

Deer Industry News

Setting the scene
for 2021 season

Velvet Coalition

PARTNERS JOIN FORCES
TO SEEK OPPORTUNITIES
IN CHINA HEALTH
FOOD MARKET

Industry Conference

RETURN TO DEEP SOUTH
FOR MAY 2021
CONFERENCE: 2020s VISION
– THE FOCUS IS YOU

Sire Sales

SUBDUED PRICES
REFLECT IMPACTS OF
COVID ON MARKETS BUT
STILL SOME BRIGHT SPOTS

Deer Industry News

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF DEER INDUSTRY NEW ZEALAND AND THE NEW ZEALAND DEER FARMERS' ASSOCIATION

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Cover: DINZ consultant chef Shannon Campbell prepared this mouth-watering venison cutlet as a centrepiece for a German Christmas table (see page 7).

Deer Industry News is published by Deer Industry New Zealand in February, April, June, August, October and December. It is circulated to all known deer farmers, processors, exporters and others with an interest in the deer industry. The opinions expressed in *Deer Industry News* do not necessarily reflect the views of Deer Industry

A big year ahead for agriculture

New Zealand's primary sector has a lot to be proud of after its impressive performance during the past 12 months.



Hon. Damien O'Connor.

AS THE PANDEMIC spread and worsened, our sector led the way by feeding Kiwis and getting our great food and fibre to overseas markets, despite the logistical difficulties posed by lockdowns and restrictions across the globe. It's fair to say that widespread drought combined with an unprecedented pandemic created some of the more challenging conditions that the primary sector has seen for some time. Certain areas of the sector have been hit harder than others and this is particularly true for the deer industry.

Despite facing tough challenges, our venison exporters should be proud of their resilience as Covid-19 hit the restaurant sector hard, especially in European and American markets. The deer industry's ability to stay positive and work through these difficulties together is something I have admired over the past year and I have great respect for how these challenges have been met.

You are not standing still but choosing to invest in developing markets here and overseas, whether that's through new venison cuts, promoting venison at New Zealand week in China, or conducting research into whether deer velvet can boost innate immune cell function in humans. The ability to innovate and be creative is crucial in times of change and I note that the recent launch of a joint venture company in China with three of our main velvet exporters offers exciting avenues for the future (see page 4).

The Covid-19 pandemic will continue to loom large this year as a major disrupting force, but we should also look to the future where shifting customer preferences and climate change may continue to disrupt how the sector operates.

I'm focused on several priorities this year, as I balance both my Trade and Agricultural roles. First, the Government is working hard to navigate the Brexit deal and what it means for New Zealand. Wherever possible, we are committed to establishing new and better trade deals that benefit New Zealanders. I'm also working through some changes to the Government's freshwater policies and am focused on working alongside industry to drive innovation and creativity in the sector.

Later this year I also hope to unveil more details about a \$50 million fund to help farmers develop integrated farm plans and reduce red tape while meeting our sustainability goals. During 2020 we launched our Fit For A Better World roadmap to help guide work with the primary industries. Our signature fund – the Sustainable Food and Fibres Fund – is accepting innovative ideas and the Government, through MPI, is committed to co-funding proposals.

As a Government, we are focused on not only recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic but also enabling the primary sector to continue to grow, even beyond our pre-Covid successes. I look forward to working with the deer industry over the next year to ensure that we can get our great products to market and that we continue to foster innovation in business. ■

– Damien O'Connor, Minister of Agriculture, Biosecurity, Trade and Export Growth, Land Information and Rural Communities

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Positive news for velveters

by Ali Spencer, *Deer Industry News* writer

There's good news for velveters: The strong underlying demand for New Zealand velvet in Asia flagged in our last issue came through, while a new FTA offers opportunities for strengthening the brand in Asia over the next decade.

DINZ MANAGER, MARKETS Rhys Griffiths reports strong velvet sales in October and November, with the value of exports in October pitching up at around \$1 million – double the same month in 2019. In November, shipments were valued at \$5.9 million, 24 percent more than the previous year.

“There was a little bit of uncertainty at the very start of the season in August and September about how the market would shape in the Covid-19 era,” he explains, pointing to two positives.

“Market feedback had indicated there was strong underlying demand, but there would be logistical complications in getting product to market. While the market did soften at the start of the season, once it found its price – giving certainty to our farmers – product started flowing swiftly.”

The second positive is that by December, velvet exporters had committed most of their stock for the season. “That demand has continued and more importantly additional buyers have come out looking for more product,” he says.

The predicted disruption to logistics did come to fruition, however.

“More testing of all products at the borders – not solely velvet – slowed shipments moving through the supply chain at additional cost,” he says. This is something DINZ is watching closely.

The South Korean and Chinese markets have both been impacted again by recent Covid-19 outbreaks. Korea has experienced its second-most severe lockdown, which has limited what consumers are able to do. Everyone is watching and waiting to see how the new Covid-19 variants affect the market, he explains. However, Asia has plenty of experience with disease outbreaks, such as avian flu, MERS and SARS.

“Their history of dealing with infectious disease means the populations are well conditioned to comply. New Zealand is lucky we're so isolated. Once the vaccination programme starts rolling out, we're hopeful some new normality will resume in the markets for the coming season.

“Velvet is better positioned than many others as a health food product.”

For that reason, Griffiths is “thrilled” about the recent announcement of a new coalition of three deer velvet exporters – CK Import Export, PGG Wrightson and Provelco – supported by DINZ which will focus activity on the development of velvet as a health food ingredient in China (see page 4).

In addition, New Zealand's signing of the largest free trade agreement (FTA) in history, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) in November presents an opportunity to strengthen New Zealand velvet's brand positioning in Asia, he reported.

The new FTA covers a population of 2.3 billion and seven

of New Zealand's largest trading partners, standardising trade rules for 15 nations: Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea and the 10 ASEAN nations of Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

“It's good to have a common set of trade rules to work under,” Griffiths comments. But, he warns, it means in coming years New Zealand will no longer have a unique position regarding dried deer velvet exports to South Korea as tariffs applied to China's exports will also reduce under the FTA's terms. These are currently set at 20 percent, for reduction at one percent a year to zero.

“As at 1 January 2021, our tariffs are set at 10.3 percent and will reduce to zero by 1.3 percent a year, which gives us about eight years before the tariff advantage diminishes,” he says.

“But as a producer of quality velvet, we have time to strengthen the New Zealand velvet brand and move away from being price competitive to becoming more brand competitive.” ■



Shanghai-based NZ Trade Commissioner Richard Dunsheath with some high value velvet-based health-food products marketed in Korea. A coalition of NZ velvet exporters aims to repeat the success of these products in China.

China Velvet Coalition: Paving way for health food products

Three companies marketing deer velvet antler in Asia – CK Import Export, PGG Wrightson and Provelco – have formed a coalition to develop a market for New Zealand velvet as a health food ingredient in China.

DINZ MANAGER, MARKETS Rhys Griffiths says the three-way collaboration will give the critical mass needed to make an impact. In all other respects they will continue to compete vigorously with each other for sales and farmer supply.

He says deer velvet and red ginseng – two of the most highly prized ingredients in traditional oriental medicine – have in recent years enjoyed an explosion in demand from South Korea for use in branded natural health products to combat fatigue and boost immunity.

“The aim of the coalition is to replicate this phenomenon in China, where locally produced and imported velvet is still mainly used in traditional medicines,” Griffiths says.

“A Shanghai-based business development manager will be doing the ground work. Their role will be to identify and work with a small group of brand-name companies that are willing to develop and promote products based on velvet from New Zealand.

“The success of these products would likely give other companies the confidence to develop and market similar products, thereby expanding demand for velvet from New Zealand.”

Griffiths says the three companies will collectively provide most of the funding, with a matching contribution from NZ Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) and administrative support and some funding from DINZ. He thanks NZTE for its support of the coalition, which he says goes well beyond the financial contribution it is making.

The business development manager is being hired by Primary Collaboration New Zealand (PCNZ), a China-registered company the coalition has joined as a member. PCNZ represents several NZ food and beverage product marketers in China and works closely with NZTE. As *Deer Industry News* went to press, interviews for the business development manager position had been completed and an announcement is expected shortly.

Tony Cochrane, national velvet manager with PGG Wrightson told *Deer Industry News* the coalition is the only way to capture more value from velvet in this market, and provide more certainty for farmers looking to build their on-farm production.

“The China market is very different from Korea, but looking at the growth of middle and upper income spending in China, we can see the potential for health food products incorporating New Zealand velvet is huge.

“It’s a big investment for the three partners. We wouldn’t be committing to this if we didn’t see it as a positive and necessary move for all stakeholders.”

Ross Chambers, general manager of Provelco, says this is an exciting initiative, one that the cooperative is pleased to be a partner in.

“The common objective is finding and developing new business



Gathering to mark the launch of the China Velvet Coalition are, from left: Rhys Griffiths, DINZ manager, markets, Shaun Stevenson, CK Import Export, Ross Chambers, general manager Provelco, Richard Dunsheath NZ Trade Commissioner based in Shanghai, Tony Cochrane, national velvet manager, PGG Wrightson, Karen Mason, NZ Trade and Enterprise coalitions customer manager and Innes Moffat, DINZ chief executive.

in the burgeoning health and wellbeing sector in China.

“By utilising New Zealand Trade and Enterprise’s coalition strategy we are able to combine forces to approach a market segment that is too complex for any one company to succeed in alone.”

The Shanghai-based NZ Trade Commissioner Richard Dunsheath, who attended the launch of the partnership in Christchurch, says the coalition is an exciting development. “I look forward to working with them. Collaboration makes a huge amount of sense in a market as large and complex as China.”

Griffiths says New Zealand is one of only two velvet producing countries that can comply with China’s strict food safety laws, with the MPI-administered Regulated Control Scheme and industry-administered National Velvetting Standards Body providing the essential framework to enable this market access.

DINZ chief executive Innes Moffat says he was heartened when the companies approached DINZ with the proposal to form the coalition.

“Collaboration means companies can make faster progress in the market and makes it easier to secure government and industry funding. Our Primary Growth Partnership programme, Passion2Profit, operates on a similar basis,” he says.

“This initiative has potential to benefit the whole industry. It aligns with our objectives of building market recognition of New Zealand velvet as a premium product, developing new markets, and creating sustainable on-farm value.” ■

Meet the staff

Since DINZ manager, markets **Rhys Griffiths** joined us in 2008, New Zealand deer velvet and its success has become something of a passion. Before coming to DINZ he was business development manager for a company importing commodity agriculture input products from China and before that he was marketing manager for a large multinational animal health company.

RHYS'S CURRENT ROLE evolved from his earlier positions of market manager, Asia and velvet marketing services manager. His focus at DINZ has mainly been helping develop the velvet market, working on a health food strategy with New Zealand exporters.

"We have great customers, exporters and most importantly awesome producers, so I am lucky to work with participants right through the supply chain. My role here is working on new market development – both geographic and channel – to cater for the increasing production we are experiencing, and also on market access."

Rhys says regulatory issues can, at times, be a little frustrating, but it is an important part of the role. "I am starting to work more closely with DINZ's venison marketing manager, Nick Taylor and his key stakeholders and – once we get through the impacts of Covid-19 – I'm excited to see where this leads."

Two areas of work have been particularly rewarding, Rhys says. "The first of these has been working with exporters to change the way New Zealand velvet is treated in the market – from an undifferentiated commodity to a celebrated and respected health food ingredient in modern and innovative health food products.

"There is still a lot of work to be done here, but it is pretty cool to know that Korean consumers are starting to really identify with the provenance of the New Zealand velvet ingredient in their products."

The second and probably most rewarding challenge for Rhys has been the way the industry – particularly velvet producers – embraced MPI's Regulated Control Scheme (RCS) for velvet removal.

"I was a little nervous about how this would look, when MPI told us we would need more government oversight and regulation. However it was a real team effort, working with the Deer Farmers' Association Executive and MPI to develop a programme that would be both acceptable to overseas markets and achievable on farm.

"One conversation between two producers I overheard at the 2018 National Velvet Awards dinner, a year after the RCS's implementation and one of particularly good velvet prices, summed it up pretty well. One was saying 'what about the [pretty

good] prices this year?' The other said 'bugger the prices, you gotta see my shed!'

"That conversation captured the essence of our pioneering industry and how we can turn new challenges into opportunities. VelTrak will complete the RCS programme and already our customers are looking forward to it."

For Rhys there's no question about the most rewarding part of his job.

"It's the people. I am really fortunate to be able to get out on farm with velvet producers and also meet our customers, who all share that passion for velvet.

"I still remember my first week in the job back in 2008, when the then DFA Chair Bill Taylor and wife Jill had me stay the night and invited a few producers around.

"The weighted average price for velvet was then around \$58/kg and highly volatile – an unacceptable position for the industry. No one was angry; everyone just wanted to find a solution for stability. I think of that night every time I am in front of a customer and remember who I work for." ■



Rhys Griffiths.

Hello/Goodbye!

When you're producing a bimonthly magazine and publishing lead times are quite long, you can get be caught out by late-breaking events. So it was for *Deer Industry News* after we introduced readers to (former) DINZ science and policy manager **Catharine Sayer** in our December/January issue. After nearly 10 years at DINZ, Catharine has now moved on to a new policy position with the Ministry for Social Development. We are currently considering options for a replacement and will make an announcement soon. All the best for your new role Catharine!



Contact Ross Chambers General Manager ph: 03 348 5080 or email: ross@provelco.co.nz

www.provelco.co.nz

Consistent, Reliable and
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Venison market update: December

- Total venison exports in the month of December were 34% higher than December 2019.
- The volume of chilled venison exported in December was down 47% on 2019 (83 tonnes compared with 158 tonnes). This saw the value of chilled exports drop from \$4.4 million to only \$1.4 million.
- The majority of this reduction was due to a significant decrease in exports to the United States with chilled exports to that market decreasing by 96%. With most US states continuing to be affected by lockdowns, food service outlets remain closed or operate limited take-away only models.
- Europe by contrast saw only a slight decrease in chilled exports (78 tonnes down to 71 tonnes). While most of Europe was also under lockdown, which saw restaurants closed, importers have been able to shift more product into retail channels. European importers have been reporting good throughput of product with limited amounts being frozen down.
- Frozen venison saw an increase in export volume of 56% (up from 603 to 943 tonnes), while total value increased by 43% to \$10.2 million. The average value per kg exported in 2019 was \$11.80, and this decreased to \$10.87 in 2020.
- December slaughter statistics show production

- of 1,700 tonnes. With total exports of just over 1,000 tonnes, about 650 tonnes will have gone into storage in New Zealand.
- The December national average published schedule was \$5.58 (Figure 1). This was \$3 down on the same time last year and 31% lower than the five-year average of \$8.16. ■



Figure 1: National published schedule: 2015–2020 (monthly averages)

2021 Deer Industry Environment Awards: Entries are open!

Have you ever considered entering the year’s Deer Industry Environmental Awards? Now would be an excellent time because entries for the biennial awards are open.

THE AWARDS PLAY a crucial role in showing each other – and the world – the strides that deer farmers are making in their environmental stewardship.

It’s now 20 years since the awards, conceived by Sir Peter Elworthy and still bearing his name for the supreme award, became a permanent fixture in the deer industry calendar.

The awards are typically held every two years and recipients have spanned the full range of deer farm systems – from high country stations to intensive finishing farms – and geographic spread, from Southland to Waikato.

North Island farms seem to have had a stranglehold on the supreme Elworthy Award, with the last South Island farm taking out the honour back in 2010. Is 2021 the year for the South Island

to strike back?

Deer farmers are known for taking pride in their animals and environment and our previous award entrants are testament to the industry’s strong stewardship values. This year more than ever your participation in the awards will demonstrate the industry’s ongoing commitment to sustainable farming and high-quality food production.

Entries close at 4pm on Wednesday 31 March 2021. Judging will be in April 2021 and the winners will be announced at the 2021 Deer Industry Conference Awards dinner in Invercargill on 19 May.

For application forms and competition information: <https://www.deernz.org/media/deer-industry-competitions/deer-industry-environment-awards> ■

Photo: Property of 2019 Elworthy Award winners Evan and Linda Potter, Hawke’s Bay

Venison adapting well to challenges in Europe

While venison prices are down on the previous season, New Zealand venison has shown remarkable resilience and scope for innovation during the European autumn and winter.

RETAIL SALES THROUGH supermarkets, and restaurants switching to takeaway sales including easily portable venison dishes such as goulash, have helped keep New Zealand venison moving well during these challenging times.

DINZ venison marketing manager Nick Taylor says that because in-store promotion opportunities are out of the question for now, there's been a successful change in emphasis to social media as a platform for connecting with consumers in the place they've been spending most time: their own homes.

"Over December and January our German Facebook page gained an extra 2,000 followers, which has been pleasing. A video on the page from New Zealand deer farmer and videographer Miriam Boyens, who is German speaking, was our most popular post – hundreds of people engaged with it."

Venison marketers have been busy on social media too. For example, Alliance Group's Ashley brand has been refreshing its promotion through Instagram, while Silver Fern Farms has been keeping its German Facebook feed active with recipes and images of deer "close to nature". The company also features farming families, promoting the human connections between producers and consumers.

Germany-based DINZ chef Shannon Campbell has also been making creative use of his time, preparing venison test kits for a number of German chefs to keep them connected with the product while their restaurants are closed.

Campbell took that initiative to the next level when he contacted the New Zealand embassy in Berlin with the idea of having the test boxes delivered to chefs on Waitangi Day. Ambassador Rupert Holborrow was happy to oblige and appears with Campbell in a video featuring preparation of two of the recipes used for the test boxes.

The video was posted on the Embassy's Facebook page and can be seen at: www.facebook.com/NZBerlin/posts/

Followers were encouraged to go in for a prize of a hamper of New Zealand goodies by posting in the comments the most uplifting two lines about what they most love (and miss) about New Zealand.

Campbell has also been busy getting a headstart on the 2021 festive season, developing and shooting Christmas-themed recipes while supplies of Christmas products were available (see cover photo). They'll be rolled out later in the year to importers as a resource for their retail promotion.

"The deer industry is very adaptable and has been inventive. While I look back on the past with mixed feelings, I look to the future with cautious optimism," he says.

"There is a lot of pent-up energy [in Germany] and I expect things to really accelerate once winter passes and the [Covid] immunisation programme takes hold."

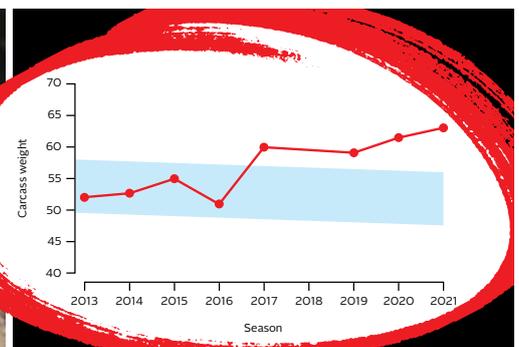
Germany's companies are keen to get back to work, he says. "Consumer demand is likely to take off when they do." ■



Voilà! Campbell presents Mongolian style deep-fried venison with crispy green tea on a bed of sweet potato chips, a dish that features in the venison test kit for chefs.



Benchmarked production and Johne's disease info on your deer



Deer PRO

To help make and assess your deer management decisions contact **DeerPRO** for your report – **0800 456 453** or **info@deerpro.org.nz**

DPO121

Deer Industry Conference: 18–20 May 2021

2020s vision: The focus is you

Does this page look familiar? It should! It's how we previewed the 2020 deer industry conference that was scheduled for Invercargill in May last year. The move to Covid-19 Alert Level 4 meant the conference had to be reframed as an online-only event but the arrangements are all still in place and Invercargill is set to host our 2021 conference at the same venues.

TO STREAMLINE THE event and encourage attendance we are designing a well-structured two day programme on Tuesday 18 and Wednesday 19 May in extraordinary surroundings at one of New Zealand's most exciting and unique conference venues, the Bill Richardson Transport World. Top-class conference rooms, catering and a dedicated display area will be set off with the Silver Fern Farms Welcome function on the Tuesday evening and Alliance Group's formal awards dinner on the Wednesday. The awards dinner will feature the Deer Industry Award, NZDFA Matuschka Award, Deer Industry Environment Awards and MSD Animal Health Deer Industry Photo Competition, plus some special entertainment.

Proceedings kick off with the NZDFA AGM at 8.30am on Tuesday 18 May, with the full programme getting under way at 10.30am.

Passion2Profit makes an appearance after the formal conference with a "P2P in Action" day at the Ascot Hotel on Thursday 20 May. This event, while also targeted at the deer farming communities of Southland, Fiordland and Otago, is also open to all delegates and has no associated attendance fees.

- The DFA will hold a pre-conference Branch Chairs, Executive Committee and SAP meeting from early afternoon on Monday 17 May and host an informal dinner with the DINZ Board and DFA leaders at the Ascot Hotel, the main accommodation venue for delegates (other options are also available).
- Following the success of engaging skilled MC Jamie Fitzgerald in 2019, we are delighted to confirm that **Sarah Perriam** (Perriam Media) has agreed to take on this role in 2021.
- For the eighth year, the event will be live streamed, also with Perriam Media. This will allow interactive commentary and provide a permanent record on the DINZ website.
- The business session will feature P2P, venison and velvet marketing sessions with keynote speakers from the international venison and velvet markets and will also focus on deer industry environmental initiatives and updates with the DINZ Board and Executive. There will also be sessions devoted to science updates, VelTrak, environmental issues such as winter grazing and safety.
- DFA and DINZ leaders are also keen to host discussion on rural resilience (mind and body), especially dealing with the constant societal pressures that impact on all our day-to-day lives.
- The welcome function opens the event on the evening of Tuesday 18 May and will allow delegates unimpeded access to the World of Transport Museum, wearable arts and other features of this extraordinary venue. The Annual Awards dinner is on 19 May. We are keen to encourage deer farming couples,

Next Generation and past and current deer farming people to celebrate and enjoy this 46th annual deer industry conference.

- Registrations and conference management will be supplied by Wellington-based Melissa Bähler, via Positive Events Plus and aided by the DFA Executive Committee and DINZ staff. Melissa is also the events manager for the NZ Institute of Primary Industries Management and well versed in rural and professional conferences.
- To encourage attendance, a 35% discount will be offered on full registration for the second (or more) registered delegate from the same farming entity.
- Registration fee and sponsor support are being finalised. These, and further programme and speaker details, will be publicised in March's *Stagline-online*, on the conference website and in April's *Deer Industry News*.

Keynote speakers

- **Kaila Colbin** (<https://boma.global/>), a futurist and founder of Global Boma, was a powerful speaker at the 2017 conference. She spearheaded the hugely successful SingularityU New Zealand and Australia Summits, introducing more than 2,500 people to exponential technologies and their impact on humanity.

She is also a co-founder and trustee of the non-profit Ministry of Awesome, Chairman of the Board of the New York-based Natural Gourmet Institute for Health and Culinary Arts, and a Director of CORE Education Ltd.

Kaila has worked with hundreds of people to increase courage as a core competency. She is also a certified ExO consultant, a Climate Project Ambassador and a Project Management Professional. She is a renowned national and international public speaker, sought after by corporates, government agencies, industry groups, and more.

Kaila was formerly the Curator and Licensee for TEDxChristchurch in New Zealand and TEDxScottBase in Antarctica. A native New Yorker, she speaks English, Spanish, French and Italian, holds a degree in Hotel and Restaurant Administration from Cornell University.



- **Lance Burdett**, WARN International, is a consultant and coach. With 22 years' policing experience at the highest level, Lance has expertise in responding to emergencies and communicating in challenging situations.

He specialised in suicide intervention and on predicting violent behaviour in his 13 years as a crisis negotiator and instructor for NZ Police.

Lance has an MA Degree, majoring in terrorism, safety and security. He has a Graduate Diploma in Business Studies, a Diploma in Policing and a Graduate Certificate in Applied Management. He has several specialist qualifications in negotiation.

He has also published *Behind the Tape: Life on the Police Frontline* detailing highlights of his police career.

- **Dr Jacqueline Rowarth** has a Bachelors degree in Agricultural Science with honours in Environmental Agriculture, and a PhD in Soil Science from Massey University. She has worked in research, education, management and governance with AgResearch, Lincoln University, Unitec in Auckland, The University of Melbourne, Massey University, University of Waikato, the Environmental Protection Authority, Crop and Food Research, AGMARDT and DairyNZ.

She is a Past President of the New Zealand Institute of



Agricultural and Horticultural Science, and of the New Zealand Grassland Association. She is a frequent contributor to public debate in the media and has spoken at a number of deer industry conferences and events. In 2008 she was awarded Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to Agricultural Science; in 2009 she was given the inaugural award of Agricultural Personality of the Year by Federated Farmers and in 2010 she was selected as the Agricultural Communicator of the Year by the NZ Guild of Agricultural Journalists and Communicators.



Jacqueline remains committed to trying to help society understand the importance of agriculture and horticulture and dispelling the myths that surround food production.

She is a farmer-appointed director at DairyNZ and is a director of Ravensdown.

- The finalised conference programme will be published in the April/May *Deer Industry News*.

For further information

Tony Pearse at tony.pearse@deernz.org, 021 719 038 or
Melissa Bähler at positiveeventsplus@xtra.co.nz,
027 664 3080 ■

46th AGM: constitutional matters

NZDFA and DINZ nominations: 2021/22 year

A) Executive Committee NZDFA nominations

Members of the NZDFA Executive Committee are elected for a two-year term. Members retire by rotation.

Nominations are now called for the following positions:

- Executive Committee member, **Two** vacancies.

(Current members **Justin Stevens, Marlborough** and **Mark McCoard, Taihape** retire by rotation).

These two Executive Committee vacancies are open to wider nomination from all NZDFA members. To be valid, nominations must be:

- signed by the nominee
- delivered to the Association's office by 5.00pm on Friday, 26 March 2021.

Note: The nominee must be a current financial member of the Association.

All nominees are entitled to submit a statement of about 150 words in support of their election. This statement must be sent to members at the same time as the ballot papers.

Should an election be necessary, details of postal voting and procedures, candidate profiles and confirmation of timelines will be sent with the April/May 2021 edition of *Deer Industry News* or by separate post to meet deadlines. Postal voting runs for 21 days and must close 7 clear days prior to the AGM on Tuesday 18 May

2021 (i.e. voting opens on Wednesday 21 April 2021, closing on Tuesday 11 May 2021).

B) Selection and Appointments Panel (SAP)

The role of the SAP is to make producer representative appointments to the Deer Industry New Zealand Board and to meet with those appointees at least twice a year to discuss industry matters and their roles as Deer Industry New Zealand representatives.

The 8-member SAP is made up from:

- four Executive Committee members
- four elected non-Executive Committee members:

The elected non-Executive Committee members whose term expires at the forthcoming AGM are (retirement by rotation) are **Steve Borland, Waikato** and **Donald Whyte, Mid Canterbury**.

Nominations are now called for the two vacancies.

Each nomination must be in writing and moved and seconded by two full, life or elected members, signed by the nominee and delivered to the Association offices by **5.00pm on Friday 26 March 2021**.

The nominees must be full, life or elected members of the NZDFA. Further, nominees:

- may **not** be a member of the Deer Industry Association
- **cannot** hold more than a 20% interest in any organisation that is a member of the Deer Industry Association

continued on page 10

46th AGM constitutional: continued

- **cannot** be a candidate for membership of the Deer Industry New Zealand Board, or a current member of the Deer Industry New Zealand Board.

[The voting procedure and timing of the process is the same as that for the positions on the Executive Committee.]

C) NZDFA Appointment to DINZ Board

The Ministerial approval of the Regulations to allow a 50:50 levy share from producers and the processor/exporter sector was formalised in October 2004 with publication in the Gazette of the Deer Industry New Zealand Regulations 2004.

The Deer Industry New Zealand Board comprises four producer-appointed representatives and four representatives appointed by the processing/exporting sector.

The producer representatives are selected by the New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association through an Electoral College process and have been appointed for a **three-year term** on recommendation by the NZDFA's Selection and Appointments Panel according to its detailed Operating Code of Practice and then advised to the Minister.

Successful appointments who retire by rotation are eligible for further terms.

Nominations are now called for the following NZDFA-appointed positions on the DINZ Board:

1 vacancy:

DINZ Board member, **William Oliver, Te Kuiti** who was re-appointed in 2018 for a second 3-year term, has advised he is not

seeking a further term.

The nominations must be moved and seconded by full, life or elected members, signed by the nominee and delivered to the Association's offices before 5.00pm on **Friday 26 March 2021**.

- The NZDFA Constitution (2008) refers:

37.9 Nominations for DINZ: The Returning Officer shall publicly announce, in writing, the names of the retiring Association representatives of DINZ and call for nominations for a replacement, prior to the end of March each year.

Nominations shall be:

- (a) made by any two Full Members, Elected Members or Life members of the NZDFA
- (b) in writing; and
- (c) in the hands of the Returning Officer at a date to be specified which will be before the Annual General Meeting of the Association each year (26 March 2021).

37.10 Eligibility for Selection as DINZ Representative: All persons interested or engaged in the deer farming industry shall be eligible for nomination, with the exception of employees of DINZ or of the NZ Deer Farmers' Association. Each nominee for selection shall be required to make a written declaration of any office held or managerial position or financial interest that either the nominee or any of the nominee's immediate family or any partner or fellow shareholder in any deer farming project has in any organisation which deals directly in the products of or materials for the deer farming industry.

37.11 Right to Address AGM: Each nominee for selection as a DINZ representative may address the Annual General Meeting of the Association at a time and date to be specified by the Executive Committee (18 May 2021 and the 46th AGM of the NZDFA).

37.12 Selection Process: As soon as possible after the closing date for nominations the Returning Officer shall publish to all Branches and in *Deer Industry News* a full list of the persons nominated, together with any declarations of interests.

On the date determined for the selection (but not later than the end of **June** each year), the Selection and Appointments Panel shall convene, interview and select from the nominees as many Association representatives as are required to fill available vacancies on DINZ.

Nominations for the positions will be considered by the Selection and Appointments Panel following the 2021 AGM with recommendations and appointment to the Board being advised to the Minister for Primary Industries at that time subject to the Operating Code of Practice procedures.

Nomination forms

Nomination forms for the Executive Committee, SAP and Deer Industry New Zealand vacancies can be obtained from the Association's office: Phone: 04 473 4500; Fax: 04 472 5549; email: tony.pearse@deernz.org

Nomination forms are also available through your local Branch Chair, Secretary or the Producer Manager and will be posted on the website: deernz.org/nzdfa-constitutional-information For further information please contact the Returning Officer, Tony Pearse at the Deer Industry New Zealand office or 021 719 038 or tony.pearse@deernz.org

Amy Watts joins as 2021 board observer

Veterinarian Amy Watts is the DINZ board's 2021 observer.

SHE HAS JUST launched her own large animal (sheep, beef, deer and dairy) vet practice, Black Sheep Veterinary based in the Central Otago and Southern Lakes district, an area where she's been working as a vet for the past five years.

Watts says she thoroughly enjoys working with deer and deer farmers. "My previous interactions with DINZ have been great. I find them

to be a very proactive voice for the industry and I'm very proud to be able to be more involved and gain a greater understanding of everything they do."

The observer role is non-voting but Watts will be attending board meetings and getting involved in the decisions and discussions. Professional development in board governance will also be provided.

Watts is currently president of New Zealand Veterinary Association's Deer Branch, a position that also involves membership of the National Velvetting Standards Body. In the past she's been involved in the P2P Southland Advance Party. ■



Awards and competitions

Matuschka Award 2021

Nominations are called for a farmer or farming entity who or which has made a significant ongoing or lifetime of contribution to deer farming and the NZDFA, in particular at Branch level.

The award recognises the grass roots farmer and unsung contributor to local area activities, functions and core spirit of deer farming. It will be announced at the Deer Industry Conference awards dinner on the evening of Wednesday 19 May 2021 at Bill Richardson World of Transport, Invercargill.

As recognition of the unsung heroes at Branch level, it is appropriate that the award itself be presented to the 2021 winner at a special mid-winter function in the recipient's Branch.

Nominations should be made through the appropriate Branch.

It is not a requirement of the award that the nominee be aware that a nomination has gone forward.

Nominations must be submitted to the NZDFA no later than 5.00pm on **Monday 10 May 2021**.

For further information contact:

- Cenwynn Philip, 027 326 1213 cenwynn.philip@deernz.org
- Tony Pearse, 021 719 038, tony.pearse@deernz.org

NZ Deer Industry Award 2021

The Award is to be presented each year to the person, persons jointly, or organisation who, in the opinion of the judges, has made the most outstanding contribution to the New Zealand deer industry, either in the previous year, or over a period of years.

For nomination forms: deernz.org/nz-deerindustry-award

2021 MSD Photographic competition

MSD Animal Health has kindly agreed to continue its sponsorship of the annual deer industry photographic awards, with some great prizes on offer:

- \$500 cash prize for the overall winner
- Category winner cash prizes
- Premium wine gift pack for "People's choice" award
- Framed photos of winning entries

Judging will be coordinated by the *Deer Industry News* editorial group with results including Judges' and People's Choice awards announced at the conference.

Entrants no longer need to submit a print of their entry/entries. Only the digital photos and entry form/fee are required.

In addition, the entry fee is now a flat \$5 per photo, which makes entering simpler.

Rules and entry form are available from via the DINZ website at www.deernz.org/MSD-photo-competition. Alternatively contact Cenwynn Philip, Tony Pearse or Phil Stewart (details below).

In general, all photos must be of subjects that are suitable for wider publication, taking into account the public's perception of the deer industry. The judges retain the right to disqualify any photo they deem to be unsuitable in this regard.

2021 competition rule clarifications

- This competition is for **amateur photographers only**. Professional photographers, who derive income from photography, are not eligible to enter.
- Deer photographed for this competition must be **farmed deer** in a farm environment.

Judging criteria

See box below with tips from professional photographer and awards judge Lindsay Keats. Key criteria are:

- technical aspects (focus, composition, balance, etc.)
- conveying core values including best practice for animal welfare and relevance to the modern deer farming industry
- the spectacular or wow factor.

Pro tips for deer photography

"F8 and be there" is an often-used phrase in photography. As deer farmers you are "there" all year. You know your farm and stock so you are already in a good position to take great photographs.

From being one of the judges for about five years I am seeing photographs that are "there" but the "F8" part (the technical stuff) is sometimes missing. Here are a few tips:

- More are using phone cameras. That's okay, as the best camera is the one you have with you. Most won't be carrying around the type of cameras and lenses that I need for my work.
- Many entries have a "glow" around the animal or landscape. This is caused by a smudge on the lens. This can happen with any camera but it seems far more common with phone cameras. Whatever camera you use, keep the lens clean and free of smudges and dust.
- If using a phone camera avoid using the "zoom" as it just crops tighter on the already-tiny sensor and the quality reduces accordingly. Also keep an eye on flare from the sun on the lens. You will be able to see it on the photograph.
- Photos taken during the middle of the day often look flat, so try and shoot when the light is interesting – low morning or evening light makes everything look better.
- Don't just shoot from standing eye level. If, for example, a fawn is laying in the grass then try shooting from a low angle.
- Strive to achieve good results "in camera". Photoshop/Lightroom and phone camera apps can "fix" things to a point but it's far better to get it right in camera. For example an under-exposed photograph will have a lot of grain/noise when it is lightened and it's often very difficult to bring back detail in an over-exposed photograph.



Lindsay Keats has been a commercial photographer for 30 years and is also a Fujifilm Brand ambassador.

Contacts

phil@wordpict.co.nz	021 620 399
cenwynn.philip@deernz.org	027 326 1213
tony.pearse@deernz.org	021 719 038 ■

Market realities and big questions for the future

by Phil Stewart, *Deer Industry News* Editor

Fighting climate change or following what the markets want? How are venison marketers responding to pandemic challenges? How can grass roots farmers influence our industry's future?

THESE AND OTHER questions were picked over by a high-powered line-up of presenters at a P2P Regional Workshop hosted in Ohakune by the Central North Island Data Advance Party for its summer seminar on 25 November.

High-energy ryegrass offers plenty, but there's a catch...

Who wouldn't want a ryegrass that grows faster, packs in more energy than conventional cultivars and makes a significant dent in nitrous oxide and methane emissions, as well as nitrate leaching?

That rhetorical question came out of a presentation by AgResearch principal scientist Dr Greg Bryan, who explained what's gone into a genetically modified high metabolisable energy (HME) ryegrass currently being field trialled in the United States.

If eventually taken up in New Zealand, the environmental sustainability, drought tolerance and productive traits could give livestock farmers some good options – but even to get to livestock grazing trial stage in this country, regulatory approval under the HSNO Act would be required.



Greg Bryan, AgResearch.

That in itself presents a big hurdle. For the deer industry another hurdle is the perceptions of customers who currently value products that are ethically raised and GMO free.

AgResearch is nonetheless pursuing the work, with some funding support from MBIE, DairyNZ and the seed industry. Bryan acknowledged the current barriers to uptake of the technology, but said any proposed introduction of the HME ryegrass here would be preceded by extensive consultation with the industry, regulators, the public and tangata whenua.

So what's the motivation? Bryan said a lot of the nitrogen (N) in ryegrass comes as protein and is excreted, mainly in urine. He said about 80 percent of the N ingested in ryegrass is excreted, leading to leaching issues.

The HME ryegrass programme aims to change the energy balance by increasing the amount of fat stored in the leaf, rather than just the seed, where plants usually store fats. "We found that plants modified to produce more fat also photosynthesise at a higher rate – a serendipitous discovery."

He said plants normally downregulate photosynthesis when they have made enough sugar, but by having the plant produce oil rather than sugar in its leaves, that signal wasn't triggered, so photosynthesis was maintained for longer.

In the HME ryegrass the amount of fat in the leaf was doubled and had the overall effect of increasing energy by 1 megajoule. The plant also keeps making soluble carbohydrates, but less so in favour of the oil. Bryan said the goal was a rate of 6–7 percent fat as a percentage of dry matter (too high it could suppress milkfat production in cows or cause acidosis at very high levels).

The higher ME levels would mean the animal potentially reduces the amount of N excreted. Bryan explained the higher fat content is expected to reduce the populations of methane-producing archaea in the rumen (supported thus far with *in vitro* trials using rumen fluid).

He's well aware that something showing promise in the lab doesn't always perform so well in the field, but Bryan said results from the trials so far in the United States were promising. The increased growth and higher proportions of energy and fat in the plants were being replicated from the lab to the field. Endophytes were unaffected. The plants also appeared to be hardy, doing well in the "brutal" Midwest summers.

Genetic modification was the best route to HME ryegrass because these traits wouldn't be found in a conventional breeding programme, he said. Even though GM sped up part of the process, it was still a long road to final commercialisation. The US trials have already been going for three years.



A new high-energy ryegrass, the product of gene editing, could help reduce nitrogen leaching while boosting energy intakes – but it faces big regulatory and other hurdles before it's ever sown in New Zealand pastures like this one.

While he's realistic about the perception hurdles faced to get such a cultivar growing in New Zealand pastures, Bryan highlighted some of the illogical approaches to biotechnology taken by some. He noted that mutagenesis, which involves blasting organisms with radiation to induce mutation in the hope of finding a useful one (that's how we came to have iceberg lettuces after all) is completely unregulated in New Zealand. Gene editing is a far more precise and controlled form of mutagenesis, but is currently treated the same as genetic modification under New Zealand regulations.

Andy Duncan of Duncan NZ, also at the workshop, later commented that it's up to scientists to educate and inform the public about the safety of genetic technologies and the differences between gene editing versus transgenic modification. "The public need to be educated better so they aren't so fearful. Currently our customers ask for GMO-free products and that's what we promote."

Whether it's the scientists' job to explain the negligible risks of genetic technologies to the public, or someone else's, AgResearch has an active outreach programme with about 16 social scientists employed to raise awareness of science and engage with both professionals and the general public.

One of those is Margaret Brown, a senior social scientist with AgResearch. She has a background in education and adult learning and is also a sheep and beef farmer so straddles both worlds. Brown urged patience when it comes to bringing the public along the journey of acceptance for new technologies.



Margaret Brown: Urged patience in efforts to get public acceptance of new technologies.

She canvassed the workshop on their response to Greg Bryan's work with the HME ryegrass and got a positive response, tinged with realism. Comments included:

"If it provides more balance and it's better for environment it's got to be fantastic, even if it can't be used in NZ."

"A lot of people with little knowledge talk very loud. It's actually dangerous, because all the work that Greg's doing could end up going nowhere."

"The old Roundup-ready GM crops gave me the screaming s**ts, but I'm quite excited about this technology – I can really see the benefits."

"All new technology has both advantages and disadvantages – fire, television, you name it. This will be no different."

"It's going to be messy for a while"

"Adapt or die" is often trotted out in response to tumultuous change. Venison marketers are certainly taking it to heart, wasting no time reframing their strategies in response to a pandemic that's been disrupting the world for the past 12 months.

Rob Kidd (Operations Manager) and Andy Duncan (CEO) of Duncan NZ Venison told workshop attendees things were tough



Robb Kidd, Duncan NZ: Early chilled season went well in the circumstances.

in their main market, the United States, although it wasn't as seasonal as Europe.

Duncan said a lot of chilled product was already on the water when lockdowns started, meaning much of it had to be diverted into freezers. This was likely to suppress the schedule as product came back out of freezers onto the market.

Airfreight had become limited and expensive and sea freight was also disrupted.

Kidd said the early chilled season had gone remarkably well. Product had moved, albeit not at the speed of previous seasons, and farmers had responded to calls to bring product forward to catch the early season wave. A second round of lockdowns in Europe later in 2020 hadn't been helpful.

Duncan said that while restaurant sales were down, retail sales had gone "through the roof – people still have to eat".

Kidd said Duncan NZ didn't have a big domestic market pre-Covid, but that was changing fast. A lot of effort was going into sales through channels like Grab One and Hello Fresh. "We're also investing in retail presentation and the local restaurant trade, which we'll stick with."

The company was "learning as we go" with online retail sales and was pursuing new marketing angles such as the health factor compared with other proteins. "We're trying to promote venison as a weekly family meal option – it could be burgers or it could be steaks."

Duncan said some farmers were probably holding stock back until the end of summer. "I'd probably do that too – although it is a gamble."

He urged farmers not to make any long-term strategic decisions about their deer herds in the current environment. "There's still a lot of dust to settle. It's going to be messy for a while. It's a case of improvising and adapting. Hopefully we'll know more next year."

Deer Industry News caught up with Andy Duncan for an update in late January. He said that since late November meaningful rainfall has helped to maintain some good grass cover, which is a positive and enables more on farm options. While this can change, especially as February/March approaches, it is a good position to be in, he added.

"From a market point of view the extended lockdowns and restrictions in Europe and the UK while the vaccine is rolled out

continued on page 14

Regional workshop: continued

mean that market activity remains reasonably slow as it has done throughout 2020. Our European customers report that product they purchased chilled before Christmas has moved through the supply chain, and although at prices significantly lower than recent years the consumption of that product is a positive. Co-products and petfood demand remains steady.

“Normally at this time of year we would be starting to see our international customers travel to New Zealand but with travel restrictions we will be keeping in touch regularly via phone, email and Skype.”

Subscription model a way for the future?

Firstlight’s general manager venison, **Matt Gibson** told the workshop about the company’s new high-end “Steak Club” concept, rolled out in the United States over the past two years. It’s a subscription service where customers pay a flat fee in advance for a package of quality meats. Wagyu cuts include ribeye, tenderloin, NY strips and a range of secondary cuts.

There are currently three membership options, with pricing tiered based on quantity and marble score.

While the content is based around Wagyu, they’ve also been introducing some venison racks, which many customers “really love”. There has been enough positive response to the venison to see any extra available on the e-commerce part of the website snapped up.

The scheme started with just eight subscribers in November 2018, but in the 12 months to November 2020 grew like topsy from 140 to more than 800 subscribers. The target is 1500 members by December this year.

Each package includes a kit with detailed recipes, video links, cooking timers and so on.

Firstlight managing director **Gerard Hickey** said the deliveries can be fully customised. “As long as we know a couple of days ahead their delivery can be switched from their New York apartment to their Florida beach house, or we can upsize the delivery if they’re entertaining.”

Firstlight decides on the content of each monthly delivery and Hickey said the Steak Club app “lights up” with each delivery as people share their experiences and ideas. “Because we choose the content it’s a surprise each month for the members. They like the specific instructions and the different techniques they’re learning.”

Hickey said this model was a great way to engage and learn more about customer preferences. “This might be showing us a way for the future.”

Gibson said the response to date for venison racks from Steak Club members was strong enough to encourage them to consider a fourth venison-specific subscription option targeted at the large US barbecue market. This would help link the “guy at the barbecue” directly with the



Firstlight managing director Gerard Hickey: A great way to engage with customers.

farmer who grew the venison, something that doesn’t happen so much at the white tablecloth end of the market.

He said e-commerce growth had been strong in both New Zealand and the United States.

On the local front, Firstlight was introducing a three-protein mince blend including manufacturing venison with some Wagyu beef and free range bacon. “This introduces venison to local consumers in a non-threatening way. We’re also selling venison sausages, meatballs and patties through many North Island supermarkets; we’re launching in the South Island in the new year.”

Farmers’ voice still needs to be heard

NZDFA Executive Committee member and local deer farmer **Mark McCoard** wrapped up the day with a discussion on the future of P2P and the role of the DFA (Primary Growth Partnership funding has only 2 years to run; DINZ is working on the successor programme).

McCoard said the Association had plenty on its plate right now. They’re dealing with new freshwater regulations, the prospect of greenhouse gas emissions controls, winter grazing restrictions and getting to grips with the new VelTrak system for tagging velvet, to name a few.

He said many regional councils were onside with farmers on freshwater and wanted to work with the sector. The new regulations had disrupted years of constructive work between farmers and councils but it was more important than ever to stay involved as they tried to chart a practical way forward.

Looking to life after the current PGP-funded P2P, McCoard said DINZ wanted farmers to be driving plans for what will follow. The success of P2P had been noted at government level, so it was important to build on that by planning for a successor that might also attract funding.

He said the P2P Advance Party (AP) programme had been highly successful, but this had the unintended consequence of driving DFA activities to the sidelines. “We’ll need to get the DFA back to the centre again.”

Sean de Lacy, chair of the expanded Taihape-Ruapehu DFA, said some APs had got a bit stale after constant rounds of visiting each other’s farms. Facilitator John Stantiall said this didn’t have to happen. “I’ve had some sheep and beef groups going since 2002. Things don’t stop changing around us – it’s a case of ongoing learning.”

One possible way forward in a post-P2P environment might be to aggregate into larger groups that could involve more variety and attract industry expertise more easily, McCoard suggested, adding that this does bring problems with travelling distances and times.

Whatever happens, the message from DINZ to farmers via the DFA is clear. They need to hear our voices when it comes to planning the industry’s future, McCoard concluded. ■



NZDFA Executive Committee member, Mark McCoard: Many regional councils are onside with farmers on water issues.

Vets school up on deer

by Phil Stewart, *Deer Industry News* Editor

Members of the next generation of deer vets have been brought up to speed on deer velvetting at two successful workshops held in the South Island on 24 and 25 November.

ORGANISER VICTORIA CHAPMAN of the NZ Veterinary Association's Deer Branch says the workshops attracted a total of about 30, mainly younger vets following a survey of members who said they were interested in learning more about procedures with deer.

"A lot of the deer work including velvetting is looked after by a few experienced deer vets but this can restrict the opportunities for young up-and-comers. Now some of the older ones are approaching retirement it's important to make sure there are people with the right experience to replace them."

Chapman says the NZVA Deer Branch decided to host three workshops for young deer vets with a focus on antler, two in the South Island and one in the North (to be held later this year). The first was held at Black Forest Park, which had "fantastic" facilities and included a session on trophy scoring.

Tony Pearce gave the vets a situation report on the velvet industry, looking at markets and the development of modern healthy functional foods using velvet ingredients. Deer vets Andrew Scurr and Peter Kalb helped untangle the confusing array of acronyms around velvet antler regulation: NVSB, RCS, VSDs and so on.

Richard Hilson also shared his 30 years of experience working with deer, giving tips on handling and safety and explaining what makes these animals special to work with.

The second South Island workshop was held at Peel Forest Estate and at the local hall. Chapman says the visit in November coincided with velvetting work at Peel Forest, so the vets were able to observe the work at first hand at the farm's industry-leading facilities.

"There were velvet buyers at Peel Forest, and they talked to the vets about what they are looking for in the product they buy. Richard Currie at Black Forest and Mark Tapley at Peel Forest also spoke to the vets."

Chapman says the vets found the workshops "bang on".

"Thanks to Covid this was the first face-to-face professional development they'd received all year. It's really added to their competence and understanding of the deer industry."

The vets were also kept well fed with venison at the workshops courtesy of veterinarian and Southland deer farmer Richard Cook, who donated an animal to the cause. ■



Velvet buyer John MacDonald explains the finer points of the product to deer vets at Peel Forest Estate.

Thanks for VelTrak

"We always buy NZ velvet, because it's the best in the world. But even with the best food products there are risks. VelTrak will help us manage those risks. Thank you, NZ deer farmers, VelTrak is a great initiative."

Kiyul Kim
Korea Ginseng Corporation

Proof of integrity from farm to market, from the start of the 2021 season.

Farmer registration opens 1 May 2021.

VelTrak www.deernz.org/VelTrak

Deer Industry New Zealand T: 04 471 6114. E: info@deernz.org

Something unusual? Call the vet!

by Phil Stewart, *Deer Industry News* Editor

When deer are stressed, it can trigger disease from agents (bacteria, viruses, etc) that normally reside harmlessly – yersiniosis is an example. Stressors like bad weather, transport or poor nutrition can provide an opening for diseases like this and the losses, especially in young stock, can be significant.

WHEN SOUTHLAND DEER farmer Philip Golden suddenly started losing weaners he was finishing from a mob of 700 in late winter of 2016, none of these factors seemed to be present. The deer were well socialised, vaccinated against yersiniosis, well fed and the weather was good. It wasn't clear what was going on.

The weaners were an amalgam of three mobs – home bred and bought-in from two separate breeders. They were on a crop of kale, supplemented by baleage and barley. They were in good condition and often it was the better animals that were dying. Golden's first thought was that the kale might be toxic, but that checked out OK.

Every time he went out to move the break, he found more dead animals, with 28 eventually dying. Golden was interested to see the mortality rates for the three contributing mobs varied widely, from 0.5 percent to 16 percent.



Philip Golden: Weaners were dying despite good conditions.

Veterinarian Oliver Craig from Vetco said malignant catarrhal fever was initially suspected. A colleague had done a post mortem on one dead weaner but the lab results hadn't revealed anything definitive.

A second post mortem done a week later with testing carried out through the Gribbles regional veterinary lab confirmed something quite different: *Pasteurella septicaemia* with meningitis. It's caused by the bacterium *Pasteurella multocida*, ubiquitous in New Zealand, carried by healthy animals in the nasal/throat area, but not commonly a cause of disease in deer. When pasteurellosis does strike it's usually a respiratory disease – the meningitis (inflammation around the brain) is uncommon.

While the veterinarians and pathology lab were working out what was killing the young deer, Golden followed his instincts and shifted the mob off the crop and back onto grass. The deaths stopped almost immediately.

"I lost only one more after that," Golden says. "We'll always lose one or two on crop, but this was different."

So what was it about the crop that was stressing the deer? It turned out that the kale had grown poorly that year, stunted, flowering early and with very woody stems. It was also the second year in a row kale had been grown in that paddock. Mineral testing showed the crop was low in nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, sulphur, magnesium, copper and manganese. It was this quality issue that was thought to have triggered the disease. (Golden later used cattle to clean up the remaining kale with no ill effects.)

Craig theorises that the weaners from one of the three contributing mobs might have been carrying higher burdens of *P. multocida* than the others and were hence more susceptible when stressed. Conversely some mobs may have not been previously exposed at all, so were at greater risk when the three mobs were mixed.

Either way, the animals were dying suddenly, with severe signs of haemorrhage and inflammation affecting all major organs including the brain and nasal passages.

These signs weren't entirely typical of what could be expected from this disease, and Craig together with John Gill (vet pathologist at Gribbles) was concerned that it might have been a severe form of *Pasteurella multocida* called haemorrhagic septicaemia. This is caused by two particular serotypes of *Pasteurella multocida* (B:2 and E:2, for the record) that are prevalent across many countries in south-east Asia but are exotic to New Zealand.

In other words, this might be an exotic disease – something we definitely don't want here – so further investigation was imperative.

Craig raised these concerns with Philip Golden and they all agreed that the bacterial culture should be sent to the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) Animal Health Laboratory (AHL) at Wallaceville, Upper Hutt, for further investigation and typing.

This example is typical of about 100–150 investigations MPI carries out each year together with local veterinarians. There's no associated cost to the farmer.

The investigations help vets and farmers to get to the bottom of issues they're experiencing, harnessing the skills of the AHL scientists to help quickly rule out exotic pests and diseases. As a trading nation and member of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), this work helps New Zealand uphold its recognised freedom from many important livestock diseases.

The investigation did rule out these exotic strains and identified an existing B capsular strain that's been associated with septicaemic pasteurellosis in calves in New Zealand.

Craig said Golden's willingness to support the investigation was important to helping exclude exotic disease as a cause. "A lot of

people only associate MPI with animal welfare investigations, but his openness to doing this was really helpful.”

In the four years since this occurred Golden has continued breeding and finishing deer, increasing his numbers and now breeding all of his own finishing stock. “It was just getting too hard to source weaners,” he says. He’s also still using kale as a mainstay for wintering but now plants it later to help avoid the quality issues that led to the *Pasteurella meningitis*.

MPI’s veterinary investigators and laboratory scientists support farmers and veterinarians who are the eyes and ears in New Zealand’s production-animal surveillance system for exotic and emerging livestock diseases. Your vet is well placed to help determine whether MPI should be involved, although the exotic disease and pest hotline (0800 80 99 66) is available 24/7 for all New Zealanders to discuss a suspect case.

- Oliver Craig has kindly made a series of postmortem photos from this case available. Please contact the editor if you’d like access to these on phil@wordpict.co.nz
- For more information on *P. multocida* and haemorrhagic septicaemia: <https://msdmnls.co/3cxgg8z>

TSE surveillance

While haemorrhagic septicaemia doesn’t usually spring to mind as an exotic disease risk for the deer industry, chronic wasting disease (CWD) certainly does.

It’s a transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE) from the same family of diseases as mad cow disease (cattle) and scrapie (sheep).

There’s a well-established surveillance programme for TSEs in New Zealand and deer farmers are eligible to take part where an animal with suspicious signs is found. MPI compensates farmers \$100 for the loss of an animal, and vets for their time.

If you have an animal 2 years or older showing signs of:

- progressive non-responsive nervous disease or ill-thrift
 - acute or peracute pneumonia, or aspiration pneumonia
- immediately call your vet who can submit the case to the TSE surveillance programme. The TSE submission form, sampling guidelines and all relevant information can be found on the MPI website at: www.biosecurity.govt.nz/tse ■

Article supplied by MSD Animal Health

How decisions around weaning impact on deer production

Minimising post-weaning mortality and maximising weight gain through autumn/winter are critical to a profitable venison operation. There are two important diseases that you should consider vaccinating weaner deer against from 3 months of age.

1. Yersiniosis

The leading cause of death in fawns during autumn and winter, this is a particularly nasty and highly infectious disease. Most, if not all fawns will be exposed to *Yersinia* bacteria which are widespread and survive well in soil, water and pasture. Carrier animals also shed bacteria in faeces. Weaner deer are most at risk, and usually become infected at 4–8 months by eating or drinking faecal-contaminated material.

The main symptom of the disease is green watery diarrhoea, often with a characteristic smell, usually turning dark or bloody. Affected deer tend to separate from the group, becoming rapidly dehydrated and weak. The shedding of bacteria from sick animals leads to significant exposure for other fawns. The time between first infection and death is often very short. Once an outbreak of Yersiniosis has started, it is too late to vaccinate.

Farmers should vaccinate with Yersiniavax® to prevent clinical disease. Vaccination enhances rather than substitutes for good management, and will help prevent a serious epidemic by reducing the spread of disease through a mob.

2. Leptospirosis

There are a number of New Zealand research papers on leptospirosis in deer, especially on the effects of *Leptospira* Hardjo. It is now known that most (80%) deer herds are permanently infected, regardless of where you farm. Leptospirosis enters farms through deer, sheep or cattle that were harbouring leptospire in their kidneys, or in contaminated water either via streams or during flooding⁵.

Evidence has shown that Hardjo infection in deer reduces growth rates and affects reproduction. In the first study of its type, researchers from Massey University have shown that on the three farms with evidence of Hardjo infection, deer vaccinated with Leptavoid®2 at weaning grew on average 10g/day faster (120 vs. 110g/day) to slaughter compared with non-vaccinated deer in the same mob⁴. This study, and others^{1,2,3} make a compelling case for vaccinating deer against leptospirosis.

Deer should be first vaccinated at about 3 months of age followed by a booster 4–6 weeks later and can occur at the same time as their Yersiniavax vaccinations.

Talk to your vet early about a vaccination programme suited to your farm requirements. ■

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Choppy conditions, numbers subdued

by Phil Stewart, *Deer Industry News* Editor

The 2020/21 sire sale season was a subdued affair, with all but four reporting a drop in sale-day averages compared with last season. Those supplying terminal sires or trophy genetics were affected more than most, although there were some exceptions and bright spots.

THE WELL-RECORDED VELVET studs generally did okay, although there were none of the spectacular six-figure sales of last season. Top price, a solid \$56,000, was achieved at Netherdale Red Deer Stud's auction of three-year-old sires. Kelly and James Hudson bought the Harlem son, which had cut 9.06kg of SA2 at three years.

The total known offering of sires was down from 751 last season to 672 sires in 2020/21, a reflection of lowered expectations this season.

Sale-day clearance rates for red sires were 93.3 percent (91.7 percent in 2019/20). The higher clearance rate may partly reflect the smaller offering this season. For elk/wapiti clearance rate was 85.7 percent, well down on last season's 94.8 percent.

An estimated \$4.9m changed hands on sale day, well down on the \$7.5–\$8.0m estimated for the previous two seasons. This figure doesn't include private treaty sales, or sales negotiated post auction.

The figures in the summary below are mainly courtesy of PGG Wrightson Deer (<http://deer.agonline.co.nz>), with additional comments and results provided by individual farmers.

- In some cases animals passed in at auction were sold post-sale.
- Large swings year-on-year for a seller's sale averages often reflect the effects of one outstanding sire price, especially when the number sold is small. They don't always reflect the overall tone of a sale. ■

ALTRIVE RED DEER 14 January, Waipounamu, Southland

Stags sold	20 of 23 on offer		
Top price	\$28,000		
Average	% change from last year	\$11,025	+3.8%
Other animals sold	55 surplus yearling hinds, ave \$1,656.36, top \$4,000 32 velvetting stags, ave \$1,578.13		

Comment

We had 82 registered buyers, slightly up on last year, plus another 42 registered on bid@. Sire stag average slightly up on last year. Velvet stags average also slightly up on last year. Hind average well back on last year but still very strong interest for the 55 on offer with one passed but sold straight after sale.



Lot 1 at the Annandale's first on-farm auction went under the hammer for a pleasing \$20,000.

ANNANDALE DEER STUD 15 January, Makarewa, Southland

Stags sold	11 of 12 on offer		
Top price	\$20,000		
Average	\$6,045.46		
Other animals sold	5 hinds, ave \$800 10 velvetting stags, ave \$1,200		

Comment

This was our first on-farm auction sale of 3yr stags – 11 of the 12 stags sold with the highlight being Lot 1 selling for \$20,000 after the sale, a super good stag still soft in the tops but 48" wide and 15kg heading to Rotorua. Prices achieved proved excellent buying and we were delighted with the turnout of people looking for the pure Warnham and Woburn bloodlines we offer. Tracy and I are most grateful for the support and would like to congratulate all purchasers and underbidders, and thank everyone who attended.

ARAWATA DEER FARM 14 January, Pine Bush, Southland

Stags sold	14 of 16 2-year-olds on offer		
Top price	\$17,000		
Average	% change from last year	\$6,750	-27%
Other animals sold	31 yearling hinds, ave \$1,209.68, top \$3,000 38 velvetting stags, ave \$1,334.21		

BLACK FOREST
12 January, Outram

Stags sold	16 of 18 on offer		
Top price	\$14,000		
Average	% change from last year	\$5,893.75	-13.6%
Other animals sold	2 hinds sold, average \$550.		

BROCK DEER
13 January, Merino Downs, Gore

Stags sold	24 of 24 on offer		
Top price	\$40,000		
Average	% change from last year	\$12,900	-22.3%

Other animals sold 18 of 22 yearling hinds; average \$1,850, top \$4,100
75 of 75 2-year velvetting stags; average \$1,510; top \$2,000

Comment
Very pleased with the sale. Using the bid@ system we had far more people than usual and sold a lot of animals to North Island buyers we'd never seen before. Trophy has been down this year but velvet-based studs still did OK.

CLACHANBURN ELK
19 January

Bulls sold	58 of 60 on offer		
Top price	\$5,800		
Average	% change from last year	\$3,014.81	-32%

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Boy racers and big antler

Big antler and boy racers were part of the action at the Elk & Wapiti Society's (EWS) annual velvet competition. At this year's event held in Cromwell on 29/30 January, more than half of the 28 entries were more than 16kg, whereas in the past only about 25 percent exceeded this weight.

"WE'RE GETTING MORE heavier heads and most of the antler was cut perfectly which is good to see," said EWS president Grant Hasse.

Overall winner was Nepia (Tikana Wapiti) for a 25.56kg head, and Reserve Champion was Storm (Clachanburn Elk).

Nepia was also the winner of the Elk Supreme category in which seven of the eight entrant heads were in excess of 20kg. Tikana had the top five year old with a 20.01kg head from Yotam, and top three year old with Prophecy.

The five year old runner-up was Bjorn from Totara Park Wairarapa for an 18.1kg head which won the North Island competition Elk/Wapiti Supreme category.



EWS president Grant Hasse wants to raise the profile of the breed.

The commercial category winner was APA from Longridge Elk.

Aside from the competition, there was opportunity to socialise and sightsee. There was time out on go-karts at nearby Highlands Motorsport Park, where born-again boy racers tested their skills on the 650-metre circuit. The group then went to Scott Base, a vineyard overlooking the Cromwell basin, to sample local wines and cheeses.

The evening presentation of awards was followed by an auction which included prizes from some of the major sponsors Xcell, Hawker Velvet, Agpac, Zoetis, CK Imports, Crystalyx and Mountain River Venison. Hasse, who took on the role of president in mid-2020, would like the more than \$5,000 raised at the auction to be used in promoting the breed.

"We need to remind the wider industry about the proven benefits of using elk and wapiti as terminal sires. About 80 percent of venison that leaves the country for the spring chilled market is from elk/wapiti genetics. That tends to be forgotten so it's up to us to raise the profile of the breed." ■

• To see full results from 2021 and previous years:

www.elkwapitisociety.co.nz/previous-antler-competitions



EWS members indulge their boy racer dreams at the Cromwell event.

Sire sales: continued

CONNEMARA
17 January, Manapouri

Bulls sold	23 of 28 on offer		
Top price	\$7,000		
Average	% change from last year	\$3,975	-32.5%

Comment

It's been a tough year for elk-wapiti and the sale reflected this. I'm finishing with deer now but we have had a great run at Connemara and I'm proud of what we've achieved over the years. Our cows are now at Freestone and bulls at Clachanburn.

CROWLEY DEER
12 December, on farm

Stags sold	4 of 7 on offer		
Top price	\$26,000		
Average	% change from last year	\$16,500	-68%
Other animals sold	7 of 9 yearling hinds sold – top price \$15,000.		

Comment

We put up a smaller offering this year, but there were also fewer buyers and results for stags were well down on last year when we sold a record sire. The hinds held up better. Things on the trophy side are likely to be challenging for another year.

DEER GENETICS
10 January, McKeown Rd, Woodbury

Stags sold	11 of 11 on offer		
Top price	\$30,000		
Average	% change from last year	\$13,681	-57%
Other animals sold	Hinds: 9/9 sold, ave \$3,200, top \$5,200		

Comment

We were very pleased with success of our 2021 2yr elite stag sire sale considering the uncertain times that we are living in. The Deer Genetics NZ team would like to express our sincere thanks to our buyers, new and regular. Without your support our great industry would not survive.

EDENDALE WAPITI
20 January

Stags sold	20 of 32 on offer		
Top price	\$5,000		
Average	% change from last sale (2018)	\$3,140	-42.5%

FAIRLIGHT STATION
9 December

Stags sold	16 of 19 on offer		
Top price	\$6,200		
Average	% change from last year	\$3,075	-30%

FOREST ROAD FARM
11 December on farm, Gwavas Road

Stags sold	17 of 17 on offer		
Top price	\$8,000		
Average	% change from last year	\$6,031.25	-17.4%

Other animals sold 100 of 100 yearling hinds: average \$600

Comment

We had been nervous about this sale given the current conditions. While prices were back on last year as expected, we were still pleased to get a good consistent average and a full clearance. We were also pleased to sell all 100 yearling hinds, which achieved a good value. There was great local support and return clientele with some new faces in the mix as well! We are really enjoying it and extremely excited about what we are producing for the coming years!

FOVERAN DEER PARK
9 January at Foveran

Stags sold	46 of 52 on offer		
Top price	\$34,000		
Average	% change from last year	\$5,800	-3.3%

Comment

Top price of \$34,000 paid by Steve Schweitzer, Marlborough. 23 of 27 hinds sold, average \$1,310. Very happy with sale, especially given the current problems for the trophy industry. Possibly biggest gallery ever. Some buyers happy to buy stags and hang onto them to see how they develop while they wait for trophy industry to recover post Covid.

LITTLEBOURNE
18 January, Winton

Bulls sold	20 of 21 on offer		
Top price	\$5,200		
Average	% change from last year	\$3,530	-3.8%

LOCHINVAR WAPITI
17 January, Te Anau

Bulls sold	23 of 24 on offer		
Top price	\$9,000		
Average	% change from last year	\$4,060.87	-33.2%



Netherdale Red Deer Stud's Lot 1 achieved the country's top sale-day price of \$56,000.

Obituary: Neil Robert Campbell

12/5/1959 – 9/12/2020

NEIL AND HIS four siblings were brought up on the family farm at “Lagmhore”, Ashburton. After first working in Albury, Neil moved to the Methven area where he met and married Lyn.

Their story is one of hard work and enterprise.

In the 1980s the couple purchased a farm at Glen Roy, where they reared hundreds of calves, long before others considered this type of enterprise.

Neil and Lyn bought “Parkwood” near Fairlie in 1992 and a neighbouring property in 2002. Dissatisfied with the returns from sheep farming, they soon diversified into cropping, beef and sheep trading and deer farming.

Neil’s intelligence and diligence won him a place on the Kellogg’s Rural Leadership Programme in 2007.

The Campbells’ success continued when they achieved the well-deserved accolade of South Island Farmer of the Year in 2016. The prize money funded a study tour of Europe, researching fodder beet production – much to the excitement of Lyn!

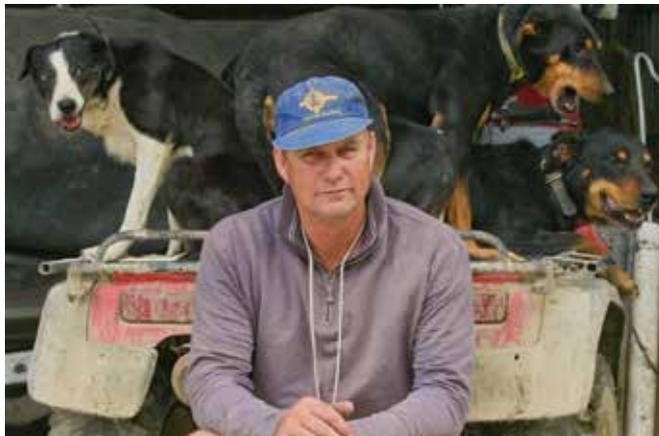
Subsequently, Neil gave a very informative and interesting keynote speech at the 2017 DFA Branch Chairs’ meeting in Wellington.

As venison producers, the Campbells understood the importance of finishing stock at the optimum, market peak price, something they accomplished remarkably often.

Neil’s astute business and animal husbandry skills were again recognised when he was shoulder tapped to join one of the first P2P Advance Parties.

As a member of the SCNO DFA branch committee, Neil was highly valued for his generosity in sharing his extensive knowledge mentoring those new to the industry.

Recently, the Neal family have joined the Campbells in a partnership to farm Parkwood and another two adjoining properties – a relationship that has proved to be rewarding for all concerned.



Neil’s diverse interests included microlight flying, sheep dog trialling, the Lions Club and learning about viticulture and wine making after the couple bought a vineyard in Blenheim in 2013. Neil’s farming decisions were always made after extensive research and consideration. Conversely, his impetuous jet boating often took him, and those following him, into tight scrapes!

The couple’s greatest love and achievement has been in the raising of their three children Hamish, Jane and Jessica and they have also delighted in grandparenthood over the past four years.

No-one could be prouder than Neil and Lyn, when Jane’s husband Athol won the Young Farmer of the Year Award in 2015.

The sudden death of this very special man is a terrible tragedy for his family and a huge loss to the local community and all who had the privilege of knowing him. The NZDFA and DINZ extend their condolences to Neil’s family and friends. ■

– Contributed by Graham Peck

NETHERDALE RED DEER 13 January, Balfour, Southland

Stags sold 18 of 25 3-year sires on offer

Top price \$56,000

Average **% change**
 from last
 year \$15,055.56 +5.6%

Other animals sold 75 of 75 2-year old velvet stags, ave \$1,676.67.
40 of 41 13-month hinds, ave \$1,477.50, top 3,800.

Comment

We had a good sale considering where the industry and the world is at the moment. Sale was attended by about 150 people and 20 on bid@. We had a good tidy line up and were very happy with prices. The only down side was the lower number of sires sold at auction compared with other years, but all but one of the passed-in stags have sold since the auction. There was strong interest in velvet stags.

PEEL FOREST ESTATE 4 December: 3-year Forrester sires (English/German venison genetics)

Stags sold 51 of 51 on offer

Top price \$27,000

Average **% change**
 from last
 year \$9,245 -8.6%

PEEL FOREST ESTATE 10 January: Velvet sires

Stags sold at auction 18 of 18 on offer

Top price (sale day) \$38,000

Average **% change**
 from last
 year \$12,639 +11.3%

continued on page 22

Sire sales: continued

RAINCLIFF STATION
12 January, Pleasant Point

Bulls sold	27 of 34 on offer
Top price	\$8,200
Average	\$3,907.41
% change from last year	-16.9%

ROTHESAY RED DEER
11 January, Darts Road, Methven

Stags sold	12 of 12 on offer
Top price	\$13,000
Average	\$3,681.82
% change from last year	-26.3%
Other animals sold	31/31 velvet stags on offer, average \$974.19 (equal with last year). 2 hinds @ \$450



Paul Hughes accompanies his sires in the auction ring for the Ruapehu Red Deer sale, which achieved a good average.

RUAPEHU RED DEER
9 December, 37 Pukenaua Road, Taihape

Stags sold	38 of 38 on offer
Top price	\$12,500
Average	\$7,026
% change from last year	+23.3%

Comment

Very pleased with sale and the new bid® system, which really helped. Last year's (2019) sale average had been back quite a bit and this year's result returned to a very similar level to what we achieved in 2017 and 2018.

RUPERT RED DEER
11 January, Scotland Farm, Geraldine

Stags sold	13 of 15 on day (full clearance reported later)
Top price	\$21,000
Average	\$7,633
% change from last year	-26.3%
Other animals sold	68/68 hinds, ave \$640.44, top \$1,050. 39/39 two-year velvet stags, average \$1,311

Comment

4th annual sale. A big thank you to everyone who braved the weather and attended our sale. We were very grateful for the excellent turnout despite the mud! We are pleased to report a full clearance with an average of \$7,633 for the sire stags, with Lot 8 Ragnar topping the sale at \$21k. As always, we are humbled by the continued support of our returning clients and are excited to find some new names on the ledger; we wish you all the best with your purchases.

SARNIA
12 December, Cambridge

Stags sold	13 of 13 on offer
Top price	\$12,500
Average	\$5,403.85
% change from last sale (2018)	-25%

Other animals sold 10 of 10 hinds on offer, average \$1,130, top \$2,600.

TIKANA WAPITI
18 January, on farm at Browns, Winton

Bulls sold	21 of 25 on offer
Top price	\$18,000
Average	\$7,143
% change from last year	-14%

Other animals sold 6 Wapiti cows, ave \$2,650, top \$3,600

Comment

Top price of \$18,000 was paid for NIWA, an outstanding bull for all traits – meat, growth, velvet and CARLA. He will take up stud duties at Littlebourne Wapiti Stud this year. Bacchus, the top velvetting 3 year old with 14.4kg EW Supreme was sold to Ian Scott of Tirau for \$15,000. There were lots of positives:

- Record number of registered buyers
- Full clearance of Wapiti cows
- Bid® activity for semen sales and Wapiti cows
- Buyers focused on high growth BV bulls
- Better CARLA bulls were targeted by a number of buyers

TOWER FARMS
12 December

Top price (velvet)	\$22,000
Top price (trophy)	\$21,000

Comment

Not our strongest line-up overall, but achieved a new weight high of 11.2kg NT. Crowd numbers were down as were prices. After-sale enquiry was strong on lots passed in at auction; two lots remain unsold. Competitive demand for top trophy genetics, which was encouraging. Top velvet sire bought by John Hunter; top trophy sire by Stu Henderson.

Roast venison with horseradish cream and salsa verde potatoes

This recipe by chef **Samantha Parish** was featured in *Latitude*, a lifestyle magazine produced in Canterbury. Samantha wrote the piece following her day with DINZ executive Graham Brown last year (see photo).

Serves 6-8 • Prep: 1 hour • Cooking: 25 mins

Ingredients

- 1.2kg boneless venison Denver leg fillet
- ¼ cup salt flakes
- finely grated zest and juice of 2 lemons
- 1 bunch thyme, sprigs picked
- 1 tsp caster sugar
- 600 g baby potatoes
- 1 bunch parsley
- 1/2 cup (75 g) cornichons, plus 2 tbsp pickling liquid
- 1/3 cup (80 ml) extra virgin olive oil
- crispy onions to serve

Horseradish cream

- 1 tbsp horseradish cream
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 tbsp finely chopped chives, plus extra to serve

Method

Preheat the oven to 220°C, fan-forced. Grease and line a roasting pan with baking paper and line with a roasting rack. Remove venison leg from the fridge and place on rack. Combine salt, zest, thyme and sugar and rub all over the leg. Stand for 1 hour to lose the chill from the fridge.

Roast leg for 25 minutes or until browned all over and an

internal temperature of 52 degrees for medium rare. Remove and stand to rest for 20 minutes. If serving warm, drizzle with oil and thinly slice or alternatively drizzle with oil and chill for 2-plus hours or until cold. Thinly slice when ready to serve.

Meanwhile place potatoes in a saucepan of cold salted water, bring to the boil then cook for a further 15 minutes or until fork-tender. Strain and cool. Thickly slice. Chill until required.

To make the salsa verde, place parsley, cornichons, pickling liquid, lemon juice and 2 tbsp oil in a small food processor and whiz until finely chopped. Season to taste.

For the horseradish cream, combine all ingredients and season to taste.

To serve, spread horseradish cream over a serving platter, arrange potatoes on top and drizzle with some of the salsa verde. Arrange meat slices, scatter with crispy onions, chives and serve with remaining salsa verde alongside. ■



Samantha Parish with Graham Brown at last year's day for food writers, which was hosted at Brown's farm.

WILKINS FARMING 11 December, North Island: Te Maire, Hawke's Bay

Stags sold	23 of 24 on offer		
Top price	\$11,500		
Average	% change from last year	\$5,943.48	-27.5%

Comment

A great crowd, with new and regular clients for our 10th North Island sale. Special thanks to George and Laura Williams for hosting us on Te Maire and to Graham Brown for the excellent food after the sale. It was the first time our Big Geoff stags were presented in the North Island. These were well received, overall a good result with 23/24 animals on offer sold. Many thanks to our bidders and under bidders over the years; it has been great to see the sale build momentum. We look forward to presenting an excellent line up of animals for our 11th North Island sale later in the year.

WILKINS FARMING 15 January, South Island: 65 Harvey Road, Athol

Stags sold	53 of 53 on offer		
Top price	\$18,000		
Average	% change from last year	\$6,701.89	-19.3%

Comment

Our 12th annual on farm sale saw an excellent turnout of purchasers from all over the South and North Islands. We were thrilled with the stags we presented at this sale and extremely proud to offer the heaviest 2yo stag we have sold at public auction: Lot 118, a whopping 292kg. Another great highlight was Lot 219 fetching \$18,000 sired by Big Geoff. A total clearance with 54/54 stags sold, a good reflection of the quality stock on offer. We eagerly await the opportunity to present you another impressive line-up at our 2022 sale. ■

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