

New Zealand scholarship

- a) Basically my studies as a New Zealand scholar were to look at the resources that were available to the New Zealand sheep farmer to compare to the resources we have in Wales, then evaluate the efficiency of utilizing the resources, for example New Zealand has a longer grass growing season, but Welsh sheep farmers have more consumer on their doorstep, while New Zealand relies on export. When analysing the efficiency factors that affect profitability I thought that New Zealand were well ahead of us because in 2001 the contemporary word within the sheep breeding circle was DNA. I was amazed at the far reaching and accumulated effect of using high index rams to generate 'Gene Pool' in the flock.
- b) My memorable experience as a scholar in New Zealand did have an influence on my way of thinking, as it broadened my horizon, I thought much more holistically, and realising the importance of the global context, we should not look at New Zealand lamb as a threat but as an opportunity to increase lamb consumption globally (the lamb consumption globally is only 4%) and look at the dramatic affect on the sheep industry if we could increase this by 1%!!
- c) I was influenced by many New Zealand farmers, but possibly the one that influenced me mostly was Homes Warren, his philosophy was SURVIVAL, and the importance of breeding sheep within this context. There is a tendency for one to look only at the best points, however his theory was that it is important as well to cull the ewes that create the most problems e.g. lambing. Following my visit to New Zealand I've been more critical and less sentimental towards culling some of the breeding stock.