



EWES NEWS

Pondering on a Wander Through the Bull Paddock

Dave Robertson BVSc, BSc

Have I got enough service bulls?

Have the bulls I've got still function?

Can any lame bulls be fixed?

Standard ratios are 3 bulls per 100 cows. Some high capacity bulls can service 45-50 cows in a cycle, which would be 2-4 cows cycling per day, but other bulls can only handle ~30-35 cows which would be 1-3 cows cycling per day. 3 bulls per 100 covers for any sub fertility or injuries to one of the other bulls.

Single sire and bull rotation after each cycle can result in better 1st service conception rates and less bull injuries/breakdowns due to fighting. But takes management. Smaller yearling bulls over larger cows can result in inefficiencies during mating and poorer conception rates.

Getting a veterinary mating ability test (MAT) on your bull service team can assist with answering these questions. We can also tip over lame bulls and correctively trim over grown feet to allow another season out of aging sires.

Bulls beyond their 4th season are much more susceptible to sub-fertility and poorer mating ability. This is due to arthritic changes in the lower back/hip area. These issues are picked up in a veterinary MAT.

R1 Beef needs

May

Oral triple Matrix C + selovin
LA + 1st Covexin
OR Eclipse E Se+B12
injection.

June

2nd Covexin + copper
injection/bullet + Eclipse
pour-on for lice-worming.



Getting (stock)horses ready for the winter



Babiche Heil DVM, MSc., DipACT, MANZCVS
Ranfurly Veterinary Centre

Autumn, a stunning time of the year, but it also means that winter is just around the corner.

Tossing up what to do with that one colt foal that needs to be weaned but also needs a friend? If you castrate it now it can stay with the other horses without having colty behaviour and he can become a well socialized animal.

As we all know, the wetter autumn months can be a challenge with hoof quality and mud fever. Pull the horses shoes if not needed to reduce the amount of dirt in the horse's feet and keep them trimmed to avoid cracks in the hoof wall. Mud fever seems a yearly problem for some and never encountered by others. Try to keep the horse's legs free of wet mud, prolonged standing in muddy areas or badly churned up paddocks are high risk factors. Taping off gates or moving the horses along can prevent problems.

In preparation for winter we move the horses to better paddocks, feed extra hay, add a hard feed and some get rugged. All to compensate for the higher energy need to keep warm during winter. Often forgotten are the horse's teeth. Uneven wear and tear over the years reduces the horse's ability to chew the roughage provided, leading to poor energy extraction from the diet and often a drop in body condition score. Get your horses teeth

checked by us before winter can save you a lot on the amount of food the horse needs over winter.

IN THIS ISSUE



- Pondering on a Wander Through the Bull Paddock
- Getting (stock)horses ready for the winter
- Deer Feeding Post Roar
- Autumn Lice Control
- Newtритion
- Cat walk talk
- Selenium
- Winter Scours
- Wintering Your Pack – Working Dog nutrition
- Feeding Ewes Post Mating
- Ewe Body Condition Scoring

INSERT

- Ewesnews Extra



Abby and Dave Robertson enjoying a lunchbreak in their work 'bubble'.



Deer Feeding Post Roar

Luke Smyth BVSc
Oamaru Veterinary Centre



Unfortunately the spread of Covid 19 around the world is having a serious impact on demand for deer products. Venison prices have now fallen to lows not seen since 2015, fortunately this didn't occur at the peak of the kill season.

Velvet provides a glimmer of hope for the future as hopefully the Asian market will turn to traditional remedies to strengthen immune systems post Covid 19.

Fortunately the deer industry has proven to be remarkably resilient, things will come right with time and we have to choose to be optimistic about the future and make good decisions.

So what can we focus on right now to optimise the outcomes for velvet?

While much of the quality and yield of velvet is due to the stag's genetics, it is necessary to feed stags well to realise the full potential of these genetic gains.

It has been shown that post rut nutrition influences future velvet weight. Some individual stags may lose up to 30% of their body weight during the rut. As nutritional requirements peak immediately after the roar and during antler growth, maximum velvet weights will not be achieved if stags are not well fed during this time.

As soon as the stags have calmed down enough to handle in early May start addressing post rut nutrition with the view to getting >40MJ/ME down the throat of a mature red stag daily. Realistically stags need to be offered at least 5kg DM/day once appetite returns.

- Autumn saved pasture or high quality silage or crop are suitable feeds.
- Bulky forages like baleage must be of the highest quality, because of the limited capacity of the rumen at this time of the year.
- Offer concentrates on an individual animal basis of 1-1.2kg Barley, PKE or nuts/stag/day. This needs to be well spread out to avoid fighting.

During the spring velvet growth rates of around 2-3 cm/day can be achieved by but the penalty for sub-optimal nutrition will be a delayed casting of the buttons which can significantly reduce velvet yields by up to 20%.

I would always consider the selective drenching of any stags which fail to put weight on post rut despite being well fed. Don't take the easy option and reach for a single active pour on drench, a triple combination is always the sensible choice and yes this does require running stags through the crush. Be aware that most triple combinations are not licensed for deer so have a default 91 day meat withhold, this can be important if you want to cull poor performing stags after the first cut of velvet so talk to us if your unsure.

If stags are coming through the crush then also consider giving copper bullets or injections at the same time.

Stay positive, we can get through this.

Autumn Lice Control



Gwyn Mark BVSc, BSc
Omarama Veterinary Centre

We have had a few concerns about lice up the Valley. Lice populations are generally highest in autumn through to late winter and a small lice population now will have a long time to build up over winter before shearing.

Autumn Lice Risk Factors:

- Breed: Fine wool breeds are more prone to developing large lice burdens.
- Ewe condition: Well-fed and well-conditioned sheep are less prone to lice than undernourished poor conditioned sheep.
- Biosecurity: have new animals coming on farm (e.g. Rams) been treated? Have animals missed in previous treatments? Is there a risk of transmission from neighbours?

Treating now will prevent lousy sheep at pre-lamb shearing, when a treatment off-shears can provide further control and prevent transmission to lambs.

Treatment options include:

- Saturation products: can be used at longer wool lengths, the key to successful treatment through a shower or jetter is making sure it is wetting the entire skin surface of all sheep. Extinosad applied in the autumn is an economic option that will kill all lice stages including adults. Other jetting options include cyrex and fleecemaster/zenith.
- Pour – on products: Generally need to be used off shears or soon after shearing. This means pour-ons (e.g. Zapp Encore) are a good treatment option off-shears pre lamb.

There is a wide variety of lice products available each with their own advantages/disadvantages, contact our vets to help decide on a lice treatment and control plan that's best for your farm.



Newetrition

Lucy Cameron BVSc, BSc
Waimate Veterinary Centre



What is your spoiled silage costing you?

That thin layer of spoilage on the top of your silage stack doesn't look very nice, but what is it actually costing you?

1. Dry Matter losses

Some DM losses are unavoidable when making silage, and include losses due to feed left in the paddock, wilting, inefficient fermentation, and losses when silage is exposed to oxygen on the face or at feed out. That layer of spoilage on the surface is due to exposure to air

during storage, and effectively means your stack has "shrunk" – much more than is visible. You've ended up with less dry matter, so what you've got has cost you more. For example, if a crop cost 30 c/kg DM to buy in and ensile, with 25% DM losses the cost of the silage fed is 40 c/kg DM, whereas if losses had been limited to 15%, the cost of the silage fed is 35 c/kg DM.

2. Animal intakes and digestibility

Including that thin spoilage layer when you feed out can have a bigger impact on your stock than you might think:

- It doesn't taste as nice, so dry matter intakes will be reduced.

- It also affects how well the silage is digested inside the animal.

In an overseas study steers were fed a diet of 100% well fermented silage, or the same amount but with a small (5%) quantity of spoiled silage mixed in. The fibre digestibility dropped from 63% to 56% - basically maintenance feeding, and a more than 11% decrease in the amount of digestible energy available to the steers. If it's practical, scrapping off the spoiled layer before feeding out is **better nutritionally** for your stock. Avoid it altogether by ensiling at the correct DM (wilting if necessary), compacting and sealing well, and your silage will also be a much cheaper feed.

Cat walk talk

Dave Robertson BVSc, BSc
Oamaru Veterinary Centre



Bull Maintenance

Lame bulls happen. It is not always the stud breeders fault. Tidying up a bulls feet can ensure they can be sound for another season and will not grow a deformed hoof. It is very routine to sedate and cast sire bulls to sort out feet. Our specially designed tungsten blade grinder disc makes this job a lot quicker and easier.



Winter Scours

Bridget Roulston BVSc
Ranfurly Veterinary Centre



We commonly see outbreaks of scouring and sporadic deaths in particularly merino hoggets (other breeds can be affected as well) in the late autumn/early winter. This is often associated with a high internal parasite burden acquired over the autumn period, but not always

Yesinia pseudotuberculosis is a bacterial organism which affects the small and large intestine of ruminants. Merinos affected with Yesinia have foul smelling watery diarrhoea which may be blood tinged, they are off their feed,

depressed and have a fever. Diarrhoea is the sign most commonly noticed by farmers.

The outbreaks usually occur in young animals in their first winter, with the stress of poor feeding and wet, cold weather. Wet, cold weather conditions favour survival of Yersinia species on pasture, assisting faecal-oral transmission between animals.

The severity of outbreaks can be reduced by separating out affected animals and treating them with antibiotics.

There is no vaccine to prevent infection (there was one recently trialled in Australia, but it was unsuccessful). The main thing farmers can do is ensure an effective parasite control program is in place, reduce stressors such as sudden feed changes or poor feeding levels.



Selenium

Bridget Roulston BVSc
Ranfurly Veterinary Centre



The Maniototo like much of the areas we service has soils traditionally low in selenium. Selenium is important for growth, reproduction, immunity and milk production. It is simple to test for and easy to supplement.

Studies from the 1980s showed that ewes deficient in selenium were still able to conceive but lost pregnancies by day 30, resulting in increased numbers of late lambing ewes and drys. This was also shown in an extensive study of south island merinos. Ewes supplemented 17 days prior to mating with 5mg of sodium selenite showed a 12 % reduction in barren ewes compared to the control group. Immunity is a hot topic at the moment and deficiencies in selenium have been associated with reduced resistance to microbial infections (..such as footrot?), poorer white blood cell function and decreased antibody production. Selenium's role in maintaining healthy animals should not be underestimated.

You can blood test as few as three animals to give yourself an idea of your status.

Ways to supplement:

1. Selenised drenches – ok for lambs, but ewes generally are drenched less frequently, so needs not met
2. Vaccinations with added selenium – will give a short acting dose of selenium but additional supplementation usually required at other strategic points of the year
3. Vet LSD – pre-mating, scanning and pre-lamb
4. Bionic capsules – long acting source of selenium for ewes, if given one capsule a year selenium needs should be met
5. Long acting injection of selenium (Selovin LA) – could be considered the gold standard of supplementation 1ml/ewe should provide enough selenium for a year
6. Selenium prills with annual fertilizer – will boost selenium levels in pasture for approx.. 2 months
7. Many farmers choose a combo of prills, vaccinations with selenium and selenised drenches in the system – perhaps worth checking your status to see if it is working?

OUR CLINICS

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Wintering Your Pack - Working dog nutrition



Anna McLeod BVSc
Waimate Veterinary Centre

A working dog is a high-performing, endurance athlete.

Feeding a high-quality, balanced, energy dense diet helps ensure the health and longevity of one of your best assets

What to consider when choosing a working dog diet – High fat, high protein

A complete and balanced working dog feed should have a good source of both high-quality fat and protein.

Fat is the most important muscle fuel and is slow to burn. A high fat diet provides a large energy source for the endurance to support a full days work.

Protein is the basic building block for muscle, essential for normal repair and maintenance after hard work. High protein diets have also been proven to significantly reduce soft tissue (muscle, ligament and tendon) damage and injury – a recent study showing an 8x decrease with a 30% versus 20% protein content.

Unlike human athletes, working dogs don't need to 'carbo load'. Many poorer quality commercial diets are higher in carbohydrate but lower in protein. These tend to be bulky and filling, but many dogs cannot physically eat enough to meet their energy requirements.

Ideal diet:
20% fat
>25% high-quality protein
>4000 kcal/kg energy content

Joint support

With everyday activities that are hard on the joints, arthritis is a common progressive problem for working dogs that greatly affects their performance and longevity. Specialised formulas within the diet (e.g. glucosamine and chondroitin) help protect joint cartilage to slow down these changes and keep joints healthier for longer.

What about homekill?

Though it can be a good source of fat and protein, even high quality homekill sheep meat is deficient in many essential vitamins and minerals. When fed as the main portion of the diet, rather than as a supplement to a complete and balanced diet, it can lead to malnutrition and serious health conditions.

Care when feeding bones is also necessary, with risks such as gut blockage, perforation, and constipation.

What else is important?

Housing and bedding

The impact of temperature on working dogs is often underestimated. The colder a dog gets, the more energy and muscle mass is burned to keep warm, and therefore a greater amount of feed is required to maintain body condition.

With overnight temperatures regularly dropping below zero in our region over winter months, insulated kennels, bedding, and coats are great options for ensuring working dogs stay in top condition.

Our clinics stock a wide range of complete and balanced diet options, and our staff are always happy to help with all aspects of your working dogs health, nutrition and husbandry.

Feeding Ewes Post Mating



Daley Watson-Krawitz BVSc
Waimate Veterinary Centre

With mating well underway for most of our sheep farmers and the efforts of trying to flush ewes nearing the end, now is the time to think about what to do with them next, going into winter.

Feeding ewes a high plane of nutrition beyond the 1st cycle (17 days) of mating does not greatly impact subsequent scanning percentage. This is because typically ~85% of ewes are already pregnant after the 1st cycle.

As such feeding of the ewes needs to be re-prioritised. It is a waste of feed supplying well conditioned ewes levels above maintenance requirements for the winter until around 8 weeks out from lambing, as there is little production to be gained. These ewes are the ones with a body condition score 3+. These well conditioned ewes can be comfortably maintained on surprisingly low quality pastures, with ME values of 8-9 MJME/KgDM (think stalky, rougher pastures). Over fat ewes, with a BCS 4+, can even be mildly restricted and used to clean up pastures.

For the lighter ewes (BCS 2.5 and lower), this is their opportunity to put condition before that final 8

weeks before lambing, after which doing so is nearly impossible due to the dramatically increased demand from the growing foetus(es). This group of ewes do need enough good quality pasture of at least 10-11MJME/KgDM (think leafy and green) to be able to achieve condition gain, this could be from the feed saved on tightening up the well conditioned ewes, winter crops or supplement feeding.

The benefit of lifting these light ewes over winter will be heavier lambs at lambing, increased lamb survivability, increased colostrum production, increased milk production and improved lamb growth rates in spring.

To create these groups (light, good, +/- over-fat) you must know the condition of your ewes. Body condition scoring your ewes by physically putting your hands on them is the only accurate way of doing this. If this was done pre-mating then these groups could continue. If not then the next good opportunity may be at ram out. The next time to review their condition and re-structure your mobs after this will be scanning.

EWES BODY CONDITION SCORING (BCS)

Chart images sourced from Beef & Lamb NZ

	Body condition score – feeling across and UNDER short ribs	Description – how it feels – compared to an 'average' hand
1.0		The ends of the short ribs feel like the ends of your fingertips, when you push your fingers under the short ribs there is no muscle underneath, just skin. Spine is prominent, there is virtually no muscle on the back and it feels concave.
2.0		Muscle depth under short ribs equivalent to distance from first knuckle to finger tip. Can feel spine, back muscle is slightly concave and not rounded.
2.5		Muscle depth under short ribs about equivalent to distance from second knuckle to first knuckle when fingers are flexed. Need some pressure to feel short ribs. Some cover on spine, back muscle flat.
3.0		Muscle depth under short ribs about equivalent to distance from 3rd knuckle to 2nd knuckle when fingers are flexed. Need moderate to strong pressure to feel short ribs. Back muscle rounded.
4.0		'Prime'. Can only feel short ribs with really strong pressure, back is rounded with plenty of fat cover, muscle under short ribs deep; nearly the distance from first knuckles to the beginning of your wrist joint.
5.0		Obese; fat rolls either side of spine; spine is in a dimple; impossible to feel short ribs; fat either side of tail head. Almost never see in a commercial flock.



EWES NEWS



FECRT Faecal Egg Count Reduction Testing

George Smith BVSc BSc.
Veterinary Centre Oamaru



Purpose of a FECRT

Faecal Egg Count Reduction Testing is a starting point for assessing the parasite resistance status of your property. It is designed to assess the effectiveness of individual drench families against the internal parasite population on your property. The data gathered is the basis for making rational parasite management decisions for your farm.

Seasonal Summary

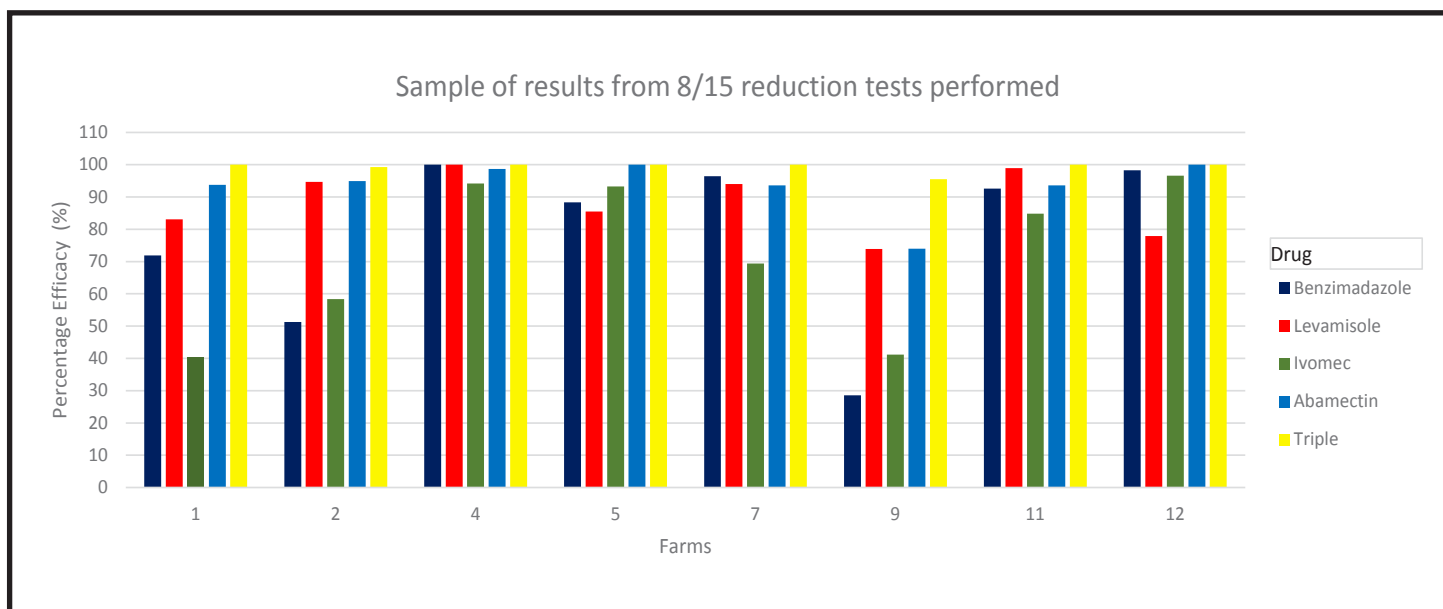
The following results are a summary of 15 FECRTs completed this year across the practice.

The following graph demonstrates some of the data generated from our reduction tests this year. Each block of bars represents the efficacy of each individual drench family on that specific farm.

Results:

	Percentage of farms with resistance to a particular single active	
	2016	2020
Benzimidazole (White drench)	57 %	66 %
Levamisole (Clear drench)	42 %	66 %
Ivomec (Macrocyclic Lactone)	68 %	89 %
Abamectin Macrocyclic Lactone	15 %	42 %
Triple Combination (Matrix)	0%	8%

- Significant resistance in the Ostertagia and Trich worm populations to drenches belonging to the Benzimidazole and Levamisole families.
- Multiple farms with Abamectin resistant Ostertagia worms.
- Very good efficacy of Matrix against Ostertagia.
- Farms with reduced efficacy to Matrix have resistant worms predominately belonging to the Trich family.



Drench resistance is defined as when a drench is less than 95% effective against one or more worm species.

Conclusions:

The data displayed above shows that there is significant variation in results between farms, The results can't be extrapolated between farms within an area.

Every farm has some level of drench resistance. The point at which this decline in drench efficacy becomes economically significant occurs long before there is visible evidence of a drench failure. The physical signs of drench resistance represent the end stage of the complex.

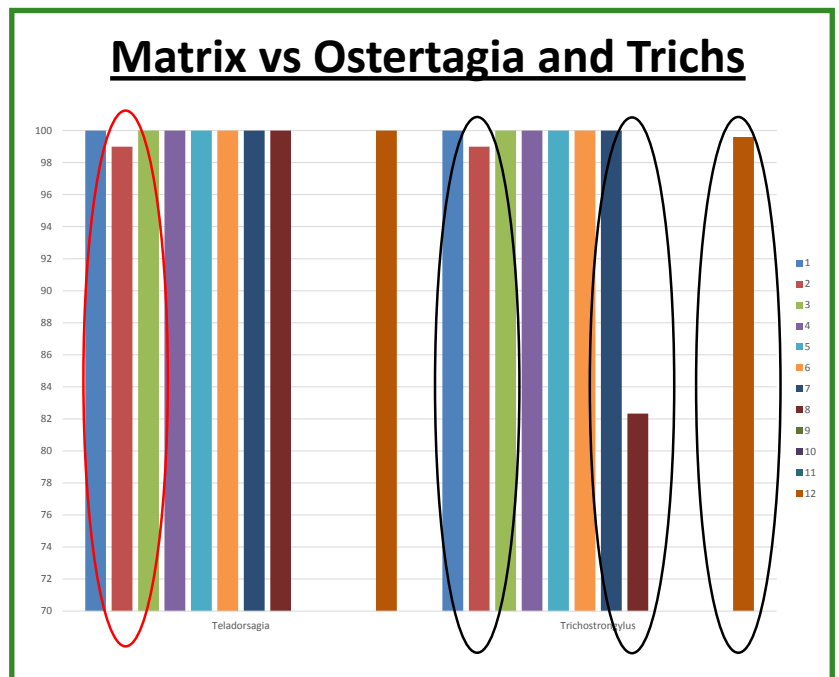
Results from FECRTs are one of the main catalysts for changing worm control habits on farm. Choice of drench is one thing but frequency of drenching, levels of refugia, long acting product use, stocking rates and classes, grazing strategies, and pasture larval management are all fundamentals that need reviewing. With other clients who have been following best practice drenching guidelines, FECRT data has re-assured their farm is in a strong position to continue using traditional drenches and worm control strategies.

An increase in abamectin resistance

The results from this year's data set shows that there has been a rise in properties with reduced efficacy to Abamectin. This is important for several reasons. Firstly, Abamectin is the most potent Macrocyclic Lactone on the market. Secondly, Abamectin is a component of most combination drenches, including the novel actives, Startect and Zolvix Plus. Both drenches rely somewhat on Abamectin to enhance their efficacy and potency.

Autumn Trich issues

There are reports from the north island indicating significant resistance issues with Trichostrongylus worms to Triple drenches. A number of these farms are having limited visible issues throughout the season then having significant problems in the late autumn period. Last autumn we had similar issues on a small number of farms within our practice. Trichostrongylus worms cause significant gut damage and have a high reproductive rate allowing for the accumulation of large numbers of infective larvae on the pasture in a short period of time.



Summary:

The results of our faecal egg count reduction testing in 2020 outline that resistance to single active drench products has increased.. It is imperative that farms know the level of resistance on their property to ensure they can make sound parasite management decisions to delay the onset of drench resistance on their property. There are many drenching strategies and management decisions that can be made to help you manage the level of drench resistance on your property. Novel active drench products are going to play a significant role in delaying the onset on resistance provided they are used in an appropriate manner when required. Not only will novel active products help delaying the onset of resistance, but they will also give increased production benefits.

Do you know the level of resistance on your property?

Can you guarantee that the drench products you are using are giving you the best results?

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EWES NEWS

The Veterinary Centre are pleased to be supporting our beef seed stock farmers. Investing in genetics is the long game. So no matter what the economic climate improving capital stock genetics is always important. It will be interesting to see how we all adapt to the new purchasing platforms being offered. We talked to four of our bull producing clients about thier bulls they have for sale.

Foulden Hill Will Gibson. Middlemarch.

When is your sale and how can farmers view and purchase bulls?

Sale is June 2nd, Starting 2-30 PM online with bidr.co.nz, to view bulls an appointment will be needed, call Will on 027 4360237 or Anton and Liz on 03 4643603.

What do you have for sale?

13 Hereford Bulls, 4 Santa Gertrudis Bulls in conjunction with 24 Angus Bulls from Nethertown Angus.

And why investing in your genetics and business vision is a sound investment for commercial beef production.

Dedicated team driven to produce bulls that are balanced in both production and profitability traits, while maintaining core values of what a bull needs to achieve in our area.



Stoneburn Herefords

Andy Denham, Taieri Peak Rd, Palmerston.

Phone 03 465 0605

Selling the 26 elite Hereford bulls will be either with the on-line BDR system or on-farm auction May 22, 12.30

Will make a decision on by May 11th.

Andy is happy with bulls this year. His target is a moderate frame, no nonsense hill country polled Hereford. Stoneburn has 300 stud cows from which to select sale bulls. The Stoneburn brand quality has been built on intense selection pressure in commercial conditions and a commitment to sourcing top stud genetics from around Australia and New Zealand.

Taiaroa and Cotswold Charolais

Drew and Carolyn Dundass

Glen Ayr Ltd

917 Upper Taieri Paerau Runs Rd,

Paerau, Ranfurly

03 4449770



Drew and Carolyn are offering 22 bulls for private sale this year. Breed focus on good natured, moderate frame bulls with good muscle pattern. Bulls have to be have sound structure and generally shift well. Charolais X calves are sort after for their superior calf weight at weaning and extra carcass potential when finished.

"We are looking forward to a more relaxed sale period this year and being able to spend a bit more time with clients when choosing bulls". Contact Drew and Carolyn or PGGWrightsons agent

Fossil Creek Blair and Jane Smith, Neil and Rose Sanderson. North Otago.



The Fossil Creek Angus team are looking forward to offering 65 Angus R2 Bulls at their sale on June 11th. "While we are keeping a watching brief on Covid considerations and looking at online options, we hope to hold our auction as planned while adhering to any restrictions that may be still in place come mid June" says Jane Smith. "Our bulls are available to be viewed in the weeks leading up to sale day, with our catalogue available both in print and online. We are particularly keen for people to look at the detailed 'sub indexes' that we are again offering alongside standard industry EBVs, to ensure the bulls you focus on are suited to your own individual herd requirements".

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