

## SURVEY OF DEER NUMBERS AND FARMER INTENTIONS

*December 2004*

*This paper summarises some of the results of the survey of deer farmers undertaken from September to December 2004.*

*After an original mail-out, followed by a reminder, 2,373 forms were received back from the 5,300 sent out. Of these responses, 2,099 responses confirmed that the recipients were farming deer as at 30 June 2004.*

### HERD SIZE AND COMPOSITION

*Returns suggest the following herd size and composition at 30 June 2004 – with an extrapolation out to 1.7 million deer based on Stats NZ figures.*

	Industry Survey	Extrapolation to Stats NZ figures
<i>Weaner Hinds</i>	267,753	320,233
<i>R2 Hinds</i>	145,492	174,009
<i>MA Hinds</i>	563,886	674,408
<b>TOTAL HINDS</b>	<b>988,356</b>	<b>1,168,650</b>
<i>Weaner Stags</i>	280,549	334,781
<i>R2 Stags</i>	74,301	88,664
<i>MA Stags</i>	90,426	107,906
<b>TOTAL STAGS</b>	<b>449,376</b>	<b>531,350</b>
<b>TOTAL DEER</b>	<b>1,439,861</b>	<b>1,700,000</b>
<i>Hinds Calving (at 82% of R2 and MA Hinds based on responses)</i>	583,078	697,362

*Note that the total hind and stag numbers in the Industry Survey column do not equal the sum of the different classes within each gender as in some cases survey respondents provided total hind and stag numbers only. Furthermore, as some respondents only provided total deer numbers the total stag and total hind numbers do not equal the total deer numbers provided. The extrapolated figures use the relative %s in each sex and age class from the industry survey extrapolated out to 1.7 million deer to estimate the total herd composition.*

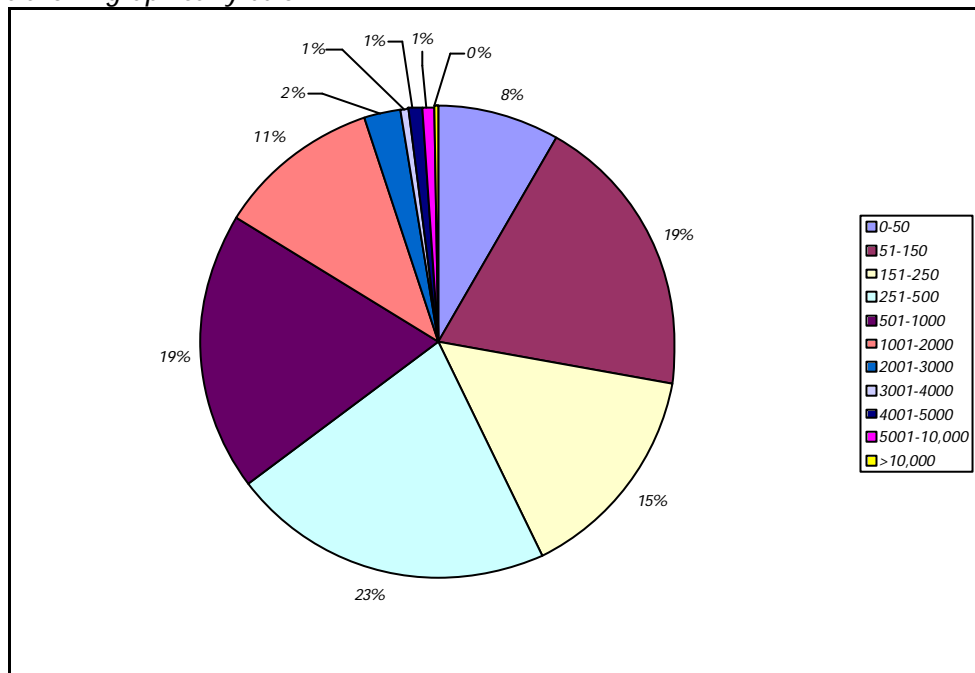
*Data available regarding velvet production supports the Stats NZ figures of 1.7 million deer being fairly accurate. At an average weight of 2.75 kg per stag, 107,906 mixed age stags would produce 296 tonnes of Korean grade velvet. Results from last year's pools adjusted for total production put the volume of Korean grade velvet at 285 tonnes.*

*The average herd size of those responding was 686 deer. Assuming there are 4,500 deer farmers, and extrapolating deer numbers out to 1.7 million deer, this compares with an overall average deer farm size of 378. This suggests the average herd size of those not responding is 108 deer (again assuming 4,500 deer farmers and 1.7 million deer).*

## FARM SIZE

No. of animals on farm	Number of Farms	% of farms of those responding	% of deer represented on these farms
0-50	176	8%	0.3%
51-150	408	19%	3%
151-250	313	15%	4%
251-500	456	22%	12%
501-1000	401	19%	20%
1001-2000	238	11%	22%
2001-3000	49	2%	8%
3001-4000	15	1%	4%
4001-5000	14	1%	4%
5001-10,000	20	1%	9%
>10,000	4	0.2%	13%

This is shown graphically below:



28% of farms have 150 or fewer deer. These farmers account for 3% of the total herd.  
 65% of farms have 500 or fewer deer. These farmers account for 19% of the total herd.  
 84% of farms have 1,000 or fewer deer. These farmers account for 39% of the total herd.  
 The 5% largest farms have 2,000 or more deer and account for 39% of the total herd.

## GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

	# Deer	% Deer	# Farmers Responding	% Farmers Responding
<i>Northland</i>	7,450	1%	20	1%
<i>Kaipara</i>	17,570	1%	45	2%
<i>Waikato</i>	55,233	4%	109	5%
<i>Waipa</i>	16,046	1%	34	2%
<i>Bay of Plenty</i>	22,043	2%	65	3%
<i>Rotorua</i>	37,686	3%	64	3%
<i>Tongariro</i>	45,758	3%	46	2%
<i>Taihape</i>	23,049	2%	37	2%
<i>Taranaki</i>	5,230	0%	20	1%
<i>Wanganui</i>	10,699	1%	23	1%
<i>Poverty Bay</i>	27,743	2%	44	2%
<i>Wairoa</i>	5,494	0%	22	1%
<i>Hawke Bay</i>	90,257	6%	141	7%
<i>Manawatu</i>	36,172	3%	93	4%
<i>Wairarapa</i>	9,633	1%	33	2%
<i>Horowhenua / Wellington</i>	134,572	9%	33	2%
<b>NORTH ISLAND</b>	<b>544,635</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>829</b>	<b>40%</b>
<i>Marlborough</i>	10,413	1%	41	2%
<i>Nelson</i>	24,734	2%	69	3%
<i>Canterbury</i>	171,749	12%	336	16%
<i>Sth Canterbury / Nth Otago</i>	154,253	11%	203	10%
<i>West Coast</i>	40,969	3%	38	2%
<i>Otago</i>	146,298	10%	186	9%
<i>Southland</i>	277,819	19%	332	16%
<i>Fiordland</i>	63,008	4%	50	2%
<b>SOUTH ISLAND</b>	<b>889,243</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>1,255</b>	<b>60%</b>

## **INTENTIONS – HERD GROWTH**

*Respondents provided an indication as to hind and stag numbers expressed as either change in deer numbers or % changes. Responses were converted to animal numbers and these results are shown below.*

	<b>Stags</b>	<b>Hinds</b>
<i>Intentions to increase</i>	17,952	48,410
<i>Intentions to decrease</i>	32,072	68,804
<b>Net change indicated</b>	<b>-14,120</b>	<b>-20,394</b>
<b>Extrapolated</b>	<b>-16,671</b>	<b>-24,079</b>

*This supports anecdotal reports of some farmers selecting to reduce numbers/exit and others seeing this as an opportunity to expand. On balance the movement suggests a slight reduction in herd numbers – 40,750 animals, or 2.4% of the estimated 1.7 million deer.*

*In terms of those indicating exit from the industry, responses indicate 51 farmers (2% of respondents) exiting only their hinds, 48 (2% of respondents) exiting only their stags and a further 90 farmers (4%) quitting all their deer. The average herd size of those respondents exiting deer entirely is 252 deer – significantly less than the average of those farms responding to the survey (686) and less than the estimated average herd size (378).*

*The average herd size of those signalling an intention to increase overall deer numbers is 967 deer – on average they are planning to increase by about 14%.*

*This appears to be reasonable support for the trend reported anecdotally that ‘the big are getting bigger and the small are getting smaller (or exiting)’.*