

Seasons Greetings

The years seem to be going very fast and 2018 is no different. Winter and Spring shot by and I'm looking forward to a few warm days over summer. This is a very busy time for us all and we look forward to seeing how you and your farming business is progressing.

The returns received for sheep and lamb meat has been an improvement on the previous year and looks strong again for the 2018-2019 year which would be well received. Summer 2018 was one out of the bag and was exceptional and according to long range predictions may continue for a few summers to come. Temperatures were great but as with us all a change of priorities was in order – number one ensuring that our stock all have access to water, feed and shelter for shade – Ermedale was hot and dry AMAZING!

Our winter project had Johnny and Leon spending countless hours re-fencing an old deer block on the farm to make it sheep and in particular lamb proof. This will make a huge difference to this area of the farm and will improve the layout and accessibility of this area. Within the next year this area will also be enhanced with new shelter belts and it's great to see both the lift in grass and stock production happening alongside improvements in bio-diversity and general environment.

Our focus for the winter was also to fence off more of our water ways/creeks and plant more shelter belts. This project is nearly complete with the last waterway to be fenced off in 2019.

In March we were honoured to have a visit organised by MFAT – Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and a top delegation of British, Scottish, Irish and Welsh officials looking at the Brexit transition and how NZ farm systems have coped without subsidies. While in NZ they visited Blackdale Stud and Morrison Farming in the North Island and met with Government officials and industry groups. One of the Northern Ireland delegates would like to find work placements for Agriculture students in NZ so if you are after a hand on the farm for Spring let me know or contact William 'Ivor' Ferguson, Deputy President Ulster Farmers Union.



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BLACKDALE STUD

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TEX x COOP

TEXTRA™

TEXEL
SUFTEX

QUALITY SIRE S

We were pleased to support Hospice Southland by putting 'Hos' New Zealand's highest rated sire Textra 416.13 on station for semen sales with proceeds (\$5079) going to Hospice Southland to thank them for the support they gave to Wendys family and father Ivan during his stay with them.

Our Textra flock rates very highly on the National proven performance sheep records and the top NZ sires for maternal worth are Blackdale Textra rams by a good bit. This is really pleasing as not only are the records from here showing superior genetics these sires have progeny in several flocks in the South and North Islands and we have just started to work with a breeder in the UK with 5 hoggets flying over in August.

2018 LAMBING

A kind winter followed by August and early September which was amazing for grass growth and fine days. The result was incredible pasture covers which are still now carrying through. The early lambing (late August/early Sept) Texel and SufTex mob had a great lambing and lambs just flying off the blocks. In the past 2 years lamb survival:

- Texels 91% of lambs born survived
- SufTex 94% of lambs born survived
- GDF9 carrying Texel 2th 21% more lambs tailed than non carrier
- GDF9 carrying Texel 4th 37% more lambs tailed than non carrier

However with the mid September and onwards mobs and hoggets there was just too much feed and some patchy weather. Ewe loss over winter had been near zero but by lambing end we had nearly twice our normal ewe deaths resulting in a lamb loss of 4% on the crossbred flocks results. Too much feed, cast ewes at set stocking and bigger lambs was less than ideal, however having a great pasture cover does let ewes milk well and lamb growth weights have been outstanding.

The first draft of flock singles (untailed, undrenched and unscratched) born the 2nd-12th September have gone off to market with 110 lambs averaging 450grams/day for 70 days and killing out at 19.12kg for \$153/head.



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Breed	Lambs scanned to ewes mated	Lambs tailed to ewes mated
EWES		
Suftex	192%	171%
Texel	188%	167%
Texel x Coopworth	189%	164%
Textra	197%	170%
Coopworth	231%	204%
Flocks	183%	159%
HOGGETS		
Textra	133%	108%
Texel x Coopworth	106%	86%
Coopworth	113%	91%

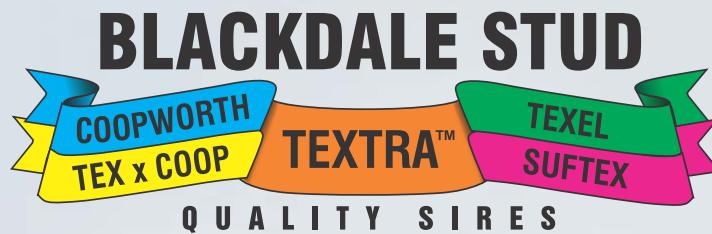
Dad opted not to mate his Texel and Suftex ewe hoggets this year off the back of a dry summer and a shortage of winter supplements.

Given the feed on the farm and the lamb price I'm pleased to have the 700 hogget lambs we will wean in early January.



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SOUTHERN TEXEL BREEDERS FIELD DAY

A good day was had with visits to Blackdale, clients Gaylene and Wilson Ronald and finishing off at the Grays 'Hillgrove' stud at Orawia. It was great to see some of you out and as it was a Texel day here is the important points about Blackdale Texels. Peter started in the mid 1980's as an inspector of the Sheepac importation, 1990 saw the release and we picked up 22 pure and 64 gradeup ewes along with 3 elite sires, breeding objectives to improve Texels so as to be used in crossbreeding programmes, tidy up fertility, growth rate, feet, wool and keep good hind end without going short and stumpy. Over the years the clear of dag and clean points reducing work and parasite tolerance have been a real plus. More recently our Texels have had two major developments:

- GDF9. This gene which can lift lambing rates by 20% for single and 40% for double was found largely in Blackdale genetics in 2013 and we have invested, tested and analysed it for industry benefit. Blackdale Texel sires have the highest NZ Texel sire rankings for reproduction due to GDF9 and are now showing clear advantage over 'normal' sires
- In 2017 we undertook the use of British Texel semen (Blackdale genetics have been at the top end of trial work in Ireland/UK) to get comparisons here with the highest rated Texel genetics they have. Vorn Yardstick was the ram hogget of 2016 with exceptional growth figures and given the huge gene pool in the UK we thought worth a try. The successful Vorn Yardstick 2017 born lambs have seen him catapult to the 5th highest growth sire of all breeds in NZ. Growth rate and fertility are the drivers of profit, high growth equals lambs off mum, lower worms on pasture, higher prices for early lamb and better feed conversion. We are seeing 500-600gram a day growth on mums milk and grass from the top Vorn Yardstick lambs and they have excellent body type for lambing ease.

In 2018 we used more of the British sires in AI and also have put some Beltex into the SufTex breeding programme as a trial. We will know growth and yield data this season and let you all know results.

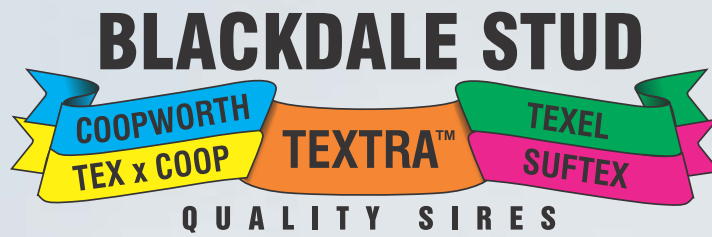
RAM ORDERS FOR 2018

Please return your order form by 20 December 2018 using the enclosed reply paid envelope or emailing to blackdale70@gmail.com. Phone orders are welcome on 021 855 106 or try evenings on (03) 224 6106. Please indicate the number of rams required and the preferred price option, also indicate any special requirements we could help you with.

In recent years some breed lines have been over ordered and adjustments in type or age have been required so please get your orders in so that we can assure you of availability. This year we have a new range of 2th rams with New Zealand Elites based on overall index, that is the genetics in the top 5% of all breeds based on Maternal Worth Index (NZMW), so rams with an outstanding index of 2800 NZMW will have a price option of \$1500. These animals generate \$11/lamb more in maternal traits above average NZ genetic merit.

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Please note the order form has changed to include a section for these NZ Elite rated Sires. If you wish to order Elite Sires circle the breed required and state the number needed.

We intend commencing private selling for two toothed in late January/early February while ram hoggets will be offered in March after scanning.

BRUCELLOSIS ACCREDITATION

Blackdale remains brucellosis free following our annual blood tests.

RAM FAIRS

The Southern Texel Breeders Ram Fair will be held at the Gore A&P Showgrounds on Wednesday 16th January 2019 with selling commencing at 11am. Blackdale will be putting forward a line of Texel 2th rams sired by Vorn Yardstick – there is a lot of interest in his superior growth rates.

WHAT ABOUT WOOL?

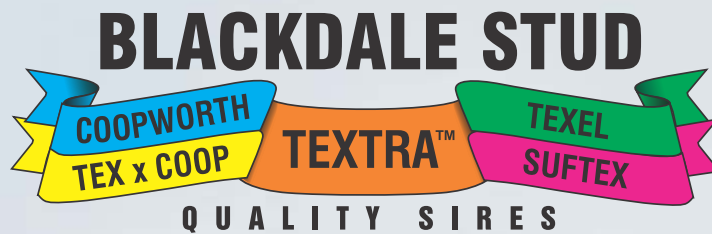
Crossbred wool prices are in a sad state, shearing costs have shot up, so what is wool's place in our selection programme?

We would love to think that world contamination with plastics of all kinds including fine particles in our oceans and food would require a strong premium for natural fibres. Some breeders are touting for a finer crossbred but we get paid per kilogram and unless the payment is significant like in Merino fine wools then any reduction in micron say '38-35' is offset by reduced kilograms. Staple length, colour, style and weight along with freedom of fault are important to us. In most winter and springs wool on the back keeps lambs alive and ewes from the worst of winter's treatments. Clean bums and legs but something worth shearing off the backs is still our objective.



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EXPENSIVE BREEDING

One way some breeders have been trying to maintain clean healthy animals is to be dependent on expensive drench capsules and injections. We have never and will not use these to breed genetics for you, I was not surprised to read recently of NZ's largest Romney breeder getting worm resistance after using capsules continually. All sheep farmers should look seriously at animals with high genetic merit by proven bench marking on Sheep Improvement numbers like: approx 1700 for maternal worth and approx 1000 for terminal worth are average Index ratings comparable across NZ and breeds, you should understand stocking rates, input levels and breeding objectives as well. There are a lot of breeders promoting stock of pretty ordinary performance and some are just expensive dogs!

THE COOPWORTH RESULT

This year we used highly rated Coopworth ram hoggets on selected flock ewes and have tagged the ewe lambs. We will have between 250-300 $\frac{3}{4}$ Coopworth $\frac{1}{4}$ texel ewe lambs available for sale end of January. Please let us know if you'd like to see or purchase these.

2018 – THE BLACKDALE FAMILY

Jessica has just completed her studies at Massey University and has picked up an internship with Foodstuffs in Auckland over summer. Daniel has been helping us out on the farm but took 3 months out to help at an American Summer Camp and visit some of the places Leon studied and worked in the states. Olivia has just completed NCEA Level 1 and performed in the Scout Association Gang Show in Invercargill this year. Olivia will return to College next year to complete her NCEA Level 2. Maggie was given the honour of being 'Kaia' for the school Kapa Haka group and was also awarded with the Sir Peter Blake Leadership Award this year and is super excited to be heading to College in 2019.

With the appointment of a new Principal to Aparima College and new BOT Leon has taken the role of Chairperson, this along with 2 or 3 environment trusts and groups around catchments.

Wendy remains on the Riverton Community Charitable Trust and school committees and really enjoys her floral art/floristry and may return to playing tennis this summer.

Peter and Marion – Peter has with a reduced stud flock found more time to garden and fix things that Leon breaks. Marion continues to mother everything and makes good sales of blackdale wool all over NZ for spinning and weaving.

Johnny had a top year dog trialling and qualified for the Nationals. He also played rugby for the Riverton Senior team until it hurt, and picked up the Senior 'Player of the Year'.

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If you haven't already be sure to have a look at the Blackdale website and facebook page. Our facebook page continues to get more and more followers and likes. We try to keep this up to date and relevant to what we are doing. Any ideas of what you would like to see then let us know.

Our email address was changed last year so please be sure that you are using our current address which is: blackdale70@gmail.com It would be great if you put your email and cellphone contacts through onto your reply form so we can ensure that we have update information.

We always welcome communication with our clients and we would like to wish all our clients the very best for a settled and successful season and we look forward to seeing you in the coming months.

The Blackdale team would like to wish our clients and their families a very safe and Merry Christmas and all the best for the New Year.

Kind regards
Leon, Wendy, Peter and Marion



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Peter and Marion Black

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FLOCK 77

TEXTRA™

FLOCK 35

www.blackdalestud.co.nz

BLACKDALE RAM ORDER FORM

Please return by 20 December 2018

NAME:

TELEPHONE NO:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

NZ Elite Sires (Top 5% in NZ)

MATERNAL BREED \$1500

Breed: Coopworth Texel x Coopworth Textra
No of rams required:

COOPWORTH ORDERS

No. of Rams required:
Price bracket requested (range \$500-\$1250)

TEXEL ORDERS

No. of Rams required:
Price bracket requested (range \$450-\$1250):

TEXEL X COOPWORTH ORDERS

No. of Texel x Coopworth two tooth rams required:
Price bracket requested (range \$500-\$1250):

TEXTRA ORDERS

No. of Textra two tooth rams required:
Price bracket requested (range \$500-\$1250):

TEXEL X SUFFOLK ORDERS

No. of Texel x Suffolk two tooth rams required:
Price bracket requested (range \$450-\$800):

RAM HOGGETS FOR MARCH PICK-UP

No. of Pure Texel Ram Hoggets required:
Price bracket requested (\$400-\$700):
No. of Texel x Coopworth Ram Hoggets required:
Price bracket requested (\$400-\$700):
No. of Textra Ram Hoggets required:
Price bracket requested (\$400-\$700):
No. of Texel x Suffolk Ram Hoggets required:
Price bracket requested (\$400-\$500):

TEASERS available \$300 each – required numbers:

COMMENT/SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS
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