



Chrome Sheep Studs

▪ Coopworth ▪ Maternal Composite ▪ Perendale ▪ ICON Poll Dorset

3rd Annual Ram Sale

Saturday 8th October

Inspection 10.30am Sale 1pm

Offering:

112 Perendale Infused, 128 Maternal Composites
40 Coopworths, 60 Poll Dorsets

Open Day / Pre Sale Inspection

Monday 3rd October 11am—4pm

6 Elite Coopworth Rams reserved for Coopworth National Sale

Monday 24th October, Hamilton Showgrounds

We would like to extend an invitation to attend our 3rd annual ram sale on the 8th of October. The inclusion of more maternal rams in our annual sale will enable clients a greater selection of maternal rams. The rams have battled their way through winter flooding however, have been enjoying the sunshine over the last couple weeks. We believe we have a better offering of rams than last year with the Embryo Transfer bred rams a feature of the offering.

In late August we hosted part of the Central Region Poll Dorset Tour on our property. We had a display of our young Poll Dorset sires and the tops of our ewes and lambs as well as some examples of our maternal operation. An interesting morning of discussion was had by all. Our Poll Dorset offering this year is undoubtedly the most even line up of rams we have presented for sale to date. We have progeny of a number of industry leading sires up for grabs this year including, Hillcroft Farms (WA) 1175/06, HF 1615/08 and Pollambi 2025/07 as well as home bred Icon sires that have also bred really well.

Our Maternal ram offering continues to improve every year and this year is no exception. We continue to strive towards our breeding aims of producing moderate frame score animals that have good carcass shape, doing ability and efficiency as well as the important maternal traits of fertility and mothering ability. Our NZ Perendale infusion has fast tracked these aims and the 2011 lambs sired by our imported rams look magnificent.

While in New Zealand earlier this year I stumbled across an article written during the aftermath of the exceptional blizzards and storms in the south island during spring 2010. In the early part of this article the author Jon Hickford talks about the average lambing percentage in NZ for 2010 of 110% and how this was partly influenced by this extraordinary weather event. He then goes on to question ewe efficiency and the actual performance of some of these so called "high performance" elite animals based on performance data alone instead of getting back to the basics of breeding tough hardy animals that survive year in year out. I have included an extract from this article over the page.

Regards, Matt Tonissen

▪ **Brucellosis Acc. Free** ▪ **MN1 (5 ABC Points)** ▪ **Lambplan recorded**

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CHROME

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Extract from 'The Perfect Storm', Country Wide (NZ) March 2011 By Jon Hickford, Associate Professor at Lincoln University.

"I believe we need to think more about ewe efficiency. Typically it is measured as weight of lamb weaned a tonne of DM eaten, or more simply as the kilogram of litter weaning weight/ a kilogram ewe liveweight at weaning. This would suggest that producing more heavy lambs off lighter ewes is a more efficient system.

Ewe efficiency is also affected by fertility and fecundity, ewe milk production, mothering ability, lamb behaviour, lamb survival, ewe and lamb wool production, how much the ewe eats (SIL discounts the genetic merit of larger ewes that have a higher maintenance cost), longevity, etc. Many of these traits are difficult to measure and difficult to breed for.

Recent science suggests variation in ewe weight is only a small component of variation in overall ewe efficiency and the more important considerations for production efficiency are maternal weaning weight, maternal survival, number of lambs surviving and ewe longevity.

In regards to longevity, genetic gain for production rates requires the rapid turnover of ewe flocks (short generation times) and therefore larger numbers of less-productive ewe hoggets probably need to be carried through winter. Arguably selection pressure on the non-production traits in these hoggets is lower.

Balance this against having long-lived ewes, requiring fewer replacements and therefore enabling harder ewe hogget selection to be undertaken. Have we tipped this balance too far towards genetic gain at the expense of weeding out inferior ewe hoggets?

Finally, I am worried about basic stockmanship and how those skills are acquired. Who is teaching the next generation of sheep farmers and breeders? Who will set the future standard as regards balancing the need for increased productivity versus having robust sheep that can get by in a bad season?

I believe we probably encountered the perfect storm in 2010, but we certainly cannot afford to let it happen again.

The sheep industry needs to breed animals that are productive in all seasons. There is a place for both figures and a good stud master and they need to work more closely together than they are now."