

Farm managers' Report 2017

The new techno and cell systems that have been installed over the last few years again proved their worth over the wet winter and early spring periods. The techno systems installed on the volcanic soils has enabled the trust to concentrate more cattle on these free draining soils and the heavier clay paddocks are used over this wet period primarily for lamb finishing and hogget lambing to prevent soil pugging.

With the ability of these systems to deliver a 60 day rotation it has meant that there is no longer any need to feed out haylage to these mobs. The only haylage made was for bought in weaner bull calves in case of a dry summer, which thankfully never eventuated.

Although there is 152 hectares converted to the cell and techno systems there is a need to install the system over the poorer hill paddocks that have areas dominant in ratstail and other poor cultivars. A new water reticulation system has been set up for this area. Creating smaller cells over this part of the farm will allow grazing pressure to be put on the rats tail and will also lift fertility to transform and at least double production on this area.

The ewes again lambed well with 148% lambing recorded. Hogget lambing was again done on the chicory paddocks so that the hoggets' body weight wouldn't suffer. The policy of sowing chicory on the poorer grass paddocks on the easier country for two years then sowing good perennial grasses is performing well. The 60 hectares in chicory proved adequate for lamb finishing over the summer and also provided some grazing for the weaner bull calves.