

THE WOOL PRESS

March/April 2022

Volume 334

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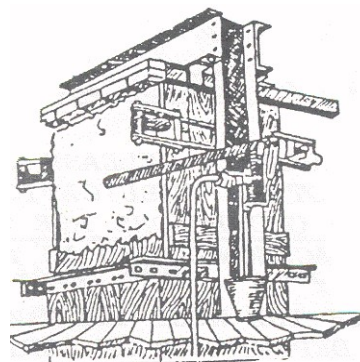
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Edited By Zoe Leigh Minto

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EDITORIAL

Wool Press Editorial – March/April 2022 (Vol. 334)

Welcome to the second edition of the Wool Press for 2022 and my first editorial. This edition is full of a variety of articles that I am sure will be of interest to you all.

I started with the Department on the day of the National Stud Flock Ram Sale and it was great to see so many there and to meet a number of people. It was a very successful day, but you will read more about that in Andrews's piece called "Saladero News" The condition of the rams and ewes this year is a credit to the DoA team. I have also been fortunate enough to do two trips to the West. The first was with Sian Ferguson to visit two farms for an internal RWS audit. The second was with Andrew Bendall to take a look at various farming systems across the island. Thank you to those who welcomed us into their homes and on their farms during those trips. I have a lot to learn about the complexities of farming in the Falklands. To those I have yet to meet, I apologise for the delay in doing so. It takes time to settle in and the lifting of Covid restrictions understandably may slow up the process of me catching up with people. After the AI program, Andrew and I will be doing a trip around the East. In saying that, if you feel comfortable doing so, my door is always open so please drop in for a chat.

So what is in this volume of the Wool Press?

We were fortunate to have two students, George Lee and Madison Evans do work experience with us last month, and you can read about their time with us on pages 6 and 7. We thoroughly enjoyed having them with us for the week and it is heartening to see young people interested in the industry.

Things have been busy at Saladero with the Ram Sale and ewe selection that you can read about on pages 8 and 9. Andrew Bendall has also crunched the numbers on a potential commercial opportunity related to culls that you might find interesting. Please don't hesitate to speak with Andrew about this if you have any questions.

On a sad note for us, yet exciting for Steve Pointing is his retirement. Steve reflects on his 20+ years on the Falkland Islands and as the SVO. For the short period that I have known Steve I have enjoyed his candour, our chats and his jokes about Australians! He will be missed by everyone at the DoA and DNR. Thank you Steve and we wish you well in your retirement.

Phillip has also written an interesting article on the Red Tractor Assurance Scheme in the UK. He covers it's history and what it means for the industry today.

Together with the Department of Mineral Resources and the Department of Environment we have worked with Emily Gilbert (from the Department of Mineral Resources) who has written a paper on the drying climate and impacts for land management in the Falklands. A summary of the report can be found on pages 18-21.

Your input on this matter is important and we are asking for volunteers to discuss this topic. If you would like a copy of the paper (either emailed or hard copy) or to volunteer please contact Kat Stephenson (kstephenson@naturalresources.gov.fk) or Emily Gilbert (egilbert@mineralresources.gov.fk).

In finishing, I would like to extend my deepest sympathy to Pilar, family and friends of Mac Davis on his tragic passing. Mac worked closely with the team at Saladero and suffice to say we are all incredibly saddened by his death but will remember him with great fondness.

Kind regards

Katrina Durham

Head of Agriculture

I think having land and not ruining it is the most beautiful art that anybody could ever want to own – Andy Wahol

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DOG DOSING DATES FOR 2022/2023

Date	Drug
Wednesday 26th January 2022	Drontal
Wednesday 2nd March 2022	Droncit
Wednesday 6th April 2022	Droncit
Wednesday 11 th May 2022	Droncit
Wednesday 15 th June 2022	Endoguard/ Drontal
Wednesday 20 th July 2022	Droncit
Wednesday 24 th August 2022	Droncit
Wednesday 28 th September 2022	Droncit
Wednesday 2 nd November 2022	Droncit
Wednesday 7 th December 2022	Endoguard/ Drontal
Wednesday 11 th January 2023	Droncit

Regular weighing - it is important to keep a check on dog's weights to ensure correct dosage is being given.

All dog owners are responsible for worming their own pets. Please remember to contact the Veterinary Office and confirm this has been done. After normal working hours, please leave a message or email.

The Falkland Islands Government

Department of Agriculture,
Veterinary Service,
Tel: (500) 27366 Facsimile: (500) 27352
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**SEEN ANYTHING STRANGE
LATELY??**

**IF SO CONTACT THE DEPART-
MENT OF AGRICULTURE ON
27355**

If you have any important articles you would like to be included in the next Wool Press that's published please don't hesitate to send it through to me via email ztaylor@naturalresources.gov.fk

AGRICULTURAL RETURNS

Agricultural Returns for 2021/2022 are due soon!

Part A: It is a legal requirement to complete and return these to the Department of Agriculture by the 30th June 2022.

Part B: It is a legal requirement to complete and return these to the Department of Agriculture by the 31st October 2022.

Contact details are:

Tel: 27355

E-mail: Merrie Ellis on agassistant2@naturalresources.gov.fk

Huge welcome to Katrina



Katrina Durham—Head of Agriculture

I would like to start with a huge thank you to everyone for the warm welcome to the Falklands and the DoA I have received and I look forward to meeting everyone in due course. So a little about myself, I grew up on a mixed farm (crops and prime lambs) in Southern New South Wales in Australia and have always had a love affair with agriculture. In saying that, agriculture has been very kind to me and afforded the opportunity to work with many innovative and passionate people around the world that have shaped who I am both personally and professionally today. I have managed cropping and livestock farms in Western Australia and the Eastern Free State of South Africa that presented challenges around the robustness and agility of those particular systems. I have also worked with farming systems groups in New South Wales and Western Australia focusing on research and communications that the farmers wanted. They are grass roots organisations that focus on research and communication that is practical and implementable on farm. Prior to a stint working in a couple of universities I worked for an oil palm company with plantations in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. I was in the Sustainability Department based in Singapore working on strategic projects before winding up in New Ireland, Papua New Guinea as the Sustainability manager of a plantation. After a few years away, I thought I had better head home (to reacquaint myself with my family & friends!) and started working with Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga, Southern New South Wales as an agribusiness lecturer before moving to Hobart in Tasmania and working for the University of Tasmania, in the same field and in outreach taking agriculture to schools in Tasmania to encourage students to think about a career in agriculture. Once again I look forward to meeting all of you at some stage whether it is in the office, on farm, at a function or socially, please come up and introduce yourself. Before I go, a hearty thank you to everyone for making me feel so welcomed.

Recipe Spot—Homemade Stew

Ingredients;

2lbs stewing beef (Cubed)
3 tbsp. Flour
1/2 tsp. G.Powder
1/2 tsp. Salt
1/2 tsp. Black Pepper
3 tbsp. Olive oil
1 tbsp. Lea & Perrins
1 Onion (Chopped)
6 Cups Beef Broth
1lb Potatoes
4 Carrots
3 tbsp. Tomato Paste
2tbsp Corn flour
2tbsp Water
3/4 Cup Peas

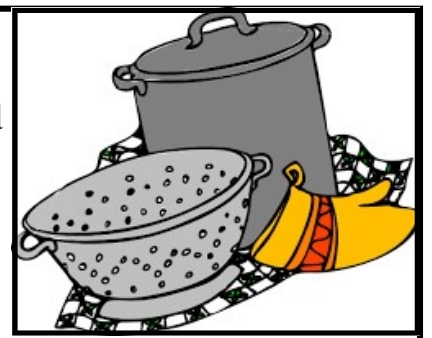


Method;

1. Combine Flour, G Powder and Salt & Pepper. Toss the beef In the flour mix.
2. Heat olive oil in a large pot. Cook the beef and onions together until browned.
3. Add beef broth while scraping up any brown bits in the pan.
4. Stir in all the remaining ingredient except for peas, corn-starch and water. Reduce heat to low cover and allow to simmer for 1 hour until beef is tender.
5. Mix equal parts corn-starch and water to create a slurry. Slowly add to the boiling stew to reach desired consistency (You may not require all the slurry mixture)
6. Stir in peas and simmer for 5-10 minutes before serving.

If you have a favourite or trusty family recipe you would like to be included in the next upcoming Wool Press please feel free to email through your recipe along with the ingredients needed and the method of cooking to ztaylor@naturalresources.gov.fk

Thank you and enjoy



Work Experience Success — Madison Evans

My name is Madison Evans. For work experience I applied for the veterinary service which I was hoping to get, which thankfully I did. I applied for the work placement as I was very keen in being a vet and I believed that this work placement would give me an insight in what being a vet really meant. This work placement taught me that there are good days and bad days and not every time you can be hero to someone but can try your best to help.

In this short week with the vets I got to experience a few surgeries such as some cat Spey's and castrations as well as ram castrations and a dog dental. I also observed in some consults and learnt that not only do you have to comfort your patient but also the owner. I cleaned kennels and washed up instruments after some surgeries. I helped do certificates

with Sarah and the understanding of the role which she undertakes as the practice manager as well as updating my technology skills. I got to meet a small variety of animals including Loli – Phillip's little jack Russell. I helped Teenie with cleaning the kennels outside but was more observing than anything else because as you may know being a veterinary nurse doesn't always mean cuddle animals but also the less loving things that the animals produce.

I probably couldn't tell you my favourite thing I have done during my work experience as it was all fantastic but I can tell you that I haven't doubted a minute of the time I have spent here at the veterinary clinic but it has given me great expansion of my goals in life to become another Zoe Fowler or Teenie Ross and I hope someday to come back to the veterinary clinic and be a part of the amazing and funny team.



Department of Agriculture *Webpage*



Falkland Islands Government
www.fig.gov.fk/agriculture



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On Monday Richard and I went to Saladero, where we gathered some ewes and checked an electric fence that had been put across a dried out pond the previous week. Once we returned to Stanley, we set about doing dung samples in the lab. Tuesday began by Richard showing me how he does the AWEX on every wool market day. Then picking up from the following day, in the Lab. Once this was completed, we went to the main storage shed at the DoA and began to clean it up-which I now realise is a never-ending task. Wednesday began with me attempting to do the AWEX like Richard had but he made it look so easy! Followed by doing many odd jobs around the department like:



putting up automatic hand sanitizers in the vets and DoA and delivering fertiliser to Workboat Services. In the afternoon we continued with the attempted cleaning of the big shed. Thursday was a completely different day as I went to FIPASS to see how the wool coring worked. We then took some samples of the wool at the DoA to be sent to New Zealand. Friday was spent doing biosecurity with Dani and then OFDA with Lucy testing for the micron on curtain fleeces.

My thanks to all the staff at the DoA for taking time to show me the different areas of work within the department.

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

The Department of Agriculture will no longer be providing bags for sending mid-side samples to NZWTA. Instead, Southern Imports will be importing rolls of the right sized bags plus small rubber bands. Please contact Ali & Marlene for further information.

Thank you.

Saladero News

By Andrew Bendall

Macauley John Davis (Mac) 14th August 1995 – 10th April 2022

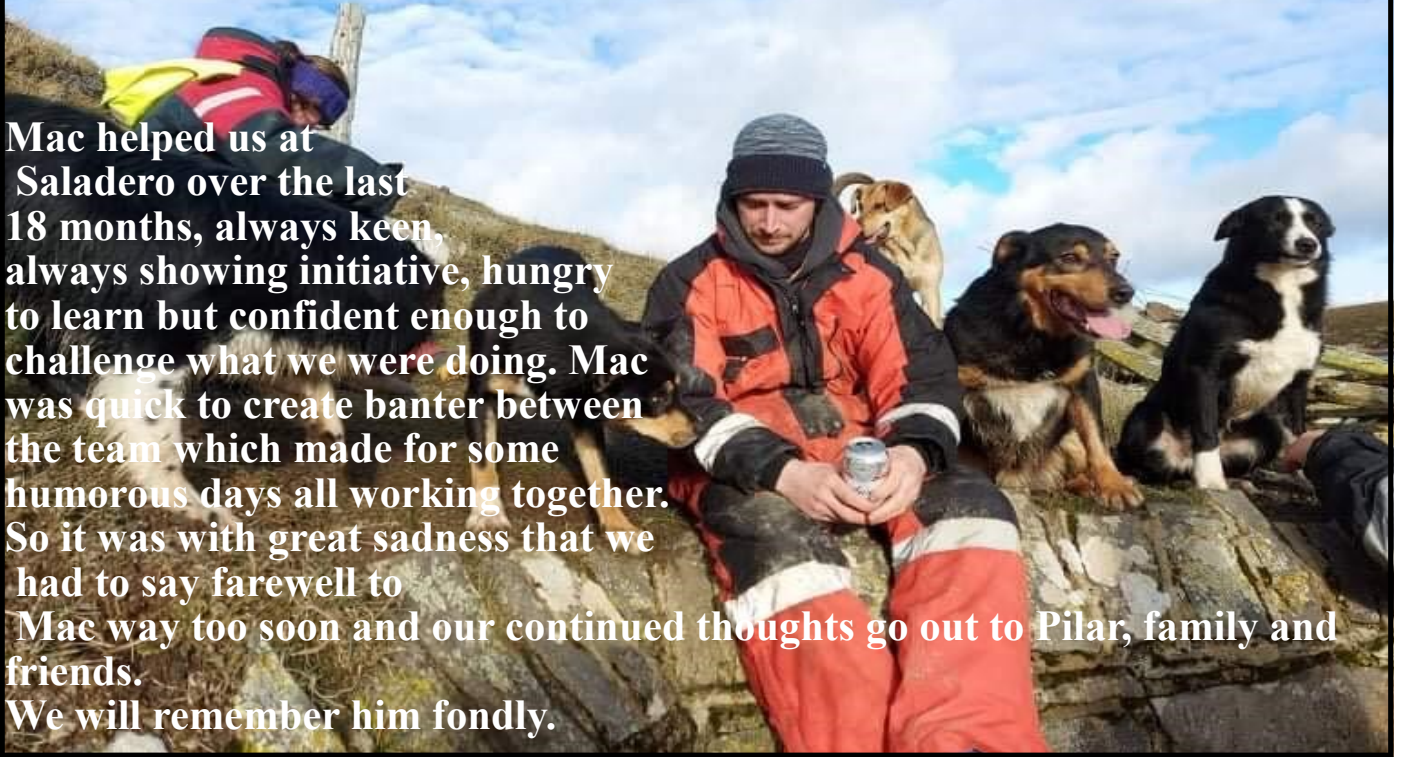
**Worked hard – played hard, On and off the field in whatever he did.
That was his way!**

Mac helped us at Saladero over the last 18 months, always keen, always showing initiative, hungry to learn but confident enough to challenge what we were doing. Mac was quick to create banter between the team which made for some humorous days all working together.

So it was with great sadness that we had to say farewell to

Mac way too soon and our continued thoughts go out to Pilar, family and friends.

We will remember him fondly.



Weather

Still relatively dry but improving, especially through March and April with some good rains. There seems to have been more growth in the last 3-4 weeks than over the entire summer. What is very noticeable with more measuring



being done is the variation across the island, with some areas receiving significantly more rain than others.

Ram Sale 2022

We were pleased to be able offer a significantly higher number of rams for sale this year (177 in total) and in particular in the flock ram category. We had a great clearance of rams with only seven individual rams and one group lot being passed on, which were later sold at the conclusion of the sale.

PTO →

Saladero News-Continued

By Andrew Bendall

I would personally like to thank on behalf of all the DoA, all those who have continually supported the NSF; those who have returned to buy rams and those few first time buyers, your patronage is much appreciated.

Blue Beach Farm also had a good clearance of rams put forward, meaning that buyers had a slight variation in genetic background of rams available to purchase.

Surplus NSF ewes were also available at this years' sale with all mixed aged ewes selling on or after the sale.

The surplus shearing ewes will be carried through, shorn again and sent to FIMCO before the winter. Ram prices, although we had a significant increase in average price, realised they are still ridiculously undervalued considering their return to you as a commercial farmer.

Ewe Selection

The ewes came in back in early March and were drafted in-



to age groups and then split into those which had reared lambs and those which didn't, then, as they were weighed and body condition scored, they were also visually scrutinised for structural soundness and general condition. The reason for having the ewes that didn't rear lambs separate is that they will naturally be better conditioned and any of those who have for two consecutive years not reared lambs, will be sold.

OFDA results along with NZWTA results of the shearlings were looked at and any ewes that were showing high micron CV's and high figures for percentage of microns over 30um have been removed from the recorded stud flock.

This resulted in 12% of the ewes being completely culled and 18% being sold for breeding, what this has done, is potentially reduced a wastage factor within the flock and made the flock not only look more consistent but will lessen the variation within our wool clip.

We will join less ewes this year with the aim of getting as many lambs as we would have normally, in line with the "more from less" theme for both sheep performance and land management.

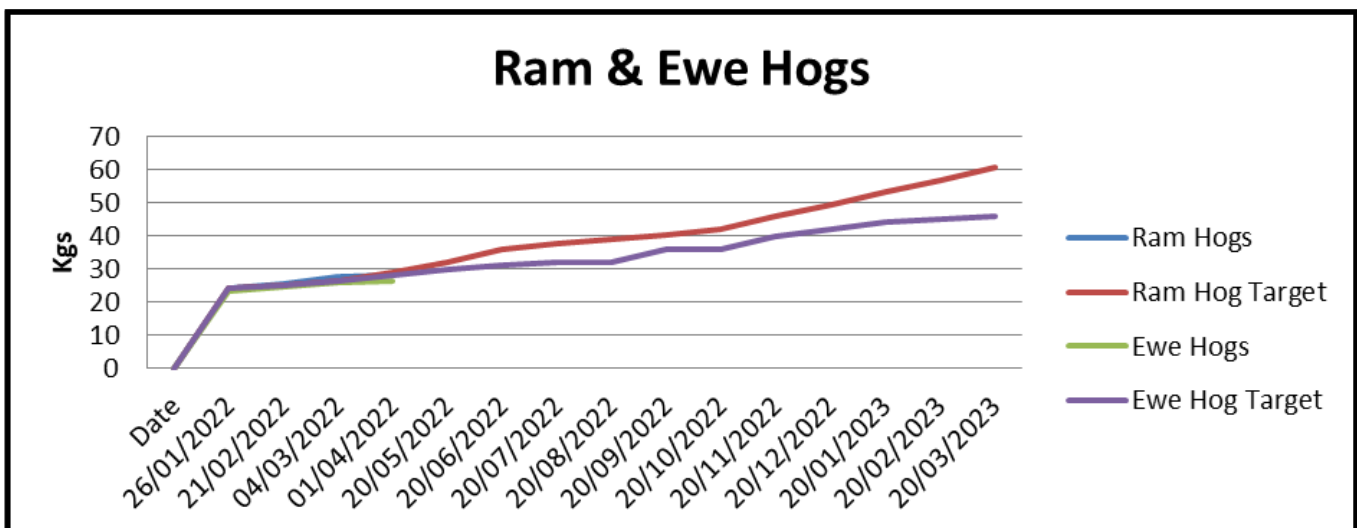
Saladero News-Continued

By Andrew Bendall

Young Stock Management

After weaning in late January the lambs ran together for longer than expected due to both some bad weather events and staff resources but eventually came in and were weighed, body condition scored and drenched.

Their daily weight gain was back on last year, but it was to be expected given the camps they had been on and being held on those camps 3 weeks longer than anticipated. What do we take out of this situation? By looking at individual weight gains it demonstrates the dangers once again of **averages**. The average daily weight gain was 70 grams per day, however the range varied from loss of weight to daily gains of over 200 grams per day. Comparing body condition alongside weight gain is the quest to finding the most resilient yet productive animals.



Actual FECs prior to the April drenching were quite low for both ram and ewe hogs, however they looked as though they'd benefit from a drench and were not only going to be further away from the settlement but also not likely be yarded again for some time.

What also needs to be remembered when reading the FEC results and deciding on whether to drench or not, is the actual worm count is an indication on what they were grazing three weeks earlier not the day before. Along with factors such as their age, weight, condition, grazing regime and time of year.

Saladero News-Continued

By Andrew Bendall

Commercial Opportunity

In the journey to breed and retain sheep which are not only structurally sound and resilient, but are consistently productive and have a fault free fleece of wool, we must get ourselves into a position where we can be culling 15-25% of our hogs and have profitable outlets for them. And I believe this can happen. Ram hogs that have been culled from sale prospects, castrated and sold as yearling animals to FIMCO

Commercial Opportunity							
Breeding Situation (Culled at shearing for faults)				Purchased post shearing and finished)			
		Value				Value	
Hog fleece (November)		£25.00		Yearling Fleece (April)		£10.00	
Yearling Fleece (April)		£10.00		Yearling (FIMCo)		£34.00	
Yearling (FIMCo)		£34.00		Cost of Hog (shorn)		-£20.00	
				(probably cost 15)			
Total Value (18 months)		£69.00		Total Value (6 months)		£24.00	
Assumptions Used;							
Hog wool at 18 micron, 2.3kg clean at £11/kg							
Yearling wool at 19 micron, 1.3kg clean at £8/kg (prem)							
Fimco value, 18.8 kgcwt at £1.8/kgcwt							
Theses are based off actuals from Saladero wethers (figures rounded)							

Management of Saladero

FLH had been providing management support through Macaulay Davis in covering the day to day running in conjunction with DoA staff.

There has been an extensive review carried out of both the NSF and the management of Saladero farm after the unsuccessful bid to find a new farm manager earlier last year.

This review was carried out via consultation with farmers, the AAC and finally went to EX-CO and an invitation to tender the service of the management of Saladero and the National Stud flock was sought.

The tenders for management of Saladero and the National Stud Flock is still currently being reviewed by the tender board and will be announced as soon as we know more.

AI Season 2022

We are all prepared for an AI season albeit a bit later in the season than first planned due to some unforeseen hold ups in the couriering of consumables from Australia to the Falklands. We have 300 ewes identified to put to 3 rams all of Anderson blood lines but of differing ages. A continued emphasis is on Yfat and the resilience traits that are so important here in the Falklands for the ability for sheep to survive and thrive.

The end of an era. A look back over 20 years as the SVO in the Falkland Islands.

By Steve Pointing

By the time you are reading this I will be very shortly leaving the Islands for the final time and so I thought this was a good opportunity to look back over my time as SVO in the Falkland Islands which spans more than 20 years. I arrived in the Islands in September 1998 initially alone but to be joined 3 months later by my wife Liz and 3 children Ben, Matt and Hannah. Andy Coe, the departing SVO, had organised things well



so that there was a take over period of about 3 months before he left. Fortunately for me I had worked overseas on two previous occasions so although there were some peculiarities which I had to get used to in the Falkland Islands I had had plenty of experience in adapting to new situations from previous postings. Early memories – firstly heading off to a visit in the North Camp driving up the Moody Brook road and realising that I wasn't going to make it if I continued up that road; and secondly having a very disgruntled Ben arrive in the Islands (he hadn't wanted to leave the UK) who refused to sleep in the house on his first night and slept in the car on the drive instead. It was a godsend when FIGAS had an open day at the end of that week which completely captivated Ben and, fortunately for us, he really didn't look back after that.

And what of all the different people I've worked with in the Department of Agriculture (as it was when I first arrived) subsequently to be merged with the Department of Mineral Resources and more recently with the Fisheries Department to eventually be known as the Directorate of Natural Resources (how governments the world over love to change department names as though that alone will help make them more efficient or effective).

My first Director of Agriculture was the inimitable Bob Reid, followed by the "oh so knowledgeable" Owen Summers (I still miss being able to ask him for information about historical events in FI agriculture) and then on to the "no nonsense but very fair" Phyl Rendell and then longest of all to the one and only John Barton – who I sometimes found rather frustrating but at the same time appreciated his quiet calmness and dry sense of humour. And finally to the current incumbent Andrea Clausen with whom I shall only have worked for about 2 years by the time I depart – very different to John and still in the process of remoulding the department to fit in with her management style and the future needs of the fishing and agricultural industries in the Falkland Islands.

The end of an era. A look back over 20 years as the SVO in the Falkland Islands.
(Continued)

On the veterinary front I've had the pleasure of working with a wide variety of staff in the clinic – initially with Maggie Battersby and early on with Sarah Bowles (who was Sarah Forster at that time) and has been with the department for longer than I have. We have a correspondence book in the vet's office in which all our correspondence is referenced and kept a record of. Many years ago Sarah wrote at the bottom of the final page something like "If I'm still here when we get to this point then I've been here too long". Well she still is there and just as invaluable now as she has been all along. I've written in the new correspondence book that if Sarah is still there at the end of that book then she really will have stayed longer in the department than anyone before her and that I myself will be pushing up daisies by that time. I think the only other people in the department who have been there longer than me are Lucy Ellis and Gordon Lennie and he, like me, is due to retire later this year. I won't mention everyone I've worked with in the clinic other than to say for the most part it has been a pleasure with perhaps a few exceptions. On the admin. side I started out with Lillian Wallace as the office manager followed by several years with Glynis King and finally with the current incumbent Katrina Stephenson.

I think we have been very lucky in the DoA to have had 3 very capable office managers and I know that I shall certainly miss the corridor chats that Katrina and I have on a regular basis – previously accompanied by the occasional comment from Tracy Evans in the office next door. It really has been a lovely place to work and I shall miss it dearly.

Of course, during my period in post I have worked alongside numerous Aussies and Kiwis (as well as a few other nationalities). At one time it used to be said that DoA didn't stand for Department of Agriculture but Department of Aussies. Having never worked with Australians before I had this idea in my head that they were all rugged types who could survive in the outback and live off the land if that was required. Well that might have been the case with Doug Martin and Jeremy Challacombe but others turned out to be surprisingly sensitive and unappreciative of my Australian jokes like "What's the difference between Australia and a pot of yoghurt?" Answer: "There's more culture in a pot of yogurt". Well I thought it was funny but some Aussies seemed to have had a sense of humour failure. I could tell you more – but I'll refrain on this occasion. Almost certainly not politically correct in this day and age. Senior Agriculture officers have included Neil ("big picture") Judd, Peter Johnson, Ian Campbell, Mac (Te Mania) McArthur and more recently Adam Dawes and Tom McIntosh – all very interesting individuals in their own way and with very different management styles.

I've also seen numerous chief executives and governors come and go. My first CE was Andrew Gurr and my first Governor Richard Ralph. I've had dealings with them all down the ages but probably struck up the best friendship with Donald Lamont because he had children of a similar age to mine and his wife Linda was a keen tennis player – as am I. In most cases the officials I've got to know the best have been those who have kept pets so the Huckles definitely fall into that category along with Colin and Camilla Roberts and their rather naughty dog Bonnie. We also see the current Governor's wife and her dogs on a regular basis. On the CE front I've been more impressed by some than others but won't name any names. I'm sure they all tried to do their best.

And what of the actual veterinary work itself and all those interactions with farmers and pet owners over the years? One of my earliest memories is a visit to the Gosse's at Horseshoe Bay.

The end of an era. A look back over 20 years as the SVO in the Falkland Islands.
(Continued)

I can't remember what I had been called out to see but I can remember what happened just before I was due to leave. When I got back to my Land rover I discovered a flat tyre and Peter Goss said it would be the perfect opportunity to show me how to use a bumper jack. Well I never did learn how to use one because the next thing I knew I was touching a very sore spot on my chin and when asked by the Gosse's to fill in their visitor book I asked them who they were! Luckily for me I had received a hefty clunk on the point of my chin but had remained conscious although to this day I still can't recollect what happened in that half hour period. Peter and Maggie gave me a lift back to town and I was met by the ambulance about half way back to town. I then spent the night in the KEMH just to make sure that I hadn't done myself a serious injury. Other memorable occasions include operating on Tim Bonner's horse Splitz for colic – the operation went quite well but the subsequent recovery was rather protracted – and trying to capture an injured fur seal at Surf Bay with fishing rope embedded deep into its neck. For those of you who have come across fur seals you'll know they are feisty little critters and can be quite aggressive. Maggie Battersby and I managed to get a bucket over its head and while it was otherwise occupied, I managed to cut the rope. It has always been interesting when new livestock arrived in the Islands (something which rarely happens these days) and I was lucky enough to be present when reindeer arrived from S. Georgia, cattle arrived from the Magallanes region of Chile and sheep arrived from New Zealand. There is always a lot of work to do prior to the animals arriving and, unfortunately, often work to be done with them post arrival.

This was particularly the case with the reindeer which were being held in quarantine at Saladero and many of which fell sick and died about a month after their arrival. By that time, I was working here alone because Cameron Bell, who had brought the reindeer back from S. Georgia, had finished his contract and headed back to Australia and his replacement had not yet arrived on the scene. It was a really difficult time for me and coincided with having to get ready for the EU inspection of the newly constructed abattoir. By the time Cameron's replacement arrived on the scene I was absolutely shattered and not in the best state of mind – as my long-suffering wife and children could attest to.

Although the building of an abattoir gave me plenty of headaches it was also a very interesting project to be involved with right from the outset. Before the abattoir design had been decided on it was felt important to check on whether a mobile abattoir might be the best way forward. This type of abattoir had been designed for the arctic regions of Sweden and apparently the best place for us to be able to see one in operation was in S. Dakota in the USA (I could never understand why not in Sweden itself). So Richard Baker (GM FIDC), Richard Cockwell (MLA) and myself headed off to the USA one Saturday and eventually reached S. Dakota 2 days later having travelled via Santiago, Miami, Denver and Rapid City. We then had a 3 hour car drive to a Sioux Indian reserve where the abattoir was located only to find that we were visiting during their non-killing period! However, the Sioux Indians kindly killed one bison for us so that we could see it being processed through the abattoir. It was a lovely bit of kit – Swedish engineering at its best – but we decided it wasn't the right model for the Falkland Islands and that got us into all sorts of trouble when we arrived back because, in typical Falkland Island fashion, we were asked what was the point of travelling all that distance and at considerable expense to the tax payer only to make a decision not to proceed with that design.

And what about the fishing industry in which the vets have an important role to play with regard to food hygiene? I have to say that I have really enjoyed working with this industry and learned so much along the way.

The end of an era. A look back over 20 years as the SVO in the Falkland Islands. (Continued)



From the food safety aspect of the industry I think the Falkland Islands fleet has much to be proud about and I have been very impressed with how the various companies down here have developed over time and enjoy such a good working relationship with their Spanish partners and the crew on the fishing vessels from the officers right down to the lowliest factory hand. I've had the good fortune of being able to visit Vigo in Spain on several occasions and have always been impressed at how close knit the fishing community is in that part of Spain. In most cases it really is a family affair with several generations involved. I always remember attending an EU workshop on food safety in Vigo which involved visits to various sea-

food processing establishments. During one visit to a cold store in the Vigo area I was present when Falkland Islands squid were being offloaded from a vessel on to the dock for transfer into the cold store. It was such a good feeling to see something which had travelled all the way up from the South Atlantic and to be present on the next stage of its journey.

Twenty years is a long time and so much has happened in that period – far too much to be able to commit it all to an article for the Wool Press even if my memory was good enough to allow me to remember each detail. So I'll sum up with a few final highlights and apologise to anyone who might think they or an event on their property should have been included. Most of you will know that I am a regular attender of the services at Christchurch Cathedral and because of that have had lots of dealings with the various vicars who have come and gone during the last 20 years. I had a particularly good relationship with Richard Hines (who was much appreciated in Camp and rather less so in Stanley) and through him I was very much involved with the making of a TV series called "An Island Parish". I got to know the various cameramen and their assistants quite well and featured in several of the episodes which included a field operation or two and concluded with a mad dash into the sea at Surf Bay in the annual mid winter's swim. I might be just mad enough to do it once more in June this year by way of a farewell – no promises though. I've also really enjoyed working with Mic Seal on her annual visits to the Falkland Islands to carry out AI and ET programmes. What a professional she is – although I like to think I might be just as good if that was what I did day in and day out throughout the year. I am so pleased that she is going to be able to make it back again this year – mainly for the benefit of the farming community but also so that I can say a personal goodbye. She doesn't know this yet but I have an idea that I might head out to WA to visit her at some future date during my retirement.

And what of retirement? Unlike some I am actually rather looking forward to it. The time has come to re-unite with my wife and family in the UK and to pursue some of those hobbies and past times which are either not available here in the Falkland Islands or that I've not had enough time to do them justice. I used to be a keen bell ringer but having reached a certain level of competence more than 20 years ago I stopped at that point and never made any further progress. Now is the time to improve my skills. The same also applies to bridge which I have played on a weekly basis here in Stanley and thoroughly enjoyed but, with the best will in the world, I think my fellow players would agree that the standard of play is not among the highest in the bridge playing world; I will endeavour to improve my bridge knowledge and bidding skills. Shortly after my arrival back in the UK I am due to become a grandfather for the first time – so that is something to look forward to and it will be nice to have the spare time to spend with the new grandson or daughter.

The end of an era. A look back over 20 years as the SVO in the Falkland Islands. (Continued)

I am also looking forward to doing some travelling in the UK and Europe – using the trains as much as possible. I really enjoy travelling by train – you can see the countryside as you journey along but you don't have all the hassles which accompany travelling by car. And what about new hobbies? Well I think I might be tempted to give lawn bowls a go – it has certainly become very popular here in Stanley and for those long, grey winter nights I would really like to learn to play the piano. Goodness knows whether I'll be able to pick it up coming to it so late in life. Add in a bit of theatre, the occasional film, a cricket match here and there and perhaps a rugby match in the winter and I don't think I'll have too much difficulty in keeping myself occupied – and I haven't even mentioned our fairly sizeable garden from which we are hoping to be as self sufficient in veggies as is possible. In fact, I might be so busy that I'll look back with longing at my working days.

I haven't mentioned my current colleagues thus far. I have been very lucky to work with some excellent colleagues during my time here but I really think the current team is one of the best I've worked with. The veterinary service is in very safe hands with Zoe and Phillip appears to have settled in very well. We have just recruited a third vet to take Zoe's position when she moves up to the SVO position and if she is as competent as our previous German vet then there is nothing to worry about. The support staff has been second to none and again our current team of Sarah Bowles and Teenie Ross has been a pleasure to work with. I will miss them all.

As for the Falkland Islands themselves and all you "Kelpers" out there this is my final observation. Embrace the opportunities of the wider world by all means but hang on to your own distinctive culture and way of doing things. The world would be a very boring place if everyone thought and did exactly the same in every part of the globe. Yes – make use of the expertise of people being brought in from the UK and elsewhere but don't automatically accept that everything which they want to bring in is better than what is here already. You only have to look at the daily news to see that there are lots of examples of poor workmanship and management practices in many public and private organisations in the UK. So be prepared to question the reasons why a particular course of action is deemed to be the best one for the Falkland Islands.



So be prepared to question the reasons why a particular course of action is deemed to be the best one for the Falkland Islands.

I will be returning to my house in the SW of England. My address and contact details are as follows:

Usborne House, Buttsway, Milverton, Taunton TA4 1LY; tel 01823 401084, mob 07928944153 and email spointing56@gmail.com If you ever find yourself travelling through Somerset then please stop in for a cuppa and a chat. We're only 5 miles off the M5 at the Wellington exit.

Department of Agriculture *Webpage*



Falkland Islands Government
www.fig.gov.fk/agriculture



A Year in Review – RWS’s and RT’s

Developments in the Falklands agricultural sector over the last year, and particularly recent months, have reminded me of developments in the UK during my most recent years of practice there.

The Red Tractor Assurance Scheme was established by livestock, farmer and food industry authorities in the United Kingdom in 2000. This was in response to the Mad Cow, Foot-and-Mouth and Salmonella crises of the 1990s, and the realisation that poor consumer confidence in farm produce and production standards was compromising markets. It is important to recognise that the Red Tractor Scheme was established, directed and developed by livestock industry producer and consumer representative authorities, with government, veterinary and welfare authorities only playing a supportive role. The goal of the Scheme was to establish, monitor and validate standards of livestock production that would generate consumer confidence in producers and their product. The public face of the Scheme is a Red Tractor symbol, on the packaging of meat, eggs, dairy, crops, fruits and vegetables, that promotes consumer awareness of the standards achieved by producers. Big retail companies (supermarkets, etc) soon set requirements for their food products to originate from Red Tractor Scheme member farms.

From a practising veterinarian perspective, the development of the Red Tractor Scheme became most relevant in 2017, when the Scheme created a new requirement for their producer members to have an annual veterinary review. This came at a time when for some years, or even decades, the veterinary profession – moving from a clinical focus to a “herd / flock health” focus – had been struggling, with varying degrees of success, to gain routine access to farms to review management practices that would impact on animal health. With the Red Tractor requirements, the onus was on the farmer to produce evidence that veterinary support and certification was part of their production routine.

At the time of these changes, I was working at a “traditional” mixed practice in North Yorkshire. Up until the new Red Tractor requirements, we had mostly maintained access to our farm clients through attendance of clinical cases – diseased or damaged stock. Of course, this allowed us to build a rapport with the farmers, but inevitably this was under time-limited and / or stressful circumstances. A veterinary-industry leader (yes, there are such things) once described the economic foundation of our profession as “grudge payments” – the concept that no one REALLY wants to pay for skills that are only required in the face of disease or injury. This may have been particularly evident in our part of Yorkshire, if county-stereotyping can still be called into play! So – with the onset of the Annual Visit requirement of the Red Tractor Scheme - to have farmers, who for years had only allowed us reluctantly onto their premises, calling us to request a visit, a review and even a cup of tea, was very refreshing. They were approaching us to request our attendance on their farms as an essential requirement for the marketing of their product.

The primary stimulus of the new (2017) Red Tractor requirement was the increasing pressure on the livestock industry to reduce, refine or replace antibiotic usage. I think we are all aware now of the very real dangers associated with antibiotic resistance – the reality that our treatment of bacterial disease is increasingly and truly compromised by the emergence of strains of bacteria that can survive treatment to continue to cause disease or death. This applies in human and animal health.

Many medical authorities believe that antibiotic resistance will, in the near future, allow previously treatable diseases to be responsible for more human deaths than any other diseases or recent wars. Such claims sound fictional, but the reality was reinforced to me when in discussion with a physician client, who told me that he was dealing with antibiotic-resistant disease - and consequent fatality - on a daily basis at the local hospital. And of course, the global livestock industry’s massive use - for some decades now - of antibiotics to prevent disease and promote production is one sure route to generating antibiotic-resistant bacteria.

The fundament of the new antibiotic management goals was to restrict antibiotic use while still allowing an animal’s welfare needs to be addressed through appropriate treatment. To achieve this, the antibiotic classes were divided into two main groups – those that could be used immediately under veterinary supervision, and those that were categorised as Highest Priority Critically Important Antibiotics (HPCIA). It was determined that, although the HPCIA could be used where essential for an animal’s welfare, such use had to be under veterinary supervision AND supported by laboratory investigations that determined the use essential. Additionally, all antibiotic use had to be recorded, withdrawal periods complied with, medications stored correctly and only used within expiry and broaching allowances. At least once a year, each farm had to produce a Veterinary Certification that these requirements had been met.

Within a couple of years of these measures, use of antibiotics in the UK agricultural industry dropped dramatically, with an average 50% reduction of antibiotic use across the industry, but much higher reductions in use of the HPCIA. The expectation is that the HPCIA antibiotics will now continue to have a longer period of efficacy against disease in human (and animal) populations. From a veterinarian perspective, the Annual Visit requirement meant that we vets got invited -access to a farm standards scheme that obliged improved antibiotic oversight, gave a foundation for improved morbidity and mortality (disease and death) interventions, and allowed a doorway to animal welfare oversight. And this could then be a path to improved vaccinations programs, worming strategies, reproductive interventions, foot care programs and more.

The importance of these interventions, and their increased recognition in the agricultural industry, was reinforced to me in a newspaper article in the UK newspaper “The Mail” within the last months. This article, titled “Farmers set for Brexit dividend as Ministers foot bill for vet visits”, reported that “...annual [vet] check-ups for two to three hours will be paid for by the Government and will cover cattle, sheep and pigs...” at a cost of between £372 and £684 per visit (depending on the species). The Minister responsible for introducing the government funding stated that the intention was to “...support livestock farmers in producing healthier, higher welfare animals through financial assistance.”

A final reflection on these matters brings to mind the grumbling debate within the veterinary profession on progressing the restrictions on antibiotic use to similar restrictions on access to deworming medication, in recognition that parasite resistance to the available worming products (“drenches”) is a rapidly increasing, global problem.

Parched ponds and crispy camps – what’s happening with that?

During the 2021-22 season, drying ponds and watercourses, desiccated soils, reduced pasture, and water scarcity issues at some settlements have been a topical issue for landowners and the general public. Conversations have been occurring throughout the Islands with general concerns about how dry it has been, fire risk, impacts on livestock, water shortages in Stanley and Camp, and comparisons between locations and previous years. These conversations and the need to “do” something, triggered a piece of work that has led to a draft report titled “Drying climate and impacts for land management in the Falklands”. The report is hopefully circulating at the same time as this edition of the Wool Press.

Laguna Isla, along with other ponds, featured in Penguin News a few months ago due to the severe extent to which it had dried out. After that, I was tasked to try and pull together information about our dehydrated landscape from existing reports, historical records, on-going projects, and to look at options for future decision-making. I spoke to colleagues, and some landowners and received a variety of insights, anecdotes and examples where impacts were being felt, different methods tested, or I was



Enderby Pond feeling parched at Lively Island - photo credit Jody Aldridge

pointed towards a name/report/piece of work that ought to be included. The report is fairly broad, so I’ve summarised a few points here, and encourage you to read the full document and share your thoughts.

Rhiannon Didlick-Smith has been collating information from gazette records, and the earlier Colonial Reports, finding references to prolonged droughts in Stanley and other parts of the Falklands in the 1950’s and little snowfall or rain in winter in the early 1900’s-1920’s. These events, combined with exceptionally dry summers and high winds led to impacts such as lighter wool

clips, suffering of small islands, and sand breaking out across pasture – sound familiar? Some of these events are cyclical, but when considered as part of the current trend towards a drying climate, it makes business and ecological sense to plan for drier conditions and be prepared to handle likely impacts.

Predicting impacts is difficult when we have limited accurate data from across the Islands, gaps in our knowledge base, and temporal and spatial differences (e.g. neighbouring farms may see very different rainfall patterns, East v West difference for seasonal changes). For example, we don’t have consistent and good quality record keeping for meteorological data across the Islands, but that long-term data is really important for identifying rainfall trends. ; .

Parched ponds and crispy camps – what’s happening with that?

Some areas are always wetter and may be benefitting from drier conditions in normally boggy camps, with better pasture available for stock, but the positive impacts of drier summers don’t appear as widespread as the negative ones. Possible options for future data collection may include hydrogeological surveys; water scarcity mapping (Scotland produces a regular water situation report between May-Sep); catchment mapping; soil moisture probes; or a number of other possible tools to inform management decisions. These aren’t the only options; increasing storage capacity, creating set asides, accessing springs, build-



Low water level in ponds: high and dry gabions and fences are no longer effective stock barriers – photo credit Ben

ings dams and various other possible solutions will form a platform for discussions. The draft report suggests possible mitigation and adaptation opportunities, some of which aren’t new, but are recommendations from earlier reports that haven’t yet been implemented. A parallel work stream is an updated climate change risk assessment, currently being prepared by the Environment Department. This also tackles issues like water scarcity and drought alongside wider climate change impacts for the Falklands.

The “next steps” include extending the information gathering exercise to capture views from across the Islands, primarily from landowners at this stage but recognising that water shortages impact on other rural residents and businesses. There will be a number of opportunities to share your views (in general and on the draft report), including a session at Farmers Week. For now – we’d like to hear from landowners from the East, West and the Islands (ideally 5 or 6 farms), who would be willing to sit down at some point in May to discuss the background report and feed in their opinions and experiences - so please get in touch with me or the DoA if you want to volunteer (egilbert@mineralresources.gov.fk or 27322).



Swan Pond, receding water and increasing erosion risk; limited habitat and water supply for wildlife in a Nature Reserve – photo credit Ben Berntsen

Onshore Mineral Exploration in the Falklands

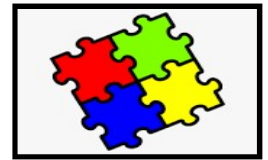
You may have noticed that earlier this year FIG Department of Mineral Resources consulted on bringing in a legal framework to allow prospecting and exploring for gold and similar minerals (excluding stone, sand, gravel, chalk, flint or calcified seaweed). Following consultation, Exco approved the proposed framework (which includes regulations, conditions for exploring and prospecting, application forms and guidance) to enable interested parties to apply for a licence to prospect and explore for gold and similar minerals. The regulations require UK Secretary of State approval before they can be made law and this is expected to be given in the coming months. It is anticipated that there will be some interest in this type of activity, possibly as early as summer 22/23.

Please note that if a person is granted a licence to prospect or explore for minerals it does NOT give them any automatic right of access over private land; they would still have to get the land owners agreement to explore or prospect for minerals in addition to obtaining any necessary planning permission or other consents. Licences issued for exploration also don't allow extraction at this stage, though some excavation and other activity may be required in the course of exploration, similar to the work carried out by Falkland Gold & Minerals Ltd around fifteen years ago.

On the topic of minerals, we will soon be consulting on related proposals to enable mining of what we call "Common Minerals". These are the low-value minerals not covered by the gold regulations - stone, gravel, sand, chalk, flint and calcified seaweed. These minerals are generally used for construction or agricultural purposes in a domestic context; examples including quarrying stone, or extracting deposits of calcified seaweed as an agricultural liming agent. The proposed application process is not expected to be onerous, but needs to be in place to allow the Ordinance to operate effectively and give FIG the ability to grant licences. It's currently illegal to mine without a licence, but regulations don't exist to grant licences – you see the problem. Most common minerals are fairly abundant and their locations are fairly well known, so although the Ordinance provides for the ability to issue prospecting and exploration licences for common minerals, we expect that most people will proceed straight to a mining licence for extraction.

It is hoped that the consultation will be launched in May, all views are very much welcome and will be taken into account. Look out for notices in the Penguin News [and on the radio], or feel free to contact the Department on info@mineralresources.gov.fk or tel: 27322.

PUZZLE PAGE!



	7				8			
					9	7	4	
8	4		2				6	
1					6			
3	9						8	5
			3					1
	2				4		9	3
	5	8	1					
			5				1	

The target of this game is to fill up a 9x9 grid. When you add numbers to each column, row and all the 3x3 boxes which are regarded as regions or blocks, the entire squares will be filled with digits ranging from 1 to 9. Other things you need to understand are:

The smallest block in Sudoku game is called a cell.

- A column, row or region has 9 cells.
- The region is marked with thicker lines.
- A Sudoku game has a total of 81 cells.
- A single nonet comprise of a 3x3 square

***Flex your brain
Free your mind
Think laterally***

Agriculture

NEFFENCELTTACEC
EIBBRTEMEADOWRO
HWNSNNEPDDVENOM
EEDDEEFTDDDEDNARB
RLBMOAMDZOAOC AI
DLEIFRRTILTCLON
BIAYEMCLREFEERE
IOBUAFEHARVESTL
PIAHHFIMPOULTRY
BERCFERTILIZERA
CANOSIBERESNRSO
ELNEECTRRLIANRB
ELDOROTCARTLCLE
TMUINDIEMLCROPS
MELORITLERTLLTF

- | | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|------------|
| Fence | Poultry | Harvest | Cattle |
| Barn | Meadow | Field | Combine |
| Tractor | Bison | Crops | Well |
| Feed | Herd | Farm | Fertilizer |

Riddle Time

Five men were eating apples.
A finished before B, but behind C. D finished before E, but behind B. What was the finishing order?

.....

Farmer Bob keeps his cows and ducks in the barn.
If there are 13 animals in the barn and altogether they have 34 legs, how many cows and how many ducks does he have?

.....

If I had 4 eggs, a thief gives me 3, and my farm rooster lays 5 eggs.
How many eggs do I have?

.....