



The Wool Press

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**All the
regular
features
and more!**

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...plus all the usual feature and more!!

EDITORIAL

The first edition of the Wool Press for 2006 has a excellent mix of articles to interest the reader.

Prompt reporting by Nigel Knight on the Nineteenth West Falkland Ram and Fleece Show is really welcome. Congratulations to all the prize winners and I am sure the organisers were pleased with the number of exhibits presented for judging.

We also have an article from Nick and Annie Pitaluga about their CORMO sheep at Gibraltar Station and Ron Binnie has written on lamb castration procedures at Fitzroy in response to a DoA article in the November edition. All these informative contributions are very welcome.

The DoA contributions are topics for the New Year. Don't miss Damien's article on ram selection and Andrew's update on pasture improvement work on farms. Then there are the weather statistics for 2005. Sian is very grateful to farmers who have been contributing data. It makes interesting reading to compare rainfall on farms. The range is considerable.

The Department is very keen to develop a programme to assist young people with an interest in agriculture. Sam Davies is working with us for a few months following completion of her training course in Australia and Helen McKay has written about her time with the Department. We would like to assist more young Islanders to get a taste for farming, and I would welcome placement offers on farms for students. With a new budget year in preparation I am keen to put forward proposals for short term placements at the DoA and on farms. Please get in touch with me if you would like to assist.

Lastly, you will see some new (and not so new) faces around the Department from this month. They include Lyn Dent, the new Senior Lab Technician, Frans Jooste, a genetic specialist for the ET/AI programme, Carolina Lopez, OVS and Matt Kelly, MHI for the Sand Bay meat export season and Zoe Luxton will also be working in the Vet's Section periodically.

Best wishes with your business endeavours in 2006,

Phyl Rendell
Director of Minerals and Agriculture

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SELECTING RAMS FROM A FARM BREEDING FLOCK

By Damien O'Sullivan

Any genetic selection process needs a combination of visual selection and measurement to be successful. As an example we have a farm ram breeding flock of 50 ewes from which we would like to breed rams. We assume that the ewes and rams have been selected as the elite animals in our flock.

The lambing period in the stud flock needs to be as short as possible, so join for a maximum of 42 days. This makes lamb comparison much easier. Visual and measured assessments need to be made.

A suggested checklist for visual assessments is shown below:

Traits		Ear tag numbers	Year.....	Date assessed:
Overall	Size	Small		
		Medium		
		Large		
	Length	Small		
		Medium		
		Large		
	Width	Good		
		Poor		
	Depth	Good		
		Poor		
	Markings	No		
		Spots	Yes-cull	
Head	Bite/jaw	Sound		
		Unsound		
	Horns	Yes		
		No		
Face	Yes			
	Wool blind	No		
Neck	length	Good		
		Poor		
Body	Barrel/girth	Good		
		Poor		
Legs	Feet	Sound		
		Unsound		
Rams	Testicles	Sound		
		Unsound cull		
Score				

A score can be given for the number of ticks or crosses for each animal. Depending on the farm a tick in some boxes may equate to a culling animal or other farms may still allow the animal to be kept eg: the presence of horns, but the ram is strong in all other traits and is therefore kept.

With other traits such as black spots all farms should immediately cull all rams or ewes in the breeding stock that have black wool or spots.

In next months Wool Press we will cover measurable characteristics in selecting rams.

LAMB PRODUCTION FOR FIMCo

By Ron Binnie

I refer to Doug and Damien's article in the November 2005 Wool Press on Lamb Production for FIMCo.

Farmers may like to know that Fitzroy used the short scrotum method for castrating their male lambs sired by their terminal sires, Poll Dorset & Texels for the four years prior to my retirement. I found the method easier to perform, less stressful on the lambs and I slept sounder knowing that any wandering lambs after weaning were marked.

On average over the four years we marked about six hundred lambs each year - lambmarking was carried out in the 7th week. Not all the lambs made the grade and they were carried over to the next year. I know one or two reached two years and although they were seen covering many ewes, we never saw any evidence that they were fertile.



WOOL TESTING REMINDER

If you would like to have mid-side samples sent in to the Department of Agriculture for micron and/or yield testing, then please contact us for a Request Form on telephone 27355, fax 27352 or email sferguson@doa.gov.fk

Usual cost per test is as follows...

Micron only	£2.00
Micron and yield	£3.00

Please note that all wool samples are generally charged at rate shown above because they are kept at the DOA until 650 are collected to process as a large batch. We will let you know the results as soon as we have them.

If you would like your samples processed urgently they will incur a higher charge (see rates in Farm Management Handbook). Please contact us for more details on any of our laboratory services.

Thank you,



STAFF CONTACT DETAILS

Sam Davies is now working at the Department of Agriculture as a Trainee Agricultural Assistant. You can contact her as follows...

Sam Davies
Department of Agriculture
Stanley

Telephone: 27355
Fax: 27352
Email: sdavies@doa.gov.fk

WEBSITE UPDATE!!

By Siân Ferguson

The Department of Agriculture has recently undergone a 'face-lift' in order to make it more accessible, readable and hold more information. In doing so, it was also decided that a new web address was needed (as www.fiagriculture.doa.gov.fk is a bit of a mouthful!!) and staff decided that the following was their favoured option...

www.agriculture.gov.fk

If you would like to see something in particular on the website or have any ideas on improvements, then please get in touch with me on 27355 or email sferguson@doa.gov.fk

SCRAPIE

By Vic Epstein

A friendly reminder. After finding the first case of atypical scrapie in the Falklands we are still on the lookout for more cases AND cases of typical scrapie..

While gathering the sheep have you seen sheep:

- Scratching of their flanks and hindquarters against fixed objects?
- Scratching their shoulder or ear with the hind foot?
- Nibbling or grinding teeth when scratching themselves or when rubbed firmly on the back?
- Nibbling their feet, legs or other parts of the body?
- With excessive wool loss or skin damage?

or

- Excitable?
- Nervous?
- Aggressive?
- Looking depressed or with a vacant stare?

**DON'T SHOOT IT- TAKE IT HOME &
CONTACT THE VET SECTION OF THE DoA**



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY... 2006

Camp Sports Week - 25th February to 4th March
Saladero Ram Sale - Thursday 16th March

NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER WEATHER

By Siân Ferguson

Firstly, apologies for the delay in getting the November weather and rainfall data into the Wool Press. As you all know, December is a very busy month everywhere so it was a mad rush to get the WP to the Printing Office so it was out at the beginning of the month before Christmas. This hasn't been the problem in January though, trying to get everything back together after the beginning of the month has already passed us by, so hopefully you will find all the weather data I have collected together for you of interest.

November

The mean temperatures was only slightly below average at 12.4°C The highest reached was 19°C on the 10th, compared to a low of -0.8°C. Rainfall was up on the past few months with Stanley nearly reaching the monthly average and MPA 3.5mm more (see table below).

There was three days of snow and sleet, slightly below the norm of four days. There was no hail and fog and four days of hail. November saw an above average amount of sunshine at 209.8 hours, with the highest daily total being 14.3 hours which was recorded on the 15th. There was only one day with no sunshine recorded.

The maximum gust of wind recorded was 63 knots on the 10th. There were gales recorded on five days and gusts exceeding thirty three knots were only recorded on fourteen days, which is well below the average.

December

The highest temperature recorded throughout the month was 20.8°C with the lowest reached being -0.6°C on the 19th, which is the second lowest temperature recorded in December. Rainfall in Stanley was well above average at 87mm and MPA saw 67.3, above average too. The wettest day was on the 30th.

There was seven days when sleet and snow fell, which was well above the norm of 2.6. There were nine days of hail, above the average of 5.9, and no fog or thunder. There was a total of 177 hours of sunshine recorded at MPA during December, which is their second lowest ever total. The average sunshine hours for December is 228.1. The highest daily total was 10.2 hours on the 2nd, there was only two days with no sunshine recorded.

The maximum gust of wind was recorded at 46 knots on the 1st and there was one day with a gale, well below the average of 4.2 for December. Gusts above thirty three knots were only recorded on fifteen days, well below the average of 19.4.

Did you know???

Since 1986...

- The highest temperature recorded is 29.2°C on the 22nd January 1992
- The lowest temperature recorded was -10.3°C on the 18th June 2002
- The highest rainfall total recorded was 48.7mm on the 29th December 1995
- The most sunshine recorded was 15.6 hours on the 30th

December 2001

- The maximum gust recorded was 72.0 knots on the 21st March 1992
- On average...
 - January has the highest rainfall total
 - June has the most number of wet and rainy days
 - January and December have the highest daily average of

sunshine hours

- October has the most gales
- November and January have the most days with gusts of wind over 33 knots
- July has the most hail
- January sees the most thunder
- June has the most fog
- September and October are the driest months

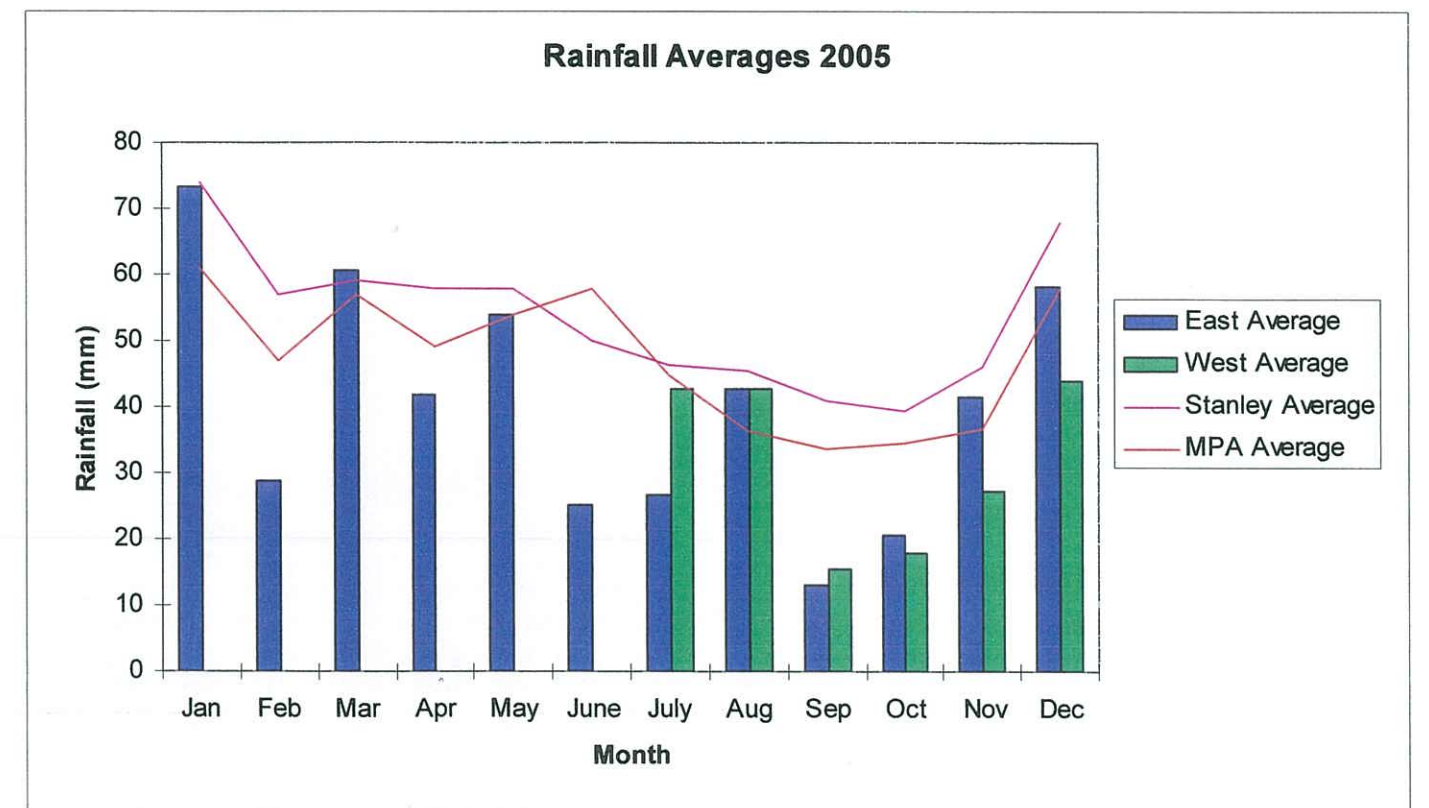
2005 RAINFALL FIGURES

Location		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Stanley	2005	67	29	77	49	39	35	29	35.5	19.3	28	45.5	87
	Avg.	74	57	59	58	58	50	46.5	45.5	41	39.5	46	68
MPA	2005	77	33	48	56	48	22	23.1	49.1	14	32.3	40.1	67.3
	Avg.	61	47	57	49	54	58	45	36.4	33.5	34.6	36.6	57.9
Head of Bay		88	30	67	42	66	25	28	46	13	21.5	35	-
Elephant Beach		68	23	69	22	57	30	31	50.5	14	19.5	43.5	67.5
Swan Inlet		55	29	45	38	50	16	28	32	3	11.5	41.5	47
Pebble Island		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14.5	16.5	44.75
Port Howard		-	-	-	-	-	-	42.75	49.75	14	24.5	47	52.5
Saladero		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	22	41
South Harbour		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	36	17	15	18	35
Wineglass Station		85	29.5	57.5	43.75	63	22.5	21.5	44	14.5	17.5	63.5	58
Darwin		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40

The Department of Agriculture would like to thank everyone who has provided us with rainfall figures over the past year, the MPA Met Office, Ted Jones, Riki Evans, Andrez Short, Raymond Evans, Ron Reeves, John & Viv Hobman, Mike Evans, Bobby Short and Peter at Darwin.

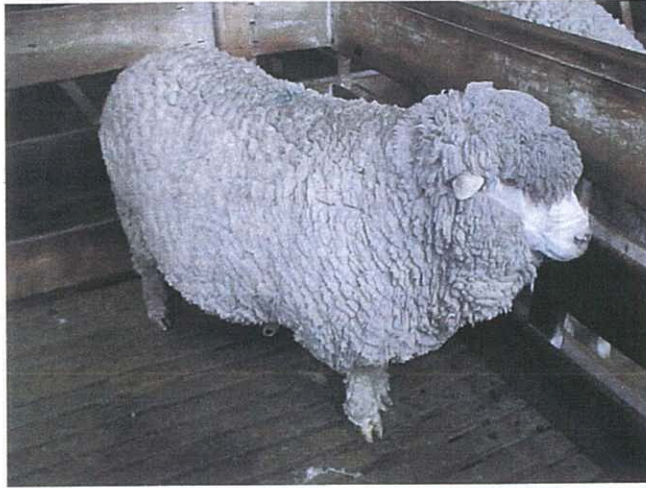
Rainfall figures should be passed onto Siân on 27355, fax 27352 or email sferguson@doa.gov.fk as soon as possible after the month has ended.

If you would like to collect rainfall data for the DOA on a regular basis, then please contact us and we can provide you with a rainfall gauge. Alternatively we would like to hear from anyone who already collects the data and would be interested in passing on the monthly totals to us.



CORMOS IN THE FALKLANDS

By Nick & Annie Pitaluga, Gibraltar Station



Gibraltar Station currently runs around 10,500 to 11,000 Cormo and Cormo-Corriedale cross sheep. The farm is largely peat hill on quartzite rock with large areas of diddle-dee/whitegrass on moist areas and diddle dee/Christmas bush on the dry hills. It was extensively split up and sub-divided with four wire electric fencing in the early 1980's to allow for rotational grazing, particularly for hoggets and ewes and this system has developed further into a feed conservation/management operation, allowing for priority grazing and maximised pasture use.

The decision to move to the Tasmanian bloodline was taken following discussions in 1988 with Sally

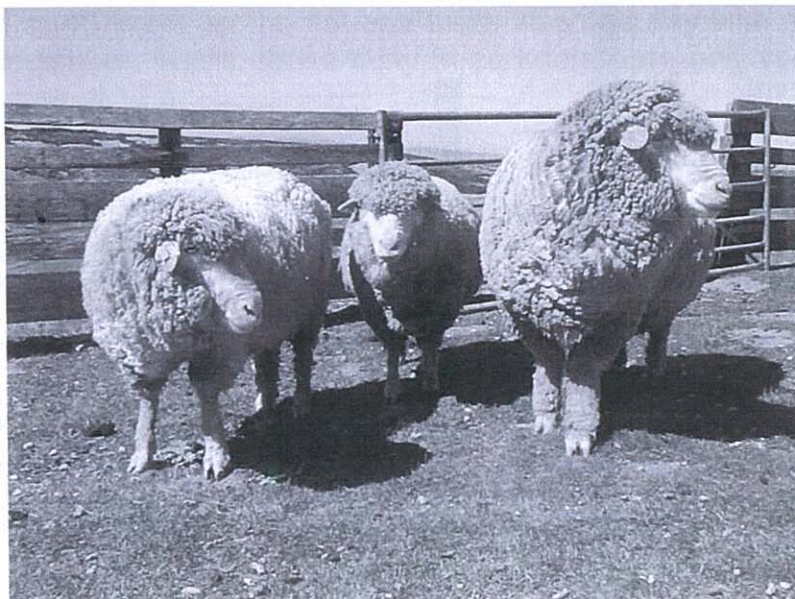
Poncet (whose family ran them in Central Tasmania) at the time the National Stud Flock was taking place. That year when semen from a Dungrove ram became available from Tasmania, a small number of our best ewes were inseminated and we got five rams and six ewes from this first half cross. When the National Stud flock flight came over in 1990, along with others, we imported two top unrelated rams and six ewes from the Dungrove stud nucleus and that same year, one ram went across the half cross AI Ewes to get the first three quarter bred.

These animals were all in the 19.5 to 21.0 micron range and from these - plus three extra complementary inseminations from other unrelated Dungrove sires - we continued to build up a two, then three line pure bred flock from which to cross progeny into selected own-stock. This purebred flock is still maintained with more recent bloodline purchases and is now concentrated around the 20 to 21 micron stock.

A small number of 'Collinsville' merino bloodline has been experimented with, from 'Glenroy 847'; however, although wool weights were good, face cover and condition maintenance were not suitable for crossing-in and this line is gradually fading out.

The remainder of the stock mostly now have some Cormo of varying mix in them, but as the plan had always been to try and get a Cormo fleece onto a Corriedale frame, the original bloodline has never been allowed to die out.

The performance continues to improve the whole clip and sixteen years from starting out the breed is flourishing. Initial objectives for overall clip were 'out of the 30+ micron range in five years and main-flock ewes all below 27.5 in ten years. This was achieved and we continue to work towards a balance of weight per head and finer microns to suit the ever-altering climate and grass growth conditions.



WORK EXPERIENCE

By Helen McKay

As a part of the 6th form class at FICS I was able to do some work experience at the Department of Agriculture for seven weeks every Wednesday. Although it was only a short length of time I have experienced many different aspects of the department and seen how varied the work done by the department is.

I have been able to go out on a couple of field trips with Doug. On a trip to Rincon Grande I was able to learn how to mark points of fence posts on the GPS to use for producing fence lines on maps. We discussed the state of the land and how wet or dry it was and the best ways it could be used. Elaine cooked us a great pizza for lunch! (Thank you very much.)

On the way back from Rincon Grande we called at Horseshoe Bay. Here we drove around with Peter looking at the reseeds and different paddocks and discussed pasture improvements.

On another trip we went to Moss Side to discuss the rotational grazing plan with Michael. We looked at how much water would be available in each paddock after each one was sub-divided. We also called in to Riverview to look at their lambs.

I went to Wineglass Station with Damien. There we helped Bobby move some sheep and then looked at a few possible sites suitable for pasture monitoring to show the changes in the ground when you rotationally graze sheep

We chose a site and marked it on the GPS, then wrote down all the different types of plants in the area so we could see the changes in the quantities of the different plants in the future. I have also been doing things at the department.

With Nyree I used the internet to look up details on various Dohne rams and tracked their breeding history/pedigree. Damien, Sam and I took some samples of grasses from around the DOA and photographed them, along with various grasses from the DOA greenhouse and transferred the images to the computer.

At the Wool warehouse at FIPASS I helped Sam with wool testing. The samples were bagged and taken back to the Department.

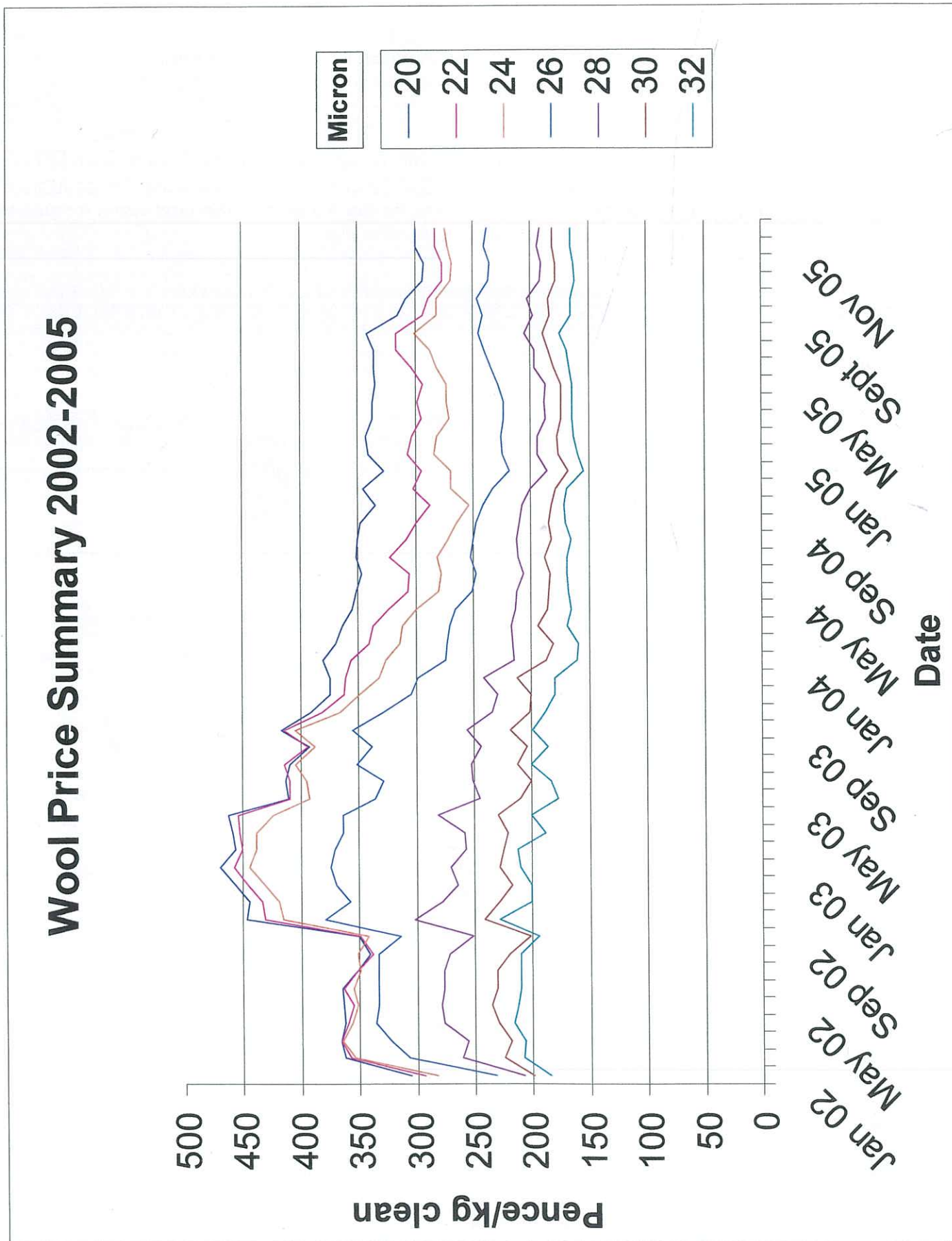
I also went with Timmy to the Rugby Pitch to help him remove and replace a damaged fence.

I really enjoyed my work experience at the DOA and would like to thank everyone who looked after me and shared their expertise with me.



WOOL PRICE TREND OVER TIME

Based on weekly DOA Wool Reports



THE NINETEENTH WEST FALKLAND RAM & FLEECE SHOW 2005 REPORT

By Nigel Knight

Another fine day on the 'West' would be the best way to describe 28th December 2005. This was in harmony with the exuberance of the visitors to the Nineteenth West Falkland Ram and Fleece Show. The residents and visitors to Fox Bay Village were anticipating 'a good day' out and were not disappointed.

Keith had already been working hard transforming the Woolshed with Tony and Susan helping build Ram pens and fleece tables. 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 invaluable help. As usual the entries started as a trickle but it soon became quite hectic as the deadline for entries approached. The Islander Aircraft had already made an early visit delivering H. E. The Governor to present the prizes in the afternoon. He was accompanied for the day by Mrs Pearce and baby Suzanna, as well as friends of theirs from UK.



Once the entries were all in, Bill Pole-Evans, Mike Evans, Lisa Pole-Evans and Vic Epstein 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-two 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 fainthearted.

A total of ninety-eight fleeces from twenty-one farms and forty-two rams from ten farms were exhibited at this years 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 had already been set up by Tex and Mandy Alazia using their gas fired barbecue pits and this year in the capable hands of Leon and Helen, Griz, Ben and Clare 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 Lisa. 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.

The micron estimate competition produced some very accurate estimates. Normally a skilled Wool-classer would be expected to estimate to within two micron of the tested sample. On the day there were estimates to within a hundredth of a micron. When you realise that a micron is 10^{-6} metre then accuracy of this standard is exceptional. The fleece weight competition also produced some very accurate results. It was also very satisfying to see an increasing number of entries in the 'Under 21's Sheep Judging Competition' - this year there were ten entries. Tony Hirtle 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.

Shortly before six pm, a good crowd once again assembled in the Woolshed for the Prizegiving. This year's prizes were presented by H.E. The Governor who had flown out to Fox Bay especially for this event. Special thanks should go to Captain Derek Clark and all the support staff at FIGAS for making this possible.



The Prizegiving brought this year's 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 next morning, thus bringing to an end another successful Ram and Fleece Show.

Prize Winners are listed on Page 15.

DO ANY OF YOUR SHED GRATINGS NEED REPAIR OR REPLACING?

The F.I.S.O.A has a limited supply of high-density (bridged double-extrusion) polythene grating slats in stock. These are 1" deep & 2 1/2" wide & 20' in length. Easily cut to size, with let-in grooves for grip & tapered sides to prevent clogging. With a superior life to that of timber equivalents, these were produced as a one off contract & are offered on a first come basis at a special price of £9.55 ex Stanley.

As a minimum of 2000 lengths are required for a run, subsequent re-ordering may not occur until enough sales are guaranteed.

CAN YOU AFFORD TO MISS OUT ON THIS OPPORTUNITY?

These are suitable for other uses (such as dogpens & ramp grips etc...)

Contact Jimmy at Bold Cove.

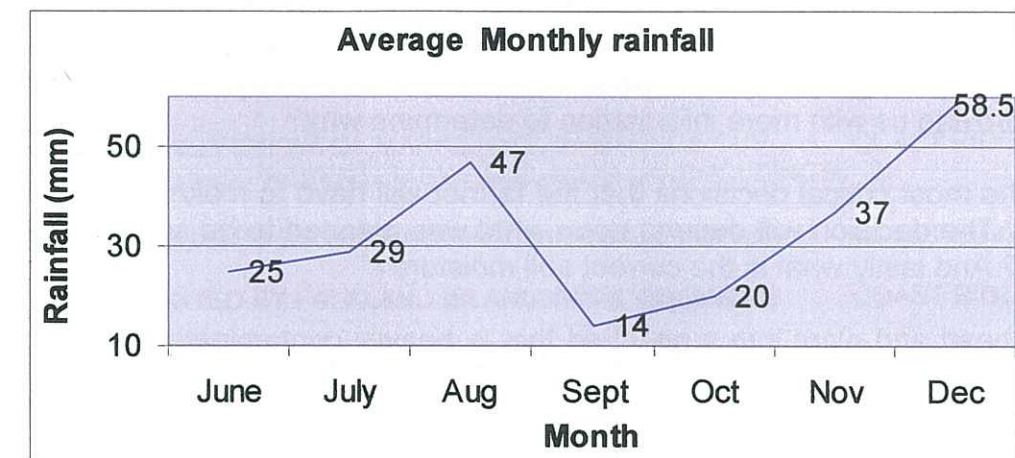
PASTURE IMPROVEMENTS UPDATE

By Andrew Pollard

Here I am writing a Wool Press article on the day before mid-summer's day. Normally of course I would like to be out and about maybe even scaring people in a pair of shorts! However, this year I am sat at my desk trying to forget that there is a -10°C wind chill outside, worrying about how we are going to cope with our usual mob of mates coming around for the Christmas Barbie.

It was only in late October where every phone call started with "have you had any rain, it must be one of the, if not the driest spring's in recent times". In September and October there was only 14mm and 20mm respectively of measured rainfall averaged over 8 sites across the islands. This low level of rainfall was on top of what has to be considered a dry winter (if that is possible) with only 25mm and 29mm for June and July respectively.

November was a wetter month and produced an average of 37mm of rainfall averaged over 10 sites. This average would have been higher if Pebble, Saladero and South Harbour were not included as their rainfalls were between 16.5 and 22mm. Wineglass had a staggering 63.5mm. In Stanley as of the 20th December we have currently had 58.5mm of rainfall with a third of the month to go!



What does it all mean in relation to pasture/forage growth?

The 3 main ingredients for pasture growth are water (soil moisture), sunlight (soil temperature) and Carbon Dioxide. It is not normally until October when daylight hours increase that we see increasing soil temperatures.

Low temperatures and low rainfall in September and October meant that very little pasture growth occurred. Jimmy and Ginny Forster of Bold Cove Farm backed this up by reflecting on the grazing of their reseeds last year. In 2004 they turned their cattle onto the reseed when a suitable quantity of pasture growth had occurred, this date was the 10th October.

On the 10th October 2005 pasture growth was so low, they decided to delay putting the cattle back on the reseed until it had grown to the same quantity as that of 2004. The cattle were put on the reseed approximately 5 weeks later (pasture growth probably still lower than the quantity of feed available on the 10th October 2004).

The fact that the cattle were not on the reseed at this time and with little growth in the camp the cattle dropped in condition during this period. If the cattle were put on the reseed they would have had some higher quality feed but this would have had longer-term detrimental effects. Jimmy and Ginny have now completed a whole circuit of the reseed (sub-divided into smaller 3 Ha approximate blocks) and have sufficient growth on the first grazed piece to graze for a second time

If the cattle had been put on the reseed earlier it would almost certainly have yielded less feed to date. This would be due to the pasture being grazed off too short, relying on its root reserves to regrow. Pasture being grazed to the ground causes increased water loss in terms of surface run-off and evaporation, this in a dry spring puts further stress on the plants.

Regardless of the Season, ignore putting animals onto pastures on set days (e.g. in Bold Cove's case relying on 2004 it would be the 10th October). This is detrimental to the pasture, both short term and long term. Animals should only be allowed to graze when the plants have reached a determined level of growth.

The same issues of growth, low temperatures and low rainfall have led to little growth with the forage crops that were sown early. Hopefully they have responded better over the last 6 weeks.

FODDER CROPS

The rainfall in November and December has stimulated good brassica germination. To thrive the brassicas are in need of some warmer temperatures. It would be a good idea to document via a diary note or digital photographs the progress of these crops on a regular basis. In the event of a failure this will provide us with more information to determine why?

This is one of the most critical decisions that the farmer will have to make in regards to PIP over the next month. The decision will depend upon what was planned to be sown? What is the state of the seedbed? And lastly what is the current soil moisture?

If you just go ahead and plant into a seedbed that is heavily contaminated with trash (rotavated material) you will more than likely get a failure, an expensive failure at that. If you go ahead and rotavate for a second time you are in all likelihood still not creating a seedbed that is suitable for germination

What options are left then you might ask? There is the option of planting a forage crop into the unburnt reseed. This is only suitable for cereal crops such as forage oats and triticale. These plants have a larger seed that enables them to better compete, they also grow vigorously and are more likely to poke through the surface trash. These crops will in all likelihood not yield as high as the crop going into a good seedbed. The feed from the crop is important but in all reality is a bonus, the main aim is to utilise the hooves of the animals to break the clumps and try to create a better seedbed for the following year.

The last option available is to leave the area until a time when it can be burnt. It is important to remember that the funds for 2005/06 PIP plan must now be re-allocated to another project. They cannot be rolled over till next year. Funding at this stage is also not guaranteed for 2006/07 for works to be completed in the next budget season. It is important if these issues affect you to get in touch with Damien, Doug or myself in the New Year.

Lastly Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all, lets hope it brings some warmth for pasture growth into 2006, but more importantly for the Christmas Barbie!!

RAM & FLEECE SHOW PRIZE LIST

PRIZE	DONATED BY	WON BY	POINTS
CLASS 1 FULL WOOL RAM HOGGETT			
1 ST PRIZE.	ENGRAVED CHALLENGE SHIELD PRESENTED BY MR & MRS AUSTIN DAVIES + £100 PRESENTED BY NEWTON INVESTMENT LTD.	GORING STATION	57
2 ND PRIZE.	£75 DONATED BY STANDARD CHARTERED BANK	COAST RIDGE FARM	55
3 RD PRIZE	£50 DONATED BY CABLE & WIRELESS PLC	PORT HOWARD FARM	49
4 TH PRIZE	£25 DONATED BY R.M.PITALUGA & FAMILY	GORING STATION	48
CLASS 2 FULL WOOL SHEARLING RAM			
1 ST PRIZE	LYN BLAKE PERPETUAL CHALLENGE CUP + £100 PRESENTED BY NEWTON INVESTMENT LTD.	BOUNDARY FARM	79
2 ND PRIZE	£75 PRESENTED BY CABLE & WIRELESS LTD	GORING STATION	78
3 RD PRIZE	£50 PRESENTED BY SADDLE COMPUTERS	BOUNDARY FARM	73
4 TH PRIZE	£25 PRESENTED BY THE RURAL BUSINESS ASSOCIATION	GORING STATION	65
CLASS 3 FULL WOOL MATURE RAM			
1 ST PRIZE	FALKLAND ISLANDS WOOL MARKETING CHALLENGE CUP A REPLICA + £40 PRESENTED BY FALKLANDS LANDHOLDINGS	COAST RIDGE FARM	107
2 ND PRIZE	A PRIZE DONATED BY THE FALKLAND ISLANDS COMPANY	COAST RIDGE FARM	103
3 RD PRIZE	£60 PRESENTED BY FALKLAND ISLAND WOOL GROWERS	COAST RIDGE FARM	90
4 TH PRIZE	£40 PRESENTED BY FALKLAND ISLAND WOOL GROWERS	BOUNDARY FARM	87
<i>WHERE RAMS OR FLEECES HAVE EQUAL POINTS, THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF FIRST PLACES IS USED TO DECIDE RANKINGS</i>			
CLASS 4 HOGGETT FLEECE			
1 ST PRIZE	SILVER CHALLENGE CUP & REPLICA PRESENTED BY MEREDITH FISHING COMPANY & FALKLAND HYDROCARBON DEVELOPMENT LTD + £40 VOUCHER DONATED BY FALKLAND FARMERS	GORING STATION	54
2 ND PRIZE	£50 FUEL VOUCHER PRESENTED BY STANLEY SERVICES	MOUNT KENT	45
3 RD PRIZE	£35 VOUCHER DONATED BY FALKLAND FARMERS	GOLDING ISLAND	39
4 TH PRIZE	£25 VOUCHER ALSO FROM FALKLAND FARMERS	PORT HOWARD	34
CLASS 5 ANY FINE WOOL FLEECE OTHER THAN HOGGETT			
1 ST PRIZE	'GOVERNORS CUP' CHALLENGE CUP PRESENTED BY H.E. THE GOVERNOR + £50 & REPLICA PRESENTED BY NEWTON INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT LTD (FIG'S INVESTMENT MANAGERS)	GORING STATION	82
2 ND PRIZE	£75 FROM NEWTON INVESTMENT	MOUNT KENT	58

3 RD PRIZE £50 FROM NEWTON INVESTMENT	PORT HOWARD FARM	35
4 TH PRIZE £25 FROM NEWTON INVESTMENT	MOUNT KENT	35
CLASS 6 ANY 'B' TYPE WETHER FLEECE		
1 ST PRIZE CHALLENGE CUP PRESENTED BY COAST RIDGE FARM + REPLICA PRESENTED BY URSULA WANGLIN + £50 FROM PORT HOWARD FARM	MAIN POINT FARM	104
2 ND PRIZE £70 DONATED BY F.I. SHEEPOWNERS ASSOCIATION	MOUNT KENT	60
3 RD PRIZE £50 DONATED BY STANLEY ELECTRICAL	MOUNT KENT	45
4 TH PRIZE £30 PRESENTED BY F.I. SHEEPOWNERS ASSOCIATION	PEAKS FARM	32

ADDITIONAL 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 IS PRESENTED TO THE RESERVE CHAMPION WON BY COAST RIDGE FARM.

ROSETTES WERE PRESENTED FOR 1ST, 2ND, 3RD AND 4TH PRIZE WINNERS IN ALL SIX CLASSES. A CHAMPION AND RESERVE CHAMPION ROSETTE IS ALSO GIVEN. THESE WERE ALL PROVIDED BY JIM MCADAM, DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE N. IRELAND.

A SILVER CHALLENGE CUP + £100 FOR THE FLEECE WITH THE HIGHEST COMMERCIAL VALUE & £50 FOR RUNNER UP. PRESENTED BY THE F.I. DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION WON BY MOUNT KENT.

FARM WITH A FLEECE HAVING AN ESTIMATED GROSS VALUE OF £11.60 THE RUNNER UP HAD A VALUE OF £10.00 WON BY GORING STATION

£100 FOR THE BEST CONFORMATION RAM WON BY GORING STATION, £75 FOR 2ND PLACE WON BY COAST RIDGE FARM, 3RD PLACE WON £50 BOUNDARY FARM. ALL PRIZES PRESENTED BY FIMCO

A CHALLENGE CUP AND REPLICA FOR THE FARM WITH MOST POINTS IN ALL CLASSES IS GIVEN BY MR & MRS OWEN SUMMERS WON BY GORING STATION + £50 FROM PORT HOWARD FARM

ADDITIONAL COMPETITIONS

IN THE 'GUESS THE SHEEP WEIGHT COMPETITION' THE WINNER RECEIVED £25 FROM MEREDITH FISHING CO. WON BY SUSAN HIRTLE WHO GUESSED CLOSEST WITH 43 KILOS. ACTUAL WT. 43.8 KGS

THE WINNER OF THE 'FLEECE WEIGHT' COMPETITION RECEIVED £30 FROM RBC LTD WON BY CLINT HEIN WHO WAS CLOSEST WITH A GUESS OF 4.5KGS. ACTUAL WT. 4.5 KGS. SHELLY NIGHTINGALE AND HARRIET HALL ALSO CORRECTLY GUESSED 4.5 KGS BUT THE DRAW FROM A HAT FAVOURED CLINT.

WHILST THE WINNER OF THE 'MICRON ESTIMATE' COMPETITION RECEIVED £50 FROM THE ARGOS FISHING COMPANY. WON BY KARL NIGHTINGALE WHO GUESSED 21.47 mu. ACTUAL MICRON 21.47 RUNNER UP WON £25 FROM C&W LTD THIS WAS SUSIE HANSEN WITH 21.51mu.

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 CARLY, RACHEL AND BETHEN. 3RD. PRIZE WENT TO ERICA BERNSTEN

ADDITIONAL CREDITS

WARRAH KNITWEAR KINDLY DONATED £50 FOR SHOW FUNDS

F.I.G.A.S. ONCE AGAIN GENEROUSLY AGREED TO FLY FLEECES FREE OF CHARGE

THE SOUTHERN CROSS SOCIAL CLUB FOR FINANCING TROPHY ENGRAVING & THE BARBECUE WITH MEAT SUPPLIED BY RINCON RIDGE & COAST RIDGE (BURGERS, SAUSAGES & BREAD ROLLS BY SHIRLEY), COOKING BY LEON & HELEN, GRIZ, BEN & CLARE WITH HELP FROM FRIENDS. BARBECUE PITS LOANED BY TEX & MANDY ALAZIA.

KEITH, TONY & SUSAN FOR TRANSFORMING THE WOOLSHED

MIKE EVANS, VIC EPSTEIN, BILL AND LISA POLE-EVANS FOR JUDGING THE SPECIAL CATEGORIES AND ALL THOSE WHO DID THE SUMS AFTERWARDS IN PARTICULAR LISA

MARLENE FOR PHOTOGRAPHS

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR THEIR ASSISTANCE BEFORE AND AFTER THE EVENT IN PARTICULAR GLYNIS AND GORDON.

H.E. THE 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

Anyone for a reindeer roast?

Article taken from MeatProcess.com

All those who still believe in Santa, stop reading here. For his sledge-pulling reindeer, Dancer, Prancer, and Rudolph, have long been consumed in a tasty stew.

You may not know it, but there is a small but growing reindeer meat export market, thanks to that iconic Swedish furniture shop, Ikea. Until eight years ago, few people outside of Lapland had had the chance to taste reindeer soup, reindeer calf kebab or roast reindeer with lingonberries, all traditional dishes of the Sami people. But in these multicultural times, things are changing. Ikea is selling reindeer meat to the masses across Europe, with volumes going up each year.

In France, admittedly a country that eats most things that can be hunted wild, smoked reindeer meat is flying out of Ikea's instore Swedish Food Markets. The carnivorous French consume twice as much as the second biggest consumer, Germany, even though they have only half the Ikea outlets of their neighbours. And restaurants from Italy to Korea are buying the meat to serve up a reindeer roast.

So what is it about the meat that can so easily erase those hard-sold childhood images of friendly reindeer dancing through the sky on Christmas Eve and entice consumers to tuck in to the rosy flesh? There is certainly a significant taste factor. More than 70 per cent of reindeer slaughtered for meat are calves that have grazed on summer pastures and not endured a harsh winter during which the animals use up fat reserves. This means the meat is tender and tasty, perhaps explaining why veal-eating French and Germans are fans and animal-loving Britons hardly look at Ikea's reindeer range.

But perhaps we should ask the Sami themselves, seeing as they eat the large majority of reindeer meat, at least 2 million kilos per year of Finland's total 2.3 million kilos consumed. Apparently it is 'very different' to beef and other meats, but difficult to explain when a part of your traditional cuisine, with a lot of the taste coming from slow cooking over an open fire, and the salting and drying of the meat. In any case, the Sami clearly know what's good for them, as reindeer meat beats farmed animals for nutrition on several points.

"It has quite a high content of vitamin E. At 3-4 mcg per gram of meat, this is three times the amount in pork," says Sabine Sempels, researcher at Sweden's university of agriculture. "It is also quite lean, with a low amount of fat at 1-2 per cent," she added.

And because reindeer still graze wild, the ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 fatty acids can be as low as 2:1, well below the omega-6 overload in the typical Western diet. The restricted stocks and slaughtering makes reindeer meat a pricy protein source (at Ikea it costs between €3-4 per 100g) that tends to be considered a delicacy in Scandinavia, featuring regularly on the Swedish 'Christmas Table'.

But it has clear appeal to those concerned about sustainable farming. So if you haven't yet discovered reindeer meat, perhaps you should opt for a reindeer sandwich, instead of the meatballs, when browsing at Ikea's Christmas sale.

The best thing is, if you get hooked, reindeer meat is not only available at Christmas.



KIDS VIEWS ON RELATIONSHIPS

How Does a Person Decide Who to Marry?

- "You flip a nickel, and heads means you stay with him and tails means you try the next one."
Kally, age 9
- "You got to find somebody who likes the same stuff. Like if you like sports, she should like it that you like sports, and she should keep the chips and dip coming."
Allan, age 10
- "No person really decides before they grow up who they're going to marry. God decides it all way before, and you got to find out later who you're stuck with."
Kirsten, age 10
- Concerning the Proper Age to Get Married "Twenty-three is the best age because you know the person FOREVER by then!"
Cam, age 10
- "No age is good to get married at.... You got to be a fool to get married!"
Freddie, age 6

How Can a Stranger Tell if Two People are Married?

- "Married people usually look happy to talk to other people."
Eddie, age 6
- "You might have to guess based on whether they seem to be yelling at the same kids."
Derrick, age 8
- What Do You Think Your Mom and Dad Have in Common? "Both don't want no more kids."
Lori, age 8

What Do Most People Do on a Date?

- "Dates are for having fun, and people should use them to get to know each other. Even boys have something to say if you listen long enough."
Lynnette, age 8
- "On the first date, they just tell each other lies, and that usually gets them interested enough to go for a second date."
Martin, age 10

What the Children Would Do on a First Date That Was Turning Sour

- "I'd run home and play dead. The next day I would call all the newspapers and make sure they wrote about me in all the dead columns."
Craig, age 9

When is it Okay to Kiss Someone?

- "When they're rich!"
Pam, age 7
- "The law says you have to be eighteen, so I wouldn't want to mess with that."
Curt, age 7
- "The rule goes like this: If you kiss someone, then

you should marry them and have kids with them.... It's the right thing to do."

Howard, age 8

The Great Debate: Is It Better to Be Single or Married?

- "I don't know which is better, but I'll tell you one thing ... I'm never going to have sex with my wife. I don't want to be all grossed out!"
Theodore, age 8
- "It's better for girls to be single but not for boys. Boys need somebody to clean up after them!"
Anita, age 9
- "Single is better ... for the simple reason that I wouldn't want to change no diapers... Of course, if I did get married, I'd figure something out. I'd just phone my mother and have her come over for some coffee and diaper-changing."
Kirsten, age 10

What Advice Do You Have for a Young Couple About to Be Married?

- "The first thing I'd say to them is: 'Listen up, youngins ... I got something to say to you. Why in the heck do you wanna get married, anyway?'"
Craig, age 9

What Promises Do a Man and a Woman Make When They Get Married?

- "A man and a woman promise to go through sickness and illness and diseases together."
Marlon, age 10

How to Make a Marriage Work

- "Tell your wife that she looks pretty even if she looks like a truck!"
Ricky, age 7
- "If you want to last with your man, you should wear a lot of sexy clothes.... Especially underwear that is red and maybe has a few diamonds on it."
Lori, age 8

Getting Married for a Second Time

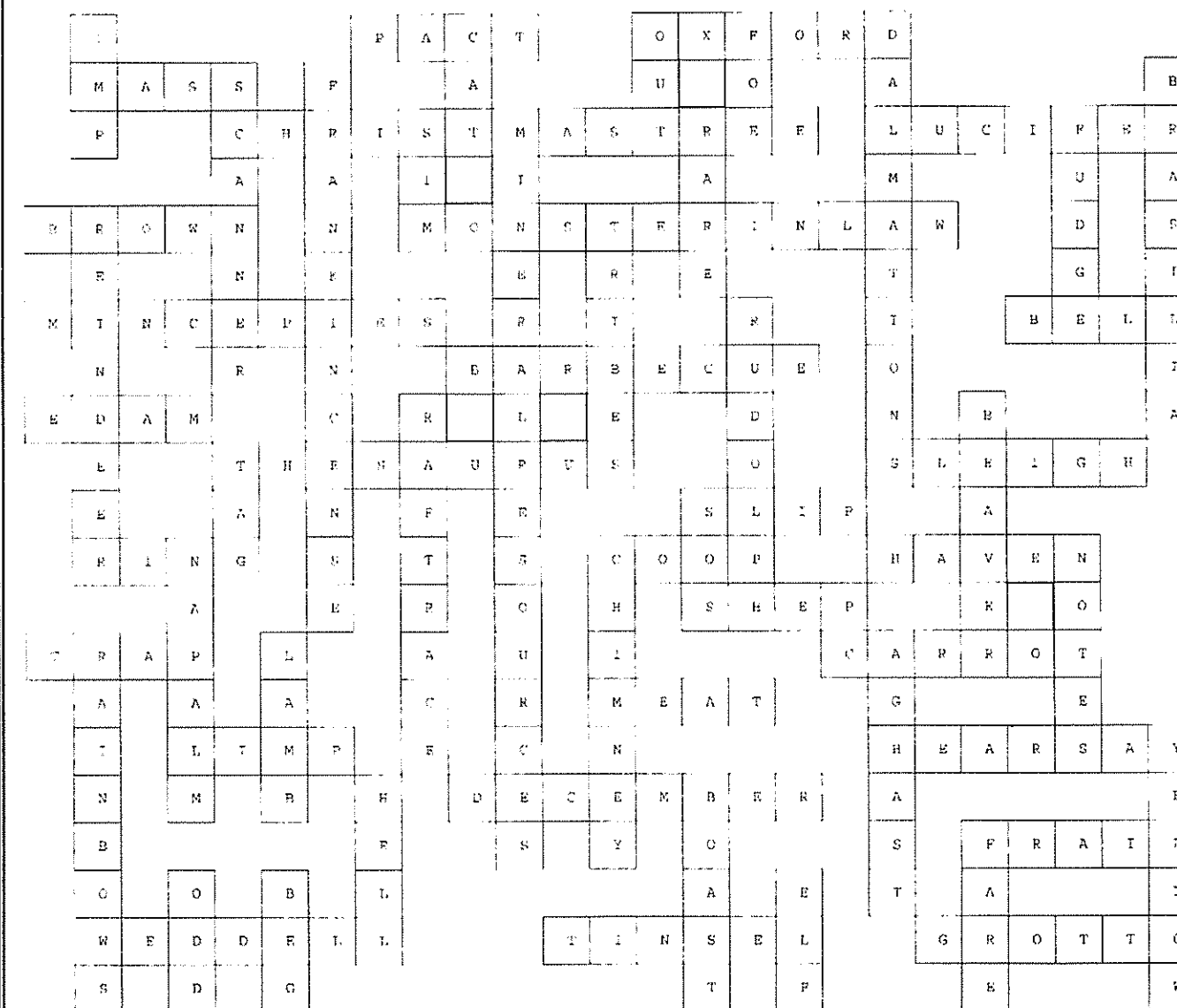
- "Most men are brainless, so you might have to try more than one to find a live one."
Angie L., age 10

How Would the World Be Different if People Didn't Get Married?

- "There sure would be a lot of kids to explain, wouldn't there?"
Kelvin, age 8
- "You can be sure of one thing - the boys would come chasing after us just the same as they do now!"
Roberta, age 7

LAST MONTH'S SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD...



- **The match**
- **387420489 = 9⁹ = 9x9x9x9x9x9x9x9x9**

- **Mount Everest**
- **9 people**
- **Both**

If you would like to contribute an article, recipe or place an advert in the Wool Press, then please contact Siân Ferguson on telephone 27355, fax 27352 or email sferguson@doa.gov.fk

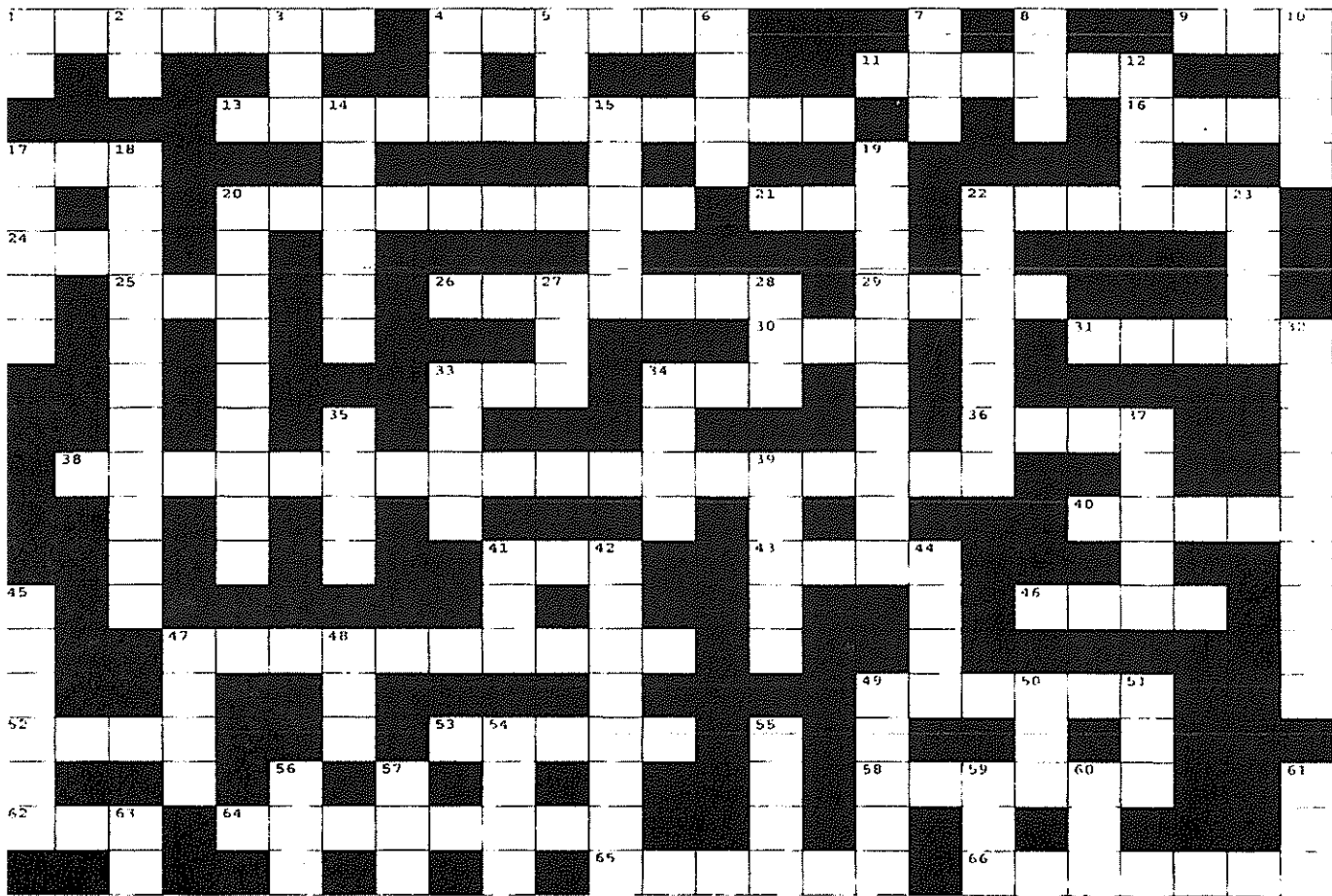
If you have something to share, then let us know!!

Submissions need to be in before the end of the month.

All contributions are gratefully received.

PUZZLE PAGE

CROSSWORD...



- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| Across | creating a mini whirlpool or whirlwind | 14. Roof material made out of straw/reed | 42. Movie about not getting your pet wet, feeding it after midnight and keeping it out of sunlight |
| 1. Innocence | 46. Price | 15. Lunatic | 44. Large manlike creature believed to inhabit the Himalyas |
| 4. Age of the Queen on her next birthday | 47. DIY shop in Stanley | 17. Breed of Antarctic sled dog | 45. London landmark equipped with 13 ton bell |
| 9. "... Man" - game | 49. Winnie the Pooh's bouncy friend | 18. Date of the Chinese New Year | 47. TV series about people stranded on an island |
| 11. Not solid | 52. Chief | 19. Elasticated rope | 48. Large deer, found in Asia and the north of Europe and America |
| 13. UK sixth form college | 53. Safe | 20. Film starring Nicole Kidman as a witch | 49. A memento |
| 16. Finished | 58. Young domestic feline | 22. Tube or rubber ball with slender nozzle used for injecting fluids | 50. Earn |
| 17. "... Man" - assassin | 62. Short sleep | 23. Public school popular with royals | 51. Fast jog |
| 20. FI nature reserve, island | 64. Long race | 27. Make progress, proceed | 54. Dull pain |
| 21. Flightless Australian bird | 65. Longest river in Britain | 28. Colour of Father Christmas' hat | 55. Abode |
| 22. A day off work due to illness | 66. Up and coming | 32. Having keen or piercing vision | 56. Pub |
| 24. Notice | | 33. Group of three | 57. Unhappy |
| 25. Pristine | | 34. Forty days of fasting in Christianity | 59. Bath |
| 26. TV series seeking out new singing talent | Down | 35. Alcoholic drink made from honey and spices | 60. Boundary, limit |
| 29. Bloodshed/carnage | 1. Used to express refusal | 37. Rubber rings over vehicle rims | 61. Cylindrical drinking vessel with a handle |
| 30. The day/evening before | 2. Credentials | 39. Residue, remains | 63. Red teletubby |
| 31. FIG's PR company "... PA" | 3. Golf ball support | 41. Method | |
| 33. A measure of alcohol | 4. Make a mistake, be incorrect | | |
| 34. Boy | 5. Merry, cheerful | | |
| 36. Agile, cheese/milk producing mammal | 6. An American | | |
| 38. LED | 7. Female of various mammals, inc elephant whale and seal | | |
| 40. Irked | 8. Pub drink | | |
| 41. An artificial head of hair | 10. Heal, rehabilitate | | |
| 43. Movement of air or water | 12. What you spend most of your waking hours doing (!) | | |

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF OUR PUZZLE PAGE?? IS THE CROSSWORD TOO HARD OR EASY FOR YOU?? WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE SOMETHING ELSE (WORD SEARCH ETC) OCCASIONALLY?? ARE THERE ANY OTHER PUZZLES THAT YOU THINK WE SHOULD FEATURE?? LET US KNOW ON EMAIL SFERGUSON@DOA.GOV.FK THANK YOU

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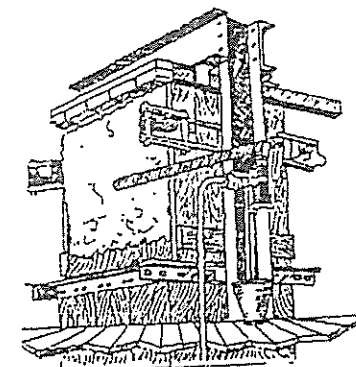
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Edited by Siân Ferguson

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EDITORIAL

This is my first editorial for the Wool Press. It comes with the new face of the Wool Press – the first new face since 1999. The new with the new.

This edition, like many before it, demonstrates the diversity of life and challenges in camp life. The serious articles show the value of wool over the past 3 years is on a slow decline making it harder for wool producers to make ends meet, but there is also a hint of optimism. Producers wishing to take up the challenge can see indications that there is a healthy higher income by aiming for the finer microns. The means of aiming towards these goals is described with articles on suitable breeding programmes and demonstrations of the equipment available to measure micron and progress.

Not mentioned in this issue, but now in full swing for the season is the abattoir. The slaughter season started on Monday 23rd and will continue until all the sheep promised are processed. This is giving an alternate opportunity for farmers to make money. Thought and planning should be given to the pasture available and reserves for the winter; the current condition of stock, winter carrying capacity, lambing percentages the future aims of the farming enterprise and the flock structure to ensure continual supplies for the abattoir.

The fun of Camp life- why people want to live in the camp is also covered. Sports Week, which is a tradition in the Falklands and Philip Ryder- Davies' story of 'cow muck and vetinrys'. This is a story to which everyone in camp can relate if you work with stock long enough.

Enjoy this issue with a few beers and a sharp pencil to attempt the cross word.

Vic Epstein
Senior Veterinary Officer

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BACK HOME

By Zoe Luxton

Finally the stories from Smith, Ryder-Davies have come to end. Because I don't work there any-more not because life there has got so monotonous there are no stories. It was finally time for a change so I am having some 'time out' in the Falklands before heading off to Australia in March to travel/work/travel before hopefully settling here in 2007.

Usually I like to write about what I have been up to and I do indeed have several stories about what went on in the Vic/on the racecourse over Christmas but I would perhaps be a bit hard pushed to get a decent veterinary slant on any of them. So I thought as a final Smith, Ryder-Davies tribute I would share a true story of my old bosses with you which was published in a lovely book of short stories about Christmas' in Suffolk.



A VET'S CHRISTMAS DAY

By Philip Ryder-Davies

I love Christmas. I love the preparations for it – the holly, the Christmas tree and the curious sense of impending pleasure that the festival induces.

Everything has to be the same each year; every detail of the Christmas dinner in particular, must not change, so that the turkey is stuffed with thyme and parsley and accompanied by roast potatoes, mashed swede, Brussels sprouts cooked so that they are still crunchy, bread sauce, all to be following by Christmas pudding accompanied by brandy butter and white sauce.

The day itself is very special. As I see to the needs of my Suffolk horses and Red Poll cattle, it really is a little difficult not to be reminded of that stable scene enacted so many years before and which the festival commemorates, then back into the house where the log fire has been lit early in the morning, which is something that the business of the rest of the year would never allow, and the day is spent with my family addressing the turkey or sitting reading the books that invariably arrive as presents.

For those of us whose jobs mean that we have to work at Christmas, this idyllic state of affairs can very easily be ruined. Having said that, after several years one becomes curiously stoical about this sort of thing and we end up just considering it as part of one's life. For many years I had in fact been able to enjoy Christmas Day in the bosom of my family, through, I thought, the very generous nature of my partner, Dick Smith, who each year kindly offered to work on Christmas Day so that I could enjoy its pleasures and then I would work on Boxing Day. Looking back it is rather worrying to realise how long it took me to appreciate that no-one ever calls the 'vet' out on Christmas Day unless they are in dire straits and they always wait until Boxing Day, when all hell is let loose, and the first words each animal owner utters are to the effect that they couldn't possibly call you out on Christmas Day.

Several years ago, however, something had gone either right or wrong with the whole scheme, according to one's viewpoint, and I found myself on duty on Christmas Day. The day set off well enough without so much as a trill from the dreaded telephone until 12 noon, when it rang with depressing shrillness just as the smells from the turkey were starting to waft through the house. It was the cowman at a farm in the village of Easton, who said he had two cows in a bit of a muddle

and could I get along there as soon as possible. A peculiarity of the Suffolk language is that nothing is exaggerated in any shape or form: 'We had some little bit of snow last night' means that there was a raging blizzard with six feet drifts and 'A bit of a muddle' will cover a fairly major drama. For a Welshman like myself, this can be difficult, as we magnify everything to make a decent story of it.

There is a great sense of rural beauty and the past in Easton but aesthetics and history were no part of my mission when I arrived at the large modern dairy unit and discovered the extent of the muddle. Two cows, for some reason best known to themselves, had decided to get into the slurry lagoon and then found themselves unable to get out of it. As you may or may not have imagined, a slurry lagoon is an agri-science euphemism for half an acre of liquid cow muck. If left to its own devices this does not smell, but disturb it and you get a very different tale altogether and its occupants had certainly disturbed it.

My first plan was to ask for two long poles to be procured; looking back I cannot imagine whether I thought two such items could be found, but strangely, they materialised. The cowman and I carefully guided our charges round the edge of the lagoon towards the one place where it would be possible for them to climb out. It need hardly be said that when they arrived at this point, they decided to make a further circuit. We took them round again, and again, and again. I have already admitted that those of Celtic origin are inclined to exaggerate a little but I can put my hand on my heart and say that this tale has not been ornamented.

I very nearly forgot that it was Christmas, but could not help being reminded of this by the fact that we were surrounded by snow as deep, crisp and even as any Christmas carol would wish and the cold was as piercing as only the residents of East Anglia and Siberia can fully appreciate. I soon realised that I was dealing with educationally subnormal cows and that my guiding plan was going to fail. I, therefore, asked for two long ropes and again, to my surprise, these were produced. I fashioned a noose in the end of each and we attempted to lasso them. The two cows looked the nearest thing to two hippopotamuses that we should ever see in this part of Suffolk. Eyes and nostrils protruded above the surface of the slurry and, as I expertly landed the noose around the general area of a cow's head, the noose would then just lie on the surface of a liquid that was too thick to allow it to sink around the cow's neck.

Still undefeated, I attempted to press the noose down with the end of the pole with which I had already armed myself but as soon as success was imminent the cow moved. We repeatedly attempted this manoeuvre and as I handled the rope and the pole the contents of the slurry lagoon gradually transferred itself to myself and I have to add to most of myself. We had been struggling with this situation for some time and had clearly failed so I considered it was time to call for a greater intellect, so summoned my partner from the bosom of his family. I was now so cold that I had passed through the pain threshold of thinking about my delicious Christmas dinner, which had almost certainly, by now, been totally demolished by my voracious family.

Dick arrived with a painful show of enthusiastic advice. He decided that the answer to the whole situation lay in the procurement of a boat. I pointed out that Easton is not a seaside village, like, for example, Aldeburgh, and wondered where the hell we would find a boat in a land-locked situation such as it is. My amazement was now stretched to its utmost when the cowman said he could immediately produce one. Prior to this Christmas Day I must add that if one asked for items as commonplace as a bucket or a bar of soap, they could never be found. However, within a very short space of time a boat was indeed produced.

Dick Smith was now enjoying himself, in full command of the rescue mission. The boat was launched with my partner as its captain and sole crew and the rest of the plan was going to be simple: he would move alongside a cow's head, place the rope over it and we would then extri-

cate the wretched animal. The slurry was of course too liquid for anyone to walk on it but too thick for a boat to be rowed upon it. The cowman and I pushed the vessel with the aid of the long poles across the cowmuck until it reached a watery area on which it could easily float and it then drifted into the middle of this. The captain, rather surprisingly in view of the command he appeared to have of the situation when he took charge of it, had, unfortunately, no oars and we then found that our ropes were not long enough to throw to him to retrieve him.

We had been struggling for nearly three hours in the freezing cold, and inspection of the two suicidal victims showed that they were weakening and beginning to have great difficulty in keeping their noses above water. I decided that the time had come to call it a day and that the remedy would be to shoot them in order to put them out of their misery. I set off for the hunt kennels to fetch the huntsman to perform the act of mercy, Jimmy Wickham, who I found stretched out in front of the fire and who left this particular spot with a very marked lack of enthusiasm. We soon arrived back at the disaster scene, where Dick was still marooned on the liquid sea of cow muck.

Jim's first contribution to the predicament was to express enormous hilarity at my partner's predicament. This was not appreciated by the mariner, and only a little by the rest of the party, who were too cold to appreciate anything. Jimmy's next step was to pick up a pole, tap a cow on the head with it and this, like some miracle, prompted the animal to lunge forward and walk out of the lagoon, quickly to be followed by the other. Things had now reached their lowest ebb. There was not only the freezing cold, the stinking smell and the ruined Christmas but we now had to endure the continuous repetition of Jimmy Wickham telling us that if ever we got into any sort of muddle again, then all we had to do was send for him at an early stage and any dilemma, however difficult, would be resolved.

My own company in my car on my way home was unbearable and all the windows had to be open despite the cold. I thought I would return home to a rapturous welcome from my wife and children. My wife asked me if I realised that my lunch was totally ruined. She obviously took the view that I had been up to no good in a totally irresponsible manner on what was supposed to be a family festival and when she got near enough she insisted that I undress outside the back door before entering the family home. After a hot bath I faced an unrecognisable Christmas dinner.



NEW STAFF CONTACT DETAILS

We have two new staff members at the Department of Agriculture, Lynette Dent and Frans Jooste. Please contact them using the details provided below...

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Fax: +500 27352
Email: ldent@doa.gov.fk

Frans Jooste
AI/ET Vet
Department of Agriculture

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Fax: +500 27352
Email: fjooste@doa.gov.fk

Darwin Shipping - Cargo receiving for Voyage 346

AMG cargo closing - 7th March
 Port receiving until - 10th March

Estimated arrival in Falklands - 18th April
 Departing Falklands - 23rd April

Estimated arrival in UK - 17th May

Wool closing on the 28th April

For shipping instructions or assistance please contact
 Eva Jaffray on telephone 27629 or email darwin@horizon.co.fk

MEASURABLE TRAITS FOR SELECTING RAMS

By Damien O'Sullivan

In the previous Wool Press article "Selecting rams from a farm breeding flock" it suggested visual assessments to select rams suitable for keeping in the breeding flock. While these assessments are important it is imperative that measurable characteristics be also taken into consideration. So what measurable characteristics should I include?

This depends on each individual farm but it will vary depending whether we are breeding wool sheep, meat sheep or dual-purpose animals. With the importance of the abattoir in the Falklands and the need to maintain wool income this article will cover the basic measurements for a dual purpose animal.

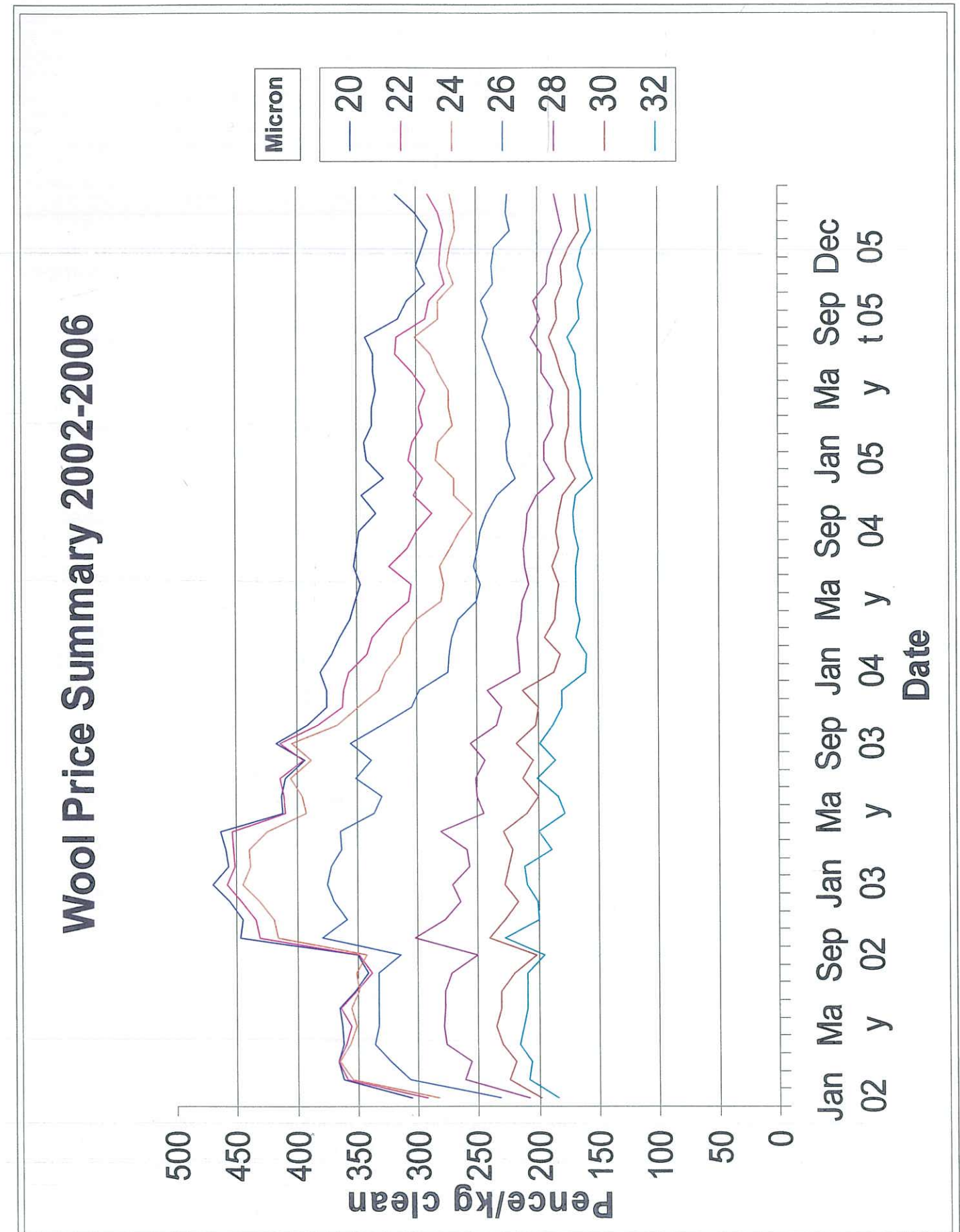
Micron – Most farmers are familiar with testing for micron. Wool can be tested using the DoA lab or by the Woolview 20/20 machine that is now in the Islands. Micron is an obvious factor that contributes greatly to the income of a farm. As an example a 20 bale line of 26 micron wool is worth £9000 gross whereas the same line of 25 micron wool would be worth £9920 gross.

Greasy fleece weight – Greasy fleece weight is another obvious measurement factor that can easily be assessed at shearing. While animals with a higher fleece weight can be easily selected, it must be remembered that better fleece weights often select for coarser microns. Therefore animals with an acceptable micron should be chosen and from these those with the best fleece weight are selected.

(Continued on page 8)

WOOL PRICE TREND OVER TIME

Based on weekly DOA Wool Reports



Lambmarking weight/Weaning weight

The growth rate of an animal is an important factor particularly for dual-purpose sheep. We need animals that mature early and respond well to nutrition so that they can be finished quickly as lambs. By weighing at lambmarking and then at weaning, weight gain for each individual animal over a pre-determined time period can be assessed.



Visual traits like wool blindness are easy to cull for but measurable traits have just as much importance

Testicle size

The size of testicle relates to a rams sperm production. The scrotal circumference is measured around both testes at the widest point. Normal scrotal circumference for hogget rams should be around 30 cm and for shearlings and adults, 36+ cm. A ram with a measurement significantly smaller than normal standard may be a late-maturing individual or may have low fertility.

There are innumerable other traits that can be selected for. In the case of meat animals eye muscle area and fat depth are important traits to measure for. Studs that have meat breed and dual-purpose sheep routinely measure for these traits. These traits are something that will need to be measured in the future.

In conclusion we need to measure the above traits and visual traits as a minimum if we are selecting our own rams and would like to have genetic gain.

CORRIEDALES IN THE FALKLAND ISLANDS

By Falkland Island Farmers

PORT STEPHENS

Port Stephens Farm - owned by Peter and Ann Robertson - is about 22980 ha, including three large tussac island groups of about 400 ha which are not used because of logistical reasons. The farm currently carries 11 to 12,000 sheep and about 120 cattle.

The peninsula to the West of the settlement is very dry and is covered with Diddle-dee and white grass; this area carries most of the ewes and all hoggets. The other side of the farm is generally of a peaty nature and wetter and mountainous so is covered by mostly sparse whitegrass and carries all the other dry sheep.

The farm has had Corriedales since the 1950's when they replaced the Romneys. The reason this breed is kept is that, next to the Romney, they have proven to be hardier and able to thrive reasonably on this rather barren part of the Islands. Like all other traditional breeds they have had to become much finer woolled to chase the market so have become much more delicate due to

slanting more to the Merino which does not like wet ground, so in turn, means that the lambing is not so good in spite of the better general husbandry that is presumed to be practiced today.

Peter says "No doubt we could run a more exotic breed on the West side of the farm but it is doubtful if the off-spring would thrive so well on the other half. I also believe that, apart from cobalt, there are other more undiscovered obscure trace element deficiencies prevalent, particularly in this area."

"However, I have an open mind on future policies and things could change due to wool prices and the fat lamb market. The main restraint in changing the breed (other than terminal sires) is the fear that as all major wool producing countries are rapidly changing to the fat lamb market and the said market could be flooded; a comparatively more affluent Falklands would be one of the first casualties due to production costs."

PORT EDGAR

Port Edgar, owned by Mandy and Tex Alazia, is currently in the process of expanding to approx 16,400 ha and 7,000 sheep. These are mostly Corriedale type sheep, with a mix of Polwarth, Cormo and Romney cross that have been bought in as replacements over the past eighteen years.

The farm is predominantly hill country with a lot of rocks, fern ditches and streams and the biggest hazard is snow, drifts and sheep pushed to beaches and cliffs trying to escape the storm. They saved three young wethers from a drift last



winter that had been stuck for two days. Mandy says "You need a tough animal to survive in these conditions, and we are therefore cautious about whole scale changing of breeds, instead of trying to improve using what we have."

"When we purchased the farm in 1988 we used an imported Corriedale Ram which we drew out of the hat from Port Stephens. We then had some Corriedale AI, which were actually coarser than we already had, so we used some AI Cormos to make our wool finer for a while. We now have Saladero Corriedale rams and two Cormos from Beaver Is-

land."

Their hoggets were 24.8 micron in 1989 and are 22.9 to 23.5 now. With an average flock micron of about 28 micron, Mandy and Tex said "We hope this will decrease a micron or so with selling most of our older wethers to the abattoir and continued selection in the stud flock." They do not lamb their 3 year old ewes, running them instead with wethers to grow more and then choose the very best ewes for the stud flock.



THE SPORTS ARE ON!!

With Sports Week only a few weeks away and counting, here's a little taste of the action...

HILL COVE

Everyday there will be a BBQ for lunch and a dance in the evening.

Sunday 26th February
Foot Events - Hill Cove Forrest
including Treasure Hunt and Rounders

Monday 27th February
Horse Racing - Shallow Bay

Tuesday 28th February
Morning - Shearing - Shallow Bay Shed
Afternoon - Mechanical Bull - The Peaks
followed by Kids Party in the Dance Hall

Wednesday 1st March
Day - Dog Trials - Main Point
Kids Sports
5pm - AGM
9.30pm - Prize Giving

West Sports Website:
www.horizon.co.fk/westsports

GOOSE GREEN

All events are held at Goose Green. There is no steer riding this year as they don't want the animals bruised before they head off to the abattoir!!

Monday 27th February
Dog Trials

Tuesday 28th February
Horse Racing

Wednesday 1st March
Gymkana and Foot Events

Thursday 2nd March
Morning - Shearing
Afternoon - Football & Fun Events
Night - AGM, beware - they are looking for new committee members!!

Friday 3rd March
Day - Childrens Sports
Night - Prize giving dance

Entry to the dance is by ticket only,
available from Diana Aldridge

THE WOOLVIEW : ANOTHER SHEEP SELECTION TOOL

By Ali Short

From that fateful moment when we signed on the dotted line and became proud owners of Swan Inlet, we have looked at any proposition to help make the farm viable. It is sometime ago now that Doug Martin showed us details of the Woolview 20/20...but it planted a seed. One of those ideas that go on the 'back burner' - along with new clothes and holidays. Then the FCO asked for any interested parties to bid for funds from their Economic Diversity Programme and we were off! We decided to apply for a grant for the micron testing machine along with a drafting weigh crate and computer software. Harriet Hall was very helpful with the application form, as were Neil and Mandy at the Ag Department, and we waited with bated breath.

The FCO were very efficient and payment to Australia was swift, but nevertheless it all takes a while and, by the time the shipment landed here in the Falklands, it was well into Spring. Andrez has spent the first few months getting to grips with it and even persuaded some brave souls to be guinea pigs (see comments). The learning curve was steep. A few glitches (like allowing the lead to lie over the keyboard and so turn it off! See below) and grappling with email didn't put him off, and he has also become significantly quicker. Andrez can presently sample around 20/25 sheep

an hour. For a while now, he has been officially 'up and running' and accepting paying contracts.

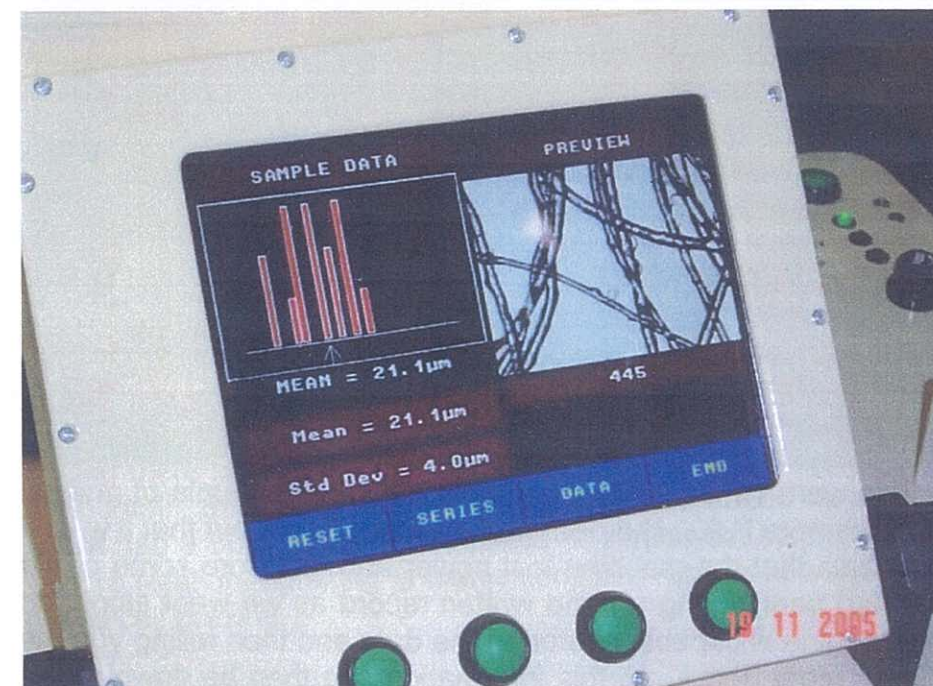
But why should farmers be interested in micron testing this way? Well, the obvious one is cost - it is possible to sample many more sheep for your pennies than the Ag Dept test. However, the data gained is more than just an 'average micron'. You are also presented with statistics for each fibre that will give you the *range* of micron for the staple. For example, two sheep both register 21 micron as an average. But one has individual fibres ranging from 15 to 28, whilst the other has all fibres between 18 and 23. Maybe that will influence your selection decisions. So too might the info you obtain on comfort factor.

The drafting weigh crate and software is a dream! No more 'race capers' for me - clutching a clipboard in one hand, a gate in the other and a pencil between my teeth. The crate operator keys in tag number, body score (if they so wish) and presses a key to record weight and hey presto! General statistics can be viewed there and then at the crate or downloaded to a computer and specifics tinkered with at leisure.

So what now? If any of this can be of use to you, then give us a ring. It may, of course, be too late for us to visit you this season, but don't forget you can send us samples by post or have us visit next year. We can also email example data to show you how it is presented. Remember ... this is eligible for PIP funding!

Peter and Shelley Nightingale West Lagoons

"Having recently begun a new breeding system, we were interested to see how the wool was shaping up in comparison with our existing flock. As Andrez and Ali Short had just acquired their new toy, and needed the practice, we thought we'd send samples from 30 ram hoggets as a trial.



We are very pleased with the results, which gives the micron diameter, max, min and mean, the CV and CF. The only thing you don't get is the yield, but I guess that is easily enough worked out if you have the patience to weigh, wash and dry a few pieces of wool! The average micron was more or less what we expected from the two groups of rams, and I'm particularly interested in CF (comfort factor), which reads higher as the wool is softer to the touch.

Although we sent small samples from the fleece this time, the preferred method is to test on the unshorn sheep. We are hoping to have this done next year, over a lot more animals, including the ewes from our program."

Peter and Maggie Goss...Horseshoe Bay

"On the 23rd November, we invited Andrez over. We'd heard he was looking for some sheep to practice on with his micron testing equipment, so I rounded up our Dohne/Polwarth offspring for him. This is a new testing technique for us farmers, but one that both Andrez and I feel is a good one because it allows us to see where the sample is taken from. All the data that you receive

shows you how much the fibres can deviate within the sample taken. This information gives you a choice whether you want to continue breeding with this animal as a stud or not. He also showed us how the micron can change from shoulder to hips so you have to be very precise on the mid-side sample.

Andrez gave me the handset but I found I was all thumbs - it isn't that easy to tease the wool into the machine. Andrez made it look easy. He tested 50+ animals in our makeshift set up. I will be interested in having Andrez back next season."

Richard & Toni Stevens...Port Sussex

"We had heard about the new gadget that Andrez had imported, which tests wool 'on farm' and on the sheep's back, and we thought it was worth trying it on a pre-selected group of shearling ewes. We were interested in the average micron and also the range, i.e. what was the finest and coarsest fleece and whether there was a correlation between fine and coarse and body size because of the meat/ wool issues etc.

The machine itself was a lot smaller than we imagined, and was the size of a small suitcase and was carried into the shed. It took a couple of minutes to set up with the monitor as part of the case and the head and lead which was attached to the machine.

We worked on the raised board in the shearing shed. The sheep were caught in the catching pen and brought to the edge of the raised board. Andrez would then start to take samples from the mid-side, shoulder and rump. On a prize ram, or ewe that you wanted to take eggs from, you might want to take more samples. As Andrez took the samples he could see them on the screen of the monitor. The idea was to get a few strands to read rather than a number all in a confused state. Once a good sample appeared on the screen he took a reading. It was a slow process but as time went on we got a lot quicker. We had a couple of guests, namely Harriet Hall and Sylvia the Governors P.A., who both had a go and found out that it wasn't as easy as it looked. The only glitch was that the machine lost power and therefore some of the data manipulation was lost, but we had been taking a hand written record as we went along, so we didn't lose the information. The machine is capable of storing the data and then telling you the highs and lows, averages and a lot of other detail. All this information can then be downloaded on to a computer.



If wool was worth a little more, there are many things that a farm could do to select and monitor progress in wool micron in areas of ones flock. On a small budget, micron testing Rams works out to be cheaper and possibly quicker than through the Ag Dept lab. We will be taking mid-side samples to Andrez from our Ram hoggets in the near future."

KINGSFORD VALLEY FARM

By Damien O'Sullivan

Summary:

- Rotational grazing using existing farm fences has proven successful
- In 2005 there was a 78% lambing with help from reseeded and crops
- Eye locking and wiggling reduces death rates from 17% over 5 years to 10%

Kingsford Valley owned by Terrence and Sheila McPhee covers 10 468ha. Of this there is 5000ha of stone runs and peaty country that was deemed in the past as only being suitable for wethers. Since Terrence and Sheila have owned the farm they have had good successes with their rotational grazing management and fodder crops. Currently the farm has 1400 breeding ewes and this will increase over time as they further reduce their wether numbers.



Fodder crops & Reseeds

The fodder crops on Kingsford Valley in the last few years have been quite successful except for their first crop where sheep developed a Calcium deficiency due to lack of sunlight over a 3-week period. In establishing reseeds Terrence and Sheila believe that a good burn and the use of rock phosphate and calcified seaweed has proven to be a key for successful crops.

Currently Kingsford Valley has 58ha of permanent pasture and this year 22 ha will be planted to oats, swede and appin turnips. Ewes will be fed on 10ha of swedes. There were 2ha of crop put aside for abattoir wethers but these are now going so well on pasture that this crop will be used for shearling ewes. 10ha of fodder crop will be used for hoggets. By feeding the hoggets it will assist them in their main growth period and avoid having them in areas where they have had losses from ditches.

Grazing management

Sheila attended the week long "Grazing for Profit" workshop series in 2003 and Terrence also attended a similar 3-day workshop in 2003. Using the knowledge gained at the workshop Sheila experimented using rotational grazing to try and improve sheep production. This was done despite there being some risk to domestic bliss! The first rotational grazing was done on Canterra mountain, this camp had previously only been used for wethers. Shearling ewes run in this system had a 50% lambing compared to similar set stocked shearlings. As a result of this success more rotational grazing is being adopted. Sheila however said she would not go as far as intensive cell grazing.

Sheep Management

In 2003 a decision was made to pre-lamb shear ½ the ewes to see if there were any benefits. Results showed the pre-lamb shorn ewes had a 10% better lambing and although it is difficult to attribute all this benefit to pre-lamb shearing, all ewes are now pre-lamb shorn. The McPhees have noticed that pre-lamb shorn ewes seek shelter quickly for their own protection and therefore help save the lamb. In the previous 4 years ewes had been belly crutched and eye-locked before lambing.

All hogs and shearlings on the farm are eye-locked and this has reduced death rates. In 1995 death rates were 17% and they now have been reduced to 10%. Ram numbers have been cut by half on the farm without affecting lambing rates. All ewes are now tupped in small paddocks joining the settlement. In all there are 7 reseed paddocks and a forage crop used to tupp ewes. 12 half bred Dohne rams will cover the ewe flock next season.

The aim is to continue to supply the abattoir with wethers. Presently there are no wethers older than 3 years on the farm. The current group of wethers destined for the abattoir have been on camp that was spelled for 12 months and as such have not needed forage crops planted for them.

Management

Terrence & Sheila aim to have everything up and running over a ten-year period on the farm. Like most farms though there are other jobs that have come up such as renovating 3 houses since they have been on the farm. As all farms know any labour saving ideas are worthwhile and they are particularly pleased with their circular drafting race made from 2nd hand roofing iron. It makes the job of drafting far easier. They acknowledge that they have still not achieved everything and that off-farm income has been necessary to help fast track the changes they have made. Future plans are to finish fencing and start to market their self-catering house as additional income. There is also the possibility of additional tourist enterprises.



FOR SALE NOTICE

One three year old AI Short Horn Bull.

Very tame and quiet natured.

Price £200 ono.



All enquiries to Kenneth & Josie, Sheffield Farm,
Tel 42212, Fax 42213 or Email josie.kenneth@horizon.co.fk

MAINTAINING SUSTAINABLE SHEEP NUMBERS

By Robert Hall

Maintaining a sustainable sheep population in the Falkland Islands is critical for the long-term production of wool and sheep meat to farmers, those marketing wool and the abattoir. On an individual farm level, maintaining a sustainable sheep population is vital in order to generate future revenue and importantly it would influence how a farm might sell in the future (if that occasion should arise). As a generalisation, the traditional sustainable sheep structure was a third young sheep, a third ewes, and a third wethers; all for wool, with culls often wasted and relatively few sheep under five years old being killed.

Given the relative ease and better prices obtained from selling lamb meat compared to cull mutton, the abattoir will inevitably seek to acquire better quality and younger animals. This is the response of all abattoirs to the relative global demand for lambs rather than manufacturing mutton (and it ignores the fact that farms initially wish a profitable home for all their cull sheep). The challenge for farms wishing to sell younger animals is to modify their sheep structure and perhaps their sheep numbers, in order to continue to be sustainable and to have a worthwhile sheep farm to 2030 and beyond.

There is considerable variation and diversity amongst farms and the natural ability of the ground. Some farms may always have surplus stock, as a result of their scarce resources (land, labour, management and capital). Many farms may find the production of surplus stock exceedingly difficult.

With low farm incomes, there is considerable debate as to how the abattoir should be utilised. Some ideas, for some farms sound unsustainable and potentially ruinous. All farms should utilise their own farm information, to calculate the impact of different sheep selling strategies on their own farm sheep population and run such calculations for at least 10 years. (I've no doubt the DoA would assist).

Farms with weaning percentages below 60%, or with young sheep death rates above 10% or with main ewe flock death rates above 6% need to make predictions of their surplus sheep with particular care. I would encourage all farms selling stock to make the necessary calculations using their own farm data (weaning percentages to ewes mated, young sheep death rates, main flock death rates etc).

Most farms are currently unable to sell many female lambs or breeding sheep and maintain their ewe flock numbers. Similarly most farms are currently unable to sell many young male animals and maintain their wether flocks, therefore such sales require very careful long-term strategic planning.

Maintaining ewe numbers is critical for all parts of the Falklands sheep industry and requires careful calculation at all levels. The meat and wool industry must ensure that the breeding ewe population is maintained otherwise it may cut its own throat.

'Reference Andrew's article on pasture improvements in last month's Wool Press and his comments regarding the 3 main ingredients for pasture growth being water, sunlight and carbon dioxide I think he would find the addition of a little NPK would help things along!'

*Malcolm Ashworth
White Rose Farming*

THE MANY FACES OF THE WOOL PRESS

By Siân Ferguson

Last month I received an email from the Printing Office informing me that as we were out of pre-printed covers this would be a good time to start using a new design for the front page (this had been on the cards since not long after I started here). Luckily I had some spare time a couple of months ago and had already made up three new designs (one of the only times in my life I have actually ever been prepared for anything). So, last minute finishing touches were made, they were emailed around to all the staff, a few magic words were uttered and as you hopefully may have noticed, we now have a new front cover - complete with original wool press sketch!!

In desperation of filling up empty space, I've dug through the filing cabinet and dragged boxes down from the loft to bring you the four previous 'faces' of your favourite publication!!

June 1985 - Issue 1

The first Wool Press was printed and circulated with the following on the front cover "A newsletter for Falkland Islands Farmers published by FIDC in conjunction with ARC covering a wide range of farming and related topics including news and views of local farmers". It included an introduction by HE The Civil Commissioner, Sir Rex Hunt...

It gives me great pleasure to write this introduction to a newsletter in the Falkland Islands. I understand that the main purpose of the Wool Press will be to inform practising farmers about farming news and to provide a forum for discussion of farming topics of all kinds. It's Editor is the Farm Management Advisory Office and it is financed by the Falkland Islands Development Corporation (FIDC). It will contain articles illustrating different farming methods and ideas, prepared in cooperation with the Agricultural Research Centre (ARC). There will be news of events and developments applicable to the farming scene in the Falkland Islands and a miscellany of articles ranging from fertiliser prices to accounts of the work of the FIDC and the ARC.

Like any other publication of this kind, the Wool Press will depend very heavily on contribution from readers. The Editor wants it to be a platform for open discussion between farmers

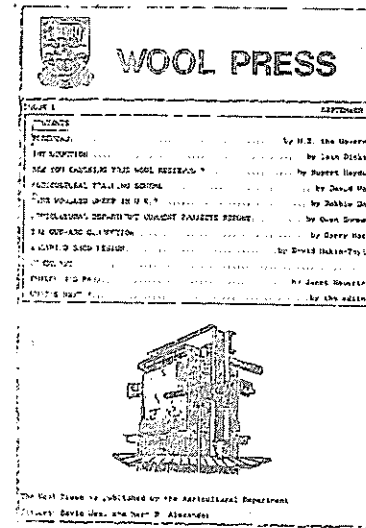
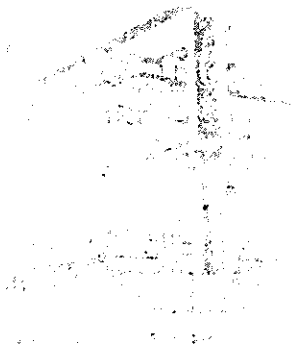
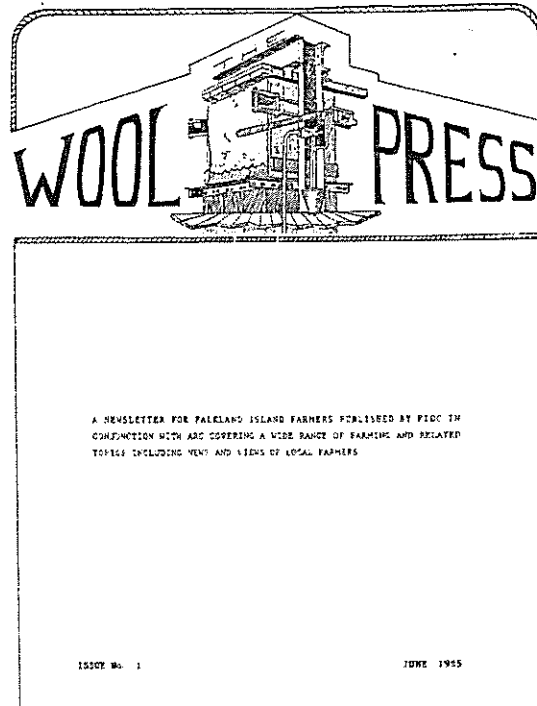
themselves and I hope that readers of this first edition will be not be hesitant to come forward with ideas and comments.

The Wool Press has the full support of the Sheep Owners Association and it is not intended to supercede or compete with the SOA newsletter, which performs a different function and is written for a more selective readership.

I cannot think of a more apt title for this new publication than the Wool Press and I wish it and its contributors every success.

Other articles featured include an update on the workings of the ARC and its role in the community, Wool Prices & International Markets, Pink Eye, A Falkland Islands Wool Board?, The Upland Goose ad Agriculture, Farm Management and Advice, What are FIDC Up To, which includes a paragraph on the need for a shopping complex at Mount Pleasant, combined with cafe, toilets and waiting area and any interested parties should contact FIDC. The last meeting of the Board of the Development Corporation approved the establishment of an 'ultra-modern' market garden, based in Stanley to be built and commissioned by Stapley Contracts Ltd in Kent and early 1986 should see the first crop, mainly salad crops.

The eight page long publication did not include any crosswords or puzzles.



September 1989 - Issue 1

The relaunch of the Wool Press sees the FIG Crest added on for the first time. The eighteen page publication includes a Foreword by HE the Governor, Mr William Fullerton

I was delighted to hear of the proposal that the Wool Press should be relaunched when David West and Marc Alexander of the Agricultural Department told me about this a month ago, and it gives me great pleasure to now welcome it back to publication.

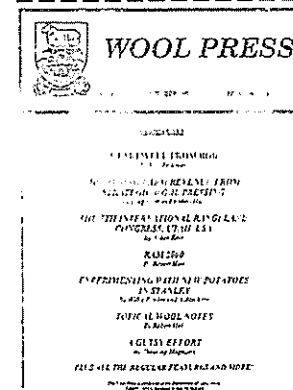
I feel sure that the Wool Press will admirably fill a gap which now exists in Camp for a comprehensive journal to cover a wide range of subjects of particular interest to all Campers, and not only one dealing with the more technical aspects of farming or land management. Such a journal is no doubt even more important now after sub-division when a number of additional farms are setting out to make their own way independently. The Wool Press will be helpful in drawing the community

together generally as well as being informative and entertaining.

From the varied nature of the contents of issue Number 1 it certainly seems that the aims of the producers and contributors of the Wool Press, to all of whom I would like of to offer my warmest congratulations on their efforts, will be thoroughly well achieved. I wish the Wool Press all the best for a long and highly successful run.

In this issue, there is a £5 FIC gift voucher (donated by Terry Spruce) as prize, which was won by Christine and Callum Butler from Waimea Farm, San Carlos (announced in a later issue).

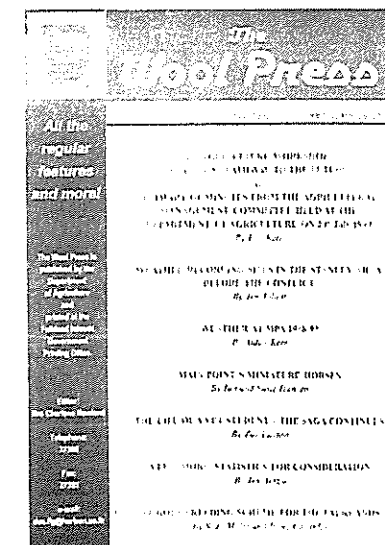
Articles featured include Are You Checking Your Wool Receipts?, Agricultural Training Scheme, Fine Woolled Sheep in UK, Current Projects - The Agricultural Department which tells of Port San Carlos being sub-divided, an AI programme in April and May (which was the first attempt to improve stock by importing frozen semen from New Zealand) in which 53 farms took part. Other articles were The Qub-ARC Connection, Shearing Shed Design and a Homecraft section aimed at Farmers Wives.



October 1995 - Issue 71

The wool press sketch has been taken off and Charlene Rowland and Mandy McLeod are the current editors. A cartoon has been added, along with Spot the Difference and Recipe Page. Articles in this issue include A Farewell from Locum Vet Bob Jackman, Optimising Farm Revenue From Strategic Wool Pressing, The 5th International Rangeland Congress, Ram 2000 and Michael Alazia contributes to the Letter Page, voicing his concerns that the abattoir could prohibit the purchasing of replacement sheep.

Willie Bowles and Aidan Kerr write about Experimenting With New Potatoes in Stanley, Robert Hall includes Topical Wool Notes and A Gutsy Effort is taken from the Shearing Magazine.



August 1999 - Issue 117

The Wool Press changes to it's longest running front cover yet and is being printed at the Falkland Island Government Printing Office. In this issue there was The Agricultural Workshops - A Critical Pathway to the Future, Weather Recording Sites in the Stanley Area Before the Conflict, Weather at MPA 1998-99 and Susie and Ian Hansen write about their visit to Kilcummer Miniature Horse Stud in Cornwall where they bought nine animals, adding to the two already purchased which had successfully foaled in the summer.

Also featured was An Abstract From a Report Made by the Director of Agriculture in 1937-1946 - J G Gibbs, A Letter from Robert Carver about the possibilities of marketing Falklands products as 'organic', Woolmark Signs Deal With Manchester United Soccer Club (taken from ABC National Rural News), Replacement Fencing Scheme, A Few More Statistics for Consideration, A Group Breeding Scheme for the Falklands, Summary of minutes from the Agricultural Management Committee held on the 20th July 1999 and The Life of a Vet Student - The Saga Continues by Zoe Luxton.

Welsh Cakes



Ingredients

1lb self raising flour
6oz sugar
2 eggs
Pinch of salt

8oz margarine
3oz currants or sultanas
Little milk

Sieve flour and salt into a mixing bowl. Cut up margarine and rub in with fingertips until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Add sugar and fruit and stir in beaten eggs, mix to a stiff dough, add a drop of milk if necessary. Place on a floured surface, knead lightly and roll out to ¼ inch thickness. Cut with a fluted 2 inch pastry cutter. Cook on a pre-heated, lightly greased plan (griddle) over a slow heat until golden brown on both sides. Cool on a wire rack and serve fresh.

Recipe kindly provided by Steph Ferguson, Stanley

Diddle Dee Jam Maker Wanted

Hubert Mantha from Canada is looking to contact someone about the possibility of producing Diddle Dee jam for export to Toronto, Canada. If you can help him then please contact him directly, details below...

Postal Address

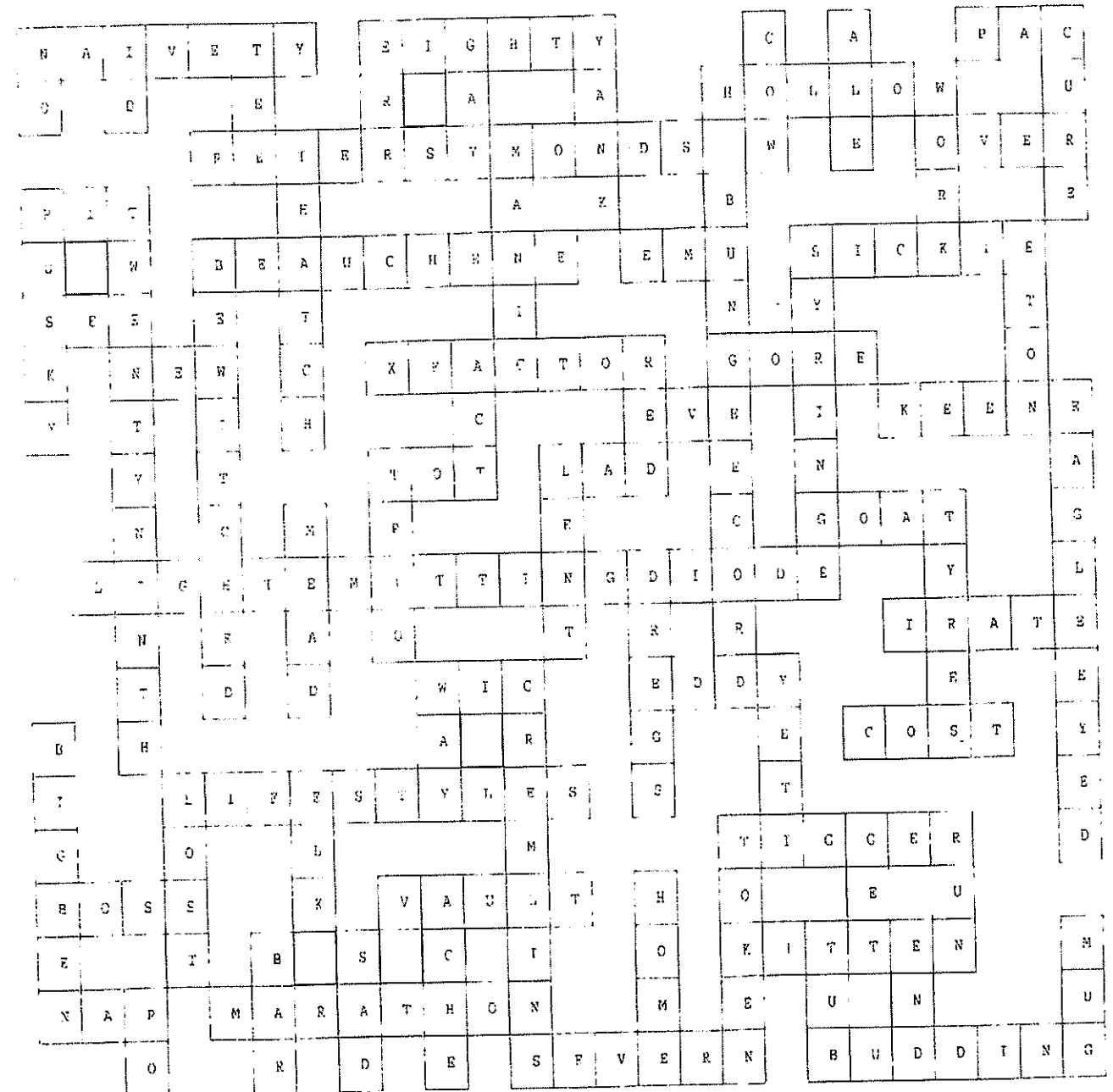
Hubert E. Mantha
219 Markham Street
Toronto ONTARIO CANADA M6J 2G7

Telephone, Fax and Email Address

Tel: (416) 214-1717
Fax: (416) 214-2809 (after 19th Jan 06)
e-mail: hubert.mantha@sympatico.ca

LAST MONTH'S SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD...



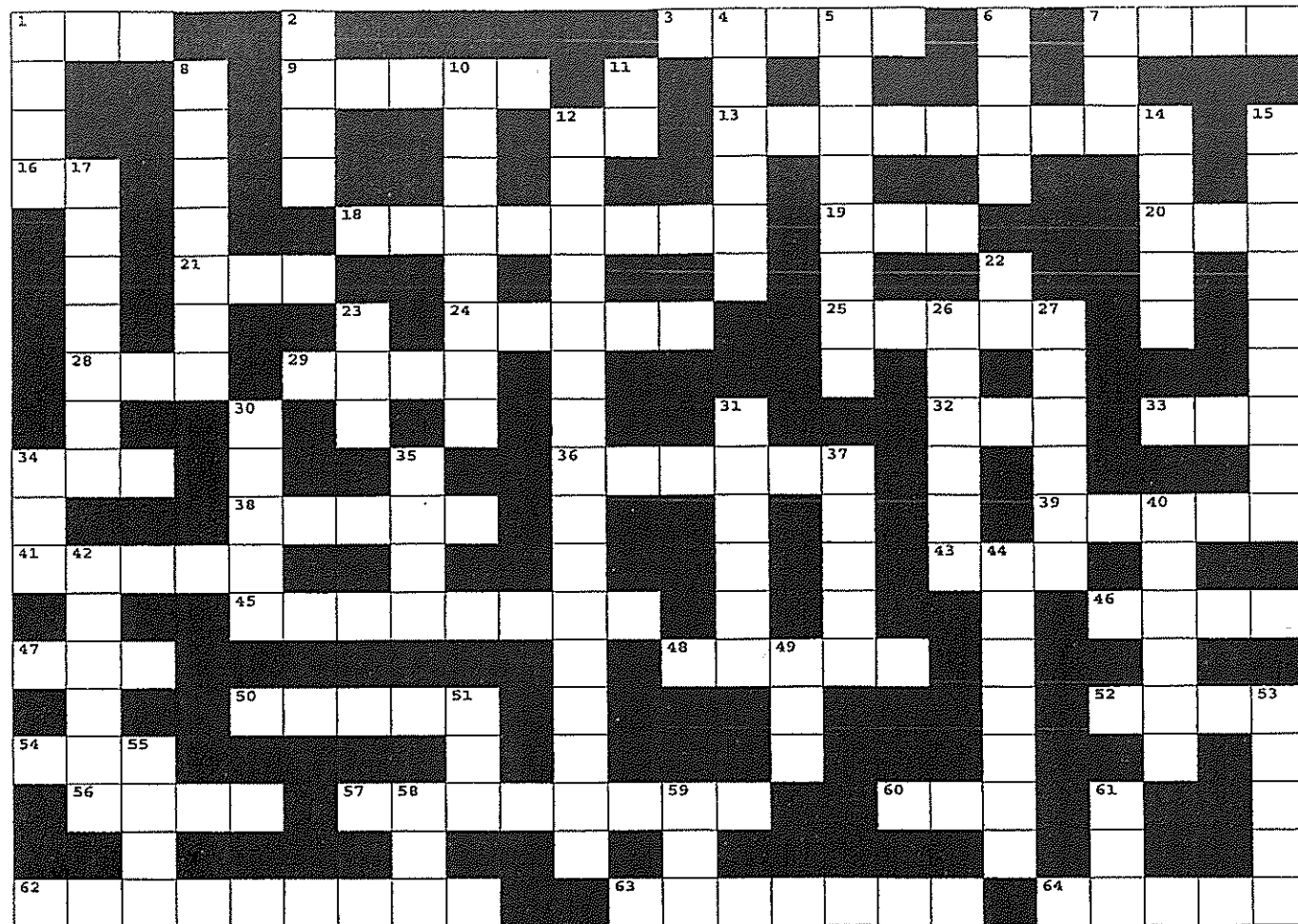
If you have something to share, then let us know!!

To contribute an article, recipe or cartoon for the Wool Press, contact Siân Ferguson on telephone 27355, fax 27352 or email sferguson@doa.gov.fk

**Submissions need to be in before the end of the month.
All contributions are gratefully received.**

PUZZLE PAGE

CROSSWORD...



Across

- 1. Lacerate
- 3. "... number" - only divisible by itself or one
- 7. DOA staff member
- 9. Conscious
- 12. "... Jane" US film starring Demi Moore
- 13. King of beers
- 16. "... system", tancy
- 18. Cranium pain
- 19. Tin
- 20. Canine
- 21. "T ..." fearsome dinosaur
- 24. "Peter ..." singer
- 25. Foreign exchange student in American Pie 1 and 2
- 28. Half a dozen
- 29. Sly glance
- 32. Old name for DOA
- 33. Non-venomous snake

- 34. Grain of this grass is used in making flour and whisky
- 36. Computer game using blocks
- 38. Make amends
- 39. Stout, single edged sword with curved blade
- 41. Decorate/furnish
- 43. Distress signal
- 45. Cutting instrument
- 46. 3D square
- 47. Wager
- 48. "... dish", shallow with a cover, used in labs
- 50. Additional
- 52. LSD (slang)
- 54. Scarlet
- 56. Legal document
- 57. Venue for West Sports
- 60. UK fast food chain
- 62. Reproof
- 63. Perpetual

Down

- 1. Forceful taking over of a government
- 2. "Go ...", used for recreational racing
- 4. Eraser
- 5. Remedy
- 6. Coloured part of the eye
- 7. Referring to a female
- 8. Highly infectious disease of animals which can be passed to humans
- 10. Japanese make (ie motor-bikes)
- 11. Sleuth
- 12. Long-pendulum clock in a tall wooden case
- 14. Where cowboys display their skills
- 15. Infuriate

- 17. General pardon
- 22. Informal greeting
- 23. Football umpire (slang)
- 26. Local pub
- 27. Admission
- 30. A/ET vet
- 31. A fruit with the same name as its colour
- 34. Local farmers association
- 35. Deputy in Dukes of Hazzard
- 37. Rake through
- 40. Spring back
- 42. Regarded as
- 44. Fast and flightless African bird
- 49. Lead
- 51. Every
- 53. "... Duck" Bugs' nemesis
- 55. "Johnny ..." hunky actor
- 58. Tavern
- 59. Animal doctor
- 61. Mineral spring

LOGIC...

A BUTCHER GOES TO THE MARKET WITH £100 CASH. HE HAS TO BUY EXACTLY 100 ANIMALS. THERE ARE COWS, GEESSE AND CHICKEN FOR SALE. A COW COSTS £15, A GOOSE IS £1 AND A CHICKEN COSTS £0.25. HE HAS TO BUY AT LEAST ONE OF EACH ANIMAL AND HAS TO SPEND ALL HIS MONEY. WHAT DOES THE BUTCHER BUY?

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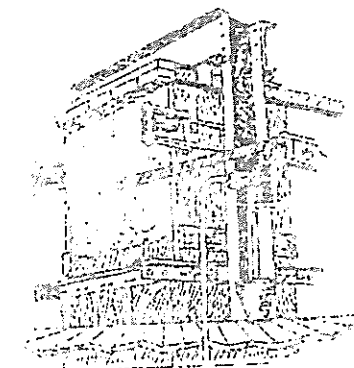
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Edited by Siân Ferguson

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EDITORIAL

It seems like only a few weeks ago that the start of the shearing season was the subject of an editorial and yet here we are, in March again, with another season just about finished! How quickly time flies...

This edition of the Wool Press promotes several key activities...

1 The Saladero Ram Sale

Due to the large numbers of rams to be sold/allocated, the Ram Sale will once again be held at the Goose Green shearing shed. Thank you very much to Brian Aldridge for making the facility available for this important event and the time he and his staff give to make it a success. Thanks to Port Howard farm for all the assistance to West farmers with sheep movements and the Tamar crew for being so co-operative with the needs of the day.

2 Sheep Selection and Breeding Workshops

All farmers (and others) with a keen interest in developing the quality of sheep on their farms are urged to attend. If you require more information, please do not hesitate to contact Damien O'Sullivan.

The Wool Press also contains an article from Harriet Hall on the FCO's Economic Diversification programme, certainly food for thought and perhaps an opportunity for those with ideas for diversification or business development.

This edition of the Wool Press also contains excellent articles on Wineglass Station and Elephant Beach. They are recommended for your attention. While not reviewed in the Wool Press as yet, please do not forget to ask Hope Cottage, Horseshoe Bay, Race Point, White Rock or West Lagoons as to how their Grazing Management trials are progressing as well.

It is also good to hear about staff, particularly new staff such as Lyn Dent and Frans Jooste, as well as more familiar names/faces such as Sam Davies. Please do not hesitate to take the chance to catch up with them when the chance exists.

We hope that you find this edition of the Wool Press informative as well as useful.

Neil Judd
Senior Agricultural Advisor

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FCO ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION PROGRAMME BUDGET

By Harriet Hall

Many people in Camp have been asking for more information about the Foreign Office's fund to boost Economic Diversity in the Overseas Territories. Much as I would like to visit everyone individually I thought the easiest way to reach a wide audience would be through an article in the Wool Press – so here it is!

The full name for the fund is the Economic Diversification Programme Budget – EDPB. It is available to all Overseas Territories, so people in the Falklands are competing for funding with those in St Helena, Pitcairn and the Caribbean OTs. The aim of the fund is to help encourage and develop **new** business opportunities. The key word here is **Diversification**. For example, if people in the Falklands currently have to source a product or a service overseas at great expense, and you think you could start a small business to provide this service locally, then the fund is a possible source of finance.

If you think you can make a new product that could be exported and that this could develop into a small business which creates employment, then again the fund might be able to help. The key thing to remember is that the fund is (unfortunately) not just to help individuals get rich – it is to help develop a new and different business that will benefit the local economy and hopefully bring in new money to the Falkland Islands.

If you think you've got an idea that you'd like to see funded, the first step is to think about the key questions which the Foreign Office will ask:

- What are you trying to achieve? What will the money be spent on and what will you contribute to the business? What goods or services will the business produce?
- How much funding do you need and how long will it take to establish the business?
- What other sources of finance have you explored?
- Will the project really work?
- What might go wrong and how would you deal with problems?
- How will the Falklands economy benefit in the medium and long term? Who will benefit?

Usually there is a limit of £30,000 on our contribution to each project and the Foreign Office expect you to provide at least a quarter of the investment from elsewhere. But your own investment does not have to be financial – sometimes throwing in labour costs, or contributing existing stock can count towards the total cost of a project.

Government House can email you the application forms, which contain Guidance Notes. I am also happy to discuss ideas with interested people to see if they are suitable. Come and see me if you're in Stanley, or try and grab me in a sober moment at the West Sports! If you do get offered funding, the normal procedure is then for us to pay all invoices associated with the project directly, up to the maximum amount agreed by London. We would also visit you either during the project and/or when it is completed to see how successful it is.

The UK Financial Year runs from 1 April to 31 March and all spend must be completed within the Financial Year. I don't yet have a closing date for applications for next year but if you let us know you're interested then I'll keep you informed. My email address is harriet.hall@fco.gov.uk. Alternatively you can contact sylvia.allen@fco.gov.uk or vera.bonner@fco.gov.uk who can also send you the forms.

WINEGLASS STATION - GRAZING TRIAL UPDATE

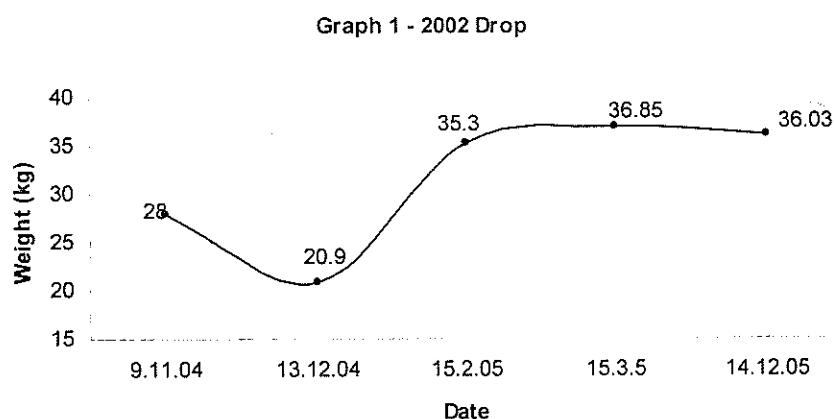
By Doug Martin

Just to recap, the trial at Wineglass commenced on the 9th October 2004 with 436 x 2002 drop lambs and 348 x 2003 drop lambs. A total of 784 head with a DSE (dry sheep equivalent) of 450hd. Approximately 100 sheep of each group were tagged in order to monitor individual animal performance.

The managed summer grazing area of 342ha was subdivided into 10 blocks using one or two hot-wires. A 19 ha reseed is included in the system, however this had poor dry matter yields which were no better than the native camp species. A second winter grazing area of 680ha was subdivided into three blocks of 2 x 190ha and 1 x 300ha.

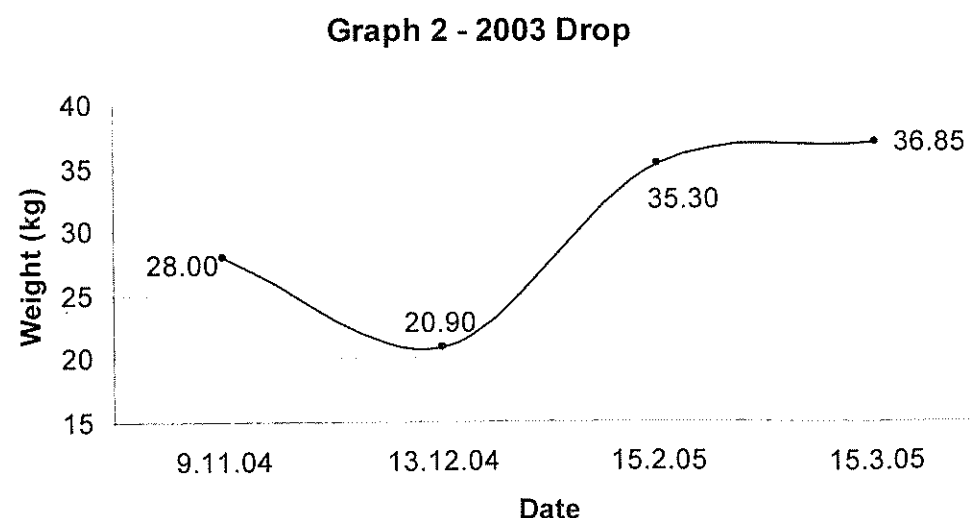
The combined flock was rotated through the 320ha summer grazing twice until 25.5.05 with each move on a weekly basis and exact timing depending on grass growth and condition of stock. The sheep were gathered for shearing in early October and then moved back onto the summer grazing area. The sheep were then rotated twice through the winter grazing area from 26.5 until 1.11.05.

The sheep were weighed off-shears prior to commencement of the trial. Graph 1 shows a weight loss after the first weighing but both classes of stock made considerable gains from January until March. In the second summer grazing the initial weight loss did not occur perhaps reflecting the improved nutrient content of the grass and forbs from the initial season.



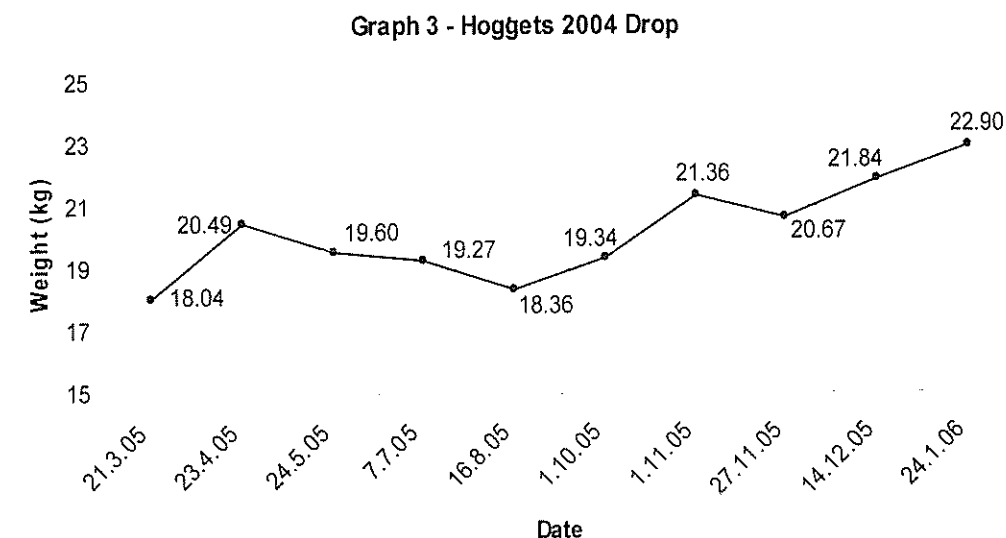
The 2002 drop sheep were moved to a set stocked system on 15.3.05 in order to make way for 541, 2004 drop lambs. This gave the trial a DSE rating of 520. It was interesting to note that the 2002 drop suffered a small weight loss when returned to the set-stocked system.

For the 2003 drop shearlings weight loss was minimal (as shown in Graph 2) in the early part of winter 2005. During August 2005 weights commenced an upward trend. Wiggling took place in June. Despite conditions being difficult though the September – December period the sheep continued to make weight gains.



Wool weights were taken in October 05, with the graph dipping to reflect this, then weights again improved.

Graph 3 shows the progress with the 2004 drop hoggets with weight losses being minimal over winter 2005.



The following points are of interest:

- Losses have dropped from an average of 25% to less than 4%.
- Sheep are much easier to handle.
- The system allows for improved husbandry.
- Faecal egg counts have been low, with drenching considered only on one occasion.
- Fuel and labour costs have increased, however this is more than compensated for by fewer sheep losses.
- Rainfall was better for the 12 month period than most other areas in the Islands, therefore this perhaps lessened the effect of the dry Spring.
- Wool produced from the trial area was 2468kg which equated to 4.75 kg per DSE or 2.4kg per ha.
- Winter bodyweight losses have been minimised.

The intention on Wineglass is to establish low-cost rotational grazing systems for the whole farm area. A system is already in place for the ewes and this winter a wether grazing system will be established.

The Department of Agriculture is interested to work with any other interested farmers wishing to improve nutrition and survival of their sheep and cattle in order to improve efficiency. In this case the system appears to be working well and certainly worth persevering with. It may not suit other farms, but is a viable alternative.

Want to keep ahead of the competition?

Then why not advertise in the Wool Press?

Full Page	£20.00
Half Page	£10.00
Quarter Page	£5.00
Flyers	contact us for details

Send your adverts into Siân Ferguson, Department of Agriculture by post, fax 27352 or email sferguson@doa.gov.fk

A. Anderson

SALADERO RAM SALE at Goose Green

By Neil Judd

Venue	Time
Goose Green Shearing Shed	Inspections start at 8am
Date	Auction
Thursday 16th March	Commences at 11am

Tamar

Sails from Port Howard to New Haven on the morning of 16th March and returns to Port Howard the same evening. Please contact Island Shipping on 22345 for bookings and information.

Approximate Number of Rams available at sale...

- 50 x NSF Polwarth shearing rams plus several mature ex-stud sires (reserve £50 *except as shown in catalogue*)
- 50 x Corriedale stud flock shearing rams (reserve £30)
- 15 x ET Corriedale (stud flock) x Dohne ram hoggets (reserve £100)
- 70 x ET Dohne ram hoggets (reserve £300)
- 70 x ET SAMM ram hoggets (reserve £300)
- 13 x ET Poll Dorset ram hoggets (reserve £300)

Sale catalogues will be generated over the next couple of weeks and distributed to all interested people towards the end of February/early March. They will be sent to all farmers on the Wool Press mailing list - if you know of anyone else who would be interested in obtaining a catalogue, please advise them to contact Siân Ferguson at the DOA.

The final decision as to the selling process that will be used at the "Saladero Ram Sale" will be agreed at the March meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee. However, the following process will be recommended to the committee...

The Sale Day will proceed in two distinct parts as follows...

FIRST PART - HELMSMAN AUCTION

The Helmsman auction will commence at 11am sharp for all buyers wishing to purchase any of the above rams using their **own** funds. Please note that PIP funding will **not** be available to assist farmers with any purchase at the Helmsman auction. Usual auction processes including buyer numbers etc will apply.

SECOND PART - PIP RAM ALLOCATION

- After the conclusion of the Helmsman auction, remaining rams will be **allocated** to farms that have included ram purchases on their 05/06 PIP plan.
- PIP plans contain details on available funds plus ram breed(s) for each PIP eligible

farm. Any changes should be negotiated with Neil Judd, Andrew Pollard, Doug Martin or Damien O'Sullivan within 15 minutes of the completion of the Helmsman auction.

- The number of rams available for each of the breeds is limited. Hence it is likely that some farmers will not get all of the rams of some breeds that they wish.
- Any farmers wishing to nominate another person to represent them at the sale should contact Neil Judd **in writing** prior to sale day.

Example: 70 x SAMM ram hogget allocation

- Names of farms who have applied to utilise PIP funding to purchase SAMM ram hoggets will be placed into a 'hat'. Order of **allocation** will be drawn **randomly** on the sale day.
- Rams will be allocated in **ascending** tag number order to farms in their randomly allocated sequence repeatedly until each farms demand is satisfied or until ram supply is exhausted.
- It is quite likely that demand will out-strip supply for most breeds and as a result some farms may not get the number of rams required or individual animals most desired.
- After the PIP ram allocation finishes, farmers will have 30 minutes to view their rams.
- Any farmer wishing to reject any rams that they have been allocated must advise Andrew Pollard within 30 minutes of the completion of the ram allocation.
- No rejected rams will be replaced or billed against PIP accounts.
- Rams rejected by farmers after the completion of the allocation will be re-allocated to farms whose PIP requests were **not** satisfied by the initial allocation.
- Ram allocations will be debited (£300/SAMM ram hogget in this instance) against PIP funds.

The same process will be repeated for all breeds of sheep to be purchased using PIP funds.

Private Ram Sale Opportunity

An opportunity may exist for farmers to sell **their own rams** at the Ram Sale. Please contact Lucy Ellis or Neil Judd to discuss your options.

It should be noted that sale negotiations and payment details for privately owned rams would remain the responsibility of private buyers/sellers. The DOA will not take part in or accept any responsibility for private transactions completed on the day.

Farmers participating in the PIP scheme should also be aware that PIP funds are able to be used to purchase rams from private farms **provided** all PIP planning requirements are satisfied.

Anyone requiring more details should contact Neil Judd on 27355.

National Stud Flock Ewes and 2005-drop lambs will be available for viewing at Saladero after lunch on the 16th March.

Please contact John Hobman on 27357 for more details.

Michele's Burger Van will be there selling hotdogs, burger and soft drinks.

Tea and coffee will be provided free of charge by the DOA

USEFUL WEB PAGES

By Sam Davies

During my time at college I collected up a heap of favourite web addresses that came in handy during my studies away and some just for fun, here is a list below that might be of some interest to you all.

Firstly, link to Longreach Pastoral College along with the three other Queensland Ag Colleges are included in this site.

<http://www.agriculturalcollege.qld.edu.au/>

MLA Meat and Livestock Australia, this website is useful for Cattle, sheep and goat producers, lot feeders, meat exporters and good for marketing information.

<http://www.mla.com.au/default.htm>

Ag Links, this is a search engine that can find any agriculture topic that is searched for. Really good for wool market links, stud pages and general livestock information.

<http://www.aglinks.com.au/>

Australian Wool Testing Authority, this site became very useful to me during a marketing assignment that I chose to do about wool. General information about wool, and regularly updated.

<http://www.awta.com.au/>

Australian Wool Innovation Limited, again a very good site for the update of markets. Covering topics such as harvesting, wool production, wool science and processing, and lots of other helpful information.

www.wool.com.au

Dohne sheep have their site as well; I often looked at this site just out of personal interest.

<http://www.dohne.com.au/>

For my major assignment I produced a property business plan on Adrian Veitch's dorper stud in Western Australia, his website came in handy!

www.kayadorper.com.au

WOOL STATEMENTS & WOOL PRICE DATABASE

Please send your Wool Statements into the Department of Agriculture asap for processing.

We will photocopy them here and post the originals back to you as soon as they come in.

Please contact Neil Judd or Siân Ferguson for more information on 27355.

WHAT I'VE BEEN UP TO

By Sam Davies

Since starting with the Ag Dept again at the end of November 2005 I have been kept busy, my first priority has been to supervise core testing. This has taken a lot of my time at FIPASS, Goose Green, North Arm and Fox Bay. Already from this season 05/06 we have cored a lot of wool, and lot more is to come.

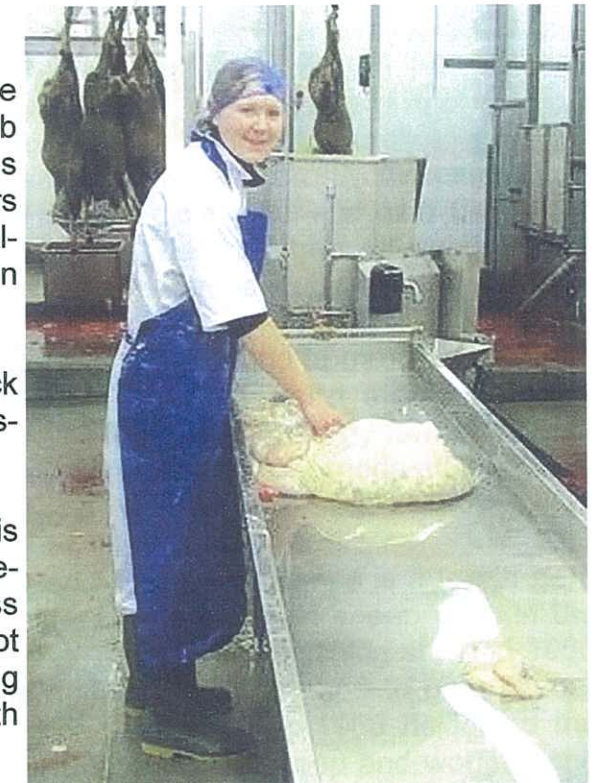
Every Friday afternoon I have blood samples to spin down, this is to separate the clotted blood from the serum. The serum is then extracted into duplicate samples, identified and frozen. The bloods come from the abattoir, and are being taken for Vic's Q-Fever screening. Now that Lyn is here - our new senior laboratory technician - she has taken over the blood sampling.

I have also been helping Doug with his grazing trial; have been to various farms weighing fleeces, weighing sheep and conducting GPS work. I would like to do a lot more towards this trial, but will have to wait until core testing has come to a halt.

Through out the next five months I will be assisting Nyree and Frans with this years AI/ET programme, my job through out this will be to nurse when flushing and various other tasks as well. I am looking forward to this years programme, as I thoroughly enjoy this type of work. Already we have been to Goose Green and Cape Dolphin flushing this year.

I have also started daily visits to the abattoir to check stomachs for johnes disease, again as part of Vic's disease screening program.

Johnes Disease; other wise known as paratuberculosis is caused by the bacteria mycobacterium diuim subspecies paratuberculosis. It mainly presents as weight loss and ill thrift in sheep greater than two years of age. A lot of markets in Australia (stud onina buyers) are requesting that purchased stocks are vaccinated against johnes with 'Gudair' vaccination.



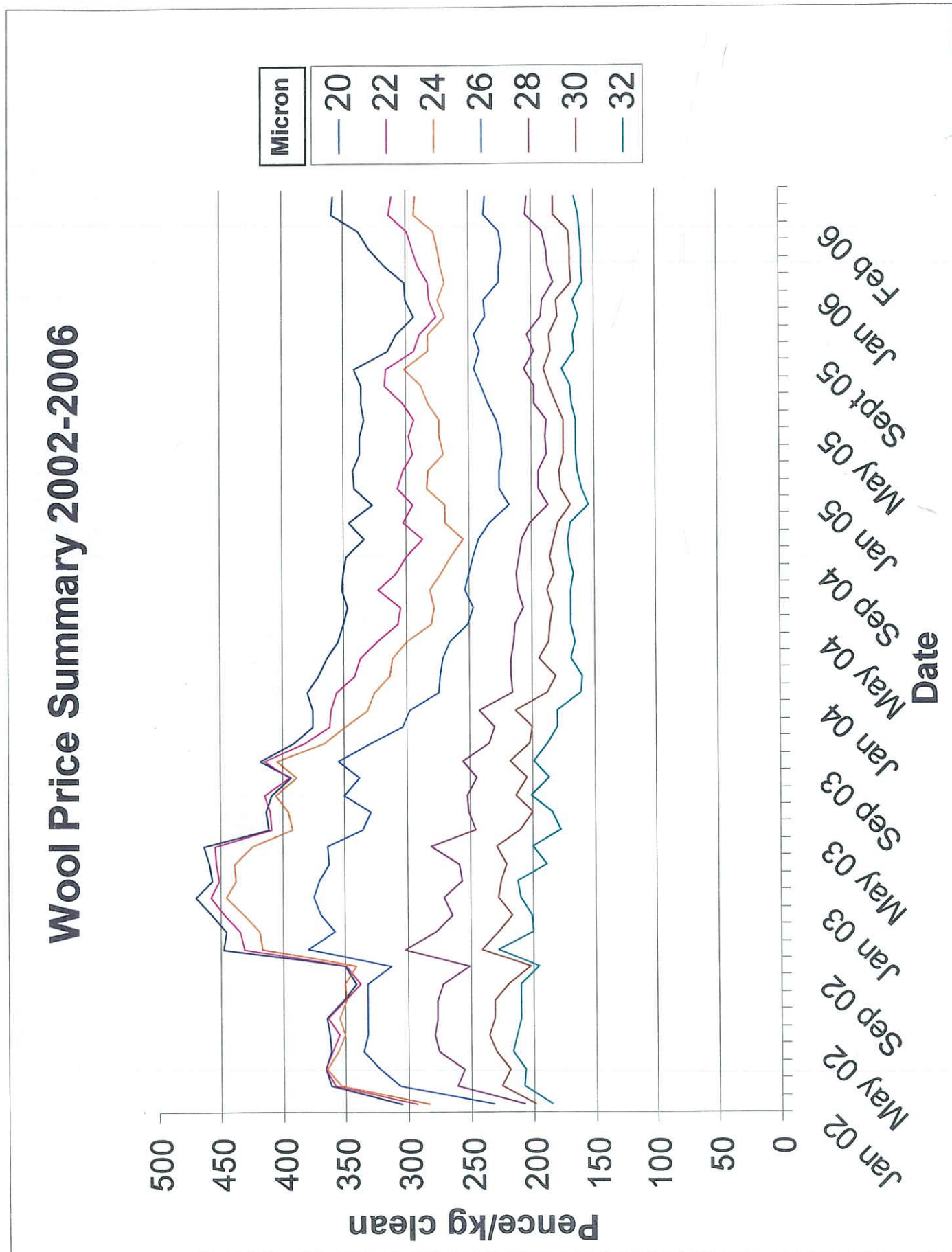
CORRECTION

In last month's Wool Press in the Corriedale article, a mistake was made in the section about Port Edgar. What Tex & Mandy actually said was they had saved three young wethers last winter that had been stuck in a snowdrift for two days under five weeks (not just two days).

We apologise for any misconceptions about the amount of sheep they have getting stuck in snowdrifts, when they were trying to talk about the hardiness of the breed. Sorry!!

WOOL PRICE TREND OVER TIME

Based on weekly DOA Wool Reports



SHEEP BREEDING AND SELECTION WORKSHOPS

By Damien O'Sullivan

The wool classing workshops held in 2004 prompted many requests from farmers for more information on practical selection of sheep on farms. Several issues kept coming to the surface; *how to select sheep for commercial flocks* (for the small number farms that can afford to sell cull ewes) and *how to select ewes/rams for on-farm studs to produce their own flock rams or stud rams for sale?*

As a result we have Henri Londt, a South African with many years experience in the sheep industry coming to conduct a series of 3-day workshops. Dates and location for the workshops will be:

Estancia	22, 23 & 24 March
Port Howard	27, 28 & 29 March
Coast Ridge Farm	31 March 1 & 2 April
San Carlos	4, 5 & 6 April

The workshops will have plenty of practical hands on classing of sheep, mixed with sessions on setting breeding objectives, planning breeding programs and predicting genetic gain (i.e. more wool, increased growth rates, lower micron, greater fertility etc). The workshop will examine the reality of what should be expected from on-farm flock ram breeding versus stud operations.

Workshops will examine the different approaches that are used in the world to maximise genetic gain for specialist wool producing breeds such as the Merino and specialist meat producing breeds such as Poll Dorsets and Texels. In addition systems that are utilised by farmers to ensure greatest possible gain for the dual-purpose breeds such as Polwarth/Corriedale/Dohne will also be "put under the microscope"



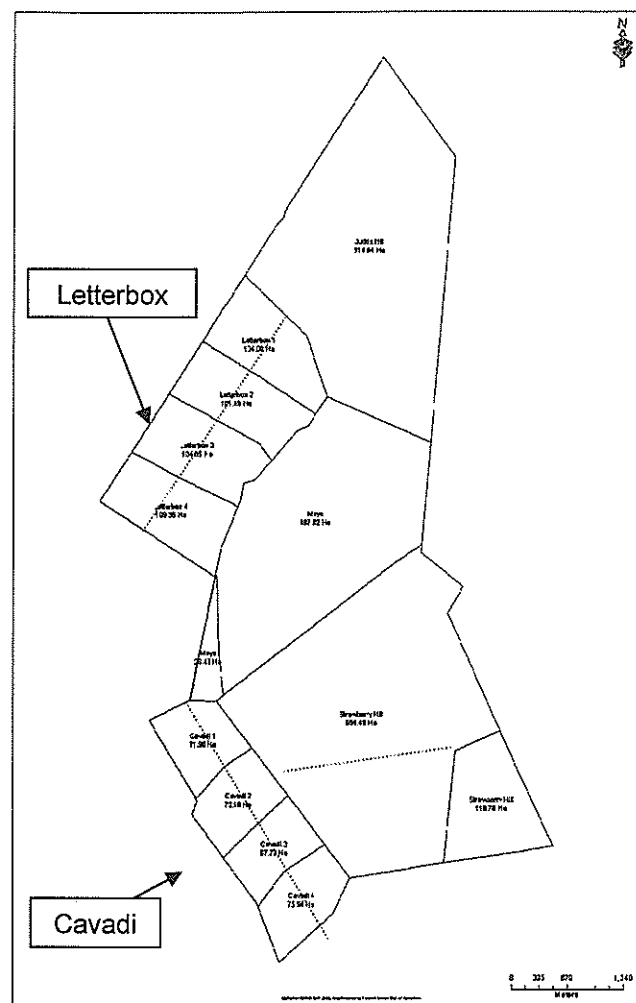
Henri Londt who is leading the workshops is a fourth generation sheep farmer. He grew up on sheep farm in the Karoo region of South Africa. After finishing study in 1966 he visited Australia during 1967 and 1968 to gain experience in the wool sheep industry. In 1968 he joined the wool broking firm BSB working as sheep and wool technical advisor mainly in the summer rainfall region of the RSA. During his professional career Henri has worked as an inspector for the the traditional "wool cutting" Merino, Damara, Dorper, SAMM, and Dohne Merino sheep breed societies. Henri served on the executive committee of the SA Federation for Group Breeders and still serves on the executive committee of the National Wool Growers Association of SA. He is currently the President of the South African Federation for Small Stock Breed Societies.

If you would like to attend one of these workshops please contact the Department of Agriculture on 27355.

ELEPHANT BEACH FARM GRAZING TRAIL UPDATE

By Damien O'Sullivan

The aim of the trial started in Dec 2004 is to increase sheep production and returns by using "Managed Grazing" techniques. Outcomes of the trial are to increase sustainable production from white grass camp in the most economic manner and maximise % of productive fine grasses.



Two camps, Letterbox and Cavadi have been fenced into a total of 9 paddocks. These paddocks average 72ha each in Cavadi and 95ha each in Letterbox. The camps where the trial is located is on very peaty soil, formerly used as wether ground. A ninth paddock of 26ha joins the two groups of paddocks. There is planning underway to further subdivide Cavadi & Letterbox camp using single wire electric fencing this will make rotations far easier as sheep can move around the system in a circle and do not have to be moved from one end of the system to the other when a new round of grazing begins.

Fencing: 2-wire electric fencing has been used for all the dividing fences. C posts, strainers and wire have cost approximately £400/km including an allowance for labour. The top wire is 52cm high and the second 20cms high with only the top wire electrified. C posts are approximately 15-18m apart depending on the camp. There are no battens or droppers except in ditches where tie downs have been used. It took two people 7 hours to erect a kilometre of this fencing.

Sheep

Numbers: 1035 to 1324 ewes and lambs of varying ages and backgrounds have been rotationally

grazed through the system since 18th of Dec. Currently there are 1035 ewes in the system and it is anticipated that these numbers will stay the same.

	Current	Start of Trial
Actual sheep no.s	1035	1300
DSE Sheep no.s	1863	2340
Area ha	2650	2650
Stocking rate DSE/ha	1.42	1.13
sheep/ha	0.39	0.49

Management

SHEEP ARE MOVED EVERY 5 TO 7 DAYS DEPENDING ON THE SIZE OF A PARTICULAR

CAMP, THE AMOUNT OF FEED AVAILABLE, RAINFALL, AND RATE OF GRASS GROWTH. GRASS GROWTH, PLANT SPECIES, WOOL WEIGHTS, SHEEP WEIGHTS AND TOTAL PRODUCTION IS BEING MONITORED ON THE SITE.

Observations

Initially when sheep were first put into the system about 10 % went through the fences into the next paddock. Part of the problem was the top wire being too high. After moving the top wire to 52cm high and some training of the sheep movement across the fence has been minimal. In managing the system sheep are checked regularly to ensure everything is ok and there is still sufficient grazing. A large number of sheep have been found cast or stuck in ditches saving quite a number. The sheep soon become very tame. Lambs have quickly got used to being worked and breaks have become rare. With careful planning the sheep can be at the closest point to the settlement when shearing comes around. This makes gathering very much easier. It is noticeable that fine hair grass is now appearing in the rested pasture and when sheep graze down the cinnamon grass it is time to move them on to the next paddock.

Despite all this there were some major setbacks towards the end of 2005. With good weather conditions in October the system was working nicely but as we moved into poorer spring weather conditions in late November with some snow and not watching the sheep carefully enough we lost about 200 of the ewes. A combination of poor weather that week, a slow start to spring, very old cull ewes and grazing a paddock for too long contributed to the losses. Add to this a 30% lambing of the ewes and it has been disappointing. However when we consider wethers were only run in this area previously and we are using aged cull ewes we cannot expect a perfect situation in the short term. Other farms have also had large losses in the ewe flocks so we are confident the rotational grazing system is not totally at fault. Like any management system it takes time to get used to.

Where to now?

Given what has happened we have reassessed the stocking rate and over the winter period will use a rotation to move the sheep through the larger adjoining camps for winter. This has seemed quite successful at Wineglass so we will try this over winter here. One of the important lessons we have learnt is in this system the regular monitoring of the sheep is essential.

The Essentials of Managed Grazing

Check sheep regularly - even daily to monitor feed

More than one or two paddocks are needed for winter grazing

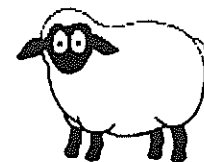
While there have been beneficial changes to pasture state in the short term it will require longer time periods for significant changes to occur.

Ultimately we still have enough faith in the system to adopt a similar managed grazing strategy right across the farm.

Rural Business Association News



The Rural Business Association secretarial post is now held by SeAled PR Ltd, run by Sarah Clement and Amanda Morris. If you wish to contact the RBA you can phone their office on 22432 or email rba@horizon.co.fk



The 2006 Sheep Show will be held at Fitzroy Farm on the 15th of April. This coincides with the dates for the new ferry service. For more information on classes please call the RBA office on the number above.

JANUARY'S WEATHER

By Siân Ferguson

First of all, apologies for the delay in getting the January weather out to everyone, but by some miracle the February Wool Press was ready for the printers and back again before the end of the month - not something that seems to happen too often so I will make the most of it when it does!! You may notice that February seems to be missing from this month as well, but with me skiving across to the West for Sports Week (armed with many a bottle of Spiced Rum), your favourite publication has been sent to print early.

Well onto the matter in hand... as you all may have noticed, January was a pretty wet and windy month, with temperatures recorded at MPA being pretty close to the norm. The highest temperature recorded was 21°C on Friday the 13th with the lowest reaching 1.9°C on Thursday the 19th. MPA recorded 89.2mm of rain, well above the average, although Stanley only saw 56.5mm, compared to an average of 74. Port Howard experienced a total of 130.5mm in January.

There was no snow, sleet or fog, but there was thunder on two days. It was the first time that MPA had a hail free January. Sunshine hours were only slightly below average at 219.3 hours. There was only one day with no sunshine and the highest daily total was 13.2 hours on Saturday 21st. It was a very windy month with a mean wind speed of 17.2 knots (the highest recorded at MPA). The maximum gust of 58 knots was on Thursday the 19th. There eleven days of gales (average is just 4.8) and gusts exceeding 33knots were recorded on 18 days, which is average for the month.

Location		2005											2006
		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
Stanley	2005	29	77	49	39	35	29	35.5	19.3	28	45.5	87	56.5
	Average	57	59	58	58	50	46.5	45.5	41	39.5	46	68	74
MPA	2005	33	48	56	48	22	23.1	49.1	14	32.3	40.1	67.3	89.2
	Average	47	57	49	54	58	45	36.4	33.5	34.6	36.6	57.9	61
Head of Bay		30	67	42	66	25	28	46	13	21.5	35	71	77
Elephant Beach		23	69	22	57	30	31	50.5	14	19.5	43.5	68	68
Swan Inlet		29	45	38	50	16	28	32	3	11.5	41.5	47	66.5
Pebble Island		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14.5	16.5	44.75	44.75
Port Howard		-	-	-	-	-	42.75	49.75	14	24.5	47	52.5	130.5
Saladero		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	22	41	56
South Harbour		-	-	-	-	-	-	36	17	15	18	35	30
Wineglass Station		29.5	57.5	43.75	63	22.5	21.5	44	14.5	17.5	63.5	58	87
Darwin		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	63
Cape Dolphin		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	52.5
Moss Side		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	62	62

The Department of Agriculture would like to thank everyone who has provided us with rainfall figures over the past year, the MPA Met Office, Ted Jones, Riki Evans, Andrez Short, Raymond Evans, Ron Reeves, John & Viv Hobman, Mike Evans, Bobby Short, Peter Wakefield, Sheena Miller and Donna Minnell.

Please pass your rainfall figures onto Siân as soon as possible following the end of the month.

If you would like to collect rainfall data for the DOA on a regular basis, then please contact us and we can provide you with a rainfall gauge. Alternatively we would like to hear from anyone who already collects the data and would be interested in passing on the monthly totals to us.

Question & Answer Session with Reproductive Specialist Frans Jooste

By Siân Ferguson

Why did you become a vet and then move into AI/ET work? I did a Master's degree in reproduction after qualifying as a veterinarian and AI/ET work was part of my training. I don't do only AI/ET, but domestic animal reproduction in general.

Where have you been working these past few years? I have been employed by the University of Pretoria while I was doing my internship in the Veterinary hospital at Onderstepoort in South Africa. I spent a year in Australia doing cattle reproduction and I spent about 6 months in the UK doing mostly sheep reproduction and general practice work. Up to June last year I was employed at Onderstepoort as a senior lecturer in Reproduction.

What attracted you to the Falklands? I thought it would be a good opportunity to see this part of the world.

How well do you think AI/ET will work in the Falklands? I am sure it will work the same as in the rest of the world. If you have clear-cut breeding objectives and know what you are trying to achieve with an AI/ET program the outcome is likely to be positive.

What are your thoughts of being in the Falklands? I am enjoying my stay here very much and I find farming in the Falklands very interesting. Farmers have to operate in a pretty harsh environment and this makes it very challenging.

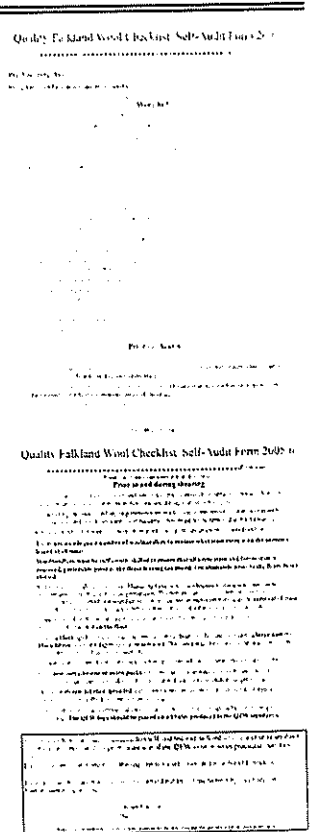
TO ALL QFW STENCIL HOLDERS

As most of you will have finished shearing for this season we are sending out this reminder to ask that you send in your Completed Self-Audit Checklists.

We aim to check sheds at least once every 2 years or more often if possible

If you are not currently in QFW but would like to be involved please contact us.

Please send your completed Checklist to Damien or Lucy at the Department of Agriculture.



NEW SENIOR LAB TECHNICIAN

By Lyn Dent

I am a Microbiologist from Brisbane, Australia. I arrived in Stanley on Saturday the 14th January and when we stepped out the door of the plane, we almost got blown right back home again! It was a nice day other than that and my first impressions were positive.

I was met at MPA by my line manager Vic, and his wife Coralie. We did a short Tiki Tour of the town and went to their place for lunch. This was the first of many such impromptu meals I have had since I have been here and I thank everyone for their hospitality and friendliness.

I have taken up a position in the Veterinary Laboratory as Senior Laboratory Technician. I have inherited Sue Halfacre's portfolio so will be here there and everywhere for the duration of my two year contract. The abattoir will be a constant source of activity over the next few months as will the fishing boats that come in.

The penguins at Volunteer Point have already had a visit from me and my camera and my computer now sports a new desktop photo of King Penguins.

In the past, I have been a Victorian Police Officer, for 8 years, and a Diploma level Veterinary Nurse for 16 years. I like to tell people that I changed over because I like 4 legged animals better.

I have nursed all over Victoria and Queensland and found it a great way to see the country. I was born in Harare, Zimbabwe and moved to New Zealand in 1964 to avoid the civil unrest that was always a part of life in Zimbabwe. Nothing has changed to date. I left NZ in 1976 to follow an Australian man home, married him in 1978 and had one son in 1982. When that lot stopped being fun, I went to live with an Australian Vet near the border of Victoria and South Australia and learnt all about vet nursing at the coal face. It was a one man practice and we had an enormous area to cover. We were on call 8 days a week, 25 hours a day and still they wanted more. I loved every minute of it and when we weren't doing vet stuff, we played Squash and were members of the local amateur theatre group.

Around 8 years ago, I decided to go, alone, to Queensland and nursed around Brisbane for a while. Then I decided that it was getting too hard for too little pay and went to University to learn about bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites. I graduated in June, 2005 and went to work in an enormous abattoir about 150 kms west of Brisbane. Beef City is part of Australia Meat Holdings and is one of 4 export beef plants in Australia owned by AMH. All our cattle were grain fed feed-lot cattle, mostly Angus and Santa Gertruidis crosses. We held 27,500 head at any one time on our premises and replacements came from Prime City, Caroon and Myola feedlots. They weighed around 200-250kgs a side when they hit the chillers. We were a cold boning plant, so the sides hung in the chillers a minimum of 12 hours before boning out. Of course, all this stuff was sworn to secrecy, so now I will have to kill you all!!!

I look forward to a happy and productive two years here in Stanley.

Next Dog Dosing Day...

...Wednesday 12th April

DARWIN SHIPPING LTD

CROZIER PLACE, STANLEY, FALKLAND ISLANDS, FIOQ 1ZZ

Voy- age	Cargo Receiving Period (1)		MARCHWOOD		ASCENSION		FALKLAND ISLANDS (2)		MARCHWOOD (3)	
	From	To	Load	ETD	ETA	ETD	ETA	ETD	ETA	ETD
344	19-Dec-05	06-Jan-06	09-Jan-06	12-Jan-06	26-Jan-06	27-Jan-06	08-Feb-06	11-Feb-06	08-Feb-06	08-Mar-06
345	25-Jan-06	08-Feb-06	13-Feb-06	16-Feb-06	02-Mar-06	03-Mar-06	16-Mar-06	18-Mar-06	16-Mar-06	12/13 Apr 06
346 #	01-Mar-06	15-Mar-06	20-Mar-06	23-Mar-06	06-Apr-06	07-Apr-06	20-Apr-06	23-Apr-06	20-Apr-06	17-May-06
347	30-Mar-06	12-Apr-06	17-Apr-06	20-Apr-06	08-May-06	09-May-06	22-May-06	25-May-06	22-May-06	22-Jun-06
348	04-May-06	17-May-06	22-May-06	26-May-06	12-Jun-06	13-Jun-06	26-Jun-06	29-Jun-06	26-Jun-06	27-Jul-06
349	12-Jun-06	23-Jun-06	26-Jun-06	29-Jun-06	13-Jul-06	14-Jul-06	31-Jul-06	03-Aug-06	31-Jul-06	31-Aug-06
350 #	17-Jul-06	28-Jul-06	31-Jul-06	03-Aug-06	17-Aug-06	18-Aug-06	04-Sep-06	07-Sep-06	04-Sep-06	05-Oct-06
351	17-Aug-06	31-Aug-06	04-Sep-06	07-Sep-06	21-Sep-06	22-Sep-06	09-Oct-06	12-Oct-06	09-Oct-06	09-Nov-06
352	25-Sep-06	05-Oct-06	09-Oct-06	13-Oct-06	27-Oct-06	28-Oct-06	13-Nov-06	16-Nov-06	13-Nov-06	14-Dec-06
353	30-Oct-06	10-Nov-06	13-Nov-06	17-Nov-06	04-Dec-06	05-Dec-06	18-Dec-06	21-Dec-06	18-Dec-06	18-Jan-07
354	04-Dec-06	15-Dec-06	18-Dec-06	21-Dec-06	08-Jan-07	09-Jan-07	22-Jan-07	25-Jan-07	22-Jan-07	22-Feb-07
355	08-Jan-07	19-Jan-07	22-Jan-07	25-Jan-07	12-Feb-07	13-Feb-07	26-Feb-07	01-Mar-07	26-Feb-07	29-Mar-07
356 #	12-Feb-07	22-Feb-07	27-Feb-07	02-Mar-07	19-Mar-07	20-Mar-07	02-Apr-07	05-Apr-07	02-Apr-07	03-May-07
357	19-Mar-07	30-Mar-07	02-Apr-07	05-Apr-07	20-Apr-07	21-Apr-07	07-May-07	10-May-07	07-May-07	07-Jun-07
358	23-Apr-07	03-May-07	08-May-07	11-May-07	24-May-07	25-May-07	11-Jun-07	14-Jun-07	11-Jun-07	12-Jul-07

Where indicated these are ammunition sailings.

PLEASE NOTE:

RECEIVING DATES FOR CONSOLIDATION INTO CONTAINERS WILL VARY FROM THE DATES SHOWN PLEASE CONSULT ON A VOYAGE BASIS



Never talk to the parrot!

Mrs. Peterson phoned the repairman because her dishwasher quit working. He couldn't accommodate her with an "after-hours" appointment and since she had to go to work, she told him, "I'll leave the key under the mat. Fix the dishwasher, leave the bill on the counter, and I'll mail you a check. By the way, I have a large rottweiler inside named Killer; he won't bother you. I also have a parrot, and whatever you do, do not talk to the bird!"

Well, sure enough the dog, Killer, totally ignored the repairman, but the whole time he was there, the parrot cursed, yelled, screamed, and about drove him nuts.

As he was ready to leave, he couldn't resist saying, "You stupid bird, why don't you shut up!"

To which the bird replied, "Killer, get him!!!"

FARM ACCOUNT BOOKS

The Department of Agriculture has for sale the following Farm Account Books at only £2.00 each..

- 1 Payments and Receipts
- 2 Livestock and Wool Production
- 3 Gross Margin, Payment and Loss Account and Balance Sheet

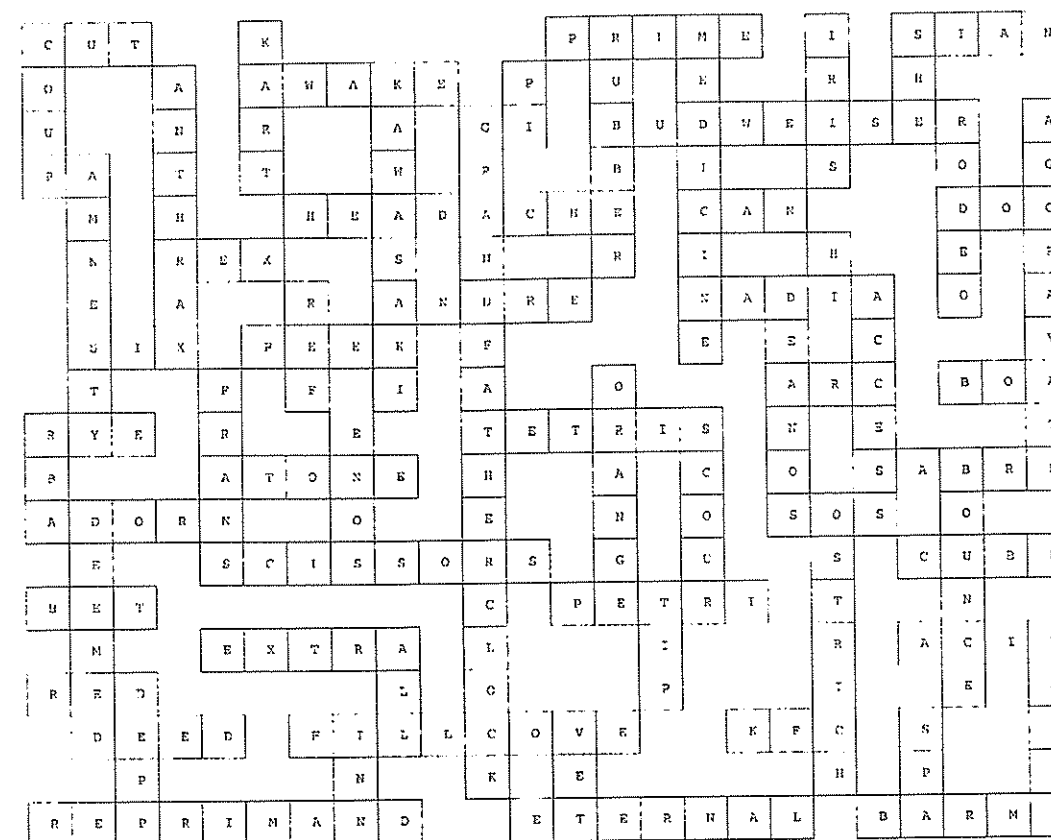
Give Siân a ring on 27355 or email sferguson@doa.gov.fk to get individual books or the complete set sent out to you.

If you have something to share, then let us know!!

To contribute an article, recipe or cartoon for the Wool Press, contact Siân Ferguson on telephone 27355, fax 27352 or email sferguson@doa.gov.fk

**Submissions need to be in before the end of the month.
All contributions are gratefully received.**

LAST MONTH'S SOLUTION



Baked Alaska

Ingredients....

For the toffee sauce
2 tbsp maple syrup
knob of butter
1 tbsp double cream

For the baked Alaska

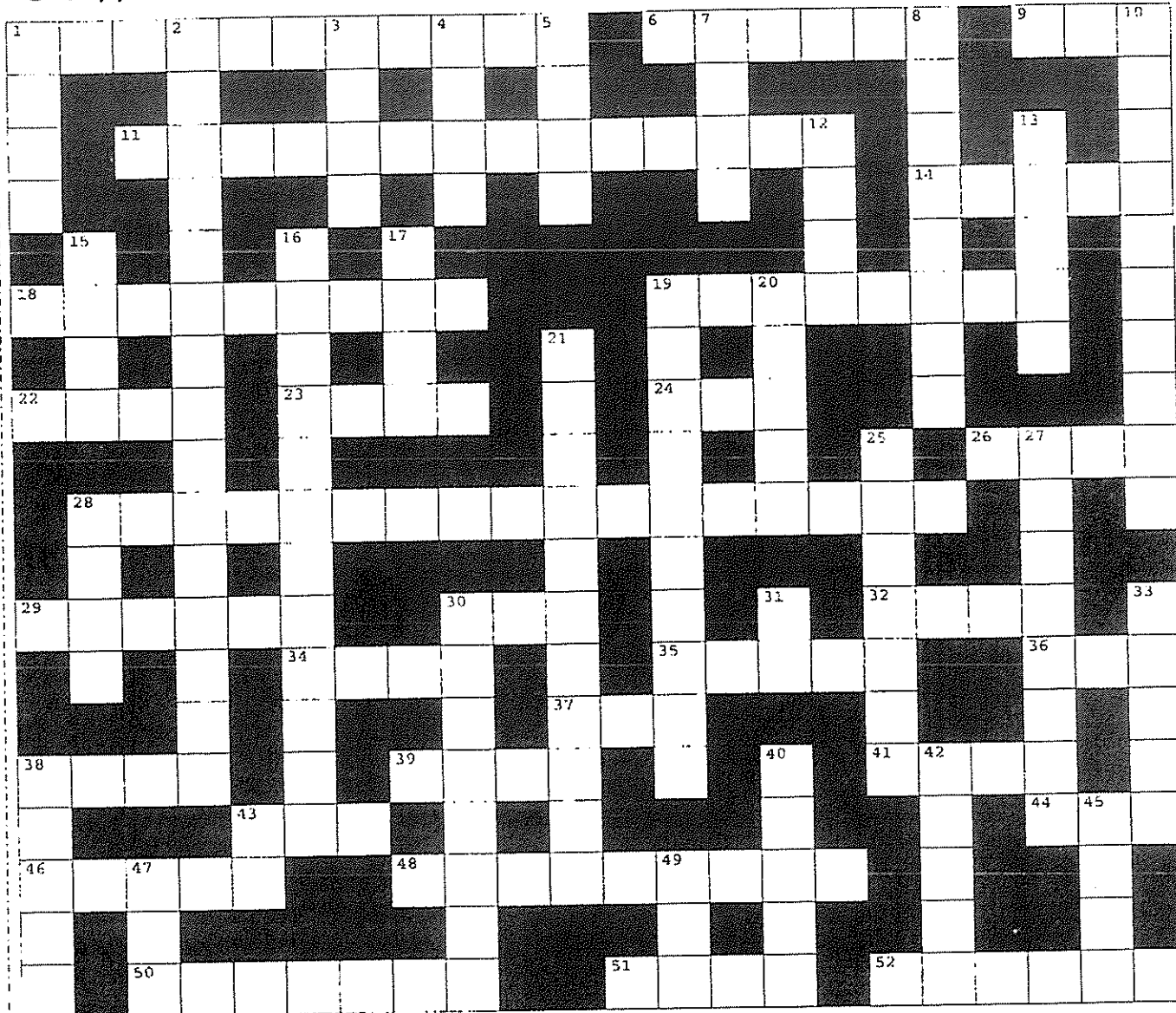
3 egg whites
3 tbsp sugar
1 scoop of vanilla ice cream
1 Belgian waffle

Method

Preheat the oven to 220C/425F/Gas 7. To make the toffee sauce, place all ingredients into a saucepan and heat gently for 2-3 minutes. To make the baked Alaska, first make a meringue by whisking the egg whites until just stiff. Then add the sugar and continue whisking until the meringue holds its shape. Fill a piping bag with the meringue. Place the waffle onto an ovenproof serving plate. Add a scoop of ice cream on top of the waffle. Pipe the meringue over the waffle and ice cream. Bake in the hot oven for about three minutes until the meringue is slightly coloured. Serve immediately with the toffee sauce.

PUZZLE PAGE

CROSSWORD...



- Across**
- 1. Pastry & mince snack
 - 6. Island with Guanaco's
 - 9. Pilfer
 - 11. Red ice-breaker
 - 14. Impromptu, improvised
 - 18. Demands an answer but doesn't ask questions
 - 19. Ringing device to announce your arrival
 - 22. A raised platform for honoured guests
 - 23. Swedish chart topping band
 - 24. Taxi
 - 26. Alcoholic beverage
 - 28. Booklet derived from annual Stock Returns
 - 29. Tedious
 - 30. Organised gang of criminals
 - 32. A temporary or insignificant hitch
 - 34. A district in central London
 - 35. Forbidden fruit
 - 36. Female octopus/lobster
 - 37. Conflict
 - 38. Popular dogs name
 - 39. Bawl/wail
 - 41. Small, secluded valley
 - 43. Abnormal
 - 44. Secure
 - 46. Enchanting
 - 48. Rodent-catcher
 - 50. Location of abattoir
 - 51. Unproblematic
 - 52. Pummel
- Down**
- 1. A long story or series of events
 - 2. Fuel depot
 - 3. "... Falkland" - location of STY
 - 4. Solitary
 - 5. White cooking fat
 - 7. Second slowest gait of a horse
 - 8. FIG farm
 - 10. Teaching aid (with chalk)
 - 12. Sharp/acidic taste
 - 13. Marine mammal with blow hole
 - 15. Greek Goddess married to Zeus
 - 16. Building home to wool press etc
 - 17. Style of door handle
 - 19. A reference book in alphabetical order
 - 20. The path a celestial body follows around a larger one
 - 21. Veterinary Services Officer
 - 25. Floating block of frozen water
 - 27. Dumbo - flying ...
 - 28. Green amphibian
 - 30. Exclusive right to an industry or service
 - 31. Slang for medical procedure
 - 33. Garden ornament
 - 38. Cargo ship/ferry
 - 40. Daily record of goings-on
 - 42. Immature insects
 - 43. "The ..." Saturday night series set in the US
 - 45. Work-shy
 - 47. Natter (slang)
 - 49. Hot beverage

THE WOOL PRESS

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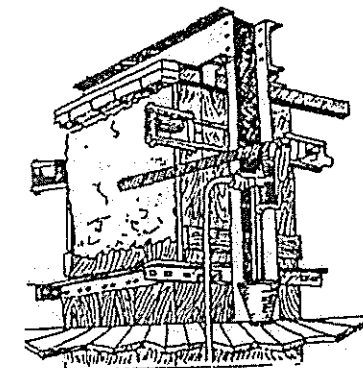
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Edited by Siân Ferguson

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EDITORIAL

This edition represents an end to an era. After 71/2 years, and this week celebrating his 50th birthday, and by my estimation after the consumption in excess on 6000 cups of tea, Steve Pointing is heading to England, with his family. I can not say home because he considers the Falkland home.

Steve has done the Falklands proud, indeed he has triumphed in battle with EU regulations and beaurocratic procedures - the Veterinary Department is the 'competent authority' and without Steve's signature both meat and fish exports would not have been possible. Steve has 'cast the dye' and now the dye needs to be continued and maintained.

I am sure Steve and his family will be missed both within the Department of Agriculture and the Falkland Islands community, in which they have played important roles.

We wish all the family good luck. Who knows where the future leads. Maybe we should merely say 'au revoir' as 'good bye' seems to be too permanent a expression.

Other articles in this edition also show the signs of change. The abattoir is giving farmers a viable option to market their products. How to reap the optimum benefits is addressed by Doug Martin's article. If the minimum dress weight required is 9 kg – sending anything less than approximately 24 kg live from the west (see details in the article) will not return a dividend! If you attended the recent course presented by Henri Londt you will see how important meat is as a source of income to the sheep farmer and participants should be a step closer to achieving these goals.

A dead sheep doesn't grow a lot of anything. Several cases of clostridial disease have been diagnosed in the Falklands. Maybe it is time to consider vaccination especially for the more valuable stock.

If you need help, you know where to find us.

Vic Epstein
Senior Veterinary Officer
Acting Director of Agricultre

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RBA SHEEP SHOW

The Rural Business Association Sheep show that is to be held on the 15th of April in conjunction with the Falklands Conservation Campers dance hosted by Fitzroy Farm, will contain the following classes...

- Class 1 Mature ram over 24 months of age
- Class 2 Shearling ram over 12 & less than 24 months of age
- Class 3 Ram hogget less than 12 months of age
- Class 4 Mature ewe over 24 months of age
- Class 5 Shearling ewe over 12 months of age and under 24 months
- Class 6 Ewe hogget under 12 months of age
- Class 7 Pen of 3 hoggets under 12 months of age
- Class 8 Pen of 3 flock shearlings over 12 months and under 24 months of age
- Class 9 Ram of any age suitable for producing prime lambs
- Class 10 Ewe of any age suitable for producing prime lambs
- Class 11 Pen of 3 weaner prime lambs
- Class 12 under 16's open entry

Special prizes will be given for

- Most points in Sheep Classes
- Champion Ram
- Champion Ewe
- Guess the weight of the sheep
- Guess the weight of the fleece
- Guess the micron of the fleece

There will also be the opportunity to have sheep auctioned at the end of the show. To make your entries please email rba@horizon.co.fk or fax 27201.

For more information please call Amanda Morris or Sarah Clement on 22432.

For sale from Elephant Beach

Approx 350 wethers mostly younger age, £5 per head. Any one interested please contact Ben or Riki.

Wanted

Second hand 4 wheeler preferably smaller model, anything considered. Please contact Riki Evans on 41026.

WEIGHT CHANGES OF SHEEP IN TRANSIT FROM WEST FALKLAND

By Doug Martin

There has been some discussion in relation to weight change in sheep travelling from West Falkland and the Islands to Sand Bay.

In order to provide some advice in relation to dealing with the problem a small number of mainly 6 year-old wethers and a few dry ewes were weighed 1 day prior to travelling.

- They were weighed straight off camp on the 5th March
- Average weight was 49.94 kg.
- The sheep were transported from Port Edgar to New Haven, the trip taking approximately 8 hours.
- The sheep were walked to Goose Green and then transported by road to Sand Bay, arriving on 12th March
- They were weighed and slaughtered on 15th March.
- Average weight at slaughter was 44.26kg.
- Average weight loss from farm to abattoir was 5.21 kg or 11%.
- Dressing % averaged 45 with a carcass weight of 19.84 kg.

Important points:

In order to determine the amount of weight loss it is important to weigh a number of sheep prior to travelling.

1. Using the accompanying information record the average weight loss for time off feed.
2. To get the most accurate picture of weight loss and final carcass weight record the weight of a wether slaughtered from the mob on farm prior to departure.
3. Remember that dressing % will be influenced by time off feed.
4. Shrinkage. To convert hot carcass weights to cold weights, deduct 2-3 percentage points from the dressing percentage. Farmers are paid on cold carcass weight.
5. Sheep on a high roughage diet in dry times can have extremely slow release of gut fill contents so will dress lower. Conversely sheep on lush feed will have a higher dressing percentage than animals off drier feed because of faster rate of gut fill loss.
6. Dressing percentages will decrease if the carcass is trimmed for boils and contamination.
7. Adjustment will need to be made for the skin. This will depend on the length and type of wool and could be ½ to 2 percentage points, particularly if wet.
8. Some breeds will dress better than others.
9. Rain and severe cold may also reduce dressing percentage by up to 3 percentage points.

The chart on the next page provides a guide in relation to time and weight loss off feed.

More weighing will need to be carried out in order to gain a clearer picture of what to expect in future.

WEIGHING PROCEDURES

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

- Always weigh at least 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 a 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 determining dressing %.
- Do not weigh rain soaked sheep; wet sheep are several kilograms heavier than when they are dry.
- Ensure the next sheep in the race is not pushing against outside of the weighing crate because an incorrect reading will result.
- After taring, weigh yourself and use your weight for checking accuracy during an 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 bases is best. Anchor the scales to the concrete or to the racer end.
- Mud, gravel and rocks on the floor of the scales, transported in by the sheep, can lead to inaccurate weighing.
- 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 per cent liveweight loss
 - 12 hours off pasture - 5 per cent liveweight loss
 - 24 hours off pasture - 7.5 per cent liveweight loss
 - 48 hours off pasture - 10.5 per cent liveweight loss

Adjustments to dressing percentages for time off feed

Time off Feed	Add to Dressing %
0 - 3 hrs	0
4 - 5 hrs	+ 0.5
6 - 8 hrs	+ 1
9 - 12 hrs	+ 2 to 3
13 - 24 hrs	+ 3.5 to 4.5

As an example the following example summarises the pathway from farm to abattoir:

Processing on farm
 Weight on farm - 45kg
 Dressing % - 40%
 Carcass weight = 18kg

Processing through abattoir
 Weight on farm - 45kg
 Loss in transit - 10%
 Weight at abattoir - 40.5kg
 Dressing % - 45
 Carcass weight - 18.22kg
 Shrinkage - 2%
 Final weight for payment - 17.86kg

This is without taking into account other losses which may occur.

One of the greatest influences on losses may occur when sheep are graded for example one week prior to travel and if run on greens with little growth then weigh loss will be significant.

FAREWELL – AFTER 7½ YEARS WORKING IN THE FALKLANDS

By Stephen Pointing

Well, I hardly know where to begin this final article for the Wool Press. I suppose the day for writing it was always going to come one day but the longer we stayed the less likely it seemed that we might ever leave these Islands. And as I write this I'm still not 100% sure why we are leaving. As in all such decisions there is no single over-riding reason but a collection of smaller reasons which all contribute to a feeling that if we don't move now then we may never move at all. Our children are gradually heading back to the UK for their secondary and tertiary education and aged parents in the UK are not getting any younger. As the children begin to flee the nest then Liz feels less need to remain at home and a greater desire to take up her previous career and try to make something of it. Sadly that does not seem to be possible under current circumstances within the Islands. I also feel that I have probably contributed as much as I am able to do on the veterinary front and it is time to pass the responsibility over to someone new with fresh ideas and a fresh outlook on the animal health and welfare issues here. There is an old adage that in a new job you probably achieve most of what you are ever going to achieve in the first 2 to 3 years of your tenure and I think there is an element of truth in that. It is during those early years that you see things with fresh eyes and feel that there are changes that could be made that would improve the situation. As time goes on there is a danger that you become discouraged by your failures and start to fail to notice some of things that concerned you at the outset – just because they have become such a familiar part of the daily routine. When that happens – it is probably time to move on. For me I think that time has arrived but it doesn't mean that I'll be leaving gladly – after such a long period it will be a huge wrench.

The past 7 and half years have been some of the happiest of my life on both the personal and professional levels. There is no doubt that for some people (and I include myself in this group) something happens to them while living and working here - making you feel a real part of these Islands. I think you know that has happened when you go away on leave for a period of weeks and really start to look forward to the time when you'll be returning to the Islands – surely that is a sign of where you consider home to be. Well, that feeling came to me fairly early on and has remained with me ever since. In many ways the UK feels more like a foreign country to us than the Falkland Islands do.

The Highs and Lows of the job

I'll start with one of the low points first as this happened fairly early on in my career here. It happened after a visit to Horseshoe Bay to see something that needed veterinary attention (sorry to be so vague but you'll see the reason why later). Having done whatever was necessary and gone into the farmhouse to have a cup of tea and a chat with the Goss's I came out with Peter only to find I had a flat tyre. This seemed like the perfect opportunity to learn how to use the bumper jack and Peter offered to give me instruction. Well, we managed to get the flat tyre off and put the spare one on but that's as much as I can remember even to this day. Apparently Peter was telling me how you had to be careful when you released the jack handle when lowering the vehicle – but I don't think I heard him with the result that I took a stiff uppercut to the point of my jaw – not enough to floor me or knock me out but definitely enough to "joggle" my brain about so that I couldn't remember a thing. This became evident after I'd cleaned up the small wound on my chin and Peter and Maggie asked me to sign their visitor's book. I think when I asked them who they were they realised I wasn't quite all there (many might say that this has been the case ever since!) I spent the rest of the day in a confused state in the KEMH – but I did learn a useful lesson in how to handle a bumper jack.

As we've started on low points I'll mention another also to do with vehicles. This involved one of

the rear wheels of the Landover coming off altogether as Diana Aldridge and I were making our way back from North Arm to Goose Green in the days before the North Arm road. In fact, at the time of the incident the road had just made it across the Oriqueta Creek. We went to put on the spare tyre only to find that it was completely flat (damn!) and then started to walk in the direction of the road gang about 7 or more miles away. We tried raising someone in Goose Green on the two metre set but got no response and were eventually spotted by Mike McKay as we came over the horizon. He kindly came to our rescue, gave us a lift back to our vehicle and loaned us his spare tyre so that we could get home.

On the work front another difficult time was in the run - up to getting the abattoir approved by the EU in early 2001. Prior to the EU inspector arriving I had spent the previous 8 months almost entirely devoted to getting everything in place from a veterinary perspective. While this work was very interesting it was also very complicated and immensely time consuming with the result that by the time the EU inspector had come and gone I was mentally and physically exhausted. This is one of my continuing concerns for the position of the SVO in the Falklands – the job is tremendously varied and interesting but it can also seem remorseless and, unlike in many bigger countries, there is often a lack of skilled support staff that is equally necessary in helping to get big projects off the ground. I fear that this situation will only continue to get worse as the budget is cut year on year – as it has been in every year that I have worked here. A single cut of 3% in one year might have little effect on the running of a department but when that happens year after year for 7 or more years then it is not surprising that something has to give – unfortunately it often means that certain individuals have a bigger and bigger workload as new staff members are not recruited or retiring staff members are not replaced.

As for the highlights of my time here – well, they are almost too numerous to remember. Some of my best memories will be of driving around Camp (both East and West) at certain times of the day, alone in the Landover with no-one else around and just marvelling at the beauty of the landscape in a certain type of light – huge skies and endless horizons - and the feeling of having it all to yourself at that moment in time. That feeling doesn't happen too often in somewhere as crowded as the UK. And then, of course, there are the people of the Falkland Islands - always generous to visitors and always willing to put up an itinerant vet for the night. Some of my overnight stays in Camp settlements will remain with me as my best memories of my time in the Islands. Yes I had usually gone to the settlement to carry out a job of work but when that was done you had the remainder of the time there to relax and explore the local countryside – and what fantastic countryside to explore. I always looked on a visit to Camp as somewhere to recharge my flagging batteries and invariably that is how it worked. I know Stanley is only a small capital by world standards but you'd be surprised at how frenetic life can be there – both at work and socially. Somehow life in Camp seems to move at a more leisurely pace and long may it continue to stay like that.

From a veterinary viewpoint some of the things I'm most proud of helping to achieve are getting EU approval for the new abattoir, raising awareness of the importance of biosecurity issues, supervising the introduction of reindeer from South Georgia and Hereford cattle from the Magalanes region of Chile and establishing good links and working relationships with veterinary departments in Chile, the UK, Australia and New Zealand. The world has become a very small place and having friends in these and other countries is invaluable in helping to market Falkland Island products more widely. I've also had some very special patients – both large and small – over the seven year period that I've spent here. They are too many to mention but I have a particularly soft spot for Timmy Bonner's horse Splitz – which, by rights, should no longer be with us – but, against the odds, has managed to pull through a couple of very major abdominal operations. I wouldn't have persevered had she not been such a good natured patient with such caring owners. I can think of similar instances for various cats and dogs both in Stanley and in Camp. On the whole it has been a pleasure to deal with owners and their animals throughout the Islands. I'm

going to miss this aspect of the job a lot.

I've also been privileged to work with some very special people within the DoA, many of whom are no longer working in the Department, but who I remember with great fondness. Thank you to all DoA staff members – past and present – who have helped to make my stay here so memorable. There have also been one or two with whom I've not seen eye to eye and haven't always made the working environment as easy as it could be. But that occurs in any organisation and thankfully they were few in number.

The future

For Liz, myself and the family the future will see us returning to Somerset in the S.W of England where I'll take up the post of veterinary officer in the State Veterinary Service, based in Taunton. I worked for the SVS in Gloucester for 3 years before coming to the Falkland Islands and have, in fact, been on leave of absence from my previous position for all the time I have worked and lived here. After seven and half years you might have thought that they'd have given up on me altogether but that obviously hasn't been the case.

If any of you find yourselves in Somerset or passing through on your way to Devon or Cornwall then please remember that we live there and take a break from your journey to stop by and say hello. We don't know exactly where we'll living as yet nor do we have a UK postal or email address but as soon as we do we'll forward it to Sarah or Glynis and they can pass it on to whoever is interested. We'd really love to see you.

HELLO FROM AN AGRICULTURAL TRAINEE

By Clint Short

I started work at the Department of Agriculture as an Agricultural Trainee at the beginning of March. I wanted to come here because I thought I would enjoy working with everyone and to gain some experience in agriculture before hopefully going away to study at an agricultural college.

One of my first jobs was core testing at North Arm which I found hard but fun and very tiring! Since then I have worked alongside Timmy, helping him at the Ram Sale and cleaning up and around the shed. As well as helping out with more core testing, I also took part in the Sheep Selection and Breeding Workshops run by Henri Londt at Estancia. I found this very interesting, learning what to look for when selecting sheep, the difference in wool and different sheep enterprises.

Another job I was involved in was pregnancy testing cows from Blue Beach. I went to the dairy and helped out there for a week. I was involved in milking the cows and cleaning up after them, making cheese, yogurt, cream, collecting the hen eggs - which was my least favourite as I'm terrified of hens! Collecting silage off the fields was another job and one day the reception class came out to see the dairy and how everything works, the kids thought it was very funny when one of the pipes came loose when we were feeding water through the milkers to show them how it all worked and they all got wet! After going out to the dairy at five every morning and getting home between half five and half eight it's nice being back at the DOA. I would like to say thank you to Leonie and Kevin for putting up with me.

I have also helped Kimberley out at the abattoir looking for Johne's disease in sheep intestines and weighing sheep with Doug at Sussex and Wineglass Station.

Working here has been really good fun so far and I am looking forward to the next three months.

BEWARE CLOSTRIDIAL DISEASES

By Damien O'Sullivan

There has been much written in the past regarding the dangers of Clostridial diseases affecting animals in the Falklands. However, many people have not realised that these diseases may be causing sheep losses on their farms. In the last month the clostridial disease blackleg has killed the valuable ram pictured below. Last year similar deaths from blackleg occurred with several rams being lost on another farm. Initially it may seem that an animal is lost due to rams fighting or some other misadventure. However in this case a post-mortem and laboratory tests indicated death due to blackleg. Given that these rams could be worth £300-500 each the loss is significant. A simple double injection of 5 in 1 vaccination could have provided protection for this animal and others in the flock.



In backleg animals are usually found dead without any symptoms

There are five Clostridial diseases that animals are protected from with a 5 in 1 vaccine:

- Blackleg
- Tetanus
- Pulpy kidney
- Malignant oedema
- Blacks disease

Blackleg and pulpy kidney often attack the most healthy and best conditioned young animals in the flock causing sudden death.

How can it be prevented?

Vaccination is the only protection. The Clostridial diseases are spread by spores that can last up to 50 years or more in the soil. You may go for many years without animals being affected but certain environmental factors can cause one or more animals to be affected.

How to vaccinate

All young animals should be vaccinated twice 4 weeks apart; a follow up booster 12 months later will provide lifelong immunity. Compared to the loss of a valuable ram the cost of vaccination is minimal.

Vaccination is like insurance - you never know when you may need it.



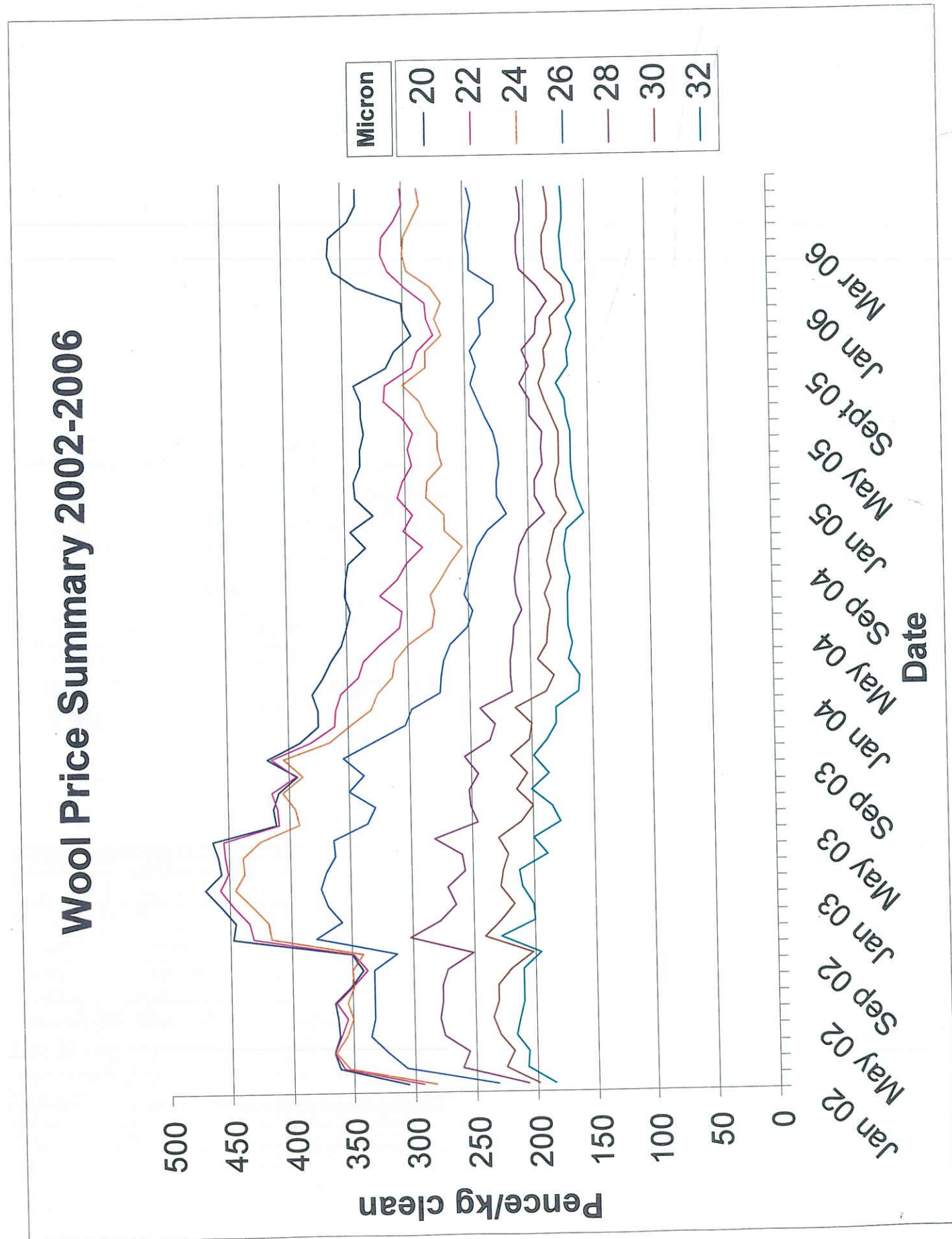
There is "bruising" of the muscle tissue



Under the muscle surface there are air pockets

WOOL PRICE TREND OVER TIME

Based on weekly DOA Wool Reports



ANNUAL RAM SALE - 2006

By Lucy Ellis

The Annual Ram Sale was once again successfully held in the Goose Green woolshed on Thursday 16th March 2006. As there were many more rams for sale than in previous years, and of various breeds, a large gathering of farmers was anticipated and realised. Tamar F.I brought over farmers from the West who, due to the strong winds and rough sea, looked faintly green upon arrival!



The Helmsman auction in full swing

A PIP allocation process was conducted on completion of the auction and growers seemed fairly satisfied with their new acquisitions. All 228 rams were either sold or allocated with the highest price being paid for a Poll Dorset hogget. Average price for the Polwarth shearlings was £1111.49 whilst the Corriedale shearlings realised an average price of £34.80.

Both the SAMM and Dohne Merino hoggets attracted considerable interest and the average prices of £322.92 and £303.33, respectively, reflected this. Three of the seven Poll Dorset hoggets, average price of £401.66, were sold in the auction whilst the remainder were allocated and ten out of the twelve Corriedale x Dohne hoggets presented sold with an average price of £103.50.



Sale rams heading for a new life on the West

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank Brian, Diana and the Goose Green crew for the use of the woolshed, truck and assisting with the setting up and Myles and Critta at Port Howard for their help with the boat and rams. Thank you to ISL and the captain and crew of the Tamar F.I for shipping farmers and animals across the Sound and to Michelle for keeping the burgers and chips flowing all day!

WARM FRONT FOR NEWBORN LAMBS

Source: The Times, 28th March 2006

A gadget to warm newly born lambs and save them from shivering to death on hillsides has been invented by a children's nurse. Sally Howe, 35, who lives on a farm in Penistone, South Yorkshire, came up with the Woolie Warmer after she spent years treating lambs with buckets of warm water. The plastic bathtub allows them to be warmed through without supervision — enabling the lamb to remain with its mother and so reduce the risk of its being rejected.



SHEEP BREEDING AND SELECTION WORKSHOPS

By Damien O'Sullivan

The Sheep Breeding and Selection workshops were held during March and April. Over the four workshops 49 people attended, representing 23 farms and over 50% of Falkland Islands sheep. Henri Londt was brought to the Islands by the Department to conduct the workshops. Henri was very impressed with the standard of some sheep he saw during the workshops but added there is still some way to go with setting breeding objectives and principles.



On the left is the sheep more suited to dual-purpose enterprise



The ideal dual purpose sheep has a clearer face and an open free growing wool

Some of the comments from participants at the completion of the workshops were:

- Very interesting, informative, useful
- Will have an influence on future sheep selection
- Enjoyed the workshop, left me with a lot to think about
- More workshops relating to farming business in the future
- Well done Henri for a very enjoyable workshop



Participants had many opportunities to hone their sheep selection skills

The workshops had half the time spent on theory and the remaining time spent on practical selection of sheep. In recent years the economic pressure of declining wool prices and opportunities for meat sales has changed the way farmers view their sheep farming businesses. If farmers are looking for a Dual purpose breed animals are now selected with an emphasis on bodyweight, fleece weight and fibre diameter. These sheep are somewhat different to sheep that have been selected solely for wool. A tool to assess the suitability of sheep for all key characteristics was discussed at the workshops - Wool Production Potential (WPP%).

An investigation into enterprise selection at the workshops using the gross margin model from the Department of Agriculture demonstrated that using Falklands Island averages that the estimated gross margins for a 3000 DSE enterprises were:

Balanced flock	£9,662
Meat sheep only	£6,935
Ewe flock	£12,181
Dry sheep flock	£7,269

As a result some farmers will now re-evaluate their long-term enterprise goals.

Time at the workshops was spent on the possibilities of setting up ram breeding programs with several farms co-operating to pool all their genetic resources. Another message from the workshops was that farmers have genetically adapted sheep here already that can give the adaptability and fitness that we need. By selecting these animals using visual assessment and measurement we can then add other genetics if needed to attain a farms breeding goals.

Henri detailed how economic pressures in South Africa have led a move to dual purpose sheep that provide meat and wool. In South Africa it was explained the highest performing farms achieved approximately 70% of their income from meat and 30% of income from wool. While such a level of income from meat is not realistic from Falkland Island farms the message was clear, that to increase OVERALL farm incomes an increase in the contribution from meat was required. It was also very clear that in order to achieve this, an increase in lambing % was required.

Overall the message for farmers in the workshops was for dual purpose breeding flocks to have these traits in order of importance:

1. **Hardiness and adaptability** - Easy care, Maximum Income, Minimum Costs
2. **Reproduction** - Fertility, Fecundity, Mothering ability, Lamb Survival
3. **Lamb Growth rate**
4. **Fibre Diameter** - reduce or maintain current diameter
5. **Wool Production** - maintain or increase

Farmers who attended the workshops spent a considerable amount of time finding out how to identify sheep that achieved all five characteristics. If any farmers would like to discuss ram breeding plans, Wool Production Potential, breeding selection and objectives or enterprise selection they are welcome to contact the Department of Agriculture.

Thanks to the Falkland farmers

It was a wonderful experience to visit and talk to woolled sheep farmers of the Falklands over a three week period. I found the exchange of information at the four workshops on both islands very informative and interesting. The problems experienced by the industry in a changing economic environment are very similar to what we experienced in the industry in South Africa a few decades ago. I thoroughly enjoyed meeting all of those who attended the workshops as well as exchanging ideas and information about the road ahead for the industry. I would like to thank you all for the very warm welcome I received and your hospitality. Thank you for those who welcomed me in your homes and provided meals and a bed. My gratitude is also extended to Damien O'Sullivan of the Department of Agriculture who arranged the workshops and for his guidance as well as the Department who extended the invitation to me to conduct these workshops. Without their invitation I would probably not have visited the Falklands to meet all the wonderful people of these islands. Please come and visit me should you ever happen to pass through South Africa and also contact me for technical advice regarding the subjects we discussed at the workshops if needed. The woolled sheep industry has provided a living to many over centuries and it deserves our constant attention with a view to improve it if our intentions are to leave it as a precious asset to those who will follow us.

Henri Londt
South Africa

FALKLAND ISLANDS MEAT COMPANY UPDATE

By John Ferguson, General Manager

PRODUCTION

To date, 19,000+ sheep and lambs have been produced. At the present time we are still on target for the planned 30,000 sheep & lambs for the season, which is planned to run until about mid-May. As always, the weather will be a deciding factor at this time of year, as it affects both transport and having dry animals for slaughter. Daily production is being maintained at an average of 400+ sheep per day, with 500+ being reached on several occasions when producing lamb. The work involved in boning out mutton is much more labour intensive, however we have been able to settle down to 430+ per day during the past week. Production numbers and average carcase weights to date are as follows:

12,090	Sheep	19.7kg	
5,911	Hoggets	13.3kg	(The majority from North Arm, which were very even and of excellent quality)
1,039	Lambs	11.9kg	

EXPORT SALES

Export Sales have been more difficult this season, due in particular to the high volume of lamb available from New Zealand, which has had a good growing season – but a detrimental affect on international prices. Overall, we have sold the majority of lamb, but mutton forequarter cuts remain difficult.

BREAKDOWNS

There have only been 2 serious breakdowns to date (lets hope it stays that way!) and they have both involved refrigeration equipment. Firstly, one of the Blast Freezer compressor motors will require re-winding in Santiago. This resulted in a new compressor being sourced from the UK. Secondly, a Sheep Chiller compressor also went u/s, and through Energise FI we were able to source a complete unit from Chile, which was immediately installed and is back on line. *Energise FI and their staff must be congratulated for their efforts in getting both of these units back in operation so quickly.* During these breakdowns, we were able to maintain operations at 400+ day (albeit not without difficulty...) due to (a) the Old B/F still being in commission and (b) with the use of star racks, which will take 120 carcasses we were able to utilise the Beef Chiller.

LIVESTOCK LOGISTICS

Mike has a good grasp on this now, and requires very little input from myself. However, livestock transport is becoming increasingly difficult each year from the West & Islands as the numbers increase. Whilst the number of animals coming from the West has doubled in the past few seasons, the supply timing and method of transport has not altered (in fact, the opposite has happened with the present propeller damage to Tamar FI, and it echoes a breakdown encountered last season)

There has been one major difference this season, which has added to the pressure on the plant and supply system, in that there has been a huge increase in the qty of hoggets ('old season' lambs) being produced, and these always take priority over sheep. There were over 5,000 of these produced in the early part of the season, which resulted in there being 2,000 – 3,000+ sheep in the paddocks at times (as with the set shipping periods, we were unable to hold back many sheep from the West & Islands). Not a situation that anyone was comfortable with but difficult to avoid.

There is still unfortunately a lot of pressure on FIMCo to take animals at some farmers convenience, whilst being clearly informed that there may be a considerable delay before they are slaughtered – however, the risk to both farmer and FIMCo is increased when this happens, with resultant loss of carcase weight / yield when slaughtered. The entire logistics system will be considered in depth during the FIMCo Review at the end of the season, to see where improvements and changes can and should be made, and we will be seeking input from all involved. In reality,

many of these side issues will disappear when the ability to truck from farm – plant materialises, for West as well as East, and this cannot happen soon enough.

We will soon be discussing with FIG, what options are available to allow road transporting to continue after the 1st May weight restriction is applied. This will be particularly important this season, when there are so many animals left to produce. Unless the breeding and finishing of livestock is brought forward in general, then the run into May will have to remain for the foreseeable future. From FIMCo's side, it would be better to start earlier and finish earlier – but this is entirely dependent on livestock availability and condition. EWES - we would like to remind producers that we can ONLY accept 'dry' ewes, in good condition. 'Tired' old breeding ewes (fit for pet food etc) are totally unacceptable to our customers, and it is against EU legislation to put emaciated product into the food chain. We will reject any such animals arriving at the plant, as it puts FIMCo and the FI meat industry at risk. We are also looking to improve the feedback to producers, however, this is only possible when each Farm Lot is completed, which has been more difficult this season due to the above reasons.

EXPORT SHIPPING

During 2006, FIMCo is utilising the link into Montevideo, which for the first time enables us to ship product directly to the customer's home port. We presently have reefers en-route to the UK, Spain and Malta. We have yet to see if there are to be any 'teething' issues encountered, but we are confident that this will be a successful and cost effective option. Another advantage, is the ability to be able to load-out reefer containers on a 3 weekly cycle and this takes the pressure of our Cold Store.

LOCAL MARKET

Production continues to go well, and soon settled in well alongside export production. The temporary local market production room is somewhat 'cosy' but has proved adequate for the season. The quality of cattle supplied has improved a lot, as expected – due to the time of year and current work being carried out by producers to improve the consistency of beef livestock.

FIMCo BOARD MINUTES

We are working towards having the minutes (or a summary of) sent to all farmers each month, with the first lot recently sent out. We hope it will help in keeping you all better informed.

VISITS TO SAND BAY

We encourage all farmers to visit the plant, to view the process and discuss any aspect of the supply and operation. It is particularly relevant if your own animals are going through at that time, but if not, a visit is always well worthwhile. Please give us a call (prior to visiting), and we look forward to seeing you.

ISSUES / COMMENTS / SUGGESTIONS

In general, the 2006 season (to date) has seen much more consistent productivity than previous years, but there are definitely some 'bottle-necks' to work through during the closed season – many of which are outside our control. However, it is inevitable that issues will arise from time to time, and if you have any concerns or difficulties, please contact the following:

Payments & Documentation	Nikki Morrison
Livestock / Grading & Transport	Mike McRae
Local Market Production	Nigel Leach

If there are any real issues which they are unable to assist with, please contact me directly.

If you have something to share, then let us know!!

To contribute an article, recipe or cartoon for the Wool Press, contact Siân Ferguson on telephone 27355, fax 27352 or email sferguson@doa.gov.fk

Submissions need to be in before the end of the month. All contributions are gratefully received.

FALKLAND ISLANDS REPORT

By Dwain Duxson, Glendemar MPM, Australia

I came to the Falkland Islands with globetrotting sheep classer Wally O'Connor some weeks ago and thoroughly enjoyed my trip. The main purpose of our visit was to class and inspect the West Lagoon flock of Peter and Shelley Nightingale as well as visit a couple of interested parties. Peter and Shelley have been using semen from our top Glendemar MPM semen sires for three years now in programmes that have consistently inseminated 800 of their best ewes.

We breed sheep under the MPM or Multi Purpose Merino brand name and have a network that stretches right throughout Australia and South America and we are looking to help Peter and Shelley expand that network on the Islands.

The early signs are good in that we have had an increase of up to a kilo of wool, a micron reduction and an increase of 3kg in body weight from the monitor group at the West Lagoons property. I know how these genetics perform in Australia and to a lesser extent in South America and it was very pleasing to see them get off to a good start, but I believe the best is yet to come. Just looking at the Island average for things like fleece weights, micron and lambing percentages, I strongly believe that you can improve in all these areas and have a good meaty carcass to boot.

Now I know what you are thinking right at this minute! What about the harsh climate? The snow? The wind chill? I recognise that only the hardy sheep will survive and thrive on the islands and that's why we are working with ewes that derive from the islands, these traits are already inbuilt and I can guarantee that those traits won't diminish.

It's all about making money from our farms/camps at the end of the day. Do you want to make your farm/camp profitable? From what I was hearing when I visited was that a lot of Falkland Island properties are not running profitably. Why? Can you improve things? Are you looking at your operations and saying is this working? Are we going to be here in years to come? I'm not here to tell you what to do, I'm just providing you with some questions and hopefully some suggestions that might help you improve your business. There is an old saying that "if you keep doing the same things today you will get the same result tomorrow". We looked at that statement some years ago and decided to grab our own fate with our own hands and make some changes and it's amazing how you look at things through a different set of eyes.

Here are some questions that we asked ourselves six years ago...

- Are we going ahead, if not why?
- If we want to be here in years to come what do we have to change?
- Are there better ways to do things?
- What do we want from this farm?
- How can we help all around us improve their positions and lifestyles?
- Can we improve the aspects of our core income producing product (our sheep)?
- Will we be seen as "different" in our community if we make changes?

The MPM group is about working with the people and we will work closely with Peter and Shelley and anyone else that is interested in improving production and in turn profitability. We are not here for the quick buck and we are not fly-by-nighters; we have invested heavily in this project and expect a return on our investment when you guys get a return on your investment.

MPM is out there as an option for Falkland Island sheep producers.

If you are interested contact Peter and Shelley on 41194 or email sptk@horizon.co.fk

Next Dog Dosing Day...

...Wednesday 12th April

SUCCESSFUL TENDERS FOR AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY

Please find below a list of successful tenders for the recent Department of Agriculture Sale of Machinery.

Lot No. 1	Tintinara Blade Plough	NO BIDS RECEIVED	
Lot No. 2	Red Ball Hooded 8 Metre Boom Spray	White Rose Farming	£800.00
Lot No. 3	Allman Eco-Wipe Wick Wiper	NO BIDS RECEIVED	
Lot No. 4	Parmiter 5 Metre Width Chain Harrows (East)	Falkland Landholdings	£1,500.00
Lot No. 5	Parmiter 5 Metre Width Chain Harrows (West)	Coast Ridge Farm - Mr N Knight	£211.00
Lot No. 6	Ex Ford County Wheels x 4	NO BIDS RECEIVED	
Lot No. 7	Spearhead Slasher (East)	NO BIDS RECEIVED	
Lot No. 8	Spearhead Slasher (East)	NO BIDS RECEIVED	
Lot No. 9	Spearhead Slasher (West)	NO BIDS RECEIVED	
Lot No. 10	Spearhead Slasher (West)	NO BIDS RECEIVED	
Lot No. 11	Cousins Rollers x 2 (not hydraulic set)	Mr Fraser McKay	£2,200.00
Lot No. 12	Teagle Spreader XT 46 (East)	Mr Stephen Poole	£1,060.00
Lot No. 13	Teagle Spreader XT 46 (West)	Mr Fraser McKay	£750.00
Lot No. 14	Howard Rotovator 90"	Falkland Landholdings	£2,000.00
Lot No. 15	Transpread Trailed Fertiliser Spreader	Coast Ridge Farm - Mr N Knight	£2,011.00
Lot No. 16	4 Furrow Plough	NO BIDS RECEIVED	
Lot No. 17	Kuhn Power Harrow	White Rose Farming	£1,000.00
Lot No. 18	23 Portable Cattle Panels	Bluff Cove Farm - Mr K Kilmartin	£1,725.00
Lot No. 19	Bomford Turner Flail Mower	Mr P Gilding - Port Louis	£780.00

FEBRUARY & MARCH WEATHER

By Siân Ferguson

I can't believe that already three months have passed and we are already in April of 2006. One good thing about this though as it's only just over a month until my birthday, which is always a favourite time of the year as it comes with lots of presents and attention on just me (not that I'm shallow or anything!!). Apologies for the April Wool Press is out a bit later than usual this month in a bid to catch up with all the weather. Here goes...

February

It was a cool, dry month overall. Temperatures were well below average, dropping to 2.4°C on Wednesday 1st and peaking at 20.7°C on Tuesday 14th. Rainfall Islandwide was lower than average. There was no snow, sleet or thunder recorded at MPA and unusually no hail. There were two days with fog. Only 162.5 hours of sunshine was recorded, well below the average of 188.6. There was only one day with no sun recorded and the highest daily total was 12.9 hours on Thursday 16th. The highest gust of wind recorded was 53 knots on Saturday 11th and Saturday 18th. There were seven days of gales, well above the average of 3.4. There were twelve days with gusts exceeding 33 knots, which is below average for February.

March

April was generally a sunny, dry month and rather warm on some days. The highest temperature reached 21.2°C on Saturday 4th and falling to 1.8°C on Friday 10th and Saturday 25th, which is well above the record low for March of -1.3°C. There was three days of hail and one day of snow and sleet, but no fog or thunder, which is fairly close to normal for March. There was 180 hours of sunshine, well above the norm. The highest amount recorded in one day was 11.7 on Monday 6th and there were no days without any sunshine. The highest gust of wind was 47 knots on Tuesday 21st. There was just one day of gales, well above the average of 3.9. There were seventeen days of gusts exceeding 33 knots, which is about average for month.

FALKLAND ISLANDS RAINFALL TOTALS

Location	2005									2006			
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
Stanley	2005	49	39	35	29	36	19.3	28	45.5	87	56.5	42	39.5
	Average	58	58	50	46.5	46	41	39.5	46	68	74	57	59
MPA	2005	56	48	22	23.1	49	14	32.3	40.1	67.3	89.2	32.3	45.2
	Average	49	54	58	45	36	34	34.6	36.6	57.9	61	46.3	57
Bleaker Island	-	-	-	22	31	10	17.5	23	36	135	52	37	
Cape Dolphin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	52.5	24.5	22	
Darwin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	63	20.5	25.25	
Elephant Beach	22	57	30	31	51	14	19.5	43.5	68	64	37.5	37.5	
Fern Ridge	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35	
Head of Bay	42	66	25	28	46	13	21.5	35	71	77	38	40	
Moss Side	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	62	53	29	36	
Pebble Island	-	-	-	-	-	-	14.5	16.5	44.8	66	26	22	
Port Howard	-	-	-	42.75	50	14	24.5	47	52.5	131	48.8	48.5	
Saladero	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	22	41	56	26	37	
Shallow Harbour	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19.6	33.25	
South Harbour	-	-	-	-	36	17	15	18	35	30	10	28	
Swan Inlet	38	50	16	28	32	3	11.5	41.5	47	66.5	24	45.5	
Wineglass Station	43.8	63	22.5	21.5	44	14.5	17.5	63.5	58	87	32.5	36.5	

Thank you to Elaine Short, Sheena Miller, Peter Wakefield, Riki Evans, Ted Jones, Donna Minnell, Raymond Evans, Ron Reeves, John Hobman, Marlane Marsh, Donna Evans, Andrez Short and Bobby Short for collecting and providing the DOA with the above rainfall figures.

If you would like to collect rainfall totals (or if you already collect them, provide us with your totals) on a monthly basis then please contact the DOA and we will provide you with a rain gauge.

BACK HOME

By Kim Steen

After two years of hard strenuous work I've finally returned home, it's great to be back and even better that I managed to get a job with the Agriculture Department, even though it's only for the season, some experience is far better than no experience.

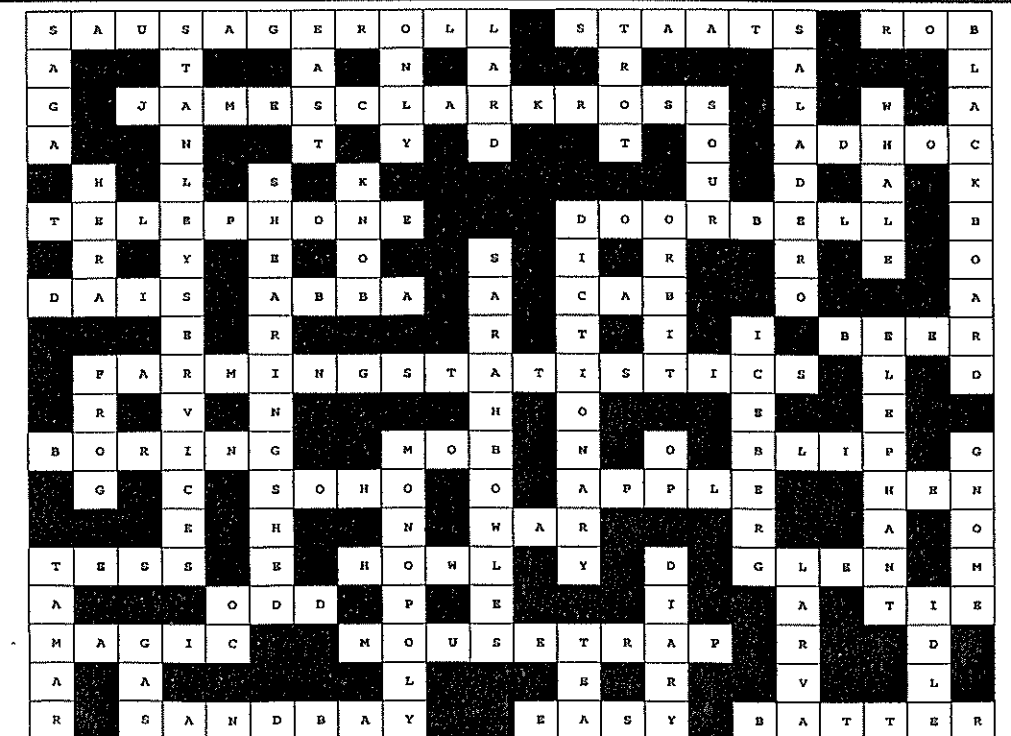
I've been working mainly in the lab with Gordon and Lyn, although I have been out and about doing a few other things. The lab has been fairly quiet lately, except for the days when it's my turn to go to the abattoir. I'm sure most people will know what we've been looking for out there but for those who don't, we have been looking for Johne's disease in the intestines of the sheep by checking the lymph nodes for any abnormalities, bloods are also being taken and tested for Q fever. The jobs not too bad but it does tend to get a bit monotonous after the hundredth gut has been checked, although time does seem to fly by and you know what they say.....when you're having fun!

I went to the Ram Sale at Goose Green and had a good day out. I also went to the Sheep Selection Workshops at Estancia which were very informative and turned out to be a very good three days. I've also been helping out with the fish silage trial, which Doug, Damien and Tim have been doing at the quarantine paddock. The sheep have been fed a mix of fish silage and lupin seeds, for the past few weeks, yesterday Tim and I weighed them and according to their previous weights the majority have put on a few kilos. I guess the dodgy smell of fish silage doesn't put them off in the slightest!

The most interesting thing which I've seen since being home was my trip out to Estancia with Nyree and Frans, after work one day, to extract semen from one of Tony and Ailsa's bulls; it was my first time and not really knowing what to expect I found it all rather amusing. I had to work in the Victory that night, although I was just on time for work I would have had a reasonable excuse for being late!

Although I'm sure I've been doing heaps of other interesting things I'm having trouble remembering them all, but all in all it's been a fantastic first month back at work, and I'm looking forward to the next two.

LAST MONTH'S SOLUTION



PUZZLE PAGE

WORD SEARCH - EASTER MANIA!!

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

April	Easter Egg	Miracle
Ash Wednesday	Easter Sunday	Pagan Festival
Baskets	Egg Hunt	Pancakes
Chickens	Fasting	Religion
Children	Forty Days	Resurrection
Church	Good Friday	Ribbons
Daffodils	Hot Cross Buns	Shrove Tuesday
Easter	Jesus	
Easter Bunny	Lent	

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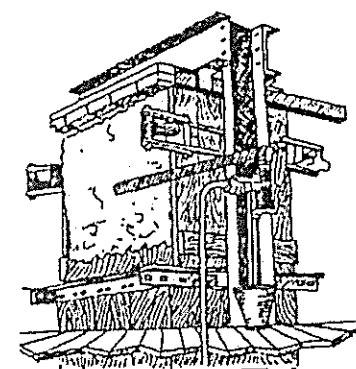
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Edited by Siân Ferguson

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EDITORIAL

This month's Wool Press contains informative articles that record results from work carried out last season as well as those looking forward to next year's activities. There is no let up in farming these days! Stanley residents driving in camp might not see farmers out and about on the farm so much in the winter months. Instead they have a great deal to do to review the successes and failures from this season and strategically plan next year's work on their office computer or around the kitchen table. Planning related to next year's PIP, sheep and cattle genetics for future wool and meat markets and so on. When visiting farms recently I have heard many issues being discussed. Should we go for earlier or later lambing? What rams should we select for breeding? How many hoggets could be available for the abattoir next season? What cattle have the right condition score for slaughter? How can we subdivide the ewe camp?

Damien has written a number of useful articles this month and I recommend you read his informative piece on sheep breeding and selection particularly if you were unable to attend the series of workshops led by Henri Londt from South Africa. Damien also writes about sheep coat trials taking place on West Falkland farms and, with Gordon as co-author, they review the Fitzroy grazing trials. I was interested to read and see from the graph, how quickly the grass growing season declines after early January. Thank you Damien for all your articles for the Wool Press during your two years with the department and best wishes to you, Neralie and the family on your return to Australia.

News about the 2006/07 Pasture Improvement Programme is clearly documented by Neil in this edition. Please note that plans need to be submitted by **23 June** to be part of the scheme. Councillors have given the programme priority status in the DoA budget.

Farmers are encouraged to read Lucy and Damien's article on QFW accreditation. This could influence the price you get for your clip in the longer term as quality assurance becomes more and more critical at the point of sale. And Frans, our visiting veterinary specialist, writes about the nutritional requirements for reproduction in farm animals. His contribution is appreciated as the ET/AI programme really accelerates in May and June.

Best wishes to all readers,

Phyl Rendell
Director of Minerals & Agriculture

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PLANNING YOUR SHEEP BREEDING & SELECTION

By Damien O'Sullivan

The recent Sheep breeding and Selection workshops have prompted many people to look at a number of options for their own sheep selection and the breeding of rams.

Sheep Selection

In the Falklands we are always limited in our sheep selection due to numbers but there has been some interesting work carried out recently looking at the effect on selecting only for clean fleece weight and reduced micron. Generally the work indicates that sheep selected this way have less fat cover which leads to reduced reproduction. As a result the selection criteria for an ideal sheep should include micron, fleece weight and body weight. It has been found that the ideal selection criteria for a dual purpose sheep are:

1. Hardiness and fitness

Over the years there has been a trade-off between wool weight and wool micron with finer woolled sheep generally producing less wool per animal. In addition as micron has decreased so have bodyweights but this need not be the case. There is now sufficient evidence to show that these traits are negatively influenced by an unfavourable relationship between fleece weight and body weight. This relationship is termed the Wool Production Potential (WPP%) and it is calculated by expressing the average clean fleece weight of the flock as a percentage of the average body weight.

$$WPP\% = \frac{\text{Clean Fleece Weight} \times 100}{\text{Body Weight}}$$

The maintenance of a favourable WPP% (about 5%) can assist in maintaining wool weights and reducing micron while improving the fitness and reproduction rate of the flock. Selection for hardiness and fitness (adaptability) is perhaps the most important objective in woolled sheep breeding since it has a strong influence on the most economically important production traits (e.g. reproduction) and is a powerful tool in keeping production costs down.

2. Fertility

Fertility is influenced to a very large extent by environment. Generally the heritability of the ability of ewes to conceive, is low.

The basic components of flock fertility are:

- 1) Active and vigorous rams with large testes, libido and mating ability
- 2) Ewes that are regular and multiple ovulators
- 3) Early maturity
- 4) The ability of ewes to lamb unassisted and rear the lambs to weaning
- 5) Good milk production and mothering ability.

3. Selection for Body Weight

- a. *Weaning weight or 100-day body weight:* Weaning weight is the result of a combination of the mothers' milk production and the lamb's own potential for growth up to the weaning stage. It is important that adjustments are made for age of dam, birth status and rearing status, so as to be able to make accurate comparisons between lambs born as singles and twins and lambs reared by maiden ewes.
- b. *Body Weight at test age:* This is one of the most important records that can be taken, not only because it has a direct economic value, but because it is highly correlated to both fertility, hardiness and fleece weight. Animals which exhibit poor values for body weight should be eliminated.

2006/2007 PIP PLANS REQUIRED BY 23/06/2006

By Neil Judd

- c. *Growth*: To determine growth potential, body weight is recorded twice during the growth period – at weaning and at 12 months. The average daily gain can be determined by calculating a growth potential for each animal.

4. Wool Properties

Increasing the value of wool by reducing fibre diameter, which has a high heritability, will earn good dividends and improve gross margins.

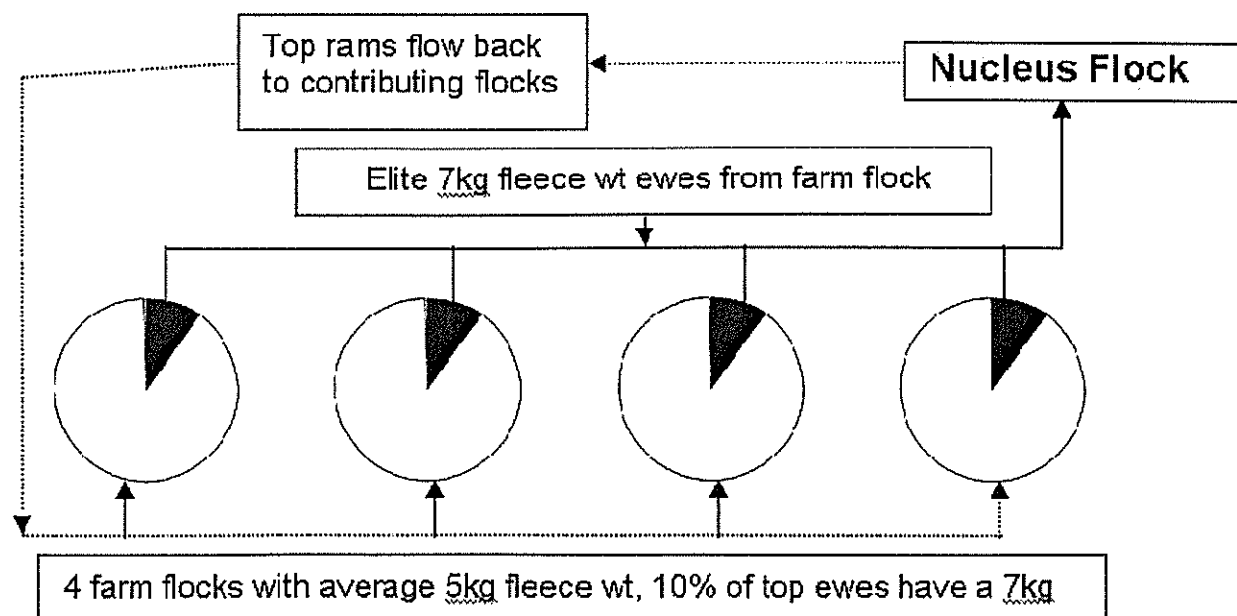
Fleece weight has a high heritability and production can be improved by direct selection for this trait, but because of the unfavourable correlations between fleece weight and fibre diameter as well as the negative effect of high WPP% on the fitness traits, this must be done with care.

There are effective selection methods to overcome these unfavourable relationships and achieve the correct balance between the Clean Fleece weight body weight and micron.

- a. *Fleece weight*: Clean Fleece weight (CFW) is one of the three production records that should be recorded for both rams and ewes at test age (12 months +).
- b. *Fibre diameter*: When selecting ewes and rams the objective should be to maintain or improve fleece weight and simultaneously achieve a reduction in fibre diameter. By selecting rams that do not deviate too far above the average fibre diameter, but at the same time are satisfactory in terms of fleece weight, this objective will be achieved.
- c. *Other wool traits*: Crimp definition, staple length, wool style, colour and yield are taken into account when they deviate too far from the ideal. Faulty sheep will be removed depending on the severity of the problem.

Ram Breeding

The workshops looked at the options of a number of farmers getting together to develop ram breeding programs. This has been suggested in the past but with the advent of roads and a ferry service there are now far more options for this to occur.



The structure of a ram breeding program would vary but it could be based on the diagram above where a farm use selects it's best ewes to mate with the best rams held in a nucleus flock. For example a farm may select 25 of its best ewes and mate these with a group of the best rams on a farm that has the nucleus flock. Farms would then receive an equal number of the resulting rams.

Any farmers that would like assistance in reviewing their sheep selection methods and/or are interested in ram breeding schemes should contact the Agriculture Dept.

Farmers are advised that applications are now being called for the 2006/2007 round of PIP funding. Completed forms should be submitted to the DOA by close of business on Friday 23rd June 2006.

While it is not yet possible to be precise about the level of PIP funding for the 2006/2007 financial year (this can only be advised after the completion of the FIG budget process), at this stage, farmers are advised to work on an allocation of £6,000 per eligible farm. The exception to this would be the very small number of farms whose historical spending still exceeds the current baseline threshold. These farms have already been advised of their individual circumstances, so if you have not heard from the DOA, you can assume that this does not apply to you!

It should be noted that the project's usual Terms and Conditions remain in place. Please see as follows;

Project Principles

- A farm is defined as a discreet business unit with a 5-year average stocking rate in excess of 2000 Dry Sheep Equivalents

or

- A discreet business unit within an 'approved' business plan that demonstrates the capacity to generate in excess of £10,000 of gross income per annum from activity in accord with the principals outlined in the PIP.
- Only one application for funding is permitted from each farm management entity or farm owner
- To qualify for funding consideration, works proposed will need to demonstrate greater than a £3 return for every £1 of PIP funding over a ten year timeframe. (DOA staff will assess return.)
- Persons leasing land are able to apply for funding for land that satisfies all other criteria, provided they produce a 'stamped' lease agreement that shows a minimum of 5 years tenure over the land from the date of application to join the PIP.
- New business entities that come into existence after the PIP plan lodgement date are able to take-over an existing PIP if such a plan is already in place on the land they acquire.
- New business entities are eligible to apply for funding available at the time of application and subject to the 'baseline' level of allocation operating at their time of entry to the project.
- Farmers receiving funding from PIP will be required to sign an initial statutory declaration detailing their intention to carry out the agreed works.
- Alterations to the approved PIP plan must be approved by the Director of Minerals & Agriculture.

- Failure to complete the agreed schedule of works will render the farm ineligible for further funding until the works are completed and may incur FIG action to recover funds received, at the discretion of the Director of Minerals & Agriculture
- Farm maps (available from DOA) should be used to show the location of proposed works

PIP Priorities 2006/2007

In addition to the PIP conditions of operation (as outlined), farmers are also advised to carefully consider the PIP **priorities** for 2006/2007 when formulating their plans as follows:

1. Improved winter nutrition of breeding ewes
2. Improved winter nutrition of hoggets
3. Effective grazing management to improve long term pasture productivity and animal performance
4. Targeted sheep genetic change to achieve improved farm Gross Margins

It is clear that improved sheep reproductive performance, reduced sheep death rates, improved growth rates and liveweight combined with a slight adjustment to sheep type on many farms, offers the Falkland Islands as a whole the greatest scope to improve profitability of farming. Because of this, PIP plans should focus on works that offer the prospect of gains in these critical areas.

Works that do not carefully match the stated project priorities will not be supported. As an example the planting of large areas to such crops as oats, turnips and swedes for the fattening of sheep and cattle for slaughter would not match the stated priorities. In much the same way simply continuing to cultivate and plant extensive areas of land to pasture (re-seeds) without first implementing an appropriate grazing management system on the farm's existing re-seeds would also not match the 2006/2007 PIP priorities and hence could not be funded.

Note: Work presented by Damien O'Sullivan and Gordon Lennie on Simulated Grazing in this issue of the Wool Press supports the experiences of local farmers in showing increases in pasture production and pasture sustainability in the Falkland Islands through effective grazing management.

For 2006/2007 PIP planning, farmers should assume that sheep AI and ET work will continue. However it should be noted that it is highly probable that AI/ET activity will not commence until **late April/early May 2007** and will continue until the end of June 2007. The programme will be shorter than this year!

The same principles of involvement for sheep AI/ET that existed in 2005/2006 will operate for the 2006/2007 season as follows:

Sheep Genetics

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

Farmers should be aware of the following points:

1. All farms eligible to apply for PIP funding will be eligible to use some of their PIP funding for sheep genetic improvement activity up to the rate of £3,000 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).
2. Farm choice will need to be exercised to determine the proportion of funding committed to the various activities eligible for funding under the PIP scheme. (ie individual farmers will decide the proportion of their allocation committed to traditional PIP work and that committed to sheep genetic improvement).
3. Farms still exceeding the PIP funding thresholds are eligible for involvement in sheep genetic activity but NOT other PIP activity until farm spending and allocations are balanced.
4. Support activity necessary to ensure the success of a farm genetic improvement programme (such as testing of mid-side samples and processing of data) could be included in a farm's PIP plan.

DOA staff are available to assist farmers with technical advice regarding their PIP plans.

I would be happy to expand on any issue raised in their paper if required, so please do not hesitate to give me a call if you have a concern or if something is not clear.

G&S Shearing Supplies has been taken over by Southern Imports. Sue and I would like to thank all our past customers and we wish Ali & Marlene well for the future.

Hew & Sue

DARWIN SHIPPING LIMITED

Cargo receiving for Voyage 349

General & Consolidated cargo receiving
12th June to 21st June

Estimated arrival in Falklands
31st July

*For shipping instructions or assistance please contact Eva Jaffray
on telephone 27629 or email darwin@horizon.co.fk*

SEW WHAT

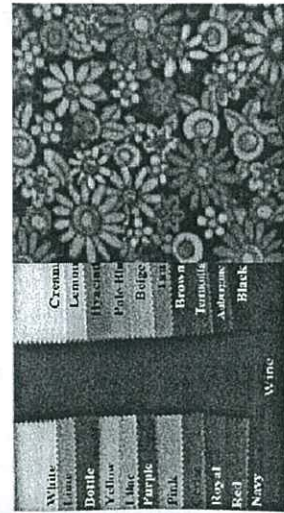
Haberdashery & Craft Shop
5 Jersey Road, P O Box 687
Stanley, Falkland Islands

ABOUT SEW WHAT

In 1998 I was tired of ordering my fabric and haberdashery from overseas due to there being no local suppliers so decided to do something about it. I started Sew What in 1999 as two shelves in my aunt's shop. In 2000 I moved the business to its present location in Jersey Road and have been expanding my stock lines ever since. Following is a sample of what you can expect to find in store.

FABRICS

1. Polar Fleece: quality anti-pil fleece in many colours and designs.



2. Evening & Bridal: a wide range of satins and other fabrics such as Chinese brocades, crystal-line organza and foils, dress-net and antistatic polyester lining.

3. Denim & Casual: a wide range of plain, patterned and embroidered fabrics, cottons, t-shirting, gingham, etc. New stock arriving regularly. Check out the suede and leather effect fabrics - look real but fully washable - but beware, stock sells out quickly!

4. Furnishing: curtain, bedding and upholstery fabric, curtain lining, cushion pads and wadding.

5. Costume: and speciality fabrics for Christmas, Halloween and fancy dress.



6. Craft: a selection of fur fabrics and felt.

HABERDASHERY

The A-Z of quality haberdashery including: beads, bobbins, bra extenders, buttons, cords, curtain tape & wire, cushion pads, duvet poppa tape, Dylon dyes, elastic, eyelets, frogs, machine bulbs & oil, mend-it, motifs, name tapes, needles, patches, pins, ribbon, scissors, seam rippers, tape measures, threads, toy fill, Velcro, Wundaweb and zips.

DMC CREATIVE WORLD

An excellent range of cross stitch, tapestry and craft kits from a company that you can trust for quality. In stock now their fabulous new range of DMC fabrics.

SEWING MACHINES

Stockist of Babylock Sewing Machines and accessories. Top of the range sewing machines which are suitable for all abilities, from beginner to professional, and cost less than the UK RRP.

Model 651 Super Pro

- * 20 programmed stitches
- * Easy drop in bobbin
- * Rotary hook mechanism
- * Drop feed
- * Snap on feet
- * Foot pressure adjustment
- * Easy 2 step buttonhole



PATTERNS

A selection of New Look and Simplicity patterns in stock.



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Answer Machine: 22088
Fax: 22088

SHEEP COAT TRIALS UNDERWAY

By Damien O'Sullivan

Many wool growing areas in the world now use sheep coats to improve wool quality by decreasing dust penetration and vegetable matter contamination. Generally it seems that it is economic to coat sheep for wool quality in regions where contamination is a problem.

There are also other benefits that are expressed for the use of sheep coats such as:

- sheep are warmer in winter and during inclement weather conditions (heat loss reduced by 40%)
- Coated sheep graze more extensively, untroubled by cold.
- Improved lactation rates in coated ewes.

If these benefits are achievable there may be some worth in trialing whether the coats are an economic option for the Falklands. A preliminary trial at Bleaker Island showed no conclusive benefits from the coats. Two more trials have started, one at Port Stephens and the other at Manybranch.

Port Stephens

A group of 190 randomly selected hoggets have been coated and another 190 will be used as controls. All hoggets have been weighed and individually tagged. At the end of winter death rates, body weights and wool weights of the group will be recorded. So far there have been problems with several of hoggets escaping from the coats and some falling in ditches.



Manybranch

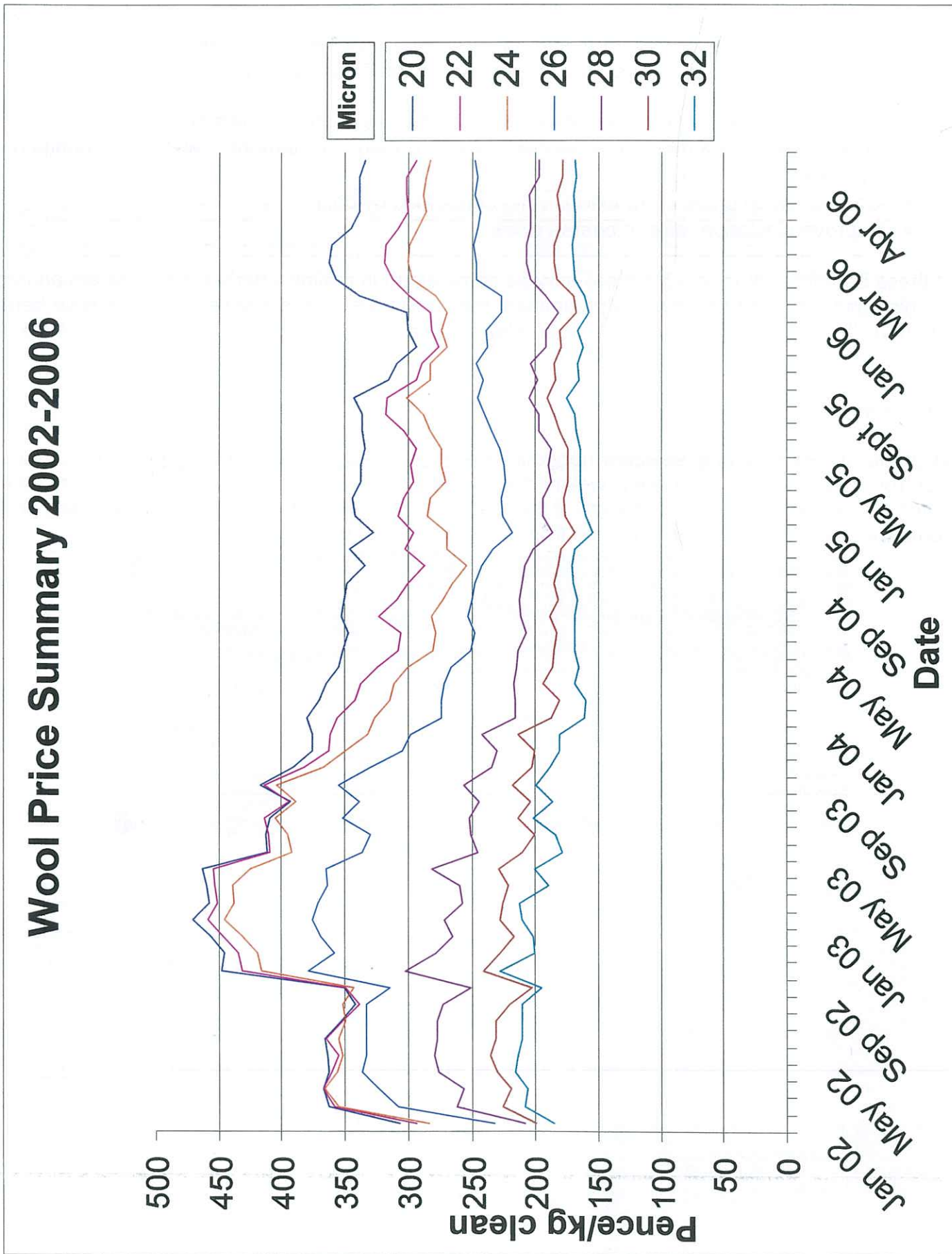
194 randomly selected ewes have been coated and another 194 ewes used as controls. Coated ewes will then be compared with un-coated ewes for lambing %, bodyweight and fleece weight.

If there is an obvious difference in the weights of lambs reared by the coated ewes lambs would also be weighed. So far only 2 ewes have escaped from their coats. Cost of the coats delivered was £3.00.

Results for the trial will be available by the end of the year.

WOOL PRICE TREND OVER TIME

Based on weekly DOA Wool Reports



CHALLENGE DAY MAY 31st 2006

OVERCOMING INACTIVITY

Challenge Day is fast approaching. On the 31st May 2006, the Falkland Islands will once again be taking part in Challenge Day. For those who are not familiar with the day the objectives are simple. We aim to get as many members of the community as possible 'breathless' on the day. It does not mean that you all have to run madly around the block, be imaginative examples from the past two years include;

Climbing Jacob's Ladder in St Helena
 A mass conga line by the IJ school
 A mass aerobics session in the FICS Gym
 A brisk walk to the Jhelum and back by the secretariat staff
 And so on...

Plans for this year so far are;

Free Swimming Pool all day - 7.00 am - 9.00 pm (dependant on Block Bookings)
 Free courts all day (dependant on Block Bookings)
 5-A-Side Football game in the Gym 11.00 pm - 12.00 pm - Contact Chris Biggs with your team names (Only 8 Team Slots Available)
 5-A-Side Hockey game in the Gym 12.00 pm - 1.00 pm - Contact Chris Biggs with your team names (Only 8 Team Slots Available)
 Free access to the new exercise machines all day
 Free Aquarobics - 6.00pm - 7.00pm with Sarah Clement
 Free Aerobics - 5.00pm - 5.30pm with Carol Peck
 Free Yogafit Class - 5.30pm - 6.00pm with Carol Peck
 Free Aquarun session between 4.00pm and 5.00pm for all
 Free Roller Blade session from 4.00pm - 4.45pm in the gym
 Free Parents and Toddlers session in the gym from 2.00pm - 3.00pm
 Dog walking group at Surf Bay from 2.00pm - 3.00pm.
 Lots of other fun and exciting things are planned, what are YOU going to do

It is a little way to go until the day however I would like all departments to start thinking about how they might participate. There are certificates of participation for all departments who take part on the day and a trophy for departments with 100% participation.

If departments could please nominate a contact point that would be most helpful. All I need is someone who I can liaise with on a regular basis in order to get and keep the ball rolling.

We are hoping to get a higher level of participation than ever this year by including the military and camp communities in the count.

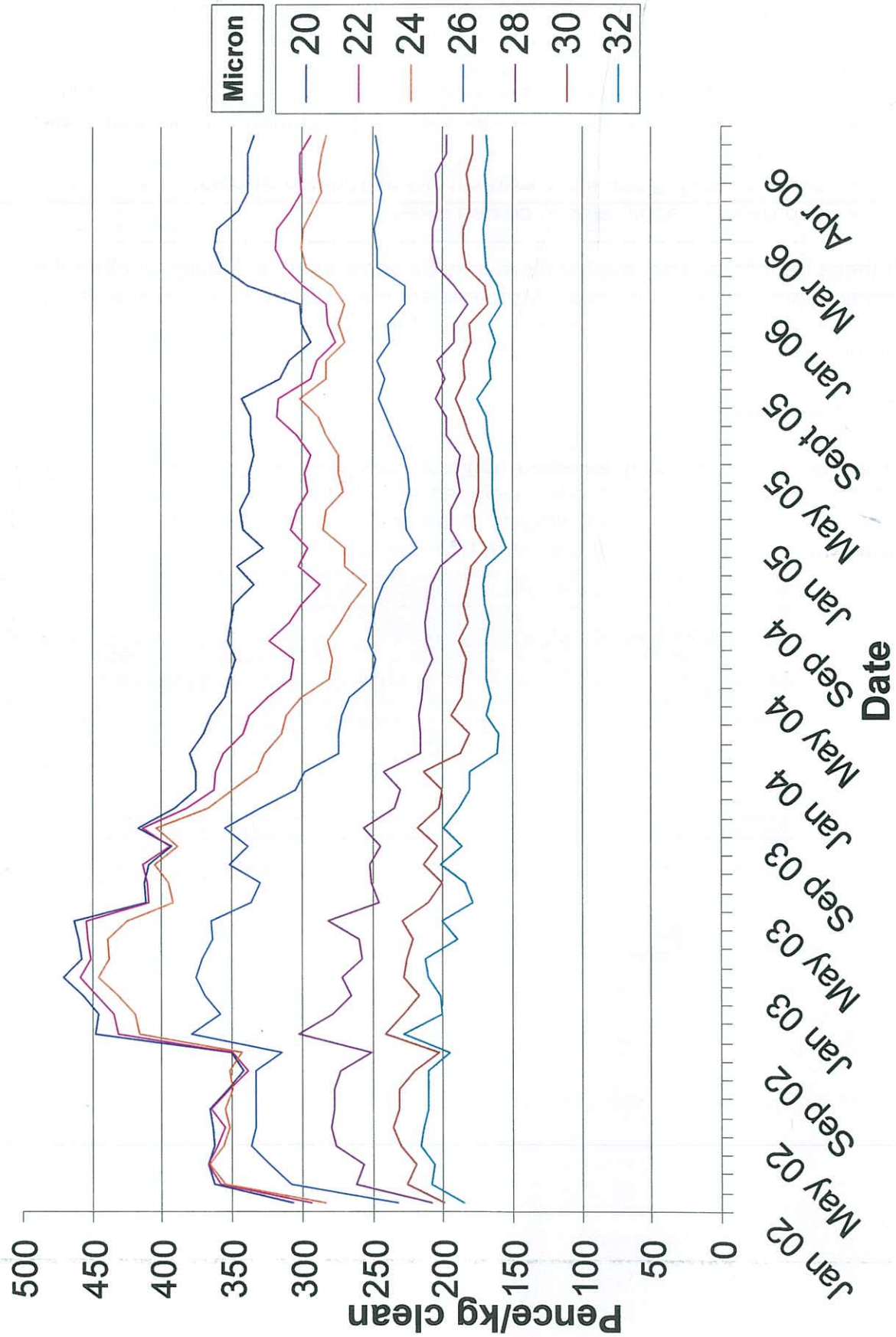
If you want to know more then please contact the Recreation manager or check out the Challenge Day Website;

<http://www.sescsp.org.br/sesc/hotsites/diadodesafio/ingles/index.htm>

WOOL PRICE TREND OVER TIME

Based on weekly DOA Wool Reports

Wool Price Summary 2002-2006



SIMULATED GRAZING TRIALS

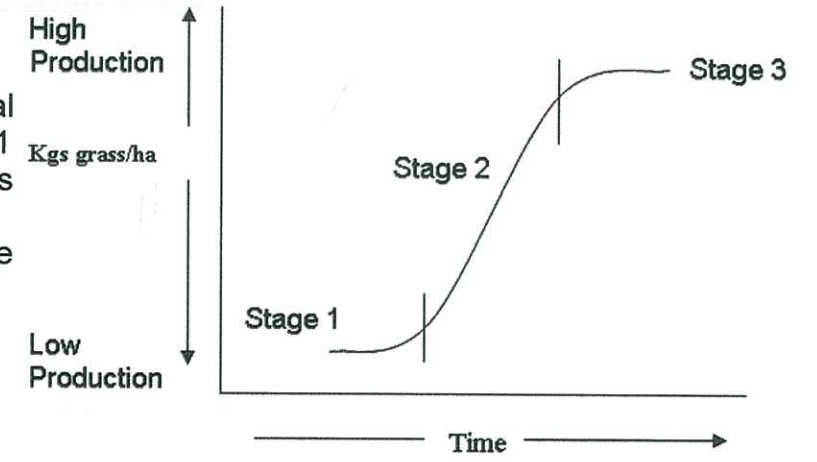
By Gordon Lennie & Damien O'Sullivan

Much has been said about managed grazing and the resting of camps to maximise animal production, but does resting pasture and grazing at the correct time improve pasture production in the Falklands?

Managed grazing theory indicates that if a pasture is kept in Stage 2 of it's growth (e.g. medium height, lots of leaf but no seed head) we will maximise our grass production. To determine whether this theory holds true in the Falklands, DoA has trial sites that simulate grazing of grass at three levels with the grass consumption being carried out by a lawn mower rather than sheep. There are two main sites one a settlement green at Fitzroy and the other at a reseed at Estancia. A third site on a valley green is being established at Island Harbour

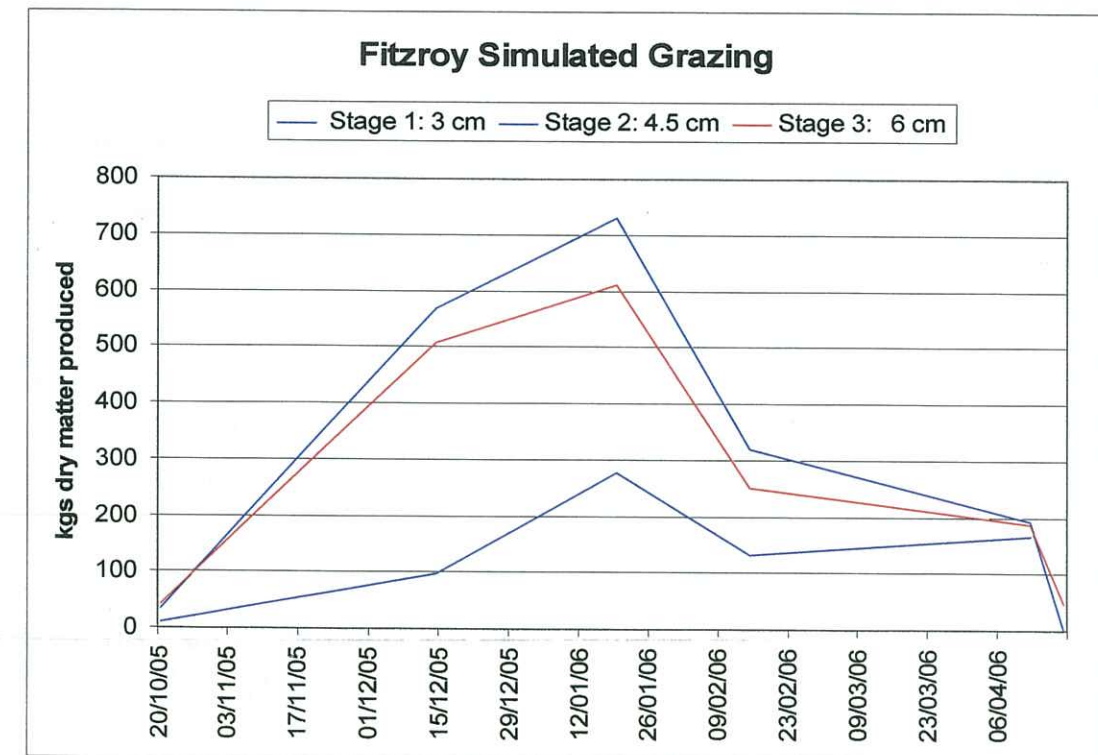
Each of the sites has three treatments:

- grass mown at 3cm: simulates normal continuously grazed camp eg: Stage 1
- grass mown at 4.6cm: simulates rested & managed grazing - Stage 2
- grass mown at 6cm: simulates mature pasture gone to seed - Stage 3



Graph 1: Stages of grass growth

The grass is then dried and weighed after mowing and the results determined on the basis of dry matter yield/ha.





Gordon has mown the sites despite rain, hail & snow

The Fitzroy results show a peak of pasture growth in early January but a rapid drop off of growth from this point on. The graph clearly shows the optimum dry matter grass production occurring at a Stage 2 or a mowing height of 4.5cm.

The Estancia results show less difference between the Stage 2 & 3 pastures but once again there is far more production from rested and managed pastures.

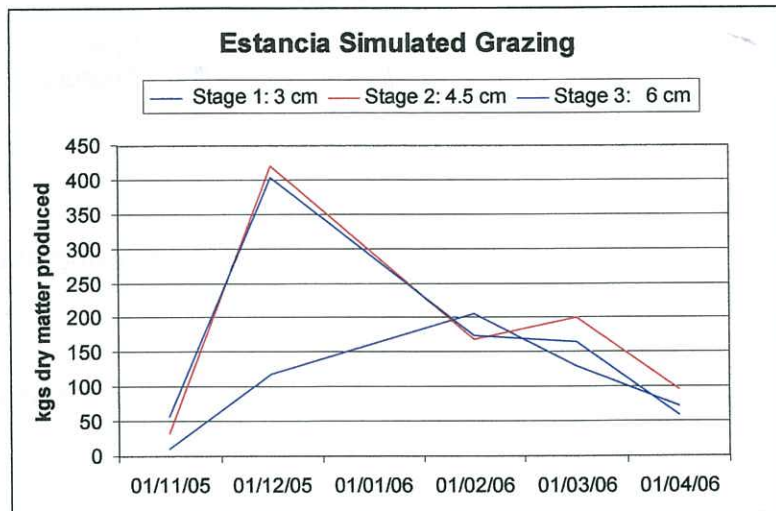
So with this in mind what are the implications for managing pastures?

- Pasture rested and grazed at strategic times has far more production than pastures that are continuously grazed.
- This year peak pasture growth occurred between December and January and then dramatically dropped off.

Simulated Grazing site	No. of 40kg sheep able to be grazed for 182 days on 1ha		
	Stage 1: 3 cm	Stage 2: 4.5cm	Stage 3: 6cm
Fitzroy	2.4	7.2	6.2
Estancia	2	3.5	3.1

These grass growth figures can then be equated to stocking rates and the estimated number of sheep that can be carried on 1 ha for the growing period from November to April.

The graph to the side must be taken in consideration with all the other factors such as varying grass species, selective grazing and individual conditions but it does give a good indication of the gains that can be made from a managed grazing system that all farms have the ability to set up.



Labour Scheme

Funds are available in the Labour Scheme right now for work to be carried out on farms. Please check your Farm Handbook for details. Applications should be forwarded to Glynis or Phyl by email or fax clearly stating what work is to be done, by whom (preferably a camp resident) and an estimate of how many hours the work will take. Please take advantage of these funds to progress work on your farm. If you want to discuss proposals or find out what work would qualify please do not hesitate to contact Phyl on 27322 or Neil On 27355.

QUALITY FALKLAND WOOL ACCREDITATION

By Lucy Ellis & Damien O'Sullivan

We currently have 33 farms registered under the Quality Falkland Wool stencil. Last year it was decided that farms would self-audit for QFW every second year and then there would be an inspection by Department of Agriculture staff the following year. We now have 7 farms that have returned their self audit forms and another 26 farms that need to return their self audits. Farms that have successfully complied with the standards for QFW will be issued with a bi-annual certificate (shown below) to display in their shearing sheds. This will indicate that the farm fully complies with the guidelines set down in the QFW standards. This year we have had two new farms expressing interest in joining the scheme and it is hoped that they will be certified in the coming season.



The aim of QFW is to ensure all sheds produce a quality assured product that is prepared to a high standard by committed participants so that those purchasing the wool can do so with increased confidence of quality. QFW may not necessarily mean a premium for the wool but it is a further reason why QFW wool should not be discounted against other farms or wool from other countries.

If you have misplaced your self-audit form please contact us for another form.

For those farms that have been using the Owner Classers Specifications many people have found it convenient to add bale weights to their specification as shown below: This negates the need to complete a 2 separate bale specifications. The Owner classers Specification will give buyers better information on the wool they are purchasing.

Falkland Islands Wool Classer Specifications

Brand _____	Trading Name _____	Shearing Details
Special Instructions _____	Address _____	Is the shearing complete? Yes/No _____
_____	Phone _____ Fax _____	Totals Bales this report _____
_____	Email _____	Est (or) Total Bales this shearing _____
_____	Owner/Manager _____	Date shearing completed _____
		Classer's Name _____
		Address _____
		Phone No _____

No of Bales	Description	Individual Bale Numbers												Sheep Group	Classer's Comments	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12			
	Weights															
	Weights															
	Weights															
	Weights															
	Weights															
	Weights															
	Weights															

Sex Codes E = Ewes W = Wethers R = Rams M = Mixed E/W/R Ages in years 1 = 12 months or less 2 = 13-24 months 3 = 25-30 months 4 = 31-36 months 8 = 85-90 months etc 9, 10, 11, 12 Mixed years eg 1-2, 3-5, 4-6	Sheep group and Breed	No of sheep in group	Sex (code)	Age (yrs)	Crutched (y/n)	If crutched, was it within 3 months of shearing (y/n)	Av. Micron estimate	Wool growth (mths)	Av. Length (mm)

Owner/Manager's Signature _____ Date _____

For farmers that would like an Excel copy of the specification to complete on their computer we can email a copy of it to them. For those experiencing problems with emails we can either print out copies at the DOA, or save the files to disc to post out to you.

If you would like more information on the QFW scheme or the Owner classer scheme please contact the DoA.

Livestock Ordinances Forms
The 2005/2006 Stock Return forms will be sent out shortly. You will receive two copies, please keep own for you one records and the second needs to be completed and returned to Siân Ferguson at the DOA by 30th June 2006. Remember: The sooner we receive all the forms, the sooner we can compile the Farming Statistics!!

NUTRITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL REPRODUCTION PROGRAM IN FARM ANIMALS

By Frans Jooste

It has been said that 90% of breeding is feeding. This is true to a large extent and while the type of animal and the genetic capabilities of the breed in question are obviously important, body condition score at the time of breeding and the extent to which it varies throughout the year is of major importance. Vitamin and mineral deficiencies (especially Vit A, E, Cobalt and Selenium) are also important, but to a lesser extent than body condition score. In my opinion nutrition is a major cause for the poor reproductive performance in Falkland Island animals. I will try to highlight a few significant effects of nutrition that impacts on reproduction in breeding animals.

The reproductive system of sheep is very sensitive to the availability of energy in the environment. Changes in the energy status of sheep can alter the levels of the important reproductive hormones. In sheep, low energy intakes, for more than three weeks, result in lower ovulation rates. Energy levels are also largely responsible for the quality of the egg that is destined for ovulation, with low energy levels being associated with poor egg quality. This shows the importance of not making severe dietary changes before mating. The oocyte(s) destined for ovulation starts developing long (at least 3 months) before they are actually ovulated. Suboptimal feeding in the months preceding the breeding season can therefore negatively impact on conception rates. This is especially true in embryo transfer programs where a lower percentage of good quality embryos can be recovered from superovulated ewes fed at lower than maintenance rates.

Overfeeding sheep can have a negative effect on reproduction as well. There is a strong negative correlation between feed intake and progesterone levels in sheep. In sheep, overfeeding results in decreased progesterone concentrations, decreases pregnancy rates and decreases the rate of development and viability of embryos. Practically this implies that animals should be adapted to their diet before any breeding programs are started and the feed levels should not be increased (or decreased!) until pregnancy is well advanced to allow for the higher energy demands of pregnant animals.

Pregnant animals need higher levels of feeding especially during the last third of pregnancy. This is not only needed to maintain body reserves of pregnant animals and to ensure adequate production of milk, but it is very important in development of the fetus while it is still in the uterus. Female animals are born with a certain number of eggs in their ovaries and no more eggs get formed later on in life. One (sometimes more) of these eggs get ovulated during each heat cycle throughout the reproductive lifespan of the animal. Undernutrition effects the concentration of eggs in the fetal ovaries and this obviously will affect lifetime production and ovulation rates in lambs and calves born to undernourished mothers. In practice this means that lambs/calves born to mothers with deficient diets will be able to reproduce less effectively later in life compared to lambs/calves born to mothers in good condition. In addition, poor nutrition during pregnancy decreases lamb birth weight and increases the incidence of lamb mortality. Undernutrition also affects the expression of appropriate behavior essential for survival of the offspring. Undernourished animals take longer to attend to their newborn, they spend significantly less time grooming their newborn and they are more likely to start feeding during the first 30 minutes after birth of the offspring rather than grooming it.

In the current economic environment reproduction rates of animals is the single most important factor determining the profitability of a farming enterprise and it will probably be for many years to come. I am convinced that by optimizing the nutrition of breeding animals in the Falkland Islands reproduction rates and profitability will increase if some of the above effects are kept in mind.

**SALE OF AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY
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Lot No. 3	Allman Eco-Wipe Wick Wiper	NO BIDS RECEIVED	
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Lot No. 7	Spearhead Slasher (East)	Mr N Davis, Johnsons Harbour	£250.00
Lot No. 8	Spearhead Slasher (East)	RM Pitaluga & Co Ltd	£215.00
Lot No. 9	Spearhead Slasher (West)	Teal River Farm	£250.00
Lot No. 10	Spearhead Slasher (West)	Coast Ridge Farm	£171.00
Lot No. 16	4 Furrow Plough	RM Pitaluga & Co Ltd	£335.00

Work Wanted

My employment with the Department of Agriculture finishes at the end of June 2006. If you have any work for me over winter of the following months, then please get in touch. I am capable of fencing, general farm work and many other tasks and am happy to undertake work funded by the Labour Scheme if available.

You can either contact me at the DoA on 27355 or on my mobile 51212.

Thank you,

Clint Short

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SHEEP AT HALF THE PRICE

Source: *Night & Day Live March 2006* - Provided by Pam & Leon Berntsen and re-written by Kim Steen

The days of lamb ruling the roast are over – rich, slowly cooked mutton is the only meat to eat.

The problem with mutton is one of image rather than taste. Most people will admit to disliking this meat without even having tried a bite. In the United Kingdom mutton is recognised as a cheap meat, eaten only out of necessity. Why spend hours plodding through some leathery flap of raddled old ewe when you could be savouring the rosy tenderness of spring lamb?

The flavour of mutton is certainly more pronounced than that of most lamb, the texture firm but not tough, and it can be made for incredible eating if roasted to a perfect pink, just like your favourite leg of lamb. If you're looking for real flavour, then you'd be mad to miss out on mutton.

Mutton was the national meat of Britain until it was knocked from its top spot by beef in the 18th century, but still flourished for many years. The Victorians – who had little regard for the tasteless youth of lamb – adored it. They liked their sheep anywhere between three and six years old, the limit to ensure sufficient flavour, the upper to prevent too much toughness. These days people have been conditioned to appreciate unthreatening tastes that do little to trouble the taste buds, mutton seems to be too gamey for those brought up on supermarket meats.

After World War II, mutton slipped from fashion. The fall in wool prices affected the mutton industry too (as there were fewer old ewes about, to butcher for meat), while consumers acquired a taste for year-round lam, British when in season and the rest from Australia and New Zealand. Lamb became dominant leaving the cheaper mutton with an image problem it still struggles to throw off today.

In a campaign spearheaded by The Prince of Wales, the mutton renaissance is already afoot, with chefs as diverse as Jamie Oliver, Marco Pierre White, Gordon Ramsey and Brian Turner all celebrating this wonderful meat, and featuring it on their restaurant menus. But it will be some time before mutton sits proudly alongside lamb on supermarket shelves.

Most lambs are killed at six months, as for the vexed question of when lamb becomes mutton, definitions vary, but as a rule of thumb a lamb older than about ten months is called a hogget (when castrated they're known as wethers). Aged between 15 and 18 months, you still get a wonderfully tender texture, but the flavour is barely comparable to a few months earlier. After two summers and winters, the hogget becomes mutton and, though a little tougher – it will need slow cooking, and is best served with a sharp caper sauce – still has a fantastic flavour.

Older mutton does need more careful attention when cooking, and is better suited to slow cooking. And the flavour and texture of a really old sheep is not the best way to start on a mutton trial.

It costs more (in feed and work) to raise lamb to mutton, and with limited public interest in eating the meat, it can seem a waste of time – especially when the public will pay more for lamb than mutton. The payback comes in the flavour (the animal needs to be hung for at least two weeks) and the benefits rearing mutton has for rural communities. Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall points out in his *River Cottage Meat Book* that 'mutton is to lamb what beef is to veal'. He argues that mutton should be our year-round staple, with lamb a seasonal treat.

This article does not suggest that lamb should be abandoned, rather that mutton be given a chance. It's only a matter of months between lamb, hogget and mutton. Don't think broken impotent old ram but rather lamb with experience, a youthful animal at the height of its life, as the very best mutton should never have to dress as lamb.

Next Dog Dosing Day...
...Wednesday 24th May (Droncit)

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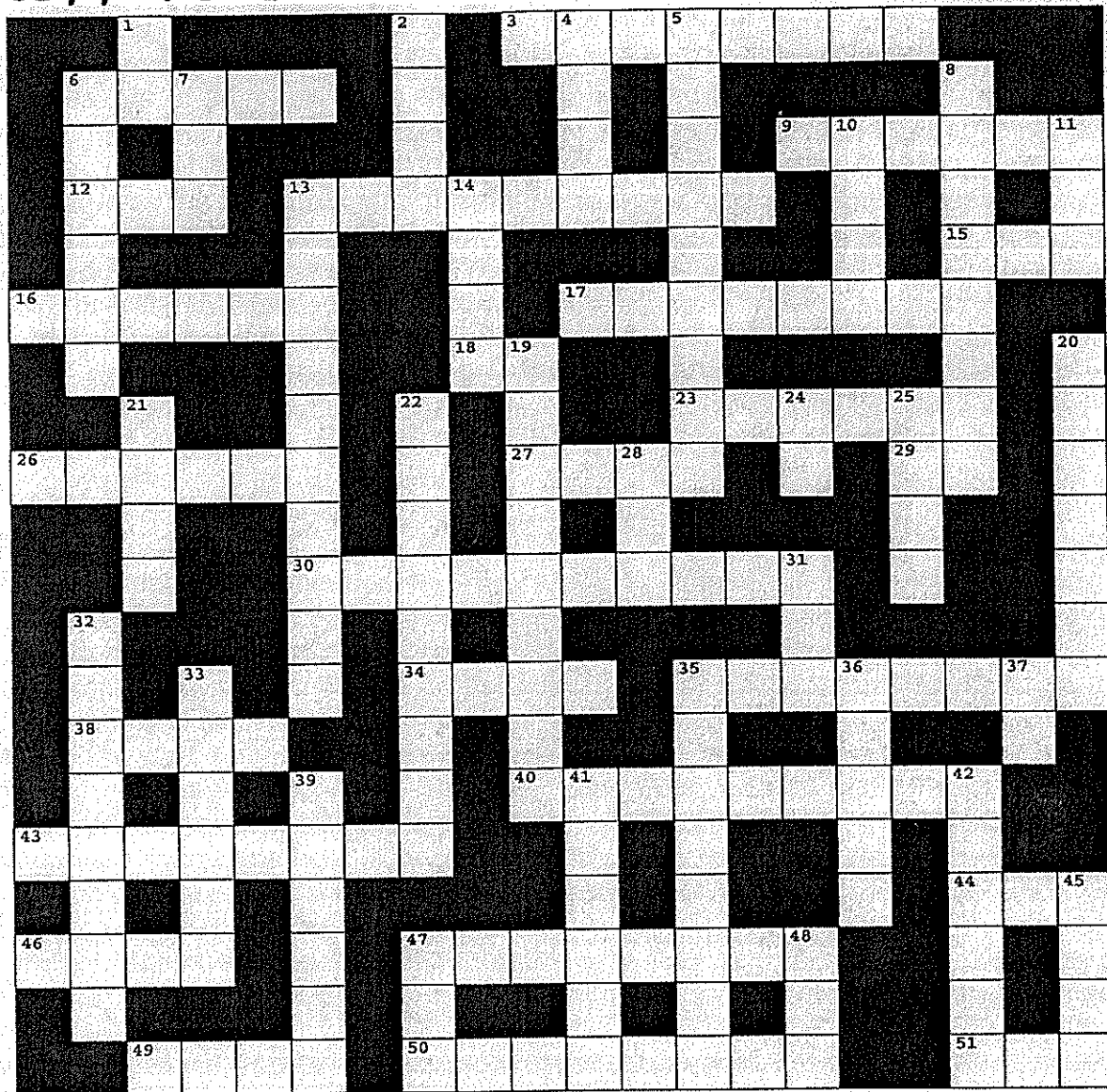
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PUZZLE PAGE

CROSSWORD



Across

- 3. Animated cat
- 6. New Falklands farm
- 9. Edible seed
- 12. Flexible container with opening at one end
- 13. Major Falklands industry
- 15. Female ovis bovidae
- 16. Floating dock
- 17. A system for determining the beginning, length and order of years and their divisions
- 18. Chemical symbol for aluminium
- 23. Sheep marker
- 26. Japanese import
- 27. Close friend (*slang*)
- 29. Electronic Equipment
- 30. 4x4 vehicle

- 34. Supporting shaft for wheels
- 35. Paper encasement
- 38. Depict/represent
- 40. Body restraint
- 43. Metal goods & utensils
- 44. Law officer (*slang*)
- 46. Suffering from fatigue
- 47. Sport tournament dominating radio and television broadcasts
- 49. A repetitive sound
- 50. Chilean city founded in 1541 found in the foothills of the Andes
- 51. A number of these play an important part in walking

Down

- 1. Mail central (*init*)
- 2. Radio broadcaster (*init*)

- 4. Roman counterpart of Eros
- 5. Household safety device
- 6. A burrowing animal
- 7. A lock of matter of dung-coated wool
- 8. Information resource
- 10. "... Blyton", children's author
- 11. Part of a males formal clothing
- 13. Long tapered flexible pole
- 14. Hawaiian dance
- 19. DOA staff member
- 20. Planet saving process
- 21. Upholstered furniture
- 22. Instrument measuring precipitation
- 24. Practical & theory based GCSE subject
- 25. Prevaricator
- 28. Flying saucer
- 31. "... up" to liven up
- 32. Warmth producing device
- 33. Spring holiday (*UK*)
- 35. East Falkland farm
- 36. "... MacArthur", sports-woman
- 37. Aide
- 39. Portable piece of IT equipment
- 41. Small hole for a lace to pass through
- 42. The concave part of a joint that receives the end of the bone
- 45. Sinless
- 47. Has been
- 48. Sport at the top level

THE WOOL PRESS

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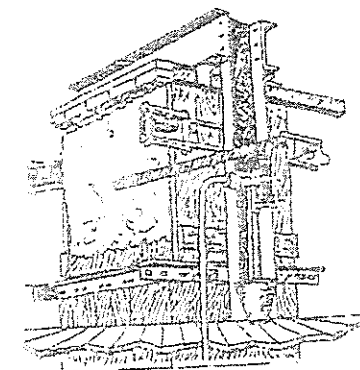
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EDITORIAL

It is always a sad time when very active members of the Department of Agriculture leave the Falkland Islands. Last month we saw Steve Pointing leave and this month Damien O'Sullivan. I will not expand too much on Steve; his contribution to the Department has been discussed widely already, however I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the contribution that Damien has made to the DOA and to farming in the Falklands during his two year stay.

Damien co-ordinated and managed a number of very successful programmes of activity on behalf of the department and was a prolific contributor to the Wool Press. His work with the wool classing and sheep selection workshops has provided information and process's that, it is hoped, will have a profound influence on how farmers go about their businesses for many years. Damien's replacement, Peter Johnson (not former director Peter Johnston!) will arrive on 15th July to take up the position of Sheep and Wool Husbandry Advisor. More on Peter in a later edition.

This edition of the Wool Press contains a 'smorgasbord' of delights. Several contributions from Doug are recommended for your attention. I found the article on endophytes in grasses to be particularly interesting and worthy of consideration. Damien, as a final contribution, has provided informative articles on happenings at Blue Beach Farm, West Lagoons and Sheffield - please take the time to read and consider these articles, and then if you are keen, question Hew & Sue, Peter & Shelley and Kenneth & Josie about their progress. Thanks also go to Vic for a summary on hydatidosis, I am sure everyone will be very keen to hear from Vic and his team as to how investigations proceed with the disease over the next 12 months or so.

Thanks also to John Ferguson on his FIMCo export season summary. It will be good to work through all of the detail with FIMCo during Farmers Week. Paeonies in the Falkland, who knows? But if anyone is keen it would certainly appear that Jim McAdam is willing to assist in tracking down information, FIDC could be consulted to review the business logic and staff at the DoA are able to discuss some of the site suitability issues!

The DOA is delighted to welcome back vet Joe Hollins for a twelve month veterinary stint. Joe's friendly and professional nature plus vast experience will contribute greatly. Wool Goes To War - while sincerely hoping that wool will not have to be put to the test under real circumstances, it is re-assuring to hear of the development of new uses for wool, as farmers know, the market could do with more competition and demand. Thank you Kimberley for this contribution.

Enjoy reading.

Neil Judd
Senior Agricultural Advisor

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The articles printed in the Wool Press do not necessarily represent the views of the DOA.

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PASTURE AND CROP SEED STORAGE QUALITY SEED FROM THE START

By Doug Martin

At the time of physiological seed maturity the germination and vigour of pasture and crop seed is optimal and at its maximum. This is the time when our farmers are harvesting the seed.

The seed is dried immediately after harvest to reach a moisture content of 12-13%. This gives the seed the best position to be stored. A careful and soft handling during the seed processing is a guarantee for a high quality product with a long shelf life. Nevertheless seed is a living organism and ageing of seeds starts right after harvest. **The aim of the storage should therefore be to create conditions to slow the ageing process.**

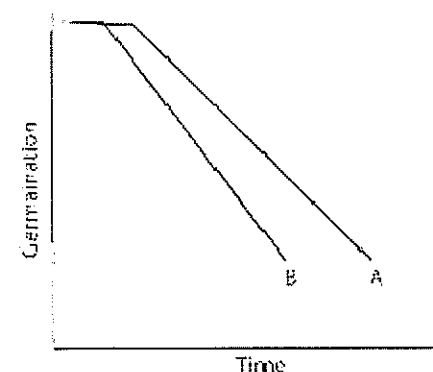
Water Content and Temperature

Low moisture is more important than low temperature. You might experience problems if the seed is exposed to large differences in temperature. In that case air circulation can be initiated which does not only transport heat but also moisture from seed to seed. This is possible because the difference in the temperature of warm seed and cold air condense water on the seed in the bag. The high moisture content accelerates the respiration of the seed and thereby the loss of energy.

Storage Condition Impact on Shelf Life

The temperature and humidity decides how long you can store the seed. Each seed has a built-in "shelf life meter" which is the potential time the seed can be stored.

Figure 1-deterioration of seed over time



In Figure 1, Line A is the maximum period of seed shelf life, whereas Line B shows the effect of poor seed storage conditions in the warehouse. When conditions deteriorate, the seed germination will deteriorate accordingly. In the majority of cases, the germination will stay stable for a length of time before starting to decline.

Optimal Seed Storage Conditions

Generally, the colder and drier the surrounding environment the better. The conditions to aim for are 30% relative humidity - or as low as possible and temperatures below 15°C. The aim is a temperature that is as consistent as possible. It is more important to maintain consistency, rather than maintaining a low temperature level, i.e. a range from 15-17°C is far better than a range from 8-30°C. Darkness is a third rule of optimal seed storage. Light stimulates and supports the germination process in the seeds and storage in darkness helps keeping the pre-germination processes in the seed at a low level.

Some of the seed in the Falkland Islands has traditionally been stored in shipping containers which may be suitable for exclusion of mice, however whilst this is suitable in winter the temperature variation in summer will be enough to cause poor germination.

BACK AGAIN

By Joe Hollins

Once again I return to the Falklands to fill the role of veterinary officer, but this time on a 1 year contract. My previous experience, a 4 week locum while Sue Harvey travelled Chile, opened my eyes to what a fascinating, quirky place this is. And I mean that in the nicest of ways. The people are hospitable, the landscape is wild, the sea is ever present, and the weather – well, it's about the most changeable, challenging but visually exciting weather I have come across. Was it Darwin who said that the Falkland Islands have four seasons in one day? What he failed to say was that they have four seasons in one day over and over again.

Which is not to be naïve. I appreciate fully that this is why farming in the Falklands is such a challenge. As my father said when we moved down to Devon to start a new life, 'Yes, it's all very beautiful – but you can't eat landscape.' Here one can only admire the fortitude with which farmers have worked the land, adapting, with the help of government and the DOA, to rapid global changes in traditional agricultural markets, and adopting new concepts and farming practices to move with the times. It is an ever evolving process. This is not easy land to farm. Geologically it is plagued by deficiencies, meteorologically is scourged and blasted, and geographically it is a long way from consumers.

And yet despite these handicaps, I really believe the islands have a future, a small economy filling small but valuable niche markets. There are a host of obstacles, but it is clear to me that your land, air and sea are unpolluted, your export lamb is all but organic (bar the virtually insurmountable problem of accreditation), and your wool is of the finest quality. With the genetic improvements brought along apace by the ET programme, there is much to hope for.

One of the things about working at the DOA, is that there is a great pool of invaluable expertise gathered here from around the world. The Falklands is still a raw and exciting place to work, with much to be found out and much to be done. My role as a veterinary surgeon here is somewhat varied, and if I have particular question to ask, I can invariably not only find someone with the answer, but usually come away feeling thoroughly enlightened. There's no doubt that this is a vibrant, well motivated and active department, and I am happy to be a part of it.

So I'm looking forward to the year ahead with anticipation and a healthy degree of trepidation. Much is new to me, but like you farmers I'll adapt and learn and do my best to get it right. A year is not long, but I hope that in some small way I might make my mark and benefit the islands.

FARMING STATISTICS

By now everyone should have received their Livestock Ordinance forms. If you haven't, then please get in touch with me as soon as possible and I will send you another set. It is a legal obligation that all completed forms should be returned to the Department of Agriculture by Friday 30th June 2006.

We hope to get them all processed and published in July, but this is only possible if all forms are received by the deadline, however this does not usually happen as we end up waiting for one or two returns.

If there is anything you are unsure of in the forms, then please ask so we can ensure all information going to print is correct.

You can contact me on telephone 27355, email sferguson@doa.gov.fk or on 55399 in the evenings.

Thank you,

HYDATIDOSIS (ECHINOCOCCUS GRANULOSUS) IN THE FALKLAND ISLANDS

By Vic Epstein

Background: E granulosus (hydatids) eradication campaign commenced seriously in 1977 with the introduction of a 6 weekly treatment of all dogs in the Falkland Islands with praziquantel (Droncit) and maintaining strict offal disposal control through education and legislation

This programme has progressed unaltered since that date.

Statistics on the occurrence of hydatids in the Falklands are demonstrated in Table 1...

Table 1

Year	Prevalence	Reporting Body	No. Properties
1950	3.3%	Ajax abattoir	
1976	13%		
1983	1.8%		
1993	0.5%	Stanley Butcher	
1996		Stanley Butcher	2
2001	0%	Sand Bay abattoir	
2004	0.06%	Sand Bay abattoir	6
2005	0.003%	Sand Bay abattoir	
2006	0.01%	Sand Bay abattoir	5

Current status: Accurate figures have become available by the use of microscopic analysis of cysts found in the offal, an effective meat inspection service at a recognised abattoir; processing a high volume of mutton.

The last human diagnosis was made in the 1970's in the Falkland Islands.

So the question remains:

Why after treating every dog in the Falkland Islands with an effective worm tablet every 6 weeks and preventing access to offal of all dogs for the last 29 years does hydatids still occur in the Islands?

There are several theories:

1. There may be non-compliance: someone/s (and it would be a very minority of people) is/are letting down the side and are either not treating the dogs or letting the dogs get access to offal. No one has reported to the DOA an offal cyst since I arrived, in camp killed animals!
2. There may be hydatids worms in the foxes and somehow these worm eggs are getting from the islands where the foxes live and infecting the sheep in other places. (The fox in the Falklands has been shown to carry Echinococcus in studies carried out in Chile).
3. There is resistance to the drug being used (The experts tell me this is most unlikely)

There is NO transmission from feral cats.

Any inspiration let me know. Next spring we will be looking at the fox theory and Joe and Shona have already visited West Falkland farmers, talking to them about offal control and pill administration compliance. They will shortly be talking to people on East Falkland.

PAEONIES FOR THE FALKLANDS?

By Jim McAdam, UK Falkland Islands Trust
and Consuelo Saez, University of Magallanes, Punta Arenas

Paeonies?

Paeonies are a wide group of hardy, attractive flowering plants, particularly valuable for the cut-flower market in North America and Europe.

Can they grow in the Falklands?

In a word, yes – several gardeners around the islands already grow Paeonies outdoors. Over recent years, contacts between the UK Falkland Islands Trust and the University of Magallanes in Punta Arenas has raised the idea of growing Paeonies commercially in the Falklands. Paeonies can be grown commercially in Punta Arenas for export to a lucrative out-of-season market in the USA. Following some basic research into the potential to grow Paeonies and the marketing opportunities available, the Trust and the University of Magallanes feel that:



(a) Paeonies could be grown in the Falkland Islands, probably on a commercial scale

(b) There is an opportunity to link with a producer in Punta Arenas to export (by air) from the Islands to northern hemisphere markets.

(c) The time is right to put up a business case to support at least an investigating pilot project.

Is there a market out there?

Paeonies are being commercially grown by at least one producer in Punta Arenas (Flores de la Patagonia Ltda.). Flores de la Patagonia Ltda. and University of Magallanes have been growing Paeonies for several years. The latter on a scientific scale and the former for about 4 years producing 50,000 stems last year. All of these were boxed, cold stored, flown directly to Santiago and then onward to Florida for a December/January market which has to depend on no supply or expensively grown northern hemisphere plants. An experienced Chilean agent (Chilifresh Ltda.) handles the whole transport/marketing operation and has good cold storage facilities at Santiago. Flores de la Patagonia Ltda. is very happy with the returns they get from this operation. The work is relatively concentrated on the months of December and January with few but important inputs for the rest of the year. Flores de la Patagonia Ltda. does not try for the Christmas or Valentine market but these could be even more profitable and demand is currently outstripping all they can supply. It is also felt that the UK as well as the rest of the EU out-of-season market is not yet exploited as all the Chilean production can be absorbed in the US.



What do we know about growing them?

The Paeonies in Punta Arenas are being grown in an exposed, coastal site with a strong, protective windbreak. The soil is quite light and needs to be well cultivated. Production is intensive –

Flores de la Patagonia produces 50,000 stems from an area of 5,000 square metres. The soil has to be limed up to a pH of 6.5 and a fertilizer regime has been worked out. Normally plants are at 80 cm between rows and 40 – 50 cm between plants.

The UK Falkland Islands Trust through Flores de la Patagonia Ltda brought some rhizomes of Paeonies (the varieties are grown from large rhizome sections) across to the Falklands in 2004 and planted some out around Stanley, Fitzroy and Shallow Harbour. In the first year, survival was good and some plants even flowered, when normally it would take at least 2 years in the ground for this to happen.

In 2005 many of the rhizomes produced flowering stems before Christmas (earlier than the same varieties in Punta Arenas). We now have good experience from Punta Arenas on the best varieties for the region, for those that the market wants in the US (mostly red and white ones like *Red Charm*), but although a variety like *Sarah Bernhardt* doesn't grow well in Punta Arenas it might perform better in the Falklands. There are price implications for varieties. Once cut, stems can be cold-stored for over a week with no deterioration so a weekly flight should present no problems.

Cultivation and growing profile

YEAR	MONTH	PLANT	FERTILISER
1	March	Plant out rhizome	Lime at planting
	December	Leaves	Light foliar Oct @
2	Jan	Only	Foliar feed ¹ (Jan-Feb)
	March	Cut Leaves (April – Aug Dormant)	Fertilise ² (March) (100 P ₂ O ₅) Lime (March)
	Sept		Fertilise (50 kg N)
	Dec	1 – 3 stems (Remove)	
3	Jan		Foliar Feed (Jan – Feb) Fertilise ² (Mar) 50 kgN Fertilise ³ (March) P ₂ O ₅
	March	Cut off leaves	Lime (March)
	Sept		50 kg N
	Dec	5-6 stems Remove 2 or 3 best for sale and cut head only off the rest	
4	Jan		Foliar Feed (Jan – Feb) Fertilise ² (Mar) 50 kg N Fertilise ³ (March) P ₂ O ₅
	March	Cut off stems & Leaves	Lime (?) March
	Sept		50 kg N
5	Dec/	8 – 10 stems	
	Jan	For sale	Foliar feed (Jan – Feb) Fertilise ² (March) 50 kg N
	March	Cut leaves Split rhizome & replant on part	Fertilise ³ (March) P ₂ O ₅

Fertiliser regime:-

Jan Jan (after flower removal)
Standard foliar feed each week until first week in March
Fertiliser 2. Half Nitrogen dose (50 kg N ha⁻¹) as
eg. Nitrochalk (avoid urea/ammonia)

March Fertiliser 3. Second half of Nitrogen (50 kg N ha⁻¹ as
Nitrochalk (for rhizome growth over winter)
100 kg P₂O₅ ha⁻¹
100 kg K₂O ha⁻¹

Liming Regime Optimum pH is 6.5. Bring up to this gradually with autumn/winter application of Calcium Carbonate (approx 200 g/m² – 2 tonnes/ha) for about 3 years to bring up.

Sulphur Depending on soil analysis approx 40 kgs/ha in Autumn.

Getting started?

If you are interested in growing Paeonies commercially in the Falklands and wish to put together a business case to FIDC to do so, the Trust will give you the information it has found and put you in contact with Flores de la Patagonia Ltda and/or University of Magallanes to discuss many of the finer details of growing and marketing the flowers.

Jim McAdam: jim.mcadam@afbini.gov.uk
 Consuelo Saez: consuelo.saez@umag.cl

FOR SALE FROM BOLD COVE FARM

23 Weaner Oxen & 16 Weaner Heifers.

These animals are all naturally polled, black Aberdeen Angus.

Ages are from 5-7 months. All are well over 200kgs with a range of 210kgs (last born) – 273kgs (first born) at last weighing on April 25th. Prices, per live kilo, are negotiable.

Please contact Jimmy on 42178.

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West Falkland First Aid Training – Fox Bay

Organised by Stanley Leisure Centre, Falkland Islands Red Cross

5th – 9th August 2006

Contact Steve Dent, Jean Diggle or Helen Marsh for more details

Stanley Leisure Centre
 Tel – 27285
 Fax – 27284
 e-mail admin.leisure@sec.gov.fk

DIRECT DRILLING OF PASTURES AND FORAGE CROPS AT SHEFFIELD

By Damien O’Sullivan



Truax seed drill



Truax Double disc openers



Direct drilled and burnt whitegrass



Germinated oats

The ever rising price of fuel makes it increasingly difficult to justify the full rotavation of new reseeds to produce sheep and cattle feed. Over the years there have been many attempts to look at various low cost pasture establishment methods and if they are an option to increase production.

This year at Sheffield, Kenneth & Josie McKay are trialling the direct drilling of pasture seed and oats into burnt whitegrass camp with oats also being direct drilled into existing reseeds.

Direct drilling has not been used routinely in the Falklands but there has recently been direct drilling of lotus into pastures with mixed success.

Kenneth used the pool machinery Truax planter which has double disc openers with press wheels. On this machine a scalloped disc makes the first cut into the soil, the seed is then dropped onto the ground and a second disc and press wheel follow to give the necessary soil seed contact. Some runs with planting direct into the whitegrass did not seem successful with there being too much trash.

A pasture mix and winter oats planted in early May have already germinated. The Gerald and Millenium oats are winter varieties that will produce their greatest amount of feed at the end of winter and early spring depending on weather conditions. It is hoped that the winter oats will provide early feed for October/November lambing ewes and their abattoir lambs. The pastures will be used as a reseed. This area will be planted to legumes in the spring.

So what are the cost comparisons? The table at the bottom shows there are dramatic differences in the costs associated with the two operations. There are many unanswered questions such as:

- does the expected extra productivity from the rotavated reseed outweigh the lower cost of direct drilling?
- will there be more production from the rotavated reseed compared to the direct drilling?
- is it worthwhile to plant oats directly into old reseeds with no other preparation?

Table 1: Cost Comparison/ha

Operation	Traditional reseed	Burn & Direct drill
Rotavate 1 st time (0.5ha/hr, tractor £22/hr fuel 15L/hr @43p/l) + labour @£6/hr	69	-
Rotavate 2 nd time (1ha/hr + labour @£6/hr)	34.5	-
Drill hire £3/ha	-	3
Planting @ 1.5ha/hr	-	23
Varisreader @ 3.5ha/hr	9.9	-
Rolling @ 3.5ha/hr	9.9	-
Total	£123	£26

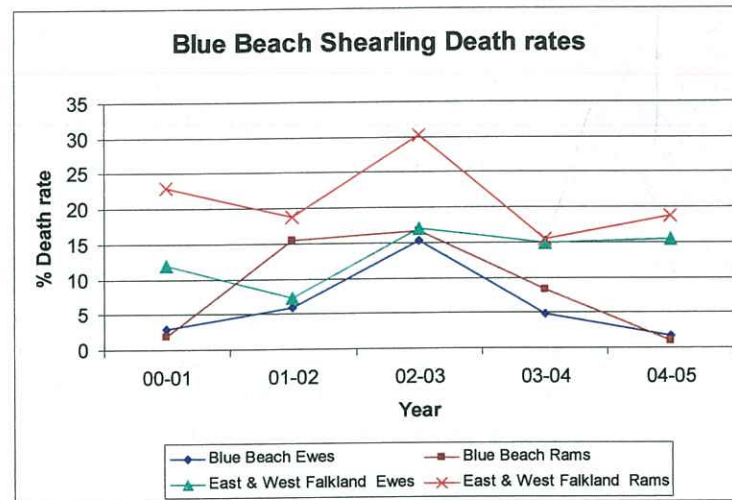
The above costs are an estimate only. For some farms costs may be lower or higher.

We will keep people up to date with what happens on this direct drilling site as the season progresses.

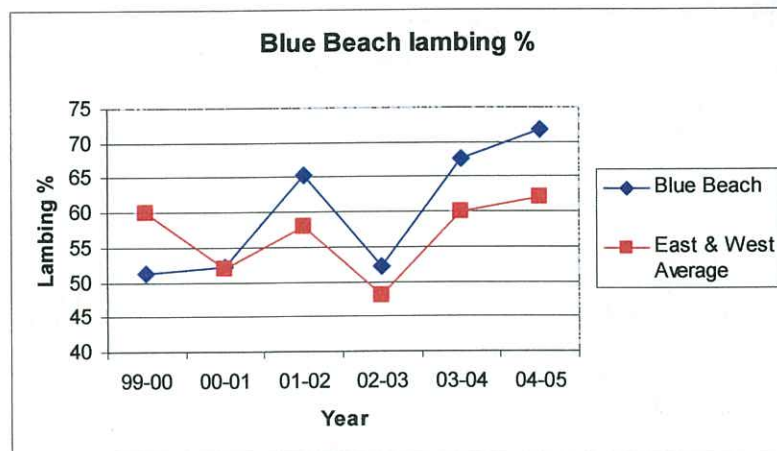
BLUE BEACH FARM – LOWERING DEATH RATES AND SELLING EWES

By Damien O'Sullivan

Blue Beach farm run by Hew Grierson and Sue Smith has a history of achieving some of the better lambing percentages in the Falklands and some of the lowest sheep death rates in the islands. As a result they have been one of the few farms that have been able to sell cull ewes, gimmers, while also selling hoggets and supply sheep to the abattoir.



When we consider that the main limiting factor of sheep production in the islands are lambing percentage and death rates it is worth looking at the management of Blue Beach to see if there are any of Hew and Sue's management principles that can be adopted by other farms.



The typical work program on Blue Beach is intensive with a lot of care being taken with hoggets and ewes. The yearly management that is giving positive results for lambing and death rates is:

Ewes:

- Ewes are set stocked during summer in camps that have been spelled over the autumn period from mid-February to May. This allows ewes to go into fresh camps over winter and for lambing. The camps grazed over the winter period adjoin a reseed which it is hoped in time will provide winter feed for ewes over this crucial period.
- Ewes are drenched at shearing.
- Joining – ewes have a joining period of 45 days starting around the 20th of May to lamb in mid-October.
- Ewes are belly crutched and wigged before lambing.

The oldest ewes in the flock are 5 ½ years old. A few older ewes are in the stud flock.

Lambs

- Drenched at weaning.
- Put into spelled camps that have been grazed by older wethers to reduce worm burdens on pastures.

Hoggets

- All hogs are wigged in mid-May with the topknot and cheeks shorn.
 - At shearing they are drenched then put into spelled paddocks.
- Low worm egg counts 24 weeks after drenching show that this strategy for reducing worms is working.



Shearlings

Wigged in May and drenched off-shears.

Ditches

There are several problem ditches on the farm. Currently 10 kms of the worst ditches have been ditched to avoid losses with 2km of this around the settlement. The ditching will continue on the farm with other areas to be completed in the future. Another 10km of ditching would help reduce death rates but general sheep management is more of a priority to increase production.

Sheep Sales

Blue Beach farm is one of the few farms that has been able to sell cull ewes. In addition to this 30 ram lambs were sold in 04 and 53 ram lambs in 05. In addition 122 cull hogget ewes were sold this year. Cattle are moved around most of the ewe, hogget and gimmer camps. Cattle have been found to help knock down some of the whitegrass and may assist in reducing sheep worm burdens on pastures.

Stocking rates on the farm are approximately 1 sheep to 1ha whereas the average of East & West Falkland is 1 sheep to 1.9ha. There are also 170 cattle on Blue Beach which equate to a total sheep stocking rate of 1 sheep to 0.87ha

Main Principles

- All lambs and shearlings are wigged
- Ewes are belly crutched
- Pastures are spelled
- Pasture spelling and strategic drenching minimises worm burdens
- Joining is kept to 45 days

The management practices at Blue Beach are possible on any farm and are being carried out on several other farms already. The adoption of these practices can make a positive difference to any farm's lambing and death rates.

Note from Damien

The are my last Wool Press articles. I would like to thank all farmers for their help and hospitality since my family has been in the Falklands. I have enjoyed immensely my time working in the Falklands and look forward to seeing you in Australia. Thanks,
Damien O'Sullivan.

WEST LAGOONS MANAGED GRAZING TRIAL

By Damien O'Sullivan

The most recently established grazing trial on West Falkland is on Peter and Shelley Nightingale's farm at West Lagoons. Like the other managed grazing trials that have been established the aims are:

- Increase sheep production and returns by using "Managed Grazing" techniques.
- Increase sustainable production from white grass camp in the most economic manner
- Increase % of productive fine grasses over a number of years

It is hoped there will be other side benefits such as:

- Easier stock control
- Less deaths due to more time being spent with sheep



Site
The West Lagoons site is on valley greens with diddle-dee ridges, soils are shallow with some peaty areas. There is beach access to three of the camps. We will be experimenting with the seeding of these legumes Birdsfoot trefoil, Balansa clover, Denmark sub clover and Serradella together with Timothy grass. This will be spread on the surface in spring and trampled on by the sheep.

Fencing
Two wire electric fencing with a solar energiser. There are 10 paddocks that range from 100ha to less than 10 ha which is an existing holding paddock. The grazing time in each camp is varied depending upon the area and the amount of feed on offer.



Management
Currently the site is being rested over the winter period but during this season the site was grazed for 120 days over the months of November, December, January and February. During the season the sheep have been moved every 5-8 days. Already observations of the grazing system have shown the paddocks in the system vary in their production and the amount of time that stock can be grazed in them.

Stocking rate
135 ewes & lambs x 2.5 = 337.5 DSE
530 shearlings x 1 = 530 DSE
867 DSE ÷ 1/3 year in system = 289 DSE

$$289\text{DSE} \div 395.5\text{ha} = 0.73 \text{ DSE/ha}$$

Grazing Pressure	Dry Sheep equivalents (DSE)
Managed Grazing trial	0.73
West Lagoons farm average	0.48
Falkland Islands average	0.52

As can be seen from the table one the previous page, the stocking rate is higher than the Falklands average but with better pasture management this slight increase is not expected to cause any problems.

Observations

Peter & Shelley have noticed the following advantages and disadvantages of the trial:

Advantages:

- Shearlings that went into the trial as hoggets, are now much quieter and very easy to handle due to the regular movement and contact
- The usual camp for hoggets/shearlings has been rested all summer and now has excellent feed for winter
- Bare areas in the less productive paddocks are now showing more grass growth due to the pasture spelling

Disadvantages:

- Ewes in the systems did not do well and it is thought that only dry or wet sheep should be together in this system
- There was mis-mothering of lambs caused mainly by shearlings moving faster when paddocks were changed

Other points:

- Electric fences need to be working well otherwise it trains some animals to continually move through the fence.
- Times between paddock movements need to vary depending on grass growth
- System needs to be watched carefully so sheep are not left in paddocks too long
- Regular shifting of sheep is not a problem and is usually done when there is other work to be carried out

Future plans:

- Spread legumes in spring and walk in with sheep to improve pastures
- In the coming season only hoggets will be grazed in the system
- Split largest paddock and add another two paddocks
- Gradually adopt the system for other ewe camps on the farm

Outcomes

It is far too early for any outcomes from the trial but initial results suggest that the increased stocking rate has not had any affect on the sheep. As would be expected the ewes with lambs have lost some weight in the initial stage of the trial. As with most of these trials unless spelled

Group	Average Weight		Body Condition Score	Wt gain/g/day	Wt gain/g/wk
	Weighing Dates				
	28/11/2005	02/02/2006	02/02/2006		
MPM Shearlings	26.7	29.4	2.2	39.41	275.84
Flock Shearlings	25.8	26.8	2.4	15.25	106.78
Ewes with lambs	34.4	33.7	1.7	-10.25	-71.80
Ram lambs	8.6	14.7	nr	90.95	636.62
Ewe lambs	9.2	14.7	nr	82.17	575.21

pasture is started with there can be some weight losses in the starting phase.

In the short term it is hoped that there will be better use of pasture available. In the longer term of three to five years we hope to see a state change where better finer grasses predominate and there is a diversity of pasture. Continuous grazing promotes growth of less palatable pasture species and does not allow favoured species to go to seed and reproduce. With the managed grazing sites we hope to overcome this and have more of the pastures in the more productive stage 2. (see page 11, May Wool Press). The addition of legumes are hoped to add extra protein to the diet and in time, nitrogen, to the pastures.

FIMCo - 2006 EXPORT SEASON SUMMARY

By John Ferguson, FIMCO

The Export Season production was completed on Thursday 18th May 2006, and despite being a 'difficult' year for export meat sales, the actual product was vastly improved and we were able to consistently produce both lamb and mutton at (or on occasion, above) the design capacity of the plant.

Slaughter Summary

Qty	Ave wt	Type
24,300	19.2kg	Sheep
5,950	13.3kg	Hogget
3,250	11.5kg	Lambs

33,500+

Average produced per day:

Over entire Season **404** including part days & season shake-down period

Over last month **444** including several part days & 2 Saturdays at 350

Season targets:

	<u>Results:</u>	
1. 30,000 sheep / lambs in total	Exceeded	(33,500+)
2. 10,000 lambs / hogget/s	Achieved	(9,205)
15 farms to supply lamb (from 7 in 2005)	Exceeded	(17 supplied)

Despite the whole team working flat out for months, (including the last 2 Saturdays) there are about 2,500+ sheep which we could not process, which mainly effect FLH, with 2 farms from the West & Islands who were unable to get their animals across (due to the breakdown of Tamar FI). However it is planned that many of these animals will be processed over the coming months for the local market.

Cold Store stock

There is still much work to do, with 6-7 more containers to be loaded out of the cold store, and this will be completed in the near future.

There is also to be some frozen processing carried out next week, in order to maximise the value from some of the frozen lamb loins. This involves a degree of bandsaw work and re-packaging before shipment.

End of Season 'wash up' meeting

On Tuesday 23rd May, there was an end of export season 'wash-up' meeting held, in which we invited representatives from all aspects of the supply and production chain (from gate – plate) to speak. A summary of this meeting will be reported separately.

Obviously, livestock transport was very high on the list, as it has a lot of knock-on effects in addition to the main difficulties encountered. It is essential that people understand that overcoming the main challenge of shipping / transport will result in many of the side issues disappearing.

FARMERS WEEK 2006

The following sessions are booked for the July meetings:

Tuesday (am) – FIMCo Review 2006

Thursday (late am session - then lunch provided by FIMCo, followed by early pm session) – discussion periods. Details of which will be confirmed at a later date.

Contact details for Veterinary Officer Joe Hollins

Telephone: 27366 Fax: 27352

Email: jhollins@doa.gov.fk

WOOL GOES TO WAR

Source: Australian Wool and Sheep Industry Taskforce eNewsletter
Re-written by Kimberley Steen

Keeping the US armed forces safe and looking professional may once again be a job for wool-growers. Wool is a naturally fire-resistant fibre that maintains its colour and does not wrinkle.

A recent directive from the US Marines states that soldiers are no longer allowed to wear polyester materials. Polyester is an oil-based synthetic fabric which burns easily and causes more severe burns to the soldiers when they are injured in combat. The US military is now moving back to natural fibres such as wool.

The Prairie Star reports that wool studies have been conducted with the US military for several years. One type of product being tested is woollen underwear. The underwear is 100% wool and treated with an enzyme to make it washable.

An inexpensive process which makes wool fabrics brighter, whiter and more easily worn next to the skin is the method of 'bio-polishing'. Bio-polishing also makes it possible for wool to be used in the US Army for cold weather protection.

In bio-polishing, the outer-lipid layer from wool fibres is removed. The wool is then exposed to a special blend of enzymes that "digest" the exposed scales on the surface of the wool fibre. These scales cause shrinking and removing them makes the wool washable.

Woollen underwear is not itchy because the fine wool used to produce the jersey knit fabric has a low micron count. Finer wool is more comfortable against the skin because it has a smaller thread diameter and is softer. Therefore coarser wool is used for heavy coats and finer wool for undergarments.

A member of the American Wool Council, John Helle, said his group has been providing experts to facilitate the use of wool in the military. Those experts include a scientist, a former Air Force pilot with a textile degree and an Australian who understands how to get the wool from its raw form into fabric.

"The sheep industry doesn't have a huge campaign to promote wool," he said. "But we have convinced the military that our products are superior and cheaper than what they were using."

To add to the safety factor, wool is being blended with Nomex, a man-made fibre that adds superior flame-retardancy and high strength.

Wool is a high performance fibre that draws away moisture naturally, leaving the wearer comfortable and dry. Wool can take on an enormous amount of moisture without losing its thermal properties.

Furthermore, wool is a natural bacteria inhibitor that controls body odour, which is good for soldiers often having to wear the same garments for several days in a row while in the combat zone.

Next Dog Dosing Day...

...Wednesday 5th July (Drontal)

TALL FESCUE – FALKLAND ISLANDS

By Doug Martin

Tall fescue (*Festuca arundinacea*) is a valuable component of reseed mixes sown in the Falkland Islands. Tall fescues are often classified as either "Mediterranean" or "European" according to the area from which the parental material for the variety came.

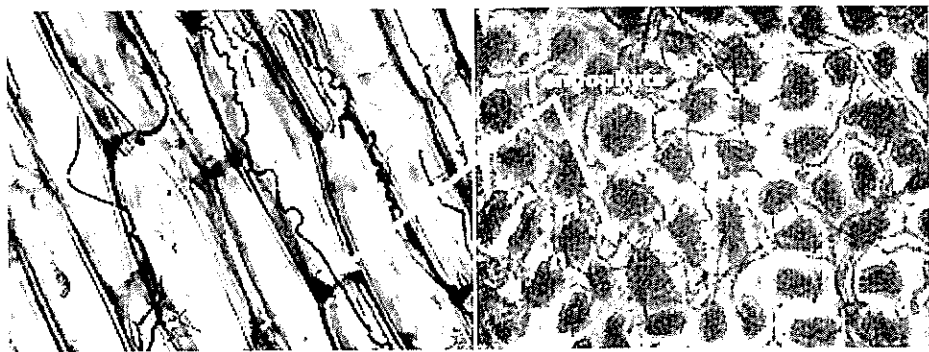
Mediterranean types:

- are more productive in the autumn and winter,
- have greater tillering ability.
- have finer leaves than the European types.
- are sometimes dormant and non-productive during summer in warmer areas.
- mature earlier in the spring
- are more susceptible to some leaf diseases than European varieties.

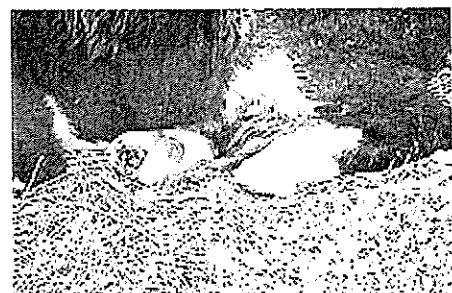
AuTriumph and Fawn are examples of Mediterranean-type varieties sown in the Falkland Islands, whilst Dovey, Barcel and Bariance are European or Continental types in general, the earlier maturing varieties (Mediterranean) tend to be higher yielding, especially in the spring as tall fescue yield is strongly related to stage of maturity. However, several European-type varieties were equal or superior in total annual yield.

Tall fescue (*Festuca arundinacea*) is among the most common cool-season pasture grasses in the U.S. and is grown in many other countries with temperate climates. In Europe however other grasses and in particular ryegrass are considered better quality and are not so popular. In the U.S., nearly all tall fescue pastures planted before 1980 are infected with *Neotyphodium coenophialum*, a microscopic fungus. This fungus is usually referred to as an endophyte, because it grows inside ("endo") the plant ("phyte"). Alkaloids produced by the endophytic fungus cause tall fescue toxicosis, a syndrome that costs U.S. livestock producers more than \$600 million each year.

The fungus can be seen as ergot in the seed heads, where it is 5 times more concentrated than other plant parts. A similar fungus also occurs in red fescue, perennial ryegrass, which is an excellent species and which grows around many settlements. This is an excellent species but due to a high soil fertility requirement has only been used in a limited number of reseeds in the Falkland Islands.



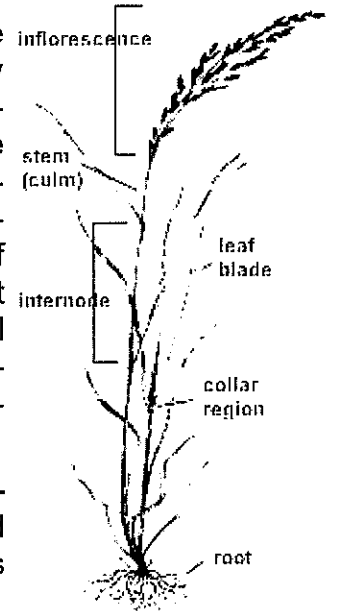
The tall fescue endophyte (*Neotyphodium coenophialum*) in the tiller (left) and seed (right) as seen in a microscope. (Tiller photo by Nicholas Hill; seed photo by Craig Roberts.)



Fescue foot in cattle. Toxic tall fescue can restrict blood flow to the extremities which may result in hoof loss, particularly during cold weather. (Photo by George Garner.)

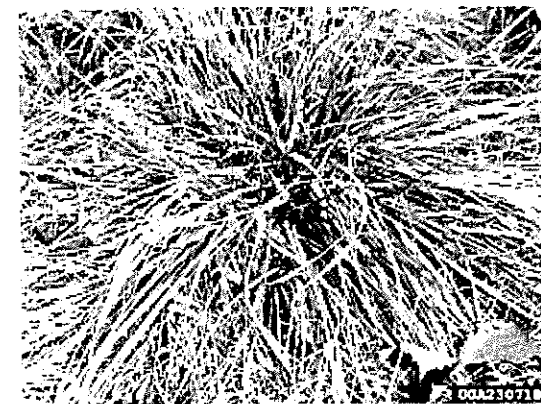
Endophyte-free tall fescue cultivars. Fescue toxicosis was partially solved in the 1980s, when it was reported that cattle grazing tall fescue pastures with low endophyte infection rates gained weight more rapidly than cattle grazing highly infected pastures. These grazing trials encouraged plant breeders to remove the endophyte from tall fescue (26). The new endophyte-free cultivars produced no symptoms of toxicosis in livestock. When compared to their infected counterparts in side-by-side feeding trials, the new endophyte-free cultivars dramatically increased rate of gain, reproductive performance, and milk production. It could be said that the new cultivars rendered tall fescue a nontoxic and highly nutritional cool-season grass. Seed with infection levels of less than 5% are regarded as being endophyte-free. This information will be prominently displayed on a tag attached to the seed bag.

All the tall fescue varieties planted in the Falkland Islands are endophyte-free. It may be possible that wild strains exist, as in New Zealand and Australia. If in doubt a test can be conducted using a kit which costs £50 and will do 100 tests.



Plant persistence problems and the importance of an endophyte. As producers began planting the new endophyte-free cultivars, they began reporting problems with stand loss. These reports were soon followed by scientific studies that revealed problems with drought tolerance. Endophyte-free tall fescue lacks critical physiological functions that allow plants to recover from drought stress. These drought-related functions, still being explored in research laboratories, are operational in endophyte-infected cultivars. In addition to the drought studies, other research reported that in comparison to infected tall fescue, endophyte-free tall fescue was more susceptible to plant pathogens, insects, overgrazing, and mineral deficient soils. Recently, researchers have suggested that this lack of persistence is caused by several individual factors that work together in a phenomenon called accumulated stress. An example of accumulated stress in endophyte-free tall fescue can be seen from the dual effects of drought and nematodes. As roots are degraded by nematodes, plants fail to take up moisture and suffer from drought stress, a stress that is already occurring because endophyte-free plants lack drought tolerance mechanisms. The compounding effects of nematodes and drought place the entire pasture at maximum risk.

Recent solutions: Tall fescue infected with beneficial endophytes. Until recently, producers who preferred to use tall fescue faced a dilemma. They could either plant a traditional endophyte-infected cultivar, such as Kentucky 31, which gives excellent plant persistence but poor animal performance, or they could plant an endophyte-free cultivar, which gives poor plant persistence but excellent animal performance. Now producers have a third choice. They can plant tall fescue infected with a so-called beneficial endophyte, sometimes called a novel or introduced endophyte.



Cultivars with beneficial endophytes are developed by first removing the common endophyte and then replacing it with a new endophyte strain. These new endophytes are the same fungal species as the common endophyte found in infected tall fescue, yet they produce little or no ergot alkaloids. Since these fungal strains do not produce ergot alkaloids, tall fescue cultivars infected with beneficial endophytes are considered nontoxic. Beneficial endophytes have been inserted to increase plant persistence, attempting to overcome the major disadvantage of endophyte-free cultivars. Some cultivars infected with beneficial endophytes have been tested extensively in grazing trials with various classes of livestock. Lamb and steer gains were

similar to gains seen on endophyte-free tall fescue. In comparison to cultivars infected with the



toxic endophyte, cultivars with beneficial endophytes are grazed for more hours per day and are consumed in larger amounts per day. Tall fescue cultivars with beneficial endophytes are also grazed closer to the ground than is toxic tall fescue, indicating higher forage intake rates for the animal and more intense grazing pressure on the plant. New endophyte technology (MaxP) is available only in certain cultivars marketed by two seed companies, Agricom and Wrightson Seeds in New Zealand, who have invested in its research and development with AgResearch. MaxP is a new technology available for farmers sowing tall fescue pastures, and provides substantial benefits.

MaxP is a non-toxic endophyte which improves the production and persistence from tall fescue, largely by protecting the host plant against insect attack.

As well as providing resistance to a range of insects, endophyte in tall fescue provides other direct benefits to the plant. It improves heat tolerance, increases root mass and drought tolerance, enhances the ability to extract phosphate from the soil, and improves the plants' tolerance to soil aluminium (one of the side effects of acidic soils). Collaborative research by AgResearch in New Zealand and the University of Georgia and Pennington Seed Inc in the United States has resulted in the development of another non-toxic endophyte strain for tall fescue, known as MaxQ. Pennington Seeds has a variety called MaxQ available however this is expensive at £6.30/kg without freight. This seed is also available in New Zealand from Agricom and Wrightsons Seeds.

Tall fescues with novel endophytes have been tested throughout New Zealand since 1997. Trials consistently show significant yield and persistence advantages to fescues with novel endophytes. These are the current cultivars from New Zealand:

- Grasslands Advance MaxP tall fescue (Agricom)
- Quantum MaxP tall fescue (Wrightson Seeds)
- Grasslands Flecha MaxP winter active tall fescue (Agricom)
- Resolute MaxP winter active tall fescue (Wrightson Seeds)

Tall fescues with novel endophytes have been tested throughout New Zealand since 1997. Trials consistently show significant yield and persistent advantages to fescues with novel endophytes. A suggestion would be to trial more expensive varieties on a limited scale at a reduced rate of say 8 kg/ha. It is best sown at 10-15kg/ha.

Even though tall fescue is a bunch grass it will spread slowly via rhizomes in the longer term, and will be well worth persevering within the Falkland Islands.

Summary

- Tall fescue, whilst being a valuable pasture species, can be attributed to health problems in livestock.
- The problems are caused by a toxic fungus called endophyte.
- Species have been developed which have nil endophytes (less than 5%). Therefore health problems are eliminated. Endophyte-free varieties have always been sown in the Falkland Islands
- The endophyte-free plants were found to be not as productive and long-lived as varieties with endophytes.
- More recently varieties have been developed which have novel endophytes. These do not cause health problems with livestock, are also much better in dry conditions and can handle lower pH soils, particularly those with Aluminium.
- A test kit is available for rapid testing for endophytes. It is possible that red and chewing fescues have endophytes here which may cause lower livestock productivity.
- Farmers considering planting a reseed should investigate endophyte free tall fescue and ryegrass varieties.



PIP FORAGE CROPPING UPDATE

By Neil Judd

At the recent AAC meeting the need was expressed to reinstate the position regarding forage cropping through the PIP scheme. Farmers should be aware that strategic forage cropping for fattening of sheep (and cattle) is possible under the terms of the PIP scheme, however the activity should fit in with an overall plan to address the key long term priorities for farmers in the Falkland Islands, namely:

- Improved sheep reproduction
- Reduced ewe death rates
- Reduced hogget death rates
- Improved grazing management

Forage cropping for fattening should be on a scale to match animal numbers and seasonal requirements. Please do not hesitate to discuss PIP plans with an Agricultural Advisor!

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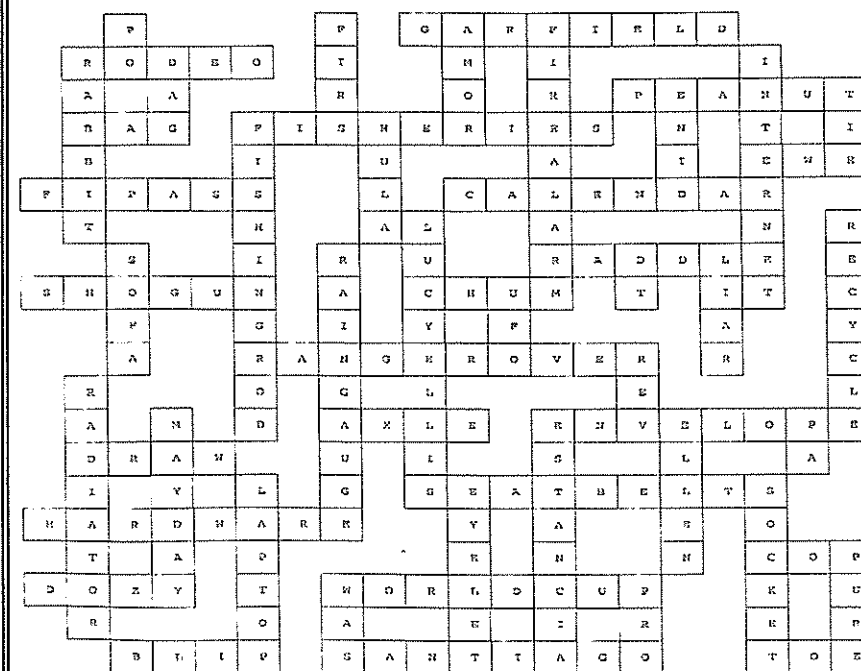
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LAST MONTH'S SOLUTION

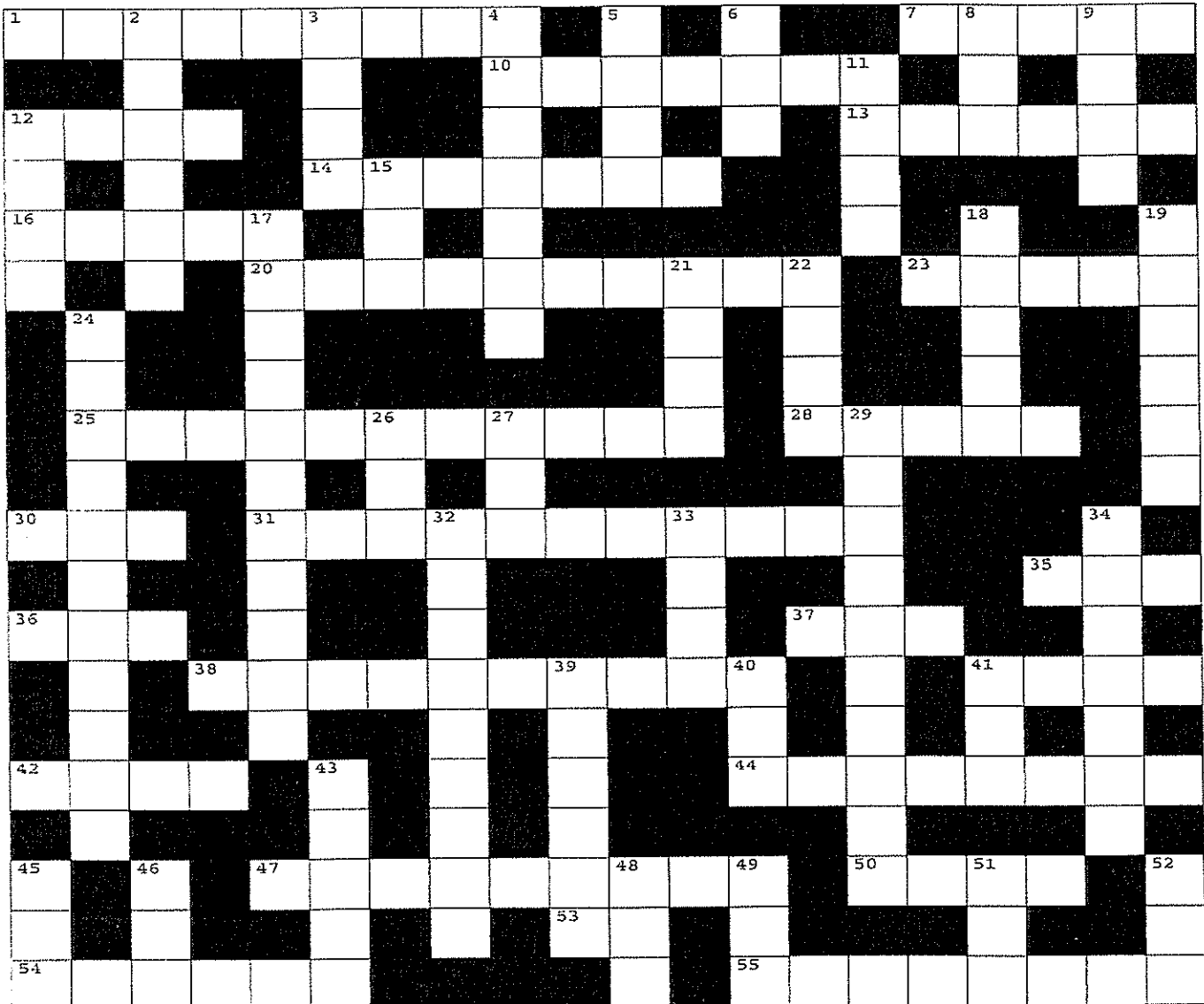


TEATIME RIDDLES

- What has fingers but can't type?
- What has ears but can't hear?
- What has arms but can't hug?
- What has a head and a foot but no body
- When is a car not a car?
- What has a mouth but never smiles?
- What has a face but no head?
- What has leaves but isn't a tree?
- What has eyes but can't see?
- What has legs but can't walk?

PUZZLE PAGE

CROSSWORD



Across

1. Protected seabird
7. Fast dance
10. Persons appointed to head executive departments of government
12. Vault
13. Insect with curved forceps
14. Form of output
16. Pleasant smell
20. Former British territory
23. *Equus caballus*
25. Party
28. Covers 70% of Earth's surface
30. "... Jonson", local newsreader
31. Often reproduces things by xerography
35. Sub-market of the London Stock exchange (*init*)
36. A trivial or contemptible amount

Down

2. Panda food
3. Animals hindquarters
4. Receiver that continuously receives signals from radio frequencies
5. Capable or talented
6. Insect living in a complex social organisation
8. Atmosphere
9. Pus-filled inflammation of the skin
11. Two or more draft animals used to pull a farm implement
12. "Billie ...", Michael Jackson song
15. A line of straight things
17. Records messages
18. Timid creature
19. Vanquished
21. Used to express strong agreement
22. To cause something to move away or towards by pulling
24. Not pledged
26. Hopping Australian creature
27. Duo
29. Person competent in the study of soil/plant sciences and
37. Popular card game
38. Graduate school
41. Animal hunted as game
42. Office furniture
44. Two blades with handles, held together by a pin in the middle
47. Machine often kept in garden shed
50. Large container for liquids or gases
53. Expression of denial
54. Examination of tissue from a living body
55. Defect, failing

6. Insect living in a complex social organisation
8. Atmosphere
9. Pus-filled inflammation of the skin
11. Two or more draft animals used to pull a farm implement
12. "Billie ...", Michael Jackson song
15. A line of straight things
17. Records messages
18. Timid creature
19. Vanquished
21. Used to express strong agreement
22. To cause something to move away or towards by pulling
24. Not pledged
26. Hopping Australian creature
27. Duo
29. Person competent in the study of soil/plant sciences and

- crop production
32. Famous Alexander Bell invention
33. Useful partially decomposed vegetable matter
34. Collection of printed material, systematically arranged
39. Antiseptic healing cream
40. Affirmative
41. Large passenger vehicle
43. Personal record
45. Covered compartment housing the driver
46. "This ...", later today (*slang*)
48. Victorious
49. Crude
51. Prioress
52. A woman's title