

QUARTERLY PROGRESS SUMMARY: April – June 2017

THE NEW ZEALAND SHEEP INDUSTRY TRANSFORMATION PROJECT (NZSTX)

Summary of progress during this quarter

Fibre

Note: PGP investment in the fibre component of NZSTX ended on 30 June 2015.

- This quarter has again brought extensive travel throughout Europe, as well as the UK. In addition, new brand partners have also visited New Zealand, building their relationships with NZM and our grower suppliers.
- We continue to get unprecedented demand for ZQ fibre.

Meat and Other

Note: PGP investment in the Meat and Other component of NZSTX ended on 30 June 2015.

- We continue to focus on rebuilding the supply base and in-market presence for the SILERE programme, following the establishment of a new partnership with Alliance Group relating to Alpine Origin Merino and the SILERE brand.

Production Science

- April – June 2017 was the final quarter for NZSTX and the focus for the Production Science component of the programme has been on completing co-funded project work and transitioning ongoing projects to the post-PGP environment.
- We would like to acknowledge the enormous support from MPI, Merino Inc, New Zealand's fine-wool growers and the wider primary sector throughout the lifetime of NZSTX.

Key highlights and achievements

This quarter's highlights and achievements:

- We have made excellent progress with the development of the genomic breeding value (gBV) for footrot resistance this quarter, with footrot breeding values being made available to New Zealand fine-wool ram breeders for the first time. This is a significant breakthrough for the project. By using 'single-step' analysis, the FeetFirst team can generate a prediction of the footrot breeding value for a sire where we have collected DNA information only (based on the information we have for sires that have had their progeny tested for footrot as well as DNA information collected). More information about the FeetFirst project can be found on www.perfectsheep.co.nz.
- A major focus for the quarter has been on the fifth mating at the fine-wool central progeny test (CPT). There have been thirty fine-wool rams entered for this year's CPT. This ongoing commitment from New Zealand's fine-wool industry is essential for the future success of the FeetFirst project (see above). With the support of NZM growers, we will continue to collect performance data from their progeny across a comprehensive range of production, animal health and ease-of-management traits, with a particular focus on resistance to footrot.
- With the support of NZSTX, fine-wool ram breeders in New Zealand have adopted the technology that enables estimated breeding values (EBVs) to be generated for their rams (and those sold to commercial breeders). The number of ram breeders in New Zealand using EBVs has increased from three to 20, representing approximately 90% of the Merino and quarterbred rams sold.

- During NZSTX, our producer groups have enabled us to extend the reach of NZSTX outputs to growers, bridging the gap between awareness-raising activities, such as field days, and consultations with individual growers. The groups have become a valuable communication channel between not only NZM and our growers, but also with the wider industry that support New Zealand's fine-wool growers.
- We have developed new fact sheets for growers, which are available on www.perfectsheep.co.nz and through the NZM producer group network. These fact sheets add to the growing suite of tools available to New Zealand fine-wool growers through NZM and our networks. These materials will continue to be available via www.perfectsheep.co.nz.

Investment

Investment period	Industry contribution	MPI contribution	Total investment
During this Quarter	\$0.3m	\$0.3m	\$0.6m
Programme To Date	\$16.4m	\$16.4m	\$32.8m

