

Delaying Yearling Kill Date to Improve Profitability

Background:

With our group members running wapiti and/or hybrid finishing stock a large proportion of the male yearlings have reached target slaughter weights in the spring (Sept-Oct)

But, considering the mature body weight of these animals they have the potential to reach heavier carcass weights.

So would there be an advantage in holding these animals longer to achieve these heavier weights?



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➤ Advantages

- Heavier weight; more venison
- More velvet
- Opportunity to assess velvet to assist selection of animals to retain for velvet herd

➤ Disadvantages

- More feed required
- Potential drop in schedule



What was Done?

- Two Properties retained a proportion of their spikers beyond their normal slaughter weight
- Connemara:
 - Animals ready for slaughter on 10th Oct were held until 20th Nov
- Fearnvale:
 - Animals ready for slaughter 5th Oct were held until 26th Oct



Assumptions Made:

- Carcass yield; 56%
- Pasture consumed; 3kg DM/head/day
- Feed cost; 20c/kgDM



Passion | Innovation | Evolution

LTD

Results: Connemara (40 day delay)

Animals gained 21kg LWT but schedule dropped by 75c/kg

- Income if killed on 10 Oct; \$524 (estimated)
- Income by killing on 20 Nov \$573 (actual)

Difference; \$49/head

Add: spiker velvet return; + \$54/head

Less: cost of additional feed; - \$24/head

Nett Benefit: \$79/head



Results: Fearnvale (21 day delay)

Animals gained an estimated 3kg carcass weight and schedule remained at \$8.75

Extra Venison: 3kg x \$8.75 \$26/head

Add: spiker velvet return; + \$27/head

Less: cost of additional feed; - \$13/head

Nett Benefit: \$40/head



A vertical strip on the left side of the slide shows two deer in a grassy field. The deer in the foreground is a spotted fawn, and the one in the background is a larger stag with antlers.

Prediction for 2017

If same exercise was done this year, using contracted schedule for 2017/18 season, the nett benefit would be:

- Connemara; **\$99/head** for a 40 day delay in slaughter date
- Fearnvale; **\$42.50/head** for a 21 delay in slaughter date