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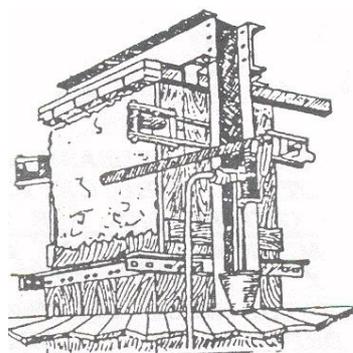
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# EDITORIAL

This edition of the Wool Press starts with a tribute to Owen Summers from Jim and Aidan. As noted Owen was involved with, and oversaw Department of Agriculture activities through many of the major changes and key developments in Falkland's agriculture. One of these developments was the National Stud Flock and in this edition Nigel Knight looks back in the third part of his informative review of the progress of the NSF and what it has achieved.

Things rarely stand still. No sooner have one set of objectives been achieved than the next lot need to be identified and pursued. The NSF has achieved a number of the objectives set for it but we shouldn't necessarily rest at that, and the objectives are reviewed. The recent wool innovation project lead by FIDC has identified a number of areas where the consultants believe there are opportunities to improve the visibility, marketability and the bottom line results in Falkland's wool production.

Managing and coping with change is rarely easy. However the example of the NSF is one which was a major project and took considerable drive and resources to get it to fruition by those involved. NSF ram sales have seen virtually all animals offered being successfully sold in the annual auction. It is now something we wouldn't be without. So if we are looking at the next major push or change what would it be? There are of course some 'more of the same' options and activities. There are areas where incremental improvements can be made. One of the initiatives on the agenda recently includes the FIDC wool innovation work. Another is the recent Agricultural Advisory Committee paper proposing to focus FIP in part on flock sustainability issues and reducing lamb and hogget mortality in particular. Are there other major initiatives to be researched and pursued?

Such programmes or projects may not be quite in the same league as the improved returns which have been achieved through reducing micron with the NSF and other avenues. Nonetheless they could provide significantly improved returns to farmers. In all such initiatives identifying the key components of some projects is easier in some cases than others. Getting a critical mass of folk involved to make the selected project worthwhile is not always straightforward. In some cases initiatives can founder due to insufficient resources. On this latter point the 2017/18 budget round has been concluded. Proposals submitted from DoA relating to hydatid research and calafate control are amongst those which have been funded. The revised island wide capital programme which has been described as "demonstrating more ambition" has been set. Some of this ambitious capital programme will undoubtedly assist in areas which improve the quality of life in Camp such as roads and communications in general. However for the future it is also important to identify what might be done in mainstream agricultural production to improve returns to farmers and the wider Camp and Island economy. So perhaps that is the challenge for Farmers Week!

**John Barton**  
**Director of Natural Resources**

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# OWEN SUMMERS

*Personal tributes by Jim McAdam and Aidan Kerr*

## **Jim's memories of the early years**

I first met Owen in 1976 when I was newly arrived in the Falklands as a young agronomist with the GTU and he was an (almost!) equally young Meteorological Assistant in the building we shared with the Met Office. It was all a completely new experience for me and I was fresh and eager to learn all I could about life and living in the Falklands. I soon struck up a friendship with Owen which lasted for over 40 years. He and Veronica took Sally and I under their wing and from him I learnt the skills of camp driving, cutting up a mutton sheep, setting a garden, cutting peat and many more. He was always patient, careful and helpful in everything we did together and I like to think I could not have been better taught. It was undoubtedly a part of the process which gave me a huge love for the Falklands, the place and the people, which has stuck with me ever since.

Danny Borland, Owen's boss was easy to persuade to let him come out with me on field work to far off places like Goose Green (those were in the days before the roads!) and those trips were always memorable-Owen was the best of travelling company. One time when I had to go to Brenton Loch, Goose Green, Veronica came with us and we took the grey GTU Rover. We had not gone too far before we cracked the fuel tank on a rock near Bluff Cove. As if he was used to this mishap every day, Owen calmly told Veronica to start chewing her way through the bag of toffees we had with us and he plugged these into the crack in the heavily leaking tank! We made it to Bluff Cove and Gus Reid soon had us patched up and on our way. Those were the days!

Owen was a camp man through and through. He learnt many of his skills from his uncle George Llamosa who clearly had a huge influence on his life. I cannot recall any of my annual visits when he did not make some reference to George and the "apprenticeship" he had at Purvis House. His love of horses seemed to stem from those formative years.

As well as having a practical bent, Owen undoubtedly had ability to go further in life and in 1983, FIG sent him to the West of Scotland Agricultural College in Ayr to undertake a 2 year Diploma in Agriculture Course. Coincidentally, a neighbouring farmer of mine from Northern Ireland, Adrian McClure, undertook the same course with Owen and they remained friends ever since. When they came to visit Northern Ireland, Owen and Veronica would go to see Adrian on the farm. Adrian was extremely saddened to hear of Owen's death. He recalled that Owen, who was the eldest in their student group and had family commitments, was always the most reliable and sensible amongst them. He would take on any farm work going at the College at weekends and quickly picked up ploughing, milking and a host of other practical skills - he was willing to turn his hand to anything. I always felt that as well as the academic attainment (which he obtained with flying colours), this breadth of skills give him the confidence to deal with many of the staff he had to manage in his subsequent role in the Falklands. They had come from very diverse agricultural backgrounds but Owen was always able to quietly empathise with them and assure them that he knew where they were coming from through having had the same experience himself. Owen had that unique, priceless combination of theoretical knowledge firmly grounded in a thoroughly practical background and an innate affection for the camp and camp life.

He arrived back in the Falklands at a hugely challenging time for agriculture, indeed for the Islands themselves. The process of Subdivision was well underway, the value of research and innovation was being recognised by FIG through a well resourced and active Agricultural Research Centre. Owen was in charge of a small Agricultural Department but gradually his responsibility increased to the extent that he was in a position to lead the amalgamation of these groups into an FIG Department of Agriculture

## **Huge developments in agriculture in the Falklands**

Throughout all of this period of growth and change, Owen was the quiet voice of direction and realism; the one who appreciated what could and could not be done better than anyone - because he had lived it himself.

He did not enjoy the responsibility of managing and directing the wide- ranging group of people he now had to deal with, yet it is to his credit that he took the challenge on board and directed the Department of Agriculture with a steady hand through the most momentous changes in farming in the history of the Colony. Subdivision, the Abattoir, the National Stud flock and eventually the formation of Falkland Landholdings. Owen saw them all through with commendable dedication to duty and his contribution to their success is immeasurable. Jim has visited the Falklands annually over almost all of those 40 years and has known and interacted with virtually all of those involved in that steady journey of progress which agriculture has made over that time. He has seen them come and go, many leaving a notable legacy, but few if any grasped that indefinable bond people have with the land which only Owen could see and understand. Owen knew, more than anyone else, that the fundamental tenet of agricultural development is that you must bring those who live on, and make a living from, the land along with you. He sprinkled a dose of realism on many a bold plan often conceived in some faraway land! Falklands' agriculture is now in a better place than it was before Owen's time at the helm and he played what may be perceived to have been an unsung role in it.

Jim valued his wisdom and judgement greatly - if he said something would not work, it probably wouldn't . This was not based on some innate pessimism but on a judgement from a lifetime of experience right across the broad spectrum of life ranging from a young shepherd at Purvis House, to Director of the Department of Agriculture.

### **Aidan's reflections on Owen**

I worked in the 'ARC' and the 'FI Dept of Agriculture' for many years. I first got to know Owen in 1985 when I began at ARC. At that time, he himself was the 'Ag Department' (with apologies to one or two assistants! )

After leaving in 1988, I returned in 1994 in a senior role in the DoA under Owen's leadership. I am very grateful to Owen for that opportunity and experienced his very personal and flexible approach to staff management which I greatly appreciate to this day. My appointment unfortunately coincided with my Dad's passing and, as the only son, I had to delay my arrival in DoA to ensure my mum's affairs were organised as best as possible. Owen understood and accepted my request for a delay in joining a couple of months later. When I got there he and Veronica made Pauline and I very welcome and helped us settle in.

He also allowed and encouraged me to undertake a doctorate using the research I was doing on the native grasslands in my job. He strongly supported the idea that the farms could make better use of Whitegrass, Tussac and Greens which was what he directed me to research. He also understood the benefits of publishing the results of this research to raise the scientific and agricultural profiles of the Islands. He supported me and other colleagues in achieving this.

He also encouraged many others, particularly young islanders, helping them develop their agricultural careers in the same way as me. He encouraged and forged the valuable links with Jim and Queen's University here and later with Australia and New Zealand.

I can honestly say that the small senior management team he put together and quietly led for quite a few years was one of the most enjoyable and effective teams I have been a member of in my professional career. As the first local Director he effectively led the development of the depart-

ment at a personally difficult time for himself and Veronica. I humbly acknowledge the hugely beneficial influence Owen had on my career.

I have no doubt that Owen's consistency, local perspective, foresight and leadership in the mid 1990s allowed the DoA to lay the foundations for the significant work programmes of the late 1990s and beyond. He achieved that at a time of huge changes in the Islands. When the history of agriculture in the Islands is updated, Owen's role will be a very important and significant one. He was closely linked with the development of Islands' agriculture for about 40 years; from the 1970s through the land sub-divisions of the 1980s, the technical improvements in the 90s through to the later practical and commercial achievements until his retirement a few years ago. I believe he was unique in this.

Finally, it's the man and friend that I will remember. He could tell many a good story about places, people and bogging - of which there were many - but rarely by Owen! We always enjoyed his hospitality, warmth and sense of fun.

### Owen and horses

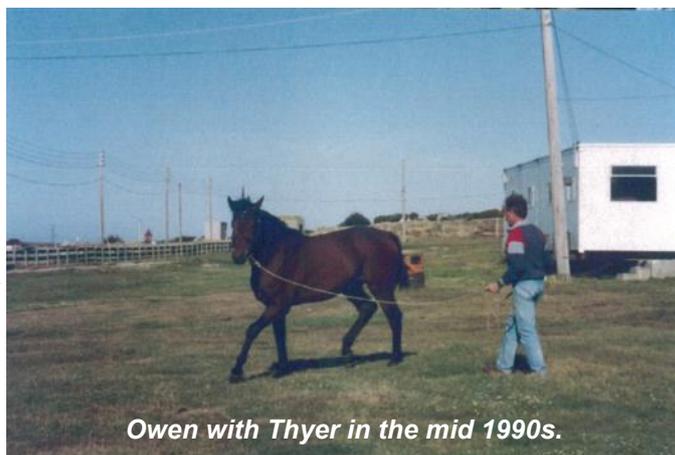
Next to his family, horses were the love of Owen's life. He was a fine horseman - the entries against his name in Patrick Watts' excellent history of the Stanley Sports Association (2012) testify to his and Veronica's contribution to the Association as well as his prowess in the saddle. We are not particularly qualified to highlight his lifelong association with horses, but it is a reflection of his deep association with the camp and with an aspect of the life and heritage of the Falklands which was championed by Owen and was passed on to his son and grandchildren. A re-read of Sean Sackett's interview with Owen for his "Highly Commended" entry to the Alistair and Jane Cameron History Prize (when he was 11) on Thyer (a stallion gifted to the people of the Falkland Islands in 1994 and which Owen cared for until the horse died in 2016) and published in the Falkland Islands Journal (2014) reflects Owen's commitment to horsemanship and stock quality in the Falklands.

#### ***Thyer and Owen Summers (an interview)***

*Thyer had a serious injury about two and a half years ago after which the vets advised that it would be unwise to use him as a stallion any more and that he should be retired, which resulted in him becoming a drain on the SSA funds. It was with this in mind that I made the offer to the SSA that if they gifted him to me I would continue to look after him and pay for his food provided that he could remain at the Racecourse. I was gifted Thyer at the SSA annual general meeting of 2012.*

*Thyer was gifted to the Falklands on the understanding that he was to be used as a stallion and not for racing. I have had a couple of short rides on Thyer when moving him between paddocks but other than that he is not ridden on a regular basis.*

*I consider myself quite fortunate with regard to the foals I have had off Thyer. Two of my own mares produced foals; two each but unfortunately the two foals from one of those mares both died at a year old which we later discovered was due to a ground related disease. I have two surviving offspring from my mare Tia Nina. Beagle you know and a younger sister Tia Maria who is not fully broken. In addition to this I have two other horses that were bred from my sister-in-law's mare; one of which they gave to me and the other is owned by my niece.*



Owen with Thyer in the mid 1990s.

*Thyer stays in and around the paddocks at the Racecourse for the majority of the time; I have to find somewhere else for him during the sports events, which is normally one of my paddocks in Town. Also, during the summer, prior to the Sapper Hill development, I made sure he was fenced off from the Common when horses were on the Sapper Hill piece of the Common .*

*He is quite a character and will test you at every opportunity he gets. He likes to be brushed and patted but at the same time he will try to give you a nip. When he was working as a stallion he could get very excitable and at times it took a lot of effort and knowledge of his habits to ensure both his safety and that of the mares he was with. There have been 82 foals born to Thyer that were still alive at six months of age. A further 13 foals were either stillborn or died before reaching six months of age for various reasons. In addition to this there were five other mares that were tested as pregnant and died before giving birth and a further five were tested as pregnant but aborted.*

### **In conclusion**

We both feel convinced that, only when the history of Falklands' agriculture is written with a dispassionate eye at some future time, will Owen's true contribution be recognised. It was a real privilege for both of us to have known and shared a part of his life. It is the man and friend that we remember.

*Sackett, Sean ( 2014) Thyer The Falkland Islands Journal pp 261-267*

*Watts, Patrick ( 2012) The Christmas Sports. A History of Stanley Sports Association. Stanley Services Ltd, Stanley.*

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## **RBA AGRICULTURAL SHOW 2017**

### **By Sammy Marsh**

The annual Rural Business Association Agricultural Show took place on the 1st April 2017 at Goose Green. It was a very busy show, with many visitors filling the Goose Green shearing shed.

The day was busy with local arts and crafts stalls, homebaked goodies to sample and shearing demonstrations as well as viewing the livestock. Brian Aldridge also gave some guided tours which were very well received.

Blue Beach Farm took the most points across the sheep classes this year, with Hope Cottage and North Arm taking the most across the cattle classes.

Ron Binnie was also thanked for his twenty years of involvement with the RBA show, having organised the very first one.

The day was ended with a traditional asada cooked by Tito and his helpers, and a very lively country dance in the evening at the Social Club.

Thanks must go to Keith and Glynis and all at



Goose Green who host this fantastic event, and their gang who work very hard to get the shed ready.

The RBA would also like to thank everyone that sponsored, helped and contributed by bringing their local wares and livestock. We look forward to seeing you next year!

## **Results**

### **Class S1 Ram hogget less than 12 months**

1. North Arm 2. Blue Beach 3. North Arm

### **Class S2 Shearling ram over 12 and less than 24 months**

1. Blue Beach 2. Blue Beach 3 North Arm

### **Class S3 Mature ram over 24 months**

1. Hope Cottage 2 Blue Beach 3. Blue Beach

### **Class S4 Ewe hogget under 12 months**

1. Blue Beach 2. North Arm 3. Kingsford Valley

### **Class S5 Shearling ewe over 12 months and less than 24 months**

1. Blue Beach 2. Goose Green 3. Elephant Beach

### **Class S6 mature ewe over 24 months**

1. Blue Beach 2. North Arm 3. Blue Beach

### **Class S7 Pen of three flock hoggets under 12 months**

1. Walker Creek 2. Walker Creek 3. Kingsford Valley

### **Class S8 Pen of three flock shearlings over 12 months and under 24 months**

1 Hope Cottage 2. Goose Green 3. Goose Green

### **Class S9 Dual purpose ram hogget less than 12 months**

1. North Arm 2. Goose Green 3 North Arm

### **Class S10 Dual purpose shearling ram over 12 and less than 24 months**

1. North Arm 2. North Arm 3. Hope Cottage

### **Class S11 Dual purpose mature ram over 24 months**

1. Blue Beach 2. North Arm 3. Hope Cottage

### **Class S12 Dual purpose ewe hogget less than 12 months**

1. Goose Green 2. Dunbar 3. Hope Cottage

### **Class S13 Dual purpose shearling ewe over 12 and less than 24 months**

1. North Arm 2. North Arm 3. Hope Cottage

### **Class S14 Dual purpose mature ewe over 24 months**

1. Hope Cottage 2. Blue Beach 3. Blue Beach

### **Class S15 Pen of three dual purpose hoggets less than 12 months**

1. Dunbar 2. Dunbar 3. Blue Beach

### **Class S16 Under 16s open entry**

1.2 and 3 Kai Heathman

**Most points in classes 1-8 Blue beach**

**Champion ram: North Arm Champion ewe: North Arm**

### **Class C1 Any beef heifer less than 24 months**

1. North Arm 2. Hope Cottage 3. Hope Cottage

### **Class C2 Any beef heifer over 24 and less than 36 months**

1. Hope Cottage 2. Hope Cottage 3. Blue Beach

**Class C3 Any beef cow with calf at foot**

1. Hope Cottage 2. Hope Cottage 3. Blue Beach

**Class C4 Any beef oxen between 12 and 14 months**

1. Hope Cottage 2. North Arm 3. North Arm

**Guess the micron:** Adam Dawes 15.94

**Guess the weight of the silage bale:** Eden Molkenbuhr 616kg

**Guess the combined weight of the sheep:** Gemma Joshua (with 255kg actual 260.2kg)

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## **PASTURE VARIETY TRIAL - RESULTS PART 2 & NEXT SEASONS DECISIONS**

**By Adam Dawes**

With the help of Frinn Ross (Falklands Conservation and Regitze Petersen DoA) most of the grass pasture plots of the trial were measured in March 2017. Unfortunately, the fescue and legume plots had significant sorrel problems and were not able to be reliably measured. On account of the heavy pressure from geese, no yield cuts were taken from the grass plots and they were assessed for establishment and ground cover (%).

Below is a summary of the results for each category, which can be used to assist with seed ordering decisions for the upcoming season season.

### **Short Rotation Ryegrass**

Short rotation ryegrasses establish rapidly and provide a large quantity of high quality feed throughout the summer months and can extend well into early winter. Both the quality and quantity of feed is far superior to oats, though more care is needed to successfully establish a ryegrass pasture. Short rotation ryegrasses typically persist for 1-2 years, depending on the variety. A field of 'Moata' Italian ryegrass sown at Saladero this season yielded >7000kg/DM/Ha of very high quality feed that was used to wean lambs in late January. The top performing short rotation ryegrasses from the trial are listed below with their performance (ground cover and establishment) listed in relation to 'Moata'. Each variety was planted at 14-17kg/ha, dependant on seed size.

<b>Variety</b>	<b>Performance (% of Moata)</b>	<b>Supplier(s)</b>
Sonik	106%	Cropmark (NZ)
Asset	105%	Agricom (NZ)
Winter Star II	102%	PGG Wrightson Seeds (Uruguay)
<b>Moata</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>Public (NZ)</b>
Jack	96%	Gentos (Uruguay)

### **Perennial Ryegrass**

Perennial ryegrasses provide a similar quality of feed to short rotation ryegrasses, though typically do not yield as high. The main benefit of perennial ryegrasses compared to short rotation varieties is that their increased persistence (typically > 5 years) reduces the need to invest in seed and planting operations as frequently. The top performing perennial ryegrasses are listed below with their performance (ground cover and establishment) listed in relation to 'Kingston', a variety that has recently been used across the Falklands. Each variety was planted at 14-17kg/ha, dependant on seed size.

Variety	Performance (% of Kingston)	Supplier(s)
Kidman	119%	Heritage Seeds (Aus)
Ultra	119%	Cropmark (NZ)
Avalon	117%	AusWest Seeds (Aus)
Kai	113%	Cropmark (NZ)
<b>Kingston</b>	<b>100%</b>	Agricom (NZ)

### Cocksfoot

Cocksfoot is a tried and tested perennial in the Falklands. It is tolerant of our acidic soils and should persist for >10-15 years under proper grazing management and maintenance of soil fertility. Grazing management is essential to maintain plants in a vegetative state to maintain high nutrient value; this must also be balanced with not over grazing plants. There have been very good results this season with 'Aurus' fields planted at both Goose Green and Fitzroy. The top performing cocksfoot varieties are listed below with their performance (ground cover and establishment) listed in relation to 'Savvy', a variety that has recently been used across the Falklands. Each variety was planted at 6kg/ha.

Variety	Performance (% of Savvy)	Supplier(s)
<b>Savvy</b>	<b>100%</b>	Agricom (NZ), AusWest Seeds (Aus)
Howlong	98%	Heritage Seeds (Aus)
Aurus	93%	PGG Wrightson Seeds (Uruguay)
Pawnee	91%	Allied Seeds (USA)
Bounty	88%	Allied Seeds (USA)

### Phalaris

Phalaris species (particularly Reed Canary Grass) have been planted in the Falklands in the past with great success. Once established, phalaris is a very hardy perennial that will persist >20 years with appropriate management. Again grazing management is essential to maintain feed quality; however phalaris is more tolerant than cocksfoot of hard grazing and tends to hold its quality more into the cold. Advances in breeding for acid tolerance warranted a trial of traditionally acid sensitive species (*P.bulbosa* and *P.aquatica*), these performed exceptionally well and will be a key focus of future trial work. The top performing phalaris varieties are listed below with their performance (ground cover and establishment) listed in relation to 'Savvy', which is the closest comparable pasture variety currently planted in the Falklands. Each variety was planted at 6kg/ha (Savvy at 6kg/ha).

Variety	Performance (% of Savvy)	Supplier(s)
Marathon Reed Canary grass	109%	Allied Seeds (USA)
<b>Savvy cocksfoot</b>	<b>100%</b>	Agricom (NZ), AusWest Seeds (Aus)
Mate - <i>Phalaris bulbosa</i>	98%	Gentos (Uruguay)
Holdfast GT - <i>P.aquatica</i>	95%	Heritage Seeds (Aus)
Advance AT - <i>P.aquatica</i>	93%	Heritage Seeds (Aus)

### Tall Fescues

While the fescue plots were not measured the following varieties showed promise and will be a focus of future trial work: INIA Aurora (PGG Wrightson, Uruguay), Royal q100 (Gentos, Uruguay), Barnaby (Heritage Seeds, Aus), Rhizomat (PGG Wrightson, Uruguay).

### Legumes

Observations that were made on the legume plots showed Lotus species to perform quite well in the perennial section and subterranean clovers (short and mid-season) in the annual sections. Work next season will begin to focus on companion planting these legumes with the different perennial grasses to try and establish a long term recommendation for a legume / pasture mix that can meet the majority of its nitrogen requirements through nitrogen fixation in the legumes.

From observation to date it appears that subterranean clovers are far more suited to the Falklands than the traditionally used white clovers.

The next edition of the Wool Press will report on the results of the brassicas section of the trial. If you would like more information on the trial results to far, or would like advice on pasture or crop establishment for the coming season, please don't hesitate to get in contact by dropping into or calling the DoA or e-mailing [adawes@doa.gov.fk](mailto:adawes@doa.gov.fk)

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## **The National Stud Flock Twenty-five years of Progress (Part Three)**

**By Nigel Knight**

With the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the NSF being published in January 1995 there was now a fresh resolve to move all the NSF sheep from Sea Lion Island to East Falkland. The Director of D.o.A met with the G.M. of FLH to discuss possible sites. A discussion paper was presented to the board of Directors of FLH listing six options within Fitzroy and Goose Green Farms. All these options included infrastructure costs which varied from £104,000 to £390,000.

A paper was presented to Council on 14th March 1995 titled, "National Stud Flock, proposal for an East Falkland Site". The favoured option was Saladero/Brenton Loch and Council agreed to this. A total of £235,000 was budgeted for all associated infrastructure costs at Saladero and for compensation to FLH for the loss of land.

The 200 ewe hoggets and 270 shearing rams and ram hoggets were already at Goose Green and were due to be weighed and checked on 6th April 1995 before being driven out to Saladero. Mr Riley Short was appointed as shepherd for Saladero.

On 18th October 1995 three members of the NSFAG (N Knight, J Forster and R Binnie) accompanied by the Wool Advisor and the Director of D.o.A. visited Saladero as well as the portion of North Brenton Loch which was to be acquired from FLH. The discussions centred on the general condition of the sheep, the proposed new settlement and the envisaged fencing and sub-division plans.

The year 1996 was another difficult year in the NSF's short history, there was a lot to achieve

to keep the move to the new site on track. Some NSFAG members and Department staff became frustrated at the lack of infrastructure progress. This came to a head during 14th February 1996 when the Penguin News made public on its front page the contentions amongst NSFAG members. These mainly centred on the fact that infrastructure money was approved by Council in July 1995 but nothing had been ordered or spent by the year's end. On the 26th April 1996 N Knight resigned as Chairman of the Group after six years. He remained a member of the NSFAG whilst R Binnie became Chairman.

The breeding flock left Sea Lion Island during the week 28th February 1996. Arthur and Rhoda McBain moved into temporary accommodation at Saladero on 11th March 1996 until the new house was completed. The house which is a Stuart Milne Timber design was supplied by Ian Stewart construction and built by Michael Summers and Terrance McPhee. It was completed on 1st May 1996 and Mr & Mrs McBain moved in on the 15th May. The shearing shed was built by Ian Stewart construction and completed on 26th April 1996. The interior of the shearing shed was completed by Colin Smith in late December 1996. The fencing was erected between Keith Heathman and D.o.A. staff mainly during March/ April 1996.

Once the basic infrastructure was in place, the flock moved and the NSF manager housed the impetus was back to increasing the supply of superior genetic material to F.I. woolgrowers.

During 1998, in an effort to improve the hardiness of the NSF and also widen the genetic base, it was agreed by the NSFAG to

select and purchase a number of ewes from selected F.I. flocks. A total of 219 ewes from 6 farms were purchased and used for breeding that season, this was in addition to the 230 pure bred sheep. The initiative was agreed to be a success as the local ewes gained 6kgs over winter compared to the 0.23kgs of the pure-bred sheep. Lambs produced from local sheep was 91.3% compared to 72.6% in the pure-bred sheep.

It was also acknowledged that within any breeding and management programme there is a need for clear targets for animal production over time. Up until now these had not been set so after consultation with the group a number of production parameter targets were set. These included lamb weaning %'s, hogget, shearing and mature sheep liveweights, micron and clean fleece weights.

The sale venue which had previously been held at Goose Green was moved to Saladero on 18th March 1998. It returned to Goose Green in 2005 but then returned to Saladero in 2008.

In late 1997, there was a move to disband the NSFAG but this was resisted. However, from 1998 onwards there was significantly less involvement and input from the group. In 2005 to ensure the continuing progress of the NSF the AAC approved the re-formation of the NSFAG. As a result, the first meeting of the NSFAG for many years took place at Saladero on 5th May 2005. Members of the old committee still actively farming; namely Nigel Knight, Maggie Goss and Jimmy Forster all agreed to participate and represent the views of farmers. In addition, John Hobman, who replaced Arthur McBain as NSF Manager in 2000, and Neil Judd (SAA) made up the committee. The task of the group that day was to select the very best ewes in the NSF for use in a fresh embryo transfer programme. From these top ewes 500 embryos would be created that had the potential to produce superior offspring at lambing.

Prior to this in 2002/2004 the NSF breeding objectives were reviewed in consultation with F.I. farmers. These farmers clearly stated what they wanted from the NSF genetics:

increased clean fleece weights, fibre micron diameter in mature sheep between 21-24, good frame and liveweight, clear open faces with strong survival instincts, polled sheep and wool free from pigmentation. AI had been used quite extensively in the NSF in previous years. Unfortunately, in some cases excessive face cover and some horns had been observed in the offspring. Following on from this further, more specific genetic goals for the NSF were set; average fibre diameter of 22 microns in adult sheep, greasy fleece weight of 5.0 kgs in mature sheep, hogget liveweight of 31 kgs at first shearing and clear faces and freedom from pigmentation.

So, after all the trials and tribulations so far, the question must be asked: has the introduction of the Polwarth NSF been a success?

The latest results from the NSF show an average micron of 18.8 with a high of 23 microns and a low of 15.1. The Falkland Islands National flock now averages 24.5 micron with a high of 32.7 and a low of 18.4. When the NSF was introduced in 1992 the average micron of the National clip was 27.5 micron so a 3-micron decrease has been achieved. NSF genetics have played a pivotal role in this progress. At present the gross value of the national clip is approximately £6,000,000. At today's prices the reduction of 1 micron has been calculated to increase prices by 10 -15%. So a reduction of 3 microns has conservatively contributed £1,500,000 -£2,000,000 to the gross value of the national clip. Sales of animals from the NSF are as popular as ever with this year's offering of an impressive 510 animals almost all being sold. High prices continue to be paid for superior animals and this year a Centre Plus shearing sold for £520. The total income from the sale was £33,950. NSF genetics continue to win prizes at the West Falkland Ram and Fleece Show and the RBA Annual Sheep Show.

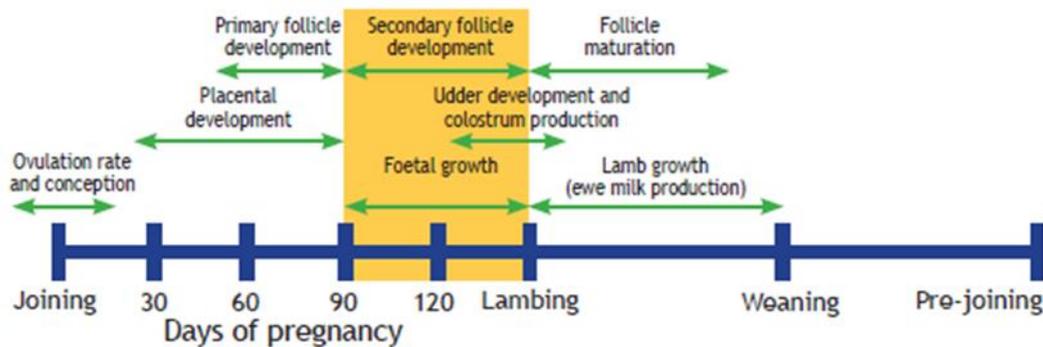
I think most people will agree that the answer must be yes. With world wool prices continuing to stay at record high levels the future looks bright for low micron wool sales.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING BODY CONDITION DURING PREGNANCY IN REGARDS TO LAMB PRODUCTION

*By Sue Street*

I am sure you are all getting sick of me telling you how important body condition score (BCS) is in regards to ewe health, especially during pregnancy, but please indulge me for one more article. In the previous Wool Press I spoke about the importance of BCS at joining and how losing condition during pregnancy is inefficient. In this article I am going to talk about what happens to the lamb when the BCS of the ewe is compromised during pregnancy.

The BCS of a ewe during pregnancy is best to be maintained at BCS 3. Although it is possible for a ewe to be allowed a drop from BCS 3 in the first 90 days (providing it can be regained in late pregnancy), I would not advise to do this given the time of lambing and available feed at this time of year in the Falklands. When body condition is lost (it has been said that ewes can lose up to 15kg over the winter in the Falklands) it has a detrimental effect on the future production of the progeny. As seen in the figure below, from early pregnancy ewe condition starts to have an effect on the lamb and its future production potential.



**Figure 1.1** The stages of pregnancy and lamb development in relation to the reproduction cycle of a wool type ewe (Source: Lifetime Wool)

In early to mid-pregnancy (day 0-90) poor ewe nutrition will reduce lamb birth weight, which leads to smaller lambs, which are less likely to survive to weaning. Poor ewe nutrition also effects the future wool production of the lamb, with increases in fibre diameter and decreases in fleece weight. For example lambs from ewes that maintained BCS during pregnancy can produce 0.1kg per head more wool and up to 0.2 micron finer wool.

Late pregnancy ewe condition is also important in terms of future lamb production. Good ewe nutrition in late pregnancy is required to achieve high secondary wool follicle density, which leads to lower fibre diameter and higher fleece weight, which affects the progeny for life.

Effect on progeny production	Effect of losing one condition score in a period of pregnancy		Cumulative effect of losing half a condition score by day 90 then regaining that condition by lambing
	Early to mid (Day 0 to 90)	Mid to late (Day 90 to 150)	
Clean fleece weight (kg)	-0.19	-0.19	0.00
Fibre diameter (µm)	+0.31	+0.35	-0.04
Birth weight (kg)	-0.33	-0.45	+0.12

**Table 1.1** Effect of BCS of ewe during pregnancy on progeny production (Source: Lifetime Wool)

But it is not just wool and birth weight that is affected by poor nutrition and low BCS during pregnancy. If you underfeed ewes during pregnancy expect the following in the lamb:

- Slower growth

- Less muscle and more fat at the same bodyweight
- Lower immune competence
  - \* More susceptible to worm burden
- Lower adult reproductive performance

So, maintaining BCS in ewes during pregnancy can have a huge impact of the future production of the lambs.

If you have any questions or recommendations on other nutrition and management information which you would like me to address please do not hesitate to contact me on [sstreet@doa.gov.fk](mailto:ssstreet@doa.gov.fk) or ring me on either 23577 or 65937.

# Saladero News

By Mandy Ford

Hello, I don't think I need to introduce myself, having worked with most of you and your animals at FIMCo.

I have been at Saladero now since the 10th April 2017. In the first week or so I was busy decorating and having a general tidy around the place and in between that demoucing and reducing the amount of flies, all seem to be on the decrease now.

So far I have had some interesting and testing times, especially with the cattle, who don't have much respect for what is left of some of the fences.

There is a lot of fencing to do here and I have already started and will be getting some help to do a load more next week, hopefully the weather will stay mild.

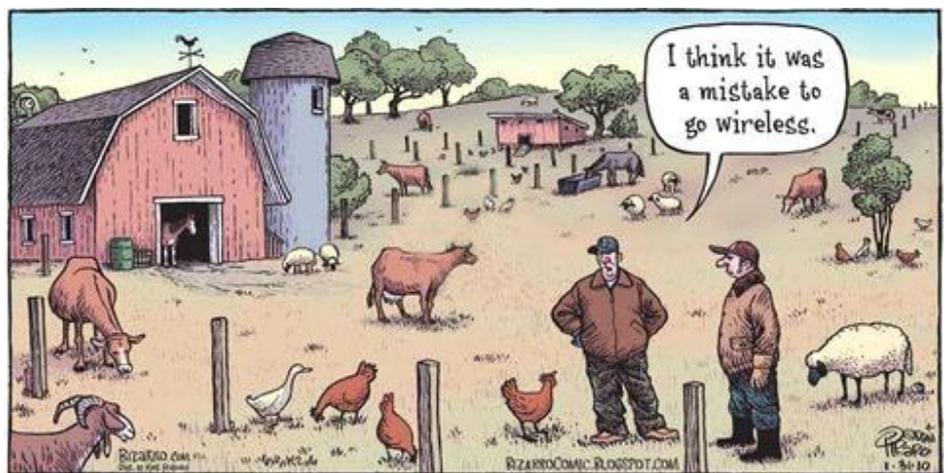
On the 11th April the rams were drenched and while they were in 20 were drafted off ready to head to Port Howard.

Also 1 bull was sold and sent to the West. After he had escaped several times, and quite fancied seeing Kev up close, I on the other hand, was being very helpful and tested the strength of the top rail in the cattle yards!

Adam brought Roddy Twynman out to take a look around the camps and also some re-seeds. The re-seeds are looking good, swedes are doing well and should be being strip grazed in September by the joined ewes.

Ram weighing was done on the 8th May, they were previously weighed in February and they appear to be doing better now than they were back then. I had been hefting the rams most days, and they do seem to look stronger now.

Cows were pregnancy tested on the 10th May and we are



expecting 4 calves.

The cows were then moved into a camp that has a working electric fence and had remained there up until about 2 weeks ago and then the 5 repeat offenders were off again and roaming where ever they pleased. It was great to see them not roaming around and leaving a trail of destruction behind them, so more work needed to keep them in. The bulls on the other hand have destroyed most fencing towards the North, so they soon will be up for some electrifying times!

Tony Mills has been in the islands for a week and has been here helping with the ram and ewe selection along with Donna, Steven, Adam and Sue.

We decided to move away from AI this year to prevent in-breeding, and Tony suggested having 11 single sire groups and 2 syndicate groups each with 3 rams. 794 ewes and 17 rams were selected. Around 100 ewes across ages will not be ewes in future NSF breeding and most likely will be for sale in the 2018 ram sale.

Mic Seal was also out to do the fertility checks on rams and that was a whole new experience to witness!

Towards the end of the third week of May we sorted the ewes into their lots ready for rams going in with them. The ewes were drenched and put out into their new camps with the rams and this was all completed by the 3rd June. The rams are due to be out for 35 days, and will be taken off around Farmers' Week, then the ewes will all run together again.

I am now in the process of cattle weaning, so hopefully that will all run smoothly, and me and the cows will start having a better working relationship soon.

I am trying weaning in the yards, so have separated the calves and kept them in one pen and have the cows close so they can still sniff the calves but have no access to them. The calves have been given cattle nuts and water while being shut in the yards. The cows have now moved back to their camp and calves will be going to a separate paddock for about 2-3 weeks then they will all run together again.

The ewe hogs have their ASBV's weighing and drenching, up and coming in the next few weeks. The ewe hoggets were not very strong when I first saw them but they also have been hefted a bit and seem to be better than they were. They will then be going to a fresh camp.

When all the sheep work has finished for a while the digging out under the shearing shed will commence.

## ***AGRICULTURAL RETURNS***

*Agricultural Returns for 2016/2017 are due on 30th June 2017*

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

*Teenie's contact details:  
Tel: 27366 Fax: 27352 Email [tross@doa.gov.fk](mailto:tross@doa.gov.fk)*

# Farmers' Week Information

## General information

- Both the Rural Business Association and Department of Agriculture Farmers' Week sessions will be taking place in the Town Hall and all lunches and smokos will be in the Refreshment room unless otherwise stated.
- Non members are welcome but they must register when they attend and there will be a charge £20 per day which includes lunch and two smokos.
- If you would like to know more about the RBA sessions, please email Sammy on [rba.events@horizon.co.fk](mailto:rba.events@horizon.co.fk)
- For more information about the DoA sessions please contact us on telephone 27355 or email [kstephenson@doa.gov.fk](mailto:kstephenson@doa.gov.fk)
- Free admission to the museum all week!

**The programme included is only a draft version and is subject to change. The final programme will be released closer to the time.**

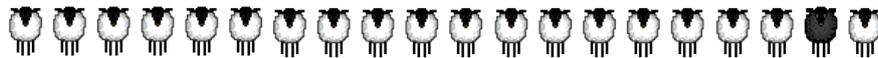
## RBA FARMERS' WEEK DRAFT PROGRAMME - 3RD TO 7TH JULY

### Sunday 2nd July

Main hall of the Town Hall (unless specified otherwise)

2pm-4pm **The Sue Whitley exhibition @ IJS will be open all day to those wishing to view the children's artwork**

2pm-5pm **Rural Expo (organised by the Rural Business Association) in the FIDF Hall**  
*The Department of Agriculture will be hosting a stand at the Expo.*



### Monday 3rd July

Main hall of the Town Hall (unless specified otherwise)

8am-10am **Rural Business Association committee meeting - In the Refreshment Room**

**Introduction and welcome by RBA Chairman Louise Pole-Evans**

10am *Smoko at the IJS, for those interested to view the artwork (under 11's), Town Hall for anyone else.*

10.30am **Johnny Rook Project - Katie Harrington**

11.15am **Update on the Wool Value-Adding Project - Anne Wagner-Gras, Vikki Lee & Adam Dawes**

12pm **Lunch provided by Hill Side Camp**

1.15pm **Work Boat Services - Adam Cockwell**

2pm **"Tussac and Beyond" - Frin Ross, Falkland Islands Conservation**

2.30pm *Smoko*

3pm **EGM - Members only**

3.45pm **RBA AGM - Members only**

5.30pm **Wool Co AGM - Members only**

7.00pm **Rural Business Association Party - Narrows Bar - Rural Business Association members and invited guests, children welcome**

# RBA FARMERS' WEEK DRAFT PROGRAMME - 4TH TO 8TH JULY

## Tuesday 4th July

Main hall of the Town Hall (unless specified otherwise)

- 8.30am **Fire Training** - *FIGAS Air Terminal*
- 10.00am *Smoko sponsored by Stanley Tower*
- 10.45am **Transport Update** - *Colin Summers, Ivan Porritt and Gavin Short MLA*
- 12pm **Lunch sponsored by Workboat Services**
- 1.00pm **Catch up on SAERI** - *Paul Brickle*
- 1.30pm **Assessment of fishing closure site for wider marine management** - *Neil Golding*
- 2.30pm **Subtidal & Intertidal Ecology** - *Emma Beaton*
- 3.00pm *Smoko*
- 3.30pm **Dolphins of the Kelp** - *Marina Costa & Marina Garcia*
- 4.30pm **FISOA Directors meeting** - *FIC Offices*
- 5pm **FISOA AGM** - *FIC Offices*



## Wednesday 5th July

Main hall of the Town Hall (unless specified otherwise)

- 8.30am **Introduction to the DoA sessions** - *John Barton & Phyl Rendell MLA*
- 8.40am **NSF update - Goals and 2017 joining programme** - *Adam Dawes*
- 9am **The Importance of managing Body Condition Score in Ewes** – *Sue Street*
- 9.30am **Agronomy Trial - Fodder Crop & Pasture Variety trial & Agronomy Update** - *Adam Dawes*
- 10am *Smoko sponsored by the DoA*
- 10.30pm **FIMCo End of Season Wrap Up** - *Zoe Fowler*
- Question & Answer Session**
- 12pm **Lunch sponsored by the Department of Agriculture**

**Two field trips have been organised.**

- **Visit Re-vegetation trials at Cape Pembroke** - 1.5hours, bring wellies
- **Coring and Grab Sampling** - Wool Warehouse, FIPASS

- 6pm **HE the Governor's Reception** - *Government House - Invite Only*
- 7.30pm **Falklands Conservation Curry Night at the Stanley Arms** - *All associated with Farmers' Week welcome to attend*

# RBA FARMERS' WEEK DRAFT PROGRAMME - 4TH TO 8TH JULY

## Thursday 6th July

Main hall of the Town Hall (unless specified otherwise)

- 8.30am **Code of Practice/Draft Policy on Protecting 1982 sites for heritage and tourism purposes**  
*- Michael Poole MLA*
- 9am **FITB TDS Update** - *Stephanie Middleton*
- 9.30am **Cruise Ships & Tourism** - *Carli Sudder, Sullivan Shipping*
- 10am *Smoko hosted by Liberty Lodge*
- 10.45am **Falkland Shears** - *Reba Peck & Vikki Lee*
- 12pm **Lunch sponsored by Premier Oil**
- 1.30pm **FIMCo Updates** - *Dave Roberts*
- 2.30pm **TBC**
- 3pm *Smoko sponsored by Premier Oil*
- 3.30pm **Pensions** - *Ana Crowie*



## Friday 7th July

Main hall of the Town Hall (unless specified otherwise)

- 8.30am **Informal update from His Excellency The Governor TBC**
- 9.00am **MLA Update on the Budget**
- 9.30am **MLA's Question & Answer session** - *chaired by Louise Pole-Evans*
- 10am *Smoko hosted by the Cancer Support Trust at FIMNT or Town Hall*
- 10.30am **MLA's Q&A session continued**
- 12pm **Lunch**
- 1pm **Young People in Agriculture** - *Ali Ford & Emma Brookes*
- 1.15pm **Address from Chief Executive Barry Rowlands**
- 2.30pm *Smoko*
- 3.30pm **RBA Committee Wash up meeting** - *RBA Committee only*
- 9pm **Camp Education Dance** - *At the Town Hall £5 on the door and 18 years plus only*

*Thank you to those who have sponsored smokos & lunch's, are hosting events & giving presentations. Special thanks to RBC Ltd for their continued sponsorship of the RBA.*

# Found a bug on imported goods?



**CONTAIN IT. CATCH IT.  
KILL IT. REPORT IT.**

Exotic pests like the brown marmorated stink bug are a threat to the economy and environment of the Falkland Islands

Department of Agriculture - Biosecurity

Call (+500) 27355 or (+500) 55535

[www.fig.gov.fk/biosecurity](http://www.fig.gov.fk/biosecurity)



# Dog Dosing Dates 2017/18

Wednesday 28 June - Drontal  
 Wednesday 2 August - Droncit  
 Wednesday 6th September - Droncit  
 Wednesday 11th October - Droncit  
 Wednesday 15th November - Droncit

Telephone: 27366, Fax: 27352  
 Email: 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 giv-  
 en.*



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



## RAINFALL

	2016						2017					
	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Stanley	48		23	11.5	40	16	-	-	-	89	47.5	56.5
Average	45.5	49.8	39.4	37.7	18.9	48.1	55.3	43.3	39.7	51.5	49.8	46.8
MPA	21.4	29.3	27	8.2	51.6	-	-	-	30.8	82.2	60.4	61.5
Average	54.4	48.6	39.1	35.1	34	40.2	59.4	57.5	48.3	55	55.3	50.2
Bleaker Island	-	22	24	7	75	12	31	70	23	40	45	47
Blue Beach	-	-	-	4	16	10	-	35	16	-	33	54
Fern Ridge	-	14.5	16	9	13.5	12.5	39	29.5	49.5	52	90	58
Goose Green	-	-	-	11	16	13	41	45	21	44	38	-
Head of the Bay	14	18	22	10	25	19	56	45	22	40	53	-
Moss Side	17	16	-	2.5	26	-	44	54	-	-	45	70.5
North Arm	-	23	25	9	22	-	-	54	43	52	42	49
Saladero	22	25	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Salvador	10	13.75	12	2.75	27.25	30.25	56	41.25	28.75	38.5	20.25	52.5
Shallow Harbour	-	16	17	11	13	13.5	38.5	28	48	49.5	82.5	66.5
Walker Creek	18	14	22	35	95	13	42	36	24	34	46	42
West Lagoons	-	-	96	-	74	-	30	52	42	49	62	75

# WOOL PRICE TREND OVER TIME

Based on weekly DoA Wool Reports

AWEX Wool Price Summary 2002 - 2017

