

# THE WOOL PRESS

March / April 2017

Volume 304

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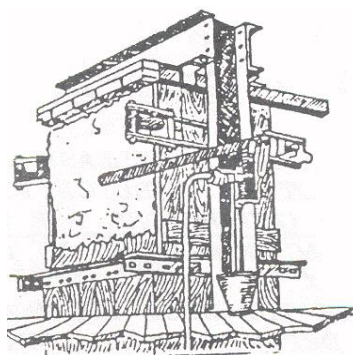
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*Edited By Teenie Ross*

*Printed by The Print Shop, Stanley*

*Produced by the Department of Agriculture, Falkland Islands Government*

## EDITORIAL

Welcome to the latest edition of the Wool Press as the nights start to draw in and winter approaches. You'll all be making the most of the reasonably good weather we've been having lately to finish off all those jobs around the farm that are easier to complete in good weather than in bad.

There is plenty to keep you entertained in the latest edition starting with Zoe's article on why you should get your bitches spayed (and please do unless you are certain you will be breeding from the bitch at a later stage) to the final article which is the second instalment in the development of the National Stud Flock by Nigel Knight and makes most interesting reading. I hadn't realised that so many ram hoggets had died on Lively Island in the winter of 1994. That must have been a worrying time.

Sandwiched between those 2 contributions are a host of other interesting articles on subjects as diverse as nutrition of ewes in the lead up to mating to the damage the potato cyst nematode can do to your potato crop. Lucy has written an interesting article on the wool sale results for the National Stud Flock this year and in the centre pages of this Wool Press you can read Teenie's write up of this year's Ram Sale with accompanying photos. I think it can safely be said that this year's Ram Sale was a success.

April has now arrived and with it the first of some rather foggy days. This is the time of year when the vets get occasional call-outs to stranded young albatrosses which land in the streets of Stanley at night time – attracted by the street lights. Fortunately they are rarely injured and just need to be launched from a suitable launching site on the following day.

Wishing you all a Happy Easter and Queen's birthday celebration later this month.

**Steve Pointing**  
**Senior Veterinary Officer**

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# THE PROS & CONS OF SPEYING BITCHES

**By Zoe Fowler**

This isn't a new topic for the Wool Press, however the clinic has been really quite busy of late and we have seen several cases over the last few months that have been related to reproductive systems being intact. Things that can arise in un-neutered bitches can be life threatening, not to mention costly to treat.

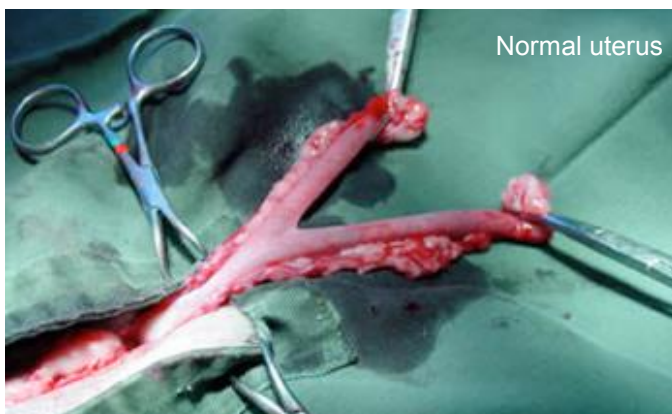
If you have a female dog that you absolutely know that you don't want to breed off then there is no question – neuter it!

Probably the most common, and potentially most serious consequence of not neutering a female dog is pyometra (infection of the womb lining). Repeated exposure of the endometrium (lining of the uterus) to high concentrations of oestrogen and progesterone (which you will get in a normally cycling dog) leads to cystic endometrial hyperplasia (a thickening of the womb lining). Bacteria readily invade this thickened womb lining causing an infection. If the cervix is open you will have an off colour dog and pus discharging from the vagina. Antibiotics and treatment (with the same drug that you use for mis-mating interestingly enough) will probably

clear the infection but invariably the same problem will arise next time the dog comes into season so the point of medical treatment is to get the dog well enough to be speyed rather than having to operate on a sick dog. Given the cost of the mis-mating injection (see below) you will have spent over £100 before you've even got the dog asleep to spey when it is better. If infection develops in the uterus and the cervix remains closed the pus will build up in the uterus and the bitch develops septicaemia and shock and will die unless she undergoes an emergency spey. An emergency operation like this carries more risk to the dog who also requires more care, more peri-operative treatment and will likely have a longer recovery time. Two recent emergency pyometra cases that we have operated on have cost between £90.00 - £150.00. The cost of a routine bitch spey (for a working dog) is £40.40.

We also see a reasonable number of mammary tumours. Not all are aggressively cancerous but research has well proven that neutering a female dog before she has her second season drastically reduces the chance of her developing mammary tumours. Some tumours are just benign hyperplasia (not cancerous) but removal of this type of tissue is usually recommended in case of malignant transformation (ie becoming cancerous). This requires an anaesthetic and operation, plus aftercare and lab fees. The mammary tumours that are cancerous are often aggressively so and long before the lumps are noticed or are too visible or are causing the bitch problems will have spread to other tissues, most often the lungs – which is invariably fatal. A recent routine mammary tumour removal cost in the region of £130. A routine bitch spey costs £40.40.

Inguinal hernias are another surgical issue that we see relatively often (when abdominal contents herniate through a defect in the muscle in the groin). There is a natural tunnel in the muscles of the abdominal wall called the inguinal canal. Blood vessels and nerves run through here and in the developing animal this is the canal through which the testicles



descend in male dogs. In the case of non-traumatic hernias (ie there hasn't been an accident causing damage to the muscles) it is likely that genetics play a part in causing the muscles around this inguinal canal to be lax and fat, intestines, bladders and wombs can herniate down to sit under the skin. This isn't a problem unless something twists and tissues start dying off – this is then a real emergency. At one time it was thought that hormones in entire bitches made it more likely for these hernias to occur. That may not be the case but what is likely is that bitches that have had non-traumatic inguinal hernias are likely to pass these genetics on to their off-spring, so they require surgery to repair them and continue passing these faulty genes to their off-spring. We see quite a lot of inguinal hernias here and again, a routine repair of one will cost in the region of £100. A recent case of a strangulated inguinal hernia resulted in the bitch being put to sleep as the strangulated gut was so infected there was no saving her.

There are also management benefits to having neutered bitches. There are no messy seasons or wandering, optimistic dogs to deal with. Bitches that have had a season but not gotten in pup may suffer from false pregnancies, when the body thinks it is pregnant but it isn't, this is more common in dogs than other species as their hormonal cycle is a little different. This isn't life threatening at all but can make your bitch a bit miserable and off colour and make her want to nest with your socks! It will resolve but will probably occur again after her next season too. Being entire can also make the management of some medical problems such as diabetes, much harder to control.

Unwanted pregnancies are not resolved quite so easily as false pregnancies. A course of mis-mating injections for an average sized bitch will cost £50 or more – more expensive than a routine spey for a working dog – have I mentioned that is only £40.40?? You may also be surprised at the number of young dogs that we put to sleep that are 'failed' pets. The failing here of course, is not with the dog but with the owner that didn't fully recognise the consequences of having a young collie and found them to be unmanageable when

they were no longer the little cute puppy that they first took home. Some of these young dogs get lucky and find a good farm and farmer to be relocated too, but some have missed the boat to learn how to be a good working dog and are euthanized by us or dispatched on farm, or spend a miserable existence as a frustrated pet in town and are complained about continually by neighbours fed up with a barking dog.

Of course, you may not know for sure if you do or do not want to breed from your female dogs – they need to grow up and prove if they are going to be a good worker and carry good genetics. The Delvosteron injection that prevents them coming into season until you are ready is fairly reliable but can increase the risk of pyometra developing with constant use. So, once your bitch has had her litters or you have decided to not breed her – seriously consider neutering.

However, as with anything, there are pros and cons and there are some negatives to be considered when making the decision to neuter your females. A routine anaesthetic and operation is obviously less risky than an emergency one BUT it is still a general anaesthetic which comes with an element of risk regardless of age, breed and size.

Female dogs can be prone to weight gain when neutered and the list of medical problems that comes with obesity is probably longer than the list of problems that can occur in entire dogs BUT with careful food and exercise management weight can be controlled. In larger breed dogs neutering too young can cause some bladder sphincter dysfunction and urinary incontinence, which generally can be treated but that is then an ongoing cost for you.

In the giant breeds, Rottweilers and upwards, it is recommended to let them have at least 2 seasons as this reduces the risk of some other types of cancers.

We generally prefer to have bitch speys done at the surgery (as we have much more control over the anaesthetic and recovery) but we also have good outside kennels and runs so can accommodate camp dogs to stay for a

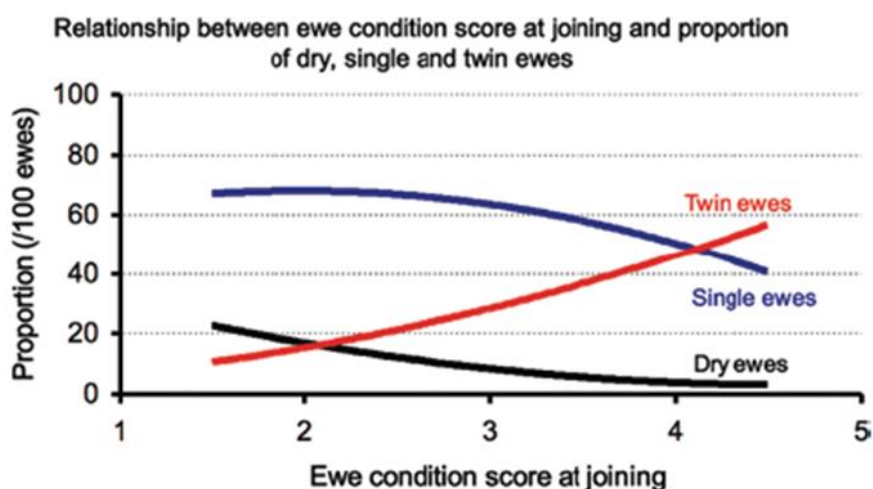
day or two around the time of their operation if needed.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to give us a call on 27366.

## NUTRITION OF EWES IN THE LEAD UP TO JOINING

**By Sue Street**

Ewe nutrition is the most important factor to ensure the best reproductive performance in your flock. Condition scoring is a quick and reliable tool for managing ewes to meet production targets and enables timely decisions to optimise reproduction rates. Condition score of the ewes is the most important determination of ovulation rate. Lifetime Wool and Meat and Livestock Australia recommends that all ewes to be joined should be at condition score 3.0 to 3.5 and that maiden ewes need to be at least 75-80% of their mature weight at joining. For example, a maiden ewe with a mature weight of 45kg needs to be joined at a weight of approximately 34-36kg and at BCS 3-3.5. Studies conducted by Lifetime Wool have shown that an increase of around 20% extra lambs have been reared for each rise in condition score at joining. This, however, does not include BCS of 4-5, as ewes that are deemed too fat will have problems at both conception and at lambing.



**Figure 1** The relationship between the number of lambs born and ewe condition score (Source: Lifetime Wool).

Conception rates in the Falkland Islands are very high, with approximately 90% of all joined ewes getting pregnant, however on average only 59.2% of lambs are marked. This indicates that most of the losses are associated with poor nutrition during pregnancy or survival after birth.

Maintaining BCS during pregnancy is important as losing condition is inefficient, as it takes at least three times the energy to put on condition than it does to maintain it. The requirements for protein and energy increases 2.5 – 3 fold during late pregnancy and early lactation, and ewes often cannot eat enough pasture to meet these needs. As a result of this, ewes will start to mobilise fat and muscle and this highlights the importance of having ewes in the optimum body condition score at joining.

These joining targets will be used on Saladero this year and studies will also be conducted on other farms on the islands. From this research we hope to establish targets based on the Falklands Islands farming systems, rather than relying on research conducted in Australia.

Department of Agriculture *Webpage*

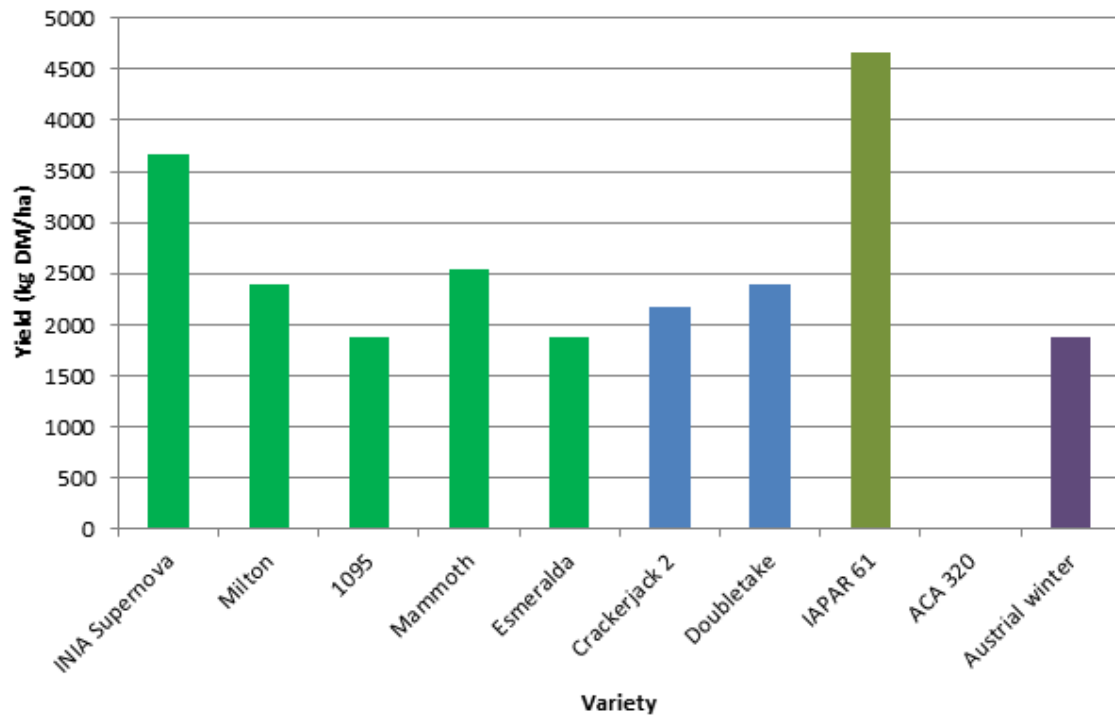


*Falkland Islands Government*  
[www.fig.gov.fk/agriculture/](http://www.fig.gov.fk/agriculture/)

# PASTURE & FODDER CROP VARIETY TRIAL - RESULTS PART 1

**By Adam Dawes**

The cereal fodder crop plots of the Pasture and Fodder Crop Variety Trial were harvested on 23rd February, with assistance from Dr Jim McAdam. 2 of the 3 plots of each variety were harvested with a petrol push mower and fresh weights for each plot were recorded. A push mower does not recover all available plant material, however it gives a good indication of the amount of feed available for animals in an efficient grazing system (allowing for spoilage / trampling etc). One plot of each variety was left standing for viewing in conjunction with the National stud Flock Ram Sale. A sample of the fresh weight of each type of material was taken and oven dried to allow calculation of dry matter%. The summarised results of the trial are included in the table below:



From this phase of the trial we have gained some valuable information to help us with recommendations for next season.

Oats: INIA Supernova, the 'traditional' fodder oat used in the Falklands performed better than all other varieties in terms of yield. It should be noted that Milton and Mammoth went to head later (approx. 15 days) than all other varieties, as such they will retain quality further into the season and their tolerance and recovery from heavy or delayed grazing is likely to be better. 1095 and Esmeralda did not yield well, ran to head early and should not be planted in the Falklands.

Triticale: Both Crackerjack 2 and Doubletake performed well and held up with the oat varieties. Triticale fodder crops must be grazed early or cut for whole crop silage or hay to overcome palatability issues associated with the 'hairy' seed heads as



they mature. Both varieties would be suitable for planting in the Falklands.

**Saia oats (*Avena strigosa*):** A species of oats native to Brazil that is very tolerant of acid soils. Saia should be planted after the risk of 'heavy' frost has passed. The variety that we trialled, IAPAR 61, was slower to establish than all other crops, however performed exceptionally well in terms of yield. Saia oats do not recover well from delayed grazing, however will recover well if grazed appropriately. It is also an excellent option for whole crop silage. Samples have been sent off for feed analysis and comparison with triticale and oats. Saia oat seed is smaller than traditional oat seed and can be sown at 60-70% of the 'normal' sowing rate for oats.



**Wheat:** The wheat that we trailed (ACA320) germinated well, but was not tolerant of the acid sub soil. Yields were so low that these plots were not harvested.

**Field peas:** Austral Winter field peas (ex USA) were sown to assess their performance for inclusion in future pea / oat mixes for whole crop silage. The peas performed better than expected in terms of yield and will be used in future trials in combination with cereals. Work will also be undertaken to assess the nitrogen fixing ability of inoculated field peas.

From the information that we have obtained this season we will source further varieties to trial next season and undertake some work on sowing rate, sowing fertiliser and swing depth. If you would like more information on the trial results or guidance for next seasons sowing, please don't hesitate to get in touch with me: [adawes@doa.gov.fk](mailto:adawes@doa.gov.fk), or drop into the Department when you're next in town.

## *Dog Dosing Dates 2017/18*

Wednesday 19 April - Droncit  
Wednesday 24 May - Droncit  
Wednesday 28 June - **Drontal**  
Wednesday 2 August - Droncit  
Wednesday 6th September - Droncit

**Telephone:** 27366, **Fax:** 27352

**Email:** [sbowles@doa.gov.fk](mailto:sbowles@doa.gov.fk)

After normal working hours, please leave a message or email.

All dog owners are responsible for worming their own pets. Please remember to contact the Veterinary Office and confirm this has been done.

*Regular weighing - it is important to keep a check on dog's weights to ensure correct dosage is being given.*



# Department of Agriculture Ram Sale 2017 10th March

**By Teenie Ross**

This year has seen another great sale at Saladero which was held on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> March.

There were a lot of animals up for grabs this year – a staggering 510! There were, as usual, the shearling and ex-elite rams, along with groups of flock rams and groups of mixed aged ewes.

Overall there was some fantastic bidding for the shearling rams on offer. This years genetics included Anderson, Moojepin, Karbullah, Triggervale, Centre Plus and Polwarth. Of the 153 rams available the highest price was £520.00 for a Centre Plus shearling. Across the board there was an average price of £135.07 with 12 remaining unsold.

The old boys, as usual, generated a lot of interest and some intense bidding which saw a top price of £660.00 and an average price of £208.75

The majority of the flock ram groups were sold for an average of £74.00 a head and the entire selection of ewes were sold for an average of £26.66 a head.

With these fantastic bids floating around and a huge amount of animals, it wasn't a surprise to

discover that we'd smashed the sale record with total of £33,950.00!

Thank you to everybody involved in getting animals and the shed ready for the sale plus John, Adam and Phyl for kicking things off on the day. Huge thanks to Keith for the use of the sheep panels, chairs and the loan for a day of Alexander and Derek! Also, thank you to Steve Dent and John Birmingham for keeping the hungry crowd fed and watered and WBS for getting Westers and their precious cargos home at the end of the day. Lastly, but most certainly not least, a very huge thank you to all farmers who once again supported the NSF sale and have once again shown faith in the genetics being introduced into the Islands.







# Watch Group's Calafate Control Patrol

By Ross James & iLaria Marengo

Calafate is not an issue limited to Camp; it is also quietly popping up in areas around Stanley.

they found, so that the plants can be easily found for spraying and monitoring.

Calafate is an invasive plant native to Patagonia. The seed-packed berries are eaten by birds, which distribute the seeds far and wide. The thorny plants outcompete native plants, altering habitat structure and the spines lodge in sheep's fleeces making them hard to shear and reducing the value of the fleece. Furthermore Calafate can cover huge areas of land, reducing its value for grazing and in some cases making the area completely impassable.



To make things more fun a few Calafate plants held clue cards which, once put together in the correct order, spelled Berberis; the latin name for Calafate. On the reverse of the cards were the coordinates of the "Calafate Cache", a new geocache packed full of information about Calafate, and details of how geocachers can report sightings of this invasive plant.

Calafate has left the confines of Stanley's gardens and broken into the surrounding area at the Camber and on the ridge behind the racecourse. Brian Summers has worked extensively to record and spray the plants at these sites however, small Calafate plants and seedlings are extremely hard to spot, and so it can be several years before the spread of the seedlings becomes apparent.

Recently the DoA led a group of young volunteers from Falklands Conservation's Watch Group on a survey of the racecourse ridge site. The children used GPS to mark the position of all of the plants



These reports will feed into the information we already have about the location, spread or decline of Calafate, and will help us manage and control Calafate in the future.

After the Watch Group's survey of the area, the data was passed onto Sally Poncet of Island Landcare, who sprayed the plants with a herbicide that will hopefully stop them in their tracks. The site will be monitored in future and new plants will be sprayed until the outbreak has been eliminated.

What is GIS and how does it help us manage the control of invasive species? Dr iLaria Marengo, SAERI's GIS specialist and project manager explains...

In general, maps are tools for representing the world and its objects through symbols and in scale. One of the main advantages of maps is that they tend to show patterns that can hardly be detected from a table. Hence maps tell a story and help us understand better what is happening in the geographic area that they represent.

When dealing with invasive species, identification (the earlier the better) and eradication are para-



mount. Maps of distribution of invasive species allow us to know where the invasion is occurring, how bad is its extent and in which direction it is spreading.

Because the GPS device captures the geographic coordinates of the plants, it means that the data collected with GPS are "spatial" and can be mapped.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) are tools that allow mapping and analysis of spatial data. QGIS is a free open source software that has been used to visualise the geographic distribution of the Calafate plants recorded not only by the Watch Group but also by previous data collectors. At the same time QGIS has been used to calculate the Calafate plants density within a radius of 100 metres.

If the distribution map is a simple representation of points, the density map suggests that there are more plants on the western side than on the eastern side of the race course area (assuming that the data recording has been consistent across the entire area).

These maps are a snapshot of today's distribution of Calafate at the race-course area in Stanley. As mentioned before, the next step is to monitor the area and keep recording any new plants with GPS. In a few months a new map can be issued to show whether the eradication and control program has been successful or whether the Calafate invasion is continuing, and if so, in which direction and with which intensity.



# Saladero News

By Regitze Petersen

The summer months have been lovely with warm(ish) weather and longer, lighter days but I have to say I'm starting to look forward to the short winter days and the quieter time it brings.

## The National Stuck Flock

Shearing has finished and as I mentioned in the previous news update mid-sides were taken from the 2013 and 2014 drop ewes. Below is a summary from the ewe shearing (January). The clip was split into 3 lines of ewe wool and 1 line of hog wool (AE, AH, AS and BE). All fleece lines have now been sold and the prices are included below.

The 2016 drop lambs were split into male / female groups in mid February. They were weighed and tagged with EID and VID tags. We have 332 ewe lambs with an average weight of 22.5kg and 340 ram lambs with an average weight of just under 24 kg. In the 4 weeks post weaning we saw an average weight gain of 2kg/hd, which no doubt was helped by being weaned onto a good Italian ryegrass pasture!

The weeks leading up to Ram Sale were busy with ram and ewe selection and a total of 569 animals were selected for the sale, including 12 lots of 4-5 shearling rams, 1 lot of 5 mature rams and 13 lots of mix age ewes, the largest number offered for sale to date.

The Ram Sale kicked off Friday 10th March and it was good to see so many farmers in the shearing shed and follow the different bidding wars. An impressive £660 was paid for the top

mature NSF ram '3340' which has only seen a micron increase of 1.3µm since it was a hog! The best top selling shearling ram '5256' was from a Centre Plus sire and brought £520 on sale day. Congratulations to everyone on their purchase and thanks for coming out!

Lynsey Anderson, from the Anderson merino stud in Western Australia semen, visited Saladero to see how her offspring are doing. The Anderson semen was first introduced in the Falklands by former Sheep Advisor, Travis Allington for the 2014/2015 season and has been used at Saladero for the past two seasons.

## The National Beef Herd

It has quietened down on the NBH side of things. All calves were successfully mothered up before 9 AI cows went out for a romantic week with the cover bull. This year bull SF1130 won the lucky draw and was joined with the cows from 23rd February—2nd March. Pregnancy scanning will take place on the 10th May.

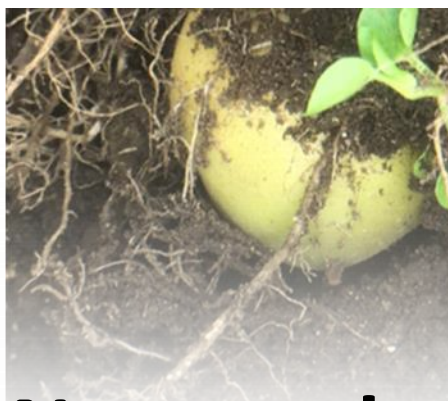
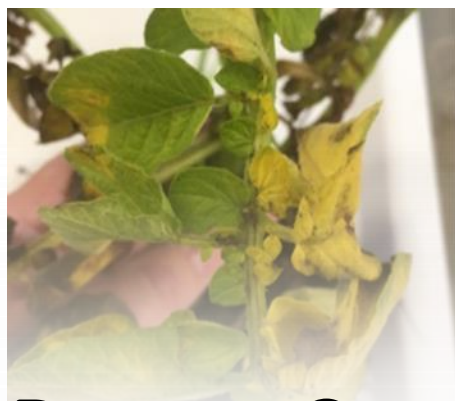
## Agronomy

Reseed conditions: 1 perennial grass reseed had an autumn application of DAP @ 150kg/ha and 2 swede fields were fertilised with Urea @ 125kg/ha

## Soils of the Falkland Islands

Rodney Burton and John Hezelden visited Saladero on 23rd February, together with Jim McAdam and iLaria Marengo as part of their project to map the soils of the Falkland Islands.

| Line | Bales | Kg (greasy) | Micron | Length (mm) | Strength (N/Kt) | Colour | Yield | VM  | Price (p/kg clean NETT) Stanley | Sale date |
|------|-------|-------------|--------|-------------|-----------------|--------|-------|-----|---------------------------------|-----------|
| A E  | 10    | 1942        | 21.2   | 106         | 29              | -2.2   | 76.8  | 0.1 | 855                             | 14 Feb    |
| A H  | 8     | 1336        | 17.9   | 107         | 35              | -3.0   | 76.6  | 0.2 | 1195                            | 14 Feb    |
| A S  | 4     | 768         | 20.1   | 133         | 24              | -2.5   | 75.2  | 0.2 | 920                             | 14 Feb    |
| B E  | 4     | 699         | 22.4   | 111         | 33              | -3.0   | 77.5  | 0.2 | 815                             | 27 Mar    |



# Potato Cyst Nematode

By Ross James

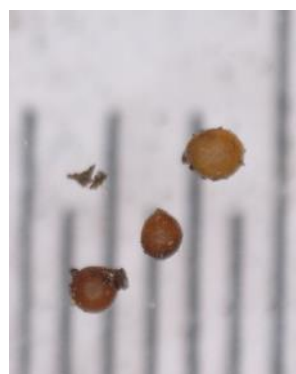
A member of the public called the Department of Agriculture to seek advice about their failing crop of potatoes. They took soil, plant and tuber samples from 3 different plots (plot A, B and C over the page), and sent them into the DoA. The potatoes were not identified by variety.

A visual inspection showed that the plants were all suffering from similar symptoms; being stunted in growth and showing significant yellowing and curling of the leaves. The potato tubers appeared more or less healthy, though they were few and small. With the aid of a hand lens small milky white cysts were visible on the tubers and root stock. Under a microscope they were identified as *Globodera pallida*, or the white potato cyst nematode (PCN or eelworm) .

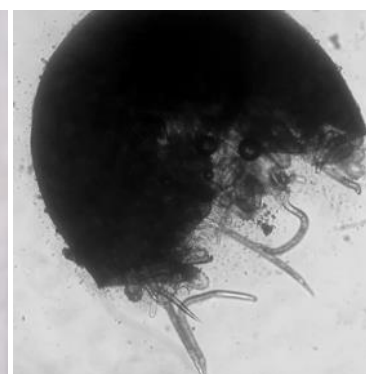


Cysts are just visible with the naked eye on roots and tubers.

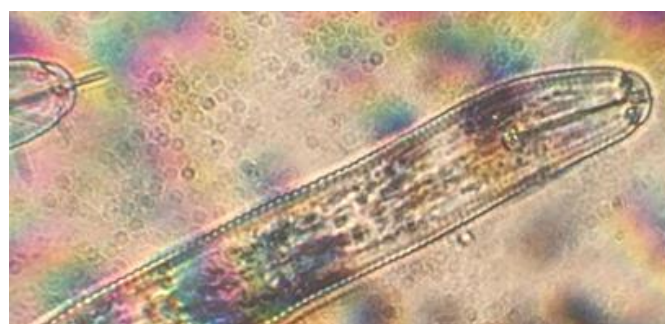
In 1986 a survey conducted by Queens University, Belfast found that *G.pallida* was present in parts of



Cysts (females)



Juvenile nematodes emerge



Stage 1 Juvenile *G.pallida* under high power microscope.

the Falklands, and was likely to have originated from potatoes imported from South America.

The female nematode worm swells with eggs and forms the cyst which is visible to the naked eye (just). The cyst may remain dormant in the soil for up to 30 years. The cyst is packed with up to 500 eggs which hatch into 1st stage juvenile nematodes. The juveniles are infectious and penetrate plant material to develop and continue their lifecycle. At this point they become male or female and sexual reproduction occurs, the female swelling to produce the next cyst. This cycle can be completed in 45 days in favourable conditions.

# Management of PCN

Due to its ability to remain dormant for up to 30 years, PCN is a difficult pest to eradicate. However, careful management may reduce the population density and increase the crop yield. Management techniques include crop rotation, trap cropping, biological control, chemical control and the use of resistant cultivars. Biological control of PCN is subject to a great deal of research but as yet remains an experimental control technique for this pest. Chemical control is by way of nematicides, which offer a limited and localised effect in reducing population density.

**Crop rotation** - Planting different types of crops on a plot of land each year in rotation, will reduce the amount of PCN. However, it is unlikely that the rotation periods will be long enough to have a significant impact alone. Crop rotation used in conjunction with the following methods would be most effective:

**Trap Cropping**, or sometimes known as sacrificial cropping, is when you plant crops to mop up unwanted pests with no intention of harvesting the crop itself. It's a simple method that has been used successfully for the reduction of cyst nematode populations. Sufficient crop growth time is allowed for the nematodes to penetrate the roots and develop into young adults (5-6 weeks), but not enough time for them to form new eggs. PCN populations can be reduced very quickly as long as the grower removes and destroys the crop, including the nematodes in the roots. If left too late, the nematode density will increase but, if the crop is removed in time, the nematode density is reduced

and there will be a significant yield benefit for any subsequent potato crop. *G. pallida* can be reduced by as much as 80% per annum.

**Resistant Cultivars (varieties)** are perhaps the simplest and most effective way of managing PCN infections. Many varieties of potato are now available with good resistance to PCN, producing good crops and reducing the population density of PCN in the soil. It is important to select varieties that are resistant to *G.pallida*, as some are only resistant to other species of PCN such as *G. rostochiensis*.

***G.pallida* resistant varieties include Ariata, Camel, Eurostar, Lady Anna, Lady Valora, Malou, Panther, Performer and Rock.**

For more information on managing PCN the following website is a useful resource:

**<https://potatoes.ahdb.org.uk/agronomy/plant-health-weed-pest-disease-management/pcn>**

PCN can be transmitted with soil on footwear or gardening tools that have been used in infected areas, or transmitted from infected plant material. It remains in the soil for many years and is difficult to treat. It is very important therefore to never plant ware potatoes, as they may have PCN or other diseases which could remain in the soil and harm current and future crops. Seed potatoes, if imported correctly, will be guaranteed free from such disease, and cultivars with resistance to *G.pallida* will do better in areas with existing PCN infections. These should be rotated with non-host plants. Trap cropping may produce good results but will require dedication, hard work and time!



# World Shearing & Wool Handling Championships 2017

**By Martha Molkenbuhr**

Invercargill – South Island – New Zealand 2017

31 teams – 27 blade shearers – 58 machine shearers and 34 wool handlers

Falkland Islands machine shearing team members Paul Phillips and Lee Molkenbuhr left the Islands in mid-January in preparation for the world champs in February.



They both worked in the North Island in Te Kuiti for 2 weeks. During this time, they worked with some pretty handy shearers who gave them some tips and showed them good positioning to decrease second cuts, up the speed and produce cleanly shorn sheep. They entered 2 competitions in the North Island giving them a good insight in to the competition they were up against and highlighted areas they thought they needed to work on.

Meanwhile wool Handler representative Pilar who had been in NZ working hard in the South Island for the season had also been working with some of the world's best wool handlers including the champ himself Joel and Pagan who spent time with her showing her the NZ way of wool handling both on second shear and full wool. Pilar's contractors also put her through a wool handling course where she reached level 2. Reba also picked up work and set to in training for the champs picking up tips from experienced New Zealand wool handlers.

Both girls entered a few competitions previous to the champs and the more they entered the higher up the tables they climbed. You could certainly see the hard work and effort the girls put in to their training with each result that came in. Like the fellas, they could also see areas which they thought they needed to improve and took this away and worked on them whilst at work and asking other very experienced wool handlers for advice.

The world champ's committee organised 2 training days for all teams to attend. These 2 days were very well attended by both shearers and wool handlers from across the globe all wanting to perfect their skills. All Falkland Islands team members attended these with Jack Wilson the team manager and each individual found at least 1 thing which they could change to improve their skills.

The evening of Wednesday 8th Feb team members and their other halves were invited to a welcome meal. Absolutely beautiful feed for us all (apart from Jack who isn't a seafood fan). The starter was a fish platter which included tooth fish caught in the South Atlantic – this being the Falkland Islands first mention.

Thursday 9th Feb was the opening day of the Worlds with machine shearing round 1 (shearing 5 lambs).





Molks placed 10th and Paul 14th and as a team sitting in 6th.

Friday 10th was a busier day for the team kicking off with round 2 machine shearing (5 second shear). Molks placed 12th and Paul 17th. Next up the girls had their first heat; these were second shear ewes. Pilar placed 17th and Reba 23rd.

Saturday 11th another busy day with final round for both shearing and wool handling.

Wool handlers were up first with 4 full wool sheep.

Both Pilar and Reba jumped up the table after this event with Pilar getting 8th and Reba 18th.

Individual placing after the end of the comp – Pilar 10th just missing out on a place in the semis as they took the first 8. Reba finishing 20th and as a team finished a respectable 7th. Very impressive from both girls considering they'd only previously entered the competition here at Christmas and Pilar had never worked out of the islands.

Back on to the last round of shearing (5 full wool) it was all to play for in this round. They took the top 6 teams in to a final event and it was close points for 5th, 6th and 7th places. Molks placed 10th in this round and Paul 22nd. Pauls end position for the comp 18th. Molks made it through to the semis as an individual shearer and was placed 11th after the semi-final.

As a team, Falkland Islands shearers finished again a very respectable 7th place.

In between all the excitement of the Worlds they held a speed shear on one of the evenings and Molks was placed 9th with them taking 8 through. "Worst place you can be – next in". ILT stadium in Invercargill and the world championship committee put on a fantastic event from start to finish. Next world champs are to be held in France in 2019.

Reba and Pilar both enjoyed their time in NZ both in preparations for the champs and the comp itself. They both made some amazing friends and have created a lot of very special memories. They recommend any young person considering their options after school to consider joining the shearing gang; you get to meet amazing people, travel all over the world and earn money while doing it.

Not a bad effort for 2 old farmers who retired from shearing years ago.

The team would like to thank all supporters here in the Islands who followed them on the live stream and the shearing page, supporters who travelled to NZ and the supporters world wide – it was impressive.



Also thanks to all the sponsors who got the team to NZ; special thanks to Byron for the return flight and to SAAS for the smart uniforms.

# RURAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (RDS) UPDATE

**By Anne Wagner-Gras,  
FIDC Development Manager**

A good deal has happened in the last few months towards the delivery of the RDS Action Plan, and now is a good time to provide you with a short update on progress against the agreed projects. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of activity carried out under the RDS, but a selection of achievements we would like to share with you. The headline results from the recently conducted Census show that Camp has become a more popular place to live and work and we are proud to have contributed to this by addressing a number of rural development issues.

Let me take this opportunity to thank all the partners involved in the delivery of the RDS Action Plan. It really has been a collective effort and we hope our achievements will serve to demonstrate how critical joined-up working between the FIDC Development Team, FIG Departments, and the wider rural community has been in the delivery of all the agreed projects.

## **Key recent achievements**

**Rural Enterprise Zone (REZ) at Fox Bay –** With plans for the refurbishment of the Old Manager's House now finalised, the work to create the basic layout detailed within the plans previously discussed and agreed with the Fox Bay community has now been tendered. Once this work has been completed this historic building will be fully restored, providing offices, accommodation and community space for those living and working in the Fox Bay settlement.

A Development Plan, providing guidance on the location and design of future development in Fox Bay East, was approved by Executive Council in April 2016 and has now been formally adopted.

There have been a number of Improvement works carried out recently to make the REZ more appealing for residents and businesses, including upgrades to the settlement's water supply, fuel storage system, and graveling



around the jetty area, etc.

A comprehensive energy survey has been carried out by the Rural Energy Advisor to establish Fox Bay East's energy needs and identify the costs and expected return on investment of installing a diesel/renewable hybrid system. It is hoped this work will help inform investment decisions and ultimately lead to the installation of a more efficient and cleaner system of generating energy for the Fox Bay Community.

A **Waste Management Scheme** was developed in partnership with FIG's Waste Management Coordinator and a number of rural businesses have used the scheme to help manage their scrap metal waste. This initiative has resulted in a significant reduction in the amount of metal waste in camp and made a positive visual impact, in particular in some key tourism locations.

**Water systems improvements** – Based on the recommendations contained within over 30 different site surveys conducted by expert hydro-geologists, rural businesses and residents have decided to invest in the improvements to their water systems, with support from the Water grant scheme available under the RDS. The volume and quality of water are very important elements in the growth of rural businesses, in particular in the horticulture and tourism sectors, where the issue of water supply is key.

**Conserving the Camp Environment** – Two case studies have been conducted on i) the use of rotational grazing and on ii) restoration techniques using native plant tillers to experience and better understand their benefit in terms of habitat conservation and restoration. The findings from these will enable landowners to make informed decisions regarding conservation activity on their land. Falklands Conservation have indicated that, as a result of the approach promoted through this RDS project and alongside other habitat restoration work, they have managed to secure funding for three years to provide continued support for the Habitat Restoration Role. Well done to them and to all the landowners involved in this important project.

**Energy Project** – The Rural Energy Advisor has managed to visit a large proportion of rural businesses and meet with residents across the Falkland Islands to provide them general energy advice, and produce more detailed energy surveys for those seeking to invest in new equipment or upgrade their existing system.

The mapping of natural resource data for the Falkland Islands has now been published, providing rural businesses and residents with detailed information on the wind and solar resources available at a given site. This data is a key element in the sizing of any new energy projects and assessing the likely return on investment and is available online:

<http://www.fidc.co.fk/rural-development/gis-resource-map>

A range of updated loan and grant funding schemes are now available to Falkland Islands businesses and residents to cover their energy needs. More information on the different energy funding schemes can be accessed on-line:

<http://www.fidc.co.fk/helping-business/grants>

Moreover, five 'Rural Energy Partnership Development Projects' are on-going across the Falkland Islands to trial different innovative energy technologies and/or designs for the generation and/or usage of energy. Details from the first three case studies have now been published to help promote their efficiency and the cost saving potential to the whole rural community and can be accessed

online:

<http://www.fidc.co.fk/rural-development/rural-energy-partnership-development-scheme>

Let me take this opportunity to say, on behalf of the RDS Steering Group and hopefully all of you, a big thank you to Andrew Crighton, who will complete his contract at the end of the month. Andrew's support to the rural community has been invaluable and there is no doubt that we will continue to benefit from his commitment and expertise long after he has left the Falklands. We are currently working on securing follow-up advice on rural energy initiatives, whilst a more sustainable approach is considered as part of the review of the Economic Development Strategy (EDS) and RDS.

### **Planning next steps**

In the short term, to ensure continued progress towards achieving the RDS key strategic objectives, a transitional Action Plan for 2017-2018 has been agreed and forms part of FIDC's annual subvention request to secure rural development funding for the next financial year. It focuses on four key projects; a capital Costs Grant Scheme available to rural businesses, a farm training programme, a follow-up advice package for the rural energy project and a funding package for further improvements to the REZ. More details will be provided once the position on funding is known.

In the medium term, for the RDS to continue to support the delivery of the objectives included within the EDS, work on the development of a new Rural Development Strategy is planned once the review of the EDS has been completed by the Policy Unit. In the meantime, we have made sure the RDS Steering Group follows-up the on-going review of the EDS and plays an active role in the consultation process has been put in place by the Policy Unit.

For more information on any aspect of the RDS, please do get in touch:

Telephone: 27211

Email: [development.manager@fidc.co.fk](mailto:development.manager@fidc.co.fk)

Facebook Page: [www.facebook.com/rds.fk](http://www.facebook.com/rds.fk)

## NATIONAL STUD FLOCK, 25 YEARS OF PROGRESS PART 2

**By Nigel Knight**

*Article continuing on from part 1 in the January/February edition.*

With the NSF now safely moved to Sea Lion Island the vital task of multiplying the gene pool began. Besides the flock having contracted orf in quarantine, on the whole the flock were in good health. Unfortunately, many animals had excessive face cover which made them less attractive to potential purchasers. This trait continues to be problematical even now.

The Department of Agriculture decided to use Flockmate which was a computer based performance recording package and utilises performance information in a selection programme. Information on any number of traits can be recorded and stored for use in the selection process. The Computer Steering Committee approved the purchase of this programme on 10.3.92.

Farmer input would come from a new group which was set up and approved by Exco. in a paper dated 19.11.91 it would be called the NSF Breeding and Marketing Advisory Group. This group comprised of the Director of Agriculture, (chairman) West representatives, N. Knight and B. Betts although this was changed before the first meeting to J. Forster. East representatives were Mrs M. Goss and R. Binnie. Ex-officio members were R. Hall (Wool Advisor) and R.M. Lee (Flock Manager). This group held its first meeting on 13.3.92. The next meeting to actually view the sheep was held on Sea Lion Island on 10.4.92. One of the items on the agenda was how the surplus animals would be marketed. All privately purchased ewes were booked to be moved off the Island by sea on 12.10.92. The privately purchased rams had already been flown off by FIGAS to central points on East and West Falkland.

A report on the DoA by J.M.M. Cunningham and D.W.H. Walton in April 1993 made the following observation, "The continuation of the flock is fundamental to a long-term strategy for the improvement of wool in the Falkland

Islands. It has the support of many farmers who are interested in the improvement of their clip and the economic benefits which can follow".

At a further meeting of the group on 10.5.93, and because of the present FLH Management costs, a paper would be put to Exco. to approve that the management contract should either be given to The Department of Agriculture or put out to tender. There was also detailed discussion on the marketing of rams and other surplus sheep. The management of the NSF was put out to tender with bids being received from FLH, Lively Island and Main Point farm. At a meeting on 10th December 1993 all the bids were examined but none were accepted, this meant that the management of the NSF reverted to the DoA.

Controversy over the out of season lambing of a stud ewe and the practice of shearing stud flock lambs in order to eliminate the bias that results in earlier lambs having heavier fleece weights was published on the front page of the Penguin News on 31.7.93. A reply was sent from the NSFB&AG to be published in the next edition explaining the groups view. It should be noted that none of the farmer members of the group were in favour of lamb shearing.

In February 1994, the NSF stock manager employed by FLH, Arthur McBain, asked the Director of Agriculture to remove all ram hoggets from Sea Lion Island. He was concerned about the lack of water and subsequent grass growth after a very dry season. Overwintering the ram hoggets on the Island he believed would jeopardise the rest of the flock. The Director of Agriculture made the decision to move the ram hoggets to Lively Island on the same voyage of Tamar FI as the sale sheep destined for Goose Green. Consequently, on 24th February 1994, 192 Ram Hogg's and 3 ewe hoggets were moved to Lively Island.

The first sale of NSF progeny was held at Goose Green on 15th March 1994. Sheep were sold by auction to the highest bidder, the

auctioneer being Mr B. Hardcastle. A total of 238 animals were sold for £38,535. A further 13 rams were unsold at the sale but after post sale advertising were then sold, this raised an additional £550. As part of the sale 77 rams and ewes described in the sale catalogue as commercial or structurally impaired were sold. Two member of the NSFB&AG N. Knight and R. Binnie were totally opposed to selling sub-standard stock at the NSF sale and suggested that a figure of around 30% of the progeny should have been culled and then either castrated or destroyed. They believed that the NSF represented a pool of genetic excellence, imported to improve fleece quality within the Islands. Animals with wool blindness or other defects should not have been released for commercial use. The opposing view was that the sub-standard sheep for sale were fully described in the sale catalogue and were bought by experienced farmers.

The following day 16th March 1994 there was a further meeting of the NSFB&AG and a number of important developments were minuted.

- 1) The DoA would take over the management of the NSF at the end of the month.
- 2) It was decided because of 1) that N. Knight would take over the chairmanship of the group from the Director of Agriculture.
- 3) R.M. Lee was asked to remain a member of the group and represent both East and West Falkland in order to retain his knowledge of the NSF gained to date.
- 4) R. McBain agreed to transfer his employment from FLH to DoA.
- 5) Whilst R. Hall is working with DS & Co. from April to October, the Director of Agriculture would be responsible for the NSF operation.

On 5-6th April 1994 the Director visited Lively Island to dose the ram hoggets with Glanvac. Five were found dead with another 13 unaccounted for leaving a total of 174. On 15-20th June the Director inspected them again. With only 137 now remaining, he recommended that feed block be distributed in their camp.

During Farmers Week 28th June–1st July 1994 members of the NSFB&MAG came under severe criticism for the large number of ewes purchased at the NSF sale that were later found to be pregnant. It subsequently turned out that of the 117 ewes sold, 56 were in lamb. These ewes produced 59 lambs of which 43 later died along with 28 of the ewes. The group were also criticised for the poor condition of the ram hoggets on Lively Island. Because of this criticism, R. Binnie, as a member of the NSFB&MAG, visited Lively Island on 14-15th July 1994. He did not carry out a head count because of the wintry conditions but found a further 4 dead. He was very concerned about their condition and recommended a vitamin injection and supplementary feeding immediately. On reading R. Binnies report, N. Knight as chairman of the NSFB&MAG, visited Lively Island on 1-2nd August 1994. An earlier visit was not possible because of heavy snow. He was assisted by J. Jaffray (Agricultural Assistant, DoA) where they gave worm drench, multi-vitamins, condition scored and eye locked the remaining ram hoggets. The total ram hoggets remaining was now only 114: a 41% loss. On his return from Lively Island N. knight wrote a detailed report on his visit. This was circulated to all NSFB&MAG members. As the Director of Agriculture was on overseas leave the Acting Director of DoA A. Kerr forwarded the report to the Acting Governor and FIG Chief Executive R Sampson. On reading the report he immediately gave instructions to the Acting Director of DoA to take whatever steps were necessary to try to save what remained of the ram hoggets.

He also instructed the Acting Director to advise him on a daily basis of what actions were being taken to resolve the situation. Further to this the FIG Chief Executive indicated that a Commission of Inquiry would be conducted to fully examine various aspects of the NSF. The Commission of Inquiry was gazetted on 10th November 1994 and signed by the Governor D.E. Tatham.

Then on 29th–30th November 1994 the ram hoggets were shorn, after shearing the clipped sheep were turned out. Unfortunately, the weather became wet and cold, this

resulted in a further 11 hoggets dying.

The Commission of Inquiry was conducted by a former acting Judge of the Supreme Court and Senior Magistrate James Wood alongside Brook Hardcastle, retired General Manager of FIC. The commission met between 16th November 1994 and 6th January 1995. Its terms of reference were divided into seven parts, including part five, "the sale at auction of ewes which subsequently were in lamb". Part six, "deaths of animals comprising part of the NSF on Lively Island including those deaths occurring since the date of the Commission".

Whilst the commission was not set up to point fingers it was critical in several areas, namely; Part Two, 5) The commissioners consider the choice of Sea Lion Island as a site for the NSF, save for the initial quarantine period, to be wrong. Part Three, 6) The commissioners consider that the Wool Advisor to the DoA, showed insufficient flexibility in the application of Flockmate software programme in relation to the shearing regime for lambs which subsequently contributed significantly to losses amongst the NSF. Part Five, 1) The animals selected for sale at Goose Green

included a number which due to poor quality should not have been available to the public. 4) The fact that a number of rams had gained access to the ewe paddock during the pre-shipment period was known to FLH and the Director of DoA yet no indication of this was given to the prospective purchasers. Part Six, 2) The commissioners consider the poor state of the ram hoggets at the time of their arrival on Lively Island to have been the crucial factor giving rise to the subsequent losses.

The commissioners also made two main recommendations;

1. We propose that the ownership of the NSF should remain with FIG and that its management should be retained within the public sector for a period of not less than five years.
2. We consider that a suitable permanent home needs to be found for the NSF. In practice the choice of prospective suitable sites is limited and the following have been suggested during the Inquiry; Island Harbour area, Fitzroy Farm and Brenton Loch/Saladero/Gimmer ground, Darwin Farm.

### **Reminder To All Farmers**

**Cover combs are to be used for all shearing taking place in March and no shearing after 31<sup>st</sup> March except for small numbers of "straggler" sheep.**

**If you need to shear in April then please contact the Veterinary Section on telephone 27366 or email [spointing@doa.gov.fk](mailto:spointing@doa.gov.fk) to let us know how many sheep you intend to shear and when you should be finished.**

## ***AGRICULTURAL RETURNS***

*Agricultural Returns for 2016/2017 will be sent out at the beginning of May.*

*It is a legal requirement to complete and return these to the Department of Agriculture before the 30<sup>th</sup> June each year.*

*Please contact Teenie Ross as soon as possible if you know you will be out of the Islands during May & June, so that we can arrange for your Agricultural Returns to be either sent to someone to complete on your behalf or to be completed before you go away.*

*Teenie's contact details:*

*Tel: 27366 Fax: 27352 Email [tross@doa.gov.fk](mailto:tross@doa.gov.fk)*



## Stamping-Out Wildlife Diseases -By Ross James

When there are lots of animals together in one place, such as in seabird or seal rookeries, it is inevitable that disease outbreaks will happen from time to time.

Some diseases are naturally occurring but limited to certain areas, others have been accidentally introduced by people, via livestock or contaminated equipment.

Although some outbreaks are natural, humans may be responsible for spreading diseases to new areas, outside of their natural range, or spreading them quicker than they would otherwise travel.

It's important to be mindful of biosecurity when visiting wildlife sites, and when moving from one site to another. This is particularly true if there are known or suspected cases of disease at those sites. Disinfectant foot dips will help reduce the spread of

diseases by people carrying pathogens on their footwear, and where present, should be used before and after visiting wildlife sites, or before onward travel to another island or location.

If foot dips are not available, footwear can still be cleaned in a bucket or over a sink, ideally with Virkon disinfectant, or a solution of domestic bleach (1 part bleach to 3 parts water) will suffice. It is important to remove any lumps of mud or faeces before disinfecting footwear.

If you see signs of disease in seabird or seal rookeries please report them. This may include mass mortality, animals with lesions, sores or swellings, or animals that appear to be unwell. Please report your concerns to either Falklands Conservation (22247), Department of Agriculture (27355) or the Environmental Planning Department (28480).

### *Dates for the Diary*

|                                    |                                         |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <b>14th April</b>                  | <i>Good Friday, Public Holiday</i>      |
| <b>16th April</b>                  | <i>Easter Sunday</i>                    |
| <b>21st April</b>                  | <i>Queen's birthday, Public Holiday</i> |
| <b>14th June</b>                   | <i>Liberation Day, Public Holiday</i>   |
| <b>Dog dosing dates on page 18</b> |                                         |

[www.bugs.co.fk](http://www.bugs.co.fk)

# WOOL SALE RESULTS 2016/17 SEASON

*By Lucy Ellis*

The National Stud Flock (NSF) wool clip, like many other farm clips, went through the grab sample process as well as being core sampled this season. We are expecting around 50 different Lots to be grab sampled from as wide a variety of wool as possible across the islands, therefore, pre- and post-lamb shearing ewes, wethers, hoggets, some oddments plus different ages, breeds, types and micron ranges will be tested. Once all the wool has been tested, NZWTA will be analysing the results and giving us their conclusions. We are hoping it will be a positive overall picture of the worth of the islands clip and this exercise will show there is value adding to be made with the extra wool parameters tested.

Below is a table showing the results from both the core and grab sampling of the NSF fleece lines:

|            | Wool |        |     |       |        | Mean Staple    | CoV    | Mean Staple | Position of Break |        |      |
|------------|------|--------|-----|-------|--------|----------------|--------|-------------|-------------------|--------|------|
| Farm Brand | Desc | Micron | Vm  | Yield | Colour | Length (SL) mm | SL (%) | Strength    | Tip               | Middle | Base |
| NSF        | A H  | 17.9   | 0.2 | 76.6  | -3     | 107            | 19     | 35          | 2                 | 53     | 45   |
| NSF        | BE   | 22.4   | 0.2 | 77.5  | -3     | 111            | 19     | 33          | 0                 | 23     | 77   |
| NSF        | AE   | 21.2   | 0.1 | 76.8  | -2.2   | 106            | 15     | 29          | 0                 | 32     | 68   |
| NSF        | AS   | 20.1   | 0.2 | 75.2  | -2.5   | 133            | 13     | 24          | 3                 | 31     | 66   |

The coring results are very pleasing but the grab results show that we have some work to do. The AS staple length of 133mm came as no surprise as these ewes have at least 2 months extra wool growth plus Polwarth's have a reputation for a longer than average staple length.

CoV SL (%) results are also satisfactory as they are within acceptable limits (Typical Length Variation 13 – 21%) but it would be good to pursue the Uniform Length <12%.

Staple strength is disappointing especially for the AE and AS but more puzzling for the AE, compared to BE, as all the ewes are run in one mob. Staple strength readings for the AS line was not that surprising given that the shearlings really struggled last year during pregnancy and post-lambing.

PoB is also an area for us to work on – it is disappointing to see the bulk of the break being in the Middle for the hoggets and that could affect sales. However, knowing where the break is in the staple can assist in combating stress in the flock during the growing year, whether it be nutritional (highly likely), weather, illness, lambing or weaning. As well as selling aids, these results are also very useful management tools.

The table below lays out prices that were achieved for three of the four lines core sampled, the B line is still waiting to be sold. As prices continued to rise and rise this season, it was tempting to hold back for better offers but prices achieved were very satisfactory – especially for the hogget line!

| Line | Bales | Micron | Colour | Yield | Kg Clean | p/kg clean nett Stanley |
|------|-------|--------|--------|-------|----------|-------------------------|
| A H  | 8     | 17.9   | -3     | 76.6  | 1023     | 1195                    |
| A S  | 4     | 20.1   | -2.5   | 75.2  | 578      | 920                     |
| A E  | 10    | 21.2   | -2.2   | 76.8  | 1491     | 855                     |

Our grab sample results were not back in time for sales so we missed the opportunity to find out what difference there would have been in price offers however, I am fairly certain all our lines would be discounted for Length, Strength and PoB but would be interested to hear your views...

# WOOL PRICE TREND OVER TIME

Based on weekly DoA Wool Reports

