

# Wairarapa Branch Newsletter

New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association



NOVEMBER 2010 ISSUE NO. 3

## CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

Summer is here, Christmas is nearly here and we seem to have missed a spring after a very wet winter and no autumn before that. In fact it's been a winter from hell and it's been a really difficult six months farming in the Wairarapa and throughout New Zealand.

Despite those setbacks, our branch is flourishing with several new members coming on board, and the big highlight being the revival of our discussion days. This was timely given the winding down of the Central Districts Focus Farm activities at The Steyning. I can't thank the discussion group participants enough for opening up their farms and books and making the discussion days so meaningful. Because, without them, there is no discussion group or day. Some food for thought over the holidays – if you're not attending our discussion days you might want to ask yourself why not!

At the recent Branch Chairman's meeting one of the big things we looked at was what the DFA might be like in 10 years time. All the Chairmen believe it's very important that the DFA exists because it is the only group representing the farmers' interests. In conjunction with DINZ, the DFA is doing a lot of hard work on our behalf with the AHB (reduced TB testing), NAIT (improving practical aspects), various marketing companies (for velvet and venison), appropriate Government bodies (overseas trade) and other groups in an endeavour to progress the industry and protect farmers' interests. So the feedback that I am getting from the various meetings I have attended is that most people in our industry believe the future for deer farming is extremely positive and I think this is a great note on which to end the year.

All the best for the Christmas season. Hope to see you at the Velvet competition and Christmas party.

Cheers *Tony*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### VELVET COMPETITION AND CHRISTMAS PARTY Friday, December 3rd

4.00pm	Judging of Velvet at the premises of PGG Wrightson, Lincoln Road, Masterton (Velvet to be delivered to their freezer prior to 4.00pm)
6.00pm	Bar opens at Masterton Motor Lodge
7.00pm	Buffet dinner
8.30pm onwards	Prizegiving and frivolity

### INSIDE



- Christmas Party and Branch Velvet Competition
- Wairarapa discussion group days.
- It's a Wrap - Central Districts Focus Farm Finale
- \* Annual Conference Timaru – 2011
- Your Committee



**WAIRARAPA BRANCH**  
**New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association**

**VELVET COMPETITION ENTRY FORM**  
**4.00PM**

Friday December 3, 2010  
PGG WRIGHTSON, LINCOLN ROAD, MASTERTON

**NB: Entrant must accompany entry on the day to be eligible for judging.**

ENTRANT'S NAME:.....  
Please print

PROPERTY NAME:.....  
Please print

CONTACT PHONE NO:.....

**CATEGORIES ENTERED - Please tick each appropriate category**

**CATEGORY 1**  
"WAPITI STAG" – Criteria: Any Wapiti Stag  
Label No.....

**CATEGORY 2**  
"BEST 3 COMMERCIAL HEADS" – Criteria: From a "commercial farmer"  
Label No:.....

**CATEGORY 3**  
"SUPREME VELVET" – Criteria: For any head weighing 6.5kg and above as weighed by the Judge on the day  
Label No:.....

**CATEGORY 4**  
"COMMERCIAL RED STAG" - Criteria: Any head under 6.5kg as weighed by the Judge on the day.  
Label No:.....

**CATEGORY 5**  
"HARD ANTLER" – Criteria: Cut from any stag in 2009  
Label No:.....

## CHRISTMAS PARTY



**DATE:** FRIDAY DECEMBER 3<sup>RD</sup>  
**VENUE:** MASTERTON MOTOR LODGE

**TIME:** 6.00PM Pay Bar opens  
 7.00PM 3 course buffet dinner  
 8.30PM Onwards Prizegiving and frivolity

**COST:** \$39.00 PER PERSON

**RSVP by THURSDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER**

[tonyandlouise@wizbiz.net.nz](mailto:tonyandlouise@wizbiz.net.nz)

or Louise/Tony 3727865

## WARARAPA DISCUSSION GROUP

We are a passionate and dedicated group of enthusiastic deer farmers offering our farms for scrutiny and have got together every couple of months to compare notes. This year we've covered four local farms and learnt a lot about deer farming in the district and how different the challenges are for each farm. We've been really fortunate to have Tony Pearse, with his wealth of industry knowledge, join us on 2 occasions; Jackie Bedford from the Deer Farmer Magazine enjoyed her opportunity to participate, as did Pam MacLeman from the National Velvet Standards Body. We're always grateful when Steve Penn can join the group and share the vast experiences that Landcorp offers to the industry.

### Totara Park Deer Stud



In September we met at Dean and Nicky Wilkinson's wapiti sire stud where we really did hold our breath and wonder how a deer farm could look so good given the "winter from hell". In fact one of the first questions asked of Dean was "where have you been hiding your deer over winter". A credit to great farming practices and a great example of what can be achieved by careful management and not overstocking.

***Exciting to know that we have young blood coming into the industry! Scott Wilkinson is determined to follow in his dad's footsteps – go Scotty!!!***

### Waiohine Deer

The velvet season is a sight to behold at Gavin and Barb McManaway's "Waiohine Deer" property. A brilliant November day gave our group the chance to get very close to some amazing animals and learn more about velvetting practice from two very passionate farmers. Gavin and Barb have 23 years of animal husbandry graphed out and an intimate knowledge of their stock breeding habits – right down to the twins and triplets.





*Waiohine Deer triplets*

It's a fact and one which some of our scientific friends might well be interested in.

Our discussion days have really shown us how profitable deer farming can be despite the current economic environment and we look forward to more on-farm days in 2011 – details in the New Year on this.

## **WRAPPING UP ‘THE STEYNING’ – What comes next?**

Over the past three years our Branch members have keenly followed the developments at Tikokino and the “final fling” was no exception. A busload of us once again travelled north to support Tim and Lucy as they ended their public commitment to the focus farm. Both agreed it had been a valuable experience, not without its trials and tribulations – the fodder beet this year causing some anxiety, and yersiniosis lurking, but the “Aitken method” shone – and they did themselves proud throughout the whole venture, certainly deserving the accolades they received. This time our group stayed on to “celebrate” at the Tikokino Pub before heading to Waipukurau for the night. What’s that about what goes on tour stays on tour?!

The benefits of field days differ for everyone, but as a captive audience we were certainly always offered the opportunity to discuss and debate animal health issues, feed programmes and the like with industry professionals. Over the years it was a great forum to meet with qualified scientific personnel, who being associated with the industry were particularly generous with their time and could offer a wealth of information from their years of intensive work within the deer industry.

The Central Districts will take a break from focus farm activities over the next 12 months so that DINZ can research farmers’ feedback on what is wanted for field days going forward.

## **NAIT UPDATE**

Latest information suggests that NAIT are listening to us and your Chairman, through the NZDFA is making inroads with his constant insistence on their need to implement the most practical and sensible methods. (They might just meet our demands just to shut him up!!)

## **VELVET UPDATE**

Current upheaval in the market place is very disappointing and advice from the NZDFA is to be very careful when selling your velvet and to ensure you know who you really are selling it to, and on what terms and conditions.

## **2011 ANNUAL CONFERENCE – Timaru**

Next year’s conference will be on 17,18,19 May in Timaru. With plenty of time to plan why not get a group together? We know of 4 of our branch already intending to be there. More details in the New Year.

**RECIPE** — [www.nzvenison.com](http://www.nzvenison.com) has a wonderful selection of recipes, as does [www.cervena.com](http://www.cervena.com)  
The below recipe is copied from [www.cervena.com](http://www.cervena.com)

## **BBQ Cervena Venison Leg Fillets with Toasted Fennel Seed Crust, Grilled Summer Vegetables and Walnut Pesto**

**serves 4**



### **Cervena Leg Fillets**

(700g) Leg fillet of venison  
1 tbsp toasted fennel seeds  
Flake salt and cracked pepper  
2 Tbsp olive oil  
Garlic  
Fresh basil, oregano and thyme  
Selection of available vegetables such as zucchini, aubergine, capsicum, asparagus, beans, red onion, corn, flat mushrooms, or young fennel bulb.

### **Walnut Pesto**

½ cup of Fresh walnuts  
1 small clove crushed garlic  
2 cups flat leaf parsley leaves  
¼ cup walnut oil  
¼ cup extra virgin olive oil  
1 ½ Tbsp of fresh cream  
Salt and pepper to taste  
Puree nuts, parsley, garlic to a paste add oils slowly and finish with cream.

### **Method:**

**Grind salt and pepper and fennel seed in a mortar and pestle and rub into the venison. Allow to stand for ½ hour prior to cooking. Sear venison on high heat, remove to rack if BBQ has a hood, or to the side away from high heat and cook for about 10 minutes. Rest, and slice when required.**

**Chop vegetables into bite size pieces and coat generously with olive oil and chopped garlic. Add a few small sprigs of basil, oregano and thyme and grill on the hot plate until just al dente.**

**Serve the sliced meat on top of the vegetables with walnut pesto on the side.**

## YOUR COMMITTEE

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## SPONSORSHIP

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

## CONTRIBUTIONS – please feel free to send in your thoughts!

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.  
The Wairarapa branch publishes this newsletter as a service to its members.