

welcome to



call of the country



Welcome to the

Professionals Call of the Country

This publication offers relevant articles to those of you who are part of, or interested in, the rural and lifestyle sector of the New Zealand property market.

We hope you enjoy this edition and the many to follow.

IN THIS ISSUE

The Dorper in
New Zealand

Clover and Nitrogen
and the Costs

Rural Property Market
Ends 2006 with Strong
Sales

Flooding - Will it leave you
stranded?


Professionals

www.professionals.co.nz



The Dorper in New Zealand

The Dorper was introduced into New Zealand in 2000. The first Dorpers arrived from Australia as frozen embryos, and were closely followed by the first live animal imports.

At present all stock is sourced from Australia as South Africa is closed for export due to a foot and mouth outbreak. It is hoped that the South African borders will open again soon to allow more genetics to be sourced.

Lifestyle Options

Lifestyle farmers are purchasing Dorper sheep as an easy care, low maintenance solution for their '5 acre' block. They make great commercial or pet animals as they are easy to handle.

With the higher tolerance to internal and external parasites the Dorper is also an ideal 'lifestyle' animal for people wanting to go organic.

Commercial Options

■ Terminal Sire - Many commercial farmers have used the Dorper as a terminal sire across their flock sheep and have had excellent results; both in percentage of lambs born and the ability of the Dorper cross-bred lambs to achieve higher, earlier weaning weights than many of the more traditional sheep breeds.

■ The meat processing companies are showing a lot of interest in the breed and the resulting lambs. In the past there were several hundred half-bred lambs slaughtered and the response from the companies has been very positive.

Breeding for New Zealand Conditions

Dorpers were originally bred for dry arid country. The breed is performing well under most New Zealand conditions so far but as stated earlier they will get better as time goes on. In New Zealand we have a wealth of experience in sheep breeding and a world beating pool of sheep genetics available for this process.

Breeding up programmes are currently under way, using Romneys, Perendales, Poll Dorset and Texels to name just a few. A breeding up programme has been approved by the Dorper Breeds Society which will allow breeders to follow a set path. After four generations and following an inspection, purebred status will be granted to bred up animals.

Potential Markets

In New Zealand commercial flocks are just being established. It is still early days and it will be several years before large numbers of commercial flocks are around. But in preparation for this, processors are being contacted and markets established. The early stages of marketing and branding Dorpers as a separate breed is underway.

Dorpers are well suited to domestic prime lamb markets and the export carcass market. Dorpers' continuous breeding season and fast growth rates offer producers with well managed breeding programs, the ability to fill shortages in the prime lamb market between April and November.

Article kindly supplied by Greg Burgess from www.nzsheep.co.nz



Clover and Nitrogen and the Costs

Farmers often question the benefits of an all grass plus fertiliser N system compared to that of a more natural clover based system.

The N inputs into a clover-based pasture are self regulating. The more stress that is applied to the clover the less N is added to the soil (via clover symbiotic N fixation) and the more the soil becomes N deficient - but the more N deficient the soil the more the clover flourishes (it does not need soil N, unlike grasses, to grow). The more it flourishes the more N is added to the soils. This is why the clover content of pasture changes on a cyclical pattern.

Pests

The size of the clover pest population and hence the damage from pasture pests, is also cyclical. They build up, do their thing and when the 'food' is gone, move on. During their active-damage stage they will reduce the amount of clover growth and hence N inputs of atmospheric N. The soil will become more N deficient and hence, when the flea flees, the clover will flourish with a vengeance returning the soil to its 'pre-flea' N status.

The point is this. The clover/grass system is self compensating. All it requires is patience.

Requirements

The requirements of an all-grass system are different to that of a clover and grass system. An all-grass system requires less P and S, because grasses have a lower nutrient requirement than clovers.

In the example below the savings in terms of the reduced inputs of these nutrients represents about \$20/ha/yr. But this is more than offset by the cost of the additional fertiliser N required on an all grass system (about \$200/ha).

This is a further example of the fact that it costs about 2-3 cents to produce a kg of clover-grass DM, but about 10-12 cents for a kg of all-grass pasture DM.

Consider that clover has a higher nutritional value than grasses and that milk production and animal growth rates increase with increasing clover content of the pasture.

Finally, ponder these numbers: The total input of N into the NZ pastoral farming system is

estimated to be about 3.6 m tonnes of N per year. This comes from the N fixation by the clover (90%) and fertiliser N (about 10%). If this entire N input was valued on the basis that fertiliser N cost 70 cents/kg then in dollar terms it can be valued at \$2.4b! If this was added to our production costs how competitive would our agricultural products be on the world market?

It is suggested that NZ must re-commit itself to the clover-based pasture system and pour as much research money as possible into developing more productive legumes which are efficient N fixers and are resistant to pest attacks.

Such research should go hand-in-hand with developing biological control agents against these pests.

Article courtesy of Joanne Marshall-Crack of www.farmnews.co.nz.



Dairy Farm Sales and Prices Drive March Rural Property Market

Dairy farm sales increased from 27 in February to 56 in March and prices were well up, with a median of \$3,275,000 in March 2007 compared with \$2,950,000 last month.

"The March rural property market and especially the dairy farm sector showed an undiminished confidence in the future. Despite the exchange rate being a constant problem, confidence in the rural sector is strong," the REINZ National President Murray Cleland said.

The national median sales price was up from \$1,195,000 in February to \$1,212,500 in March, up 10.2 per cent on the March 2006 median of \$1,100,000 with sales up significantly from 154 in February to 234 in March, still below the March 2006 figure of 274 sales.

Regional Highlights

Northland

The median price for a farm increased to \$825,000 in March, up from \$795,000 in February and the lifestyle block price increased to \$346,500 in March, from \$310,500 in February.

Auckland

The median farm price in Auckland eased to \$1,462,500 in March, well down on February's median of \$1,930,000. Lifestyle blocks median sales price eased to \$749,500 from \$810,000 in February.

Waikato

The median farm price rose from \$2,000,000 in February to \$2,210,000 in March. The median lifestyle block price rose to \$440,000, up on February of \$400,000.

Bay of Plenty

The median price for a farm improved to reach \$1,267,063 in March, up on February of \$1,170,000 and the lifestyle blocks the price rose to \$540,000 in March from \$520,000 in February.

Hawkes Bay

The median price for a farm decreased to \$1,237,500 in March from, \$1,706,888 in February. The median lifestyle block price fell to \$450,000 from \$500,000 in February.

Taranaki

The median farm price increased significantly to \$1,700,000 in March, up from \$1,100,000 in February. The median lifestyle block price reached \$466,000 in March, well up on February's median price of \$350,000.

Manawatu/Wanganui

The median farm price eased to \$885,000 from \$1,435,000 in February and the lifestyle block median price eased to \$292,500 in March, from \$325,000 in February.

Wellington

The median farm price increased to \$925,203 in March, up on February of \$335,000. Lifestyle blocks gained ground to reach \$380,000, up on February 2007 \$341,000.

Nelson/Marlborough

The median farm price increased substantially to \$830,000 in March against \$435,000 in February. The median lifestyle block price rose to \$525,000, up on February of \$445,000.

West Coast

The median farm price reached \$1,083,000 in March, up on February at \$1,035,000. Lifestyle block price fell from \$330,000 in February to \$178,000 in March.

Canterbury

The median farm price rose to \$1,050,000 in March, up from \$782,500 in February, mirrored by the lifestyle median of \$385,000 in March and \$352,500 in February.

Otago

The farm median price eased to \$976,250 in March from \$1,320,000 in February. The lifestyle block median price increased from \$327,500 in February to \$345,000 in March.

Southland

The median farm price eased to \$1,013,752 in March, from \$2,435,000 in February. The lifestyle median price went from \$327,000 in February to \$345,000 in March.

Article supplied by www.reinz.co.nz

Moving In Moving On



3.2 Hectares Morrinsville

A two-storey three-bedroom home with two bathrooms, set well back on an attractive 3.2 hectare lifestyle block. Built in brick with a double garage, land subdivided into 11 paddocks and on town water supply. Sold for \$587,500 by Morrinsville Real Estate Ltd - Morrinsville.



Freedom Awaits Whangarei

114 hectares of gentle to flat land, subdivided into 62 paddocks, a great water supply and good holding yards. A large 4 bedroom home and a 3 bedroom workers cottage also accompanies this property. Sold in excess of \$3.2 million by Glenbarry Real Estate - Whangarei Heads.



82 Zanders Road Waimauku

15 rolling acres with views forever, grazing for calves and horses. Added to this, a 3 bedroom home with double garaging, a new barn and excellent water supply. You have it all for the perfect country lifestyle. Sold for \$800,000 by Classic Real Estate - Kumeu.





Flooding - Will it leave you stranded?

Severe flooding in the Far North and Bay of Islands recently left an estimated repair bill of up to \$80 million.

Civil defence and emergency agencies said an estimated 2000 homes were without power or phones during the height of the flooding and many of the main roads leading into areas such as Opuā, Kerikeri and Russell were closed.

Fresh water was an immediate concern affecting particularly remote rural property. Water use was restricted to the bare minimum with the need to boil all drinking water.

This paints a disastrous scene which can often happen unexpectedly even to areas that are not flood prone. In an emergency you may not have time to prepare and gather all essentials. Instances such as the Northland flooding can leave you inadequately prepared when roads are closed and stores are down.

To minimise that flood damage to your property and the disruption of your everyday life, there are certain precautions that you can take to help reduce further damage to your property and stock.

Flood Precautions

Before a flood:

- Check your area for signs or history of flooding and find out how many feet above flood level you are or need to be if you are building your house.
- With known weather warnings put sandbags by exposed openings to reduce the impact of damage.
- Turn off your gas and electricity to the property.
- Put your important personal, legal and business documents into watertight containers and put them above head height. Where possible store copies off the premises.
- Move your car to higher ground and away from trees that could become dislodged in the flood.
- Turn off the water supply to all plumbing fixtures and put a plug in sewage connections such as the toilet, sink and shower. Hold the plug in place with a wooden brace or weight.
- Prepare a checklist of all family and personal needs, you may not be able to return to collect items left behind.



Have essentials ready in case of evacuation:

- Food and water.
- An emergency kit with first aid equipment, medicine, blankets, torches.
- Sand bags.
- Waterproofing material such as plastic sheeting.

During a Flood:

- Turn off power to your property. If the main switch is in an area that is already wet, stand on a dry board and use a dry stick to turn switch off.
- Disconnect all electrical appliances and try to move them to higher ground. Appliances such as fridges and freezers should be moved first.
- Oil, water and gas tanks will float if not full. Secure and anchor these by tying a chain or cable around the tank to prevent it floating away.
- Turn on a battery powered radio to listen to updates and possible evacuation of areas surrounding your home.

Looking after your stock:

- Move stock to higher ground.
- Have extra pasture or feed for the animals.
- Turn off electricity to the working side of property.
- Block off narrow passageways where animals would be unable to turn around. Heavy animals in a narrow dead end can be dangerous to themselves and the building.
- Ensure that herbicides and pesticides are not accessible to livestock and are stored where floodwater will not contaminate livestock feed or water.
- Drive cattle out of the barn. During rapid rise of water, cattle can refuse to leave the barn and may drown inside if the water rises high enough. So it is necessary to begin evacuation measures before a state of emergency.

