



WAITAKI BOYS' HIGH SCHOOL FRASER FARM

Waitaki Boys' High School Fraser Farm Monthly Update. August 2020

June and July are important months on a sheep farm. We find out at scanning how well our management of the ewes over summer and autumn has gone and get an idea of our production and profit for the coming year. At the same time, we have to look after our expectant mothers through cold and sometimes wet weather and set the farm up for spring.

Key points this month:

- Currently on hand are 136 ewes and 5 lambs. Pasture covers are about 1600kgDM/ha
- On 11 June we scanned (pregnancy tested) the ewes. Overall the ewes achieved 173.7%, so from the 137 ewes we have a potential 238 lambs that will be born. The breakdown was:
 - 4 dry (non-pregnant) ewes
 - 35 ewes expecting single lambs
 - 91 with twins
 - 7 with triplets.
- This scanning result is lower than the 189% we achieved last year but the proportion dry is lower (2.9% vs 4.3% in 2019), and last year we had 19 ewes with triplets. So overall we have more twins and less triplets which is certainly easier for the managers
- The boys helped the managers weigh the ewes at mating, and scanning results were recorded as well linked to the EID tags each ewe has, so we have overall information and can look at the influence of liveweight on production. This dataset will be used by students in several subjects.
- On 30/6 all the ewes were drenched by the boys with 'Matrix', a triple-combination drench, to prepare for the rest of winter
- 4 August ewes received a 5in1 (clostridial) vaccine. This protects the ewe from infection over lambing and gives some immunity to their lambs
- 5 August the ewes were belly crutched to make it easier and cleaner for sheep and managers over lambing, and to make it easier for lambs to feed. Thank you to Donald Johnson who showed the boys how to do this – see earlier Facebook post on the farm page for photos
- Our single ewes are now back from their winter grazing at the A&P Showgrounds
- The management team have the usual winter maintenance tasks and are replacing the pipe in the culvert across the creek which will improve access and tidy up the spot.

