

SIR ARTHUR WARD AWARD 2002

Paul D. Muir

Paul Muir is a recognized authority in applied research, especially with respect to early lambing, lamb growth, beef production and calf rearing. Being at a regional research station, Paul's research and technology transfer projects have been fully integrated with the farming community and the industries and businesses involved with them. However, his work has also national and international interest.

Probably the best known project has been the Poukawa calf-rearing programme that began from a need to identify low-cost calf rearing systems.

The highlights of this project that has developed a simple but novel calf-rearing facility, include a nation-wide technology transfer programme with seminars attracting an average of 90 calf rearers per venue in 2000. Another feature of the programme is its wide industry support including the East Coast Beef Council, Meat NZ, PCL Feeds, Ngahiwi Farms, NZ Milk Products Ltd, NZ Holstein Friesian Association, MAF and AgMardt.

Like the calf project, the elite lamb programme is growing in importance within the farming community. Beginning as a project aimed at producing heavyweight lambs early in the season, it has expanded to include lamb growth rates and progeny testing. This programme also has huge farmer interest including regularly attracting between 200 and 300 people to an annual field day at Poukawa. Similarly, it involves the likes of Richmond Ltd, Meat New Zealand, Sheep Improvement Ltd, and WoolPro. The outstanding features of this programme include the very applied nature of the project and the generation of high farmer interest, Paul's ability to present the information to farmers clearly, and his skills in



developing the joint involvement of the meat, wool, processing and service industries. This has resulted in a project of great value to the sheep industry.

Some of Paul's major achievements in technology transfer over the last few years include:

- 4 major elite lamb field days at Poukawa and a calf-rearing display at Mystery Creek;
- 3 *Number 8 Wired* television presentations on the elite lamb programme, colostrum and calf performance, and the performance of jersey-cross calves;
- presentations at over 50 farm discussion group meetings, seminars and field days;
- 15 calf-rearing seminars throughout the country;
- 70 newspaper articles; and
- an annual newsletter distributed to nearly 3000 calf-rearers.

These efforts are also reflected in Paul's contribution to NZ scientific societies and the internationally refereed scientific literature.

Paul has successfully developed a range of applied research projects of relevance to the New Zealand farming community in collaboration with both farmers and farm businesses and industries. This work has been consistently brought before those communities and adopted. As such Paul has made a major contribution towards animal production in New Zealand. The Sir Arthur Ward Award recognises the successful application of scientific research or farmer experimentation through a series of trials or effective extension in New Zealand animal production, Paul Muir is a very deserving recipient of this prestigious award.

M.W. Fisher and T.W. Knight