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NZGE



February NZGE Reports: new reporting period

Leader lists on the SIL website now include sires used from 2017-2019 in connected flocks. This results in some changes as sires with progeny in 2016 drop off.

February is when SIL's three-year connectedness and reporting period is adjusted to include the previous year's lambing (2019) and drop the oldest year (2016). The current year range is now 2017 – 2019. Some breeders may find they have dropped connectedness for certain traits and indexes, which indicates that their connections were more than three years old, or they may have been connected via another flock that has lost connectedness.

Now is a good time to check your flock connectedness prior to mating. To provide good connections, B+LNZ Genetics recommends 20-25 measured progeny of a sire used in multiple flocks. To be connected to the main NZGE grouping, the link sire needs to be from an NZGE connected flock. This is a big ask for traits such as reproduction, but it is important to retain and capture lambing data on daughters of link sires. i.e. 10 daughters retained with 2 lambing records each, or 20 daughters with 1 lamb record each = 20 records.

Check with your bureau or B+LNZ Genetics if you have questions about how you are connected to the main NZGE grouping.

For info on the principle of connectedness refer to the [Best Practice Guide](#)



Autumn Liveweight

Take an Autumn liveweight on as many animals as possible before culling. Some breeders do not record Autumn weights of ewe lambs - this means their post-weaning growth is only informed indirectly from half-sib brother information, reducing BV accuracy. The selection of female replacements for growth will be more accurate using their own performance records compared to BVs predicted from half-brother records.



nProve Update: Commercial Farm screens

We are close to launching nProve for commercial farmers. In response to feedback at last year's roadshows, we have been making changes to the way nProve will handle unconnected flocks. These changes are designed to balance the need for all SIL breeders to be discoverable, with our responsibility to provide commercial farmers information that is straightforward and comparable when it comes to identifying ram flocks for their specific farming circumstances.

Summary of changes:

1. Unconnected flocks will only be excluded when a user restricts by one or more indexes or traits.
2. Connectedness exclusions will only be applied to the specific indexes or traits that have been set by the user (using the trait sliders).
3. Any other criteria (regions, breeds, year, sex and exclude flocks) will not cause unconnected flocks to be excluded.
4. Wording changes are being applied to indicate when connectedness (referred to as "benchmarked") filters are applied.
5. Unconnected indexes or percentile values will not be displayed (as demonstrated at roadshows)

We will send out a video demonstrating the updated tool in the coming weeks.

Thankyou to everyone who took the time to review the nProve commercial farmer functionality and share feedback.



Sheep Progeny Test: Sire list

A table of rams being assessed at the Progeny Test sites is available on the SIL website. To improve connectedness, you can contact a breeder on the list to check if additional straws are available, or organise a sire referencing group to share one of these rams.

Best practice for achieving connectedness to one of the progeny test sites is to use the same ram, in the same year and measure the same traits.

You can email silhelp@sil.co.nz for more advice on connectedness.

[View table of Progeny Test rams](#)

You can contact SIL Help for more advice on connectedness. [View table of Progeny Test rams](#)



Want to measure methane?

Ram breeders are showing good interest in the new Methane research BV.

How it works:

1. A portion of your flock has its methane emissions measured in Portable Accumulation Chambers, which travel to your farm.
2. Sheep spend 50 minutes in the chambers, where their gas emissions are measured.
3. This happens twice, at a 14-day interval.
4. The resulting information is used alongside other genetic information to calculate the Methane BV.

Curious ram breeders are encouraged to visit www.methanebv.co.nz for more details.



Beef Sire Report: Cohort 3

The interim results for Cohort 3 of the B+LNZ Genetics Beef Progeny Test are available on our website. Sire averages are calculated after adjusting for herd, management group, age of dam and age of animal (based on estimated conception date) – so all sires are comparable for the given trait.

[View Cohort 3 report](#)

EVENTS



Please take note of the new date for the field day at our Low-input Progeny Test site.

SAVE THE DATE
21 May 2020 | Orari Gorge Station

More details to follow next month.



The team (from left): General Manager Dan Brier, IT Programme Manager David Campbell, Lead Scientist Dr Michael Lee, Genetic Evaluation Technical Manager Sharon McIntyre, Sheep Genetics Manager Dr Annie O'Connell, Genetic Systems Analyst Jacqui Edwards and Office Administrator Pam Schofield.

[More information about team](#)

