

# THE WOOL PRESS

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## EDITORIAL

September! Shearing will soon be under way and the whole cycle of farming revolves again. It really is becoming a little scary how quickly each 'off-season' seems to pass. Perhaps it is a reflection of how busy the entire farming calendar has come rather than of passing years!

Welcome to another information filled edition of the DOA Wool Press. Thank to the veterinary section for the up-date on Foot and Mouth disease and the ramifications on importation of products into the Falkland Islands. The outbreak of this devastating disease in the UK provides a reminder about why biosecurity controls exist in this country and their critical importance to the overall economy.

Peter Johnson has been extremely busy this month. The articles on lamb lot-feeding, length of mating as well as hogget and wether trials have an important message to the long-term conduct of livestock operations. They are commended for your attention. Similarly, if anyone is interesting in establishing a small scale demonstration site to further their understanding of grazing management principles, please do not hesitate to discuss the issue with Peter, or indeed any one of the Agricultural Advisors.

Bloat in lambs! A clear and logical article from Zoë that offers an explanation of why problems sometimes occur and, even more importantly, what can be done to reduce the problem. I am sure that the veterinary section would welcome comments from farmers as to how the option works in the Falkland Islands.

Thank you to Helen Otley for the update on Elephant Seals and information on the questionnaire being carried out by Gilly Cotter over the next few months and also to Krysteen for her fantastic sounding recipes. We hope that everyone tries and enjoys her recipes.

This month we have added information on the price of lambs, beef and also pork in the United Kingdom. The information is sourced from the 'Farmers Weekly' and is intended to provide a current price snapshot of price each week as well as showing how the current prices compare to longer term benchmarks. We hope that the information is of interest

All the best for now,

Neil Judd  
Senior Agricultural Advisor

# **FOOT & MOUTH DISEASE OUTBREAK UNITED KINGDOM**

## **IMPORT RESTRICTIONS IN THE FALKLAND ISLANDS**

The Department of Agriculture would like to advise retailers and the general public that due to the current outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease in the United Kingdom there are restrictions on the export of goods from the whole of the United Kingdom.

Although the Falkland Islands is not part of the European Union, we do (in most cases) mirror European Union import regulations aimed at controlling animal disease. This is to ensure that the Islands do not allow the importation of an animal disease which could be detrimental to our economy.

The European Union has introduced legislation which provides that certain things derived from animals can be exported from Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) despite the recent outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease.

This legislation is European Union (EU) Commission Decision 2007/554/EC. It is currently in force but will be reviewed, and updated, on 23 August by the Commission of the EU.

The Director of Agriculture in the Falkland Islands intends to permit the import, from the United Kingdom to the Falkland Islands, of certain things derived from animals, as if the Falkland Islands were a member of the EU (other than the United Kingdom), for the ease of importing goods.

This will:

- enable the exporters to get valid information from DEFRA (the UK department for the environment, food and rural affairs) about what products, procedures and declarations need to accompany the imports to the Falkland Islands;
- give the Falkland Islands the same confidence that the measures introduced will protect it from foot and mouth disease as other EU member countries;
- enable importers to simply explain to their wholesale agents in the UK what is required; and
- enable changes and updates to be easily (*automatically? See notice below*) adopted and implemented as the progress unfolds in the UK.

The Department will keep you informed of any further major changes. This does not affect those goods currently being imported from Chile or Uruguay

### **IMPORT PROHIBITION (FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE) PROCLAMATION 2001**

#### **(Article 2)**

Authority is given in accordance with article 2(2)(e) of the Import Prohibition (Foot and Mouth Disease) Proclamation 2001 ("the Proclamation") for the importation of anything falling within the descriptions given in article 2(1) of the Proclamation, the importation of which would otherwise be prohibited by effect of the notice of the Acting Director of Agriculture of 6 August, provided that the Director of Agriculture can be satisfied that thing was exported from the United Kingdom in compliance with;

- (i) Decision 2007/554/EC; or
- (ii) a Decision which amends or replaces Decision 2007/554/EC.

# FULL PELLETT FEEDING OF NEW-SEASON LAMB

*By Peter Johnson*

The trial that was conducted from February through to June has finally been completed and the simple analysis conducted.

## The Trial

- Sheep pellets sourced in Uruguay were fed to three different mobs of lambs for a period of 50 to 71 days at Port Howard (PH), Elephant Beach Farm (EBF) and Swan Inlet (SI)
- The cost of the pellets, (averaged to include freight within Islands) was £250/tonne or 25p/kg
- A starter and a finisher ration were used. The starter had lower energy and protein, but was more palatable to get animals used to feeding
- Troughs and self feeders were used to supply feed to the animals ad lib
- Growth rates achieved were 82g(PH), 125g(EBF) and 152g(SI) per head per day (g/hd/day) over the length of the trial
- These differences can be put down to feeding regime, time on feed and genetics of the lambs

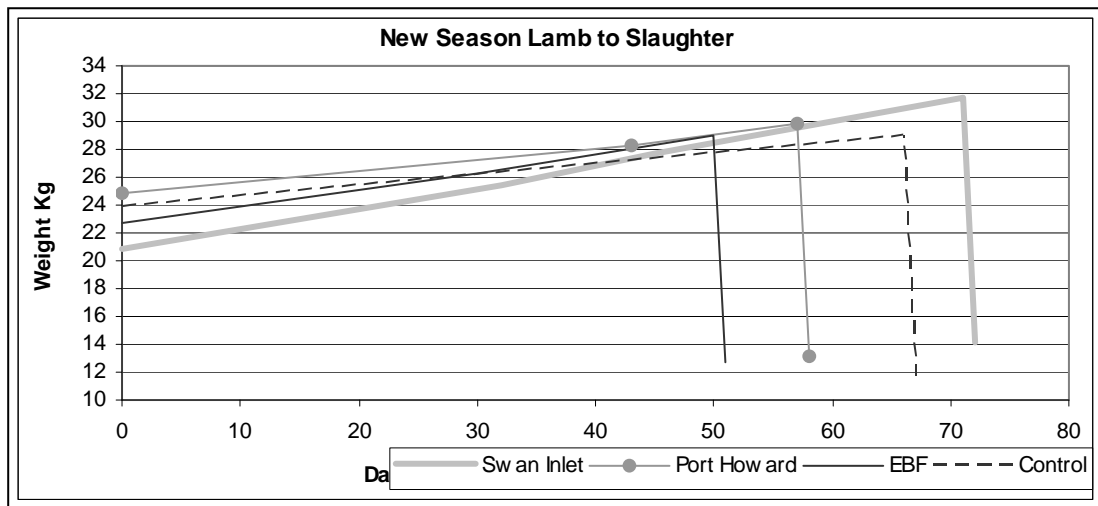
The control used for this experiment was the combined average of the lambs that had entered the wether trial at Goose Green for a similar period. These animals were placed onto high quality native camp. Although the animals were not slaughtered, a carcass weight of 11.7kg was estimated for these animals, using a yield based on an average of all animals at the three other sites who weighed 29.0kg at their last weighing.

## Lesson Learnt

- The animals need to be on the higher protein, higher energy feed for longer
- Animals need to have continuous access to fresh feed, and need to be routinely directed towards the feed
- We were too cautious about the possibility of grain poisoning (which occurs when the change from a grassed based diet to a grain/pellet based diet is too rapid and the rumen microbes cannot adjust)
- Growing animals need high levels of protein and energy which were limited in the starter feed used in this trial
- Animals require access to good quality, clean water
- There are always a proportion of the animals that will not eat the ration. About 15% of the lambs in all three of the trials did not respond in the same way as the rest of the mob

## Results

The following graph sums up the trial from where the animals started to where they finished and their carcass weight. The second graph shows the differences in growth between the three sites and the control.



## Costs and Returns

At current prices for feed and for lamb at the abattoir, it was not economically viable with the feed source used on a whole mob basis – even if the highest growth rate of 152g/head per day is reached.

The important factor is how many kilograms of pellets it takes to produce a kilogram of live weight gain, or the **feed conversion ratio**. This can be described as 6:1, or 4:1 etc. At 6:1, that means it takes 6 kilograms of feed to produce 1 kilogram of live weight. As FIMCo pays on a carcass weight value, the yield must also be taken into account. For the following calculations a yield of 45% has been used, i.e. 45% of the animal live weight was carcass weight.

Below is a sensitivity table. It illustrates the price it costs to produce a kilo of carcass weight (which is the basis on which animals are paid for by FIMCo) based on the feed conversion ratio and the cost of the pellets and an average yield conversion of 45% from live weight to carcass weight.

So let's look at Swan Inlet –

- It takes 2.22 kilograms of live weight to get 1 kg of carcass weight, if the yield is 45%
- The animals there had a feed conversion ratio of 6:1; 1 kg of live weight for 6 kg of pellets eaten.
- The cost of the feed was £0.25/kg. It cost £1.50 (6 x £0.25) worth of feed to put on 1kg of live weight
- If they need to put on 2.22 kg of live weight to make 1 kg of carcass weight that is  $2.22 \times 1.50 = £3.33$

The price in brackets below the farm name, are the actual performance.

Cost of pellets per Kilogram	Ratio of Pellets eaten to Live weight Gained				
	8 to 1	7 to 1	6 to 1	5 to 1	4 to 1
£0.05	£0.89	£0.78	£0.67	£0.56	£0.44
£0.10	£1.78	£1.55	£1.33	£1.11	£0.89
£0.15	£2.66	£2.33	£2.00	£1.67	£1.33
£0.20	£3.55	£3.11	£2.66	£2.22	£1.78
£0.25	£4.44	£3.89	£3.33	£2.78	£2.22
£0.30	£5.33	£4.66	£4.00	£3.33	£2.66
£0.35	£6.22	£5.44	£4.66	£3.89	£3.11

<b>Port Howard (£4.77)</b>	<i>Elephant Beach</i> -£3.71	<u>Swan Inlet</u> -£3.42	Prices Currently under the £1.35/kg paid by FIMCo
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At the highest current price paid by FIMCo of £1.35, none of the trial sites would be economically viable. The boxes highlighted in green show under what conditions (pellet price and conversion ratio) feeding pellets would be economically viable.

### Future

- The benchmarks of 152g/head/day and a feed conversion ratio of 6 to 1 have been set for what can be achieved in the Falkland Islands
- Higher growth rates and lower feed conversion ratio's can be achieved with a higher energy level within the diet, but care will need to be taken to avoid acidosis

Although wide spread feeding of whole mobs has been shown not to be viable at this stage, there is still a future for pellet feeding in the Falkland Islands in some specialised circumstances. This may be where by putting on a few kilograms with a concentrated pellet feed adds considerable value to the overall animal, not just the extra kilograms worth £1.35.

## THE CARRY OVER EFFECTS OF THE LENGTH OF JOINING

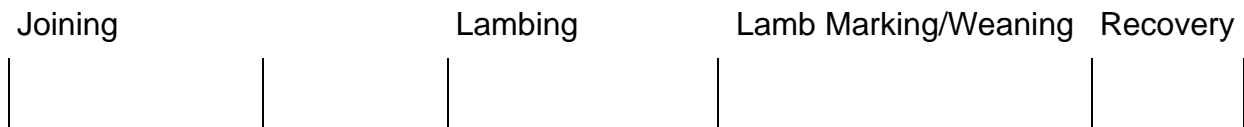
*By Peter Johnson*

The length of time that the rams are left out with the ewes has a huge carryover effect on the whole productivity of the ewe flock. If the rams are out longer than they need to be, then it has impacts further through the season for lambing, weaning and joining again the next year. Let's look at two systems –

### System 1

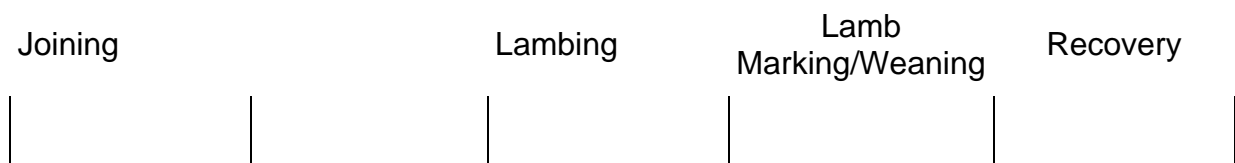
In this system the rams are put out on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May and left with the ewes for 12 weeks until about the 1<sup>st</sup> of August. Sheep have a gestation period of 150 days, so the lambs could be born anywhere between the 1<sup>st</sup> of October and the 1<sup>st</sup> of January. If the lambs are then weaned in mid-march, when the youngest lambs are 8 to ten weeks old, that only leaves the

rest of March and April for the ewe to get ready again for joining, a period of about 6 weeks.



### System 2

In this system the rams are left out for 6 weeks from the 1st of May. Lambs are born between the 1<sup>st</sup> of October and the middle of November. Weaning can take place in the middle of January which gives the ewes 14 weeks to recover and be in the best condition possible for joining the next season.



This second system gives both the weaned lambs and the ewes access to fresh, high quality pastures in the middle of the growing season.

The dates used (1<sup>st</sup> of May etc) are indicative. You can do this whether you lamb in September or in December.

Most ewes fall pregnant within the first two cycles after the ram is placed in with them. If they don't, then there is generally a problem with the ram, or the camp that they are in is too big or too broken up for the ram to find all of the ewes. Having good body condition in both the ewes and rams is also an important factor when joining. All of these can be overcome with management.

If ewes do not have a good recovery period from weaning to joining, they are weaker going into winter and that has carry over effects on the quality as well as the number of lambs born the next season. There are also detrimental effects on the ewes ability to survive the winter.

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## **REDUCING 'BLOAT' IN HAND-FED LAMBS**

*By Zoë Luxton*

An article in the July 2007 Vetscript from New Zealand caught the eye of us here in the veterinary department and we thought we would share it with you since lambing time will be upon us before we know it.

A farmer from New Zealand, fed up with losing hand-fed lambs to bloat, ended up contacting a Norwegian farmer and the Norwegian school of veterinary medicine for help (a high incidence of abomasal bloat has been reported in 15-30 day old lambs in Norway!)<sup>1</sup>. This novel Norwegian idea of using a more yoghurt like feed for lambs instead of milk replacer has been used by farmers and vets alike in New Zealand with bloat and scour cases being much reduced.

Abomasal bloat occurs in lambs being fed milk-replacer. Warm milk entering the abomasum (the 'true' stomach) provides the bacteria present (it is thought that *Sarcinia ventriculi* and Clostridial species are the main culprits) with an excellent environment for fermentation. Fermentation produces much gas which then causes the abomasum to expand. Lambs can become really distended within 1 hour of feeding and die quickly from abomasal rupture or from the extreme pressure on the organs of the abdomen and chest. Typical treatment includes using a trochar to release the trapped air but often it is too late for successful treatment so prevention is definitely better than cure.

Yoghurt containing *Lactobacillus* species ('good' bacteria) theoretically provides a stable environment in the abomasum that prevents the 'bad' bacteria colonising and multiplying in the gut. *Lactobacilli* are also said to improve immune function.

#### Ideal early feeding strategy for artificially reared lambs

On the day of birth try to give up to five feeds of colostrum if possible (ewes or cows) – about 600ml for a 4kg lamb (or 15% of the lambs body weight).

If you have fresh/frozen/powdered colostrum available then feed this on days 2-4 also. If lambs have had a feed of colostrum from the ewe they can go straight on to the yoghurt feed. If you have no colostrum and don't think the lamb will have had any from the ewe just start feeding the yoghurt on the day after birth and feed milk on the day of birth.

#### Yoghurt recipe for small numbers of lambs (under 20)

- Put 3L of warm water (40°C) in a 9L bucket
- Add 1kg calf milk powder. Mix with an electric stick blender. They recommend calf milk simply because it is cheaper. You can use lamb milk powder if you prefer. Fresh cows milk is also fine to use as long as it has no antibiotic residues as these will kill the 'good' bacteria.
- Add 200ml of acidophilus yoghurt. Mix, then cover with a lid or sheets of news paper. The yoghurt produced at the Dairy contains acidophilus, make sure you get natural flavour. Lamb might not like strawberry!
- Keep the mix warm for the next few hours, if the air temperature is too cold the milk will take a long time to ferment. (They suggest using a brewer's mat that you can buy but not that many of us here make beer! Their other suggestion is putting the bucket in a polystyrene box with a lid with a hot water bottle as the heat source in the box. The airing cupboard may be another good warm spot).
- The yoghurt should set within 8-12 hours and may have a soft crust on top with some liquid at the bottom or may resemble thick commercial yoghurt.
- Top up with cold water to the 8L mark on the bucket and mix well. Feed in the same quantities that you would feed milk.
- Remove 200ml of this liquid yoghurt for use as the starter for the next batch.

There is a recipe for really large numbers of lambs as well which I can provide you with if you want it – just give me a ring on 27366.

Points to remember:

- Replace every milk feed with this 'soured' milk.
- Have a gradual transition from feeding warm to cold liquid yoghurt over a period of 4-5 days.
- Introduce the liquid yoghurt to lambs from 5 days of age, although it can be given to lambs from 2 days old if insufficient colostrum is available.
- Treatment is effective under either ad lib or set feeding regimes (eg 1-2 times a day)
- Treatment does not add a lot of extra expense.

The New Zealand farmer that started using this regime stopped abomasal bloat and scours completely by feeding yoghurt and she raises 100 lambs artificially each season. Lamb deaths were reduced from 25% to 3%. She feeds the lambs meal, hay and water along with the yoghurt but if you have decent grass for them to nibble that will be just as good as hay and meal. Make sure there is always a plentiful water supply.

Any further questions? Call 27366.

#### *References*

1. Lutriases B. and Simenson E. (1982/83) *An epidemiological study of abomasal bloat in young lambs. Preventative Veterinary Medicine 335-45*

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## **FALKLANDS ELEPHANT SEAL QUESTIONNAIRE**

*By Helen Otley, Environmental Planning Department*

The southern elephant seal is found across low latitudes of the Southern Hemisphere. During the 1800s and early 1900s, elephant seals were killed by sealers at most places where they breed, including in the Falkland Islands.

Elephant seals slowly started to return to the Falkland Islands during the 1900s but what is the status of the species today? How many pups are produced and where are the breeding harems?

Italian scientists monitor the population on Sea Lion Island annually but what is happening elsewhere? Have your breeding harems increased or decreased in size? Over the last 50 years, have breeding harems come and gone?

Science student Gilly Cotter has organised for the Environmental Planning Department to run an Elephant Seal Questionnaire for landowners during November.

You will hopefully find a copy of the questionnaire in your October edition of the Wool Press. It will ask you to check your coastlines for breeding elephant seals and where possible, count the number of weanlings (that is, pups that have just been weaned by their mothers) present in mid to late November.

We're particularly interested in counts of weanlings. The pup in the photo is about two weeks old and after four to eight weeks, it will be abandoned by its mother, develop silver-grey fur and be rather fat.

We realise that November will be a busy time for you but perhaps the location of the breeding sea lions are near to where you might be gathering sheep or checking lambs. However, if you know that you have breeding elephant seals but could do with some help with the weanling count, please contact us in advance, as we may be able to help.

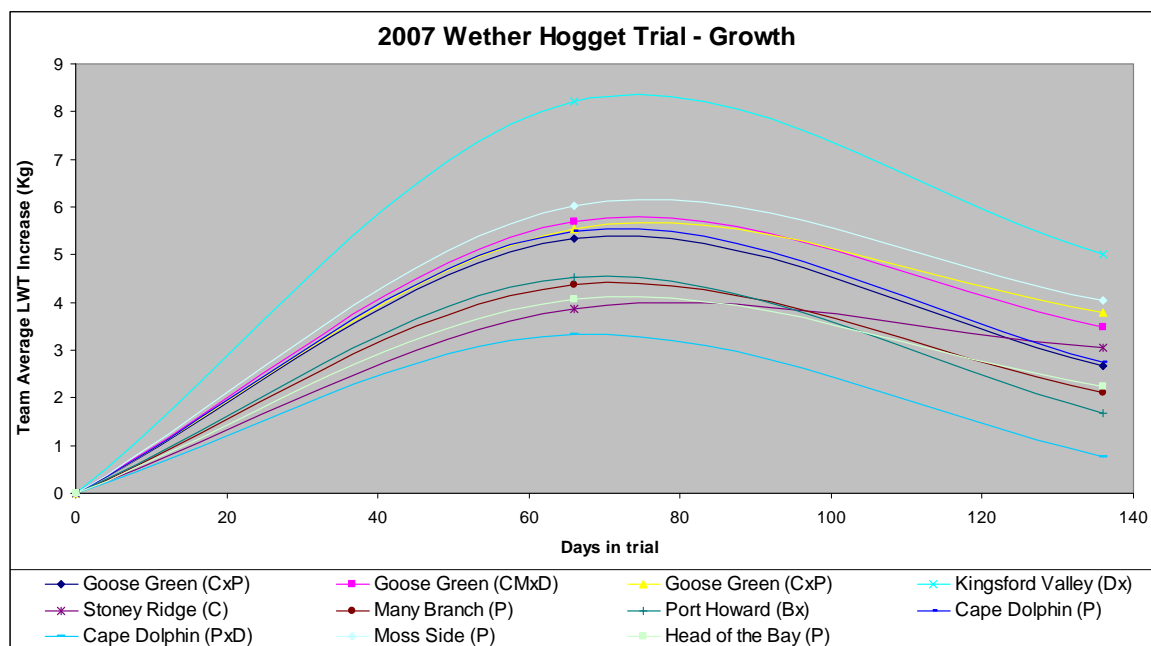
We are as much interested in where they breed as to where they don't breed, so completed questionnaires saying 'no elephant seals' will be as interesting as weanling counts!

For more information, please contact: me on telephone 27390, fax 27391 or email [hotley.planning@taxation.gov.fk](mailto:hotley.planning@taxation.gov.fk)

# GOOSE GREEN WETHER LAMB TRIAL - WHAT ARE THEY UP TO?

*By Peter Johnson*

The 11 teams of lambs entered in the 2007 wether evaluation are bunkered down for winter at Goose Green. They were last weighed on the 6 July, just before Farmer's week, and the graph is shown below. All teams had lost weight, but keep in mind that they were kept in the shed overnight before this weighing, where they had previously been weighed straight off camp.



The table below shows the team average weights and the dates they were taken. The table on the right shows the letter used to identify each breed within the trial. The next weighing will take place some time in September. **Note** - All farms involved in the trial have given their permission for their data to be published.

Team Average Weights	Weighing Date		
	20/02/2007	27/04/2007	06/07/2007
Cape Dolphin (P)	25.8	31.3	28.5
Cape Dolphin (PxD)	27.3	30.6	28.0
Goose Green (CMxD)	23.8	29.5	27.3
Goose Green (CxP)	24.9	30.3	27.6
Goose Green (CxP)	22.8	28.3	26.6
Head of the Bay (P)	25.5	29.6	27.7
Kingsford Valley (Dx)	23.7	31.9	28.7
Many Branch (P)	25.0	29.4	27.1
Moss Side (P)	22.8	28.9	26.9
Port Howard (Bx)	23.1	27.6	24.8
Stoney Ridge (C)	17.9	21.8	21.0

Remember, that the open day planned for shearing of the trial has been set as the **13<sup>th</sup> November** - it promises to be an interesting day with the ability to see all of the teams together before and after they are shorn, and have their fleece values displayed on the day.

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## **DEMONSTRATION TRIALS HIGHLIGHTING THE IMPACT OF MANAGEMENT INTENSIVE GRAZING (MIG)**

*By Peter Johnson*

Been to the MIG workshops in April and May? Enjoyed listening to Jim again at Farmers week, maybe even read the book? Still not sure if this whole 'Management Intensive Grazing' thing will work for you, but willing to give it try with a little help?

**You could be just the person to take on a small scale demonstration trial!**

Recent workshops and Farmers week have honed in on the importance of grazing management, and the positive outcomes for animal nutrition and production as a result. The DOA is already demonstrating this in a number of ways through the grazing management trials on farms and the simulated grazing work at Fitzroy. The next step to complement these current trial's, is to start some demonstration trials with what MIG can do on your land in small plots.

### **The Demonstration**

If you have a currently set stocked area with good water supply, why not work in conjunction with the DOA to fence off half of it, and put in place a MIG system so that you can see the results for yourself. You get your greatest return from your best land, so that is where we would like to start. A reseed or good native camp with greens would be the perfect place to set up this demonstration. Below is a simplified diagram of what it might look like –



The MIG system could have a series of parallel fences that temporary fencing can be run between to strip graze the pasture, while the areas not being grazed are rested, ready for the next time. There are no apologies that management will need to be intensified for the MIG system, and that will involve regular movement of portable fences. The DOA will assist in fencing set up and with monitoring animal live weights, wool production, death rates and important plant responses such as production of dry matter and also species sustainability (particularly of the 'good' ones like legumes).

If you are interested in having a demonstration plot on your farm, please contact Peter at the DOA to discuss the general requirements of the demonstration.

## INVASIVE SPECIES - BIOSECURITY POSTER

The Environmental Planning Department wishes to raise awareness, particularly amongst visitors, of the risks of accidentally introducing harmful non-native species to islands and remote settlements via FIGAS flights and helicopters. The poster will highlight that new species should only be bought to islands and settlements with landowners permission.

We plan to highlight on the poster that rats and mice should not be deliberately or accidentally introduced to New Island, Carcass Island, Speedwell Island, George Island or Sea Lion Island.

However, if you would like the poster to also highlight any other species, such as earwigs, thistles or introduced ragwort, that you specifically don't want arriving to your island or settlement, please contact the Environmental Planning Department via phone, fax or email by Monday 17th September.

The poster will be displayed at the Stanley FIGAS departure area, hotels, and lodges and given to travel companies.

Jane Rowlands, Clerk  
Environmental Planning Department  
Phone 27390, Fax 27391  
jrowlands.planning@taxation.gov.fk

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### A REMINDER ABOUT BOILS!

Before we know it we will be starting to think about shearing again. This is the time to consider what you need to do to lower the risk of spreading *corynebacterium pseudotuberculosis* – the bacteria that causes 'boils'.

- Remember the fatty covering that protects the bacteria is easily destroyed by disinfectants – stock up and get scrubbing! Pens, gateways, chutes – anything that sheep can rub against should be cleaned.
- Arrange disinfecting equipment for any shearers that will come to your farm and ask them to please clean their equipment at each break and immediately if they happen to cut into a boil.
- Have an antiseptic spray on hand to spray all obvious shearing cuts with.
- Shear young stock first and also remember that lambs may become infected at lamb marking so a scrub of the board and prominent gateways at your lamb-marking pens may be prudent also. A coughing ewe can leave the bacteria on the pens which is then spread to the lamb.

Joe wrote an excellent informative article in the August 2006 wool Press so contact us if you would like a copy to refer to.

*Note - this article is also in your Farm Management Handbook and is also available on-line at [www.agriculture.gov.fk/caseous\\_lymhadenitis.pdf](http://www.agriculture.gov.fk/caseous_lymhadenitis.pdf)*

## FARMERS WEEK – QUESTIONS ANSWERED BY 6 GROUPS

After lunch on Wednesday the 11<sup>th</sup> of July during Farmer's week, 6 groups totalling about 40 people were formed and the following questions were put to them. Below is the questions and a combined form of the written responses that each of the groups provided. The number in brackets indicates if more than one group came up with the same response.

### 1 - Are you happy with the current productivity and profitability of your farm?

No (6)

### 2 - Do you think there are opportunities? If so, what are they?

Yes (6)

Improve grazing management (3)  
Dual income from meat and wool (2)  
Lambing percentage increase  
Death Rate Decrease  
Better food  
Better opportunity to market products  
Supplements  
Review past performance and learn from others  
Increase animal nutrition  
Increased productivity/income

### 3 - What is the first step for you to start some form of Management Intensive Grazing?

Plan/Evaluate/Set Goals/Budget (4)  
Sub-Division (2)  
Pasture and water assessment  
Make a fencing plan  
Identify area to improve  
Match resources – money, PIP, time

### 4 - What are the problems you see?

Money (4)  
Labour (3)  
Lack of collective experience (3)  
Time (3)  
Availability of materials (2)  
Cash Flow  
Bad attitude  
Sourcing extra stock  
Selling cattle  
Logistics  
PH (acid soils)  
Rest period – longer recovery period and viability of supplementation  
Shelter  
Risk of a bad season  
You would have to spell a camp before starting management strip grazing

Animals need better feed.

## **5 - What can the DOA do to support you to achieve these aims?**

Co-ordinate shed talks/farm walks (2)

Business/Budget advice (2)

Hands or advice and pasture assessment

Advice and finance continuing on farm trials

Continue with PIP

Assistance with sourcing items

Sounding board

Labour scheme (continue)

Don't reinvent the wheel (learn from past mistakes)

Make available results from past trials and help with risk assessment

Soil testing and monitoring

Trialling, new varieties of seeds-sowing rate trial

Documentation-best practise

Knowledge from farmers (collectively) and Agricultural Scientists

To run practical trials on Saladero and turn it into a commercially viable farm

To encourage the Education Department to promote Agriculture as a career

## **6 - What do farmers need to do to help each other?**

Communication (5)

More active RBA/Something New (3)

More discussion groups for skills/ideas/problems (3)

To lobby FIG

A collective voice

Collective marketing- meat and wool

Co-operation

Positive attitude

Stop arguing

Support each other

Stop being jealous of your neighbour

Respect each others thoughts and ideas

If at first you don't succeed, try, try, again! Never give up trying

<p>These are the responses as recorded on the day, and are provided as a reference for what was discussed. Just because the response is recorded here, it does not imply that it was unanimously accepted by the group as a whole, or the DOA, but merely that it was raised in this forum.</p>
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