



Pfizer New Zealand

Farmer: Mark Porter
Location: Raglan
Stock Type: Sheep/Lambs

Uralla Station manager Mark Porter is excited by the results of using Pfizer's new sheep drench Startect.

Extra profit on the 607ha dairy support unit near Raglan comes from finishing winter trade lambs.

"Drenching is one of the most important things we do on this farm and, to me, is the cheapest thing we do," he says.

"My policy with lambs is that you drench a healthy animal – you don't wait until it's hard to muster and covered in dags."

Porter targets lower priced lambs because "the money is not in what you're making at the end, it's when you're buying".

"We buy medium healthy lambs, not big forward lambs.

"It's easy to get \$100 but if you've paid \$70 for it, it's lost profit.

"We try to average around \$50 for our lambs landed on farm."

In August this year Porter bought a line of 600 winter lambs from Manawatu.

"Normally we operate on a 90-day turnaround but these 600 were pretty good so we were banking on 60 days," he said.

Having just hosted a field-day on the farm, where Pfizer's newly launched Startect was introduced, Porter decided to test the new drench himself.

"The 600 we'd brought were a good line of Perendales and it was just a simple experiment because they were like peas in a pod, all identical, no tail-enders.

"It seemed the obvious thing to do drench them with two different drenches to see how good Startect was."

Porter split the mob into two groups of 300 and weighed them.

Half were treated with Startect and half with a triple combination product and they were run on the same hill country.

Thirty days later they were brought in for crutching and weighed.

"The mob I'd treated with Startect was ready to go to slaughter at 30 days," Porter says.

"They weren't fat, they were meat, and even the wool was glowing and clean.

They were super healthy strong lambs and ended up 2kg heavier in carcass weight."

\$6/kg was achieved on this line returning an extra \$12 per lamb gross for the Startect treated group.

Porter says it was the best result he has had with finishing lambs in the five years he's been at Uralla.

"For a quarantine drench when buying lambs in I was using more of the triple combinations over spring and autumn and over the winter we were going to use a dual combination but I think after seeing how Startect has worked on our lambs I may change because I think we can get better results just using Startect."

Porter says while Startect initially costs more a dose he still considers it good value.

Dr Victoria Chapman, a Pfizer veterinarian, says “The result from using an ineffective drench may not be obvious.

“If you have only ever seen your stock performing at 90% of their potential you may never know that they are underperforming.

“Using an ineffective drench can result in slower growth rates meaning it can take longer to reach target weights,” she said.

Porter says “On the results we got with Startect, although it cost more, it worked out the cheaper option.

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