



FERNLEAF NEWSLETTER

September 2020

Hello everyone

Well what a year this has been for us all!- Drought, Covid lockdown, difficulty moving stock, wool prices and then more drought.



One positive we were able to gain during the 'big lockdown' was that Ian was able to join Justin to help out with neglected farm maintenance.

We are hopeful that it will be easier for you all now after not quite so severe of a winter.

With the last of our swedes and silage almost gone, the sun shining and the days heating up, we are looking forward to some serious spring growth... yas!!

National Fielddays – oh dear!

We were very sorry to have had the National Fielddays cancelled as it's such a great place to be able to meet many of you for a catch-up and, of course, to let folk see what we are doing and the progress we've made.

We still believe that resistance to parasites will be the biggest challenge future sheep farming will have to face. As a result of the insistence of vets and drench companies that plying livestock with regular doses of drench, still more farms are facing the fact that parasites are evolving and becoming resistant to drenches ... not a sustainable or enviable position to be in.

And we are sorry for those who find themselves in this situation.

However, there is a way through this situation and we can help!

Looking forward, we've paid for our Fielddays site so are able to retain it for next year's event – hopefully!

Drench resistance – same old, same old ... unfortunately

Thinking about increasing parasite resistance, Justin has been looking at a few properties with the possibility of purchasing another and he was staggered to find that two neighbouring properties he looked at are in serious trouble with drench resistance. We wonder when it will become general practice to present such information with the farm sales information.

Our own results are very pleasing with great progress being made. Of our sale rams only 6% have been drenched – EVER, and 26% had a zero Faecal Egg Count (FEC) at nine months. This testing was taken six weeks earlier than usual at this makes it even more successful.





A bit of history

The other day one of my many distant cousins sent us a very early photo from my grandfather, Douglas Forlong's, stock in the early days of the Romney in New Zealand. It could be almost 100 years ago, so have included it for your interest.

He's not a bad looking sheep, is he, with his nice top line and good-looking body. And I think he would fit in well with today's top sheep.

My sons are now the fourth generation to be working with Romneys, and we've been selling rams for the last 112 years!

Wool – an encouraging development

Even though we have far too many bales mounting in our shed, we are encouraged by interest from Canterbury for our finer woolled sheep. It seems that our ten years of scanning samples from every ram and including results in our selection index is paying off in quality and finer traits. And these attributes are something SIL clients are looking for.

This is something we hope will help our more regular clients for the future so watch this space!

Facial Eczema

We have been working on this problem for more than 30 years . This year to help to improve our tolerance of this scourge for so many folk we have purchased 2 rams both tested at .6 . We think we are in a good position for FE tolerance as we haven't introduced any rams into our flock from outside the high FE area for more than 50years

Justin and Ananda

We are very thankful to have Justin and Ananda living on the property now. Justin is a full-time fencing contractor and both he and Ananda are now able to be more involved with the day-to-day farm operations – Ananda works with the stock records and Justin helps out after work and in the weekends.

As it is now time to start ringing clients and mailing list contacts he is going to be helping me as 250 phonecalls are a few too many to make for one person.

If we do miss ringing you please shoot us an email or ring us up.



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