Pukekaka Farm Managers Report

Spring/Summer 2016

Seasons Greetings Everyone.

It was nice to see some of you at this years AGM and hear your thoughts on Pukekaka.

The spring has been a lot kinder to us this year, more like a usual Taihape Spring with regular rain, some really cold weather and some quite hot days as well. At present we are well set up with grass, stock are in good condition and there is a reasonable amount of moisture in the soil, all we need is for the markets to play ball.

In late October we docked all lambs from the ewes, they did 145% or 1.45 lambs docked to every ewe that went to the ram. This is a good result from a scanning percentage of 170%, helped by a reasonable spell of weather over lambing. We docked the lambs born from hoggets in November; they came out at 65% which is not great but not helped by the snow storm that came through while they were lambing. Hoggets are only one year old when having their first lamb, so it is still a bonus to get 1,000 lambs from them. Docking is one of those jobs that we can't do by ourselves, so we get six other guys to help us. This enabled us to dock 7,000 lambs in three and a half days. The hoggets lambs aren't such a big job so Maree, Sam and I do those on our own.

The last week and a half Sam, James and I have drenched 8,000 lambs and put all 14,200 sheep on the farm through the electro-dip, which applies about half a litre of water with chemical mixed in along their backs. This will stop the sheep from getting fly blown for the next two months or so and the drench will keep internal parasites at bay for the next four weeks.

Next week we will tag all newborn calves and give the cows a booster shot for BVD. The cows have been set stocked in with the ewes for calving; we will muster them up for calf marking and leave them in mobs of about 60 ready to go to the bull in early January. The one year old heifers have been given their BVD vaccine and will go to the bull on the 22nd of December, they calve a little earlier so to give them more time to get back up to weight before they go back to the bull at just over two years old, they are the hardest group of cattle to get back in calf. We will also block test the bulls next week to make sure they are sound; around 20 – 25% of bulls fail each year so is better to pull them out before they go to the cows rather than having cows not get in calf.

In the past few years we have been forced to wean and sell some of our lambs before Christmas because of the shortage of grass, this year it looks as though we won't have to wean until early January which means those lambs that have been weaned earlier in the past will be about 5 kilos heavier at weaning, or worth about $12 more. The only problem with this is that as the season goes on and more lambs come on to the market the price usually comes down, so probably only $7 or $8 more will be achieved for weaning them two weeks later.

We sold 69 yearling steers three weeks ago and averaged $1,265 each for them, this is up about $100 on last year. We sold them to take advantage of the very strong cattle market in the sale yards and not leave all our cattle sales till late in the season and hope that the market stays as strong as it is now, predictions are for it to come back but the strong grass market is holding it up for now.

We will be having a quiet Christmas this year spending time with both sides of the family over the festive season. Hope you all have a great Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Kind Regards

Rob

Shareholders listening to Rob during the farm visit at the AGM.

UPDATE FROM ROGER DICKIE

Hello Everyone

We had a good farm visit and Annual General Meeting at Pukekaka Station and it was great to see a number of you attend. We would also like to thank those who participated in the poll, it was great to have 89.5% of Shareholders share their opinion on the future of Pukekaka.

As was communicated in the minutes 63% voted to hold and 37% voted to sell the property. We will review this decision in two years time. This time frame ensures we provided stability for our Farm Manager Rob Stratton, who is an integral part of the farms operation.

Now that a decision has been made as to the future of Pukekaka we can distribute the cash surplus generated from the 2015/2016 financial year. It was agreed at the 2015 AGM that a preference would be given to paying a dividend in favour of debt reduction. As such the directors have decided to pay a dividend of 2.5%. This will be paid in February 2017.

As Richard Bourne has mentioned in his emails, there is some interest in the secondary market for Pukekaka Shares. If you are interested in either purchasing or selling shares, please contact Richard in the office on (06) 346 5329.

On behalf of the directors and the Roger Dickie New Zealand team we would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Roger Dickie
Director