***NEWSLETTER 2011***

I’m writing this at an altitude of 500 metres. No, I’m not up the mountain skiing, but sitting in my office looking directly across at the snow capped Ruahine Ranges with the Oroua River below them, snaking along the valley.

Absolutely awesome views, although the decidedly alpine temperatures may have me cutting firewood all summer!

Our new property, just north of Kimbolton is mainly hill country with a small balance of flats. Our sheep arrived here at the end of June – Pascale and I and family moved into the homestead a couple of weeks ago.

The last couple of years have been both exciting and challenging. Record prices coupled with uncertainty and massive upheavals around the world mean that relationships are even more important now than ever.

We’ve seen people in Christchurch turn to strangers for help and this has built a sense of community.

At Carthew Genetics, community has been the backbone of our approach for over 40 years. With our VIP training days and commitment to quality breeding we have built a strong following and sense of community over the years.

Our expansion challenges distracted us from this core truth and our “back to basics approach” is rebuilding our community, and its feeling pretty good I have to say.

Our sheep amaze me with how resilient they are. They’ve had a fairly tough, disjointed time of late with plenty of snow, truck trips etc. but they just hang in there and perform. Our ewes are looking the happiest and fittest I’ve seen them for a long time.

Last year in our newsletter, we asked for feedback from clients about their thoughts on a possible Romney infusion into our Coopworth genetics. The general response was “go for it if there’s something to gain”. After thorough research we identified two breeders that stood out for us as having very similar breeding objectives and the type of sheep that matched our criteria.

Richard Warren in the Wairarapa and Hamish DeLatour in the Hawkes Bay are the two breeders and they allowed us access to their stud rams/ram hoggets after they’d used them – so we came in right at the top!

Richard Warren’s sheep are very strong in survival, carcass and probably wool in particular, and Hamish and Bay DeLatour’s sheep are well renowned for their strong emphasis on worm resilience and no-frills farming. We’re very excited to see and measure the progeny alongside our straight Coopworth genetics.

Remember too – our Landcorp Lamb Supreme and Suffolk Supreme terminal sires. These sheep are leaders in the industry and have huge potential to add value to your lamb crop. We’re consistently sourcing the best sires available throughout New Zealand to guarantee premium rams for you each year.

One result of our downsizing is that our annual quantity of stock for sale has reduced, and we have struggled to meet demand over the last two years.

This is steadily improving, though we strongly recommend to our ongoing clients to place their orders quickly. Our Coopworth, Landcorp Lamb Supreme and Suffolk Supreme 2T rams will be available for sale in December and we’re aiming for late March, early April 2012 delivery of Coopworth Romney X ram hoggets.

Please don’t wait, we are keen to ensure that all orders are met so please place them now!

Finally, it’s fantastic to hear and see so many positives in and around sheep farming at the moment: $200 for lambs and $120 for ewes, wool at $5 . Just where our industry needs to be!

We look forward to hearing from you and very much appreciate our partnership with you. Any help in referring our genetics is greatly appreciated.

Wishing you a great farming season!

Warm regards

Simon and Pascale Carthew