



*for healthier stock, resistant to worms and facial eczema*

September 2021

### **Greetings from Fernleaf Romneys**

Many of you will already know we have moved slightly north-west to Ohura, and we are delighted with our new farm – Waiora.

It has been an adjustment for Carolyn and I, but we are loving it. Justin and Ananda are now fully part of Forlong Farming Limited and are therefore taking more responsibility (and doing more work) which is great for me now that I'm almost 78.

Our new home is comfortable and low maintenance and Justin and Ananda have a cosy 3-bedroom cottage which gets great sunlight. The farm is 320ha with a great range of contours. The ground fertility levels are high, and we can see that reflecting in our stock. We are very fortunately to say the least – though we are having to adapt to mud, rather than pumice.

We are very pleased with the way our Romney sheep have moved (all three truck and trailer loads). They were brought out in the wool and shorn in our new woolshed, which was a treat for all. Currently Justin and I are flat out with lambing and moving electric fences for the dairy grazing cattle we've taken on.



### **Lockdown and it's benefits / challenges**

As farmers we are lucky that it's business as usual with the exception that Farmlands and the vet requires a phone order and its contactless pickup. We are fortunate to have a big playground to stretch our legs, but we miss the interaction we have when we do the weekly trip to town. Remember we're only a phone call away if you want to have a chat. We have Ian with us at the moment and he is teaching from home – another set of hands for when we start docking – haha.

## Mystery Creek Fieldays

We moved onto Waiora at the start of June and went straight onto setting up for Fieldays. It was good to see many of you there after missing 2020 due to lockdown, and we really enjoyed you making the effort to pop in for a catch-up. It was also good to see the expanding numbers of lifestyle folk who came, to give them the chance to discover that there are sheep available that, when handled correctly, can thrive with less drenching and fussing.

Justin was with us this year helping to look after the site. This meant some of you were able to meet him and put a face to the name (and a voice) when we start talking to you regarding ram sales.

On the first day we had three groups of people come in who told us they are now using the new Zolvix drench because nothing else was working. When questioned about “where to” when that failed few had many answers. That issue leads me to my next favourite topic ...



## Resistance to parasites – one of my favourite topics

We do believe we should drench if a sheep needs it but, if they don't, we don't drench – it's a bit like dosing up on medicine only when you need it. If sheep need more than one drench they are removed from our breeding flock.

We got our July faecal test results back and we very pleased with the outcome – out of 199 lambs, 33 came back as having 0 eggs per gram and 38 came back showing less than 75 eggs per grams. Only three came back with 700 plus. Around 15 years ago I got excited when six tested less than 1000.

So we're constantly making great progress and the numbers are still coming down.



## Looking forward

We believe there is a great future for our sheep genetics. The progress we've made with resistance to parasites is significant with very few drenched again this year. This is something Justin is equally as passionate about.

It is very pleasing to see so many lambs doing well, despite high numbers confined to small areas in a highly challenging year for worms. There has been no let-up on the challenge with the perfect conditions for worms.

Despite the disaster wool returns are currently experiencing, I still believe it will eventually have a strong future. I am hopeful that the world wakes up to the fact of what I read recently ... to 'carpet a 3-bedroom house takes the equivalent of 22,000 plastic bags and 5% of all landfill in the US is synthetic carpet'. When I told city relatives these numbers recently, they immediately changed their new carpet order to wool – yeah!!

And did you see what the beloved Greta Thunberg was wearing the other day – a woollen jersey – for goodness sake!

## For sale! – 2020 rams

It's coming up to that time of the year when we're starting to work out ram orders for our 2020 progeny so Justin and I will be ringing you at some point soon.

Alternatively, if you are keen to have a catch-up and/or get your order in please don't hesitate to contact us.

Melvin 021-0275-3847 / Justin 027-656-8782

P.S. Stay safe during these uncertain times with Covid and remember, we are the industry that keeps New Zealand ticking 😊



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