

We will all certainly remember 2020 for so many reasons and I think we are looking forward to 2021 for a fresh new start.

TOPICS TO BE
COVERED:

1 Low Input Trial

2 WormFEC Gold

3 Drench Resistance

4 Facebook Post

5 Avalon Fine

6 Ram Selling

LOW INPUT TRIAL

The Beef and Lamb Genetics Low Input Trial is being run at Orari Gorge Station and now has its second crop of lambs on the ground.

This is the first progeny trial where low input traits such as breech bareness, resistance and dag score along with production trials. The key has been farming these lambs under high

parasite levels to measure how these lambs perform compared to in a typical farming operation. Avalon had two Ultimate rams in the first year and both have performed well out of the 17 rams evaluated.

Our ram Texel/Perendale 2318/15 was one of the top performers, being ranked third overall on performance and

resistance and the best ranked on low input traits. What wasn't included in the rankings is the biggest profit driver, fertility. 100% of his hoggets showed oestrus ranking him above a pure Finn with 86% oestrus. This proves that our focus on a Texel with dual purpose traits has really come through in a breed not known for its fertility. Ram 2318/15 has been used widely in our Ultimate and Texel studs.

For a Texel ram to show this level of fertility over unselected Romney Texel ewes means Avalon has the fertility to match any stud in NZ.



WORMFEC GOLD

WormFEC Gold is a group of elite breeders who have a proven track record in selection of worm resistance along with performance traits. Currently only 15 breeders and 18 flocks qualify for this group.

Avalon has 3 of the 18 flocks. We are the only South Island Perendale flock, the only purebred Texel flock in NZ and our Ultimate is the only low input breed making the cut.

I have just taken over as Chairman of WormFEC Gold.

DRENCH RESISTANCE

There has been an interesting report from Tachion on the increasing levels of drench resistance on NZ sheep farms. They have gone back to 2005 when they first did resistance monitoring.

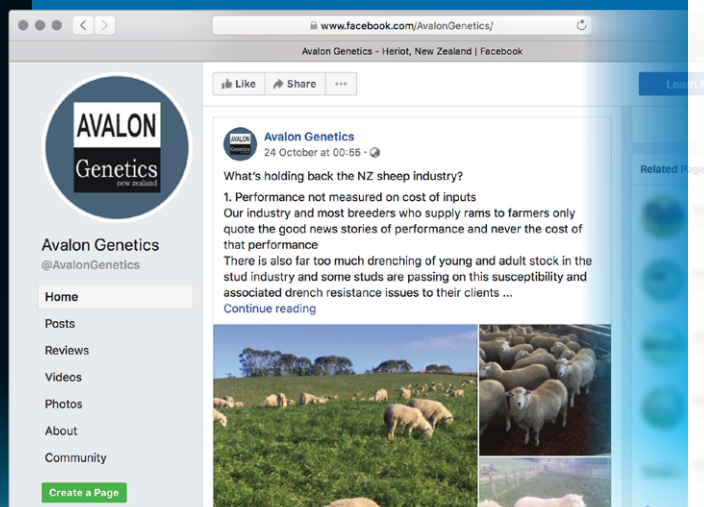
Take Home messages

- ➔ 43% of farms had resistance to combination drenches
- ➔ 15% of farms had resistance to triple drenches
- ➔ 260% increase in resistance to Abamectin resistance in last 4 years
- ➔ 60% rise in triple drench resistance in last 4 years
- ➔ Dramatic increases for all drench types over the last 4 years

For many farmers the last point is a major worry with so many using triple drenches. Another 60% increase in levels of resistance will put many of you in risk and leave only the more expensive 4 family drench option.

FACEBOOK POST

I did a post in our Avalon Genetics Facebook site about *What's holding back the NZ Sheep Industry?* For me these are things reducing our potential.



AVALON FINE

We are two years down the track of producing a 22-24 micron fleece on an Ultimate sheep. Essentially we want a low input fine wool sheep that will thrive in a crossbred environment.

With our Perendale and Ultimate lambs already producing 27-28-micron wool, hoggets at 29 and 34-35, ewe fleece we are already at the fine edge of crossbreed. We have progeny tested Merino, Merino Corriedale, Dohne, Ill De France and Quarterbred genetics and will be in a position to offer halfbred rams with 24-26 m rams in 2021/22. We will have a limited number of 2ths rams for sale this year.

Our best ram lamb had a \$12/kg fleece, pre covid prices and we want to leverage our fertility, meat, growth, resistance and dag score to breed a sheep that will deliver a \$10-15kg plus fleece, without losing the performance we currently have

The advice we have got from Mark Ferguson of NextGen is to try and do this in two generations rather, try and do it with a Merino over one generation.



Half bred ram hoggets progeny tested in 2020



RAM SALES

Scott Walker continues to do great things with Perendales. We have now completed the changeover with our Texels and Ultimates moving to the Avalon property that Allan manages.

Pricing remains the same as last season and we will be contacting you regarding rams selling in mid-December and if you can't make it, mid-January.

For NI farmers we will try and get rams up before Christmas.



*All the best
for the season.*

*Regards,
Allan & Sonia*

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