



## B+LNZ Genetics on Facebook

Did you know B+LNZ Genetics has a Facebook page?

B+LNZ Genetics has been posting to Facebook since late last year. Extension Officers Max Tweedie and Annie O'Connell share interesting (and odd) events from their working days, while the wider B+LNZ Genetics team also uses the page to communicate important facts and reminders from SIL and the research programmes.

[Visit B+LNZ Genetics Facebook page](#)



## B+LNZ Genetics "Quick-fire" roadshows

B+LNZ Genetics is holding a series of meetings around the country talking about some of the innovations, changes and technologies coming through the organisation and SIL during 2017.

As the roadshow's "Quick-fire" name suggests, the pace of the afternoon should ensure everyone has a chance to discuss what's on their mind.

## **Locations and dates**

- Gore, Croydon - Thurs, 16 Feb
- Waipawa, CHB Theatre - Fri, 17 Feb
- Darfield, Recreation Centre - Mon, 20 Feb
- Hamilton, Airport - Mon, 27 Feb
- Masterton, Solway - Thurs 2 Mar

## **Timing at all venues will be:**

- 12:30pm - Start arriving
- 1pm - Meeting starts
- 2:30pm - Break for cup of tea and a nibble
- 3pm - Continue meeting
- 4pm - Discussion
- 4:30pm - Meeting closes.

## **Topics**

The intention is to cover off 10 key topics in 15-minute blocks – via a quick outline, then a Q&A – then finish with discussion on topics important to those attending.

The 10 quick-fire topics are:

- Vision for the evaluation
- The NZGE – merging of evaluations and genomics
- The significance of re-ranking
- Connectedness and connectedness reporting
- Leader Lists, their criteria and frequency
- Restricted traits and "blanking"
- Information tools for selection or marketing of rams
- Performance ram sales
- Relative economic weightings
- A 'sticky-note' workshop – Sheep Forum 2017.

An indication of your preferred venue location and an RSVP at least 5 days before the event, would be appreciated.

[\*\*RSVP now\*\*](#) (please include location in your email)



## Recording Wool and Wool Colour traits

B+LNZ Genetics is interested in hearing from sheep breeders who are particularly keen on performance recording for Wool and Wool Colour.

Wool continues to be a significant part of the New Zealand farming system and, while the volatility of the wool price is frustrating, there are positive programmes and initiatives that rely on a good product.

If you are interested in being part of a group which has a 'strong' interest in the 'finer' points of wool, let us know.

[Register your interest](#)



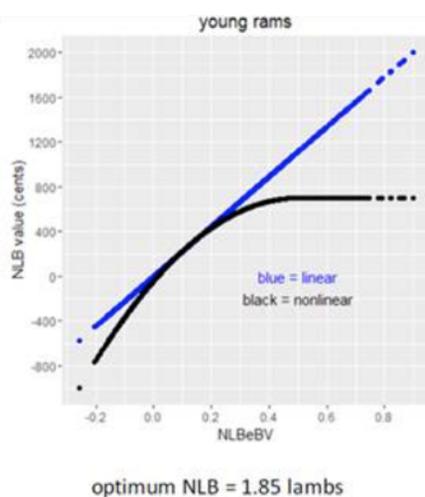
## Capped NLB

The principle of capping the value of an extra lamb over the optimum level was discussed at the B+LNZ Genetics Sheep Breeder Forum 2016.

AbacusBio reported that, as the number of lambs per pregnant ewe approaches the optimum (185% lambs per pregnant ewe), the value of an extra lamb decreases and lamb and ewe deaths increase.

185% is equivalent to approx +0.418 NLB eBV. There are a few sires with NLB eBVs in excess of +0.6. Once NLB eBV moves into extreme levels (such as 0.6), a ram's Maternal Worth Index can be dominated by reproduction, making it an unbalanced genetics package.

When building the DPR sub-index economic value, rather than applying the relative economic weight of NLB to the NLB eBV in a constant or linear fashion, the report recommends using a non-linear model. As the optimum NLB per pregnant ewe is approached the value or DPR reduces, resulting in a maximum reward possible for DPR.



**Fig 1. Current straight line reward (blue line) and suggested capped NLB reward (black line)**

- Increasing value for NLB eBV up to optimum
- Above optimum, all NLB have the same value
  - over-valued rams on linear index brought back to practical value
- Encourages improvements in lower prolificacy flocks, while keeping more prolific flocks from badly overshooting optimum.

The non-linear model is not applied when generating the NLB eBV. It is only applied when generating DPR. This results in the relative economic contribution of DPR to the NZMW index diminishing in animals that have extreme NLB eBV. In this way, animals with extreme NLB eBV to still be identified and used in breeding programmes, while also increasing the profile of more genetically-balanced animals in breeders' selection lists.

The concept is still being debated and B+LNZ Genetics welcomes your views.

[Email your feedback](#)



## **B+LNZ Genetics Dairy-Beef Progeny Test update**

The first crop of progeny test calves have now moved into a sheep and beef finishing system. Initial results for this project will be presented by Massey University's Dr Rebecca Hickson at the Limestone Downs annual field day on Tuesday (14 February).

For those that are able to attend, this is a great opportunity to hear first-hand insights, learn about the viability of dairy-beef calves and view the beef-sired progeny test calves on display.

Speakers will present in the morning. In the afternoon, there will be a farm tour, with a choice between dairy or sheep and beef.

Topics to be covered:

- **Physical and Financial Farm Performance**
- **Dairy-Beef and Theileria** - Dr Rebecca Hickson, Massey University, will report on progress with the dairy herd mated to beef sires and an update on Theileria.
- **Precision Application of Fertiliser** - Michael White, Ravensdown will report on work done at Limestone Downs
- **Facial Eczema** - Professor Hugh Blair and Dave Milne will discuss steps taken to avoid Facial Eczema damage including breeding for tolerance
- **Stream Monitoring** - Gerry Kessels, Ecologist, will report on monitoring stream water quality following the dairy conversion.

[Find out more](#)