

# Wairarapa Branch Newsletter

New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association



AUGUST 2010 ISSUE NO. 2

## CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

Hi there Wairarapa Deer Farmers,

It was probably always going to be a difficult winter for livestock farming, after an almost no growth autumn! I'm sure we are all looking forward to some sunny days. Niwa is predicting La Nina conditions ahead and a warmer, drier, early Spring, and after that... who knows?

It is a good time of the year to get away to a warmer climate, as I think a lot of us have, or are about to.

Louise and I went to beautiful, warm, Samoa, but it was a bit hard coming back to the wet and cold and horrible cluster flies. Are these things ever going to leave us?

Thanks to all those who braved the freezing wet conditions and came to the discussion group afternoon at Shane & Lynnette McManaway's. Unfortunately, the weather prevented us seeing the deer being put through their paces on the electronic system but the industry experts gave good feedback at question time. Our next discussion day at Dean and Nicky Wilkinson's reverts back to the basic format which we introduced at Quentin's. We're looking forward to this day – Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> September - as I am sure Dean has a lot to show us and we'll have plenty of issues to discuss.

We were saddened to hear of the sudden death this week of one of our members, Neil Richardson, who farmed at Waitawhiti Station, near Eketahuna. We extend our sincere condolences to Neil's family.

Don't forget the last focus farm field day at "The Steyning" (Tim & Lucy's is on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> of September.

Hope the forthcoming season is kind to all deer farmers.

Cheers,

*Tony*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 2, Thursday	DISCUSSION GROUP – Masterton Dean & Nicky Wilkinson
SEPTEMBER 15, Wednesday	CENTRAL DISTRICTS FOCUS FARM – FINAL FIELD DAY – Tim Aitken & Lucy Robertshawe Tikokino
NOVEMBER 11, Thursday	DISCUSSION GROUP - Carterton Gavin & Barbara McManaway
DECEMBER 3, Friday	CHRISTMAS PARTY and Velvet Competition

### INSIDE

- Central Districts "The Steyning" Field Day Finale.
- Wairarapa discussion group days.
- Copper supplementation trials.
- Your Committee

And more.....

"I JOINED DINZ BECAUSE THE DEER INDUSTRY IS A FANTASTIC INDUSTRY WITH GREAT PRODUCTS IN VENISON AND VELVET AND I AM KEEN TO PLAY MY PART TO ASSIST THE INDUSTRY IN FULFILLING ITS POTENTIAL."



## **COPPER SUPPLEMENTATION TRIALS** - *an excerpt from Deer Industry News Issue 40, February/March 2010 which we thought could be relevant for our region.*

### **No magic bullet for managing copper deficiency**

*Copper supplementation trials at David Dewar's Focus Farm at Ngakuru, near Rotorua, suggest to date that supplements aren't likely to be a magic bullet for deficiency problems.*

At the 3 February field day, veterinarian Robin Hopkirk of Animal Health Services said results from two year's trials tended to replicate other studies showing no significant velvet growth. Different dosing regimes showed no pattern of improvement and there was little difference in results between years when supplements were used and years when they were not, he said. 'We still don't even know at precisely what body copper levels deer become deficient. The problem certainly seems to manifest itself at a lower level than in sheep and cattle, probably below 60 micrograms of copper per kg of liver tissue. However, some clients have herds that are constantly well below this level and they have given up using supplements as they feel there is no measurable advantage.'

He said many studies had shown wild deer had about three times the copper levels of domestic deer in the same region. This could result from the wild animals preferentially grazing plants not available to their domestic counterparts.

The present trial followed on from a 2002 review of 11 copper supplementation trials, only two of which had shown any improvement.

'What this all means is still open to interpretation and we don't have any clear answers. The picture is complicated by the fact that copper levels in deer are antagonized by sulphur, molybdenum and iron. Even where there is sufficient copper in pasture, or a supplement is being fed, these antagonists can combine with some of the copper and make it unavailable.'

**This explains why copper deficiency tends to be worst in late winter and spring – at these times grass is short and animals end up eating more soil and dust which contain the antagonist substances:.**

Copper supplements could be applied as an oral dose, injection, in supplements or by spraying dissolved copper on pasture.

'Copper deficiency can have serious effects, so it's important that we keep working on the problem. **The worst symptoms are arthritis and swayback (enzootic ataxia)**, a complex syndrome resulting from lesions in the brain that can cause wobbly walk or paralysis of the back legs. Other symptoms include poor immunity and possibly anaemia.'

## **NAIT UPDATE**

Following up on a meeting at the May Conference and in response to a request to put his concerns in writing, Tony Bayliss has received a reply from the Hon. David Carter which states (quote) "I can assure you that commonly raised issues including the colour of the tag, the correct ear of application, and the timing of tagging prior to slaughter will get full consideration by the NAIT Stakeholder Reference Group and the Board of the establishment company, NAIT Limited. Regulations to support the mandatory requirements for deer will be subject to public consultation". We'll keep you posted on any developments!

## FOCUS FARM FIELD DAY FINALE – Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> September

*“Featuring the 2010 Biennial Deer Industry, NZDFA Environmental and Sustainability Award with Distinction winner - Tim Aitken & Lucy Robertshawe's - The Steyning”.* The full programme for this day was not available at the time of writing, but it promises to be informative and entertaining and we believe the day will start at the earlier time of 10.00am, giving a bit of extra time in the bar at the end of the day. The field day is an invaluable resource always offering a gem of information which “makes a difference” and totally justifies setting aside the day to attend. In case you’ve missed any of the previous days and their excellent handouts, you can find them at <http://www.deernz.org/centralregions>.



*The Wairarapa Branch is planning a good attendance to honour Tim and Lucy and if you'd like to join the group travelling up to Tikokino, please contact Louise Bayliss (06 3727 865) for further details of departure times etc. There is still room on the bus and at the motel.*

## WAIRARAPA FARM DISCUSSION GROUP

Apologies, apologies. I inadvertently referred to our local discussion group as a “field day” which caused all manner of difficulties. Stagline were very kindly offering to ‘advertise’ the occasion and various local non-deer farmers expressed interest in being there. So... just to clarify – the farm discussion group was set up by members of our own branch, who make their farms available to fellow members of the discussion group and share confidential information, including financial facts and figures in an endeavour to assist one another and bring about better conditions and results for the deer farming industry in our area. Any current branch member can join the group on payment of a \$50.00 annual fee.



Discussion group members at McManaways

Our next farm discussion group day is at Dean and Nicky Wilkinson’s Wapiti Sire Stud Farm at 78 Totara Park Road, Fernridge Masterton.

**Thursday September 2<sup>nd</sup> – 12 noon – Bring your own lunch.**

**Directions – heading south from Chapel Street, Masterton:  
 Turn right into Lincoln Road  
 Turn left into Ngaumatawa Road  
 Turn right into Westbush Road  
 Turn left into Skeets Road  
 Turn right into Totara Park Road. Follow to end of road.**



Dean Wilkinson

## **GROWING OUR INDUSTRY**

For the second year running, Quentin Connell and Ngarita Brookes, ably assisted by Phil and Bridget Gray, have hosted Lincoln University first year graduates for an on-site visit to soak up all aspects of deer farming. Soil types, feed, husbandry, animal health, farming systems and the like form part of the discussions for the day..

Quentin, himself an “old boy” of Lincoln University, believes he gets as much out of the visit as the students do.

He finds it stimulating “as their questions challenge you to recall things that you might have forgotten about and simply take for granted. Interacting with the Lincoln tutors who expand on my information is a good learning experience for me. It’s great to be attracting young blood into the industry – showing them the simplicity of running a deer farm, discussing the economics and the fact that it is a lucrative industry.”

The Lincoln University initiated visit forms part of the field trips and tours requirement of various diplomas and degrees which Lincoln offer.

## **NEW CHAIRMAN FOR DINZ BOARD**

Ashburton deer farmer, Andy Macfarlane in accepting his recent appointment as DINZ Chairman, said: “I joined DINZ because the deer industry is a fantastic industry with great products in venison and velvet and I am keen to play my part to assist the industry in fulfilling its potential.”

## **KEEPING TRACK– an occasional light- hearted pictorial essay**



You think the mud is hard work.....



What about the snow for us guys?

**RECIPE** — [www.nzvenison.com](http://www.nzvenison.com) has a wonderful selection of recipes, as does [www.cervena.com](http://www.cervena.com)  
This gorgeous "soup" is from the Cervena website.

## **Garden Vegetable Minestra with Braised Cervena Venison, Tarragon Pistou and Garlic Croutons – serves 6**



### **For the Venison:**

4 Cervena Venison shanks  
2 whole heads garlic, sliced in half horizontally  
2 large onions, peeled and sliced  
1 large carrot, peeled and chopped  
4 celery stalks, washed and sliced  
2 large tomatoes, cored and quartered  
Herb sachet: thyme, rosemary, bay leaf  
2000 ml good quality chicken stock  
Salt and pepper  
Olive oil

### **For the soup vegetables:**

3 large onions, peeled and diced  
2 carrots, peeled and diced  
2 fennel bulbs, diced  
  
2 large zucchini, diced  
Kernels from 2 large ears of corn  
450 grams fresh green beans, cut into 1.3 cm pieces  
4 medium tomatoes, peeled, seeded and diced  
2 tablespoons chopped thyme  
2 tablespoons chopped rosemary  
1 cup cooked pasta, such as orzo

### **For the pistou:**

2 tablespoons toasted pinenuts  
3 peeled garlic cloves  
1 cup tarragon leaves  
1 cup parsley leaves  
½ cup extra virgin olive oil  
Salt and pepper

### **Method**

Preheat the oven to 170° C. Season venison shanks generously with salt and pepper. In heavy, high-sided roasting pan over medium heat, add some olive oil and brown the shanks evenly on all sides. Remove the meat from the pan. Add the garlic, onion, carrots and celery to the pan and lightly sauté. Add the tomatoes, chicken stock and herb sachet. Season to taste and bring mixture to boil. Add venison shanks in a single layer, reduce heat to low simmer and cover with foil. Place in the oven and cook for approximately 2 hours or until very tender.

While the venison is braising, prepare the soup vegetables. In large sauté pan over medium heat, sauté onion, carrots and fennel until soft in olive oil. Then add zucchini, corn kernels and green beans, cooking for 4-5 minutes more. Add diced tomatoes, chopped herbs and cooked pasta, stirring well to coat with oil. Adjust seasoning with salt and pepper. Allow to cool and set aside.

**To make the pistou**, place pine nuts, peeled garlic cloves, tarragon and parsley leaves, and the ½ cup oil in blender and puree for 3 min; mixture should be consistency of grain mustard. Adjust seasoning with salt and pepper if necessary. Set aside until ready to serve.

When the shanks are done, remove them from the broth and set aside. Strain braising broth, discarding solids. Let broth settle and skim all fat. Pick meat from shank bones, discarding bones and return meat to broth. Measure amount of broth and add chicken stock or water to bring quantity to 2000 ml.

In a large pot over medium heat, bring the broth and venison meat to a simmer. Stir in the soup vegetables and pasta mixture. Cook gently for a few minutes until warmed through. Readjust seasoning with salt and pepper.

Ladle soup into large wide bowls and garnish by floating a large spoon of pistou on top of each bowl of soup. Serve with slices of crusty rustic bread.

**Photo © 2006 frankie frankeny, frankenyimages.com**

## YOUR COMMITTEE

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## SPONSORSHIP

Our sincere thanks to Allflex NZ Ltd for sponsoring our newsletter.

## CONTRIBUTIONS – Would really be helpful!!

Your input and feedback to this Newsletter would be wonderful. Any experiences you would like to share or comments to add can be emailed to me at [tonyandlouise@wizbiz.net.nz](mailto:tonyandlouise@wizbiz.net.nz) and I'll be happy to try and accommodate them. We hope to publish three Newsletters a year.

## DISCLAIMER

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No contributions or letters will be printed unless the author's name is supplied.

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