



NOVEMBER 2025

NEWSLETTER



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WELCOME TO OUR SPRING NEWSLETTER

Please enjoy reading our deer breeding
and business update.

Earlier in the year we enjoyed the Queenstown conference with the Deer Industry celebrating 50 years of the NZ Deer Farmers Association. Attendees enjoyed the chance to reflect, catch up with fellow industry members, and celebrate the potential ahead for deer farming.

It was a fantastic opportunity to reflect on the growth of our industry. I also had the honour of presenting the “Deer Industry Award” to Graham Carr, sponsored by Porter Holdings, it was a privilege to have both Alistair and Graham on stage together for the presentation.

On the farming front, we are experiencing a more positive environment. Farm gate prices are stronger, interest rates are easing, and the lower exchange rate is supporting improved profitability—though we remain mindful of global risks such as the Trump factor. Our venison and trophy enterprises are tracking well. Velvet has seen a pause in growth for the first time in recent years, due to the increased volumes heading to market over the past two seasons and changes in Chinese import protocols. There will be some volume and cutting adjustments that will hopefully help fix the current situation.

At Wilkins Farming Co, we have continued refining our breeding objectives, sharpening the focus within our hind base. We are clear about the attributes we are targeting and are selecting sires that align with those goals.

Our approach to breeding Maternal and European lines remains centred around growth rate and body type, while keeping velvet potential in mind. This year we have added sires that provide valuable outcross opportunities, supporting long-term performance and genetic diversity.

We have a strong line-up of young sires for this selling season. They come from proven maternal bloodlines or high-growth European backgrounds, including:

- **BIG GEOFF MATERNAL**
Known for performance and temperament. Sons offer +19.29 W12eBV and loin weights up to 5.13 kg.
- **COLMAN MATERNAL | VELVET | ENGLISH**
New sire with promising figures: +19 W12eBV and CDeBV up to -2 days.
- **MAPLE MATERNAL | VELVET**
A blocky type with a rich red coat. Offers +14 W12eBV and 4.33 kg loin weight.
- **FALCO MATERNAL**
Impressive growth sire with +20.12 W12eBV and up to 4.98 kg loin size and a pedigree including some of WFC most proven performers.

Other maternal options include sires from **Körper**, **Bluerockson**, and a new **Everest son**.

Looking ahead, our Wilkins Farming Co Annual On-Farm Sale will be held at our Athol farm on 13 January 2026. For North Island clients, our private treaty catalogue will be released in November.

We will also be offering private treaty English, Eastern, and Elk Cross sires, along with semen options for AI programmes. These include both proven performers and promising new sires for velvet and trophy purposes.

We welcome all enquiries and would love to connect with you ahead of the sales or at the January event.

Also, in this newsletter (page 3), we have included a special acknowledgement of long-serving staff members Darryl Brown & Pauline Pattullo, departure of our Sharrow Downs farm manager Cam Hudson and retirement of Alliance agent Garth Lindsay. We also welcome Glen Gregory and his family as a key part of our deer team.

Yours in farming

Michael Wilkins

On behalf of Wilkins Farming Co.

ON THE FARM NEWS

A SEASON OF CHALLENGES AND MILESTONES

We are finally enjoying a few spring days in Southland, it has only taken until early November for this to happen in Southland on the back of two tough springs and now a windstorm.

We also farewelled our Deer Manager, Cam Hudson, who has moved on after his time managing the Sharrow Downs block. We wish Cam and Emma all the very best as they head off on their overseas travels and future endeavours.



Cam and Emma ET March 2025



Cam, Glenn, and Darrell January Sale 2025

While acknowledging change, it's also important to recognise long-standing contributions. Last October, two of our key deer team members, Darrell Brown and Pauline Pattullo, both marked 15 years with Wilkins Farming Co. Darrell continues his work on the Athol deer block, while Pauline, after beginning in various roles, has found her long-term place as our Livestock Genetics Manager, overseeing all things deer breeding and performance.

Continuity in key staff is a crucial element in building a stable and successful business, and we are sincerely grateful for the dedication and contributions both Darrell and Pauline have made over the years. We'd also like to acknowledge our continued association with Craig North, who began working with WFC in 2008. While no longer a full-time employee, Craig remains a valued part of our extended team.



Craig - 2008



Darrell - 2012

Another chapter closed this season with the resignation of Garth Lindsay from Alliance Meat Company. Garth finished up after 28 years with Alliance, including 18 years as WFC's livestock drafter. We thank Garth for his long-standing service and commitment over the years.



Pauline - 2009



The team Craig, Darrell & Pauline reflecting on the past 15 years



Garth Lindsay & Jared Tree - 2009

THE REPORT

FROM SALE DAY

SOUTH ISLAND

January 2025

Top Price \$12 000 Average \$6600

This was our 16th on farm sale, where once again we enjoyed a strong gallery of new and repeat buyers from both the North and South Island. Thank you to those who attended, we know some of you travel a great distance and appreciate the effort to do so. It was great to see BIDR in use as well for those who could not attend in person.

After a long winter and an extremely hard spring we were happy with how we presented the stock, given the circumstances.

The 11-month weights were up to 137 kg in the Europeans and loin weight measures were up to 5.24, great for meat yield! The first season of Colman sons as well as the Maple sons were well sort after, including lot 28, a Colman son at \$12000 purchased by Lochlan McDonald.

We felt privileged to see good demand for the good deer at the sale as well as the private treaty sales with 43 of 47 animals sold on the day at the sale.

NORTH ISLAND

Private Treaty

In the North Island we continued with our private treaty catalogue which was well received.

We had a good line-up of Europeans represented by sires Big Don and Mortlach. Our Europeans presented with very impressive meat yield traits and EMaCeBV's. The Maternals represented by Big Geoff and Maple sons were also very well sort after as dual-purpose sires for venison and velvet.

We remain grateful to our loyal client base.

LOT 3
TAG 270
MATERNAL



EAST DOME
\$8000 SIRED BY BIG GEOFF

LOT 7
TAG 916
MATERNAL



STREAMLANDS STATION
\$6000 SIRED BY COLMAN

LOT 9
TAG 282
MATERNAL



KNOBLOCH FARMING
\$6500 SIRED BY COLMAN

LOT 15
TAG 1038
MATERNAL



DAVID BAKER
\$9500 SIRED BY MAPLE

LOT 16
TAG 1192
MATERNAL



BELL GROUP LIMITED
\$5500 SIRED BY KÖRPER

LOT 26
TAG 1044
MATERNAL



B & S MCNEIL
\$4000 SIRED BY BROOKLYN

LOT 101
TAG 792
EUROPEAN



HAUROKO DOWNS
\$5500 SIRED BY MORTLACH

LOT 111
TAG 792
EUROPEAN



K & F MCLEAN
\$5000 SIRED BY ROCKDON

A SNAPSHOT OF SALE DAY



HILLS RANCH VISIT

GLEN ROSE, TEXAS, USA

Mike & Cooper were lucky enough to visit Hills ranch in July as part of their trip to America. Of note was the impressive USA cattle market at the time, store cattle say 380 kg were selling for \$3.40 USD a pound/ \$12 NZ per kg. The cattle herd in the USA is at a 70 year low for numbers, feed demand for grain and DDG is also low based on the lack of livestock numbers.



Top: Texan long horn cattle.

Middle : Quarter Horses at Hills Ranch.

Bottom: Angus Cattle and White Tail Deer

WIND DAMAGE

OCTOBER

The windstorm 23rd October saw us lose trees and power. The power outages lasted for between 2.5 to 6 days in various locations on our various farms which has created challenges and workload. These farms are in different areas within Northern Southland, and some escaped relatively unscathed whilst Wendonside wore the brunt of it.

Below are photos of some of our tree damage, the un-topped trees and trees 45 years or older, especially gum trees were most vulnerable. These have caused extensive fence damage around the farms and lane ways. Our deer shed at Sharrow Downs was out of commission for a few days whilst we cleared the trees that fell in the lane way to the shed.



Top: Access blocked to main yard. Clockwise from middle: Access cleared to deer shed; these eucalyptus trees were once a continuous row of trees for shelter – more wind damage in various parts around the deer unit.

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS WILKINS FARMING CO 1974-2024

In 2024, Ray and Pam Wilkins marked 50 years in business together – a journey that began with the purchase of a Ford 5000 tractor and a 130-hectare block of land. From four bare paddocks, they built Wilkins Farming Co into a large-scale, progressive, and diversified agricultural enterprise. Deer farming has been a central part of this story since 1981.

Below is a time-line of key milestones in our deer farming legacy:



50
YEARS
WILKINS FARMING CO
EST. 1974

50 YEARS

A CELEBRATION



EARLY DEER FARMING YEARS



Clockwise from top : 1984: Brendan Wilkins and pet deer. 1985: 2 year old Stags. 1988: Pet Deer; MA NZ Red Stag; Hinds Grain Feeding. 2001: 1st Deer Athol Farm.

ESEININ

Shown at 3 years
European



Esenin was bred with a strong focus on growth rate and meat yield.

His sire, Yesenin, is by Sergei, a historically proven sire known for producing progeny with excellent loin weights. Esenin's dam 659/19, is by Icon, an industry leader in eye muscle performance. Esenin demonstrates exceptional growth, moving from a weaning weight of 80 kg to 176 kg at 15 months, and boasts an impressive EMACEBV of +2.05.

Bred by the imposing sire Yesenin, Esenin offers an alternative European bloodline to compliment our existing stags.

AGE	YEAR	BODY WEIGHT (kg)	VELVET (kg)	GRADE
Weaning	2023	80		
11 Months	2023	125		
15 Months	2024	176		
W12eBV		17.08		
EMACEBV		2.05		
CDeBV		-5.59		
Est. Loin Weight		4.51		
EMA		36.16		

ZEUS

Shown at 4 years
Maternal



Shown at 3 years

Zeus is an impressive young sire with a deep red coat and strong physical presence.

He was selected for his unique outcross of bloodlines for our herd, offering valuable genetic diversity to compliment the foundation of our current maternal lines.

With a sale day weight of 248 kg at 3 years and strong growth rates across all key milestones, Zeus also boasts a solid 12-month EBV for growth.

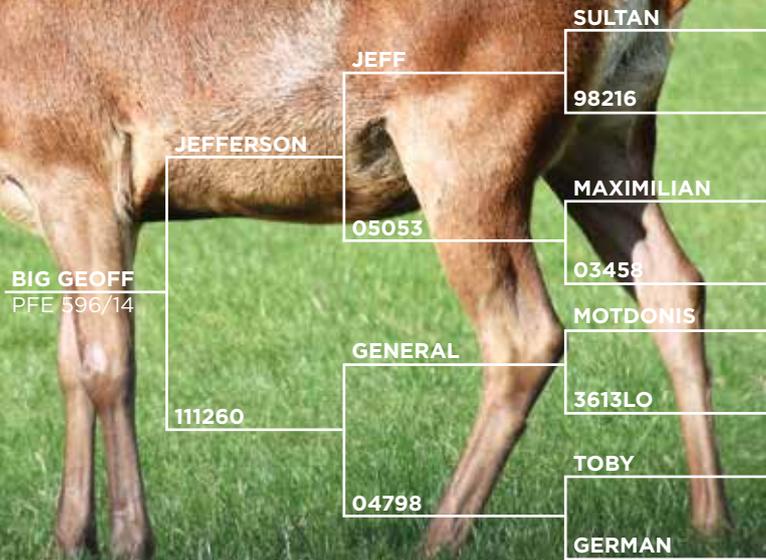
We look forward to seeing the positive impact this promising sire will have on our herd.

AGE	YEAR	BODY WEIGHT (kg)	VELVET (kg)	GRADE
Weaning	2022			
11 Months	2022			
W12eBV		12.56		
2 Years	2023		4.7	SA
3 Years	2024		8.3	SA



BIG GEOFF

Shown at 4 years
Maternal



Shown at 7 years



Shown at 7 years

Big Geoff is an imposing stag within the herd. He has a great nature and is an all round great performer.

Sired by Jefferson out of a general hind, Big Geoff is 1/2 English, 1/4 German and 1/4 European.

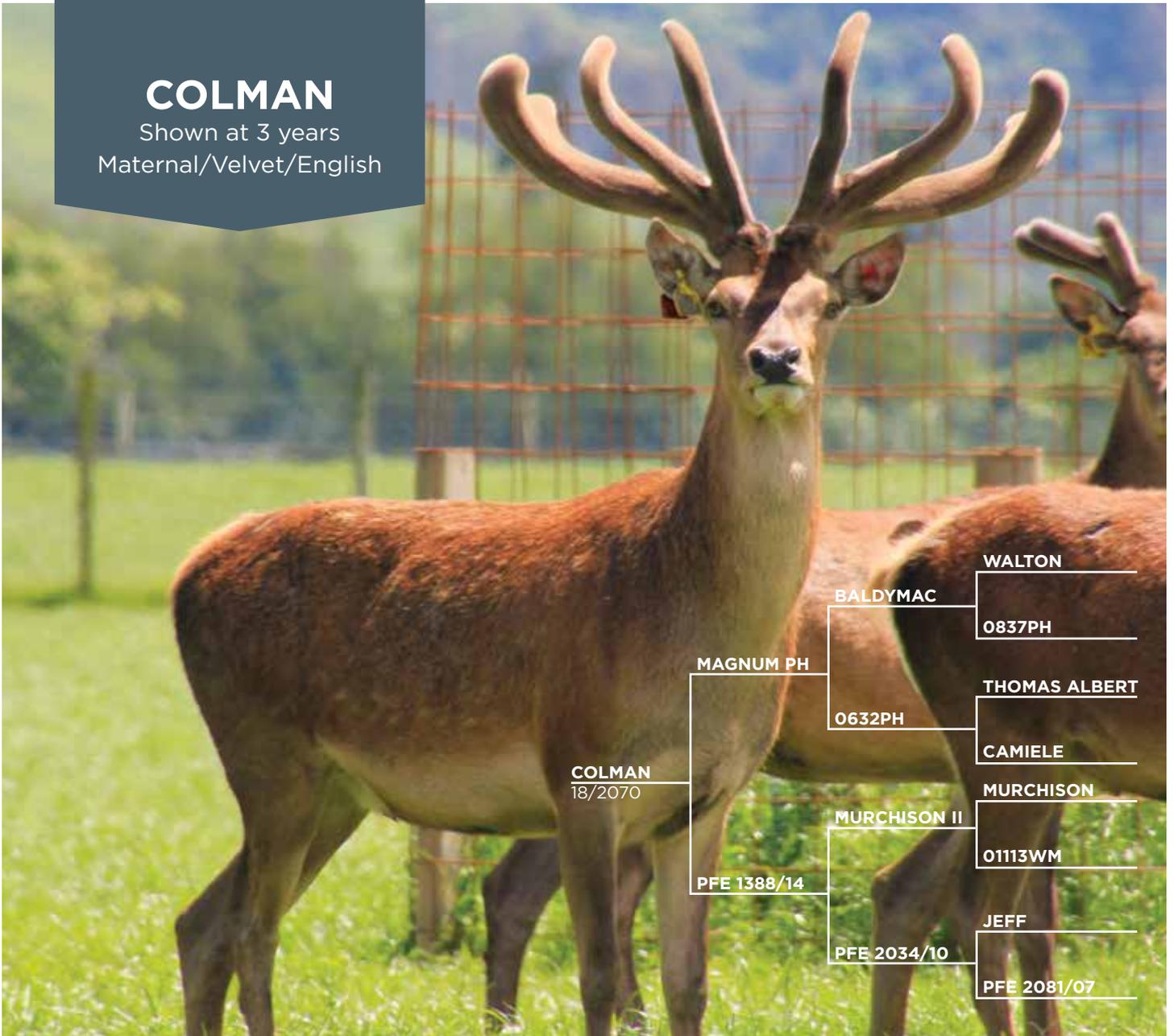
Big Geoff is appropriately named, given his live weights of 249 kg at 3 years (sale day) and his W12eBV of 13.5 which is solid for this breed type.

As a MA stag Big Geoff is consistently cutting 11+ kg of velvet and +3 kg of regrowth. We are continually impressed by the progeny coming through for sale and retention within the herd by Big Geoff.

AGE	YEAR	BODY WEIGHT (kg)	VELVET (kg)	GRADE
W12eBV		13.5		
12 Months	2015	128		
2 Years	2016		4.6	A2S/SA2
3 Years	2017	249	7.2	SA2
4 Years	2018	278	395 2/8	IOA
5 Years	2019	340	10.4	SA
6 Years	2020	352	12.1	SA
7 Years	2021	356	11.5	SA
8 Years	2022	357	11.6	SA

COLMAN

Shown at 3 years
Maternal/Velvet/English



Shown at 3 years



Shown at 3 years

Colman is an impressive English stag with exceptional velvet quality and weight.

Sired by Magnum out of a Murchison II hind and going back to Jeff, Colman offers a very nice well performed English pedigree.

Colman has exceptional long heavy round beamed velvet, and he cut an impressive 9.56 kg at 3 years of age. Combining excellent velvet with solid growth credentials this stag is an exciting pure English bloodline to enhance our stud's deer production.

AGE	YEAR	BODY WEIGHT (kg)	VELVET (kg)	GRADE
Weaning	2019	66		
W12eBV		12.59		
1 Year	2019	135.5		
2 Years	2020		4.51	
3 Years	2021	221	9.56	SA2
4 Years	2022	234	10.1	SA2
5 Years	2023	239	13	SA2
6 Years	2024		11	SA2

FALCO

Shown at 3 years
Maternal/Velvet



Shown at 3 years

Two of our most recognised and proven bloodlines — sired by our superstar Rock Me out of a Maximilian hind who is a full sister to WF144, going back to one of our most proven dams in stud matriarch 350 Red.

Falco is an impressive stag with good growth rates, weaning 73 kg and achieving 188 kg at 15 months. He has a massive loin weight of 6.15 kg which is exceptional for his type, as is his deep thickset body. As a 2 year old, Falco cut a respectable 4.8 kg of SA2, increasing to an impressive 9 kg of clean heavy SA2 velvet antler at three years of age.

This stag is a true asset to the stud, Falco is the complete package for what the Wilkins Farming Co stud has been aiming to achieve.

AGE	YEAR	BODY WEIGHT (kg)	VELVET (kg)	GRADE
Weaning	2020	73		
11 Months	2020	139		
15 Months	2021	188		
W12eBV		16.31		
Est Loin Weight		6.15		
EMA		41.05		
2 Years	2021		4.8	SA2
3 Years	2022	305	9	SA2
4 Years	2023			SA2
5 Years	2024		13	SA2

AI & ET

YIELDING OUTSTANDING RESULTS

The Wilkins Farming deer breeding programme has included artificial insemination (AI) programme since 2001 as a strategic move to enhance genetic gains and accelerate the development of superior breeding stock.

From its inception, the programme yielded outstanding results, enabling the access and integration of top-tier genetics into the herd with consistency and precision. On the back of this we used ET (Embryo Transfer) in 2004 & 2005 and then again from 2020–2025 as a current tool. One of the stand-out achievements from the 2005 programme during this period was the breeding of the stalwart sire WF 144/05. Alongside him, many of his sisters also emerged as high-performing females, consistently breeding in our herd for 15+ years, this further cementing the programme's success and value.



Aperion 678/21 shown at 3 years bred by ET (Cleomenes * Rock Me out of Infinity's dam)



1090-22 5.8kgs shown at 2yrs



1486-22 6.2kgs shown at 2yrs

Building on this strong foundation, Wilkins Farming continued to utilise AI as a core breeding tool throughout the following years. The programme allowed for the controlled introduction of desirable traits such as structural soundness, fertility, and growth performance, ensuring steady improvement in herd quality. However, while AI remained consistent, the use of embryo ET was put on hold after the initial phase of the programme.

In 2020, Wilkins Farming made the calculated decision to resume its embryo transfer efforts, seeking to further amplify the genetic potential of elite females. Over the past six years, this reintegration of ET into the breeding programme has delivered phenomenal results. The combination of AI and ET has allowed for the multiplication of top-performing genetics at an accelerated rate, reinforcing the herd's consistency and lifting the overall standard of performance and type.

Today, the Wilkins Farming AI and ET programme stands as a testament to long-term vision, innovation, and commitment to genetic excellence. The results speak for themselves — an increasingly uniform, high-quality herd with sires and females performing at the top of their class for the traits targeted. With continued investment in reproductive technologies, the programme is poised to deliver even greater gains in the future.



Above: Four Maple sons bred by ET showing great consistency in type

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Ray & Pam Wilkins
Celebrating 50 Years 2024

