

THE WOOL PRESS

November 2010

Volume 250

£1.25

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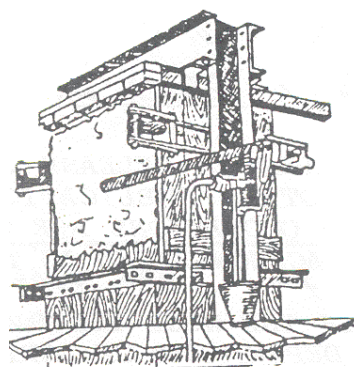
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Edited by Lucinda Lowe

Printed by The Print Shop, Stanley

Produced by the Department of Agriculture, Falkland Islands Government

EDITORIAL

In writing these editorial contributions to the Wool Press, I usually look through the articles to see if there is a theme, no matter how tenuous it might be. This month the contributions cover a wide range of domestic and international topics and issues. If there is a theme it might be to do with the opportunities in agriculture at this time.

Animal health is the subject of a number of articles. Zoë reports on the results of an interesting trial assessing the benefits of using vitamin D supplements to ward off rickets. Sue and Steve write on safeguarding dog health with items on looking after teeth and the potential perils of dogs commuting to work on quad bikes.

In terms of the 'opportunities theme', Mac describes the expanding possibilities for beef production both for the domestic market and the export market. He also contributes an item on the stem cell revolution and its relevance to breeding programmes. Staying on meat we thank Jack Allolio for contributing a useful report on the World Meat Congress held recently in BA. Jack sets out a range of interesting, and some quite staggering, statistics in terms of meat production in southern South America, together with information on prices which generally seem to be on the rise.

Talking of rising prices, wool has not been left out. Ian comments on current wool prices and the factors that have led to the upward trend. Shelley Nightingale reports on the progress being made with MPM breeding at West

Lagoons Farm. The reduction in micron has certainly exceeded the target in the Islands Plan! It must be pleasing to see the improvement in prices for finer wools and indeed all wool. Rising prices for wool and meat are good of course. However, lest we get too carried away they are only one side of the equation and production costs are unlikely to have remained static.

Finally, Ian contributes an article on opportunities in working in Agriculture. This is aimed particularly at young people looking at embarking on a career in agriculture. It looks at some of the options and highlights the training opportunities available here.

Readers will notice that the October 2010 edition was the last to be edited by Siân Ferguson. Siân has left however she continues in the agriculture sector as DoA's loss is FIMCo's gain. We wish her well in the new job. Teenie Ross is due to join the department later in November and in the meantime Lucinda is holding the fort.

Earlier this week I was kindly sent an email link to the British Pathé news site (remember the newsreels in the cookhouse). The item of interest showed the *RMS Darwin* loading wool at Teal Inlet. Seeing the *Darwin* again brought back a few queasy memories. It was fascinating to see photos and people from 1969. You never know what is going to turn up on the web, but I should sound a note of caution on the download size of some of the images.

John Barton
Director of Natural Resources

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BEEF CATTLE SUPPLY AND DEMAND

By Mac McArthur

Increased Quality Beef Demand

With the oil and gas exploration employees enjoying the high quality, relatively inexpensive Falkland Islands beef, both on the rigs and in the restaurants in Stanley, demand for finished young cattle has increased considerably. Other new market outlets include the NAAFI and family store, at MPA as developing markets for fresh young beef. Prior to these new markets for beef being developed, FIMCo was processing around a beast a day on average (365 per year) and is currently processing around 400 a year.

Surprisingly the Falklands has for some time imported both from South America and the UK significant tonnages of fillet, sirloin and processed beef burger patties (estimated equivalent of around 100 head of cattle annually) and with the increased demand from the oil and gas exploration industry this amount of imported beef has recently been increased.

Export Beef Market

Last year, FIMCo purchased 115 older cattle for a small export trial and was aiming at purchasing around 200 head. This year FIMCo will be purchasing older cattle that are carrying at least 3-4 mm of subcutaneous fat to provide manufacturing type beef which is mainly sold to the foodservice industry (schools, hospitals, service clubs etc.).

For those farmers still carrying old beef, cull cows that can be fattened up or other relatively unproductive 'grass guzzlers' that previously there has been no market for, this is your opportunity to quit them and replace them with genetically superior, polled, quiet young cattle that you can make money from if you manage them properly.

Following a successful trial with manufactured grade beef for export in 2010, FIMCo are looking to develop this further in 2011 and are looking to increase the price for 3-4 fat score.

Change Brings Opportunity

With the steadily increasing demand for both quality young cattle and older finished cull cattle there are emerging opportunities for farmers that have beef cattle and are prepared to manage them well and improve the genetics to meet a number of markets.

The defined markets are: (a) producing weaners and selling them on a pence/kg basis to a fattener; (b) marketing weaners straight off their mothers with 5mm minimum carcass fat (young beef); (c) marketing steers and heifers from 18-36 months with 5mm plus of fat (prime beef); (d) marketing cattle older than 36 months (mature) or (e) providing cull cows and old beef that have at least 3-4mm fat for the export market.

These 5 different markets provide farmers from all parts of the Islands an opportunity to do their homework on the costs of producing



and transporting their cattle to FIMCo or consider selling them as weaners for someone else to finish on quality re-seeds, crops or carefully managed tussac over the winter months.

Contracts Critical

With the increasing demand for beef cattle of all ages it is vital that the supply throughout the year matches up with the demand for processed beef that FIMCo has on any one day, week or month. FIMCo is now offering contracts for the supply of certain specifications of cattle to FIMCo at defined times. For this contract system to work it must be accepted that it is a two way obligation and just as FIMCo needs to honour the agreement and take the number of cattle from farms at the times agreed, farmers must also meet the agreement to provide the number of cattle at the agreed specification on time.

To do this will require very close liaison and regular communication with Dave Roberts the FIMCo Logistics Officer. Checking that cattle are growing and finishing at the expected rate particularly through the winter and spring months is vital. If there is a feed shortage or the cattle are not fattening as well as you expected, Dave must be informed as early as possible so he can adjust his schedule and find other cattle to fill this supply gap.

Ultimately penalties for non or late supply may well have to be introduced and possibly compensation paid if FIMCo is not able to meet its contracted obligations .i.e. a fully two way obligation.



Yards/ Handling Equipment

If you are serious about making money out of beef cattle you have to be serious about having workable yards, with a crush and head bale. If you don't have workable yards there are funding options available.

Opportunity

It is said opportunity only knocks once. Time to do your sums for your farm and decide whether or not beef production to meet the variety of markets both current and emerging is for you or not. Keep in mind the time from joining cows and bulls to a cheque in the bank account for 2 year old finished cattle is 3 years so your planning horizons need to be long term.

With the export market that FIMCo has developed, all beef that meets the specifications (even down to 1-3mm fat) now has a market. Once the local market is fully supplied the surplus beef processed can be frozen for the export market, unlike the situation some years ago when beef producers had no market except a very small local market.

If you have a mob of semi wild 'grass guzzlers' that you are going to have to tag before 2012 it might be worth talking to FIMCo and seeing if they will take them for the export market this summer when they are carrying 3-4mm of fat plus.

If you need more information call Katrina on 27355 and she will put you through to a DoA officer. Alternatively if it is a FIMCo enquiry talk to John Ferguson or Dave Roberts on 27013.



INJECTING HOGGETS WITH VITAMIN D TO ASSESS BODY WEIGHT AND THE OCCURRENCE OF 'RICKETS'

By Zoë Luxton

Abstract

Near the end of Winter 2009 there were one or two instances of hoggets developing 'rickets', the term used to describe the syndrome of bowing legs, lameness, weakness of bones and enlarged joints. Articles in the November and December 2009 WP looked closely at the relationship between calcium, phosphorus and vitamin D and their role in the development of bone and what happens when they are deficient. Overall a gross deficiency of vitamin D is the most likely cause of rickets and a basic pilot trial was performed to assess the benefit of injecting hoggets with a vitamin D supplement before winter. No significant statistical difference was found between the average weight of the mob injected with vitamin D and the mob that wasn't.

Introduction

Vitamin D is an important component in the mechanism of how ruminants absorb dietary calcium and phosphorus. If there is a deficiency in vitamin D activity, calcium and phosphorus absorption will be reduced³. Calcium and phosphorus are needed for normal bone growth. Vitamin D is obtained via the diet or by production in the skin when it is exposed to sunlight. Skeletal demineralisation and the clinical symptoms of bowed limbs, lameness, weakness, enlarged joints and pathological fractures in growing sheep are generally thought to be due to vitamin D deficiency (so that adequate calcium cannot be absorbed) rather than a gross calcium deficiency. However, calcium is low in acidic soils so it is possible that the gross amount of dietary calcium intake is also below recommended levels in many parts of the Falkland Islands. Through his work in the Falkland Islands, Sean Miller (2003) showed that vitamin D, phosphorus and calcium intake of sheep varied throughout the year, generally being lowest over autumn/winter which you

would expect with poor pasture growth. He found that calcium intake did not appear to fall below the maintenance level required in sheep and calcium availability in summer was not a limiting factor for weaner growth. However, plasma concentrations of vitamin D were shown to be low between March and October which is consistent with other seasonal vitamin D studies from similar northern latitudes to our southerly one². Phosphorus was found to be below recommended maintenance levels for weaners and shearlings during winter and spring but he saw no obvious clinical signs of a widespread phosphorus deficiency. Sub-clinical symptoms of phosphorus deficiency however, can include reduced appetite and thus decreased food intake. This investigation into phosphorus rather than simply vitamin D warrants further studies beyond the scope of this basic trial. Poor pastures, restricted access to native pasture and low hours of sunlight over winter can make growing sheep at risk of skeletal demineralisation and bone deformities. This simple, cost effective trial was proposed to see if the administration of an injectable vitamin D supplement significantly affected the growth rate and clinical well being of hoggets.

Method

In May 2010 a random sample of 100 ewe hoggets were selected from the 2009 drop. 50 ewes were tagged, weighed and injected with vitamin D (Hideject, Bomac) at a dose rate of 5500-6000IU/kg⁴. A further 50 were simply weighed and tagged to act as a control group for comparison. Three months later the hoggets were re-weighed and the injected group given a second dose of vitamin D. Just prior to shearing (2 months later) the hoggets were weighed for a final time. Throughout the trial period all ewe hoggets were treated the same. They were all worm drenched on the basis of FEC results, wigged once and grazed on swede crops and native pasture. The average weight for the injected and

non-injected sample mobs were calculated for each date and a basic statistical analysis performed.

Results

Throughout the trial period no clinical cases of rickets were observed. There were a number of hoggets lost to follow up at the third weigh in, invariably some had died but no sheep were seen to be showing clinical signs of skeletal demineralisation. Several of the hoggets had been missed at drafting for the third weigh as wool growth was such as to obscure some of the tags.

Weights of Hogget's

DATE	18/05/10	17/08/10	12/10/10
INJECTED HOGS AVERAGE WEIGHT	21.9KG	26.0KG	27.9KG
NON-INJECTED HOGS AVERAGE WEIGHT	22.0KG	25.5KG	28.2KG
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.867081 608	0.49278 26	0.93702 47

At a glance it can be seen that at the end of the trial the hoggets in the NON-injected group actually had a slightly higher average weight. Even without a statistical analysis it can be seen that our theory that injecting Vitamin D into hoggets increases bodyweight and physical condition is not upheld in this instance.

A statistical analysis was still carried out on the average weight of both groups at the time of each weighing to check that the weight differences were not statistically significant and were in fact simply due to individual variation between the sheep in the sample groups. Finding out that injecting vitamin D actually caused a significantly lower average weight would be just as useful to know!

The P(T<=t) value above is a statistical value that indicates the likelihood of getting the observed results if the injection of vitamin D made no difference at all. The cut off limit for the P-value is commonly 0.05 so if the P-value is less than 0.05 it means that there is

a less than 5% chance that we would have obtained the observed weights if the vitamin D made no difference to the weights of the sheep and then we would accept the alternative theory that the Vitamin D DID make a significant difference. In this trial all the P-values were **over 0.05** meaning that there is a higher chance that we would have observed these weights regardless of whether we had administered the vitamin D or not and thus there were no statistically significant differences in the average group weights.

Discussion

While it cannot be argued that a relative or absolute deficiency in calcium, phosphorus and/or vitamin D causes problems with the development of bones and therefore normal bone growth, it would appear that supplementing hoggets with vitamin D in this instance has not led to significantly better body weights. Is body weight the best parameter to measure to compare the effects of vitamin D supplementation? Certainly it is one of the easiest to measure and generally a deficiency in any gross or micronutrient tends to retard growth. However, if there is a deficiency in calcium/phosphorus/vitamin D it is often the best fed, fastest growing lambs that suffer the effects as they need more of these minerals compared to lambs on poorer pasture that are slower growing. The most effective way to assess what is occurring within bones is to send samples of bone for analysis but this obviously involves sacrificing a number of sheep and is beyond the scope of this basic pilot trial.

Several hoggets were lost to follow up by the third weighing. Invariably some had died and some were missed at drafting. It may be prudent in further trials to try and examine any dead hoggets by post mortem and send bone samples for analysis. Four more of the uninjected hoggets were missing than the injected ones but we cannot really draw the conclusion from this that more uninjected ones died as there has been no survey of dead bodies and it is known that the drafting was difficult due to wool obscuring tags.

No gross cases of rickets were seen in the hoggets over the course of the trial and from

the Met Office information below, I would imagine it is because there were actually sufficient amounts of these nutrients naturally available over this 2010 winter. The table below shows average hours of sunshine for winter 2009 and 2010 and it is obvious there has been considerably more sunshine this year compared to 2009 and general average hours thus leading to better vitamin D manufacture in the sheep's skin and better pasture growth and thus better availability of calcium, phosphorus and vitamin D anyway.

MPC Sunshine Data (April to October 2009 and 2010)

	Sun-shine 2009 (hrs)	Sunshine 2010 (hrs)	Average Sunshine (1986-2010) (hrs)
April	74.5	127.8	112
May	88	104.8	83.4
June	64.4	66.8	60.7
July	54.6	65.2	65.8
August	76.8	107.9	97.7
September	151.1	168.1	133.8

A repeat of this pilot trial over several winters to see if there is a significant difference between sample group weights when there are low sunshine hours would be ideal and indeed it is hoped that this is what we will be

able to carry out. If significant differences in survivability, growth rate etc was to be found over winters with low sunshine hours the difficulty lies in predicting when sheep would benefit from a vitamin D supplement.

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Hew and Sue at Blue Beach for providing the sheep and manpower required to run this trial. It is much appreciated.

Thanks also to Nick Gouldin at the MPA Met Office for providing the figures above.

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MPM BREEDING IN THE FALKLANDS

**By Shelley Nightingale
West Lagoons Farm**

Six years ago Peter and I decided it was high time to do something to improve our flock, mainly to breed finer wool without wrinkles, but also to keep and improve on both wool and body weights.

We attended a workshop in Patagonia run by Dr. Jim Watts, pioneer of the SRS® (soft rolling skin) method of sheep selection, in 2004. We also saw the evidence of success of this method on several farms.

Our entire breeding flock has been classed each year since by Wally O Connor, whom we met at the workshop.

We have carried out extensive Artificial Insemination programmes each year.

I would be the first to admit we made some management mistakes, and coupled with a few bad lambings, has resulted in slower progress than there should have been.

Then there is the Falklands factor..... Even so, as a result, our average flock micron has dropped by 3.3µ; whilst maintaining body and wool weights, both of which are now gradually improving.

Now our younger ewes and rams are well into the 2nd cross so would expect some pretty good lambs this year, and a marked improvement.



Filling the shed

This year, we had 960 ewes inseminated, our largest programme to date.

Fingers and toes crossed for the 29 and 30 October for decent weather.

This year I suddenly realized the wool coming off the shearling and young ewes was looking and feeling pretty good; awesome in fact.

These fleeces are now much more common in our flock than before.

So thought it was high time for an update.

We are also hoping to get some sheep off to FIMCO, so hope for good results there.

Finally, I was interested to see that Tony Mills had visited some properties in Australia doing the same kind of thing as we are. He mentions visiting Leahcim Poll Stud, which is interesting, as although our semen for A.I. comes from Glendemar Pty, under MPM breeding, a lot of the ram pedigrees include Leahcim sheep.

Got there first, Tony!

Anybody interested in how these rams shape up could look at the results of the last sale, log on to www.thefarmtrader.com.au and go to Glendemar page.



Glendemar ram used for AI



Wool from two year old ewes from West Lagoons farm 2010.



EWE PURCHASE SCHEME

Just a reminder that the ewe purchasing scheme is still operating. If you want to buy young ewes we will pay one third of their cost.

This is to help build up peoples breeding ewe flocks if they want to. Contact Ian Campbell for details; icampbell@doa.gov.fk or telephone 27355.

If you have ewes to sell or you want to buy ewes but don't have any lined up yet, contact us too and we will try to put you together.





Jack Allolio
Wool & Sheep Consultant,
B.A.

Report on the 18th. World Meat Congress held in B.A., 27-29 September 2010

Over 1,000 scientists, processors and traders from over 40 countries, met with farmers at this congress to analyse and tackle the challenges and opportunities offered today by the red meat markets worldwide. Cattle & pork were important subjects, but I concentrated on our own market; sheepmeat & lambs. *Both the Uruguayan and Chilean delegates expressed their pleasure at having this kind of event “just around the corner”, with a lot of technical, statistical & marketing information available.*

Uruguay had an important number of delegates representing their complete meat value chain. My first interview was with Dr. Eng. Pablo Caputi, Director of INAC, their National Meat Institute. He commented: “Our countries will soon be responsible for the export of half the animal proteins in the world. That implies rights, and also obligations.”

In Uruguay, agriculture and livestock generates about one third of the country's Gross National Product. Apart from INAC, other institutions are involved, such as INIA- (National Institute for Farming Research), SUL (Uruguayan Wool



Pablo Caputi



Secretariat), the government's Plan Agropecuario, FUCREA (Uruguayan Federation of Agricultural Research Groups), the farming associations and of course, the processing industries (exporting abattoirs).

One of our challenges is to achieve a higher degree of cooperation between these institutes. Unlike Argentina, where meat exports only represent 10-20% of production, in Uruguay they represent 60-70%. The promotional role of INAC is totally in line with national interests. In our view, to guarantee a good supply of the domestic market, we must make viable the whole meat sector, including exports.

There is important interaction with Brazil at private industry level, with significant Brazilian investment both in farming and also in processing. However, cooperation with their research institutions is only moderate, probably because their internal market is so big that it takes up all their efforts.

As an activity prior to the Congress itself, the



2nd Economics Workshop IMS was held in Montevideo between September 22nd-24th, with 50 specialists from more than 20 countries attending, discussing the agenda under the title **“Facing the challenges of meat to achieve sustainable growth”**.

In Uruguay, the national flock is probably below 9 million head, but all conditions are set for sheep numbers to grow again. Taking into consideration the much shorter biological times compared with cattle, recovery will be visible if market conditions help (as it happens right now both for lambs, sheepmeat and wool).

Uruguay exports 20-30,000 tonnes of slaughtered sheepmeat and lambs. To be considered sustainable, that figure should be below 20,000 tonnes at least until lambing rates improve. Export prices are very good at the moment, as so far in 2010 the average value of sheepmeat and lamb exports has been US \$3,426 per tonne. This is an improvement of nearly 34% above the average of last year which was US\$ 2,557 per tonne. Compared with beef, the export value of sheepmeat & lambs is US\$ 500 above, something which has not happened since 2005. This reflects how good the business is right now. In early September the price of lamb was nearly US\$/kg 4.50 (slaughtered carcase). At the same time, heifers fetched US \$/kg 3.21 slaughtered.

Fabio Montossi, Eng.Ph.D, who works from Tacuarembó in the North of the country, is Director of the Uruguayan National Beef and Sheepmeat Programme and is also a mentor of their successful Fine Wool Project.

I asked him to tell us about the successful heavy lamb project, which he described as a good example of horizontal integration of the meat value chain. He answered, “It was launched in 1996 by SUL, with support from the Ministry, the San Jacinto exporting abattoir and Central Lanera Uruguay, the exporting Cooperative. It also obtained subsequent support from INIA, the Research

Institute, the National Meat Institute and the University, in a joint work including technical information on feeding, management, genetics and animal health, helping its adoption throughout the country. The typical product is a castrated male lamb live weighing 35 to 45 kg, aged between 8 to 12 months and with a body condition between 3.5 to 4.5”.

The main focus is on the sheepmeat quota of Uruguay at the EU of 5,800 tonnes a year, which the country usually fulfills. They also sell within Mercosur, mainly to Brazil.

Development of this product has met approval from all parts of the value chain and also from abroad, due to its productivity, quality, profitability and consumer acceptance.

INAC & INIA carried out quality audits in 2002-03 and again in 2007-08, which ascertained the important progress achieved, best reflected by the maximum slaughter figure of one recent season, which was of nearly one million lambs. At the same time improving animal welfare and introducing better management practices. They also



carried out tasting sessions by European consumers, comparing with the respective local products.

The advantages of Uruguayan lamb are attributed to their natural grassland feeding.

At the moment of writing these lines (22 October, 2010) I learnt that they have already surpassed a carcass price of US \$ / kg 5.00 with a slaughter yield of around 48 per cent.

No doubt currently the most profitable business in Uruguayan camp production”.



Juan C. García González, Agr. Eng., Gral. Manager of Consorcio Ovino S.A. (Chile)

“Our company is one of the “technological consortiums” created in Chile in the last 5 years, for very different economic activities including agriculture.

Juan C. García

We operate with a foothold both in the regions of O’Higgins & Magallanes, and have adopted a pro-active stance with FIA, the Foundation for Agricultural Innovation as our strategic partner. In our first step we launched 18 R & D projects, and for our second step we have 13 new ones. Chile presently has around 3.9 m. sheep, and growth since the last census is estimated at around 6 %. Magallanes accounts for 56,7 %.

The country has a sheepmeat quota of 6.200 tonnes at the EU, with a total of 7 exporting abattoirs now operating. The 2009 slaughter figure of 780.000 head represents a very low extraction rate. Exports in 2009 were: US \$ 26.6 m. sheepmeat; 15.5 m. for wool and 1.4 m. sheepskins.”

García considers that prior to the scanning of ewes, feed supplementation, balanced animal loads, grassland & sheep management, genetics and animal health, it was necessary to develop better marketing

channels, with improved demand and guaranteed payment, to replace informal trade which is still important in the “Lakes & Rivers” regions Center/South.

Dr. Tomás de Estrada, President of the Argentine Hampshire Down Breeders Association, explained in perfect English his proposal on the subject “Sheep production and trade within Mercosur”;



Dr. Tomás de Estrada, President of the Argentine Hampshire Down Breeders Association

“Our proposal was discussed in meetings with breeders from Paraguay, Uruguay, Brazil & Argentina, trying to generate a horizontal integration between our production, taking advantage of the technical and marketing experience in all of our countries.

One of our challenges is to re-create a “sheep culture” as an indispensable part of any serious proposal. Our priority is achieving a superior lamb, which when weaned permits us obtaining a carcass of 16 to 17 kg, with a slaughter yield of around 52 %. Or as alternative, a lighter lamb suitable for fattening to a weight of 20 kg. No doubt the Uruguayans are the example we should follow. Beyond Patagonia and TdF,



Richard Brown

we promote mixed grazing of sheep, which is done in the North with Herefords, and also grazing meat sheep breeds on soja fields, as means of better use of available land”.

SO YOU WANT TO WORK IN AGRICULTURE...

By Ian Campbell

It is vital that young people are being encouraged to work in agriculture, but the entry point into farming is poorly defined and very variable. On the one hand that is good. Many different pathways get you to the same point but on the other hand it can be hard to get started.

The easiest way of course if you live on a farm is just to start work on it. Easiest is not always the most ideal and I can see a few issues with that.

Firstly the farm was performing to a production and income level without your (full) input and unless Mum and Dad are ready to retire, then the farm will need to increase its production and profit to pay your wages. This might happen; but it needs to be made to happen. Plans need to be made so that the extra labour going into the business is fairly rewarded with extra income.

What are the long term plans for the farm? If two or three siblings all want to have a go then the critical mass might be reduced and it will become non viable. It is important that moving onto the farm is well planned through - succession planning is an important aspect. There is often a conflict between family businesses and romantic attachment to home that makes this a hard topic to deal with.

Secondly Mum and Dad might I am sure be the best farmers in the world - but there might also be other ways to do the same thing. It is always good to see how other people approach the same tasks - then you can decide the best way to do things for yourself. This is particularly the case if they have different enterprises or put a different emphasis on certain aspects.

Learning on the job is a very good way to pick up the basic skills. Stock handling, tractor driving, gathering, rousabouting and so on. The business skills, book keeping, decision making, strategic planning... these are often

the more difficult skills to learn and are arguably just as important.

A good idea if you do go back onto the family farm is to take on a particular aspect and make it your own. It may even be a new enterprise that you develop, or possibly a part of an existing one - you might be the beef manager for example. This gets you out of the comfortable role of just having to follow orders and another persons plans and into the business aspects of planning and taking full business responsibility for something. The greater the challenge the greater the reward.

So if you don't have access to a family farm, or even if you do; try to experience a few different farms. I think it should include a small family farm, a large corporate farm with plenty of staff, and even an overseas farm in a place like Australia, New Zealand or the Scottish Highlands. Many farms in England for example will be interesting enough but they will require a lot of skills that you may not need here, but it does all help I am sure.

Of course shearing shed skills are important and the above also relates to those wishing to work specifically in the shearing industry. Try to get some varied experience, plan what you want to be doing and speak to those in the industry about it. Learning those skills on the job is the tried and true way, although there are courses like wool classing if you want to follow that particular interest.

Formal training in agriculture is more difficult. I did a degree in agricultural science which is designed to give you a career in research or advising rather than farm work. There are however colleges that have a more practical bent and certainly if they offer quite a bit of the business skills- planning- budgeting- monitoring the health of the business etc, then these are a very good option too.

The best thing to do is to get out and about and talking to people in the industry. We can offer help through the training scheme. We have a number of farmers on our books looking for trainees at the moment. We will

contribute up to £3,000 per farm for a few months training. If people want to give this a go then please contact us for more information.

If you are interested in the trainee program - either as a trainee or a hosting farm - then please contact us at the office and we will send you more information.

The World Longest Cat



A US cat has broken the Guinness world record for the world's longest domestic cat.

Stewie, a five-year-old Maine Coon cat, was certified as the new record holder after measuring 48.5 inches from the tip of his nose to the tip of his tail.

His owners, Robin Hendrickson and Erik Brandness of Reno, Nevada, said they decided to try for the record after hearing people say they were

amazed by Stewie's length.

"We realized that Stewie was exceptionally long about three years ago," Mr Hendrickson told the Reno Gazette-Journal. "Everyone says, 'Wow what a long cat!' "

Stewie was certified by Guinness World Records as the world's longest domestic cat. The record was previously held by another cat that measured 48 inches.

Source: Ananova.com

WATCH THOSE TEETH

By Susan Campbell

Teeth are as important to dogs as they are to humans and poor health of teeth can lead to many problems, not least of which is pain. Pain is not easily detected in animals so it is important that we look out for sources of potential pain without relying on seeing the signs of pain. In 80% of dogs over the age of 3 there will be signs of periodontal disease yet it is generally considered that only 5% of dog owners are aware that their dogs may have a problem.

It is common for dogs teeth to only be noticed when an animal stops eating or a large swelling occurs such as might be found due to a tooth root abscess. However, regular checking of your dogs teeth is a vital part of ensuring its health and well being. If you find that there is a significant build up of tartar, broken or chipped teeth, gum recession, redness or bleeding of the gum around the base of the teeth then it is probably time to let us have a look. The most common teeth to

develop tartar are the back molars and checking them properly requires you to pull the lip right back to view them adequately. These should be cleaned properly to prevent further damage to the periodontal tissues.

Cleaning of dog or cats teeth requires us to anaesthetise the animal and then clean the teeth using an ultrasonic scaler and then polish the teeth to try and slow the development of new tartar.

In addition to the build up of tartar and the consequences of this to the teeth and gums of the dog it is not uncommon to see broken or worn teeth where the pulp is exposed or discoloured teeth which have become pink through to black as the result of damage to the tooth. All of these should really be removed as they will at some stage cause the dog a problem and considerable pain which may not be detected. Some of these can be avoided by not giving the larger very hard bones to dogs. These types of bones are particularly renowned for causing slab

fractures of molar teeth.

When cleaning an animals teeth we also investigate the condition of all the teeth and decide which teeth need to be removed. On occasions it is beneficial to radiograph the mouth also as this gives us a more complete picture of the degree of periodontal disease and the necessity for teeth to be removed.

Keeping dogs teeth clean is best done using a

toothbrush but as I think it highly unlikely that many farmers will be out there doing that to all their dogs then, the use of not such large bones covered in meat which they are forced to chew off , dry food or vegetables such as raw carrots do help a little. Looking after teeth will prolong the life of your dog and helps to prevent diseases that may occur in other organs so their care is generally considered a good investment.

STEM CELL REVOLUTION

By Andrew Norris, 03 Sep, 2010 04:00 AM

NEW technology involving stem cell implants from British breed bulls into Brahman bull testicles could lead to a much greater uptake of breeds like Angus in the Top End.

The CSIRO's breed engineering team for Food Futures has been toiling away for the past few years developing this technology which is expected to take artificial breeding to the next level and could significantly lift the value of northern Australia's beef industry.

Theme leader for the team, Nigel Preston, based at Cleveland near Brisbane, said the introduction of British breed genetics into Brahman dominated herds could greatly increase the meat quality, and hence the value of the individual crossbred offspring, by as much as 30 per cent when compared to the purebred Brahman.

With the large herd sizes in the Top End,



artificial insemination has not been practical on a large scale, and with the need for bulls to handle ticks and the harsh environments, simply putting a pure Angus or Hereford bull out with the cows was not a workable solution.

Mr Preston said the Brahman was tick resistant and suited to the extremes of the north. So what if the Brahman bulls could do the artificial inseminating for them?

He said the issue with the northern herd was the six million or so Brahman and Brahman-derived cows needing to be covered – but what better way to do it than with bulls?

“What if you had Brahman bulls with Aberdeen Angus semen in their testes?” Mr Preston said.

This research was kicked off using rams in December 2008, as sheep were smaller and easier to handle.

Once they had success with sheep, they then switched their focus to cattle, which Mr Preston said were trickier due to their size.

The young Brahman bulls (five to six months and less than 200 kilograms) had their own stem cells “knocked down” with irradiation using a similar dose to a CT scan, which did not affect their somatic cells.

They had a few days of recovery before an ultrasound-directed needle was used to introduce the donor spermatogonial stem cells (or teste cells) from the chosen donor bull

such as an Angus.

These young Brahman bulls then matured as sperm surrogates which could be used to sire Angus-cross calves in areas where Angus bulls would struggle to survive. Mr Preston said this would allow commercial breeders to expand the use of elite genetics and would also have benefits in regions such as sub-Saharan Africa to increase the rate of genetic improvement in species such as goats.

“It’s ideally suited to systems where traditional artificial insemination isn’t practical,” he said. Project leader, Sigrid Lenhert, said the 30pc increase in value was based on the extra dollars a grain-finished crossbred Angus/Brahman carcass would bring at the abattoir, compared to a pure Brahman carcass. She said this profit prediction relied on a vertically integrated production system, where the producer who bred the calf could also background and finish it appropriately and market it advantageously.

At this stage, it was also unlikely all the matings from a surrogate Brahman bull would be Angus-cross, as the bull would also provide some of its own sperm, produced alongside the donor’s. Therefore, the Brahman bulls still had to be good quality. “We would source the type of high-grade bull calves producers are already happy to use, and carry out the procedure before they have reached puberty,” Ms Lenhert said. “The technology in the form we currently envisage it being applied, therefore, offers the opportunity to wean a percentage of

crossbred calves from an otherwise pure Brahman production system.”

NSW stud cattle breeder, Greg Chappell, Dulverton Angus, Glen Innes, said such technology could accelerate the rate of genetic improvement in the northern Australian beef herd. He said when combined with tools such as DNA markers, the superior bulls could be identified and their genetics used more widely.

Mr Chappell said this could also bring much faster gains than the introduction of estimated breeding values had, as the gains on Breedplan were normally diluted when they reached the commercial end of breeding. And he saw it as a great tool to get the most profitable genetics into the commercial sector quickly – a great help for producers stuck in a price-taking position. “If we’re going to make any real price gains, they’re going to have to come from improvements in performance against specification,” he said. “This is everything from market specs to parasite resistance.” He said by using the DNA marker technology, the sperm surrogate technology could be used to get the right genetics into the right environment.

Mr Chappell said this could be seen by some bull breeders as potentially reducing their market, but “at the end of the day we need diversity for different environments and markets”. “We need to be making more progress – in my lifetime the gains we’ve made have been miniscule,” he said.

TAKE CARE WITH DOGS TRAVELLING ON QUAD BIKES

By Steve Pointing

Zoë has written some really interesting articles over the past 6 months on lameness in dogs and has described some of the more common conditions that we encounter.

One or two camp dog owners have asked me why do there seem to be more injuries to dogs now, than there were in the past, and this has

got me thinking.

In the past, dogs would either have run alongside the shepherd who would have been on horseback, or in more recent times, been carried in the back of a land rover until their services were required.

Nowadays one of the most common practices is to carry your dog on the back of your quad

bike and I think this may have contributed to the increase in certain kinds of injuries to farm dogs.

The quad bike is close to the ground and dogs get used to jumping on and off it at regular intervals.

Most of the time they do this without causing any problems but occasionally they may jump off before the quad bike has come to a complete halt or they may jump out onto a piece of very uneven ground.

This is the occasion when an accident is most

likely to happen - an over extension of a joint or a nasty twist of a knee or a hip.

It all happens in the space of a few seconds. You may never be able to totally prevent such accidents from happening but you can help to minimise them by having your dog securely attached on the back of the bike, not trying to carry too many dogs for the space available and making sure the dog doesn't jump off a moving vehicle.

As I read somewhere the other day "It is better to have a strong fence at the top of a cliff than an ambulance at the bottom".

WOOL PRICES LOOKING GOOD

By Ian Campbell

I hate to tempt fate but at the time of writing, two things have happened relating to the wool market that are of note.

Firstly the AWEX prices in AUD\$ are the best they have been for a number of years. Whilst this is as close to a world wool price as we can get I will also say that, as you would expect, other international markets are equally as good.

The second thing that has happened is that the pound has dropped- certainly relative to the AUD\$, and that makes Falkland Island wool cheaper for people setting out to buy wool.

This time last year the wool prices were 40-50% better than the terrible prices the year

before and this year they are 20% better again so that is a vast improvement over the last couple of seasons.

A lot of people have forward sold wool this year to guarantee a piece of this action. Forward selling will ensure you get a price you deem to be good now; the key is to accept that as taking a lot of the risk out (remember prices 2 years ago) and if by chance prices improve above the forward contract then good luck to those that get it, including in many cases a significant portion of your own clip, as it is not often the entire clip that is sold forward.

Shearing, wool carting and wool coring are happening in earnest as people are keener this year to sell their wool than they have been for a long time.

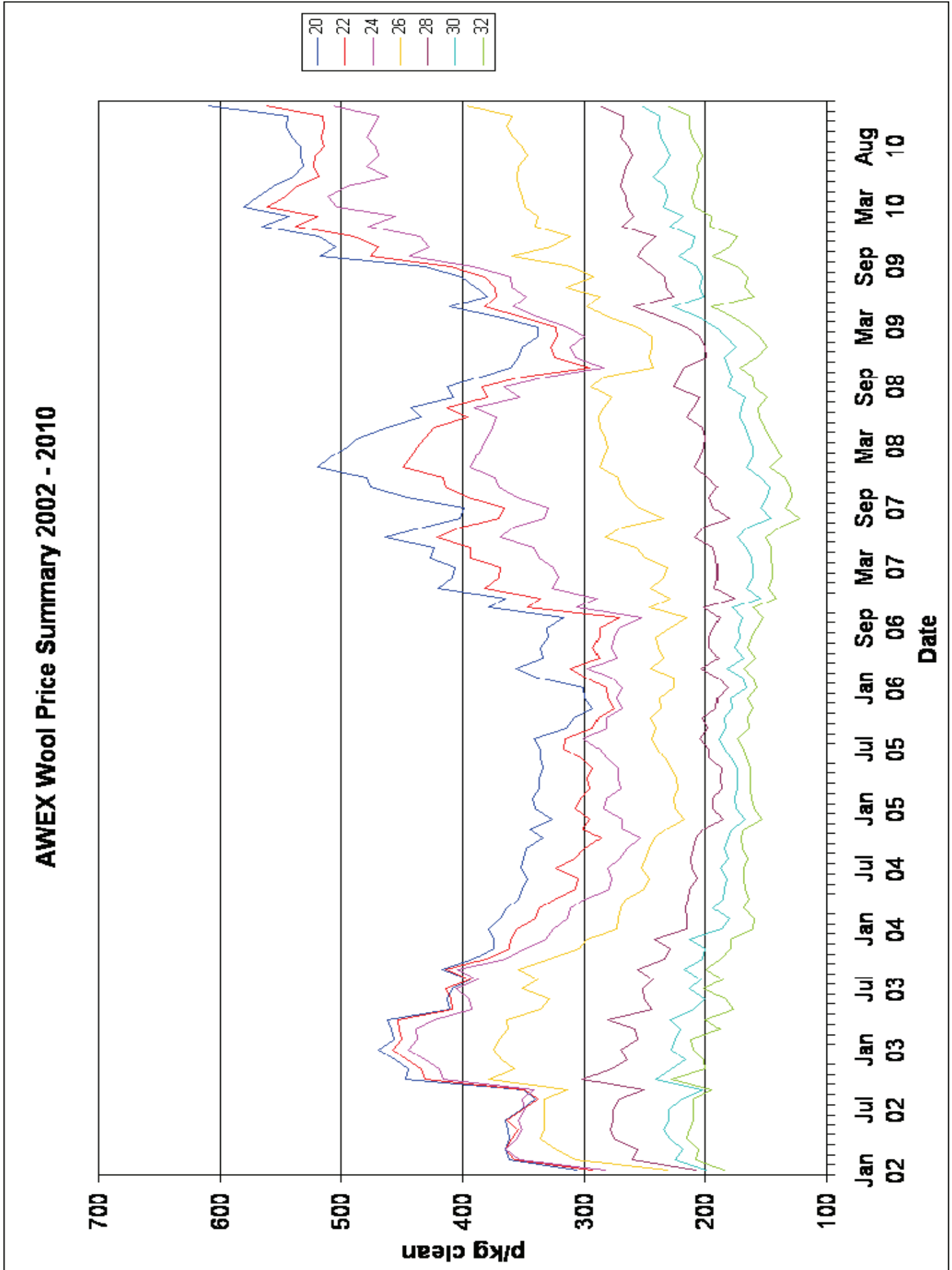
The reason is supply driven. Once again two factors are in play. The first is that world wool production has dropped considerably (droughts, changing enterprises, good mutton prices) and the second is that the vast wool warehouses supplying wool processing plants are now kept much more empty as the economists are telling the processors not to keep such huge supplies in the back room- keep the pipeline shorter is the way they describe it.



Wool Classing in the Saladero shearing shed

WOOL PRICE TREND OVER TIME

Based on weekly DoA Wool Reports



WOOL PRESS RECIPE CORNER

Potato Dogs

From the Twilight Bridge website

INGREDIENTS

- 4 medium baking potatoes
- six and a half ounce (180g) can of hot dog sausages
- 2 tsp. curry paste
- 4 oz. (125g) button mushrooms
- 1 oz. (25g) butter



METHOD

Scrub the potatoes and pierce with a fork

2 minutes

Microwave on full power for 18-20 minutes

Stir in the curry paste and place the sausages into the mixture

Wrap potatoes in foil while making filling

Cook for 2 minutes on full power

Melt the butter in an oblong microwave bowl for about 30 seconds on full power

Cut open the baked potatoes and share the sausage and mushroom mixture between them

Stir in the mushrooms, cover and cook on full for

Dates for the Diary



17th November

Dog Dosing Day (Droncit)

Please remember to contact the veterinary service on telephone 27366, fax 27352 or email imports@doa.gov.fk and advise when your dogs have been dosed

1st December

Saladero Day

To include brassica cropping, pasture production, and livestock production (sheep and cattle).

29th December

West Falkland Ram & Fleece Show

Contact Nigel Knight on telephone 42094 or email n.knight.coastridge@horizon.co.fk for details (more information to follow in the December Wool Press)

February 2011

Field days at Bold Cove and Port Howard

Puzzle Page

Trivia Time-Out

- When did Europeans first discover the Falklands?
- Where, roughly, will you find the Falkland Islands?
- What is the approximate population of the Falklands (excluding military personnel)?
- On which of the Falkland Islands do the vast majority of the population live?
- What is the name of the capital of the Falkland Islands?
- What is NOT one of the major industries of the Falklands?
- While on the Falklands, people love to spot the plentiful penguins. How many different species breed on the islands?
- There are military flights to the Falklands from Brize Norton, in the UK. From where could you catch a regular, scheduled flight?

Sudoku

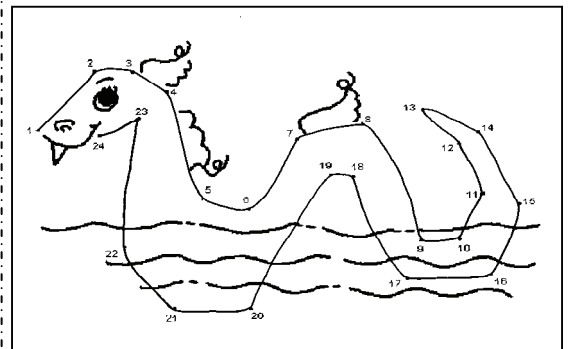
				7		4	2
2			6			9	3
8				2	9		5
		8	9	6		4	5
	5		7		4		9
9		7		8	5	3	
	8		4	3			9
4		1			2		6
5	6		1				

Each Sudoku has a unique solution that can be reached logically without guessing. Enter digits from 1 to 9 into the blank spaces. Every row must contain one of each digit. So must every column, as must every 3x3 square.

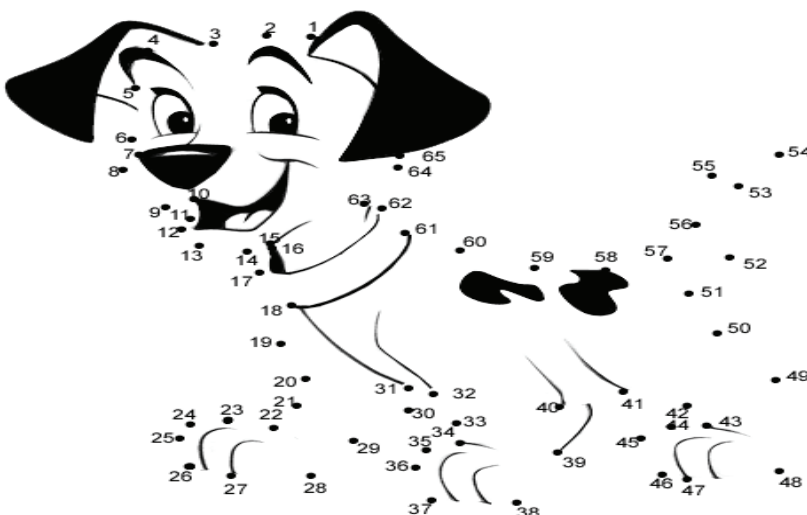
Good luck!

October Solutions

- 60p
- The lynx
- It is the slang for a sandwich
- Duck-billed platypus
- Mexico
- Dog fighting was made illegal
- The Ostrich
- Nuuk
- Lima
- 82
- Leonardo Da Vinci
- Chile
- Top to bottom, right to left and 'back to front'
- There are no eyebrows on the Mona Lisa
- The onion. (Potatoes and tomatoes are produced in greater quantities but are less widely used).
- The Giraffe
- Because all the competitors were male - and naked.
- 5
- Ash
- Cock fighting



Dot-to-Dot



4	2	8	5	1	9	7	6	3
7	5	3	6	4	8	9	1	2
9	1	6	7	2	3	5	8	4
1	4	5	9	3	2	8	7	6
8	7	2	1	6	4	3	9	5
3	6	9	8	7	5	2	4	1
2	8	4	3	9	6	1	5	7
6	9	1	2	5	7	4	3	8
5	3	7	4	8	1	6	2	9