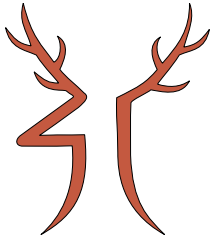


Otago Branch NZDFA

February 2004



NZDFA

New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association

In This Issue

Coming events
Snippets
Articles
ODFA Venison field day
Articles - from Invermay
South Otago Velvet results
Chairmans Report
NZDFA Excutive report
Who's who



Feb 11th
Venison Field Day
Details Inside

Coming Events

Venison Field Day Feb 11th, Invermay, See centre page for program

World Veterinary Deer Congress 21-24 February Queenstown. contact Sue Bastiaansens 03 756 9002 or email bastiaansens@maf.govt.nz

Antler Science and Product Technology Symposium 24 - 27 February Queenstown. For registration information see www.aspt2.co.nz or email linda.murray@agreasearch.co.nz or phone 03 489 9011

Upper Clutha A & P Show

12/13th March 2004

Snippets

Lincoln Farm Management Manual

Lincoln University's Farm Technical Manual has just been revised (last edition was 1996).

It is crammed full of essential technical information about farming in New Zealand. This issue also **includes special sections on deer management and nutrition, written by recently retired scientist, Ken Drew**);

Cost is \$79.90 (incl. GST, p. & p.).

The Manual can be purchased by sending a cheque (make to Lincoln University), or credit card details, to: Manual Sales, AMAC Division, Box 84, Lincoln University, Canterbury or - Email manualsales@lincoln.ac.nz
See the Lincoln's web-site: www.lincoln.ac.nz => 'search' => manual sales => Farm Technical Manual

Deer Farmers Tour to Central/ Eastern Europe June 2004

Earn funds for your Branch and Deer Research.

This tour is going ahead but we have places still available for a few more people. For every couple your Branch directs to us and they sign up for the tour C R McPhail Ltd will pay the Branch \$500 and also donate \$500 to the Johnes Research Project (\$250 respectively for a single person)

An exciting itinerary including Germany, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Austria.

Talk with venison producers and marketers in Germany, visit game and agricultural enterprises in Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary.

Experience the culture and the romance and splendour of the great cities - Berlin, Warsaw, Krakow, Prague, Bratislava, Budapest, Vienna.

Tour departs New Zealand on 6th June and returns 2nd July. Cost is \$13,750 per person You can finish the tour in Vienna on the 28th June and the price will be \$12,995 per person but most people are opting for the full tour. Almost all inclusive apart from a few meals and should be largely tax deductible (but consult your accountant)

You will be able to stop over in Kuala Lumpur on the way home if you want to or extend your time in Europe.

If you have any questions please give me a call. I hope people from your branch can join us.

There are just 6 places left on this tour so anyone who wishes to go and/or would like more information should contact us immediately.

C R McPhail Ltd
PO Box 2091
Palmerston North

Ph 06 357 1644
Fax 06 357 1948
Email enquiries@crmcpfail.co.nz

Otago Ballance Farm Environment Awards

Judging is about to commence for the 2004 Otago Ballance Farm Environment Awards. There are 24 entries overall including a range of primary production

from viticulture to dairy. Good luck to the five deer farmers entered. Look out for the announcement of the awards in April.

MAF's 2003 Situation and Outlook Report for New Zealand Agriculture and Forestry

(SONZAF 2003) has been posted on the MAF Website and can be downloaded using the following URL.

<http://www.maf.govt.nz/mafnet/rural-nz/statistics-and-forecasts/sonzaf/2003/sonzaf-2003.pdf>

This is a 1.8 Mb book of 127 pages covering all Agricultural and Forestry Sectors. The Deer section can be printed off from pages 59-62.

Main points made by the MAF analysts in SONZAF include:

- Deer numbers projected to expand over the outlook period to 2007 in spite of relatively low returns
- 30th June 2002 1.64 million
- 30th June 2003 4 % increase to 1.70 million (1.21 million hinds 71%)
- Venison schedule price for AP2 stag estimated to be \$4.74 for the year ended June 2004, down 3 cents from \$4.77/kg for the year ended June 2003
- Projected to increase to \$ 5.75 for the year ended June 2007
- Velvet Production estimated at 520 tonnes to year ended June 2004 with

average pool price at \$80/kg

- Production in 2007 is estimated at 575 tonnes and returns at \$85/kg

RAHC

Total number of infected herds (cattle & deer) at 16th Jan 2004 is 70 compared to 80 at the same time last year. While cattle have come down from 55 herds to 43, Deer have gone from 25 to 27 infected herds in the last year. On the positive side 16 of the 27 infected deer herds have had one clear test and 30 to 50% of these would be expected to get a second clear test.

On the downside, there are 8 deer farmers who have had their TB status suspended for falling to have a test within 180 of the due date and 14 more who will be suspended in the next 2 months if they fail to have a test. We know that there are some times of the year when it is difficult to test deer but there is no excuse for this sort of ongoing failure to test.

Vector control work is on target this year with some extra work to be done in the Teviot region. Vector control is very important in bringing down the number of infected herds but requires the ongoing support and assistance from Otago farmers if a TB free Otago is to be achieved.

Peter Foster

David Parker Otago MP

Some months back David Parker sent a news sheet to mail boxes in his electorate. In this he had an article on the FART Tax which basically repeated the

Hodgson / Sutton line. One deer farmer wrote to Mr Parker pointing out that he was supposed to be the representative of a large rural electorate but appeared to have made no effort to understand the farmers objections or even acquaint himself with the submissions of farmers organisations. It raises the question of whether Mr Parker is Otago's representative to parliament or Helens representative to Otago. The failure of Mr Parker to reply clearly illustrates his lack of concern for farm issues.

Peter Foster

CWD

Keep those animals coming. If you have a potential animal, i.e. one showing wasting coupled with unusual behaviour or nervous responses then call your vet. If it is eligible then you get \$100 for the animal and the vets costs are also covered.

Deer Improvement

Deer Improvement website is now up and running:

www.deerimprovement.co.nz

Contacts:

Bruce McGregor: Phone: 027 2332063

Udo Fuehrer: Phone: 0272332064

email bmcmgregor@lic.co.nz

Weaner Survey

The branch would like to thank the farmers involved, Steve Martin from Otago Venison, Ray Coombes from Duncan & Co, John Scully from Otago Deer Transport, Steve Grant from Big River Transport and Craig North from PGG who co-ordinated the whole project.

Mandy Bell

Chairmans Report

No rain for Otago coupled with a high dollar and low schedules is not a great start to 2004.

We also started the year with the tragic news of the death of Sir Peter Elworthy here in Wanaka. Peter leaves large gaps in many areas - he was a mentor, sounding board and friend for a lot of deer people. He also ran 2 properties and recently expanded Craigmore with the purchase of the neighbouring organic farm. Together with Sir Tim Wallis and others he was involved in the infancy of the industry and was the founding Chairman of the NZDFA. In the early days leadership found solutions and was very innovative. At Peter's funeral his sense of community and the ability to find answers came through very strongly. Let us carry on his vision for the industry. He is sorely missed by family and friends.

The Branch had a very successful day at Eric Thomsons with a focus on sire stags. Many thanks to Eric and all who helped or spoke on the day. Abbreviated papers are in this newsletter and will also be available online through Agresearch.

Our next outing is going to be on the 11 February (Otago Venison, 12.30 to 5pm) with a look at the 30 yearlings that have been grazing on 10 different properties throughout Otago for the past year. The branch is extremely grateful to all the farmers that have generously looked after the weaners and in some cases replaced the odd loss. We will look at the variations between them at Otago Venison and then follow up with some advice and

discussion on feeding. Doug Harper will also show us some slides on his property in Canada where he is able to slaughter animals less than 12 months of age with 100+kg carcass weights. Mat Moyes from DINZ will also give us an update on the markets having been to Anuga plus some insight into the work that DINZ has been doing to increase returns.

Two developments that the Branch has been working on over the summer are ongoing. The first is working on a package for DNA testing with Genomz (Contact Mary on 034899140 or Jason 4899138 if you want to discuss breeding values). The details are still being finalized but for anyone thinking of using this as part of a means to increasing production it is now much more affordable. Genomz has made a large capital purchase of equipment that has enabled them to cope with larger numbers.

The second development is the establishment of a monitor farm in Otago with a deer focus. Applications for funding support are being processed at the moment. If we are successful I envisage a start in the winter. It will run in a similar way to the Meat and Wool NZ Monitor farms.

I would also like to welcome Geoff Asher as the Deputy Chairman for the Otago Branch. We have a very strong and active committee with a lot of activities happening. Anyone with ideas or solutions please get in touch.

Mandy Bell

Results from South Otago Velvet Competition

Local				Open			
Placing	Winners	Age - yrs	Wt - kg	Red Section		Age - yrs	Wt - kg
				Placing	Winners		
1	L. Damsteegt	5	6.46	1	Black Forest Farm	8	8.67
2	L. Damsteegt	4	6.85	2	L. Doncaster	7	6.86
3	B McCall	8	5.97	3	E. Brock	12	6.95
3 yr old Reds							
1	Glenary Deer Farm	3	4.55	1	Black Forest Farm	3	5.44
2	L. Damsteegt	3	4.55	2	Black Forest Farm	3	5.28
3	Glenary Deer Farm	3	3.82	3	E. Brock	3	5.02
Elk / Wap							
1	B McCall	10	7.03	1	T May	4	12.19
2	T Craig	8	6.14	2	M McBride	5	9.50
3	T Craig	9	6.53	3			
Best Over All							
	L. Damsteegt	5	6.46		Black Forest Farm	8	8.67

Joke

The local bar is so sure that its bar tender is the strongest man around that they offer a standing \$1,000 bet. The bar tender squeezes a lemon until all the juice runs into a glass, and hands the lemon to a patron. Anyone who can squeeze one more drop of juice out of it wins the money. Over time many people have tried, but nobody has succeeded.

One day a scrawny little man comes in, wearing thick glasses and a polyester, and says in a tiny, squeaky voice, "I'd like to try the bet."

After the laughter has died down, the bar tender says OK, grabs a lemon, and squeezes away. He then hands the wrinkled remains of the rind to the little man.

But the crowd's laughter turns to total silence as the man clenches his fist

around the lemon and six drops fall into the glass.

As the crowd cheers, the bar tender pays the \$1,000 and asks the little man, "What do you do for a living? Are you a logger, a weight-lifter, or what?"

The man replies, "I work for the tax office."



From our Sponsors

Weaning – That time of year

By: Richard Woolley
*Agronomist & Animal Nutritionist
Superior Minerals*

At this time Sire Stags should have been prepared adequately for the oncoming mating season, some are already roaring. Animals in prime condition will perform accordingly and with only weeks to go the foundation of their performance will have been laid down. If feed supplementation is required until they are put out with the hinds then the addition of 100ml Kick Start daily to their ration will improve and sustain their stamina.

Weaning is also just around the corner traditionally beginning at the end of March and it is now that consideration should be given to vaccination, drenching and the stress associated with it.

Lung worm appear to be a major cause of ill thrift and mortality in fawns and this should be given consideration in the choice of drenches. An oral drench would probably be a judicious choice as fawns have a low fat reserve and pour-on's require fat for dissemination. Care should be kept in mind however with the administration of oral drenches.

At this time stress and nutrition also have a major influence on mortality and growth rates. Kick Start will assist in minimizing the effects of stress and assist in providing many elements

necessary for optimal nutrition however there is no substitute for quality forage or rations which should be provided. Cobalt can be administered at this time and can be used in conjunction with Kick Start. Hinds drenched with Kick Start at weaning will also benefit greatly in handling the stresses of the ordeal and in boosting and balancing their electrolyte levels prior to mating. An Injectable worm drench at this time has also proved of benefit at this time.

Backward, sick or traumatised animals can be drenched with up to 10 times the recommended dose of Kick Start.

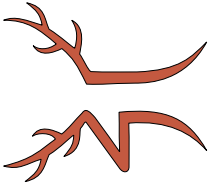
03 4847721

KICK START



~ MINERAL DRENCH ~
**Formulated to reduce stress and
increase digestive efficiency, animal
performance & health**

STAGS ~ HINDS ~ FAWNS
\$205 + GST per 20 L Drum
Fawns 40 - 50kg = 20ml
Hinds = 20ml
Stags = 100ml as a feed additive



NZDFA

New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association

Otago Branch NZDFA Field day

11 February 2004

Venison production/survey results

- Where:** Meet at Otago Venison, Invermay
- When:** 12.30pm Sharp
- Cost:** \$5 for members of NZDFA, \$10 for non members
- Format:** Carcass viewing, talks, drinks and nibbles
- Registration:** Contact Mandy Bell on 03 4434250 or Craig North on 0272414179

Programme

12.30pm:

- Introduction for day and general information on weaners – 30 weaner stags (similar weight and genetics) were divided into 10 groups in March 2003 and have been grazed on 10 properties until slaughter.
Craig North, NZDFA Otago Branch, PGG
- Walk through Otago Venison plant and view the animals involved in the survey. The animals will be available for inspection including yields and weights. There will also be a boning demonstration.

- Weaner survey 'summary questions arising

Mandy Bell, NZDFA Otago Branch

3.00pm

Afternoon tea

- Growth and feeding – how can we grow our weaners faster?
Dick Arnst, Agronomist, Wrightsons

- Nutrition and deer farming in Canada

Doug Harper, Deer farmer, Canada

- Venison sales - what is happening in the market? An update.
Mat Moyes, venison marketing manager, DINZ

- DNA testing in the deer industry and update on NZDFA news
Andrew Mitchell, Rodway Park, NZDFA executive

- Discussion

5.00 pm:

The afternoon will finish with an opportunity for informal discussion with the speakers and drinks organised by the Otago Branch (open bar provided – drinks at your own cost). Nibbles provided

Articles

Selecting Sire Stags

**By Jason Archer, AgResearch
Invermay**

Selecting sire stags was the topic of the ODFFA field day held at Eric Thompson's property at Alexandra in December. The main messages were that selecting sires for your operation is a two stage process. The first step is to define exactly what you require from your sire. This involves analysing your farming system to look at where the returns from investment in superior genetics will come from. Identifying the role you want the stag to play in your breeding structure is an important part of this. Once this process is complete you should have a clear idea of your overall breeding direction, the role the stag you are selecting will play in your program, and which are the profit-driver traits which you will focus on when selecting your stag.

Having closely defined your requirements, you now need to find a stag which meets these requirements. There are a number of different sources of information available, each of which have their own strengths and limitations and should be used in different ways. These include reputation of the breed, the breeder and close relatives of the stag (principally the sire). Other information includes a visual appraisal of the animal, performance information, and breeding

values. More detail on sire stag selection and management can be found on a new web-based information package now available on the DEEResearch Website (<http://www.deeresearch.org.nz/>).

Invermay Sire Referencing Project

**By Jason Archer, AgResearch
Invermay**

The sire referencing project at Invermay aims to provide the information required to develop across-herd breeding values. As the name implies, these breeding values will be comparable across-herds, giving stag breeders and purchasers a much better idea of where animals rank genetically against each other. The first crop of calves from the AI program at Invermay was born recently and averaged 38 kg at weighing on 26th January. All the sires used in the reference scheme will also have significant numbers of progeny (at least 30) in their own herd, and the performance data from Invermay and the other herds will be analysed jointly to provide breeding values on all the animals in participating herds. This analysis will happen once the animals have had sufficient information collected (at least a 12-month weight, together with weights at weaning and autumn).

With the breeding season now approaching, the intention is to continue

the project with a second round of matings in 2004. Expressions of interest from breeders wanting to participate are being sought now.

Further information, contact **Jason Archer** ph 03 489 9138.

Drought-proofing pastures with soil fertility.

By David Stevens, AgResearch Invermay.

How many times do we notice that our more fertile paddocks hold on into a drought and recover from a drought much better than the poorer paddocks?

Well there is a good explanation for this. It is about why plants grow less in a drought. Soil water availability is the most obvious reason. No water, no growth.

A secondary reason for poor plant growth is the availability of nutrients. Nutrients in the soil are transported in the soil water. Therefore less soil water equals less nutrients.

One way farmers can partially offset this problem is by increasing the soil fertility. Increased soil fertility means that the soil has a higher concentration of nutrients in the water in the soil. Therefore the plant doesn't undergo such a shortage of nutrients, especially early in a drought. High soil fertility also means that when the soil wets up again, the plants get enough nutrients for high growth levels sooner. So recovery after drought is quicker, as is the response to small

amounts of rain during the drought.

An example of this comes from research that shows that soils with an Olsen P of 40 produce twice as much grass per mm of water use than soils with an Olsen P of 20. Now this does not mean that all soils should be Olsen P 40, but it does suggest that some drought proofing can be gained by applying capital dressings of superphosphate during the more profitable wet years.

This may not be much comfort now but may be a way we can help drought proof our farms in the future.

Improving the quality of standing hay.

By David Stevens, AgResearch Invermay.

So we have some feed; how do we make the most of it in a drought?

Often, as the case now, farmers may have some feed in the paddock, but it is rank and unappealing. How do we make the feed more palatable and get the best from it.

One way is through balancing the diet. Standing hay is often low in both protein and energy, meaning that our deer will eat relatively little of it and digest it slowly.

Improving the utilisation of this feed can mean the difference between stock losing weight and maintaining themselves.

A common option to improve the standing hay is to supply a grain supplement. This increases the fermentable energy and can increase the amount of standing hay eaten. Only

small amounts of grain may be needed to achieve this if the diet has enough protein. However, often the diet is still protein deficient and so the hay intake may not change and high levels of grain are needed to maintain condition.

Another option is to supply a combination of grain and a protein source, such as peas. Generally this will be more effective than grain alone at help increase the appetite for the standing hay. The amount of grain may be as low as 100 g/d and of peas 50 g/d per hind, though some calculations and monitoring are required to ensure this option meets the animals feed demand. A third option is to supply a feed block that incorporates energy and protein. These usually include some grain, molasses, soybean meal and urea. They are offered as a free choice option and animals usually regulate their own intake due to the urea content of the block. These feed blocks can significantly improve the utilisation of standing hay or straw.

With any feeding option some calculations or best guessing can be done to get started, but monitoring is always the best way to fine tune a ration.

What do Deer Farmers want from Extension and Science?

As part of a larger research project, scientists from the Deer Research Group at AgResearch Invermay are planning three farmer workshops in February and March. We have chosen to invite farmers from the DFA branches in the

first instance as they have been very keen to link with the deer and farm research teams of AgResearch in the past.

The workshop aim is to identify the needs deer farmers have for information/ tools. An example tool we would like to discuss is the Pasture Quality Workshop and how to tailor these specifically for deer farmers.

The results from this and the other workshops will enable us to develop more customised material and events for deer farmers and we would be looking to invite you to future events where these can be delivered back to you.

This invitation is for all members and interested farmers.

The event details are specified as follows:

Date: Wednesday 3 March 2004
Time: 1.30pm – 5pm
Venue: Cullen Conference Centre, Invermay Research Centre, Mosgiel

Could those planning to attend please **RSVP to Lynn Hunter on 03 489 9230** to help our planning and catering for this event.

Many thanks, **David Stevens**.



NZDFA Executive Committee Report

Good-day Otago Deer Farmers.

My name is Bill Taylor and I am one of a four person committee that is known as the NZDFA Executive Committee. The two biggest concerns facing Deer Farmers at present are the abysmal prices we are receiving for our product and the drought conditions facing much of the South Island. I find it extremely frustrating not to be able to do anything about either the afore mentioned issues. So I ask myself why am I writing this article, it is certainly not for personal gratification, but rather with the hope that in reading this you will have a better understanding of our committee's role and function, and also because Mandy Bell told me to.

When the NZDFA was restructured in 2002 and DINZ formed, the concept of an Executive Committee was included to;

- Undertake the management and control of the Association; Legal, Financial, and Constitutional.
- Have overall responsibility for the Annual Conference.
- Have a working and supportive relationship with the Producer Manager (Tony Pearse)
- Be an independent political voice for Deer Farmers on producer issues, when producer views are at odds with the Industry position.

As producers you have the opportunity

to stand for or vote for who represents you on this committee, with both a North and South Island vacancy each year.

The current committee is doing its best to fulfill its role and function, but accepts it hasn't promoted its profile and role to the average producer, and we are currently working to rectify that.

The last Meeting of the Executive Committee was just prior to Christmas, where we had a full agenda, most of which now looks far to boring to repeat here, however some of the things discussed were a Life Membership application, a subscription update that showed that the voluntary membership of the Association stands at 2850, the land access submission that we have submitted on behalf of Deer Farmers, the 2004 conference with regard to the programme and sponsorship.

M J Loza briefed us regarding the current velvet removal trials and we had the opportunity to make it clear to Mark O'Connor that farmers would not accept a plan by Food Safety to have MAF auditing farm velvet storage facilities.

When I look back over the last two paragraphs I wonder whether I should delete them, because for me, my role on the Executive Committee isn't about approving Life Memberships and organizing Conferences, but representing farmers views to the DINZ staff and others.

Too often decisions are made that affect our livelihood, by people with our best interests at heart, but who have little or no idea of the every day issues faced by us as farmers, however I can assure you that I have the opportunity am committed to representing the farmer viewpoint in Wellington or wherever regardless of the consequence.

Currently some of my responsibilities include the following

- I am a member of a committee that has been formed to provide guidance and suggestions in respect to Deer Industry New Zealand's Levy Remandating.
- I have been charged with the responsibility of overseeing the final stages of the Land Care Manual Project, and ensuring it is published in time for its launching at this years Industry Conference. I have been on the management committee of this project since its inception, and I would like to thank all those farmers that have contributed, it has been a long and drawn out process, but I am confident you will be proud of the end result.
- I am a member of the QA Farm Technical Committee and I will be looking hard at the recommendations made in the forthcoming QA Review, as to whether they have any positive relevance to us as farmers.

Finally I would like to say that I and the

other members of the Executive Committee are very concerned about the venison market, however at present all we can do is pass on those and your concerns to those who do have some influence, it is not the role of the New Zealand Deer Farmers Association to dictate to exporting companies how they should run their businesses.

Personally I would remind you that Deer are a wonderful animal to farm, venison is a first rate dining experience, and velvet is a historically sound product, we are part of a fantastic industry that will succeed if we continue to believe in it.

Bill Taylor

Joke

I went to the supermarket the other day, and I was in there for only about 5 minutes. When I came out there was a cop writing a parking ticket.

So, I went up to him and said, "Come on, buddy, how about giving me a break?" He ignored me and continued writing the ticket. So I called him a heartless idiot.

He glared at me and started writing another ticket for worn tyres. So I called him a fascist.

He finished the second ticket and put it on the windshield with the first. Then he started writing a third ticket.

This went on for about 20 minutes...the more I abused him, the more tickets he wrote.

I didn't really care. My car was parked around the corner.

Otago Branch Who's Who

Current members of the steering committee are as follows:

Mandy Bell (Chairman)	03 443 4250
Geoff Asher	03 4899048
Mike Scurr (Treasurer)	03 443 7780
Craig North (Secretary)	03 488 4899

Paul Mutch	03 467 5479
John Scally	03 465 7375
Ken Harrex	03 485 9514
Tony Pearse	04 381 6016
Phil Hunt	03 443 1055
Peter Foster	03 465 7838
John Falconer	03 444 7501

Adam Whaanga	03 415 7662
Mike Smith	021 441445
David Stevens	03 4899035
Jason Archer	03 4899138
Jane Mitchell	03 4449584
John Scurr	03 443 7555
Chris Johnson	03 4896191

DINZ

DINZ	04 382 8626
John Scurr	03 443 7555
Clive Jermy (Chairman)	03 465 1022
Tony Pearse (Producer Manager)	04 381 6016
Tony Pearse, Invermay	03 489 9221
Stewart Barnett..	03 4773980

RAHC

Core Members

Stephen Woodhead, NZ Fed Farmers Meat & Fibre (Chairman)	03 417 4733
Stephen Korteweb, NZ Fed Farmers Dairy	03 413 9556
Doug Brown, Otago Regional Council	03 439 5693
Mandy Bell, NZ Deer Farmers Assn	03 443 4250
Peter Foster, NZ Deer Farmers Assn	03 465 7838

Area Members

Peter McNab, South Otago (Clutha District)	03 415 8390
Phill Hunt, Central Otago (Queenstown Lakes District, Dep. Chairman)	03 443 1055
Michael Lord, East Otago (Dunedin City)	03 486 2730
Phillip Smith Central Otago (Central Otago District)	03 444 9626
Bill Pile, North Otago (Waitaki District)	03 431 3768

Otago Branch NZDFA