



Vote of Confidence in B+LNZ Genetics

After four years of operation and a series of successful milestones, Beef + Lamb New Zealand (B+LNZ) has extended its support of wholly-owned subsidiary B+LNZ Genetics beyond its initial five-year funding programme.

Its programme was forecast to generate \$742m of benefits over 10 years, but that figure has since been reviewed upwards, to \$947m, or \$7,890 per annum per sheep and beef farm. With rising costs this helps keep farmers competitive.

B+LNZ Chief Executive Sam McIvor says B+LNZ Genetics' performance feeds directly into several of B+LNZ's strategic goals, particularly that of growing farm profitability through improved productivity, efficiency and reduced costs.

Read the full article

S.I.L



Watch a video of Peter Amer & Cheryl Quinton explaining why capped reproduction is needed. <u>Watch video</u>

Capped Reproduction

The SIL Capped Reproduction (DPCR) is a method to value an animal's genetic value, for number of lambs born (NLBeBV). This method was developed to correct two problems with the previous linear DPR method: (1) That the DPR over-valued additional multiple lambs, and (2), that the DPR caused highly-prolific rams to rank highly on the NZMW index, even when they are poor for other traits, such as growth.

For more, read our <u>Capped Reproduction Guide</u>.



Young Ram Percentile Bands Tables

Percentile bands for young unproven ram hoggets are now available on the SIL website.

Percentile bands tables provide a useful benchmarking resource for indexes and breeding values for connected flocks within the New Zealand Genetic Evaluation (NZGE). Every two months, the leader lists are updated from the most recent NZGE run for Dual Purpose and Terminal traits, and a percentile bands table for sires is produced.

The percentile bands table for young rams is based on all animals born in the previous full birth year in NZGE connected flocks. This represents a wider group than the sire percentile bands table, as it is all young animals born in that birth year – many of which will not end up being offered for sale.

If purchasing rams for commercial use, use the young ram percentile bands table.

Visit Percentile Bands Tables on the SIL website



RamFinder Update

RamFinder has been updated to include NZMW and NZTW, gBVs, DPCR and a greater range of sub-indexes and BVs. An updated user guide and abbreviations list are also available on the SII website.

The young ram percentile bands will be used for RamFinder, as they are more applicable to the variety of users than the current sire percentile bands. The change over from sire to young ram percentile bands will occur shortly.



Single Step Beta Test project update

The science team from The University of Otago and AgResearch, are making good progress genotyping over 20,000 2017-born animals on a new low-density SNP chip, from the beta test breeders and B+LNZ Genetics progeny tests. Genotypes are being routinely uploaded into the new B+LNZ Genetics genotype database and the parentage and parent verification done via a new software module connected to that database.

Read the full update

SHEEP



Updated Sheep5K represents a step change for sector

The popular Sheep5K tool was launched in 2013 and has just undergone its fourth recalibration in as many years. The latest version is more accurate, the number of traits available for assessment has risen from 22 to 34, and five breeds can now use the tool (Romney, Coopworth, Perendale, Composites and, in part, Texel).

The work was overseen by B+LNZ Genetics, with FarmIQ and the Pastoral Greenhouse Gas Research Consortium contributing additional genotypes and Zoetis distributing the tool.

Read the full article



Sire selections for Beef and Dairy-Beef Programmes

Beef Progeny Test

2017 (cohort 4) of B+LNZ Genetics Beef Progeny Test (BPT) has kicked off, with selection of sires confirmed. Sires are selected using independent breed panels. A confirmed list of sires will be published in the next couple of weeks.

Dairy-Beef Progeny Test

The latest intake for the Dairy Beef Progeny Test includes sires from 8 breeds. Sires are selected using a panel involving project and site management. The first mating at the new Landcorp, Wairakei estate property 'Renown' has got off to a promising start. The early crops of calves born at Limestone Downs Station will continue to be grown out and processed.

Dairy-Beef Sire List



Heifer trial at Orari Gorge Station

We are all told that putting teasers out with ewe hoggets helps them cycle, but what about heifers?

B+LNZ Genetics have teamed up with <u>Orari Gorge Station</u> and are running a trial on this topic. Ultrasound scanning was used to see which heifers had reached puberty one month before the bull went out. Half of the heifers (68), now have two teasers with them and half don't. Heifers will be scanned again, the day before they go to the bull, to see if the teaser has helped them reach puberty. At pregnancy scanning, foetus age will be recorded to see if the teaser also had an effect on conception date.



Congratulations to the Stewart family from Whenuapapa Angus (Andrew Stewart pictured) for their win in the B+LNZ Genetics Yearling Bull performance class at the Hawke's Bay Show.

Glenanthony Simmentals took out the B+LNZ Genetics sponsored Yearling Heifer performance class, in a hard fought battle of the breeds.

EVENT



Ram Selection Day: Snowdon Station Join us at Snowdon Station on Monday 11 December, for a

With practical exercises for those of us who learn by doing, it is designed to give a good understanding of how genetics works, what figures are relevant, and how farmers can use these numbers to buy rams that will lift their flock performance.

Monday 11 December 10am – 3pm Snowdon Station, Darfield

day focused on ram selection.

RSVP online, or phone B+LNZ Genetics on 03 477 6632



Sheep Breeder Forum 2018

Make sure to circle this date in your diary. Next year's Sheep Breeder Forum will be held on 3-4 July, in Dunedin.

Sheep Breeder Forum 3-4 July, 2018 Dunedin Town Centre, Harrop Street

An invite and RSVP details will be distributed early next year.



Genetics Conference: Feb 2018

This is the premier event for those involved in the genetic improvement of livestock. Every four years, this conference brings together leading researchers and industry professionals from around the world, creating one of the largest networks of colleagues.

Next year's World Congress will be hosted in Auckland from 11-16 February.

The WCGALP website has more information about program



B+LNZ Genetics is re-structuring the organisation to align with its funding and strategy:

- Develop & promote national breeding objectives
- Manage sheep and beef progeny test programmes
- · Provide a genetic evaluation service, including DNA and genomics
- · Provide independent technical support and accredited information
- Collaborative R&D with partners

The overall number of positions remains the same however the changes are:

Evaluation Officer - to be recruited

- Run the NZGE (currently outsourced to AgResearch)
- SIL database operational support (currently outsourced to AgResearch)
- Technical support and analysis

National Sheep Genetics Manager - replaces Genetics Extension Officer

- Dr. Annie O'Connell has been appointed to this position
- Lead B+LNZ Genetics sheep genetics program, including the Sheep Progeny Test
- · Coordinate the sheep advisory groups
- Promote best practice and provide technical support (sheep and beef)

National Beef Genetics Manager - replaces Genetics Extension Officer

- Max Tweedie has been appointed to this position
- Lead B+LNZ Genetics beef program, including Beef and Dairy-Beef Progeny Tests
- Represent B+LNZ Genetics on the Trans-Tasman beef project and BreedPlan's technical group
- Coordinate beef advisory groups
- Promote best practice and provide technical support (sheep and beef)

Regarding extension/knowledge transfer, B+LNZ Genetics will utilise digital information systems and work closely alongside our parent organisation, Beef + Lamb New Zealand.



The team (from left): General Manager Graham Alder, IT Programme Manager David Campbell, Lead Scientist Dr Michael Lee, Science Manager Eleanor Linscott, Genetic Evaluation Technical Manager Sharon McIntyre, Sheep Genetics Manager Dr Annie O'Connell, Beef Genetics Manager Max Tweedie and Office Administrator Pam Schofield.

More information about team



The future's in the genes

For more information visit www.blnzgenetics.com

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