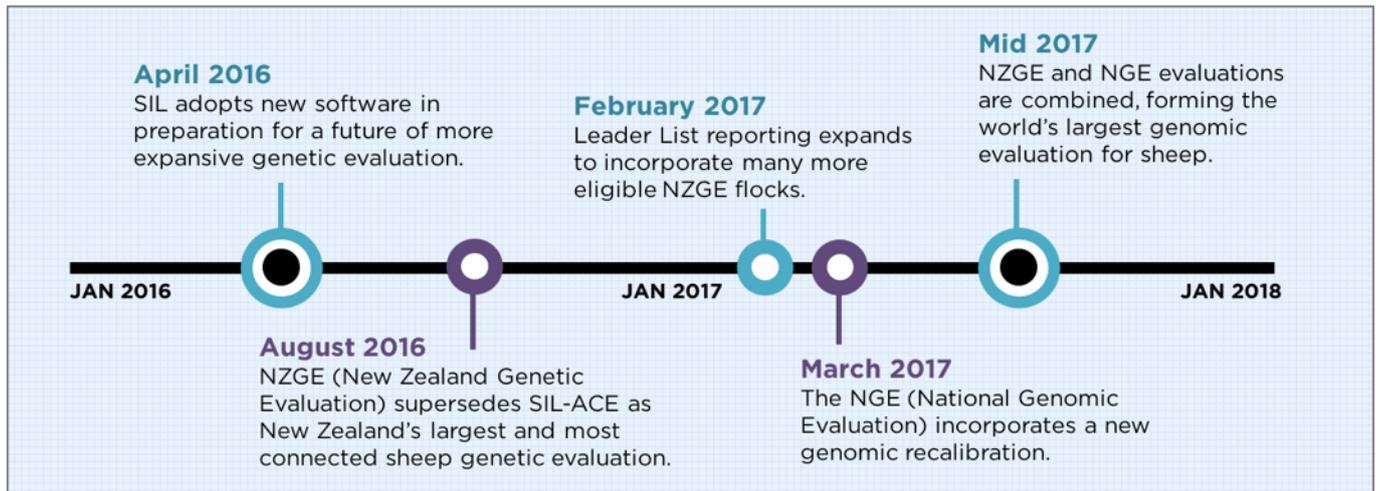


SHEEP

Timetable of significant events

The 2017 year is looking like another busy one for SIL.



Keep abreast of these changes via this breeder-specific newsletter.

Read [The Good Acid Issue 1 – December 2016](#)

BEEF

B+LNZ Genetics Beef Progeny Test: Individual sire results



Breeders and industry participants who contributed to the first sire cohort of the B+LNZ Genetics Beef Progeny Test have received performance information for their individual sires. A total of 54 sires were used for the 2014 mating.

The number of cows has been maintained at 2200 for the 2016 mating. It will be interesting to see if the average AI conception rate increases again, given it lifted from 49% in 2014, to 56% in 2015.

Breed	Number of sires
International Angus	7
International Charolais	1
International Hereford	1
New Zealand Angus	20
New Zealand Charolais	1
New Zealand Hereford	10
New Zealand Simmental	9
New Zealand Stabilizer	5

Statistics across all sires	Adjusted average weaning weight (kg)	Adjusted average yearling weight (kg)
Minimum	220	283
Average	229	305
Maximum	246	339

S.I.L.

NZGE Leader Lists



**From 1 February 2017,
Leader Lists will change to a
voluntary opt-out process**

Leader Lists have been available to sheep breeders and commercial farmers for many years. They are designed to provide a balance between high merit and high reliability, when sourcing new genetics across flocks and across the country.

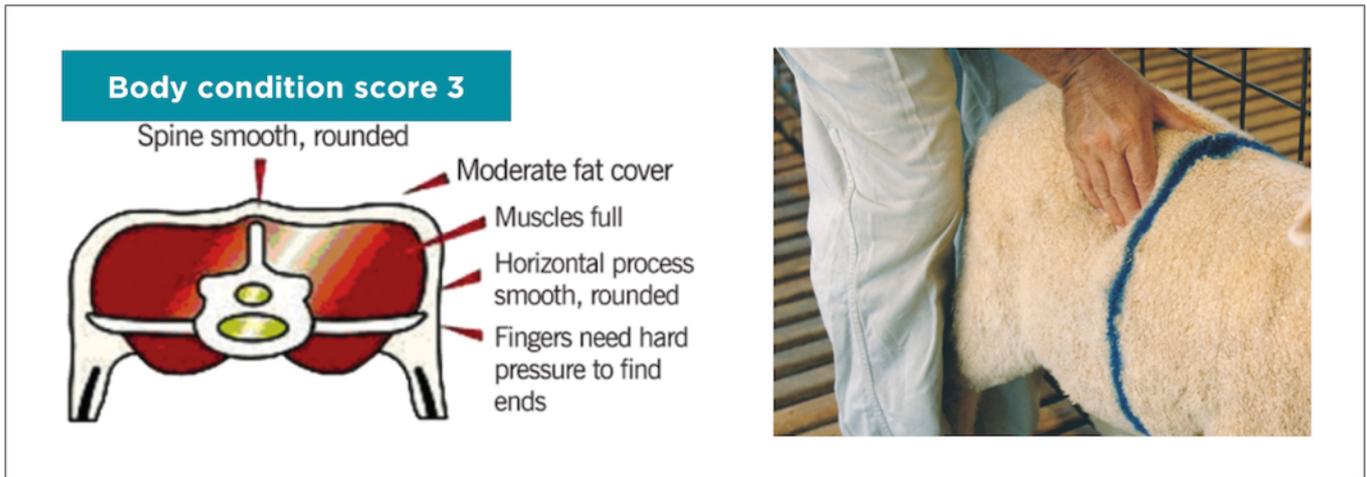
Leader Lists have tended to be generated from New Zealand's largest across flock evaluation and, in April 2016, the lists transitioned from being generated from the SIL-ACE evaluation, to the NZGE. This increased the number of flocks able to be included in the evaluation – from 450 to more than 1100. Connectedness was improved throughout the evaluation and, while there was some modest re-ranking, positions within flock and within the evaluation were stable.

From 1 February 2017, the Leader Lists will change from a voluntary “opt-in” to a voluntary “opt-out” process. All New Zealand performance-recording flocks in the NZGE analysis will become eligible for inclusion on the New Zealand Leader Lists. Inclusion on the various Leader Lists will still be subject to strict eligibility.

[More information on eligibility criteria](#)

You can opt to withdraw flocks from the generation of Leader Lists, but you are highly encouraged to remain “in”. Leader Lists generated from a single evaluation that uses all available information standardises the conversation about a ram's merit and benchmarking. It ultimately enables better breeding decisions. Breeders are encouraged to talk with their bureau or B+LNZ Genetics about the NZGE and how they can work towards making the most from Leader Lists.

Body Condition Score: Economic Sub Index



Body Condition Score breeding values have moved from the research phase and are now able to be incorporated into select indexes by breeders.

Why record for BCS?

- Higher BCS ewes are more resilient to adverse conditions.
- A BCS breeding value (BCSeBV) and sub-index (DPBC) are available in SIL.
- BCS is considered a health trait and reporting is restricted to breeders recording the trait.
- BCS all two-tooth and older ewes at least once per year is recommended (timing options: mating, scanning, lambing or weaning). BCS at mating is the preferred measurement time.
- It is important to record mob codes, if different mobs have been fed differently prior to measurement.
- A liveweight should be recorded whenever BCS is recorded.

Measurements from ultrasound muscle and fat scanning are informative for young animals and are used in conjunction with BCS recording to improve the accuracy of BCS genetic merit prediction in young animals prior to recording adult BCS.

[SIL Tech Note on the new BCSeBV](#)



Collecting DNA tissue samples at Smedley Station CPT site



Pedigree error and research

Genetic evaluation systems rely on good information to be able to generate and report reliable breeding values and indexes. Accurate pedigree is a fundamental requirement and, without it, the reliability of genetic information declines.

B+LNZ Genetics collects DNA samples from many participating breeders from throughout New Zealand for research purposes. These breeders have been working with B+LNZ Genetics' research programme for many years and the bank of research genotypes spans many generations, in some cases.

DNA technology and verification of parents is highly accurate and is an absolute prerequisite to an individual's information being used in any aspect of research. In some cases, the recorded parent information of new young sires is proven to be incorrect and, before being included in research, the parent information is changed to reflect either the correct parent or parent information is set to missing.

DISCUSSION TOPIC

Retrospective correction of pedigree error could be discussed at this year's Sheep Breeder Forum. If you have supplied samples to the B+LNZ Genetics research programme and are interested the frequency of pedigree errors in samples supplied, and/or would like to discuss this at the next forum, email us: info@blnzgenetics.com



Reporting restricted traits

Traits that come under the banner of “restricted” are:

- **Resistance to Internal Parasites (WormFEC)**
- **Resilience to Internal Parasites**
- **Tolerance to Facial Eczema (RamGuard)**
- **Body Condition Score**
- **Dag Score**
- **Bare Points**
- **Carla**

These traits are restricted so that SIL can produce robust genetic evaluations for these traits where it is critical to follow strict measurement protocols.

In the future, only flocks approved and registered as recording restricted traits will be able to report these traits from genetic evaluations. One exception will be the use of molecular breeding values from genomic tests where data will be accepted for only those animals genotyped.

— REMINDER — SIL DATA SERVERS CHANGE OVER

The SIL data servers are being changed over on Saturday 21 January. Expect the SIL system to be unavailable until 12 noon Monday 23 January.



B+LNZ Genetics team from left: Graham Alder, David Campbell, Dr Michael Lee, Sharl Liebergreen, Eleanor Linscott, Sharon McIntyre, Dr Annie O'Connell, Max Tweedie, Pam Schofield. [More information](#)

