



Pukekaka Farm Managers

Report

Summer/Autumn 2016

I wish we could have El Nino weather patterns every year, rather than getting dry we have had regular rain and one of the better summers in a while. Unfortunately good grass growth doesn't always turn into good returns, lamb prices are back \$10 to \$15 dollars this year which will take around \$80,000 out of our income. The bright side is that we have more flexibility around when we should sell them rather than being forced to sell with no grass.

Jack left us in mid December and is doing well with his new job as a Stock Manager. Our oldest son Sam has returned from a job shepherding in North Canterbury and started working full time on Pukekaka last week. Starting a new employee has been easy as Sam has already done a lot of work on Pukekaka. Our other son James filled in for Jack over the summer holidays, which was a great help.

Just before Christmas we weaned all the single lambs and sold 800 over 29 kilos. In the New Year we weaned 7,500 twin lambs and sold all males over 29 kilos, every lamb over 35 kilos went to the works and the rest were sold on the store market. Our average weaning weight from lambs out of mixed age ewes was 33 kilos which is the best we have had. We sold 3,700 lambs at weaning time in anticipation of the dry that didn't come, this in hind sight was not a bad decision as we still have 4,800 lambs on that are doing well and are able to feed all our breeding stock quite well which hasn't been easy to do in the last few years.

In late January the shearers shored 4,700 ewes and 4,800 lambs in seven days which left 106 bales of wool to sell. The ewes wool sold for \$4.55 per kilo and the lamb's wool \$5.70 which is some of the better prices we have had in a long while.

In recent weeks we have culled 1,250 older and lighter condition ewes, all ewes that are good enough to do another year on warmer flatter country (one year ewes) were sold for \$85 and the rest with poor teeth or not suitable to be on sold to other farmers have gone to the works for \$56. The only trading stock we have left to sell is 3,200 lambs and about 70 cattle.

This week Sam and I have started replacing the last bit of worn out fence above the bush that is above the river track. Once that is finished we have some repair fencing to catch up on and culverts to clean out as well as many other jobs to do. Stock work comes first so the week after next we will sort out our replacement ewe lambs and start selling the others, the cows and calves will be weaned and the dry and old cows culled and sold. Plenty to keep us going for a while.

Hope the summer is treating you all well.

Kind Regards

Rob