ruminants as part of their diet. The intention is to examine the feasability of feeding the silage as a supplement to sheep. The aim is to reduce the impact on sheep of poor quality feed in late winter in the Falkland Islands.

Fish silage can be produced using two methods:

1.Adding minerals or organic acids (chemical silage)
In this case the process involves mincing of the fish followed by the addition of an acid for preservation. The enzymes in the fish break down the fish proteins into smaller soluble units and acid helps to speed up their activity while preventing bacterial spoilage. Formic, propionic, sulfuric and phosphoric acids have been used. Normally, about 3-4% of acid is added so that the pH remains near 4.0.

2. By microbial fermentation supported by the addition of carbohydrate (biological silage)
The most common mix is 60% minced fish waste and 40% molasses. The mix needs to have a lactobacillus bacteria added to ensure a rapid reduction in pH to 5 in order to optimise keeping quality. After stabilisation 10-15% bran can be used allowing blocks to be made.

Initially the Department will manufacture the fish waste using formic acid, as it may be too cold for successful fermentation to take place using molasses.

Silage made from white fish offal does not contain much oil, but when made from fatty fish such as herring it is necessary to remove or stabilise the oil. The composition of the silage will be very similar to the material from which it is made. Fish silage of the correct acidity is stable at room temperature for at least two years without decomposition or unpleasant odours. The protein becomes more soluble, and the amount of free fatty acids increases in any fish oil present during storage. Silage production offers a solution to the handling of fish waste, when the logistics of delivering to a fish reduction plant are not economical. Silage can be produced in large or small containers both on the vessel and onshore.

Tainting of meat from animals consuming fish waste can be avoided by either controlling intake or by switching feeds several weeks prior to slaughter.

The trials will initially take place in the quarantine area adjacent to the DoA offices as daily monitoring can take place. The intention is to feed 40 lambs over two to three months in winter with fish silage and hay to observe response. If these trials are successful the intention is to conduct trials on farm.

It is expected that the feed value of the fish silage will be in the vicinity of 16-19 MJ DE/kg DM for energy and 20 - 25% protein. Levels of calcium are also high. This compares with Whitegrass at 7-8 MJ DE/kg DM and 7-9% protein, with low calcium levels.

POLWARTH NATIONAL STUD FLOCK UPDATE

Neil Judd

The Polwarth National Stud Flock (NSF) is currently made up of 630 mature ewes, 136 shearling ewes, 100 ewe hoggets, 100 ram hoggets and 17 mature stud rams.

The stud operation has a clearly defined set of breeding principles that seek to maintain genetic diversity and genetic progress for farmers. In order for this to be achieved, the NSF has been re-structured into 8 distinct families based on ewe pedigrees.

The re-creation of breeding families has been carried out to allow the implementation of a simple breeding plan that allows the movement of rams through the various families on a long-term basis, without the risk of in-breeding for either the NSF or farmers.

Presently the families are not of equal size. Due to the historical dominance of two particular rams (242 and 428) approximately 50% of all NSF ewes are in the families made up of the ram 242 (Blue) and 428 (Orange) families. See Table 1.

Table 1. NSF ewe numbers in each family

Family	Age vs Sheep No's		
	Mature	*Shearlings*	*Hoggets*
Blue	155	34	28
Orange	161	22	14
No Colour	88	33	21
Black	77	11	17
Purple	42	14	7
Yellow	42	9	5
Plumb	33	7	3
Green	32	6	5
Total	630	136	100

It is expected that through the use of embryo transfer (ET) technology over the next few years, balance will be achieved between the sizes of the various families.

Artificial insemination (AI) has been used over that last two seasons to re-create 8 genetically unrelated ram families for the NSF breeding programme. It is anticipated that from the 2006 mating season onwards, no imported Polwarth genetics will need to be used to ensure genetic diversity. Instead imported genetics will only be considered if productivity improvement is required.

NSF rams are selected on the basis of various subjectively classed characteristics such as structural soundness, reproductive soundness, face cover, polled, mouth/jaw soundness, feet alignment and lack of pigmentation. Animals that are acceptable to the NSF programme based on subjective appraisal are then ranked for Clean Fleece Weight, Fibre Diameter, and Liveweight to select stud sires.

Stud sires are used for the first time as shearlings. Eventually it is hoped that stud rams will be used for only two years and then replaced by genetically superior animals.

Genetic progress of the NSF relies on the combination of careful subjective classing and objective measurement to identify superior animals. The use of superior rams for only a short period of time and keeping the stud ewe flock as young as possible, helps to ensure that maximum genetic progress is achieved. As a general "rule of thumb" most sheep geneticists recommend that the "best" age structure of a sheep flock to achieve genetic progress (and sustain numbers obviously!) averages at rams being used for only 1 or 2 matings and ewes for 4 or 5 matings.

NSF Breeding Objectives

The NSF breeding objectives were reviewed in 2002/2003 in consultation with Falkland Island farmers.

Farmers clearly stated that they wanted the following in their NSF sheep:

1. Increased clean fleece weight
2. Fibre diameter of mature sheep 21-24 micron
3. Good frame/liveweight
4. Clear open faces/strong survival instincts
5. Polled sheep
6. Freedom from pigmentation

In response to the comments received from farmers, these objectives were set as the NSF breeding objectives and a process developed to achieve the desired results.

It is believed that the best measure of a farm's long term breeding policy is its breeding ewe flock. As such, shown below are the core test results for the NSF breeding ewe flock for the last three seasons.

Table 2 . NSF Core Test Results

Year	Hoggets	Bales	Breeding Ewes	Bales
2002/03	19.7	3	21.7	12
2003/04	19.7	4	21.8	12
2004/05	19.8	4	22.7*	15
AVERAGE	19.73		22.06	

(* Improved season and feed availability believed responsible for micron increase along with improved wool cuts.)

Through a review of table 2, it is obvious that the NSF has a fibre diameter range that matches that desired by most Falkland Island farmers. As a result, maintenance of fibre diameter has been set as a NSF breeding objective. Obviously in terms of clean fleece weight, the objective must be to increase it as much as possible while also achieving other objectives. But how is the NSF going in its drive to increase clean fleece weight?

Ram hoggets presented for sale each year provide a transparent "snapshot" of the NSF progress towards its objective of increasing clean fleece weight.

Table 3. Sale Catalogue – NSF Ram Hoggets

Year Sold	CFW (kg)	Micron	Number Sold
2003	1.61	19.40	82
2004	1.77	19.98	88
2005	1.98	19.63	80

Note: 1. Rams born Nov/Dec each year.
2. Rams shorn 1st week Oct each year at approximately 10 months of age.

Table 3 is a "good news" story. A very high level of progress is being achieved in progressing clean fleece weight in the NSF while at the same time maintaining micron.

As mentioned earlier, it has been necessary to introduce new genetics into the NSF (through AI) to increase genetic diversity. Progeny of the first NSF AI programme were shorn in early October 2004. Results as follows:

Table 4. 2004 Ram Hogget Shearing (2005 sale team)

2003 Ram Joining Source	CFW (kg)	Micron
NSF Ram	1.78	19.1
Imported AI	2.12	20.0
Overall	1.98	19.63

It should be noted that the ram hoggets conceived through AI in 2003 and shorn as hoggets in 2004 (sold in 2005) were on average 2 to 3 weeks older that the ram hoggets sired by NSF rams. However, even considering this fact, the AI ram hoggets, with an average of 19% more clean fleece weight than ram sired hoggets, demonstrate that considerable potential exists to improve NSF clean fleece weights further, without impacting too much on average fibre diameter.

However, a degree of caution is required. Considerably higher levels of excessive wool on the face and, in some cases horns, were observed with some of the new genetics. Indiscriminate use of AI without rigorous selection/culling could introduce problems into a flock. Animals with such faults are never considered for use in the NSF ewe or stud ram team.

The NSF is achieving the breeding objectives specified by Falkland Island farmers. To ensure that progress continues in the future, the Agricultural Advisory Committee recently approved the re-formation of the NSF Advisory Committee. As a result, the first "meeting" of the NSF Advisory Committee for many years took place at Saladero on Thursday 5th May 2005.

Members of the "old" Committee still actively farming; namely Nigel Knight, Maggie Goss and Jimmy Forster all agreed to participate and represent the views of farmers. In addition John Hobman (manager, Saladero) and myself make up the Committee.

The task of the NSF Advisory Committee on the 5th May was to select the very best ewes in the NSF, representing all 8 families, to use in this years fresh embryo transfer programme. From these "top" ewes, 500 embryos will be created that have the potential to become the best drop of Polwarth lambs ever produced in the Islands.

If more information is required please do not hesitate to contact myself, John Hobman or any other member of the NSF advisory Committee.

2005 OVINE AI/ET PROGRAMME SO FAR

Nyree Heathman

This is just a quick article to keep you all up to date with the 2005 Ovine AI/ET Programme. So far we seem to be on course, and, fingers crossed we won't get 4 ft of snow, and things will stay that way. Panic did set in last week when there was strange white stuff falling from the sky, but thankfully winter seems to have drifted away again for a while.

All of the drugs and equipment that were ordered from Australia have arrived safe and sound. Two lovely fridges now take up most of my office (Doug's corner is fast shrinking) and are crammed full of various strangely named and shaped bottles and boxes of drugs. The veterinary supplies that were ordered from the UK turned up on the last boat and we are now just waiting for the raddle paint that we are using this year instead of harnesses on the teasers to arrive next week. The semen and embryos will be here in a couple of weeks, and shortly after the first of our technicians will arrive in the Islands with the first day of flushing being Monday May 30th.

This year Adrian Veitch, owner of AllStock WA who was here last year will be returning, bringing with him 2 of his team – 1 vet and 1 embryologist, both of whom I worked with in Australia at the end of last year. The increased number of visiting technicians is due to the scale of the 2005 programme – for the majority of the time one team consisting of a vet, embryologist and nurse will be working at Saladero flushing the donor ewes to collect the fresh embryos, and a second team consisting of a vet and embryologist will be working at Goose Green, implanting the fresh embryos from Saladero and thawing and implanting Dohne Merino, SAMM and Poll Dorset embryos from Australia and South Africa. During the first week of the programme one team will be on the West flushing and transferring and the other on the East AI-ing donors ready for our return. In the final, and fifth week, there will only be one team necessary to complete the remainder of the work. Obviously we will be ably assisted by a number of others necessary to keep things moving, without which we would grind to a halt – shearers, scrubbers, synchronisation teams etc.

By the time you read this article, if you are involved in the 2005 AI/ET you will have received your synchronisation programme or a letter telling you the date that your embryos will be implanted, and your recips taken home. Please, please, please stick to the times given on the synchronisation programmes. Failure to do so could mean a poor result for your programme.

If anyone has any questions of problems please do not hesitate to contact me at the earliest opportunity, either at work or at home, ph - 22477.

SUBSCRIBE TO THE WOOL PRESS

The Wool Press is available to anyone who wants it for an annual subscription of £12 (local postal address) or £24 (overseas postal address). If you know someone who would like to receive the Wool Press every month, let them know it's available, or maybe buy them a gift subscription. Once we receive the mailing address and a cheque (made payable to FIG) for the appropriate amount, we will start sending (with the last 3 editions included free with the first one).

DEVELOPING LOW COST LOTUS FEED?

Andrew Pollard

What is Lotus?

A perennial that has the potential to grow on poor, acid sites where very few other species establish. Lotus will however, respond to improved fertility of better soils. As a predominantly summer grower, lotus will be most productive on soils that have available moisture during the summer months. The most suitable sites therefore are valleys and whitegrass flats. Lotus is not suitable for "stockpiling" as a winter feed due to its inability to handle hard frosts.

Establishment to date?

Photos Kingsford Valley

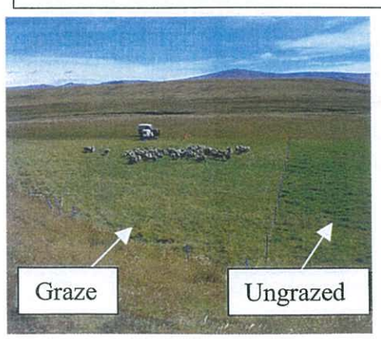
Lotus has generally been established as part of a **cultivated** Grass/Legume pasture. The first grazing of a new lotus stand will not likely occur until approximately 18 months post sowing. Once established, it spreads vegetatively by stolons and shallow rhizomes. Plants may reach a height of 600mm in thick stands.

Low Cost Establishment

In the winter of 2003 after a visit to Swan Inlet farm (Andrez and Alison Short), a forage plan was devised to re-vegetate existing ploughed camp and also to investigate potential benefits from establishing improved pastures at a lower cost. Areas were then completed in the 2003-04 growing season.

Techniques used and results as of March 2005

Technique	Result
Broadcasting of seed only	Patchy, established in clumps, seed was spread by hand
Broadcasting of seed and trampling with sheep	Similar to the above, if anything poorer
Rotavating ploughed ground and direct drilling	Better than the previous
Mowing and then direct drilling into whitegrass flat	Best establishment of all, yielded nearly double the ploughed area, an impressive stand of lotus.



It is possible the other areas may catch up on the slashing and direct drilling method over time. The results so far though are showing that it is possible to cheaply establish lotus and achieve the first grazing after a year of spelling post sowing.

Estimated Costings of Various lotus Establishment Options (£ per Ha Sown)

	Cultivated and Drilled	Mown and Drilled 2 Passes	Mown and Drilled 1 Pass	Camp Burn and Drill
Rotavated	55			
Mown		35	26	
Direct Drilled	14	14	14	14
Rolled	8			
Seed	15	20	20	20
Total	**92**	**69**	**60**	**34**

Note/ These costs are DOA assumptions and are based on pool machinery rates

Where to from here?

Pasture work in the Falklands to date has seen successes, at the same time it has seen failures. Often the excitement of a success is dampened by the failure of the same treatment the following year. This is why the success from the Swan Inlet pasture work has been taken a step further in their forage plan 2004-05.

Lotus direct drilled into Oreob

An area of 15 ha has now been flail-mowed and direct drilled into a lax whitegrass flat with a lotus based seed mixture. Remaining PIP funds only allowed Andrez and Alison to plant 15 ha, ideally they would have planted all of the 30 ha. To compromise the area has been sown in strips, one strip lotus mix then one strip left as natural whitegrass, next strip lotus mix and so on. A possible advantage of this system is that the native whitegrass may shelter the young lotus seedlings and reduce moisture loss from wind. Lotus is a vigorous plant that spreads vegetatively, I would therefore expect that in time the lotus would spread into the whitegrass rows.

Mown and drilled - 1 Pass

Other options?

It may be possible to reduce costs (see table above) further by having a controlled burn and then direct drilling, as an alternative to mowing. This should reduce fuel costs and also the time of the operation There is a possible advantage from mowing in that the mulch left over may reduce water loss form evaporation and the wind. When we consider "managed grazing" the immediate focus has to be on areas that are already productive (namely ewe camps, improved pastures). Once these areas have entered a system we can then consider improving the poorer areas. Creating a 10 ha area of burnt/drilled lotus into three 150 ha camps would be of far more long-term benefit than 30 ha in a 450 ha camps but more on this later. Why not discuss such options when completing your 2005/06 PIP Plan.

In the next couple of months people will once again be working on their PIP planning. Please get in contact if you would like to discuss this further, remember approximately 3 ha can be prepared for the same cost of 1 ha of cultivated pasture!

GAP UPDATE

Mandy McLeod

The official GAP organisation has pulled out of sending UK volunteers to the Falkland Islands as interest from their students has declined in the last couple of years. It is not only a decline in numbers for the Falklands, but generally, so they are reducing the options offered. However, it would appear by the amount of enquiries received lately, that there is still a great deal of interest from independent young people wanting to take a year out of their studies. All I can offer to do is put their details in the Wool Press and then it is up to farmers to contact them and discuss the possibilities. Don't forget that before anyone can come down here and work, they have to get permission from Customs and Immigration, which might entail you, the host(s) being party to that (it isn't a difficult process, just contact their office and explain what's what).

On that note, I received an email last week from another student wanting to do a GAP year down here, in particular doing farm work. Below is a bit that she wrote about herself. If anyone is interested in employing Sophie on their farm, please contact her via her mothers email address which is ceciliadickinson@yahoo.co.uk

I am Sophie Dickinson age 18 and I live in Colchester, Essex, along with my mum Cecilia, who works in a whole food store called 'the Organic Gourmet', my dad David, who is a consultant clinical psychologist, and my fifteen year old brother Philip. We have two cats and my horse, Twylight, lives at a livery yard in a nearby village. I attended St Helena School in Colchester and now currently attend Colchester Sixth Form College. I am sitting A levels this June.

AS Levels:

Drama and Theatre Studies	*A*
English literature	*A*
Media Studies	*A*
Psychology	*A*

A LEVELS SAME AS ABOVE

GCSEs:

Drama	*A**
English	*A**
English Literature	*A**
Food Technology	*A**
Biology	*A*
Mathematics	*B*
Geography	*A*
Music	*A*
Physics	*A*
Physical Education	*A*
Chemistry	*A*

Work Experience...

I currently work part time at a local Co op store and have done since January 2004. Whilst at school I completed a 2 week work placement at a Kennel in a nearby village (age 15). Between the ages of 11 and 14, I spent my Saturdays working at a local Animal Sanctuary/farm caring for dogs, rabbits and rodents, sheep, goats, pigs, horses and ponies, poultry, ducks and geese. In September 2002 I got my horse, Twylight, and have been attempting to train him ever since!

Me...

I was immediately drawn to the GAP placement in the Falklands because of the remote, challenging location and the opportunity to gain agricultural experience and be integrated in a new and interesting community. I am keen to learn about all the many aspects of farming life, learning new skills with sheep and dogs and improving my existing ones with horses. Working in the outdoors is something I really enjoy and it makes such a refreshing change from being trapped indoors studying. I would also be interested in the tourist trade, which I understand from the guide books is beginning to blossom. I should be taking my driving test in the next couple of months.

My long term plans have changed a lot recently, as I realised a degree in drama was not my vocation and that Medicine or Veterinary Medicine would satisfy me a lot more. After my gap year I intend to study Biology and Chemistry A levels so that I will be eligible for a medical career (my current A levels are all in the arts). I'm no stranger to hard work and whilst I enjoy being a team member I am just as happy working solo. I still have a lot to learn but I hope my enthusiasm, commitment, initiative and sociability will make me a worthwhile investment as a voluntary worker.

NB: Although Sophie describes herself as a 'voluntary worker', it is usual for the hosts to offer a wage to provide for 'social' spending and necessities.

FALKLAND PLACES WORD SEARCH

F I Z R T O N E E R G E S O O G
E I P O R T H O W A R D R A W I
L F T D N U O S Y E L E K R E B
D I I Z T E L R A M E B L A E R
D E D A R W I N S K A E P B N A
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R O Y C O V E S O L R A C N A S
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U S S A C R A C Y A B T S A E I
I N C O A S T R I D G E E G D O
S O C H A R T R E S E D G E S N

COAST RIDGE
GOOSE GREEN
SAN CARLOS
TEAL INLET
PORT HOWARD
BERKELEY SOUND
BEAVER
ALBEMARLE
ROY COVE
PORT LOUIS
FITZROY
WESTLEY
FOX BAY
HARPS
PEAKS
DUNBAR
SADDLE
SEDGE
CARCASS
CHARTRES
LAKELANDS
NORTH ARM
DARWIN
LIVELY ISLAND
EAST BAY
HEAD OF THE BAY
PORT SAN CARLOS
GIBRALTAR STATION

FARMING STATISTICS

All farmers were sent the Livestock Ordinance forms with the last Wool Press. If you are a farmer and did not receive yours, please contact Nyree Heathman on 27355 at your earliest opportunity.

It is a legal obligation that the completed forms are returned to the Department of Agriculture by the 30th June. We hope to get the Livestock Statistics published by the end of July, but we cannot do that until all farmers have returned their Livestock Ordinance forms, and it often ends up nearer to September that we go to print, usually waiting on only one or two returns. We would be grateful if everyone got their forms in to us by the end of June.

Thank you

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EDITORIAL

This edition of the Wool Press clearly indicates just how hectic things are in the farming community at the moment.

Farmers are very active with cattle programmes as indicated by Sue Harvey's recent commitment to pregnancy testing and 'TB' testing on the East, West and Islands. Her excellent contribution to this edition of the Wool Press on clostridial diseases certainly provides interesting reading and 'food for thought'. Lucy Ellis provides a review of sheep ultrasound scanning at a very timely date due to the large amount of sheep currently being inseminated (AI) or receiving an embryo (ET). Lucy makes an offer of having such 'key' stock scanned; do not hesitate to contact her for more information on how the process can help you.

It is fantastic to have a number of articles from non-DoA staff. Nick Pitaluga raises many relevant issues in response to last months 'Movement Tags' article by Steve Pointing. The importance of identifying stock destined for slaughter for export is clear, as is the need for efficiency and ease of management of the process. Steve's suggestion of a review at Farmers' Week is worthy of consideration and perhaps should also include a review/discussion on the underlying requirements for stock identification.

Thank you also to Phillip and Sheena Miller for their contribution on grazing lambs of various breeds on forage crops. Once again the story raises a number of key points worthy of consideration by all farmers contemplating a future in the 'lamb business'. Next year is shaping up as an important year for sheep meat production in the Falkland Islands, particularly with wool prices at such low levels.

The host of other articles presented by such authors as Zoe Luxton and Tim Cotter, as well as the regular DOA contributors are also recommended for your attention. Special thanks also to visiting reproductive specialist Michylla Seal for her article on sheep AI.

All the best having just completed another very busy month in the Falkland Island faming calendar.

Neil Judd
Senior Agricultural Adviser

CLOSTRIDIAL DISEASE – SOME VETERINARY EXPERIENCE

Sue Harvey

Clostridal diseases are a family of diseases that are all caused by related bacteria. Many of the diseases are similar and one of the reasons why we, as vets, do not usually distinguish between them is that the definitive test is very difficult. It involves injecting mice, some of which have been vaccinated, with toxin collected from the dead animal. As infected animals invariably die from the disease they do not have time to show antibodies in their blood and hence there is no blood test. Different clostridial diseases tend to effect different age groups of stock under certain climatic conditions so we can often be suspicious of a certain strain.

Without wanting to repeat Doug Martin's excellent article, which gives a lot of detail, I would like to emphasise that it is generally thought that most of the clostridial bacteria are found in the soil world-wide and there is no reason for the Falklands to be an exception. I know of very few sheep farmers outside the Falklands that do not vaccinate their sheep for clostridial diseases. Vaccination is less popular with beef producers though the majority of my dairy clients in New Zealand have now taken to including clostridial vaccine in their leptospirosis vaccination program. The disease occurs sporadically – that is to say usually you get an odd case now and again, however I have seen some heavy losses in lambs which is why the vaccination program is so popular with sheep farmers. It's often quoted that the best animals die from clostridial bacteria, I'm not sure how much truth there is in that, it could be just that you do not expect these animals to die so suddenly and hence they are noticed.

In my first job in Scotland I remember reporting back to one of the senior vets in the practice (a very canny Scot) that some lambs had died from a clostridial disease and the farmer hadn't been vaccinating. The reply was something like "He's a b..... fool, they think they can get away without vaccinating but it catches up with them all after a year or so". That's about it, you can get away without vaccinating but you are treading a fine line and sooner or later you will get losses. The vaccine is cheap (without taking into account the cost of importing refrigerated products) and the fact that so many hill farmers (farmers with commercial lambs not just stud breeders) are using it, must indicate that they think it is well worth while.

Classically clostridial diseases cause sudden death and rapid decomposition (rotting) of the carcass. This is how I diagnose the disease, for some reason most of my post mortems have been during colder weather so I have been sure it wasn't the heat that cause the carcass to rot. Pulpy Kidney got its name as the kidneys rot quickly – though you need a really fresh carcass to see this. For some reason us vets like to run the kidneys under a tap and see if the fleshy bits flush away.If the clostridia are in the muscle you will get the blackleg/malignant oedema type symptoms, one of the characteristics of this is that there can be lot of gas production. This leads to an amazing crackling under the skin (not so amazing if it's your prize beast) both in the alive animal and dead. Again there is the characteristic quick rotting of the meat.

Tetanus is technically a clostridial disease but I tend to think of it as slightly different and would hope I could give a conclusive diagnosis. Horses are the most susceptible animals. The vaccine has a long lasting effect so there will be very few horses in the non 3rd world countries that I have worked in that are not vaccinated. Despite this I would not castrate a colt without giving it a tetanus toxoid at the time of the operation. Tetanus toxoid is not a

vaccination but an antitoxin that neutralises any bacteria. I don't do this here (apart from my first human injection ever – post seal bite off South Georgia). I'm not sure if I am being negligent, foolish/lucky or the disease only exists at a very low level.

Clostridial diseases are so important in sheep farming that there are 2 types of vaccine (deliberately to confuse newly qualified vets and farmers). The trick being to see if the vaccine contains lamb dysentery or not. This disease effects newly born lambs and the only way to protect the lamb is to vaccinate the mother shortly before lambing to make sure the colostrum is stacked full of antibodies. Hence you vaccinate the ewe to protect the lambs. At other times sheep can be given a vaccine without the lamb dysentery . This type of clostridia does not occur in New Zealand and the only reason I mention it is to emphasis the complexity that farmers/vets will go to ensure that their stock have the best vaccination program and the animals are fully covered all their life.

Most things in farming are a balance between the perfect job and the economical job. As a vet I have no difficulty in saying that all stock should be vaccinated with a clostridial vaccine. Of course there is not only the cost of the vaccine but also the effort/cost of the getting the stock in and vaccinating them. The fact that I had very few takers when I offered free vaccine as part of the sheep AI/ET program only emphasises this.

The Department of Agriculture still has a number of doses of Glanvac 6 which vaccinates not only for clostridal diseases but sheep boils as well. This vaccine has not yet expired but will in the near future. If anyone is interested they can have this vaccine on a first come first served basis. The vaccine is not licensed for use in cattle (cattle don't get boils) but I have consulted with the manufactures who can see no reason why a 2 ml dose cannot be used in cattle to provide protection. The sheep dose is 1 ml, 2 doses are initially needed, the second given 4 weeks later and then yearly boosters. Young animals are much more susceptible to these diseases so there is some rational in vaccinating young stock followed by the first yearly booster. I would have no hesitation in doing my stud flock every year (if I had a stud flock).

There is not doubt in my mind that this spectrum of diseases does occur in the Falklands – I have seen the results. Please report any suspected cases to the veterinary section, only that way we can build up a Falklands picture. We would be delighted to explain any of the diseases in greater detail and advise individual farmers on a suitable vaccination program.

Note from Steve Pointing

I commend this really excellent article on Clostridial diseases in farm animals. I am particularly interested in Sue's comments about Tetanus in horses. We, and our predecessors, have carried out large numbers of colt castrations in the Falklands over the past 25years and I have not come across one case where Tetanus was thought to be responsible for a post-castration death.

Prior to the vets carrying out the operation, farmers and farm workers used to perform the operation themselves. Yes, I'm sure some horses died post-operatively, but does anyone reading this know if Tetanus was ever the suspected cause of death. I'd be really interested to hear back from you on the subject.

GUIDELINES FOR SHEEP ULTRASOUND PREGNANCY DIAGNOSIS

Lucy Ellis

I know that many of you will have seen this article in a previous WoolPress edition but with the imminent start of this year's AI/ET Programme, and many farmers participating for the first time, I thought it a good opportunity to re-submit this. Could I also ask that all of those farmers who have had their ewes scanned previously, please take a few minutes to read through the article - just to refresh your memories. Thank you.

Since 2002 the Department of Agriculture has been able to offer a Ewe Ultrasound Pregnancy Diagnosis Service (scanning) to farmers.

Why scan my ewes?

Scanning is widely used, world wide as a, mainly, management tool in the farming industry. It allows producers to pretty accurately predict lambing %, feed requirements and budgeting, forecast income from wool/lambs/meat (calves/veal/meat) and can be useful for informing farmers of animal health issues i.e. abortions, ram management.

Should I scan my ewes?

Before you decide to have your flock(s) scanned, have a really good hard think about why you want them done. If it's only to find out the possible lambing % then forget it, it's a waste of the scanners time and effort and puts your ewes through a lot of unnecessary stress. If, however, you want to know Twins/Singles/Dry (TSD) or Wet/Dry (WD) with a view to maximising ewe/lamb survivability, pasture/paddock use and feed budgeting then it's invaluable.

Once scanned, the dries (non-pregnant ewes) can be drafted off and run elsewhere, the singles should go on good quality/improved pasture and the twins should go on the best possible pasture plus, if they are valuable animals, budget for supplementary feeding when the weather deteriorates and the pasture loses quality.

What do I need to provide and do?

Once you have decided to have your ewes scanned, 'phone the D.o.A with your ram joining and removal dates, you will then be given a scanning date and time.

Twenty four hours before scanning commences, bring your ewes into the shed or yards so they can empty out. **This is crucial, as it is impossible to scan ewes with a full belly.** If it were at all feasible, it would be extremely helpful if, a day or couple of days before scanning, the rear half of the belly was shorn. In coarser and more open woolled sheep it is not so much of a problem but with fine woolled sheep, pushing the probe through the belly wool and trying to get a good skin contact is very difficult, very tiring and slows the whole operation down considerably.

The scanning crate will sit at the end of the race. If you do not have a permanent race or a race in the shed then rigging up a temporary one along the side of a pen will be fine.

Hint: For optimum flow-through of sheep, make sure the two panels/hurdles behind the crate are solid or covered in so the sheep cannot see the movements of the scanner.

A safe, well-earthed source of power is needed whether it is a mobile or the settlement generator. Extension cords may be needed; we supply one long one and various shorter ones.

A continuous close supply of hot and cold water is necessary. How much depends on your flock size, obviously the larger the mob the greater amount of water is used.
And last, but most certainly not least, is wo/man power. A minimum of two people is required but depending on how well or not the sheep are running, maybe three will be beneficial.

When do my ewes get scanned?

This is where your ram joining and removal dates are so important.

For Wet/Dry (WD) only, the ewes will be scanned at 45+ days after **ram removal**.
For Twins/Single/Dry (TSD) the ewes will be scanned, ideally, at 80 – 85 days after **ram joining** and no later than 90 days.

When scanning ewes that have been in that current year's AI/ET Programme, we will scan the ewes at 75 days after insemination/implantation. This is the optimum time to detect different lamb foetal size, which will show if the AI/ET was successful, or if the ewe is carrying a lamb from your sweeper ram.

For further information contact: Lucy Ellis on 27355 or e-mail – lellis@doa.gov.fk

F	I	Z	R	T	O	N	E	E	R	G	E	S	O	O	G			
E	I	P	O	R	T	H	O	W	A	R	D	R	A	W	I			
L	F	T	D	N	U	O	S	Y	E	L	E	K	R	E	B			
D	I	I	Z	T	E	L	R	A	M	E	B	L	A	E	R			
D	E	D	A	R	W	I	N	S	K	A	E	P	B	N	A			
A	Y	A	B	X	O	F	R	E	V	A	E	B	N	O	L			
S	L	Y	A	B	A	Y	E	L	T	S	E	W	U	R	T			
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O	O	O	L	A	K	E	L	A	N	D	S	S	I	H	R			
R	O	Y	C	O	V	E	S	O	L	R	A	C	N	A	S			
T	P	H	E	A	D	O	F	T	H	E	B	A	Y	R	T			
L	I	V	E	L	Y	I	S	L	A	N	D	N	A	M	A			
O	R	T	P	O	R	P	T	E	L	N	I	L	A	E	T			
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S	O	C	H	A	R	T	R	E	S	E	D	G	E	S	N			

THE
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SOLUTION

REMINDER

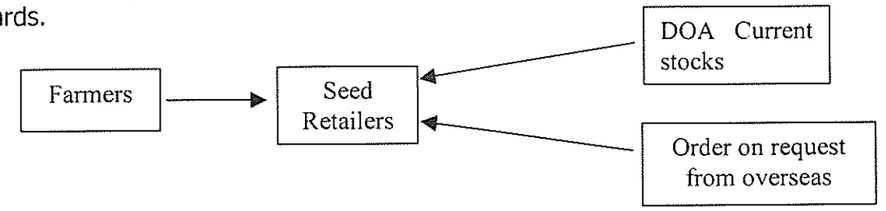
YOUR LIVESTOCK ORDINANCE FORMS SHOULD BE RETURNED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE BY THE END OF JUNE

SEED REQUIREMENTS FOR 2005/06 PIP PLANS

Andrew Pollard

Recently the Department of Agriculture (DOA) advertised that it was going to be holding a meeting in regards to the future of seed retailing in the Falkland Islands. It has been determined that the DOA will not be retailing seed, but rather that interested private businesses would be better able to take care of this for farmers. As such expressions of interest were sought from farmers and local retailers. We will keep contacts with the individual seed companies and will still provide local retailers and farmers with the appropriate advice on current and future recommended species.

What does this mean?
Outlined below is the pathway that farmers will follow to obtain seed from the 2005/06 season onwards.



What do you do?

Step 1 Carry out planning for 2005/06 PIP allocation

Step 2 Once all works have been identified transfer the relevant information from your plan onto the forms attached in the envelope with this woolpress.

Step 3 DOA approval of plan

Step 4 Send the requirement list to relevant retailer (s) ASAP, to obtain quotes; and place an order

Step 5 The retailer will then be able to create a total list of seed and make an order in advance

It is important that you get the correct seed rates and price. It is advisable to order a little extra to cover the difference in the measured area (we advise using the GPS here) and for the workings of machinery.

Example of Seed Requirement List

PIP Site	Area Ha	Seed Type	Rate Kg/Ha	Total Kg's	Retailer	Total Cost £
1	20	Swede	1	20	FI Seed Co.	240
2	30	Cocksfoot Tall Fescue Alsike Clover Lotus	6 2 2 1	180 60 60 30	FI Seed Co.	270 90 150 300

The costings used in this are approximate, we recommend that you contact retailers for their costs in planning.

SHEEP GENETIC IMPROVEMENT

Neil Judd

The ability to utilise a proportion of PIP funds for sheep genetic improvement has prompted an increase in planning of sheep breeding in the Falkland Islands.

Farmers are examining a variety of options over the next few seasons to progress their sheep and wool businesses. As mentioned in previous articles, a whole host of options exist. Options such as fresh semen AI (using local semen); frozen semen AI (using either local or imported semen); frozen embryo transfer (using either local or imported frozen embryos); fresh embryo transfer (using local embryos) and the purchase of live rams are all options available to farmers.

Each option has various strength and weaknesses. Individual farmers will need to carefully consider each of the available options in view of their own farms requirements and to choose the path that suits their own circumstances best. DoA Advisors are available to provide technical details on each of the options, if required, but are not in a position to determine the "best option" for any farm. T o assist farms with the process the following advice is offered;

Step 1

With a keen eye on long term wool and sheep meat markets, determine the long-term breeding goals and flock structure of the farm. The following examples are provided to illustrate two of the current possibilities in the Falkland Islands:-

Example 1 represents a full breeding flock where the farm has/is is moving to a finer overall micron (23 micron breeding flock average) and aims to sell wethers and cull ewes as lamb and hoggets. Example 2 represents a more traditional Corriedale based "balanced flock" system.

Example 1

- Average 23 micron, full breeding flock
- 4kg GFW average
- Wethers sold as lamb/hogget at minimum of 13kg deadweight
- 75% lambing
- Average GM £6.50/DSE

Example 2

- Average 26 micron balanced flock
- 4kg GFW average
- Wethers sold at 7 years of age at 21 – 22kg deadweight
- 75% lambing
- Average GM £4.50/DSE

A host of other breeding goals and flock structures are possible, the above two examples are provided to simply illustrate the point!

Step 2

After setting the breeding goals and structure of the farm, a second key step is then to determine the type of sheep that is acceptable to the farm. That is, to define "the sheep type box". The "sheep box" may in the short term only describe the type of sheep that should be used for "stud" purposes on the farm, but ideally over the long-term; it may describe all sheep on the farm.

- clear face
- polled
- structurally sound
- good frame and plain body
- no pigmentation
- stylish wool
- GFW not less than 3.5kg
- Ewe micron not more than 24
- Ram micron not more than 23

Example of a 'sheep box'

As shown in step 2, the farm "sheep box" might have many characteristics that are considered, as "must haves" for the farm. For some farms some of the points given might not be relevant, while for other farms, other characteristics might be important.

The Department of Agriculture sheep genetic improvement programme offers farmers massive scope to speed up the progress of achieving their farm breeding goals. Caution, however, needs to be exercised that only animals worthy of use are in fact utilised. Animals used should not only be genetically superior, but should also fit the individual farms "sheep type box". Remember, rapid use of inferior animals will rapidly spread inferior genetics through a farm flock!

DoA Advisors are happy to assist farms to prepare their sheep breeding plans and to assist in the sheep selection process, so please do not hesitate to call.

ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION

Michylla Seal

There are two types of artificial insemination (AI), cervical and laproscopic AI. They both provide a potential avenue to promote genetic gain in a flock and maximise the use of available genetics. These benefits can greatly assist in the introduction and propagation of new breeds in the Falkland Islands, such as the Dohne and SAMM. Artificial insemination enables the lambing period in the mob to be very concise.

Cervical Insemination

Cervical AI enables the use of local rams over a large number of ewes. One ejaculate from a ram can be used to inseminate not 1 but 10 to 50 ewes. Only local rams can be used in cervical insemination as only freshly collected ram semen can be used.

There are two procedures of ewe preparation for insemination. Ewes can either be synchronised, whereby drugs are used to program the ewes to cycle at a specific time. Alternatively the ewes' natural cycling can be utilised. The use of their natural cycling can result in a higher pregnancy rate however it is more labour intensive. When utilising the ewes' natural cycle teasers need to be placed with the ewe mob 3 weeks prior to AI. After this period of time new harnessed or raddled teasers are placed into the mob. Twice daily drafting is then required for a maximum of 3 weeks. This time period can vary depending on the number of ewes to be inseminated and the size of the mob. Those ewes marked and drafted at 5pm are then cervically inseminated at 8am the next morning. Those ewes marked and drafted at 8am are cervically inseminated at 1pm that same day.

Semen collection from a trained ram at Swan Inlet

A skilled operator is required to perform the AI. The appropriate equipment and ability to analyse and process the collected semen is essential. It involves the fresh collection of ram

semen just prior to insemination. Rams can be trained to be collected with an artificial vagina using an on heat ewe or a hormone treated spayed ewe. Alternatively rams can be stimulated to ejaculate using an electro-ejaculator. Cervical AI is often referred to as a "shot in the dark".

Preparing the ewe for insemination

It essentially involves placing the ewe's hind legs over a rail and using equipment to place the semen in the cervix. As ewes' oestrus cycle is 17 days, 2 weeks after cervical AI teasers can be placed out in the mob to determine which ewes are returning to service. These ewes can either be placed with a ram or cervical insemination may be repeated. Results vary from 0 to 80% conception rate, but the average tends to be 50 to 60% pregnancy rate.

Laproscopic Insemination

The main benefits of Laproscopic AI over cervical AI are that imported genetics can be utilised and higher conception rates are expected. Laproscopic AI can utilise frozen semen imported or collected locally. Smaller doses of semen are required enabling a single collection from a ram to be used over a greater number of ewes.

Ewes to be inseminated need to be synchronised to a precise time of ovulation. Timing is critical in laproscopic AI. Rams to be used in the program can be collected fresh on the day of insemination or frozen semen can be used. Synchronised ewes are placed in specially designed cradles that are elevated to present the ewe to the operator.

Ewe positioned in the cradle, operator looking through the laporoscope with the technician (hand to right of picture) ready to pass the semen

Adrian Veitch looking into the abdomen with the laporoscope, locating the uterine horn (left hand), and inseminating (right hand)

Laproscopic AI involves a skilled operator using a laproscope to view the uterus inside the abdomen of the ewe. The small doses of diluted semen (approximately 0.15mL of diluted semen) are placed directly into the uterine horns. One dose is placed into each horn using a small needle-like instrument. Teasers can be used 2 weeks after insemination to detect any ewes returning to service. These ewes can be reprogrammed for laproscopic AI or a ram may be placed with the ewes. Pregnancy rates vary from 20 to 100%, however generally results are 75 to 80% conception rate.

GRAZING LAMBS ON FORAGE

Sheena & Phillip Miller

This year at Cape Dolphin,lambs were grazed on a mix of oats and pasja (forage brassica). The aim was to bring October/November lambs up to suitable weights for the abattoir. It was planned to make silage from the crop but it was decided to see what results could be obtained by feeding the lambs.

Oats before grazing

The lambs were on the crop from the 6th of March to the 3rd of May a total of 58 days. There were 6ha of oats and pasja planted in a 12 ha paddock of whitegrass. The oats were up to 30cm high before grazing. The crop was planted in 18m wide rows with similar size whitegrass strips in between. This has proved quite successful as it seems to stop the cultivated soil drying out and helps to protect the crop from wind. The whitegrass also supplies a ready source of dry matter and protection for the animals when eating the forage.

Crop at end of grazing

On the crop there were 14 cows, 6 calves, 250 lambs and 336 ewes. The ewes were only on the crop for 2 wks. This is a total Dry Sheep Equivalent (DSE) of 510hd for 58 days. (1 DSE is equal to a 45-50kg wether). The stocking rate worked out over the entire year averaged 6.6DSE/ha/year compared to the FI average of 0.8 DSE/ha/year.

What we will do next time

- Some lambs did not utilise the forage crop and to avoid this happening strip grazing will be carried out to utilise the oats better and ensure all sheep are grazing them.
- The oats will be grazed earlier to stop them going to head and this will provide more feed.
- The older ewes will be joined earlier and have the ewes and lambs on a similar forage crop (weather permitting) by the beginning of December. This will enable lambs to be ready earlier in the season and allow all the lambs to finish.
- Lambs will be weighed and will not be sent to the abattoir unless they are at least 30kgs and Body Condition Score 3 to ensure the best returns.

Abattoir Results

- Using the price scale at the time our lambs needed to be at least 30kgs before consigning to the abattoir to maximise the number of lambs reaching 11kgs. The price for an 11kg lamb was £1/kg whereas lambs less than 11kgs were paid only at 0.75p/kg.
- Of the 250 lambs, 140hd over 28kgs were consigned to the abattoir on the 25 April. The average dressing % of the group was 37.6% so a 30kg lamb dresses out at just over 11.28kgs
- Weight gain of the group over the 58 days was 458grams/hd/wk.

It takes careful grazing and monitoring of weights to get the best returns but armed with the above information we hope to markedly improve our lamb profits next year.

PORT HOWARD FARM WALK

Doug Martin

On the 9th May a group of 30 farmers and DoA Staff spent the afternoon at Port Howard and Bold Cove observing the results of grazing management systems, crop and reseed management as well as fencing options using hotwires.

WHITE ROCK

At Port Howard the development of White Rock, owned by Rodney & Carol Lee, was under scrunity. Until 2004 White Rock was originally two Camps of 1050 and 610 ha. In 2002 a 60 ha reseed was established on the 1050 ha area with Cocksfoot, Red Fescue, Tall Fescue, Maku Lotus and White Clover used as the mix. Due to the area being low and wet throughout the winter and early spring the Maku Lotus has established really well.

The importance of the day reflected in the dress code of visiting farmers!

This summer the area has been subdivided into 7 blocks using a single polywire and tread-ins. The national beef herd was transferred to White Rock in August 2004 and the 65 breeding cows and 27 calves were rotationally grazed on the reseed from 16th December until 4th February. The reseed is now being grazed with 65 weaner calves. Throughout the Spring and Summer Rodney & Carol have fenced the rest of the 1006ha area into 4 blocks of between 204 and 260 ha. Fencing used was two 2.5mm hotwires with mainly steel star posts and a trial of plastic star posts. A further 35 ha has been subdivided from an adjacent 204 ha block, on which 4 ha oats were sown in December. Due to the dry summer however this provided only limited grazing. A 6ha swede crop was also sown on the reseed area in December and this will provide some winter feed with a yield of approximately 1.5 tonnes dry matter per ha.

Rotational Grazing Trial.

A summer rotational grazing system of 8 x 20-28 ha blocks has been established on one of the four subdivided blocks again using two hotwires, as well as galvanised C Posts.
Cost **per km** of the 10 km fencing required was as follows:

Wire – 2 strands 2.5mm Zalcote wire@ £46 per strand per km	£92
C-Posts – 60 per km @£2.25 each	£135
Strainer posts – 5 per km @£15 each	£75
Insulators 10x33p each	£3.30
Gates – 1 @ £10	£10
Insulated cable and wire clamps	£12
Solar powered energiser	£35
Switch	£5
Total	**£367.30 per km**

With an estimated labour cost of £1200, the total cost for the 226ha grazing unit was £4873 or £21.56 per ha.

Rodney Lee showing some of the visitors the 2 wire fencing

The combined herd of 137 cows and 70 calves were introduced into the system on 10th April, with a grazing time of 10 days to two weeks on each block. Stocking rate on each block is estimated to be 2055 DSE or 73-102 DSE per ha. The entire annual cycle is not as yet completed, however it is possible that over a twelve-month period this may the opportunity to achieve an annualised stocking rate of approximately 2 DSE per hectare over the entire area! Past records show historical stocking rate on the 1005 ha to be 850 ewes or 1.1 DSE per ha.

Once the cattle have been through one rotation they will be grazed on a slow rotation over winter on the remaining 3 blocks. This will commence around mid June, depending on the available feed. The intensive grazing area will be rested until October/November, depending on growth and ideally at commencement of calving. An adjoining camp of 610 ha will be further subdivided as well, and depending on the success of the trial a small flock of sheep will be incorporated into the enterprise.

Beef Herd at White Rock

Monitoring.

Monitoring of the trial will be as follows:

1. Productivity of cattle, including conception rate, calving and weaning %, ratio of calf weaning weight to cow weight, BCS, meat produced per ha, gross margin and return per DSE.

2. Impact of the livestock on the total area. This will include rainfall recording, species recording and change, photopoints, soil infiltration rates, as well as rainfall use and water cycle efficiency.

The trial will also allow cheap pasture improvement options such as direct drilling, oversowing and incorporation of seed with livestock impact and frost seeding.

PORT HOWARD

As part of the PIP programme Myles and Christopher Lee have fenced off a 38ha area handy to the settlement for the establishment of crops initially and later to be put down to a reseed as part of a rotational cropping programme.

This year oats, triticale, both mixed with annual ryegrass, swede and turnip were sown in December. The oat and triticale crop were excellent, with the swede and turnip crop patchy. This may have been caused by a problem at planting as the seed that grew produced reasonable bulbs.

Operations carried out were as follows; Rotavating, burning, discing, sowing using a drill and rolling.

The oat, triticale and ryegrass crop was initially grazed by 400 lambs for the Abattoir for a May delivery, after which 60 steers were introduced for finishing through autumn/winter.

Steers being grazed on the Port Howard reseed

Establishment cost for the oat, triticale and ryegrass crop was £153/ha, with the cost of the swede and turnip crop being £146 per ha. The estimated yield of the cereal crop was 5 - 6 tonnes dry matter per ha, therefore dry matter cost would be 2.5-3.0p per kg. With 30% loss through trampling, utilised dry matter would then cost 3.6-4.5p per kg. Based on a dry matter intake of 3% of body weight approximate cost of feeding lambs equated to 4.3-5.4p per day and steers 41-51p per day

BOLD COVE

The group next travelled to Jimmy & Ginny Forsters' Bold Cove Farm to view 2 x 26 ha reseeds,which have been further subdivided using a single polywire and tread-ins. Winter feed options were discussed and future development of the farm was explained. These reseeds, which were established in 2001 & 2002, have been subdivided into 7 and 6 blocks respectively and are grazed by a herd of 80 breeding cows, 48 head on one and 39 head on the other. The aim is to rotationally graze the 56 ha with the two mobs of cattle over the summer months commencing at calving time. All cows are mated annually and heifers are mated when they reach 2/3 mature cow weight or approximately 320-330 kg liveweight.

Reseed Management.

Grazing in 2004 commenced on the 19th October, with cattle being rotationally grazed on each block for 4-5 days at a time in order to prevent excessive grazing of regrowth and allow plants to replenish root carbohydrate reserves. As the leaves are pruned an equivalent mass of roots are lost beneath the surface and these are used as food for soil microbes. Dead soil microbes contribute to plant nutrients in the soil, whilst live microbes are responsible for the conversion of organic nitrogen to the plant useable forms of nitrogen, ammonia and nitrate.

Management of the system is such that the cattle graze the pasture to a residual of no more than 750 kg dry matter per ha with is relatively low, however which encourages greater growth of legumes due to greater capacity of leaf area for photosynthesis. The high percentage of clover, up to 50% of the species present, will provide up to 35% more weight gain than grass alone.

In situations where production of nitrogen is so great that the accompanying grass is unable to utilise the total amount excess hydrogen ions are released leading to a lowering of the soil pH. It would appear at this stage that the likelihood of this happening in the Falkland Islands is remote.

The cattle were removed on the 23rd March, with the reseeds providing 155 days of grazing. 68 calves were produced from 80 cows, with a calving percentage of 85%. 6 calves were lost at birth therefore 62 calves were reared.

Stocking Rate.

Stocking rate was estimated to be 1484 DSE (Dry Sheep Equivalent) over the 56ha, equating to 26.5 DSE/ha for the 155 days or 11.5 DSE per ha on an annualised basis. The calves weighed an average of 200kg when removed , and working on a 55% dressed carcase weight 6820kg beef was produced. This equated to a gross value of £9889 based on current abattoir price. Beef produced per ha was 121kg or £175 giving a gross of £15.55 per DSE. Comparing this result with that of say lamb production, 950 ewes (DSE equivalent) at 80% lambing producing 760 lambs with 13 kg carcases would return a gross meat value of £9880 based on £1 per kg CWT.

If wool value is considered, a flock of Dohne ewes for example, which have shown to date to be more than capable of producing this carcase weight, might return a gross wool value of £5586, based on 3kg fleece, 70% yield and a price of £2.80 per kg clean at 23 micron. Overall gross return from the lamb and wool operation could return upwards of £15466 from the area.

Dry Matter Production

Working on a daily dry matter intake of 3% of bodyweight, and not taking into account the pasture consumption by calves, it is estimated that the cows harvested 1230kg dry matter per day. Therefore over the 155 days approximately 3.5 tonnes dry matter per ha were consumed. Allowing for trampling and fouling dry matter production per ha equated to 4.5 tonnes per ha, which is excellent by Falkland Islands standards. It is important to note that as the strips or blocks were grazed each one was harrowed in order to spread the manure tp assist in nutrient cycling.

It is evident that application of fertiliser would produce greater quantities of dry matter, and application of RPR (reactive phosphate rock) and calcified seaweed are being considered as these fertilisers will supply phosphorus and calcium.

Reseed establishment costs are approximately £300 per ha. Both reseeds were rotavated, burnt, sown with the Einboch and rolled. The first reseed was sown with Cocksfoot and Creeping Red Fescue, whilst the other was sown with Cocksfoot, Creeping Red Fescue, White and Alsike Clover . The clover mix was oversown using the Einboch in the following year. Reactive rock phosphate was spread on the first reseed at a rate of 100 kg per ha, otherwise no fertiliser has been used.

Annualised cost of the reseed, assuming a life of 10 years, is £30 per ha. Based on utilised dry matter of 3.5 tonnes per ha and costed over the 3 years to date the cost of dry matter is 0.86p per kg annually. This is comparatively cheap feed, however consideration needs to be given to the time spent in shifting cattle and spreading manure, and also to reseed maintenance.

Winter Feed.
Two cropping areas of 4.5 and 12 ha respectively have been developed over the past three summers, with swede, oats and annual ryegrass the main species sown. Swede has been successful in two out of three seasons, whilst oats and ryegrass sown this summer provided enough feed this year for grazing for 1 week as well as for making 250 bales of hay.

Further Development.
The total area allocated to cattle is 450ha, including the 56ha reseed and 16.5 ha cropping area. The majority of this land is therefore spelled over summer for winter grazing.

The two reseeds are situated in such a way that they can be linked, therefore a further 6 grazing areas have been created using single and double hotwires and are being grazed in the early winter period in an effort to develop better quality by a combination of more intensive grazing, as well as direct drilling and oversowing of legumes. An adjacent 500 head ewe camp of 750 ha will be developed into a managed summer grazing area of 200 ha subdivided into 7 blocks. The remaining 550 ha will be subdivided into 3 blocks of appproximately 180 ha for a slow rotation over winter. All fencing will be constructed using C Posts and two and three hotwires.

Interestingly the cows were pregnancy tested on the 1st June and with 61 cows mated 57 (an outstanding 93%) were confirmed in calf. This compares with 2004 results with 80 cows mated and 73, 91%) pregnancy tested in calf. Results for the two years include all cows and heifers. It is also interesting to note that in 2004 all heifers mated produced a calf and are all once again pregnant in 2005.

The DoA would like to thank Rodney & Carol, Myles & Christopher, Jimmy & Ginny for hosting the informative day. Special thanks to Carol for taking care of DoA staff.

Photo Gallery

COMPARING MEAT BREED CROSS LAMBS WITH POLWARTH LAMBS

Damien O'Sullivan

Lambs for the abattoir at Cape Dolphin this year were grazed on oats and pasja from Polwarth ewes and 3 different lines of rams.

The lamb sires were: Polwarth,
¾ bred Suffolks and
½ bred Poll Dorset rams.

As a result the lambs were either: Pure Polwarth
¼ Poll Dorset:¾ Polwarth crosses
⅜ Suffolk:⅝ Polwarth crosses.

The lambs were divided into part meat breeds and Polwarths for comparison. There were 167 meat breed hoggets and 97 Polwarth bred hoggets. All were born in 2004 and were relatively even in size. Prior to slaughter the part meat breed hogs weighed an average of 28.2kgs and the Polwarths 27.3kgs. Of the total group of 264, 144 head were over 27.5kgs and sent to the abattoir on the 25-April after 58 days grazing. Results were:

	Meat breed	Polwarths
Average weight of total group prior to slaughter	28.2kg	27.2kg
% of each breed reaching 27.5 kgs	59%	42%
Average liveweight of sheep to abattoir	31.7kg	30.6kg
Carcase weight	11.9kg	11.4kg
Dressing %	37.6%	37.5%
Value	£10.9	£10.1

As we can see there is little difference in the carcase value of the part meat breed lambs and Polwarth lambs at the abattoir. Indications from the above trial suggest that to gain full benefit of using meat breeds we really need more than half their genetics to make a significant difference to growth rates. Remember though high quality feed is still needed to allow any animal to express their genetic potential. In the short term we can make more gains by ensuring that both ewes and lambs have high quality forage that is strip grazed to maximise production rather than just use meat breeds that could in the future compromise wool production. The DoA gross margin model can be used to explore the financial impact of various options that include use of meat breeds.

We can see the importance of providing adequate food if we look at:
1. the abattoir returns
2. where each lamb was in one price range heavier
3. if none of the lambs below the 11kg dressed weight mark were sold

Actual return	Return if all lambs one price range heavier	Return if all lambs are more than 11kgs+ dressed weight
£1308	£1563	£1811

In conclusion the best gains are made in these lambs by having well managed and good nutrition for the ewe and lamb and selling at the right weight and condition score.

MOVEMENT TAGS TOPIC..

Nick Pitaluga

Steve Pointing's recent article on movement tags prompts me into submitting a response. As one of the farmers who was '*frustrated*' by the seeming lack of follow through traceability within the abattoir, I would offer the following views.

Whilst appreciating the broader aspect of why we have '*traceabilty*', and protection for the consumer being paramount; having been involved in the early discussions of the application of this system here, I would agree that what we have *is* a compromise, but believe it *could* have been established and made much better to begin with. The unseemly haste to polish the backside of EU legislation and ensure that certifying inspections of the plant did not get held up by quibbles over something that actually *worked* for the Falklands, had a lot to do with why we have what we have – so there is a lesson in that alone! Anyone who feels that the EU & Europe is a *great opportunity* to be taken advantage of, can at least have the experience of spending the rest of their lives reflecting on that view if we let ourselves be directed by some of the worst ideology and bureaucracy in the Western world (a*nd you think Argentina presents a threat...?!!)*

For one thing, here we have the benefit of relatively small sheep numbers to deal with and legislate for. These are largely all ear-marked anyway (maybe a few terminal sire lambs aren't before slaughter?), so what do tags tell us that ear nips & spray-marked abattoir kill batches don't already? All the reasons and withdrawal interval considerations that Steve lists *could* just as capably be kept *just* as accurately for the duration, with the spray mark & existing movement sheet records for tracing for 'list A' diseases and drug residues, with a relatively inexpensive *reusable* tag (if it *were* really necessary). After all, the most likely time for injectable drug residue occurrence would commence (perhaps?) following a shearing injury, after which the abattoir doesn't really want them for a further 6 weeks anyway (drench withdrawal is usually 3 weeks, but shorter w/d ones are available).

The farmer would not necessarily have a *movement* or other tag in that animal's ear for that particular reason, so would be on his own recognisance to record and mark/identify that treated animal till it was *clear* and presented for grading, where it would get a spray mark only and *then* a movement tag – in conjunction with its station mark (ear nip). Ear nips are now forbidden in Britain (tattoos are allowed), so much of this traceability legislation is geared to alternatives, including the system Steve mentions of unique farm/individual animal tags. Given the %-age of Falkland stock that will *not* go to Sand Bay in its life, this level of i/d is over the top for our needs and would add an unnecessary burden and overhead to stretched systems.

What has always been a source of amazed frustration for me, is the illogical and witless part of what we *do* have for our movement tags. Namely: camouflaged colour, all put in the same ear of male/female stock, additional extra (unnecessary) digits printed on tags (particularly the early series) and a 2nd rate type of tag intended for insertion with a paltry design of applicator that could only accept the tag one way round! My suggestion right at the start was that a movement tag for direct shipment to the abattoir should (if we *must* have them) be visible in colour, applied in alternative ears of M/F stock, *not* be of a loop design (to avoid tearing out), still be low-cost, including additional printing, and if we were *really* sensible we would be able to *re*use the tags. Remember the export tags on NSF and other sheep? They can be used as a simple pin and tab as well as being two-sided. It could have been easy to use a two colour mix of tag halves to indicate *immediately* if a sheep were from

farm of origin or had been sold on. The opposed dissenting views in various areas is one of the reasons the system pays for tags and *not* the farmer (like happens everywhere else..!!)

My other reason for suggesting two- part tags was so that one half (the non-reusable half) could be steri-dipped and accompany the carcase along the chain to inspection, permitting monitoring of carcass types, particularly as a fledgling industry working principally with wool breeds attempting to comply with market demands based on meat breed values, (i.e., you could follow liveweights right through). This was deemed unnecessary and undesirable. I accept that this idea may have added more costs at the abattoir (sorry, did I say *more costs...??* Surely not- must be some mistake!!). It may sound unnecessarily complex too, but bear in mind that we are already funding a system which would not stand up to serious testing and for most of what we are doing, spray marks would suffice. Your movement sheet would indicate the date(s), red/green/other spot on head/bum/shoulder, combined with station mark.... and yes OK, use the existing type of movement tag for sold-on sheep instead of counter marks, but use *both* ears for sexes.

My views on this have been further vindicated by the recent upsets caused by mis-identification of assumed hydatid appearance boils/cysts. I disagree that not having enough practice of identifying cysts, due to their infrequency, is '*a good problem to have*'. When a community has worked for as long as this place has to rid the system of a hidden menace, (during the course of which much finger pointing & accusation has been made), then any suspicious finds need sensible and cautious investigation, rather than alarms full on. The suggestion that "conditions should be attributed to the most recent farm of origin" is not necessarily a logical step... it is however a MAFF/DEFRA style approach (and one that was used very successfully by the UK Government to justify culling for FMD in areas where it is now becoming apparent that this mis-identification of symptoms was highly probable).

If the movement tag system was also *really* to do with public health, as is suggested in the article, then why did the concept get railroaded through legislation requiring *all* sheep movements to be tagged...? (Perennial local problem; lack of vision....). It *should* have been restricted to being required only for sheep sold, (that might go to the abattoir at end of their lives - wethers/large ewes) and not get complicated and expensive recording *all* moves unlikely to ever present a threat to public health. After all, how many NSF-origin rams are going to get into the export mutton kill, or scraggy aged ewes with no condition, but maybe the ability to do one more fleece..? And as for stock that may be moved/sold and come into contact with stock destined for the abattoir within two weeks.....you are always going to be reliant on farmer information and honesty to disclose any link *regardless* of whether or not the stock is/was tagged!

IF we had the potentially threatening diseases here, livestock markets, clandestine sheep trading, unsuitable stock submitted for kill and a risk of lack of traceability within the works itself, (not to mention lots more farms, farmers & sheep....) then, proportionally, a tag system might offer some securities of movement tracking. Common sense should direct the format of these issues for the future, because sadly, too many decisions are made by folk unaffected by the outcomes of their approach and in the current economic climate, sustainability is always going to be a critical matter. Requesting any reviews is dependent on enough support for wanting change. It doesn't happen on its own..!!

Reply from Steve Pointing: *Many thanks for putting pen to paper Nick and replying to the Wool Press as I requested in my article. You have raised some very good points and they deserve further consideration. Would it be a good idea to have a session on sheep identification during this year's Farmers' Week?*

SWAN INLET
NEW GENETIC OPPORTUNITIES

If you are thinking of making genetic changes to your flock in 2005/6, then **Swan Inlet** can offer you the following services:

1. **PEDIGREE DOHNE SEMEN**
   We can provide semen from our own stud flock for your AI or embryo programme.

2. **CERVICAL ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION**
   We can travel to your farm and inseminate your ewes with the fresh semen of your choice.

3. **MULTIPLE OVULATION EMBRYO TRANSFER**
   We can rent to you our shearling pedigree Dohne ewes at a fixed rate per flushing or price per embryo. Our ewes will be programmed and inseminated with semen of your choice at Swan Inlet. The flushed embryos will be frozen and ready for implanting in your surrogate ewes in the autumn of 2006.

4. **RAM TRAINING AND SEMEN COLLECTION**
   We can train your stud rams for semen collection. Use the fresh semen for your own AI or embryo programme, or sell to other farmers.

5. **PEDIGREE SHEARLING and HOGGET RAMS FOR SALE OR HIRE**
   We can provide Dohne rams in the autumn of 2006.

Call **Andrez** at **Swan Inlet** for a chat – TEL: **32266**

REMEMBER

PIP FUNDING IS NOW AVAILABLE FOR GENETIC DEVELOPMENT IN 2005/6.

RAINFALL TOTALS

Damien O'Sullivan

Starting in this Wool Press we would like to monitor rainfall around the Islands. With more farmers relying on fodder crops it is important to be able to relate crop successes or failures with weather or other factors. Rainfall can also give an indication as to stock condition in particular areas. If you collect rainfall figures or would like to collect rainfall figures for us and provide the totals on a regular basis please contact the DoA and we can supply you with a rain gauge.

Location		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Stanley	2005	**67**	**29**	77	**39**	**49**
	Average	*74*	*57*	*59*	*58*	*58*
MPA	2005	**77**	**33**	**48**	**48**	**56**
	Average	*61*	*47*	*57*	*54*	*49*
Swan Inlet		**55**	**29**	**45**	**38**	**50**

Thanks to Met office MPA and Andrez Short for monthly data.

ARM UP THE BACK END OF A COW
What is the vet doing? - a guide for the farmer

by Sue Harvey

The first thing to decide is which hole the vet has their arm up;

Hole No. 1 - The Anus

In a well cow - It is highly likely that the vet is doing some sort of a fertility check. They could be:

a. **Trying to work out if the cow is pregnant or not.**
   The vet will be feeling down onto the cow's uterus, which lies below the rectum. If the cow is not pregnant they can usually feel the whole uterus with nothing inside it. In a pregnant cow there a number of things they might or might not be feeling such as the calf itself or the placental membranes. In some circumstances (when the calf is large and dropped down out of reach over the pelvic brim) all that can be felt are the blood vessels that supply the uterus greatly enlarged and pumping away.
b. **Trying to work out why the cow is not getting pregnant or not coming into season (coming into season is obviously the first step to getting pregnant!).**
   Here they will be feeling not only the uterus to see if it is damaged or infected but also both ovaries. The cow could have cysts on her ovaries or they could be inactive. When a cow has inactive ovaries it is because her body is telling her that she is not ready to get in calf - usually because she is in poor condition or stressed.

In a sick cow - Part of a routine examination of any sick cow usually includes a rectal examination (unless the cause of sickness is otherwise obvious). Here the vet will not only be checking the uterus to see if the cow is in calf or has an infection in the uterus they will also be checking for any abnormalities in the guts (e.g. loops of gas) the rumen, the bladder and the kidneys. This examination can also be done on a bull or steer.

Hole No. 2 - The Vagina

If the arm is up the vagina they are likely to be doing something related to calving - if the arm is not very far in they are likely to be feeling the cervix and vagina only and not further into the uterus. The cervix is normally tightly closed. It becomes slightly open when the cow is in season and when she is calving it opens up so much that normally the vagina and the uterus merge into each other without anyone feeling inside being aware of the cervix. The vet can gain information as to if the cow is ready to calve or if she has calved, if there is an infection in the uterus that needs treating or if there is retained afterbirth that needs removing. A calf ready to come out (cervix open) is usually pretty obvious but then the decision of how to get it out has to be made. This entails lots of feeling around, trying to shift certain body parts not only out but sometimes in. It sometimes calls for the use of ropes or chains. In some circumstances knives and even wire saws are used to cut up a dead calf. Vets that do a lot of calving often have some special gadgets that can really help in certain circumstances. Two that I like to have on hand are eye hooks for inserting carefully into the eye sockets (you really do need to know what you are doing) and a Kreys hook which is a ferocious looking device which when pulled has 2 sharp hooks that grab onto any tissue or bone in their jaws (not the sort of thing I would want grabbing onto my arm or finger). Usually by the time calving or embryotomy (cutting up a dead calf inside the cow) gets too involved the vet will let you know what they are trying to achieve - so they can get you to help them.

So why do we do it? We need to find out what is wrong with a sick cow so we can treat her, the same applies for a cow that is not coming into season or getting in calf. I have no doubt that all farmers know why a cow that is not calving naturally needs to be calved, so that leaves the pregnancy diagnosis.

Pregnancy Diagnosis - This is one of the most important management tools. Once a farmer knows which cows are pregnant and which cows are not pregnant, he or she can then treat them differently. Pregnant cows need good feed over winter and need to be closely observed during the calving period, not only for problems associated with the actual calving itself but there are other metabolic problems that can occur around calving as their bodies adapt to producing milk. The non-pregnant cows should be removed from the main herd and so are not eating the best winter pasture reserved for the pregnant cows. They can be given much poorer feed if kept (this can also help some of them from getting too fat - not so much of a problem in the Falklands) or they can be slaughtered for beef. Most vets will let you know during pregnancy testing if they feel any reason why a cow is unlikely to get into calf again and advise you not to keep her for another year. However there are many problems like blocked tubes which are impossible to diagnose on rectal examination. Pregnancy testing can be done at any time after all the cows are at least 6 weeks in calf. This is 6 weeks after the bull has been removed from the cows. There are often a few cows that can be difficult to feel at only 6 weeks and many vets prefer to wait until the cows are at least 8 weeks in calf.

FARM POWER UPGRADE SCHEME

Tim Cotter

FIDC has launched a new electricity grant scheme for non-domestic buildings, which is open to all farms. The scheme is designed to reduce the failure of power generation equipment, cut the risk of fire and improve safety in non-domestic farm buildings such as workshops, garages and shearing sheds. The existing electrical safety scheme only covers homes, not commercial premises, and until now, no grants have been payable on farm power distribution systems, generator protection equipment or diesel generators. The new scheme will offer a 50% grant up to a value of £5,000 per farm for power improvements on non-domestic premises. Farms with more than three permanent households connected to the same power system could be eligible for larger amounts subject to discussion with FIDC.

Successful applicants will firstly have to carry out safety improvements. When these have been inspected and certified safe by a FIDC approved electrician, remaining grant money could then be used for related items incurring high capital costs such as a new battery, diesel generator or additional wind turbine. Payment will only be made when the final system has passed safety checks to modern standards (IEE 16th edition).

In general, farms will be expected to pay for improvements themselves in the first instance, being refunded by the grant scheme when the work has been inspected. However, if farms do not have the collateral to fully fund large capital costs, an advance payment of some of the grant could be allowed, provided the safety improvements have already been carried out and approved. Half of the advance payment to any supplier would be provided by the farm, the remainder by FIDC. All enquiries to Tim Cotter at FIDC on 27211 – EMAIL: tcotter@fidc.co.fk

FARMERS - PLEASE SEE ENCLOSED FLYER FOR MORE IN-DEPTH INFORMATION ON THE SCHEME AND ITS CONDITIONS.

FOR SALE

FROM CAPE DOLPHIN FARM

1 x Pure Poll Hereford Bull (sire Niagara - Chile) - Reserve Price £100
1 x Black Angus x Poll Hereford Bull (sire Braxton Banner) - Reserve Price £80

If they are not sold they are going to lose their manhood due to farm bull numbers.
For further info or to express your interest please contact Sheena on 41015.

WELL, WELL, WELL.....

Zoe Luxton

There's an old song that warbles ".....ain't it funny how time slips away" - well, they're not wrong there. Last time I fired up the old word processor to do an article Prill wasn't even contemplating swapping her boiler suit for some handcuffs. I will miss her little emails, very gently nagging me to write something useful.

The last few weeks at work seem to have been really hectic with several ongoing, chronic, brain-straining cases which often means you spend a lot of your free time worrying about work as well. Luckily that run seems to have ended but it does unfortunately mean that you have had to admit defeat and probably put to sleep most of them.

One such case was a really lovely chocolate Labrador called Mossy. Her owner bought her in because suddenly Mossy had become fixated with eating loads of mud - she was fine otherwise but this rather odd habit was concerning her owner and making Mossy vomit quite a bit. Now, Mother Luxton always says "if you are really craving something it is your body's way of telling you you need something" (as she opens her third packet of Maltesers), so with that good advice in mind we decided to run a full blood profile to check Mossy was all ok. I have to admit that I was casually expecting a load of normal bloods and could chalk this one up as just another scavenging Labrador. End of case. So I did a bit of a double take when I got her bloods back and found that she was seriously anaemic. In lots of cases anaemia's are transient and the body manages to regenerate enough red blood cells and all is fine and dandy but after a few more tests we discovered that Mossy was just not regenerating her red blood cells and although she was generally ok she was starting to be quite quiet and tired as she was so anaemic.

The next stage was to try and get a bone marrow biopsy to look right into where blood cells are made to see if we could figure out what was going on. We decided to refer her to a specialist for this as it is not something we often do and I am really glad we did as they had incredible difficulty getting a bone marrow biopsy due, it appeared, to the condition Mossy had. She had myelofibrosis which basically meant that all her cell producing bone marrow was being replaced by fibrous (useless) tissue so she was just not making any useful red blood cells. This is an incredibly rare condition and no-one really knows why it happens and there is very little you can do about it. Mossy had a blood transfusion and was started on high doses of immunosuppressive drugs (they wondered if her body had just started attacking itself thus the change in the bone marrow) but about 6 weeks after diagnosis we had to call it a day which was really sad but the best decision for Mossy as things had just spiralled downhill.

To make me feel better I did have one little cat that got better against the odds. I got called out at 2am one morning to an owner saying "my cat's just had kittens and I think she's prolapsed her uterus". The cynic in me said "yeah right it is bound to be half a kitten or a bit of placenta" while I actually yawned "ok, we'd better have a look". The sleepy cynic had to shut up because at 2.20am I had to admit that what was protruding from this very cute small cat's back end did look very much like uterine tissue - with holes in it - not pretty. At 2.30am it sadly dawned on me that I was actually going to have to spey this cat to sort it out so in we went. My anatomy is not the best in the early hours of the morning and it took a fair amount of fiddling around to figure out where both ovaries where. The uterus had completely ruptured at the cervix and I couldn't find the remaining stump to ligate. Finally both ovaries and the uterus were out and the cat stitched up but I had to give the owners a really poor prognosis as the risk of peritonitis was pretty high and the cat was in a reasonably poor way. Luckily when I saw the cat for a check up the next day it was eating and seemed quite bright and amazingly has never looked back - cats are tough! Tough enough to survive falling down a 40ft well in fact - my friend Vick from college got called to assist 20 firemen with 3 or 4 large fire vehicles all involved with winching a fireman down a dried up well to rescue a large tabby cat who hadn't been looking where he was going! Apart from being muddy and hungry the tabby chap was absolutely fine but probably down to eight lives! If all my weekend calls involved 20 firemen I wouldn't whinge about being on call so much either!

HORSEY WORDSEARCH

C O L T P E R C H E R O N D D F
L K C A T R R A C E S T O R T E
E O P B I E R E N A Z Z I P I L
V E N R A R G Z U S T A B L E L
E N E E L I E Z P I N T O N O N
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A M F O P S R C L J U M P D I I
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D A R T M O O R F I L L Y A O L
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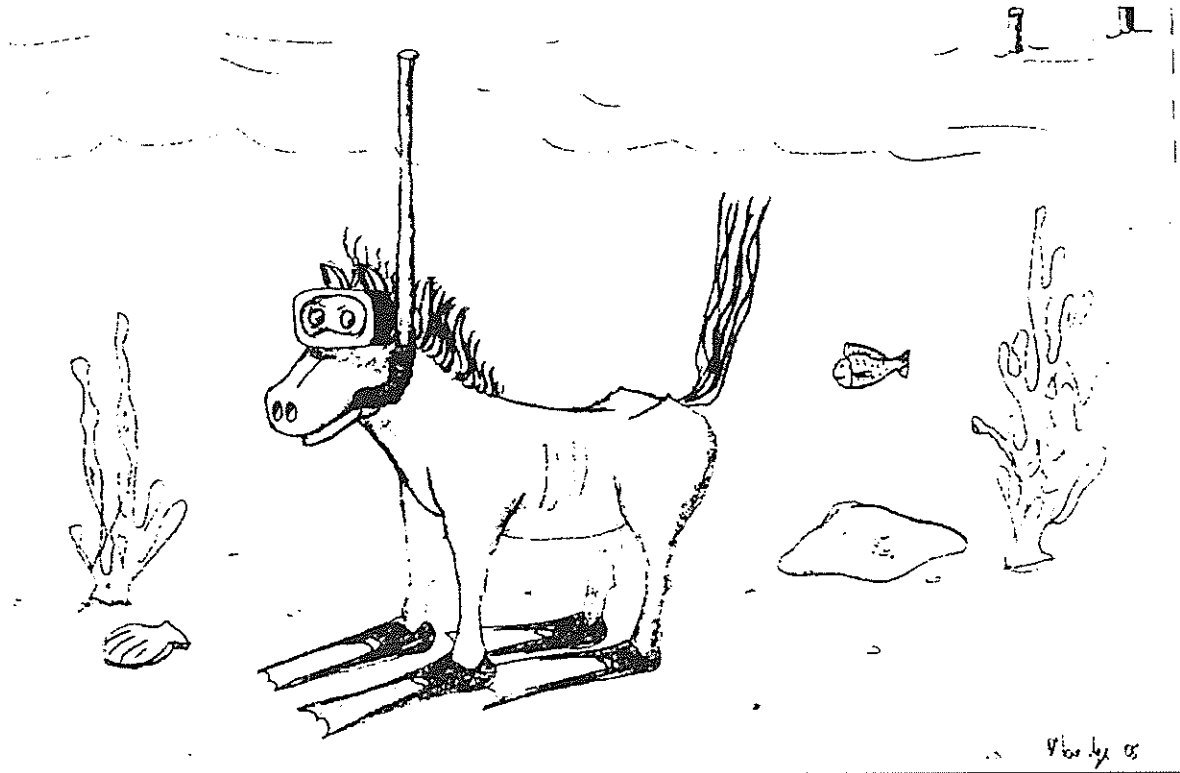
A A S A D D L E U H U N T T A T
Y B T F J O R D S T I R R U P S
C L Y D E S D A L E S L S J Z P
S T R A W B E R R Y R O A N Z Z
Z S T O C K H O L M T A R I D E
C O N N E M A R A L I O F O O H

COLT
PERCHERON
ARAB
PINTO
HACKNEY
DARTMOOR
CLYDESDALE
CLEVELAND BAY
LIPIZZANER
GEAR
NEW FOREST
PONY
FJORD
STIRRUPS
BRETON
DOCK
BREED
HOOF OIL
STOCKHOLM TAR
STALLION
FOAL
COB
MANE
PALOMINO
JUTLAND
SHIRE
STRAWBERRY ROAN
SADDLE
CONNEMARA
PLAIT
RIDE
HUNT
TACK
RACES
FELL
STABLE
FILLY
JUMP
TROT
CROP

A CARTOON FROM MARIE LOVERIDGE IN RESPONSE TO A RECENT DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE ADVERT!!



MUMMA'S LITTLE BABY HATED WINTER GRAZING AT THE BOTTOM OF THE HARBOUR

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM OUR READERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME