



mr Motu-nui Rams



THE MOTU-NUI ROUND UP

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MOTU-NUI IN THE COMMUNITY

Hi and welcome to our 2016 newsletter, What a year it has been! Like many of you have found, it has been a very challenging farming environment. We have broken all rainfall records in the time we have been at ICA with 677ml in 2015 (200mls in one event in September) and 450mls so far for 2016 - just a pity it's been lack of instead of too much.

Jason Le Grove (Owner-Operator)



LATEST NEWS AND MUSINGS

from the Motu-nui Rams team.

I can honestly say I have become a more astute farmer over this period with having only grown on average 7500kg/dm in just under two years. It's exciting to think that we can still extract the results we are after while growing very little grass.

Learning to feed stock at critical times has been the key and we now have access to many more tools in the box than those that were available in 1977-78, or even more recently in 1988-89.

There is greater understanding of sheep nutrition, forage crops, feed budgeting, technology available and genetics as well as other farmers trying different things. I see genetics as probably the largest gain that has been made in this time. The national lambing percentage average in 1989 was reported to be 95% compared to 127% in 2015. Take into account that the land use of today compares very

differently than 20 years ago, indicating that most of this increase has been achieved on hill country.

I am not one to predict what might be around the corner with our meat and wool markets but most market analysis tells us to buckle in for similar pricing. Let's concentrate on what we can control within the farm gate and use these very accessible tools to increase our bottom line, especially genetics.

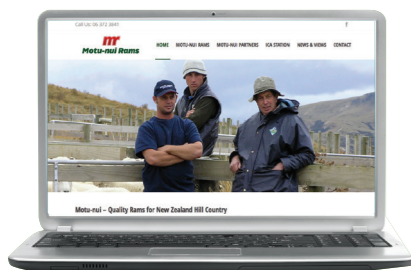
mr Contact us:
06 372 3841



Team ready to start tagging lamb 2016

Have you visited our website?

Jump on and have a look at www.motu-nuirams.co.nz



WORD FROM THE 'SOUTHERN MUSTER'

What a wild and frustrating 12 months of sheep farming we have had to endure. Parts of the country are in drought for the second year running and other parts experiencing one of the better growing seasons ever. Throw into the mix the clover weevil in the deep south and the uncertainty of pricing going forward.

We have Brexit to come to terms with, OIO approval for Silver Fern Farms and a very limp performance from The Alliance Group. The only positive at this stage is that we don't supply Fonterra!!

Being sheep farmers we are a resilient bunch and know how to dig in and plan for the shortcomings, both environmental and financial.

We have to concern ourselves with the things we can control. Good advice, good planning and good genetics are a priority at this time and we believe we have the package to help you make it through these tough times.

In the deep south we have concentrated on sheep that thrive under pressure and can deliver when the feed and opportunity allows. Fertility and growth rates are so important and we have concentrated on sires with these traits - it is certainly paying dividends.

Our ewes across the board have just delivered the best scanning results ever. This comes on the back of our best ever lamb killing season, producing an average killing weight of 19.3kgs, so we must be getting something right.

This season's rams have wintered extremely well and came through shearing last week as probably our best mob ever, having shorn 490 rams with no bottom end in them.

The fact that they are all born from multiples gives us the confidence in knowing we will have a very good line of rams come selling in November.



Solid looking South Island Motu-nui ram hoggots pre-shear.

Once again one of the highlights this year was visiting clients. John came down and I know he was impressed by how well the sheep were performing in the south. It was an exciting week and we saw some extremely well run farms with outstanding flocks that once again reinforce the fact that the genetics are working.

Remember, keep your heads up and be positive about the future. The long term viability remains strong and, hopefully, we will have a stronger industry going forward. We look forward to seeing you all in November. Hope you all have a prosperous lambing and if you have any queries please don't hesitate to give us a call.

The Robertsons

mr Contact us:
03 206 4894

WORLD SHEARING CHAMPS



9-11 FEBRUARY 2017

On an exciting note, Motu-nui South has been asked to supply 1000 full wool ewes for the World Shearing Championships in Invercargill in February 2017. This is certainly a highlight for the stud and will give us a great chance to have our genetics to the fore for the 3 days of competition. We hope some of you will take the opportunity to be at the event and will come and say hello.



LITTLE RIVER A&P SHOW

The team at Motu-nui was honoured to judge the sheep section at the The Banks Peninsula A&P Show at Little River this year. Renowned as one of the most popular A&P Shows in Canterbury, it was great to be involved in such a thriving rural community where sheep still rule!



PROGENY & PROGRESS

Targeting 35kg at weaning

With growth in any season other than Spring not a guarantee, we see lamb weaning weights as a key driver to profit. So even after two hard seasons back to back we are targeting our highest weaning weight ever of 35kg at ICA.

Terminal

We are continuing to make progress in this area, finally hitting our target with strong colouring and good muscling. For the first time we've had the chance to use the Suff/Tex ourselves. In particular, their growth and hardiness stood out as they were weaned early at 64 days and averaged 26kg.

Facial Eczema

One of the biggest concerns emerging this season has been the increase in signs of Facial Eczema in areas not seen before. This caught many off guard and little monitoring was done until clinical signs showed up. The last time we saw signs of this ourselves was nearly 20 years ago. We plan to have a satellite flock this coming mating dedicated to selecting for tolerant animals. We are well aware this will take time but are prepared to start somewhere to assist clients who may be in more FE prone areas. Give Jason a call if you wish to find out more.

Study into the use of campy

We are currently running a study of a selected number of 4th ewes as to the usefulness of campy given to 2th as, from observation, there seems to be a lot of unknown abortion in the sheep industry. We will keep you posted.

EID Tagging

This year we've decided to EID tag at birth, removing the brass tag from the system. This is done with the aim of making things more efficient at docking time and improving accuracy when recording numbers (taking away any human error). The progress in data collection is great and we are now seeing some good software programmes written for the sheep industry. The addition of EID would have to be one the largest improvements I have seen in my time and is continually getting better.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The average lamb price during the 1988-89 dry spell was \$1.51 per kg (with 13.04kg the average carcass weight) and mutton was 0.45c per kg (with 19.79kg the average carcass weight)!
And interest rates were 8-10%.

CROSSBRED CORNER

Earlier this year saw the wind up of the partnership Motu-nui had with 'Pakarakā', as Michael and Kate have decided to take on a different direction. The team at Motu-nui would like to thank them for their commitment over the past four years and wish them all the best in their future endeavours.

Meanwhile, the Crossbred flock has moved back to ICA and it is business as usual. We still have our three core breeds on offer and this year we also have our first group of Romney/Coopworth for sale. We are also looking at stabilising this cross with a portion of our Texels. We welcome any feedback.

Rom/Coop Rams waiting patiently in the Shed

mr Contact us:
06 372 3841



Good genetics will perform under pressure.
Give us a call if the performance of your sheep
needs to be turned on its head.

mr CLIENT PROFILE

FARM NAME Longridge Station
AREA (EFF.) 2000 h/a
REGION Clinton
OWNER & MANAGER Michael and Emma Sutherland

Longridge Station is a 2000 hectare property in the Clutha Gorge, South Otago, which boundaries the Catlins Forest Park. It is in a 70 inch rainfall area, running to 500 metres above sea level, making it a very challenging environment to farm in.

The farm is run by Michael and Emma Sutherland, a young couple with an extreme passion for farming. They have done a great job in the short time they have been there.

They run 9200 ewes doing 140% lambing and also have a herd of 400 Angus, Hereford cross cows. Their lamb weights this past season have averaged 19.9kgs this being their eighth season with Motu-nui rams.

In Michael's words "the rams are good, meaty and compact, and do the job for us. The ewes are not oversized but still give us heavyweight, early maturing lambs. No lambing beats are done as this is a very easy care operation. Both ewes and lambs are very free moving and we are pleased with their performance in one of Southland's most challenging environments".

TOP - Michael Sutherland. BOTTOM - Happy Ewes on swedes



SAVE THE DATE
Saturday 18
February 2017,
Masterton A&P Show.



GATE TO PLATE FOR 2017

We have signed on to be a major sponsor of Wairarapa Gate to Plate for 2017 (www.gate-to-plate.co.nz). This is a great event to showcase the best lamb produced in the Wairarapa. Every lamb that is entered is judged on the hoof, on the hook and on the plate. The event further encompasses the 'gate to plate' concept, with cooking competitions and demonstrations featuring local chefs throughout the day.

Motu-nui is excited to be involved in the Gate to Plate again as the competition is fast developing into a hard-fought contest and becoming a firm favourite on the calendar. Last year's competition had an increase in entries to 91 lambs being registered, in which three of our clients were placed in the top 10.



FROM THE HOME BLOCK

This challenging year has meant it's been hard work gaining maximum performance from our stock. (It is a concern when your limiting growth factor in July and August is moisture.) It has been very hands-on, with decisions made daily all the way through to set-stocking. We've managed to maximise the little pasture growth we have had by utilising some of those tools mentioned above, including:

Feeding the MA ewes - Firstly, we started feeding barley to the MA ewes again in early January. Continuing to feed our MA ewes for 105 days (at a cost of \$7.20/head) allowed us to give our young stock more room. As a result we were not forced to sell stock that we would have otherwise had to. In some ways we were lucky not to receive as much rain as others over that January period when the catch phrase was "if this is el-nino, bring it on!". It meant we made the decision early to do something and protected the bodyweight of our ewes.



Feeding out at single mating April 2016



Weaning late November 2015

Weaning of lambs - A conscious effort to wean early and wean good lambs (30kgs at 80 days, grass-fed only) was made, enabling us to protect the ewe body weight.

Sufficient covers - We aimed to have sufficient covers at set-stocking, something that we have again worked hard at attaining. This has been achieved with use of hill country cropping and the Ram lambs doing it hard. They have worn the brunt, living on our hill country for over 90 days with not much more than a view. 30% as a result, had to be sent out for grazing. They responded with a pleasing weight gain of 15kg over that period (These were 80 days off farm). Crops to provide options - An extra 12Ha of Kale crop on hill country has added another option to our drier than normal farming system. Ideally we were looking to mate on these crops but had to set-stock for single mating. It was interesting to note that some were accidentally mated on the crop and these scanned 46% higher (215% compared to 169% main line MA Ewes) than set stocked mated ewes. This has definitely got us thinking!

mr Contact us:
06 372 3841



Before and after some on farm development- stock are now tucking into something more productive.

mr CLIENT PROFILE

FARM NAME	Limehurst	AREA (EFF.)	670
REGION	Mangatainoka	OWNER	Andy & Nic Gardiner
		CAPACITY	4400 Sheep SU 1800 Cattle SU

Andy and Nic Gardiner moved home onto the family farm 5 years ago, and have been using Motu-nui genetics for the last 3 years. We purchased the farm from our Parents 2 years ago. Before arriving home Andy worked within agricultural sales, and Nic was a Cardiac Sonographer. Together they have 3 children, Angus (5), Henry (3) Evie (5 months).

Sheep: They currently mate 80-90% hoggets (terminal), Currently Terminal 40% ewes as we create a good line of MA maternals, ultimately plan to terminal 2th. and maternal MA. We value an older ewe that has gone through culling pressure (look to buy rams out of older ewes that are proven performers)

Sheep scanning: This year their ewes scanned at 172%, up 7%. Their ewe scanning rate has been relatively easy to increase but the Lambing % has been the hard one to lift. To try and counter this Andy has made a concerted effort to fully feed his ewes the last 35 days before lambing. In the past they set their winter rotation up for set stocking rather than 35 days before lambing they have done have this year.

This season has seen the feed situation slightly down but Andy and Nics ewes are in really good nick and the grass grubs and Porina are looking pretty fat too! Over the next few weeks they have plans to throw some Nitrogen across the whole farm and hopefully this will see some positive growth results.

Hogget scanning: With the introduction of Plantain/clover, more weighing and new genetics - thanks Motu-nui - we have seen our hogget scanning increase by 30% over the last 3 years. - this year they scanned their Hoggets at 105%.

At weaning this year they achieved 800 milk lambs this year vs 300 last year and none previously.

Key performance indicators/targets for Limehurst are: Lambing % plus a focus on gross profit and net Kg's of weight produced as they go through a development phase.

'We choose Motu-nui because in the end you can look at all the numbers under the sun but what made our decision for us was the fact that Jason actually wanted to help us improve, rather than simply sell us rams'



K@N LIVESTOCK

We are pleased to have K@N livestock working for us and taking care of all our stock cartage requirements. They do an awesome job clearing our rams out after ram selling a job that can be very testing when dealing with small amounts, they understand the value in these animals and importance to get them to their destination in good condition.

Great service and always done with a smile no job seems to be a problem!

We hope you enjoyed our newsletter and look forward to catching up with you at ram selling in the last week in November.



Motu-nui Rams

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Motu-nui Crossbreds

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For further information please contact one of our franchise managers. or visit our website www.motunuirams.co.nz