



Darcy Hamilton,
Kaikino
Not a lot of news up this way, however some record scannings have been noted from clients this spring. Let's hope Hughie is kinder later this spring. Areas of Wairoa, Mahia, and north of Tolaga Bay have had their annual rainfall in July, not to mention the wind.

The use of nitrogen is becoming a strategic part of increasing feed covers for twin and triplet bearing ewes, with many farms applying autumn and spring dressings, thus easily obtaining a 30kg lamb at 100 days or less. We are using long-acting nitrogen products which give a response for up to 80 days, and eliminate the risk caused by heavy rain.

The surplus ewe hogget scheme worked well for out clients last year, with Snow Hellyer placing some 25,000. If you have any for the coming season, please contact Snow or myself.



Michael Talbot,
Longdowns
It is exciting being part of a large breeding group working with top genetics and making use of the latest technology. Kelso composite sheep are bred to be working sheep that deliver higher profitability to the farmers who use them.

Many of our clients have experienced exceptional scanning results this season.

The new Central Otago Monitor Farmers, Ally and Helen Dowle, Ranfurly, have been purchasing high index Kelso rams from us

for the past four years. Their Kelso flock is based on Romney and Corriedale ewes. This year they have mated 2,860 ewes and 780 ewe hoggets. The mixed aged ewes have scanned 209%, two tooth's 195%, and the ewe hoggets an incredible 163%.

The North Canterbury Monitor farmers Chris and Jane Earl, Scargill, purchased 400 Kelso ewes from the Kelso associate flock of Ian Stewart and they scanned 217% - a figure previously unheard of in North Canterbury. The ewes were mated with high index Longdowns Kelso Rams.

Both the Dowles and the Earls, along with many of our other clients, can expect record lambing and weaning performance this spring.



Matt Holden,
Beechwood Hills
The arrival of the Kelso flock has provided a new challenge and kept us busy at Beechwood Hills. However with a Racewell system and Electronic

Identification, the transition to farming a large scale recorded flock has been very smooth, with no compromise to our commercial sheep operation.

A successful mating programme, backed up with a great scanning result in both the stud and commercial flocks, has us well placed for spring and we were particularly pleased with the result in our commercial hoggets scanning 133% with an 88% conception rate.

With the performance and constitution of the Kelso composites in our climate we are totally confident in the breed and are excited with what the future has to offer.

Working with Kelso and the progressive,

go ahead team of people involved is giving us the opportunity to be at the cutting edge of sheep breeding and production. The dynamic genetic programme Kelso has in place will keep it well placed in the future and we are excited to be part of it.



Jason McDonald,
Acton Meadows and Cheddar Valley Station
The family and I seem to have settled into the North Canterbury life-style and are enjoying the challenge of a new

property. All the Kelso ewes and hoggets have been successfully shifted up from Southland. In particular we were very pleased with the mixed age Kelso, due to the fact that the ram was put out whilst trucking! They still scanned us 218% in a new environment. We are really looking forward to seeing the influence of the Kelso genetics over the commercial ewes we purchased with the property. The ram hoggets we used certainly covered the country well with a very low dry percentage. We are looking forward to working closely with Wrightsons and Snow Hellyer in establishing a client base in the upper South Island, through our new selling outlet of Cheddar Valley Station.

We would like to let you know that we are having a field day at Cheddar on 3 November. We have some excellent speakers lined up and we hope to see many of you there.

We would like to congratulate our clients Colin and Joan Cardwell on their scanning performance; they have one hundred less females than in 2003 and are expecting 450 more lambs - this includes a hogget scanning of 154% Top results!

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COMPOSITE SHEEP - A NEW GENERATION OF GROWTH

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Speedy Performance

Phil Cregoe, winner of the Richmond Hawke's Bay Farmer of the Year 2004, says "the Kelso composites have grown as well as the Poll Dorset terminal sired lambs".

In the five years since Phil and Jo Cregoe bought their 704 hectares outside Hastings, they have reticulated the farm, subdivided paddocks into 4-6 hectares, built races, developed a couple of techno system blocks, built new sheep and cattle yards, planted forestry out the back, carried through a QE2 retirement along the gorge, introduced Kelso genetics, and built a new house.

The judges, awarding them winners of the Richmond Hawke's Bay Farmer of the Year 2004, praised the speed with which they have reached their goals.

"We have been flat out," admits Phil. "We've had pretty good seasons and increasing prices and our performance has lifted each year."

"We wean our lambs at 90 days from the mean lambing date and over the last five years we have drafted 50-60% off the ewes at 16kg," he says. The hogget lambs are weaned at 70 days.

The Cregoes run 2,600 mixed age ewes and 750 hoggets on mostly rolling country dissected by 300 acres of gorges.

In 2000, Phil "after looking around" decided to put Kelso genetics over the existing Romney flock, with half the flock of mixed age ewes going to a composite ram and the other half (two tooth's and 5 year olds) going to a Poll Dorset terminal sire. The composite hoggets were mated to Poll Dorsets. This year the hoggets scanned at 114%, mixed age ewes at 185% and the two tooth's at 171%, not including triplets. Phil believes the figures will continue to lift as the Kelso genetics move through the whole flock.

"This is our best season yet," says Phil, who has missed the storms of the lower North Island. "When we went into composites there were a lot of opinions and they were relatively unknown. We thought we'd keep an open mind - and we think our weaning weights tell the story."

Phil says the composite hogget lambs are lambing in the mid-70s, unshepherded, easy care, with little or no bearing problems. "We feed them flat out and we get no bearing problems."

He sends the terminal rams out on 25 February, the composite ram on 20 March and the hoggets' ram on 20 April, for 42 days. Objectives this year are to lamb onto 1,400 kg of cover, with twins on 8.75 head per hectare and

singles on 12 head per hectare.

"Our main strength is our increasing lambing percentage and the weaning weights off the mothers," says Phil, who notes that the percentage draft off the mother has been almost identical with the Poll Dorset.

"The Kelso composites have grown as well as the Poll Dorset terminal sired lambs."

"We think we should get some further increase yet. We're looking at a bit more nitrogen in winter-early spring to increase the lamb growth rate and we may increase the lambing stocking rate without compromising the weaning rates."

The Cregoes run 150 breeding cows in a pasture maintenance role and keep the sheep-cattle ratio at 60-40. Phil would like to increase the sheep ratio, but says "this is hard when the cattle prices are looking pretty good."

The Cregoes came onto the farm after running 400 acres for six years, while Phil worked as a field rep for Ravensdown. "Developing that property gave us the capital for this one and since then property prices haven't looked back - it's hard to know now whether to expand further."

Right now, he says, they are in the process of developing a new plan. "Doing the Farmer of the Year program was quite a big thing, and it helped us realize there is still potential in the property yet. It has motivated us further. I'd like to increase production and maintain numbers, do a bit more subdivision and regrassing and use a bit more nitrogen."

What are the things he thinks are most important in farming? "The things that I care most about in farming are stock performance - I like drafting straight off mum at weaning straight onto the truck. I like watching two-and-a-half-year-old bulls going down the driveway. And I like growing good feed and turning it into money."

"When you look back you wonder how it happened. You can't do it without water, subdivision, fertilizer and good genetics on top of that."

"Right now we're setting up for the best lambing ever - we just need to grow the grass and feed the lambs."



Phil and Jo Cregoe: "You can't do it without water, subdivision, fertilizer and good genetics on top of that."

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CONTACT YOUR NEAREST KELSO REPRESENTATIVE

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Kelso - The Dynamic Breed

Kelso sheep are bred to improve the profitability of New Zealand farmers. This is how the Kelso breeding programme is structured to deliver excellent sheep performance on your farm.

KELSO ELITE FLOCK

What is it?

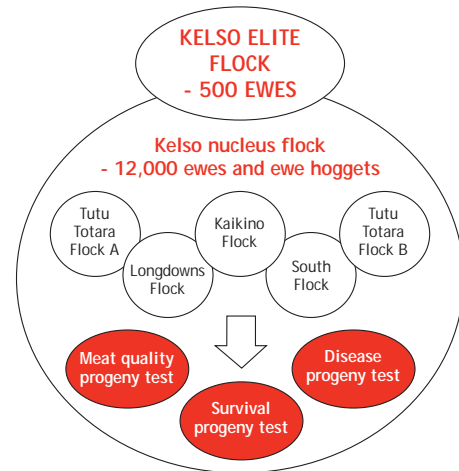
1. Elite Kelso ewes
2. All these ewes to elite Kelso genetics and "outside" genetics to:
 - Benchmark top Kelso genetics
 - Introduce outside genetics that add to our dynamic breed mix. eg worm resistant rams; rams identified with survivability attributes.
3. Use of gene markers to identify and exploit special traits

Nucleus flock – 12,000 ewes and ewe hoggets

1. Mated to best Kelso genetics from the elite flock.
2. Flocks included in the nucleus flock are Kelso Tutu Totara, Kelso Kaikino, Kelso Longdowns, Kelso South and totals 12,000 ewes and ewe hoggets.
3. Highest performing Kelso ewes transferred to the elite flock

WHAT ARE THE KEYS TO THE KELSO PROGRAMME?

1. We have a "dynamic" breed – it is at an exciting stage now and will change and evolve to meet farmers' challenges and opportunities.
2. Our genetic programmes are designed to maximize genetic progress and provide practical solutions to increasing farm efficiency. This involves working closely with world leading animal geneticists at Abacus Biotech, as well as the people at Ovita, and practical farmers including those in the Kelso team.
3. We have scale – a huge advantage if used in a structure that



allows us to exploit this genetic base. The key to achieving this is Abacus Biotech designing and analysing our across-flock sire referencing programme to identify "elite" genetics.

4. A dual ram index system that is simple and allows farmers to select rams that best fit their needs.
5. Progeny test programmes that will allow Kelso to make progress in key areas such as worm resistance, survivability and meat yield.
6. Simplicity – we deliver simple solutions for farmers to optimize profitability!

Frequently Asked Questions

WHAT IS THE KELSO COMPOSITE?

The Kelso composite is a maternal sheep, bred specifically to produce high levels of profit from superior performance.

The Kelso composite is not constructed according to a fixed formula, but is rather a dynamic breed, with different strains of high performance sheep added where it is proven that they can add value to commercial clients.

WHAT RAMS ARE AVAILABLE?

Kelso composite rams are bred from 12,500 ewes in five cross-linked flocks in the North and South Islands.

HOW DOES KELSO RANK ITS RAMS?

All Kelso rams are ranked on indexes according to their ability to add profit on commercial farms. Kelso ranks its rams against two different indexes:

Index A

Index A has a focus on rapidly increasing lambing percentage. Index A maximises profit for farms lambing below 140%, where the largest gains in profitability

will come from increasing the numbers of lambs born. Survival, growth rates, meat characteristics, wool and disease resistance are also considered.

Index B

Index B has a focus on improving profit on farms that already have a high lambing percentage (>140%), by improving the growth rates of multiple born lambs. Survival, meat characteristics, lambing percentages, wool and disease resistance are also considered.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT PRICE RANGES FOR RAMS?

Rams are priced according to their rank within each index (A or B).

- Rams in the top 10% are ranked 10
- Rams in the top 20% are ranked 9
- Rams in the top 30% are ranked 8 and so on.

Kelso will not sell any rams with an index ranking lower than 5.

KELSO RANGER SELECTION

The performance criteria for a terminal



Beechwood Hills 2ths ewe and lambs.

sire are uniform across the country (growth, survival and meat yield are the key parameters in all environments). This means that all Ranger rams are presented for sale, ranked according to the Kelso Terminal Sire Index. The Kelso Terminal Sire Index includes the key economic traits of growth rates, lamb survival, carcass and meat yield.

Example indexes

Ram ID	Category 1 Index Ranking	Ram ID	Category 2 Index Ranking
#5460	10	#6227	10
#8074	10	#7632	9
#9286	9	#3855	8
#4566	8	#1221	6
#2390	7	#8913	5
Etc.		Etc.	

Kelso Strategies

GOOD ROOFS DON'T LEAK

Kelso aims to breed sheep that deliver high levels of profit to commercial farmers.

The Kelso Maternal will produce highly profitable commercial ewes with the main focus on high lambing percentages, good survival and excellent growth rates. Kelso also looks at characteristics such as wool production, resistance to internal parasites and facial eczema. High lambing percentages are a clear characteristic of the Kelso maternal, but not solely an objective of the breeding programme. They are simply a characteristic of a highly profitable maternal ewe – it is almost like saying that a good roof doesn't leak.

The Kelso Ranger is a terminal sire with excellent libido, producing lambs with high survival rates, fast growth rates, high carcass yields and desirable meat characteristics (leanness and muscling).

CHANGE WITH THE TIMES

The Kelso Maternal and the Kelso Ranger

are not fixed breeds with a list of defining breed characteristics based on their appearance. They are composite sheep, bred to be working sheep that deliver higher profitability to farmers. This is why it is called a dynamic breed.

The changing needs of Kelso clients determine the way the two Kelso 'breeds' are modified. Because the Kelso sheep are not fixed breeds, it is possible to bring in new sources of genetics when there is a need.

MAXIMISE PROFITABILITY & SOUNDNESS

The Kelso breeding strategy is to maximise the rate of genetic gain for the traits that are most profitable on commercial farms. Structural soundness is equally important to the performance of the rams and their offspring and Kelso culls strictly for any defects that compromise soundness.

The Kelso methods of assessing animals include:

- the pedigree of individual sheep, and their genetic relationships with other sheep,
- the performance of individual sheep,
- DNA testing of individuals for specific traits, and
- progeny testing.

ALL KINDS OF COUNTRY

Commercial farms in New Zealand cover a range of environments and Kelso sheep must be able to deliver high levels of profit in all kinds of country. Sire referencing and on-going progeny tests are taken across a range of environments to prove the performance of sires and their ability to 'shift'.

Kelso classifies rams according to their suitability for different farm systems, considering the environment and flock performance of commercial clients when presenting rams for purchase. Clients can use the Kelso ram selection indexes to choose the rams most suited for their situation.

Specialist Progeny Tests Ensure Faster Genetic Gain

Kelso is now starting to use specialist progeny testing, designed to record information on traits like lamb survival, resistance to parasites, and resistance to facial eczema, as well as adding meat production progeny tests to the Ranger breeding programme.

"These progeny testing programmes go beyond standard recording within the stud flock, so that farmers can achieve faster genetic gains," says Roger Marshall, Managing Director, Kelso.

Roger Marshall

EID links the sheeppark to the office



Matt Holden, who has introduced the electronic identification tag (EID) system to Beechwood Hills in the past couple of months, says that now the system is set up, he is finding it very quick and efficient. "It completes the link from sheep yard to farm office," he says. "We can draft the ewes by any criteria or 'set of data' that we choose and we can then upload the information from Excel. I believe this ability to download and upload data is one of the strengths of the system. You can upload in a format which corresponds to how you want to draft your ewes."

The system at Beechwood Hills consists of a Tru Test XR3000 indicator, Zee tag electronic tags, an Edit ID reader set up with a Racewell sheep handler.

He says setting up the system was not hard, but it took some time and he recommends talking to Tru Test during the setting up process.

"Once you've got it set up, the chance of making a mistake is minimal. No one has to handle data manually any more. It is a highly efficient system in a number of ways"

"It's staggering what the XR3000 can do – it's the same thing as with your computer. It can do a lot more than the small number of things we do with them. It's worth talking to Tru Test so you can see what is available."

ADVANTAGES

- Ability to upload and download data
- Quick and efficient
- Mistake-proof
- Minimizes time that data has to be handled
- Minimizes administration
- Downloading straight off the indicator into Excel removes risk for human error
- Completes the link from farmyard to farm office
- Neat and tidy tags

DISADVANTAGES

- Tags too small to read in the paddock



Beechwood Hills EID tag and Racewell.