

Specialist breeder of Maternal and Terminal Sires that produce fast growing and high meat yielding lambs



The current economic and climatic conditions are very taxing for all farmers and our thoughts are always with clients, friends and colleagues facing adversity in their farming business especially with some of the weather events that have been occurring.

Returns are not great and combined with rising on farm costs over the last 12 months it is paramount that our sheep are as productive as possible.

This diagram illustrates the factors in our businesses that we can and cannot control We have to focus on the things that we can control ... being the genetics we use and our management systems, we have 100% control over these.

Genetics have a significant influence on the productive and financial performance of your flock. The scientists say that genetics and management contribute 50/50 to your flock's performance and I agree. **The performance potential of your flock is governed by genetics and the level to which that potential is captured is governed by management practices.**

High genetic merit rams will add value to your farming business.

The intention of this newsletter is to update you re the genetic direction of our recorded flocks and to comment on how we may be able to increase the potential financial returns from our farms.

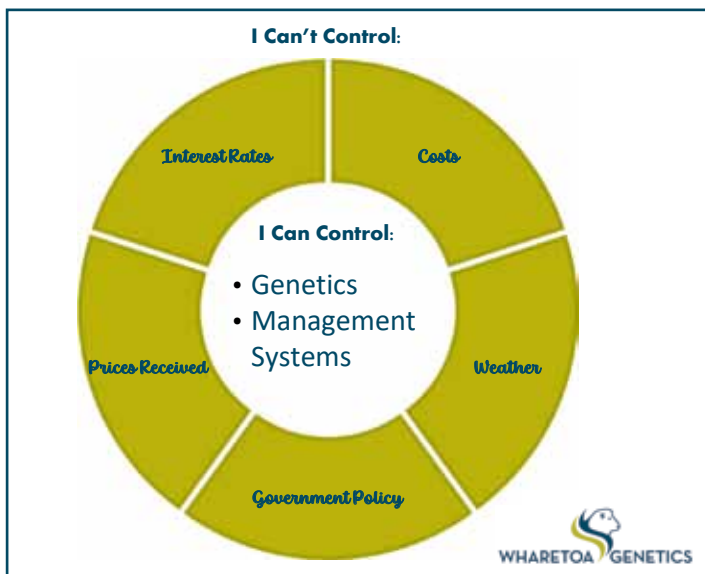
We must keep remembering that our produce remains a vital source of protein for the world's population.

Wool is attracting considerable attention around its sustainability and suitability for many purposes. Hopefully this will soon be reflected in the prices we receive.

We look forward to hosting you at our Open Day (Friday November 24) and on Sale Day (Friday December 15).

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Garth and Chris Shaw



Our Maternal Flocks

In our Wharetoa Maternal and Texel Flocks our breeding objectives are;

- Survival
- Number of Lambs Born (NLB)
- Growth
- Meat (Myomax, IMF, EMA)
- Methane

Survival; You can't sell or retain a dead lamb.

NLB; Our 570 recorded Wharetoa Maternal Ewes consistently scan 195-200%.

Lambs are DNA tested for parentage (means minimal shepherding at lambing).

DNA also identifies;

- the meat gene Myomax
- the fertility gene Lambmax

Growth; Measurement taken post weaning to measure the ability to reach target weights (Ram lambs for slaughter, Ewe lambs for hogget mating potential).

Meat; All male progeny are scanned at 120 days to measure quantity (EMA) and quality (IMF) of meat.

There is a high correlation between good meat yielding carcasses and Body Condition Score. Females that have the conformation to maintain a consistent BSC usually have superior meat characteristics.

Environmental; Last Autumn we tested 160 Wharetoa Maternal ram hoggets for methane emissions. This years Wharetoa maternal sale rams will be sold with a breeding value for Methane. As commercial farmers it is up to you how important this trait is to you and how you rank it alongside other traits that you select for Scientists and other industry leaders are suggesting that an early mean kill date is another way to reduce emissions as fewer days to slaughter means less methane output.

All **Wharetoa Maternal** and **Texel** 2 tooth rams are sold with;

- NProve figures for Reproduction/Survival/Growth/Meat
- Myomax status (Myomax = 1 copy, Myomax Gold = 2 copies)
- IMF ranking 1- 5 (1 being the best)
- BV for Methane

A little bit extra about our Texels;

Our breeding objectives for our Texels remain around Maternal traits so clients can retain females with the confidence that they will introduce strong meat and growth characteristics into their commercial flocks. The Texel genes will give characteristics that enable female progeny to have consistent BCS.

This year for the first time we will have sons of Blackdale 85/20 (bought January 2021) for sale. 85/20 continues to maintain his exceptional Texel characteristics. This year we used 2 sons (ram hoggets) and used 85/20 extensively over our Texel ewes.



Texel 2 tooth rams



Wharetoa Maternal 2 tooth rams

Our Terminal Flocks

Over recent years we have used some Meatmaker x Suffolk rams over our Suftex ewes to introduce the superior meat characteristics of the Meatmaker into the Suftex flock. So this year we have rebranded our Suftex and Meatmaker x Suffolk as Wharetoa Terminals.

In our **Meatmaker** and **Wharetoa Terminal** Flocks our breeding objectives remain;

- Survival
- Growth
- Meat

Survival; You cannot sell a dead lamb!

Growth; Lambs must have the ability to grow fast to meet the target weight early.

Meat; All ram hoggets are scanned at 120 days to measure quantity (EMA) and quality (IMF) of meat.

By using DNA technology we identify the Myomax meat gene. Sheep carrying this gene have increased muscling in the leg and loin and improved carcass weight when compared with non-myomax animals. Single copy Myomax lambs have 5% more muscling in the leg and loin and Myomax Gold have up to 10% more.

Intramuscular Fat (IMF); The eating qualities of meat can be measured by the level of IMF in the loin. This season Alliance are paying a premium of 25c/kg for lambs that fall into their "Handpicked Lamb" grade. These lambs have great conformation and a higher level of IMF.

All of our **Meatmaker** and **Wharetoa Terminal** rams are sold with;

- NProve figures for Growth/Meat/Survival
- Myomax status (Myomax = 1 copy, Myomax Gold = 2 copies)
- IMF ranking 1- 5 (1 being the best).



Wharetoa Terminal 2 tooth rams

It is always our intention as a progressive ram breeder to produce a ram crop each year that is genetically and physically superior to the previous year.

Genetic Trend Graphs show the genetic gain of flocks and traits over time and also compare our progress to that of the industry average.

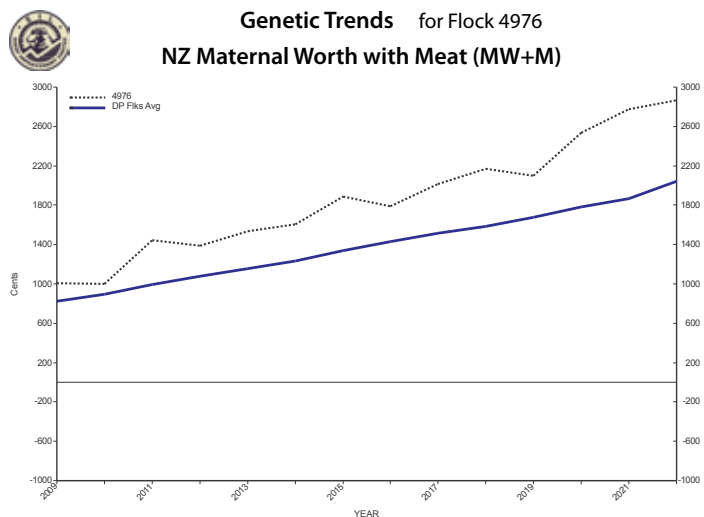
The **Genetic Gain** of your commercial flock will follow that of your ram breeder.

Genetic Trend Graphs for all of our NProve flocks are on our website.

These are the GTG's for our **Wharetoa Maternal** showing both **Maternal and Terminal Relative Economic Values (REV's)**

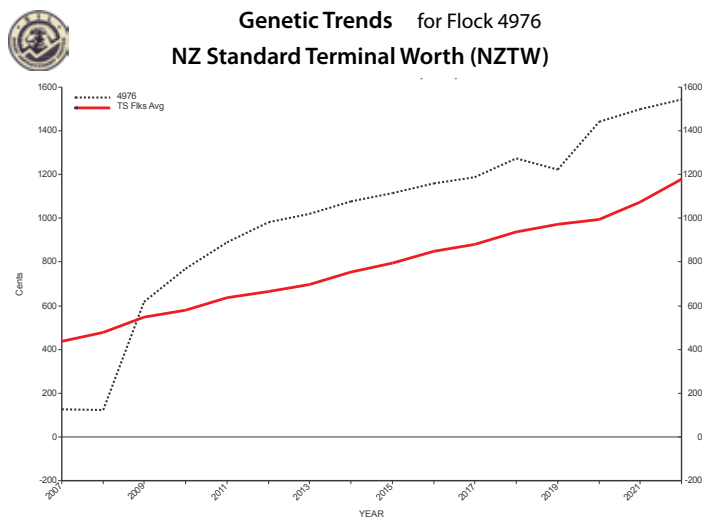
MATERNAL REV's

Genetic Trends for Flock 4976
NZ Maternal Worth with Meat (MW+M)

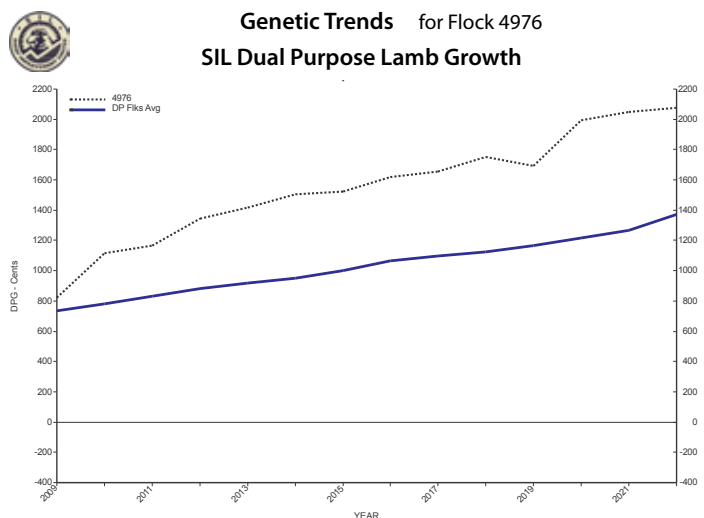


TERMINAL REV's

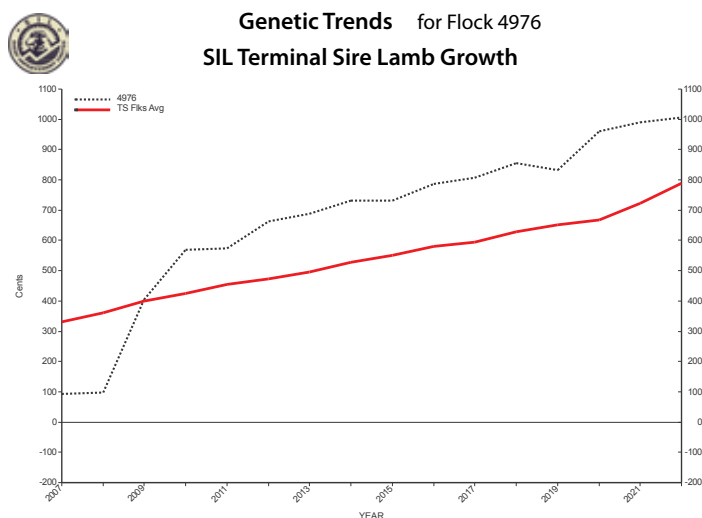
Genetic Trends for Flock 4976
NZ Standard Terminal Worth (NXTW)



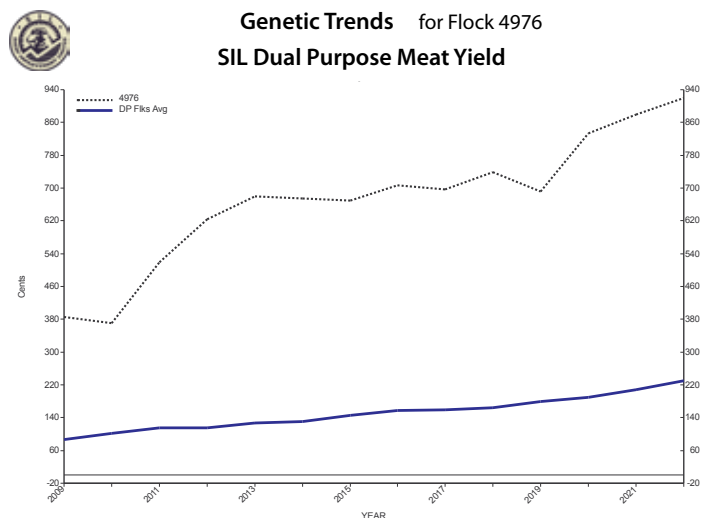
Genetic Trends for Flock 4976
SIL Dual Purpose Lamb Growth



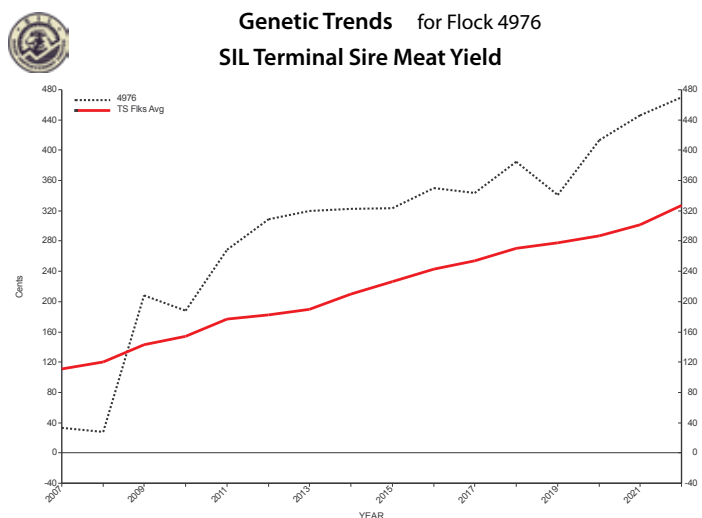
Genetic Trends for Flock 4976
SIL Terminal Sire Lamb Growth



Genetic Trends for Flock 4976
SIL Dual Purpose Meat Yield



Genetic Trends for Flock 4976
SIL Terminal Sire Meat Yield



These graphs show that Wharetoa Maternal rams will put significant growth and meat genes into your commercial ewes.

Beef + Lamb NZ Awards

We were proud and humbled to be recognised as a Finalist in the recent Beef + Lamb NZ Awards. These awards celebrate the people, the innovation, the technologies and management systems that make the New Zealand grass based red meat industry world leading.

We were finalists for the Innovative Farming Award which “recognises farmers and farming operations who are demonstrating outside-of-the-box thinking to develop new technology, tools, products or processes that will benefit the business and that could potentially be scaled up to have wider impact”.

The citation at the awards evening was

Wharetoa Genetics has been at the cutting edge of this country's sheep genetics for over 30 years as owners Garth and Chris Shaw use every tool available to them to breed sheep that are profitable.

Running four N-Prove-registered flocks as well as a high-performance commercial ewe flock on their South Otago farm, Garth and Chris are passionate about sheep. To meet market specifications Garth has combined traits from various breeds to develop Maternal and Terminal sheep that produce fast growing and high meat yielding progeny.

The couple sell over 300 rams every year and say their greatest satisfaction comes from feedback from clients of how Wharetoa's genetics are improving their production. Staying ahead of market trends is important to the Shaws and they proactively seek advice from scientists, technicians and their processor Alliance Group to ensure they stay at the top of their game.

We were gratified to be nominated by Murray Behrent, Livestock Manager of Alliance Group, this meant a lot as Murray has long been a mentor and is someone for whom we have a great deal of respect.

We really enjoyed the Awards Dinner and associated events. It was great meeting so many people contributing to our primary sector in such a positive way. There were stimulating discussions and thought provoking presentations. Our sincere thanks to Beef + Lamb NZ and the sponsors for making this event possible. Congratulations to all finalists and particularly award winners.



2023

Proud finalist for
Gallagher
Innovative Farming Award

Beef+Lamb
New Zealand AWARDS

How can we improve our Profitability ??

In these challenging times for sheep farmers

- if we do what we have always done we get what we always got.
- Adversity can create opportunity for change.
- It's a good idea to have a short, medium and long term plan for the genetic direction of our flocks.
- If making a change have a good reason for it and know what you hope to achieve.

How can we add more value to our primary source of income (red meat)??

- Lamb weights need to increase from 17-19 kg to 23-25 kg.
This will create more income but also meat plant efficiency is based around saleable red meat/unit processed.
- Need to have the correct genetics to achieve this.
Genetic Trend Graphs for lamb growth and meat yield provide this information.
- Feeding; we may need to grow lamb finishing crops.
- Select for quality meat. IMF gives a good indication of this.
- Mate 50% of ewes to Terminal rams Take advantage of hybrid vigour.
- Half of the genetics of our export lambs comes from the genetic makeup of our commercial ewes ... do we need to introduce more growth and meat genes into these ewes?

Mean Kill Date

Bringing our mean kill date forward creates opportunities:

- The extra feed generated can be utilised to;
 - Grow remaining lambs bigger.
 - Grow ewe lambs so they can be mated as hoggets.
 - Lift ewe performance (more to eat in the Autumn and through the winter)
- Reducing days to slaughter reduces methane emissions.
- Lower animal health costs.
- Security in the event of drought.
- More time to do other things.

Meat Yield

Significant financial gain can be made by having high meat yielding carcasses. There is a very high correlation between Meat Yield (carcass to saleable meat) and Live Weight Yield (live weight to carcass weight).

These are a few examples of yield payment from Alliance for our own Export Lambs in the 2022/23 season (all at weaning):

1/ Small line (22) terminal ewe lambs;
Meat Yield = 58.20% Weight = 20.21 kg
Average payment above schedule = \$9.39

2/ 207 terminal ewe lambs;
Meat yield = 57.57% Weight = 18.32 kg
Average payment above schedule = \$6.99
89% of these qualified for the Handpicked grade.

3/ 305 Terminal ram lambs;
Meat yield = 58.05% Weight = 19.06 kg
Average payment above schedule = \$7.80

The Alliance Industry average for meat yield is 54%.

Alliance has increased the payment on handpicked lamb this season to 25c/kg.



Wharetoa Commercial Flock Production Goals 2023-2024

- * Lift average carcass weight to 22kg (2022 av wgt = 19.5kg)
- * 50% away at weaning @19kg (grow the rest out to higher weights)
- * 98% of lambs gone by mid-March

How?? All ewes mated to terminal rams

No tailing or castrating

Grow 10ha Raphno under sowing short rotation rye grass

The Raphno is instead of swedes and the aim is to graze lambs on it in the summer then shut it up in February/March for Winter grazing. Paddocks will then be in grass in Spring 2024.

Shedding Sheep

The cost of producing and harvesting wool far outways the revenue generated from it and most of us are very frustrated by this.

It is our intention to start to breed a sheep with no wool....

We will use ewes from our recorded flocks as a base with emphasis on growth and meat traits the goal being a fast growing meaty sheep with no wool!

For me the ideal flock of the future;

- wean 140-150% lambs
- 50% of lambs away at weaning
- Balance 25kg with high meat yield
- all away by end of February
- no wool = lower costs



Flock ewe with twins



First draft November 2023



OPEN DAY

Friday November 24th 2023, 10am - 3pm
All Sale Rams will be yarded for inspection.

**2023 Commercial lambs sired by Wharetoa Terminal and
Meatmaker rams will be yarded for inspection.**

ON FARM AUCTION

Friday December 15th 2023
12 Midday. Inspection from 10am
Lunch and Refreshments



**PROVEN Breeder of High Meat Yielding and Fast Growth Rate
Maternal and Terminal Rams**



Warwick Howie 027 437 5276
Callum McDonald 027 433 6443



www.wharetoagenetics.co.nz

Garth & Chris Shaw, Wharetoa,
RD4, Balclutha, South Otago

M: 027 273 7037

E: wharetoa@farmside.co.nz

Facebook: Wharetoa Genetics



Proven by Performance