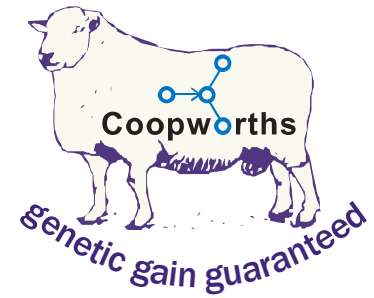


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Ceres Farm
Mid-North Coopworth Company
MEMBER N.Z. OVINE REFERENCE SCHEME
FACIAL ECZEMA TOLERANCE TESTING SINCE 1984



Newsletter No. 35 - September 2011

It was one of the better winters as far as the Waikato was concerned. Tagging and docking the lambs in this type of settled weather was almost a pleasure and beats the usual wind and driving rain that we normally get at that time of year. Prices for sheep and lamb have remained pretty good as well and the forecast (barring a global meltdown) is that we are in for a bumper year even if the dollar stays high. Even wool seems to be holding its price. After so many years of dismal prices for wool it has been hard to keep focussing on wool and it was just as well that the Coopworth Society demanded that we kept on recording fleece weights. At least it will get some more attention now.

With a bit of cooperation from the NZ dollar we might get to the magical \$200 return per ewe. The rams available to you certainly will have the genetic potential to achieve that goal.

The MNCC Flock

The flock has remained static at just over 300 ewes. As stated in my winter newsletter, three out of the five rams used carried the double MyoMAX[®] gene (aka MyoMAX Gold[®]). Two are MNCC bred, while the third is from one of the circle rams from Northern Coopworth Breeders (Nikkau) that also happened to have the double MyoMAX gene. MNCC 495/09 is the top ranking ram in the CPW sire analysis of the 2ths of this year so it was hard to bypass him despite not being a MyoMAX carrier. The fifth ram, MNCC 142/09 (with a single MyoMAX) was used as a follow up ram, while 12/109 and 495/09 were covering the ewe hoggets. So next year when you examine the 2th ram selection list the chances are that the ram of your choice will likely have at least a single MyoMAX gene. For information on MyoMAX see <http://www.catapultsystems.co.nz/Pages/MyoMax.aspx>.

There were only a handful of empty ewes this year so they have apparently coped well with the exceptionally long FE season and high spore counts (over 500,000 in some of my paddocks). The lambing percentage looks very much the same (or slightly better because of somewhat higher survival rates) than previous years. I am a bit short on feed for the hoggets at the moment due to the late spring, but both the ram and ewe hoggets get an ample supply of haylage.

The Aussies bought 450 straws of MNCC 12/09 and MNCC 495/09 and it never ceases to amaze me how rams can keep up the demand for semen. Both rams had already served well over a hundred ewes when they were called upon for AI duty.

Coopworth Genetics of New Zealand

The above is the new name for what was formally the Coopworth Sheep Society of New Zealand. The Australian Coopworth Society has already done the same and possibly there could eventually be a merger. The annual "Heartland" issue of Country Wide magazine coming out early October will give you the particulars.

The annual Coopworth conference will be held in Taumarunui next year. If you can attend the open day on May 16 2012, I would urge you to do so. It should be interesting and you can exchange thoughts with other farmers that have might have similar problems as yourself.

SIL

The latest SIL-ACE results on the SIL website (www.sil.co.nz/SIL-ACE/SIL-ACE-home-page.aspx) once again show good results for the MNCC breeding program.

There is a nice balance of the multiple traits being bred for, which is important for a profitable maternal flock. In the across flock analyses of the Coopworth Society, MNCC will lose a bit ground due to the company's on-going shift in emphasis from maximising the DPP (overall) score to increased focus on the meat indices (and MyoMAX), but there is still a good sprinkling of top animals. The wish list is never ending and shifting. The ideal sheep remains an elusive target.

Facial Eczema Testing

The annual test for FE (now in year 28) of the MNCC flock remained at 0.6 mg of sporidesmin per kg bodyweight. The results were pretty much the same as previous years with a few rams having a slight reaction.

Satisfactory as that is, it is very annoying that breeders just starting up with testing are claiming FE "resistance" for the rams they sell, undermining the genuine effort of the dozen or so breeders that have been testing for many years. The SIL Breeding Value (BV) for FE does not give any indication for how long a breeder has been testing and what his testing level is. The star rating system was developed to counter that but apparently nobody looks at those on the SIL website. It is worrying how few new clients wanting FE tolerance have actually asked me about the FE certificate that Ramguard issues every year to participating ram breeders. The certificate gives the number of years testing, the level of testing, and how many rams were put up and passed the test.

Another worry has been the low level of research in FE, which is mainly due to the abolishment of the wool levy. There is now only one person left that researches the numerous remaining unanswered questions regarding FE. The long promised DNA test is, from what I gather, still years away - although Ovita might be pushed into commercialising an unreliable test with 30% accuracy.

Ram Prices

Ram prices reached in some cases very high levels at auction last year. On-going rising costs and better economic conditions have caused a modest price rise this year.

MNCC prices for the coming year are as follows:

\$1400	SIL index \geq 2200
\$1250	SIL index \geq 2000 to 2200
\$1000	SIL index \geq 2000 to 1800
\$850	SIL index \geq 1800 to 1600
+ \$150	for FE tested rams

Keep in mind that a good SIL recorded ram with FE tolerance, fertility, good carcass and fleece weights (all of which MNCC provides), is a sound investment in the future of your flock. The opportunity to invest in genetics of proven value has never been better.

As usual the 2011 2th selection list will be on my website by the end of October.

Please give me ring, an e-mail, or return the next page to let me know your ram requirements.

Those who already have placed an order for rams by telephone do not have to repeat that.

I wish you a good and prosperous farming year and hope to see you in November.

Edward Dinger

Return this page to:

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Orders by phone (07 827 8784) or email (rams@ceresfarm.co.nz) are also welcome.

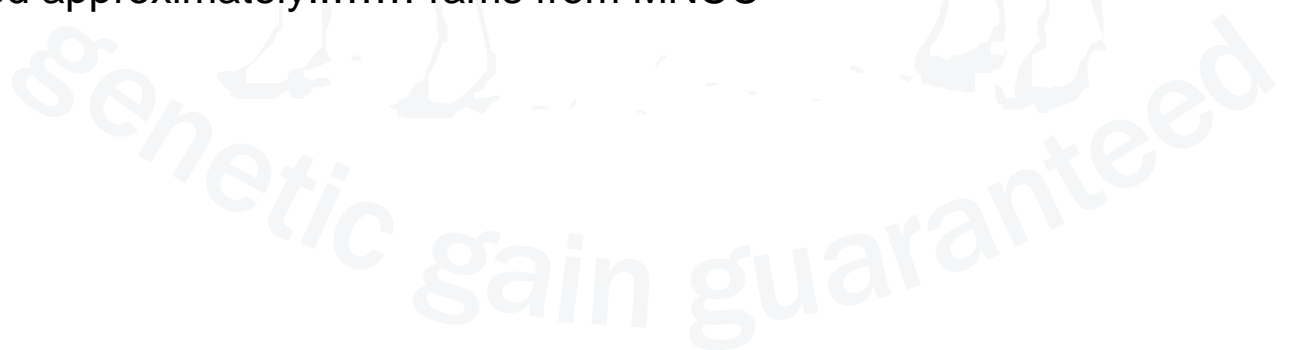
Name:

Address:

(Please include street number and your postcode)

Telephone:

I need approximately..... rams from MNCC



Coopworths

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