

PGP - The New Zealand Sheep Industry Transformation Project

Quarterly Report Summary. January to March 2013

Overall

Good progress is being made across all NZSTX projects. However, as noted in the previous quarterly report, commodity markets continue to be challenging, and together with global economic woes this is now having an impact on our ability to generate additional short-term demand in both fibre and meat markets

Project One - Transforming Demand for Fit-For-Market Fibre

New product development is ongoing.

Project Two – Meat and Other Products

Sales of SILERE and alpine origin merino branded products in New Zealand have increased this quarter.

The key activities for developing the market for Merino leather this quarter have been focused on preparation for the spring / summer leather trade fair in Bologna, Italy (Lineapelle) in April 2013. The refined and expanded range for the trade fair is nearing completion.

Project 3 – Production Science

Forage science is progressing well. The focus of the work is shifting from research to adoption. A field day was held at Glenaan Station, in Canterbury in conjunction with Farm IQ, which successfully demonstrated the role that lucerne can play in farm development.

All components of the trait acceleration projects are underway and are receiving good support from the fine wool sector. A nucleus flock and a central progeny test have been established. These will form a strong foundation to drive adoption of fit-for-market fine wool sheep genetics in the New Zealand industry. Ram breeders (representing approximately 50% of rams available to commercial growers) are now using estimated breeding values as a result of the trait acceleration programme.

The continued hot, dry weather over summer has significantly delayed the footrot sampling programme due to the lack of footrot infected sheep at present.

NZM held roadshows in March, which were attended by 272 growers. The roadshows gave a full update on the production science initiatives.

In addition, 122 commercial growers attended the Bred Well Fed Well workshops during December 2012.