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Ram news – Spring 2021

Dear clients and friends,



Bring on the good times! With strong prices and some warmer temperatures finally kick-starting growth, now is the time to really drive our sheep programmes forward, and genetics are set to play a more important role than ever!

We're on the road catching up with as many of you as we can, and it has been great to see some of your high-performance operations out there. Lambing weather wasn't easy for many in the

South this year and growth was slow and late, but it is very pleasing that many clients still noted marked increases in lamb vigor and survival as well as mothering ability since changing to our unshepherded rams.

The rams themselves are looking terrific again this year – we notice they get easier to present every year as we continue to pursue the deep, thick, easy-doing type that seems to thrive in all conditions.

With only enough space for 300 rams on sale day it's always a juggling act to ensure we offer the right number in each breed so that no-one misses out. Please feel free to give us a call or an email with your likely requirements. If you want to inspect them before sale day to make your selection then be in touch and we can easily accommodate you.

Romneys remain the backbone of our operation and continue progressing in leaps and bounds. We tagged and tailed the lambs in the last couple of weeks and it was great to see the good ewes bringing yet another set of twins down off the hill. This year the MA Romney ewes had the highest scanning percentage of all the breeds at 195% after a very dry autumn. These sheep are deep and thick with very consistent quality and structure. With 90 years of background and 30 years lambing unshepherded on hill country, we are again confident this is the best line of rams we have ever produced. There are also some top rams at the finer end of the micron spectrum.

In February we bought a line of 70 stud ewes from the Kikitangeo Romney dispersal in Northland, famed for the 40 years' selection for worm resistance and immunity that has been performed there. We were able to get access to a couple of top worm-resistance sires from the flock as well, to avoid diluting those bloodlines down. A number of clients are increasingly aware of drench resistance issues and are keen to minimize inputs, so we were privileged to be able to tap into these genetics. The ewes are running under the same easy-care system we use for all our sheep, and the first ram lambs should be available this autumn.

Romdales – this year's line-up of rams is the best we have ever offered. They are again sired by rams from Blair Gallagher's Rangiatea Perendale stud, over our own stud Romney ewes. They are bold and active with quality fleeces, depth and thickness. Clients continue to give great feedback about the way these sheep thrive in all sorts of hard country, with terrific vigour and tremendous lamb survival.

¼ Perendale ¼ Texel ½ Romney - these rams remain very popular and are delivering amazing performance to our clients. The dash of Texel makes lambs finish a lot more easily and quickly, while still retaining the constitution, hardiness and vigour for which Romdale sheep are renowned. We have bred these by mating our top Texel x Romney rams over our first-cross Romdale ewes. Our Perendale x Texel x Romney ewe hoggets are so good we are keeping them and stabilising this cross as a breed.

**2021 Ram sale –
Thursday 25th November.
Inspection from 11am,
Helmsman Auction 12:30
Online option through
Yourbid at:
www.meadowslea.co.nz**

Texel x Romneys are proving to be very productive, easy-doing sheep. The MyoMax meat gene found in the Texel breed delivers consistently meaty and fast-finishing lambs, bringing a big boost to clients' weaning drafts, yields, and bottom lines. We select Texel rams very carefully to ensure structural soundness, while the influence of our quality Romney ewes keeps fertility and survival at the highest level. We are breeding more of these as a stabilized breed and we find the extra generation under our own breeding system makes these sheep even better.

¼ Texel x ¾ Romney Over the last few years we've had some feedback from clients who've been using Texel x Romney 1st cross rams for a few years and have wanted to stabilize their flocks at around ¼ Texel. We bred these rams as a trial and have had great feedback from clients so these will be a good option going forward.

We remain the sole South Island supplier of **kelso. Maternals**. Being part of the **kelso.** franchise system has allowed us to tap into their central progeny test, genetic technology and CT scanning results. Our **kelso.** Maternal ewes consistently scan 190% +, and tail up to 170%, unshepherded off hill country. This breed has really come into its own for hogget mating, with clean shoulders and a smaller birth weight but plenty of get-up-and-go in the lambs. Contact us for more information on our ram hogget leasing programme.

We have developed the **kelso x Romney** breed by crossing these high performance **kelso.** Maternals rams with our own quality Romneys ewes. This has introduced great conformation and constitution without compromising fertility or performance.

kelso. Terminals continue to sell like hot cakes. These blackfaces are a tough, hill-bred mix of a number of different meat breeds, incorporating all the latest genetic technologies. They are meaty and vigorous with tremendous lamb survival. Clients report big increases in weaning drafts and lamb growth rates off all sorts of country. We've been selecting for darker faces, while still keeping the deep, thick body type.

2021 Ram Sale: We look forward to seeing you at the sale on Thursday 25th November, which is rapidly approaching! We will again use our [yourbid](#) online Helmsman sales platform.

Hopefully the on-farm sale format will go ahead as usual, and those who can't make it on the day can bid online simultaneously through our website at www.meadowslea.co.nz, or even bid on the smartphone from the tractor, the school breakup, or wherever you need to be that day! If there is a COVID lockdown or travel restrictions again, the sale will go ahead as usual through the online system. Full catalogue as well as videos of all the rams with commentary will be uploaded to the website in the week before the sale, and online bidding will open at that time.

For those not at the sale who buy online, we will offer a 100% refund if not satisfied when the ram arrives. This is on top of our usual 3-year guarantee we have always offered.

Registration is open now at www.meadowslea.co.nz and there is a demonstration auction up and running on the website so you can get logged in and get to grips with the system. Anyone who registers early will also go in the draw to win a \$2000 free bid at the sale!

Kind Regards, and all the best for the season ahead!



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