

Sheep Farming in the Falkland Islands

- Corriedale & Polwarth base breeds
- New breeds providing genetic diversity, finer wool and improved carcase characteristics
- Average lamb marking percent is 67.3
- Greasy fleece weight averages 3.78kg's
- Average fibre diameter for all wool is approx. 24.2 micron
- Average farm size is approx. 11,991ha
- Lambing in October/November
 - Improved Nutrition
 - Improved Weather Conditions
- Shearing from September to March
 - Pre-lamb shearing September/October
 - Wethers in October/December
 - Young sheep in November/December
 - Post-lamb (ewes) shearing in January/Feb
- Majority of sheep are shorn by professional contractors, the rest by owner operators
- Many farms wool is prepared to agreed Quality Control Standards
 - Falkland Islands Guide to Clip Preparation
 - Quality Falkland Wool
- Wool is classed by a mix of professional and owner classers based of breed, age, style and quality
- Some farms are already fully internationally organically accredited to sell organic wool.

Department of Agriculture Programmes

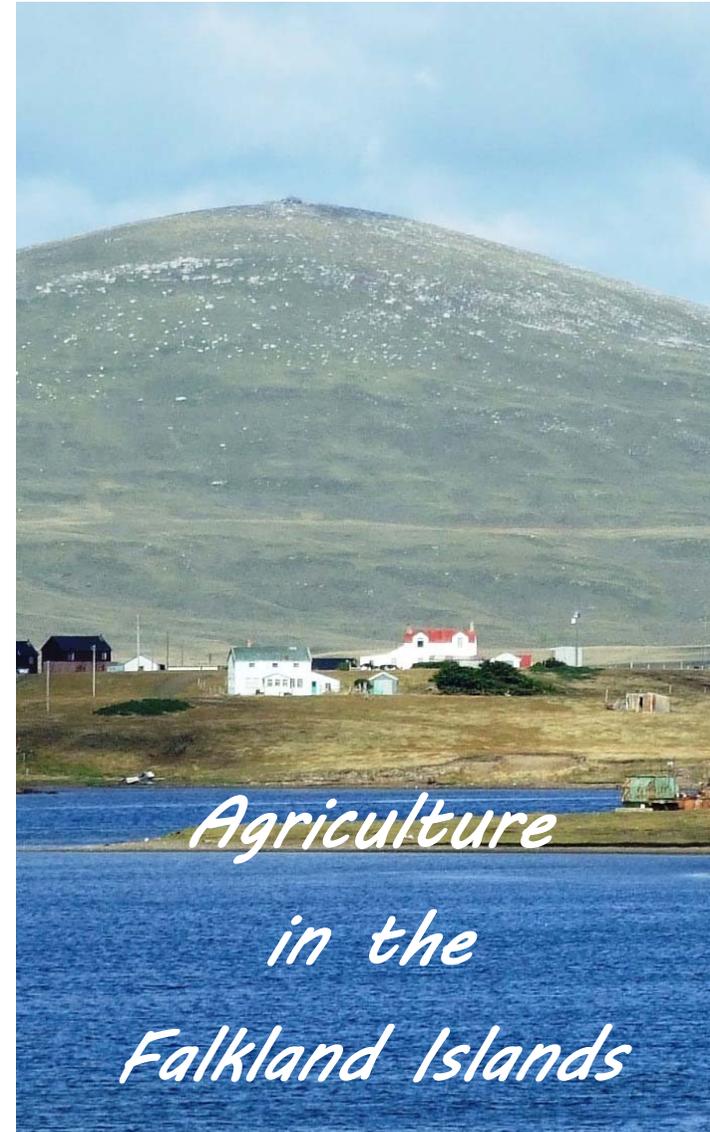
- Business Skills Development
 - Gross Margin Modelling / Benchmarking*
- Wool & Meat Development
 - Wool Clip Analysis; Sheep Genetic Improvement - introduced dual purpose breeds; AI/ET Programme; Farm Improvement Programme; sheep ultrasound pregnancy diagnosis; National Beef Herd - Angus genetics introduced to provide high quality animals for sale and lease to farmers*
- Fish, Animal & Plant Health
 - Veterinary Regulations; Oversee Sand Bay Abattoir; Fish Export Certification*
- Bio security Strategy
 - Review of Legislation; Public Awareness Programme; Inspection of imported goods*

Pasture Improvement

- Rotational/Managed Grazing
- Forage Crops
- Improved legume based pastures through cultivation
- Farm Improvement Programme - joint investment by farmers and the Department of Agriculture

Genetic Improvement Programme

- By using a selection index the National Stud Flock and others are aiming to decrease fibre diameter, increase wool cut and improve carcase traits
- They are also being selected for easy care characteristics of open faces and parasite control
- Finer micron quickly from new breeds
- National Beef Herd bull leasing & cattle sales



Introduction

Farming

Facts

The Falkland Islands

Location

- 483km from South American mainland
- 1365km from Antarctic Circle
- Latitude: 51° - 53° South
- Longitude 57° - 62° West
- 2,840 Falkland Island residents (2012 census)

Geography

- Total Land Area of 12,173km² (approx 1,217,000ha)
- Two main islands plus 778 smaller islands
- Topographically generally hilly
- Highest point is 705 metres

The Department of Agriculture

Our Vision - A prosperous and self-reliant agricultural sector that creates opportunities for Falkland Islanders and is highly valued locally and internationally.

Our Mission - To foster a viable and internationally competitive agricultural industry through integrated applied research, extension, business skills development and regulatory programmes.

Ten Year Plan

Over the next ten years the Department of Agriculture will be working closely with farm businesses to:

- Increase breeding flock sizes and hence overall sheep production levels by
 - Increasing lambing rates
 - Improving lamb and hogget nutrition and health
- Improve the value of wool sold by
 - Reducing the average fibre diameter
 - Marketing more wool as Certified Organic
- Increasing the number of lambs, mutton and beef processed for export

Farming in the Falkland Islands

Most of the Falkland Islands land mass is used for agriculture. Despite grazing with nearly half a million sheep and around 3500 cattle, the land has largely retained its native plant populations.

Much of the famous Falkland Island wildlife is in harmony with farming practices, assisting with valuable nutrient recycling and 'green' formation. These greens are interspersed throughout the more extensive native vegetation areas and are of particular relevance to animal production due to their improved nutritional value.

Wool production from dual purpose sheep is the mainstay of Falkland Island agriculture. Prime lamb, mutton and beef are growing in importance as export markets and production systems are improving.

Farming in the Falkland Islands is described as an extensive rangeland farming system. Freedom from some of the external parasites that plague other sheep farming areas, and with few production limiting diseases, Falkland Island farming is a very natural system. Similarly, whilst fertilisers and lime would make a big difference to production levels, the high cost of importing fertilisers means their use is limited to crop and pasture establishment and only occasionally to reinvigorate established pastures.

The environment here produces exceptionally clean, natural products, and selection to maintain whiteness in the wool over time has been very successful. Consequently the Falkland Islands agricultural exports has a very good reputation. Organic certification for some is a step towards marketing these attributes internationally.

The uniqueness of the environment also throws up its challenges, and it is towards these that the Department of Agriculture directs much of its advisory and research efforts and resources.

Falkland Islands Farms

- 83 farms, mostly family owned
 - 38 East Falkland farms
 - 34 West Falkland farms
 - 11 Island farms
- 482,031 sheep - base flock Corriedale and Polwarth breeds with Dohne Merino, Texel, South African Meat Merinos, Afrinos and other breeds introduced to improve the fineness of wool and meat characteristics
- 1,703,489kgs of wool exported
- 49815 sheep and lambs to Sand Bay Abattoir
- 3422 cattle
- 529 cattle to Sand Bay Abattoir
- 67 pigs
- 132 pigs to Sand Bay Abattoir
- 1,115,930ha of farmed land
- 283 people living on farms
 - 150 on East Falkland
 - 107 on West Falkland
 - 26 on Islands



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