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Register now for the 2024 Ram Sale at  
[www.meadowslea.co.nz](http://www.meadowslea.co.nz)  
and go in the draw to win a \$2000 Free Bid!



## Ram news – Spring 2024



It is great to see positive signals and confidence back in the sheep industry. There has been a lot happening here at Meadowslea as usual, but recently our thoughts have been very much with our Southern ram clients as they struggled through atrocious spring weather.

We sell 80% of our rams into the Southland, South Otago and West Otago areas, and high survival genetics have made a world of difference with many of our clients are reporting that their tailing percentages are surprisingly good. The mothering ability of the ewes and the get-up-and-go of the lambs have led to huge gains in lamb survival compared to sheep of 20 years ago. David has just been in Southland visiting ram clients and is in no doubt that these great survival results all come from the stud having spent 30 odd years selecting for a tough, unsheltered, hill-bred sheep.

**2024 Ram sale –  
Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November.  
Inspection from 11am,  
Helmsman Auction 12:30  
Online option through  
Yourbid at:  
[www.meadowslea.co.nz](http://www.meadowslea.co.nz)**

Any ewe that can't bring in 2 lambs off the hill is culled, and we only keep those twin rams through to sale – with the single lambs going prime off the mothers. DNA technology enables us to accurately identify the top performing ewes and their progeny under a completely unsheltered system. The downstream benefits for our ram clients are massive in a year like this. Our own 2024 lambing has gone exceptionally well with record survival in the mobs tailed so far. We have had twin scanned mobs of totally unsheltered Romney stud ewes bringing in close to 200% of thumping lambs off the hill at tailing.

**Romneys:** just get better every year and with DNA parentage recording we don't go near them from set stocking until the DNA sample is taken at the same time as they are tagged down the tailing chute. This ensures our clients can have complete confidence in the easy-care and high survival attributes of our genetics. We have now been breeding Romneys for 98 years and this is the best line of sale rams ever! We have micron tested every white-faced ram and there are again some top sheep at the finer end of the spectrum.

**Worm Resistant Romneys – “Kiki South”:** We purchased one of the biggest shares of the Kikitango worm resistant Romney flock at the dispersal sale in North Auckland in 2020. Kikitango studmaster Gordon Levett pioneered parasite resistance and spent 40 years recording and selecting sheep that could push through a worm challenge. The ewes we purchased carried some of the highest worm resistant breeding values in NZ. Since they arrived in Fairlie we have selected the ewes that have best adapted to our environment and mated them to some of the highest worm resistant sires available in NZ. The progeny were run totally undrenched through some very high worm challenge seasons. We are rapidly infusing a lot of this blood into our Meadowslea Romneys and it will flow through to all our maternal breeds.



*Meadowslea Romney and Terminator-bred lambs at Murray and Jenny Rowland's property. This line of lambs killed 20.1kg at just 100 days old!*

Drench resistance in South Island sheep flocks has shown a massive increase in the last few seasons and we are very pleased to be able to offer our clients a proven genetic option to tackle what is likely to become a serious problem going forward.

David Giddings  
George Giddings

(03) 685 8027

027 2299 760  
027 656 33232

[giddingsfamily@xtra.co.nz](mailto:giddingsfamily@xtra.co.nz)  
[gdgiddings@gmail.com](mailto:gdgiddings@gmail.com)

**Breed Rebranding:** We renamed our Kelso breeds to better reflect our own breeding programmes, distinguish ourselves from the North Island bred Kelso sheep, and avoid brand confusion.

**Terminator** is the new name for the Kelso Terminals. We think it accurately describes their use in any breeding programme. These are tough hill-bred sires that breed lambs heading to early slaughter at top weights and yield incredibly well and are a cross of 8 different meat breeds so have all the hybrid vigour in the world!

**K Maternal:** these high-performance composite sheep were bred from top performing Kelso Maternal Rams sourced from Kelso North Island, but we have tweaked the ewe replacements to increase the Romney content to suit our South Island farming system. The breed originally incorporated Texel genetics for yield and early maturity, a small dash of Finn for a massive fertility boost and a little East Friesian to increase ewe milking ability, all out of a Romney base. These sheep have really come into their own as hogget maters in recent years.

**K Romney:** these popular sheep previously known as Kelso Romney continue to be bred using top K Maternal rams mated over our proven high performing stud Romney ewes. We are the only breeding operation in NZ breeding this cross and they tick a lot of boxes for high performing commercial farmers.

**Our Romney x breeds** give outstanding hybrid vigour options:

**Romdale** - We lease top figured Perendale ram hoggets from Rangiatea stud and cross over proven older stud Romney ewes to produce these thumping deep bodied sheep. Romdale ewes perform strongly for clients on harder country and our emphasis on strong hindquarters, early maturity, and fertility traits produces a tough, mobile sheep with a lot of "go" about them. We also have a stabilised option bred from our own leading Romdale ram lambs and out of our Romdale ewes.

**Perendale x Texel x Romney** - This breed continues to gain popularity and suits a lot of modern breeding programmes. Bred by using our own high indexing Texel x Romney rams over Romdale ewes, the resulting progeny of ½ Romney ¼ Perendale ¼ Texel is stacked with hybrid vigour and seems to highlight the best of all these breeds, giving a massive boost to weaning weight, performance, and yield.

**Texel x Romney** - This breed continues to be popular, and everyone knows the impact the Texel has in terms of extra muscle and yield with fast finishing lambs, particularly at the weaning draft. We use high-indexing Texel rams over our older proven stud ewes, and they produce thick-bodied progeny with strong bone, good feet, and exceptionally deep bodies.

**¾ Romney x ¼ Texel** - In response to client demand we now have the ¼ Texel option available. These are bred by mating our top Romney ram over Texel X Romney ewes. The Texel influence is still very strong in these sheep, and they are virtually indistinguishable from the ½ Texels visually but exhibit more of the Romney mobility and temperament.

**Ram Sale is on Thursday November 28<sup>th</sup>** with over 300 rams on offer. These are the top performing and indexing rams of all the breeds and we are certain this is the best line-up we have ever produced! This will as usual be a Helmsman-style auction through the Yourbid platform, with both online and on-farm bidding accepted. Full videos and catalogues will be posted online so if you're busy with tractor work or the school breakup you can still get a good look at them. Registration is open now and early registrants go in the draw to win a \$2000 free bid!



**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.

**Finance Available** - With cashflow still tight for many this year, we are offering a finance package on rams bought at the sale. Register now to apply through the Meadowslea website – [www.meadowslea.co.nz](http://www.meadowslea.co.nz).

**Private ram sales and hogget mating ram lamb leases** will be available after the Ram Sale – please be in touch!

David Giddings  
George Giddings

(03) 685 8027

027 2299 760

027 656 3322

[giddingsfamily@xtra.co.nz](mailto:giddingsfamily@xtra.co.nz)

[gdgiddings@gmail.com](mailto:gdgiddings@gmail.com)