

**NZ MINIATURE HERFORD
BREEDERS GROUP
NEWSLETTER
MAY 2016**



**NZMHBG AGM
Nelson - April 2016**

Hi Team,

We had a great weekend at Nelson for our AGM Meeting. Grant and Lesley did a fantastic job of organising this weekend - Thanks heaps !!

The weekend started on Friday night when some of the members caught up for a casual drink and then dinner. Always nice to catch up with friends we haven't seen in a while.

Saturday morning our hosts had suggested that we have a good look around Nelson and some of us went to the famous Nelson markets. We met for lunch and then down to business. After a short welcome from our chairman Graham, Leslie introduced us to our Guest Speaker - Bridget Davis from Livestock Improvements Corp. (LIC). Graham Hunkin gave us a talk/explanation on grading up Miniature Herefords and the process required. Dimi Cooper also gave us an interesting talk on "Chondrodysplasia (Dwarfism or Bulldog Syndrome).



AGM was excellent and we had lots of in-depth discussions on NZ Miniature Hereford Group and "where to from here".

Saturday night for dinner at a great restaurant chosen by Lesley & Grant. Excellent!!

Sunday morning was field trip out to Lesley & Grants property. Grant & Lesley have a lovely property just out of town and we all viewed their stock and were able to compare animals and have discussions on farm management. Morning tea turned into lunch as everyone was enjoying the morning. Then all too soon it was time to depart and head our separate ways. Some members had come down a few days prior for tripping around and others were headed off for a few more days.



Grant Marshall with some of his Miniature Hereford Cows

Sharon, Grant, Chris & Graham



 **Next Years NZMHBG
AGM
To be held at NZHA Office in Feilding
29th & 30th April 2017
MARK THIS ON YOUR CALENDER NOW!!
SO YOU DON'T MISS OUT**

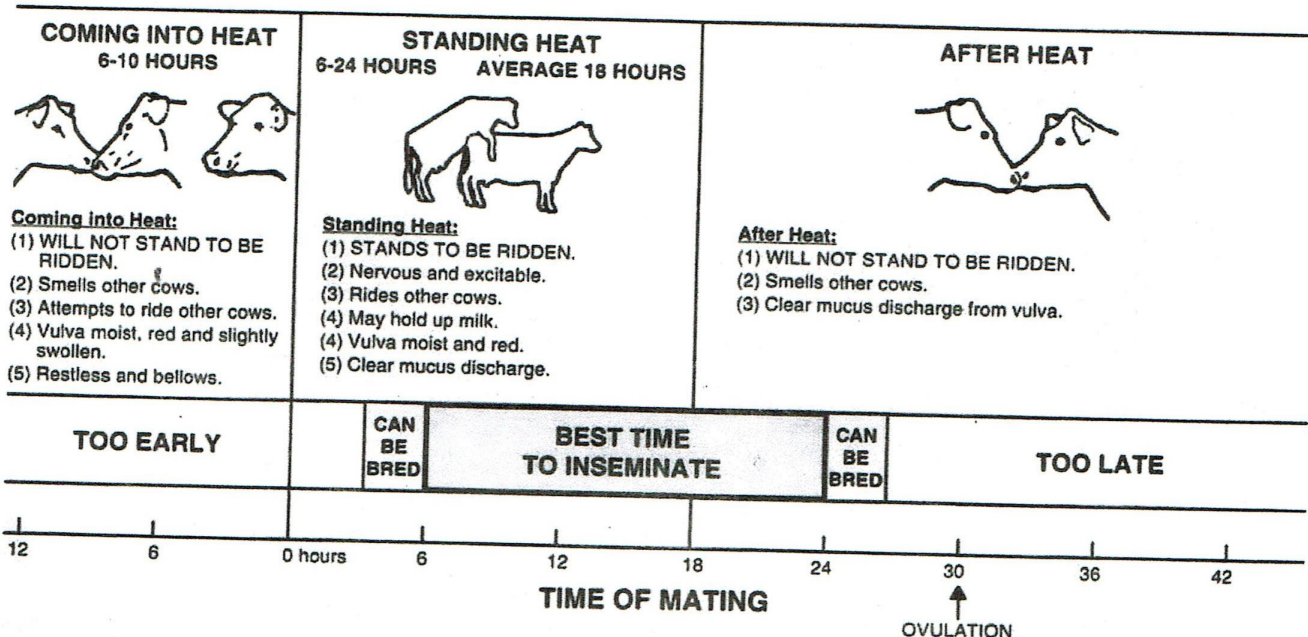
Guest Speaker - Bridget Davis, AB Supervisor from LIC (Livestock Improvements Corporation). Bridget has been working for LIC for some 20 years, 17 years as an AI Technician and then Sales Rep and then on to be an Instructor teaching AI Technicians and AB Supervisor. In New Zealand AI has been used commercially since the 1960's but back in 1678 a man called Leeuwenhoek first saw sperm under a microscope and got the idea of artificial insemination and in 1784 a dog was successfully inseminated in Italy. Professor Ivanhoff was then hired by the Russians to develop AI courses and by 1935 there was AI being used world wide on dogs, cattle and horses. These days here in New Zealand nearly 90% of dairy cattle get in calf by AI. AI helps speed up the stock improvement programs for breeders. LIC is using mostly fresh semen for dairy stock as opposed to the original frozen semen straws, except imported stock which is frozen. Bridget gave an in-depth run down on how AI Technicians are trained and the stringent and comprehensive procedure they go through to become fully qualified AI Technicians with LIC. AI Technicians train on artificial cows to start with and then move on to live stock. They also train at the meat works and get to look closely at carcasses so they can really learn what they are doing. They are closely supervised and not every applicant passes this course. Bridget also went over the process of AI and deciding to wait for natural heat or to synchronise your stock. Attached is a good "Timing of mating Chart" which is helpful.



TIMING OF MATING



FOR BEST CONCEPTION — Inseminate the cow 3-27 hours after start of standing heat.
INVESTIGATIONAL WORK — has indicated that the life of good quality semen in the reproductive tract of the cow is approximately 28 hours and that the egg remains fertile for only 6 hours after ovulation. The chart below illustrates the time scale relative to the average cow.



CHONDRODYSPLASIA DWARFISM OR BULLDOG SYNDROM

BULLDOG SYNDROME, DWARFISM or CHONDRODYSPLASIA is a Dwarf recessive gene found in most miniature cattle breeds with the EXCEPTION of Miniature Herefords. Miniature Herefords do NOT have this gene, partly due to the strict criteria of Breeding and Registration as set by the New Zealand Hereford Association and the Miniature Hereford Breeders Group.

Chondrodysplasia is a heritable defect of cattle, it produces a failure of proper cartilage development. Pregnant cows that inherit two copies (both dam & bull have the gene) of the dwarf mutation will abort during the third trimester, 7 to 8 months gestation. Symptoms of the aborted still born calf are as follows, improper cartilage formation which results in a bone that is disorganized and a skeletal system that is shorter than normal, a cleft palate, abdominal hernia and a domed head.

We also breed Miniature Highland and White and Belted Galloways and have experienced Bulldog calves in ALL of the breeds, in 2 cases (1 Highland & 1 Belted Galloway) we had to call the vet which was extremely costly being after hours as the cow could not calve naturally. Until we 'came' along, the Bulldog Syndrome had not been seen, apparently, outside the Dexter Breed. We had never heard of or experienced the Bulldog Syndrome before so we went to the breeders we purchased the stock from and were told they had never experienced Bulldog Syndrome. One breeder has since 'disappeared' and the other breeder admitted to seeing the 'odd' aborted Bulldog foetus. Naturally we were horrified by what we were experiencing and so began our campaign to:

- . breed this gene out of our herd
- . to educate on what can happen when there is no strict breeding criteria to meet
- . to educate by passing on our experiences

Currently there is no test for Chondrodysplasia/Bulldog Syndrome/Dwarfism in New Zealand. Clean dry tail hairs with the root ball attached, taken from the switch (the fluffy end bit) can be sent to the University of Queensland's Animal Genetics laboratory for testing. We will not purchase or use a mini bull without first being allowed to take and send hair samples for testing.

At this point I would like to refer to Janet's document titled "Where to now for the future of Miniature Herefords in New Zealand". Under the Dexter heading, the sentence "It is to be remembered that this breed has had to be outcrossed at times to other breeds eg Jersey, owing to the low numbers of pur genetics so that there are part-breds but these are included in the breed registers". With what we have experienced with the Bulldog Syndrome I would like to include the following, headed CHONDRODYSPLASIA, from the Dexter Cattle Society New Zealand (inc.) The Dwarfism gene is still present albeit rarely in the NZ Dexter.

"In New Zealand there are 2 mutations of the gene: Type 1 and Type 2.

Type 1 is the original mutation that has always been present in Dexters

Type 2 is a New Zealand mutation that came about though the original grading up program in NZ where a Jersey X Red Poll was used in the grading up program".

In closing I cannot stress enough the importance of having strict breeding criteria set by a Society or Association to produce such sound stock as the New Zealand Miniature Hereford who DO NOT have this gene.

FOOTNOTE:

I have often contacted sellers on Trademe who advertise a "Miniature" and when asked how many generations is this animal, invariably the reply is "oh, it just stopped growing" or even worse "well, that's what I was told when I bought it!" These DO NOT a Miniature make!!

In some cattle societies as long as the animal is a purebred it can be registered with the letter "M" beside it, as in the Galloway Society of NZ. There is no genetic or breeding proof that this animal is a miniature by they do say this "could" be considered as a breed. Both Highland groups in New Zealand DO NOT recognize the Miniature Highland as a breed.

We share our experience with as many people as possible because this Syndrome is not that well documented, in fact when we presented not 1 but 3 cases of Bulldog Syndrome calves it caused a considerable amount of interest at Massey as it had never been recorded outside the Dexter Breed.

What I am hoping to impress upon people is this.... Beware of out crossing or of breeds that do not have strict breeding guidelines and criteria.

It will be a long road ahead for us to rid our other minis of the Dwarfism gene but with the help of the University of Queensland it will NOT be impossible.

Dimi Cooper



The Minutes of Meeting were a bit long this AGM so thought you might want to read “General Business” so that those of you who were interested in responses to members email questions could see discussions on these. Complete Minutes of Meeting will be sent out separately. AGM....

General Business:

- Graham discussed grading up and gave a little background on how this came about and why. This was to help introduce new polled bloodlines into the genetic pool but the NZHA rules were in the way of this. Grading up was a solution and a way to use regular polled Herefords. After liaising with NZHA and Jan Wills it was decided to make an amendment to the NZHA rules to allow breeding between registered regular Herefords with registered Miniature Herefords. These would be G1, G2, etc until G5, then they would be then registerable Miniature Herefords. This was only to introduce more polled bloodline. These G1, G2's etc are all “recorded” with the NZHA but don't show online until they are fully registerable.
 - These G1's, G2's are able to be sold to other registered members and they can continue with the grading up process. Contrary to information that is being spread around the group, there are definitely no sales restrictions on these animals.
 - Recording of grading up animals must be put in manually (not online) to the Registrar of the NZMHBG and then they go to the NZHA Registry.

Much discussion was had and lots of questions answered.

- Graham spoke on NZHA joining fees. After our meeting in Ashburton 2014 it was agreed that the Chairman would write officially to NZHA regarding the high costs of fees. The official response from NZHA is that this will not be changing. NZHA want committed breeders. The higher fees have eliminated some of the members who were not paying anyway and were not filling in registration forms and in general were costing NZHA money chasing them for it. Graham has been continually talking with NZHA since 2014 on this subject on behalf of the NZMHBG and there is unlikely to be a change.

Since the raising of NZHA fees, yes they have lost some members but in actual fact the number of registered female breeding stock has risen. The latest Hereford Whiteface Advantage Magazine quoted.....

- - 18,300 registered females on inventory (13,782 3yr olds / 4168 2yr olds / 343 commercial)
- Active breeding members 245 (includes 11 youth, 26 Miniature Breeders, 60 life members, 69 associate members, 10 overseas)

Emails from Janet Poole for discussion – Graham read out Janet's email and letter to members and this was discussed. Comments below:

- “Miniature Hereford Sales slow” - Yes some animals will sell between members/breeders but we must not rely on this alone for sales. We need as individual breeders to be doing more sales and marketing ourselves.
 - Think about your area and your market and breed accordingly i.e. lifestyle, breeder or meat works.
 - Marketing in your local papers so people know you are there.
 - Think about a website maybe.
 - Talk with other members and swap ideas.
 - Council will check into possible guest speakers on sales and marketing and webpages etc.
 - Council will look into more advertising in lifestyle mags or similar. Also more advertorials.
 - Don't discount the idea of selling your steers and surplus bulls to sales yards/meat works. Not all bulls are going to be sold for breeding. Breeders are getting good prices from the meat works.
- “Miniature Hereford numbers declining” There are 24 current registered members (19 of these recorded stock this last season) NZHA Inventory list Jan 2015 to April 2016 = 139 Miniature Herefords recorded (66 females, 45 bulls, 28 steers). Members slightly down but have one new member and possible two more shortly. Membership fluctuates up and down and this is quite normal especially with lifestyle blocks.
- “NZHA joining fee too high” As Graham has discussed earlier, he has been liaising with NZHA on this subject since the 2014 AGM meeting and this unlikely to change. If someone purchases a Miniature Hereford and doesn't want to be a serious breeder and have registered stock then we should be encouraging them to still join but join as an “Associate Member” (\$57.50). This will then make them eligible to join the NZMHBG (\$50). This will keep them in touch with fellow breeders, they will

get newsletters and can come along to meetings etc. (Associate members have no voting rights). Often these purchasers are new lifestyle farm owners and the group can help them learn. Coming along to meetings and AGM's is also a great way to meet others with similar interests.

- “Distance ourselves from NZHA?” No – general feedback was this is not an option. No quality control. Cost and logistics of replicating all that we have now would be prohibitive and counter-productive for all the years of work done to get Miniature Herefords accepted. NZHA give Miniature Herefords “credibility”. This means that someone cannot legitimately sell a Hereford as miniature just because it is small - there has to be genetic traceability and NZHA keeps all of this on their register.
- “What do we get from NZHA for our fees?”
 - Bi-monthly magazine “Hooked on Herefords” with very relevant articles. Just because it focuses on regular Herefords doesn't mean that articles on, say, rumen development, weaning etc. do not apply to minis.
 - Yearly glossy magazine with some useful articles
 - Free NZMHBG section on the NZHA website (as much space as we need within reason)
 - Links to breeders and links to breeders' own webpages
 - On line gestation calculator
 - On line learning – health articles/technical info/business management/marketing
 - On line breeding co-efficiency / mating predictors program
 - On line video resources
 - Ear gags ordering service (charged through your NZHA a/c)
 - Access to in-house Graphics design team 'Pivot' for printing, web pages, leaflets, advertising material etc. (charged though your NZHA a/c)
 - On line sales catalogues (which miniature members aren't using as yet)
 - Registration and recording and certificates for animals
 - Purchasing a software patch just for NZMHBG use so that graded-up stock could be recorded within the system
 - Access to NZHA Promotional material i.e pens, pads etc
 - Use of NZHA office/seminar conference facilities
 - Advice re registering and paperwork when required – Linda Shailer is always happy to help you fill in forms if you are having any problems
 - Traceability/Legitimacy/credibility
- “Steak of Origin” We have in the past had a couple of members who have entered the Steak of Origin competition several years in a row. You need to plan a year ahead and put aside 1 or 2 steers especially for entering. Natalie and Steve are looking at entering next year. It would be great if other members entered too. If anyone is interested, just ask and we can point you in the right direction. You still get paid the meat works rate for the carcass - they just take the eye fillet for the competition.
- “Shrinking Gene Pool” The council is currently looking into possible new straws and the possibility of the group purchasing these for sale to the members. The grading up program could also help this in the long term.
- “Marketing and selling Miniature Herefords is no different from selling any other product. You must define your product, know your prospective buyers and develop the tools necessary to inform them of your product. Miniature Herefords are a niche industry within the cattle industry which means some level of educating prospective buyers is needed especially if they are new to the business and have limited knowledge”. We agree – get them to join us, then they have the contacts to talk to and learn. Being a member of the team is vital for learning, apart from the companionship of fellow breeders with similar interests.
- “It does not matter whether you have show cattle, seedstock or straight beef cattle you must know your product and choose your market. There are various forms of advertising – a sign by your property, ads in magazines or other publications, internet web sites, stock shows and word or mouth”.
We agree.
- “Ongoing communication between seller and buyer”.
We agree. Again you must try to get buyers to join the team.
-

“Looking back through earlier Newsletters NZMHBG has been much more active in the past especially with things like having a small “Field Day” at a person's property”.

Yes we did and it is a good idea, but it needs the support of the members. It takes quite a bit of organizing, and when only a handful of people turn up it hardly seems worth it. It is even more embarrassing when you have organized a guest speaker. This AGM is a classic example. The executive were told that people don't turn up because they didn't get enough notice. It was held in the North Island. Why not the South Island? So for this 2016 AGM we gave approximately 6 months notice and held it in the South Island. Only 3 South Islanders attended, the rest North Islanders and nearly all who were present were committee or ex committee members. We only have one meeting a year - what sort of attendance would we get if we held 3 or 4 meetings per year? The committee will look at running a workshop in the next year. We do have a member quite keen to do a field day on farm, so we will keep members informed on this.

Emails from Roelof Lourens for discussion:

“Just to emphasize how small a tail we are with NZHA and how little use they are to the Miniature group, I received again the 'flash' magazine from NZHA. No, they didn't forget us, we occupied the last half page of the magazine with 26 contacts addresses. Is this part of the reason our membership is so extravagant?” We did not advertise in the last glossy Hereford magazine as we had just had resignation from our editor and the council concluded we did not have any new and interesting articles to put forward. It was also voted that we not pay to put our usual half page advert in as most members said they had not had sufficient response from this magazine and felt funds were better spent in other magazines such as Lifestyle Magazine. Just for members information the NZHA do give us allocated space each year in this magazine for a “FREE” two page advertorial and we do get our half page advert for a discounted price as do all the other clubs within the NZHA. We/Council chose not to use this this season, so we cannot blame the NZHA for this. Members are always encouraged to put forward articles for the newsletter and other promotional work.

“As a small herd owner on a lifestyle block I think we can enjoy our animals just as much without papers – after all they don't read!”

If a member does not want to register stock they can opt out of the NZHA, however the value of their stock will most likely drop to hook value. By being a member and having registered or recorded stock you have credibility and your stock will be worth a lot more than a non-registered animal. On the very first sale that margin should cover your annual fee. You can be a full “breeding member” or an “Associate” member. Being a full member gives you registration and traceability for your stock along with all the benefits received from being a full member of the NZHA. The other needs no registration and paperwork but does give you access to being a member of the NZ Miniature Hereford Breeders Group, which gives you contact with other members and help with stock issues. There are many members who have decades of experience, not only with Miniature Herefords but general farming, beef and dairy and who would all be more than happy to assist members. Coming along to meetings can be very informative and the camaraderie of meeting others with similar interests is beneficial. It is also gives you access to new bloodlines for your breeding (whether it be registered stock or not).

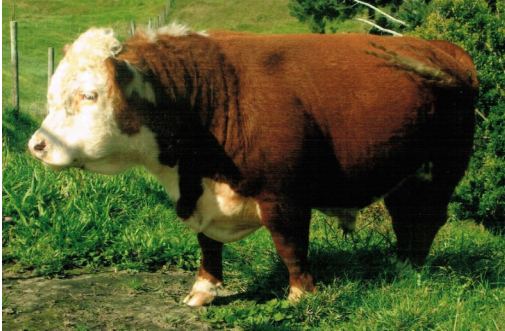
“What do we stand to lose by severing the tie with Big Brother? I, for one, need an answer to all this unnecessary expense and I am sure I am not alone.” As discussed previously in this meeting, the benefits from being a member of the NZHA have clearly been listed and are numerous. However the main one is credibility. Just a casual glance at Trademe from time to time reveals people trying to pass their animals off as miniatures. Without the NZHA and the registration and recording (G1,G2, etc) system current mini breeders would have no “point of difference” and they would be competing head to head with these falsely-labeled animals, probably on price.

We always encourage members to come along to meetings and to feel free to ring council members if they need any help or have any queries. Linda Shailer at NZHA is always available to help with registrations/paperwork.

- NZMHBG Subs – All happy for them to stay the same = \$50 annually. (Year ends 30 June so Treasurer will be doing invoicing after 1st July)
- Dates and place for next AGM – After discussions it was voted that we go back to Feilding for next year's AGM. Janet had kindly offered but members thought that the distance from airport and accommodation would make it difficult. Feilding has the facilities and plenty of accommodation. This is also a little closer for South Island members. There were several suggestions re either guest speakers or field trips.
- Date for next AGM – NZHA Conference facility in [Feilding – 29th & 30th April 2017](#)
(Helen to booking with NZHA)

STOCK FOR SALE

Gladwyn Heights—Sharon O'brien - Ph: 07/542-0061 email: sharonobrien@kinect.co.nz



Gladwyn Heights Oben - DOB 11.10.13



Gladwyn Heights Nathan - DOB 20.09.12

Sharon also has several rising 2 year bulls to choose from and some heifers. Give her a ring to if you would like more information.



Looking for female stock - talk to Sharon...

Gladwyn Heights Milly - DOB 25/09/11
Gladwyn Heights Pollyanna - DOB 21/05/14
Gladwyn Heights Mia - DOB 01/10/11
Gladwyn Heights Polly - DOB 12/06/14

REMINDER NOTICE

From 1 January 2014, ALL NZHA bulls (of any age, including calves) sold for transfer must be correctly sire verified in conjunction with having a DNA profile and be hypotrichosis tested and declared FREE. (Note - Diluter and idiopathic epilepsy testing can be completed at no charge, at time of hypotrichosis testing).

From Jan 1 2016, ALL NZHA females sold for transfer must be sire verified AND tested for hypotrichosis, diluter and idiopathic epilepsy with results declared.

DO YOU HAVE FOR SALE STOCK? LET US KNOW
Any information, articles or photos that you would like to put forward for the next Newsletter please email or post to Helen Russell.....thanks
15 Charles Street
RD 2,
Warkworth 0982
Ph: 09/425-5672
Email: amberleacove@xtra.co.nz

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