



APRIL 2003

# merino inc. newsletter

## merino inc directory

**Please note our new phone number: 0800 Merino** (0800 637 466)

### Thank you

We thank Geoff Mavromatis for his work with us as General Manager, helping us through the process of getting our new organisation up and running. We are delighted that has agreed to become a director, and we look forward to his ongoing involvement with Merino Inc.

### Directors

CHAIR	Rob Mathewson LAKE MCKAY STN, WANAKA	Ph (03) 443 7653
MARLBOROUGH	Ross Beech (Deputy Chair)	Ph (03) 575 7365
NORTH ISLAND	Lyn Finch	Ph (06) 354 0276
WAITAKI/MACKENZIE	Donald McKenzie	Ph (03) 436 0432
OTAGO	Richard Burdon	Ph (03) 443 1554
CANTERBURY	Bob Todhunter	Ph (03) 302 8232
APPOINTED	Geoff Mavromatis	Ph (03) 332 4090
ADMINISTRATION	Allison Brook	admin@merinoinc.co.nz
RESEARCH MANAGER	Claire Mulcock	claire@merinoinc.co.nz

## merino inc to use surplus funds

The NZ Wool Board has approved our Business Plan for the next three years and has agreed to pass unspent merino grower levies to Merino Inc. This will enable us to continue our planned research, development and training, until 2006. The funds are available because: Merino Inc has been able to leverage other funding; two major projects have taken longer to get underway than anticipated; and because actual wool levies have been higher than our conservative budget. Our expectation is that the surplus available as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2003 will be approximately \$2m.

As far as asking growers to decide on a levy for merino specific research and training, this means that Merino Inc can wait until SheepCo has been through the process of seeking grower support for its levy. Once SheepCo is in place we will come back to merino growers and ask you whether there is still a need for a merino specific organisation such as Inc.

The Wool Board has indicated that, for 2003/04, it will strike a much lower levy just to cover the costs of SheepCo, ongoing research and other activities. None of this will come to Merino Inc.

## research manager



We welcome Claire Mulcock who has taken on the role of Research Manager. Her job is to assist the directors with the organisation of research projects, workshops and training, and liaise with other organisations in the industry. With Claire on board over the last few months we are making great progress in getting some new projects underway.

## got an idea for research, a workshop or course ?

We are rapidly allocating the available funds to projects, so now is the time to contact us if you have an idea that you'd like us to be working on. Field trials of new technology, research, training courses, workshops, and information sheets, are all part of our business of working with merino growers.

Merino Inc is 100% grower owned and delivers research, development and training to all merino growers. Emphasis is on on-farm applied research, and ensuring that growers have easy access to up-to-date information. The projects that are funded by Merino Inc are required to offer a fresh and innovative approach & look forward to future needs, as well as being relevant to individual growers. Projects that promote a single commercial product, or are commercial rather than industry-good, are not supported, except where there is market failure.

Merino Inc actively seeks to avoid duplication, as far as possible, with projects that are being carried out by the NZ Merino Company Ltd, or any other industry participant. Good communication among all parties will be important to achieve this, and industry liaison is an important part of the Merino Inc business. Merino Inc does not seek to recreate the old Merino New Zealand structure.

## computer courses telford polytechnic t-bus

Always wanted to do a computer course but aren't sure that you could handle it?? Here's your chance to have a go in a small group, in your area. The bus is all set up, so all you have to do is turn up. Get your friends and neighbours together and sign up! Courses need a minimum of 6, and a maximum of 10.

Courses are half-day and cost \$30 per person per course (GST inclusive).

To enrol, complete the application form and return with your payment by:

- Thursday 17 April for Central Otago courses
- Thursday 24 April for Twizel/Kurow courses
- Wednesday 30 April for Methven/Culverden courses
- Monday 12 May for Marlborough courses

If you think your enrolment may be late, please fax the form to Lisa Biginato at Telford (fax 03 418 3584) or phone her on 03 418 1550 extension 842. Also contact Lisa if you have a query about having paid last year and not had a course.



The exact venues where you'll find the bus are still to be confirmed. We'll advise you when you enrol. Courses are not restricted to merino growers, their families and employees, but you will be given preference if a course is over-subscribed.

### What are the courses about?

Spreadsheets make calculations easy. For example you can record data such as stock weights, fleece weights and prices and do all sorts of calculations. Budgets and address books are other uses. Cash Manager is a specialised spreadsheet programme set up for farm accounts. In the word processing course you learn how to create/save/print and format (e.g. bold, italics, tabs) a document such as a letter or report.

If you are interested in computer courses but none of those scheduled appeal to you, please let us know what you'd like. Write, fax, or email or phone Allison or Claire at Merino Inc (contact details elsewhere). Be sure to include your name and contact details.

## merino inc supports new merino study groups

### Do you want to explore options for your farm?

Over the past five years a group of 19 merino farmers from Marlborough to Alexandra have been measuring the financial and physical performance of their farms with a particular emphasis on wool production and quality. While this has added to workload, the information has quickly revealed issues (and therefore opportunities) for group members. The strength of working within a group has shown that members bring along both the issues and the answers.

At the end of 2002 it was evident that two important issues needed more detailed study. While both topics were

not relevant to all members, the facilitators considered that other farmers outside the group would be interested, and that two Study Groups could be formed. With Merino Inc support, the existing group will be collaborating in the formation of two specific Study Groups. They will have the following topics:

### Group 1: Improving feed supply

This group will focus on "What options exist to profitably increase feed supply?" This will involve a full feasibility study for each member looking at the profitability of various development options that the group considers need exploring.

### Group 2: Winter / early spring nutrition

This group will focus on "What options exist to profitably improve late winter/spring stock performance thereby minimising lambing losses, improving fleece weight and weaning weight?" This will involve measuring livestock performance during this period and determining, for each farm, the options for improvement.

### If you are interested in learning about your farm system with a group of motivated farmers then contact:

**Ben Aubrey: 03 435 0579**



## some dates for your calendar

### "Adapting to Climate Change" workshops

Merino farmers are invited to participate in an initiative started by a group of Hawkes Bay farmers on adapting to climate change in eastern NZ. The aim is to share the collective knowledge and wisdom that will develop a better understanding of:

- what is climate change? how will it impact on rural life and business?
- how can rural landowners cope with these impacts now and in the future?

Workshops will be held at Kekerengu (May 12), Methven (May 13) & Fairlie (May 14).

For further information contact project manager Gavin Kenny – climate change scientist and agricultural ecologist – ph 06 870 8466, email gavinkenny@clear.net.nz, or Merino Inc research manager, Claire Mulcock.

### Thursday 22 May: 2pm – 4pm Sire evaluation scheme Group classing workshop

Inspect the progeny, hear the classers talk about them. Learn how the scheme works and how to make use of the information from the scheme. All welcome. At Wainui Station (Walter Cameron) – On Kurow – Waimate Highway 15 km (10 mins) from Kurow.

### June – July 2003 Grower in-shed wool harvesting workshops

Keep up-to-date on how to get maximum value from your wool during shearing.

- How to manage shearers and wool handlers to get the best results
- Demonstration of shed set-up to optimise wool flow and maximise quality
- Liaise with commercial companies on their requirements
- Get feedback on last season: micron/style/price comparisons

Dates (details will be circulated closer to the time):

June 9	Blenheim
June 10	Ward
June 11/12	Canterbury
June 16	Rangitata
June 20	Mid Canterbury
June 23	Mackenzie
June 27	Kurow
June 30	Alexandra
July 1	Paterea

MWI (was WoolPro) will again be running these sessions for us. Contact Gavin Rowland (MWI) 325 7260 or Merino Inc office for more info.

### Friday 25 July Preliminary notice: Merino Inc AGM and forum

COURSE DATES/PLACES	MORNING (9am – 12noon)	AFTERNOON (1pm – 4pm)
Mon 28 Apr	Ranfurlly	Email/internet (beginner)
Tue 29 Apr	Ranfurlly	Word processing (beginner)
Wed 30 Apr	Cromwell	Email/internet (beginner)
Thu 1 May	Wanaka	Word processing (beginner)
Fri 2 May	Wanaka	Spreadsheets (beginner)
Mon 5 May	Twizel	Email/internet (beginner)
Tue 6 May	Twizel	Cash Manager (beginner)
Wed 7 May	Kurow	Email/internet (beginner)
Thu 8 May	Kurow	Spreadsheets (beginner)
Fri 9 May	Kurow	Word processing (beginner)
Wed 14 May	Methven	Email/internet (beginner)
Thu 15 May	Methven	Spreadsheets (beginner)
Fri 16 May	Methven	Word processing (beginner)
Wed 21 May	Culverden	Email/internet (beginner)
Thu 22 May	Culverden	Spreadsheets (beginner)
Fri 23 May	Culverden	Word processing (beginner)
Mon 26 May	Seddon/ Awatere	Email/internet (beginner)
Tue 27 May	Seddon/ Awatere	Spreadsheets (beginner)
Wed 28 May	Renwick	Word processing (beginner)
Thu 29 May	Renwick	Spreadsheets (beginner)
Thur 29 May	Blenheim	Email/internet (refresher)
Fri 30 May	Blenheim	Cash Manager (beginner)