



PROVEN UNDER  
PRESSURE!

AUTUMN 2021

# Follow the Leader...



## From the GM

We had a very wet spring and a decent snow dump at the end of September that made things pretty miserable for about a week then 275mls in January including 125ml in 14 hours. We were right on top of the feed early on and when the heat came the quality was fantastic and we have been getting some extra weight into our terminal lambs as a result.

We have cut back big time on the amount of grass seed in our new pasture mixes and are now only sowing about a third of what we used to and have replaced this with more clover both through the drill and out of the aeroplane and the results have been very encouraging in terms of the pasture composition. We sowed 170ha on the back of our Wether Hill block in November in straight red and white clover with spectacular results and have recently sown a further 90ha of steep northerly facing country in red, white and sub clover. We were part of an RMPP group

looking at increasing the legume content on hill country and this gave us access to some of the best people in the business like Derrick Moot from Lincoln University who encouraged us to give it a go. Sub clover has never been grown this far south as far as we know but we did a steep 40ha block two years ago that went very well which gave us the confidence to push the go button.

There are several progeny trials happening at the moment looking at the genetic component of eating quality in lamb and we have been asked to supply rams to all of them, there has only been one with results out to date and it is still early days but the results were very encouraging. We had quite a bit of interest for our high marbling maternal and terminal rams this year from early adopters who believe as we do that there will be a market with significant premiums for lamb with a visible amount of marbling in the loin. I

have said before that the eating experience of the lamb I get fed when I visit Kinross in Australia where we get our high IMF semen from is next level. We recognised early on that to make fast progress with IMF we were going to need to get it through our maternal sheep as well as the terminals. We carcass scanned our maternal rams last week and the lambs by the Kinross sires came out on top with both more muscle and fat which will not only be great for the eating quality attributes but will give us a huge boost in body composition in the form of Body Condition Score, exciting times.

We hope you winter well and look forward to catching up with as many of you as we can before the spring.

Ceri Lewis  
Mount Linton  
General Manager

# Angus



BREEDING OBJECTIVE:

“To breed fertile, thick, moderate framed cattle that lower the cost of production and produce a high value niche product”

## Upping our game on Marbling

*Ceri Lewis*

This will be the second year I have been unable to get over the ditch to look at Bulls which is frustrating but I have the utmost faith in the Rennylea team to get the job done for us. We have been using Rennylea genetics now for 16 years and they know what we are looking for in terms of the genetic package and the type and our breeding objectives are very closely aligned. We have been upping our game on marbling every year and didn't use a bull with an EBV under 4 for IMF in our AI programme this year and took fresh semen from three of our own yearling bulls to use over the 300 Yearling stud heifers. We did the same last year and didn't pull one calf out of the stud heifers in the spring.

We have just finished preg testing the stud cows and had a great result with a 4.5% dry rate from one round of AI and follow up bull for 42 days.

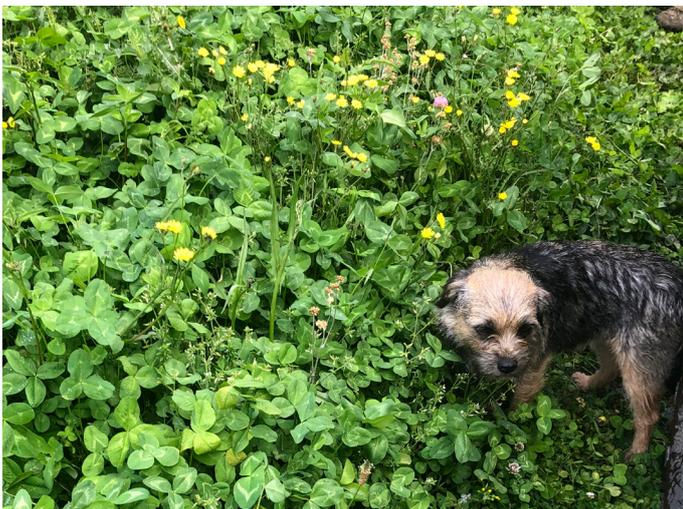
Disappointing conception rates are not uncommon unfortunately but there are a number of things you can do to minimise the risks. Our mating mobs are together as a group for at least six weeks prior to the start of mating, as with every population of animals there is a hierarchy amongst the group and a ranking process that takes place and it pays to let them sort this out long before either AI starts or the bulls are introduced. We did not always do this and the conception rate can be disappointing for no apparent reason. Similarly, we wouldn't and don't recommend mating yearling heifers in the same mob as two-year-old heifers, neither would we risk single sire mating even though we semen and jump test our bulls in the month before mating starts and observe them regularly during mating, there is simply too much that can go wrong that you can't see.

We will have a number of annual draft in calf cows for sale this autumn, this is a great opportunity to get into some high marbling genetics; if anyone is interested please get in touch. We also have a client in the South Island looking for 100 Mount Linton bred heifer calves, again if you have any available please let me know.

We didn't get to do any client visits last winter but hoping that will not be the case this year and hope to catch up with as many of you as we can this winter. Our 18-month Bull catalogue will be out in early May and we plan on starting to sell them in mid-May. They have all been used at the Station as yearlings for two cycles and have bounced back well since coming in from the cows.



MARK KENNEDY OUR HILL MANAGER IN 170ha CLOVER BLOCK ON WETHER HILL



VAEA ROLLING IN CLOVER

# Suftex and Mainstay



## Positive results at Weaning

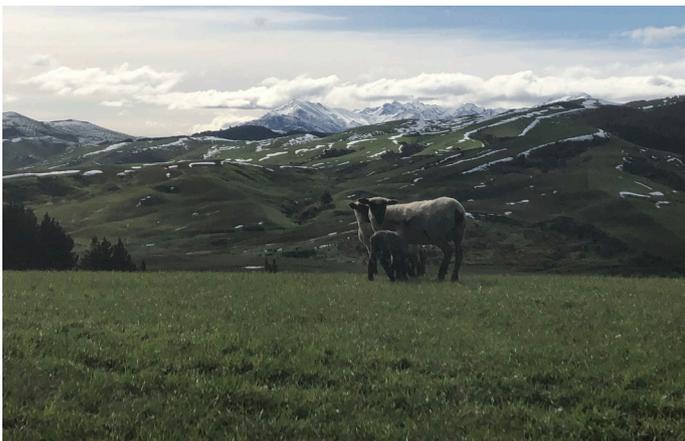
*Martha Broughton*

I hope everyone has got through the summer well and is now prepping their ewes and rams for mating. When I last wrote we hadn't quite hit the spring lambing and what a challenge it was; the AI terminals were hit with some very cold harsh winds and rain just as they were popping in early September then things ran very smoothly for the next few weeks, just long enough for me to get my hopes up for a great lambing percentage and then the snow arrived, but to my surprise the Aussie Hampshire cross hogget lambs that were on the ground the day before the snow all survived which was very pleasing.



*AUTUMN MORNING STROLL*

The positive results came in December and January when we weaned, the terminals averaged 1.1 kg heavier than last season, the Maternals averaged 2.1 kgs heavier. The hogget lambers improved the Terminal weights by 1 kg and Maternals by 2 kgs. The hogget Maternal singles impressed me the most averaging 32 kgs.



*HAMPSHIRE CROSS HOGGET & HER LAMB SURVIVING THE SPRING SNOW*

This year was the first year we moved ram selling to January and the response was very positive from all our clients and it gave me more time through November and December once tailing and lambing had finished to do thorough selections of my 2Th sale team. The rams had wintered well post mating, this lifted their weights and they filled out well in the late spring and early summer. It has always been a push fitting everyone in before Christmas and we are sure we now have a much better system.

During ram selling it was suggested by a client that he would like to see dag scoring in the Terminals, so he has less need to dag his Terminal lambs over the summer before they head on the truck, I agreed. So, this year is the first year we dag scored the terminal lambs and they had very little dags, going forward it will be good to identify those sires that



*TERMINAL EWE LAMBS IN FOR THEIR 6 MONTH LIVE WEIGHT WEIGH UP*

aren't performing as well in this department. By next ram selling season the terminals will have the dag score index displayed along beside their meat, growth, survival and IMF figures.

CIDRs are already in our 275 Suftex cross ewes ready for AI on the 8th April. 42 of these ewes are two tooth ewes that are half Hampshire half Suftex, so we will have  $\frac{3}{4}$  Hampshire lambs on the ground in the spring, pumped full of marbling. The Charolais breed is believed to have some marbling in its back ground compared to other Terminal sheep breeds so I've put a lot of my Charolais cross ewes into the AI program to see if this helps lift the IMF. We also will be artificially inseminating



*HIGH MARBLING MAINSTAYS BEING PICKED OUT AT RAM SELLING*

250 more Mainstay Maternals this year, so we will have a lot of marbling coming through our flock now being the 3rd season of AI with the high marbling Lambpro genetics.



*STATIONS FRESHLY WEANED TERMINAL LAMBS*



**PROVEN UNDER  
PRESSURE!**

**Mount Linton Dog Trial**  
Friday 23rd April 2021  
Saturday 24th April 2021  
Held at Rock Hut, signposted from the Station

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