



Rissington Breedline UK Autumn Newsletter – November 2011

We welcome you to our Autumn newsletter. Your rams will now be out, or getting ready to go out to the ewes. Richard and I are back in New Zealand getting over a very nerve racking rugby world cup final. It was good to see some of you took my advice and cashed in the increase in your wool clip value and made it over for the rugby. Things can now get back to normal. Richard is home on the farm in the Wairarapa having lambed and now tailing the lambs from his 1,100 ewe hoggets. My NZ summer project is to build a house on our vineyard property.

We enjoyed positive feedback and the results UK farmers are getting with Highlander and Primera genetics. This year sales increased by 20% and we have 30 new clients which is great for our UK ram business. Whilst we build our UK farmer base our goal is still to 'build and supply a 12 month lamb supply chain of the very highest quality to the consumer'.

Here in New Zealand we are now operating as Focus Genetics and include a recent media release and copy of our NZ Newsletter
Bayden Wilson

Rams for sale / lease

We have ram hoggets and a limited number of 2th rams available for late orders. Mating your ewe lambs is a great option if they are in good condition now, and you will be able to look maintain their nutrition.

Primera or Highlander are a great option for mating of ewe lambs. We will also lease rams at £250/hd for this purpose. If you are interested in additional rams to purchase or lease, please contact me and we can put you in touch with our closest breeder.



Ewe lambs for sale

Our Scottish farmers still have a number of Highlander X Blackface ewe lambs available. This cross grow into super efficient ewes ideal for outdoor lambing in a wide range of conditions

- Mate to a Highlander ram to start yourself replacing flock
- Mate to Primera to maximise lamb production per hectare



Contact: Bayden Wilson phone 07903484881 Please call early morning or late evening, or leave a message and I will call you back or email bayden@rissington.com

How efficient is your flock?

Do you know your sheep flocks:

- Kgs of lamb weaned per kg of ewe mated
- Kgs of lamb weaned & sold per Kg of feed eaten
- Your seasonal lamb supply profile from weaning to sale.

These are key measures in assessing your farm, and flocks, maternal efficiency and finishing performance.

This is also key data when setting up a lamb supply chain with a group of farmers.

We would like to monitor some of your farms to look at the production and efficiency of the different Highlander and Primera crosses alongside UK breeds.

We also want to get a picture of the natural lamb supply the length of mainland Britain. From Cornwall in the South, West into Wales, up to Aberdeenshire, provides a great spread of natural spring lambing dates and lamb finishing.

If you are interested in us helping to monitor your flock please email bayden@rissington.com and I will send back the required input forms

Initial farm records required

Mob mating Information (example)						
Mob	Ewe breeding		mated to ram	mating date	ewes head	mating liveweight
1	¼ Highlander	¾ Mule	Primera	31-Oct	400	65kgs
2	½ Highlander	½ Highlander	Highlander	15-Nov	250	70kgs
3	½ Highlander	S Blackface	Primera	31-Oct	200	59kgs

*Liveweights need only be collected on a sample of the flock
*Average ewe flock age would also be collected. Longevity has a huge bearing on the efficiency of your sheep flock

Later farm records required

- Ewe scanning results
- Estimate of lambing assistance
- Numbers on lambs tailed and ewes @ tailing
- Weaning lamb numbers & ave liveweights & ewe number
- Slaughter dates and liveweights/carcass weights

Highlander in the Orkneys

In September I was fortunate to visit the Corkran family on the island of Eday in the Orkneys. I was impressed by the clear blue water and the quality of the produce from the land and sea.

Very progressive, Mark detects and artificially inseminates most of their herd making his sire semen selections with an eye on maternal as well as beef quality, willing to try whatever breed might achieve gains, whilst benefiting from hybrid vigour. They had very impressive slaughter results, amongst the Orkney Island beef producers that are known for their high quality



In addition to a small sheep flock on Eday they also farm 500 breeding ewes on the nearby island of Faray. Also very progressive with the sheep flock, constantly looking to improve with crossbreeding. This is the 3rd year of using Highlander for its maternal attributes with good results in sometimes harsh conditions.



This year Mark is also using Primera to assess its suitability to the outdoor lambing and ability to finish off unimproved grassland. During my visit (as per the photos) we took the barge to Faray for the 1st muster, of the season, to bring slaughter lambs back to Eday.



What a great natural environment for a sheep. Not a dog in site with all stock healthy and vibrant. The quality of the lamb that came off the island that day was the best I had seen anywhere. Growth rates from a late lambing were obviously great to get 19kg lambs off in early September. As a consumer this lamb ticks all the quality boxes in terms of natural, high welfare and would no doubt taste great.



FocusGenetics
excellence is in our DNA

Media Release

20 October 2011

Top red meat genetics company told of its key role to play in lifting performance

The Agriculture Minister has told one of the country's top genetics company's it has a key role to play in helping to lift the performance of the red meat sector in New Zealand.

David Carter officially launched Focus Genetics at a special function at its new head office in Ahuriā last night.

Focus Genetics has been formed from the amalgamation of Rissington Breedline Ltd and Landcorp Farming Ltd's Genetics Division. The two entities officially merged on the 1st of July.

It is the largest provider of genetics (rams, bulls and stags) to the red meat sector in New Zealand with customers from Northland to Southland as well as associated ventures in UK, Brazil and Uruguay.

David Carter told the gathering there were two main reasons he agreed to attend the event, the first being his long association with the Absolom family, who were instrumental in the formation of Rissington Breedline in 2001.

"The second reason is that I firmly believe in genetics and genetic improvement for the sake of food security and climate change," he said.

"If we can improve the genetic performance of the red meat sector and deliver those improvements to the world it will be huge."

David Carter said there was a wide range of performance within the sheep and beef sector and Focus Genetics played a role in helping to extend the tech transfer to farmers and in turn lifting that performance across the board.

"With the strong reputation of Rissington Breedline coupled with Landcorp I think there is a wonderful opportunity to grab genetic gain and use it."

Focus Genetics CEO Graham Leech says that after three months trading they're excited by the opportunities that are presenting themselves as they take their compelling story to an increasing number of customers.

"This new venture capitalises on 30 years of research and development by both the Rissington Breedline and Landcorp teams. Bringing them together will benefit the red meat sector in New Zealand," says Graham.

He says the merger means Focus Genetics has exclusive access to the largest available single red meat commercial database worldwide enabling significantly improved genetic gain for its customers.

"In our new offices we are committed to excellence in everything we do and always working with intelligence, not emotion."

For further information please contact

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