

Weaner deer supplemented through Advantage Feeders reached kill-weights earlier and exhibited significantly higher weight gain when compared to mobs historically trail fed.



Trial outline

Start date: 1/5/14

Duration: 150 days

Equipment: 1x NGF1800

Quantity: 95

Stock type: Deer weaners

Feed qty: 275grams/head/day barley and one bale of Lucerne until consumption stops

Regular supplement boosts deer production

Historic results:

Peter and Diane Lowe finish 95 weaner from 105 hinds per year. He has historically trail fed for 150 days at a rate of 250grams/day plus a roll of Lucerne baleage every other day from May until they stop eating it – usually the end of July.

Historic, dressed kill weights averaged 61kg and the majority of weaners were sent to the works in October.

2014 results:

The weaner deer averaged a dressed weight of 68.18kg and were sold, on average, one month earlier allowing all to be sold before the schedule started to drop.

The weaners stopped eating the Lucerne baleage by the end of June, one month earlier, and reduced baleage supplement requirements by 15 rolls.

Other benefits of the Advantage Feeders system included:

- There is no waste feeding through Advantage Feeders. Peter Lowe commented, "Before Advantage Feeders were used, there was always lines of volunteer barley growing in the weaner paddocks in spring. Now there is none, so we must be getting close to 100% converted into meat production."
- A reduction in time required to feed weaners. The feeders were filled approximately once per fortnight with two front-end loader buckets full of barley rather than trail feeding, done daily.
- The Advantage Feeders system offered the opportunity to only have to fill the feeders up during dry weather because they only required filling once a fortnight. Trail feeding during rain can increase waste rates above 50%.
- Weaners are easier to manage as they follow Advantage Feeders through gateways into other paddocks or yards.

Supplement trial

Trial details

No. of weaners	95
Barley feed cost/tonne	\$400.00
Lucerne baleage cost/tonne	\$200.00
No. of barley supplementation days	150
2013 sales price/kg pre 10th of October	\$7.50
2013 sales price/kg post 10th of October	\$7.05

Net price/head Advantage Feeders vs trail feeding

	Trail feeding group	Advantage Feeders group
Barley amount/head/day	0.25	0.275
Barley cost/head	\$15.00	\$16.50
Lucerne baleage consumption (tonne)	30	20
Lucerne baleage cost/head	\$54.55	\$36.36
Equipment depreciation/head*	\$0	\$3.18
% of weaners sold pre 10th of October	60.38%	100.00%
Average sale price/kg	\$7.32	\$7.50
Average weight/kg	60.38	68.19
Average gross price/head	\$442.11	\$511.44
Average net price/head**	\$372.56	\$455.39

* The depreciation rate is 15% and the investment of one feeder is \$2,200

** This is calculated by subtracting the Depreciation and feed cost from the Gross price. This does not include the reduced cost of feeding due to the labour savings in using Advantage Feeders.

About the trial operators

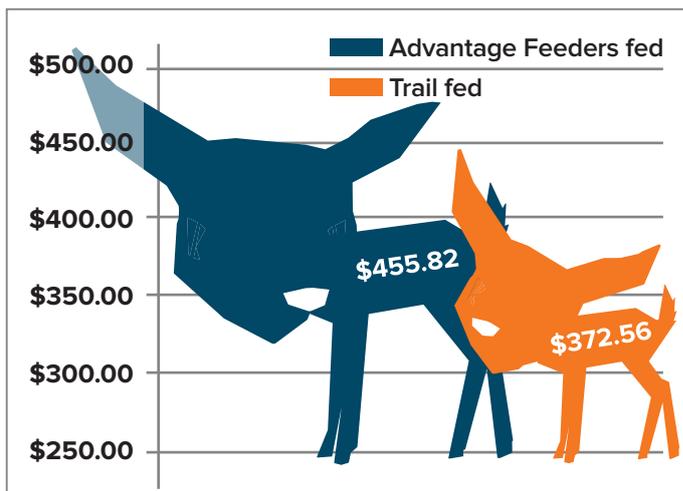
Peter and Diane Lowe operate a 250Ha property outside of Ashburton in southern Canterbury.

Other than running 105 hinds and finishing their fawns, they manage Lynnford Romney Stud and run 2000 commercial ewes.

Net income increased
by over **\$7500**
in one year
with only 95 weaners



Average net price/head



Potential for higher profits:

Weaning is done at the start of March. Fawns find this quite stressful and often have setbacks.

Employing Advantage Feeders before weaning increases the condition of the hind to get back in calve easier.

It also trains fawns to consume from the feeders and reduces the number of fawns that have a setback at weaning.

Supplement feeding also increases the weight gain of fawns.