



THE SOUTHERN STAR

News and Information for Lone Star Farms

December 2010 Issue 36

IN BRIEF

By Tom Sturgess

Drought...great product prices, more dry so shift stock.... great product prices, rain.... great product prices, floods and slips but still.... great product prices; the one constant this season has been the quite attractive prices for our products. And we have come through the weather relatively unscathed with the very real potential to materially surpass our budget objectives. Finally the product price link with the US dollar seems to have broken and we are set up to realise the reality of worldwide tight food supplies. It isn't coincidental that soy beans, wheat and corn (maize) are at historic low inventory levels and commodity prices are rising. As is red meat. And unlike Dr John "...we gonna be in the right place at the RIGHT time..."

Now is the time to convert potential to reality and to carefully execute! I look forward to our reaching and exceeding our financial objectives whilst still being mindful of achieving the stock conditioning we need come tugging.

Cheers

Tom



GM REPORT

By Boyd Macdonald

Welcome back for the start of another calendar year and it promises to be an exciting one at that.

How many times did you hear what a crazy time of the year it is to have Xmas? Maybe it is, but it is at the same time every year and does force us to take it easy for a few days and catch our breath. I know all the Lone Star Farms team certainly needed some time out after such a busy year. Thanks to everyone for all your efforts and commitment during 2010.

The Xmas break gives us an opportunity to look back at the last 12 months to reflect on, and celebrate what we have achieved over this period. All our farms have their own individual successes that the managers, staff and their families should be rightly proud of. To highlight just some of the achievements:

Godley Peaks survived a winter from hell and still produced their best wool clip ever. Patuki had a fantastic lamb finishing result with the best killing sheet data I have ever seen. Mt Albert stock policy changes and an exciting new team to implement the new policies has the future of the property looking extremely exciting. Paturau is set up for good results from introducing a new ram breed and has achieved very good weaning weights in its calves in a difficult season. Barewood - a complete staff restructure and an exciting new team, more grass, and more options, \$\$\$\$. Pупonga - over 1 million visitors and no complaints!! A successful hogget lambing was completed too. Rainbow's focus was on stock performance with weaning completed early and carbon trading being investigated. The Wandle - irrigation plans and investigations were peer reviewed and revised. Caberfeidh has had major farm policy changes, a staff restructuring and 500ha of new lucerne sown so a big year for our team there. Quartz Range survived 450mm of rain overnight after a major drought and still has all their lambs to finish.

The difficult lambing season and dry conditions in the Nelson region saw us shift 8000 lambs and 400 head of cattle to our southern properties to be finished. Despite this, we are still well on track to exceed our budgeted financial result. Yes, the increase in our product prices is playing its part, but more significant is a renewed willingness and eagerness of our Managers to work in together to create the best management options for the business as a whole. This has included putting the overall Lone Star Farms situation ahead of their own property production at times for the betterment of the wider company. With this culture in place, the future is incredibly exciting.

As staff, and as a team, we need to acknowledge and celebrate these achievements and then challenge ourselves on the potential still there for the taking. We have plenty we want to achieve this financial year so let us make it count. The outlook for sheep and beef farming may have never been better.

According to a Bloomberg article published in August last year, The New Zealand government's carbon-trading program, which began in 2008, is the only one of its kind outside Europe. By awarding credits that are sold to offset greenhouse gas emissions, the project may earn farmers \$600 per hectare annually on land that is unprofitable for grazing.

The government estimates that forests planted for carbon credits could increase to 30,000 hectares a year compared with 3,500 hectares in 2009.

Lone Star Farms is currently looking at some of its less productive land, which might lend itself to forestry conversion.

The nation's carbon-trading project was expanded last July to require energy producers to pay for their emissions, and by 2015, the system will include agriculture, forcing farmers to pay for emissions from their cattle and sheep. This represents an excessive burden, according to Don Nicolson, president of Federated Farmers, a group that has opposed the program.

Until December 2012, there is a transition period in which companies in the system have the option to pay a carbon tax on emissions capped at NZ\$25 per ton, or buy carbon credits backed by forestry. They need to offset one ton of emissions for every two they produce.

Acknowledging that the program will have little actual impact on global greenhouse gas emissions, (New Zealand ranks 51st in greenhouse gas emissions with only 0.2 percent of the global total), Prime Minister John Key has stated that carbon trading is being introduced to enhance the country's green image, boost exports, attract tourists and increase influence in global climate talks.

Another factor in the trend to increase forest land is the growth in sales of lumber to China, which more than doubled in the year ended March 2010 to 5.4 million cubic meters, driving a \$300 million increase in earnings to \$1.1 billion.

Since 1990, about 3.5 million hectares, or 28 percent, of land used for grazing sheep and beef has switched use. About a quarter went to dairy and the rest to forests, urban development and conservation, according to Meat & Wool New Zealand. David Evison, a senior lecturer at the University of Canterbury's New Zealand School of Forestry, says that carbon trading makes planting forests even more appealing, because instead of waiting for trees to grow before they can sell the timber, they're now paid annually for storing carbon. "It turns forestry into a cash-flow business."

Not all farmers are happy with the trend, however. Federated Farmers' Nicolson estimates 20 percent, or 2,800 sheep and beef farms could be replaced by carbon forests, harming communities that rely on livestock farming for jobs as shearers, mechanics and vets. He says that farmers are being sold on the profit in carbon farming without understanding the risks, such as losing trees to fires or disease or the government cancelling the program.

"You can't blame farmers who've had their profitability tested from taking a punt on their marginal land," Nicolson said in a telephone interview. "The trouble is, it comes with massive risk, and that's not what's being talked about."

BAREWOOD STATION

By Marty Deans

We have experienced in the last quarter what used to be called a historical weather pattern with an even distribution of rain through October, into a few Northwest winds for November/early December, then some welcome rain late in December to help establish the crops and grass. 160 mls for the quarter.

Grass growth, and in particular Lucerne/fescue areas, have been outstanding with monthly average covers sitting at 1435 kgDM in October, 1500 kgDM November and 1570 kgDM for December. This has been the only season in the past 13 when I can honestly say that we have surplus grass in Nov/ Dec and were able to conserve surplus feed into silage and baleage in late spring.

As per normal when you are having a good season so too are the insects and pest population. We have lost 50ha of early established fodder to spring tails and have also lost 50ha of established basics to grass grub. These little blitters must have been having trouble battling the nor-west winds and have eaten the sheltered areas out of five blocks that will now have to be re-drilled.

The next pest to attack us in this period was the Aussie blow fly which found the humid conditions post tailing an ideal opportunity to increase our pre-Xmas workload with all 24,200 lambs having to be jettied for fly.

Pete and Davey have done an outstanding job getting through our direct drill programme both at Barewood and The Wandle. Hours have been long and varied due to some unforeseen circumstances. They are on track for a mid-February completion.

The Southern Three Xmas function was another very memorable occasion. A big thank you to Scott and Rachel for hosting us all. We have staff members at Barewood that are quite happy to offer fishing lessons to other Lone Star properties if they desire.

Another very well prepared Xmas/Focus functions and workshop were held in Nelson. Many thanks to Tom and Heather and Ann for their hospitality and to the Management Team for their novel and entertaining ways of making us look outside our comfort zone at opportunities to succeed as a group.

Barewood has completed its staff restructuring process and is delighted to welcome on to our "ship that has left the harbour", Justin Thompson as our new Stock Manager and his partner Ange Fletcher. Tyler Hulse, Experienced Shepherd, Hemi Ramsay and Tom Scott as Shepherds, along with Steve, Pete, Davey and I, all make up the new Barewood team. Melonie has been instrumental in securing the quality of staff that will be necessary to achieve what we, as part of the LSF group, want to achieve and it has been an experience enjoyed by all.

The next quarter has the potential to be one (of hopefully many more) of Barewood's best ever with weaning weights and lamb growth rates exceeding what we had budgeted. Returns for wool, lamb and beef are very promising. Grass grown is being well utilised. Ewe weaning weights are heavier than we had in the past and as a staff member quoted the other day, "At least we won't be feeding out grain in February this year."

The leadership and enthusiasm shown by our new team is inspiring and bodes well for the future of Barewood.

CABERFEIDH STATION

By Andrew Harding

The weather for the past quarter was a mixed bag you could say. October was very dry with only 15mm of rain, November we received 39.5mm with little wind thankfully. It did start drying out early December until we received 69mm of rain on 21st December.

Covers going into lambing were lower than ideal at 1200kg DM/ha but with a lot of singles lambing on Lucerne and Ryecorn the covers lifted to 1400kg DM/ha by December. 1600 tonne of silage and 409 bales of hay have been made to date with more hay to be baled in January. All the Kale, Rape, Lucerne and grasses have been sown.

The lambing percentage ended up at 133% at tailing (from ewes put to the ram). This shows we only had a 19% loss from scanning to tailing which we were pleased with. We started killing lambs on the 1st November and by the end of December we have killed 3,957 of our own lambs. We have also killed 961 of lambs that were brought in. The hoggets are in good order being an average of 52kg and have been grazing the Ryecorn all spring. The cows were a bit light coming into the Spring but have put on a lot of condition and are going to the bull in good order. We put the bull out to 119 heifers on the 15th November at 361kg average.

This has been a very busy quarter on Caberfeidh but as always everyone has pulled out all stops to get jobs completed prior to Christmas. A very big thanks to all staff in the Caberfeidh team. This quarter we have seen two staff members leave. We would like to wish Craig Morgan and his partner Rebecca all the best in their move to manage a property in Omarama, and Logan Sinclair who has left after having a bad car accident.

Next quarter:

- Weaning the rest of the ewes.
- Lambs to the works.
- Steers away to feed lot.
- Irrigation.
- Sow 300ha of Ryecorn.
- Buy in store lambs.
- Lachie Wettenhall starts as Experienced Shepherd.

GODLEY PEAKS

By Rob Glover

Three months have passed and the usual farming tasks have been completed. Product prices have taken a lift or at least maintained and the weather has been favourable with ample summer rainfall which gives one confidence of being able to achieve production and financial targets.

Merino wool quality was exceptional over all classes of stock. General stock health has been very good. Interco crossbred lambs have been presented in excellent condition and in a very timely process which has reinforced the benefits of being part of a larger team.

Overall most things are rosy on this property with stock units presently running around 60% higher than the opening figures for July. That in itself has created a higher work load and a challenge but it is very satisfying to know the investments made to date (in staff, time and capital development) have all been very worthwhile.

This quarter will be as hectic as the past one with calf marking, lamb weaning, marketing of prime lambs and cattle, hay making, and the completion of some general maintenance along with the ever present irrigation ties - the cement that makes all possible.

MOUNT ALBERT STATION

By Scott Paterson

Rainfall: October 109mls, November 18mls, December 458mls.

At the start of this quarter we farewelled Mike and Lorraine King after nine years' service to Mt Albert and Lone Star Farms and we wish them all the best.

November was dry but was made up for in December with 458mls; 217mls falling in 48hr which left 70% of the Wilkin Valley floor under water. Netting fences were not the best option in a flood-prone area and in future will be changed to two hot wires.

October arrived and Ann and Klaus were here to see young cattle being loaded onto trucks to be sold Interco due to the slow start of Spring with ground temperatures just reaching 10 degrees. R1 steers went to Caberfeidh, R1 heifers to The Wandle, Barewood took the smaller R1s and the R2 heifers joined the ranks at Godley Peaks. Calf marking was done ten days earlier than usual which was a great decision with high river levels occurring pre-Xmas.

At the end of November Hamish Murrury finished as Shepherd for us as he is heading to Lincoln University this year. Allan Cooper resigned from his Farm General role due to health problems in October. Cole Wells joined the Mt Albert team as an Experienced Shepherd based over the river in the Mt Albert homestead. As a result of these staff movements, we went through a recruitment process for a new Shepherd. Due to the fantastic calibre and skill range of applicants, we selected two new shepherds with Brett Harmer and Liam Garlick due to start mid-January. Also to join the Wells family was Ruby, born on New Year's Eve 2010. Congratulations Amanda and Cole.

Casual Shepherd Scott Hussey joined the Mt Albert staff to help out until the permanent staff arrived. Kevin Derrick came down from the Nelson area to smack in numerous tie downs on Wilkin Point to keep ewes where they are meant to be! Matt Lang has been re-grassing old brassica paddocks and tried to put in new brassica paddocks in-between rain showers. This year the spraying of paddocks was done by spray contractor Alex Robertson which proved to be very successful. Tailing was also done by a contractor and finished within two days - 120% lambing achieved from ewes put to the ram.

The Nelson Xmas functions and focus days were most enjoyable and our many thanks to Tom and Heather and Ann and Klaus.

Next quarter:

- Shearing ewes.
- Weaning lambs.
- Finishing drilling brassicas.
- Hay, silage and baleage making.
- Introducing new staff to Mt Albert.

PATUKI

By Gus Forgan

Rainfall throughout 2010 was an all or nothing event and Spring continued this theme. October started with floods and slips followed by ten weeks of dry weather, then down came 120mm of rain in the second to last week of December. All up we measured 170mm for the three months and just less than 900mm for the year which is better than average (just a shame about the timing).

The lambs enjoyed the dry weather and grew well until feed conditions tightened up considerably by the end of November. We weaned in early December with the first barge load of 884 lambs prime to Alliance killing out at 16 kgcwt. Over the next two days we sent out two barges of store lambs and they went all the way to Godley Peaks to enjoy the alpine scenery and paddocks awash with clover. Our lamb weaning weights were back 2½ kgs on last year to (29.4kg) due to the dry conditions.

We marked 164 calves this year from 190 cows with most of the calf deaths attributed to misadventure, one harmless looking dam has claimed a calf for the last two years and I can only assume that they were trying to get out of the wind! For the first time we put the yearling heifers to the bull. Weighing 330kgs when the bull went in and 370kgs when the bull was removed at 42 days we are hopeful of a very good result there.

At Waiua the Talley's have put in a windmill to augment the limited water supply but at present it is struggling to come to terms with the wind on D'Urville Island. Twice in three months it has become inoperable so what its long term future is, is not certain at this time. The capital dressing of fertiliser we applied to Waiua has been a disappointment with the equivalent of \$28su of Molly Sulphur Super applied in the Autumn and only average results coming through.

In October we enjoyed a visit from Tom and Heather and I was glad to be able to show them around on a beautiful Spring day. (It is definitely a good time to visit the farm if you get the weather right.) In November Annabelle had her 5th birthday which has doubled the school role and with Samantha starting pre-school in March the teacher's resources will be put to the test... We also enjoyed getting off the island for some annual leave, and the Christmas party in Nelson to meet some of the new faces in the LSF Team.

Next quarter:

Shearing ewe lambs and culls ewes, crutching ewes, selling the culls, Toxo and campyvax for the 2ths, pregnancy testing cows, calf weaning, flushing and tugging the ewes. Also, fertiliser application to Patuki and Waiua and the usual round of maintenance to fences, roads etc.

PATURAU / PUNA PAUA

By Nigel Clarke

We came out of the last quarter very wet having had 545mm of rain for the quarter, an average ground temperature of 7.5°C and pasture covers at the end of September of 1150kg per hectare. This quarter we have had 428.5mm of rain and an average ground temperature of 15°C. With 300mm of the rain arriving in the last half of December the farm has gone from very wet to very dry and now some welcomed rain and recovering pastures.

Tailing was completed in October with our lambing result not too bad given the storm issues over this period. Calf marking in late November was made easier with the new cattle yards however, again, the calving % was back due only to the weather which is really disappointing.

All the ewes were shorn and lambs drenched at Puna-Paua in mid-November. With the very dry conditions and low pasture covers we weaned all the lambs on both farms and sent 211 away prime and 2227 going Interco. The remaining lambs were all drenched and spread out. I was hoping to shear all the ewes and remaining lambs before Christmas but postponed shearing until early January because of flooding etc. The bulls were put out with the cows in late November.

On-going maintenance fencing, weed control and stock water repairs have all been ticked off the list.

Mid-November the LSF meetings were engaging and Christmas parties were a good chance to catch up with everyone. This year has been challenge weather and financially wise and has shown we need to continue challenging our current policies and keep an open mind to new options in our drive for improved profitability.

We wish you all a happy and prosperous 2011.

PUPONGA

By Darryl Heaps

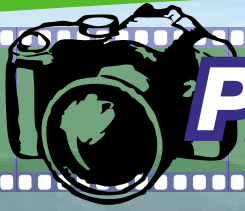
I am writing another Southern Star report from the porch at Puponga, looking out at sea as the tide rolls in enjoying the summer heat and breeze as we head into January. The many tourists that pass with a wave and a smile as they head off either down the Spit or across the farm to take in the scenery of the area. The horse treks are going through around six times a day and with groups of up to 12 on a trek. Four busloads of people are heading out the Spit to do the tour and around 30 cars in the car park 50 metres away with at least the same amount up at the cafe. Mountain bikes are coming through in ever increasing numbers, and everyone is here to enjoy the many tracks, walks, and the fantastic scenery of the place, something that Ben, Sonjya and I get to enjoy in this magical part of New Zealand every day.

Rain for the quarter was 404mm and as always we could do with more, unlike a fair chunk of the rest of Golden Bay. The flooding that recently made the news in the Bay did not affect us out here at the end of the road, but the 30mls we received was very welcome. It had been fairly dry at Puponga before Xmas and no doubt will be again.

We continue on with our prime lamb finishing and it feels good to see the higher prices we are receiving for our stock.

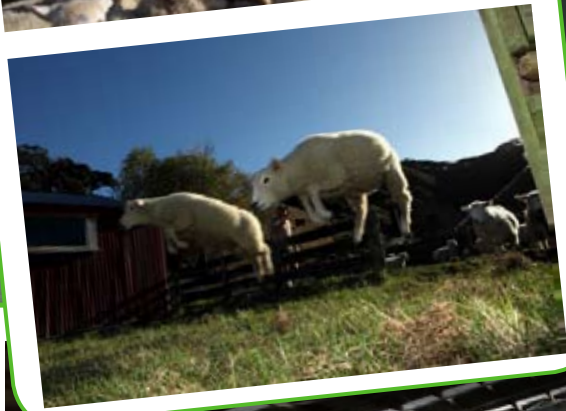
Time for fishing has been relatively short, but is good for a bit of quiet contemplation on a hidden rock shelf away from the masses as long as you leave by 6.30 am with coffee on hand for the day. By 10am the hidden spot is found by 7 surfers, 1 body boarder, 2 more fishermen and a musical support crew to entice the fish with a song and a tune. I'm not sure the fish realised the singing was for their benefit as it did not entice them in to listen in their droves. I have decided that music and fishing are best done well away from each other and pack off home with not much catch of the day, and to plan for a busy few weeks yet to come on this special farm.

Thanks to Tom and Heather, Ann and Klaus for once again hosting us all in November for Xmas/Focus days and also for their continued commitment to farming in New Zealand.



PROPERTY PICS...

Puponga



Ben working in the yards.



Trev working the sheep.

Paturau



CORRESPONDENCE SUCCESS

Christopher Clarke of Year 7 recently attended the Te Kura/The Correspondence School end-of-year prize giving in Wellington. He received the Ruby Harris Prize, which is awarded to a student who has raised the standard of his or her education by courage and perseverance. Correspondence School teacher Marie O'Leary said that Christopher made a real commitment to his learning and has achieved the goals which were set in his specific education programme. "He engaged in both weekly reading lessons, travelling a considerable distance to reach these and in weekly Skype sessions with his Te Kura learning advisor." Christopher lives with his family at Paturau and has studied by correspondence for seven and a half years.

Well done!!



A Tui taking up residence outside the house at Paturau.

Quartz Range



The historic swing bridge, built in the late 1860s and now extinct as a result of the 28th December flood



The river in full flood taken 8.45am; note the remains of the swing bridge, centre photo.



This photo, taken two days after the flood and again taken from the main bridge, shows the river almost back to its normal flow with the remains of the swing bridge against the right hand bank.

Patuki



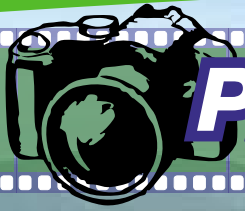
Tailing



Collecting the mail on a good day.



Chopper.



PROPERTY PICS... *Continued*

Caberfiedh



Southern get-together

Rainbow Station



Once again our organic audit has come and gone without problems. We are now able to take hay off our transition paddocks above the pine plantation. This will ensure we have plenty of winter feed on hand and allows us to keep the main pakahi paddock in the rotation. Timber enclosures have been erected in the eucalyptus paddock and deciduous specimen trees have been planted in them.

One of our recent tasks was to change the single chain swing bridge to a more user friendly double chain and board item. When this was done we decided to lift it a meter higher which paid off when the December flooding brought water levels 100mm higher than the centre span. At 6.15 am when the river was peaking I was sure we would be collecting the remains off the beach but at 8 am the water was 500mm lower and it was still there! There was a small amount of leaf matter caught in the chains but no structural damage. Unfortunately the rest of the river reserve didn't get off so lightly with lots of erosion and fallen trees. There was also a fairly decent slip on the lower driveway.

Our trading lambs were sold averaging \$100. 23. Our R2 steers went to Alliance in October at an average weight of 293kg cwt. The last of our surplus baleage was sold in October; approx. 350 bales have been sold in total this year along with three unit loads of hay. Our South Suffolk Wiltshire X lambs seem to be performing well and it will be interesting to see what weights they achieve.

Spraying and grubbing out gorse and thistles is ongoing as is cutting and mulching willow. Fruit trees and garden beds have been mulched and fertilized. The blueberries are doing well with lots of fruit starting to set on the bushes. Planting of trees, shrubs, and flaxes in Reen's ravine has continued along with weeding, scrubbing and track maintenance. It's a must to go and look at when visiting!

Along with the house and entranceway gardens Reen and other members of the crew have put a lot of effort into these ever changing and maintenance hungry areas. Well done!! Welcome back to Zinnia Harris who has just returned from cruising the Pacific on a yacht for three months....gee it's a tough life, but someone's got to do it.

Congratulations to Harley and Tyler on the birth of Ryder born 10 October 2010.

Next quarter:

- Wean, drench and sell lambs.
- All the usual property maintenance.
- Weed and pest control.
- OLD THUMPERS classic scrambles.
- Sell remainder of R2 R3 stock.
- Harvest and sell excess produce.
- River reserve maintenance.

QUARTZ RANGE

By Len Rapley

The final three months of 2010 have been influenced more by the weather than any other quarter in the 10+ years that we have been managing Quartz Range. The cold snap that wrecked havoc in Southland also impacted on us with freezing temperatures and snow on the top paddocks resulting in lambs losses. October rainfall was average for here (186mls) but the 22mls in November, mostly falling on the 4th, was not adequate to sustain grass growth on our pakahi soil structure. By the time we got to the beginning of December we were in drought mode. The need to off load stock became critical and all 187 fattening cattle were sold Interco to Godley Peaks and The Wandle.

A good rainfall on 18th December brought relief, filled our water tanks, got our creeks running again and stimulated enough grass growth to move our ewes and lambs forward so all was not lost.

2010 had a final sting in its tail for our Aorere Valley with a 150 year flood. Our rain gauge overflowed at 285mls but a neighbour further up the valley recorded 470mls for the 24hr period 27th-28th December. We suffered some track damage, two small slips and flood gates didn't quite cope but our friends and neighbours further down the valley have lost stock, fences, bridges, and vehicles, as well as some having more than 60cms of water flowing through their homes. Several quad bikes took a trip to Davey Jones' locker along with baleage, bales of hay etc. The historic swing bridge, built in the late 1860s at the bottom of our road, was a casualty to the disbelief of everyone.

Lambing percentages were well down on other years with a dismal 117% achieved at tailing. Hopefully with the grass growth now happening, we will be able to sell all lambs as prime. This is the first year we haven't winter shorn any ewes and they are all currently carrying 11 months' wool. Happily, wool prices are looking pretty good so the revenue from the January shearing should be above our budgeted target.

A short visit pre-Christmas to our son and his wife gave us an opportunity to see the countryside in the middle of the north island; this confirmed that they too were suffering from lack of rain and were also off loading stock and feeding out hay and baleage to sustain their stock.

Clint and Lee have continued to provide a valuable contribution to the running of Quartz Range; unfortunately Clint's boat didn't spend much time in the water over the holiday period – hopefully this is due to change!

In conclusion, Dot and I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a prosperous, happy and healthy year throughout 2011!

Next quarter:

- Weaning, drenching and weighing lambs.
- Cull ewes.
- Shearing ewes and lambs.
- Roto wiping, gorse spraying, rush cutting etc.

RAINBOW STATION

By Dave McEwen

Well where do we start with our first newsletter for 2011? I see a memo from one of our lovely office ladies requesting our contribution focuses on the positives for the year gone, not the 'less so' positives. Well that bits quite easy. As farmers we deal with mother nature on a daily basis and quite frankly she can be a bit mean. So we have no real option but to deal with it and do our best to turn any situation she tosses our way to our advantage and this can't be done with anything less than a positive attitude.

This is the attitude I aim to impart to staff here working with me, in some trying conditions at times. Again they have come through showing their abilities and dedication to both company and property - these are the qualities in people you can't buy and are so very much appreciated.

The Spring quarter started slow and cold giving us a few snow showers through lambing and generally lack of grass growth - but change was on the way. What we did not realise is that the change was not to be enjoyed for too long as November was the driest on record since 1968, and December was not a lot better until towards the end of the month when we ended up with flooding - just to add a little spice to the season.

A decision was made in early December to wean all lambs to protect the ewes' condition for next season's mating. Just over 4000 lambs were sold to three of the southern blocks. A big thanks to the Managers down south involved for their support which made the weaning decision here that much easier and hassle free. Knowing LSF were still going to get the advantage of selling the prime stock later to Alliance reinforces the benefits of working together as a farming company.

With weaning completed before Xmas, bulls out with cows, crops and new grass in the ground, our mass work load eased back to a more manageable level enabling both Tom and Rowan to take a good break over the Xmas/New Year period. During this time shearing and crutching of ewes was completed.

The final stages of our property restructure have now been completed with the stock policy adjusted and Cole and Amanda moving on to their new role at Mt Albert. Although sad to see anyone move on, we wish them all the best for their new challenges (parenthood perhaps the most major one) ahead of them.

As per normal, the road through the Station is open to the public (when not being closed for flooding), with Lisa and Greg Bradley again handling this role with the public for us.

This summer quarter is going to be a quieter time than normal with only a few lambs to finish compared to the past. This will give us the opportunity to catch up on maintenance fencing throughout the property and projects such as the water system, solar electric fence systems, mains unit to be installed, cattle yards to complete, and a total rebuild of the Raglan's sheep yards. With cattle to be mustered and calves to mark on reflection, it may not be too quiet.

THE WANDLE

By Marty Deans

The November norwesters were again present at The Wandle but not as bad as they have been in past years. Rainfall for this period has been 211mls which has resulted in outstanding pasture covers being achieved and a lot of effort invested into maintaining quality.

All cattle carried through the winter killed to weights of 300kg. Five star grazing cattle have reached their target weights and have been sent on to the feed lot.

All freezer ewes were removed from the property prior to Xmas which created a win-win with us being able to take Interco lambs from Paturau and cattle from Quartz Range as the early December drought affected these properties.

Laurie has been very proactive in managing our irrigation programme. Due to his terrific maintenance schedule over the winter, the K-Line was left in great condition enabling us to start irrigating early. A new trax map programme for positioning the pods has made for better utilization of the water also. Lucerne and grass have been made into baleage and silage with a lot more (and better quality) being made off the same area than last year.

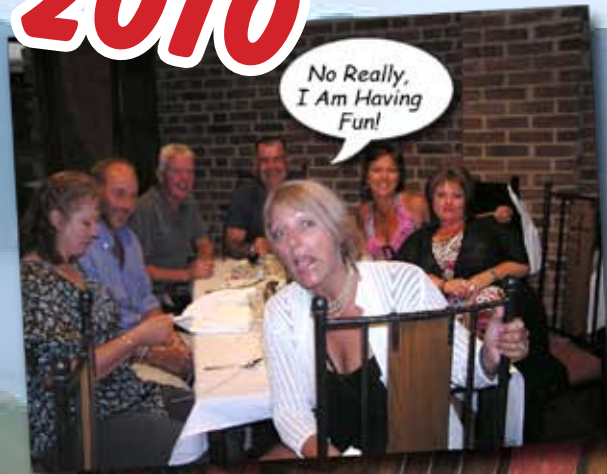
Paul and his staff are putting in a tremendous effort to running this property. With just on 16 months' experience with the farm, we have experienced its full range of challenges from ensuring we procure the right classes and weight of stock needed at the right time, managing the impact the wind can have and the issues with gravity fed K-lines and water harvesting.

Store stock continue to arrive at The Wandle and prime stock are looking fantastic as they leave. Future opportunities with the irrigation remain and once plans are confirmed, we look forward to capturing the full potential of the property.

Next quarter:

Finish as much prime stock as possible while maintaining pasture quality.

XMAS PARTY 2010



XMAS PARTY 2010

Now, If I take 80cm of wire
and divide by
2...argh...where's my
caculator?



Who is this
joker anyway?



Stephen with his
winning mini model.

He said and
then she said...



I told you, he's
always
watching my
back



I take thee....



DOH! So this
is Broadband!!



Yes Boyd, can't
you see my lips
are sealed??



Madame Butterfly

