

Nine properties combined

Caberfeidh is the result of the amalgamation of nine farms, the first of which was bought in 2004.

Lone Star's general manager, Boyd MacDonald points out that combining the farms creates a lot more opportunities, but it also requires a lot of planning, monitoring and measuring. Lone Star has a strong philosophy of doing just that.

This includes measuring pasture growth through pasture cages which are cut every month.

"If you can't measure it you can't manage it," he says.

MacDonald believes that as farmers, the most gains they can make in the red meat industry are those inside the farm gate.

"We focus on what we can control and that's where we focus our energy."

He says Lone Star's overall goal is to maximise farm profit by fully utilising resources in an efficient and sustainable manner.

When carrying out their SWOT analysis two years ago the management team identified pasture, stock, infrastructure and staffing to be the four areas that would help them reach their production targets.

The strengths of the property include climate, good animal health, good soils, easy contour and typically kind weather over lambing.



Fencing is on-going on the station including this holding lane with Perendale ewes and lambs.



Tom Sturgess: Owns Lone Star.

Rainfall ranges from 350mm on the flats and 650mm on the hill, which means the hill hangs on to feed longer and is a useful safety valve.

Caberfeidh is one of Lone Star's seven properties which combined winter around 120,000su, with numbers peaking at 160,000-170,000su late in spring and summer.

Tom Sturgess owns Lone Star, which employs 35 full-time staff.

MacDonald says Lone Star is often referred to as a corporate, although

because it is owned by one individual, this is not strictly true.

Lone Star does operate like a corporate in that it has structures, procedures and reporting lines in place.

Some of Lone Star's key advantages are its economies of scale and the way the properties, which have a range of climates, complement each other. Stock can be moved to properties in areas with more feed if necessary.

Each farm has its own manager and budget, but MacDonald says the overall Lone Star business is the staff's number one priority.

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