

# Collaboration in the NZ sheep breeding industry

**A joint address by Focus Genetics and Kelso**

Richard Lee and Matt Holden  
B+LNZ Genetics Sheep Breeder Forum  
27<sup>th</sup> June 2017

# What does collaboration mean?

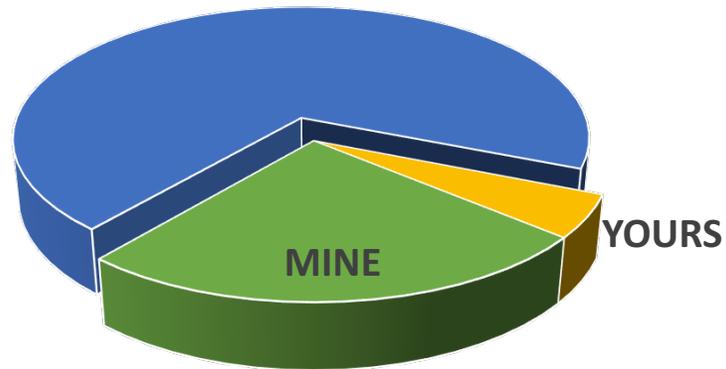
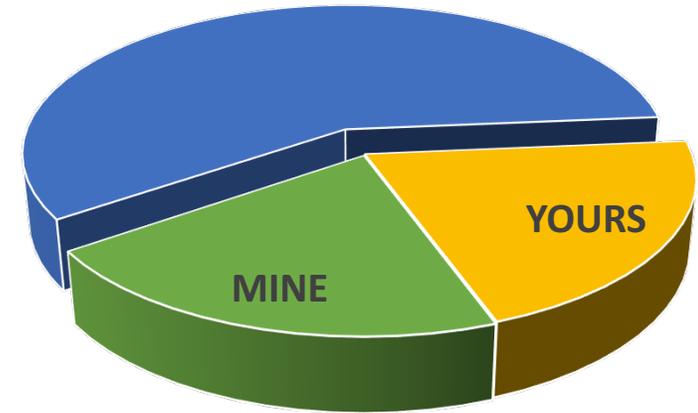
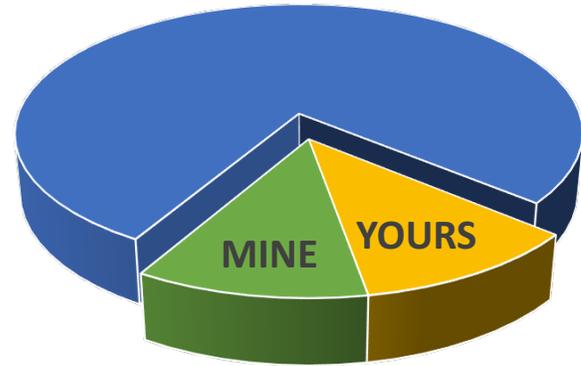


# Let's do some baking... = ram production

- Based on 20 million breeding ewes
- 1:100 ram to ewe ratio and a ram lasting three years
- There are ~ 66,000 rams needed every year
- There are ~ 350 breeders in NZ = average ram sales of ~ 200/breeder.
- What IF there were 25M ewes ....
- **= +20% more rams needed**

Let's do some baking (= ram production)

# Non-competitive baking... “grow the pie for us all!”



# Competition - Where and Who?

- Kelso vs FG?
- FG + Kelso vs YOU
- Romney vs Composite
- FE Gold vs others not there (yet)
- Phenotype vs Genotype
- Dairy
- Dairy grazing
- Forestry
- DOC
- Other proteins –  
pork/poultry/Clean Meat

# Competition - Where and Who?

- What's your time frame ?
- Are you 60+ like me and on the out or 30 and on the up?
- Whose perspective is therefore relevant ?
- Is siloed wisdom of an existing, aged and change averse breeder what's most needed here?

# Breeder level - currently

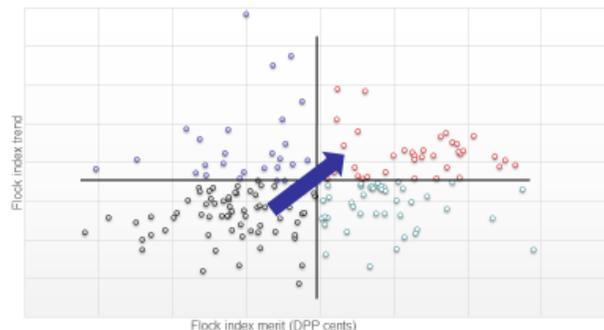
Lots happening already:

- PTs, SIGC, Otiwhiti, HFL CPT, Smedley
- BLG facilitated forums – eg this / Best Practise /SIL-ITAG
- FE Gold
- Group Breeding Schemes – Southern SufTex ,SIRDG, WRDG, TRIGG etc
- Sheep Milking

# More collaboration from and between breeders

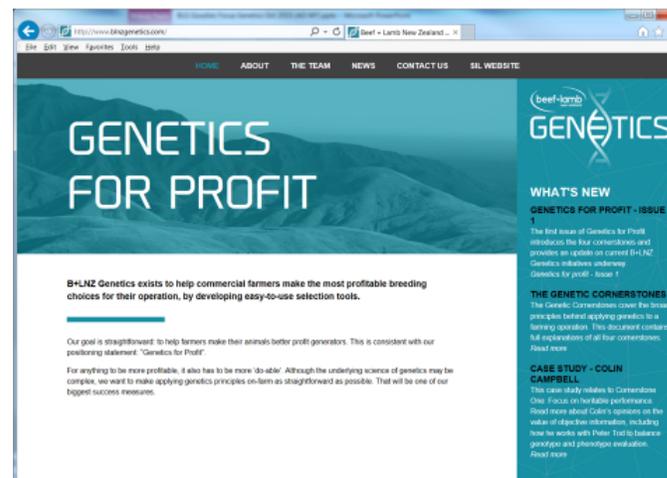
- Strengthen linkages to allow valid across flock comparisons. This is driven by a true commercial client service mentality = grow **their** pie 1<sup>st</sup> → ↑profitability → ↑ NZ ewe flock size etc.
- Client **education** - objective science to challenge conventions

How to increase value to "NZ inc" 



# More collaboration from and between breeders

- Allowing true genetic ‘worth’ to be realised e.g. ram accountant. Sell rams for their real value and let the cream rise.
- Combined efforts/cost sharing for industry new projects especially re genomics e.g. SIGC, FEWG, other?
- Collective lobbying e.g. FEWG



# At farm level for us



	Focus Genetics	Kelso
Visits, look, see, discuss and share	✓	✓
Assessment and alignment of breeding objectives	✓	✓
See points of difference	✓	✓
Genetic exchanges	✓	✓
See animals and compare	✓	✓
Listen	✓	✓
Learn	✓	✓
Build relationships	✓	✓
Respect commercial constraints	✓	✓
Actively tout to clients	x	x
Tell about dirty laundry externally	x	x
Denigrate	x	x



# Specifically what are we [FG & Kelso] doing in this space currently?

- Cultivating an attitude of openness.
- Respond positively to any request for info/visits/mutual hosting/associations albeit with given commercial constraints
- Getting out and about and actively asking to look at other breeding programmes, animals and set ups.
- Learnings always there and respecting others commercial constraints
- Always looking for **new genetics** and
  - Exchange first if possible
  - Purchase if necessary
  - Driven by need for linkage as well as genetic diversity/merit

# What now?

- Find the ‘bakers’ to grow the PIE
- Find the game changers if they exist....can only do this if out and about
- Use the best of modern tools and technology and work to find scale to afford these
- Keep our skin nice and thick and our heads up!