

Deer Research Unit – Massey University

History:

The Deer Research Unit was established in 1980, and through the 80s and 90s was been heavily involved in research. Whilst still utilised for some studies such as parasite research, it is now used mainly as a teaching unit for Vet students.

Objectives:

- To maintain a base deer flock using sustainable management practices to provide a facility and environment suitable for research and a practical teaching resource for SoVS.
- To provide a link between the University and Agribusiness.



Location:	The farm is located on Sheep Farm Road adjacent to the Massey University campus, approximately 5km from Palmerston North City.
Altitude:	80m above sea level.
Topography:	Predominantly flat with about 5 ha of gullies.
Rainfall:	980mm (average annual rainfall).
Temperature:	7°C July, 18.1°C January (monthly 10cm soil temp.).
Soil Types:	Poor draining heavy clay Tokomaru Silt Loam on the higher terraces. Compact clay loams with compact subsoil, poor natural drainage and with a tendency to dry out in summer. Moderate natural fertility.

Area: 20.30 ha

Effective Area: 20.16 ha

Subdivision: Intensively sub-divided into 35 paddocks, ranging from 0.14 to 1.77 ha (averaging 0.59 ha).

Drainage: Tiles and mole, with the soil still wet in winter

Water Supply: Reticulated water from main Massey University supply.

Staff: Half a labour unit. Works together with Keebles and Haurongo farms.

Stock Numbers:

Red Deer	@ 1 July 2025
Hinds	40
Yearling hinds	
R 1 Year Hinds	81
R 1 Year Stags	79
Breeding Stags	5

Yards:

A purpose built handling shed constructed in 2005 with yards.

Pasture:

Predominantly perennial ryegrass with clovers, chicory, and plantain.

Grazing Policies:

Pasture based production system aiming to achieve high levels of feed conversion efficiency through excellent rotational grazing management. Sheep and cattle from Keebles farm are utilised to graze any surplus grass and clean up paddocks.

Crops & Supplements:

No supplement is made on farm due to the small paddocks,
However if required Baleage is purchased in and fed to stock if required.

Regrassing Policy:

Pastures are renewed on a ten-year rotation and or as required for research.

Fertiliser:

Fertiliser programmes are based on soil test results.

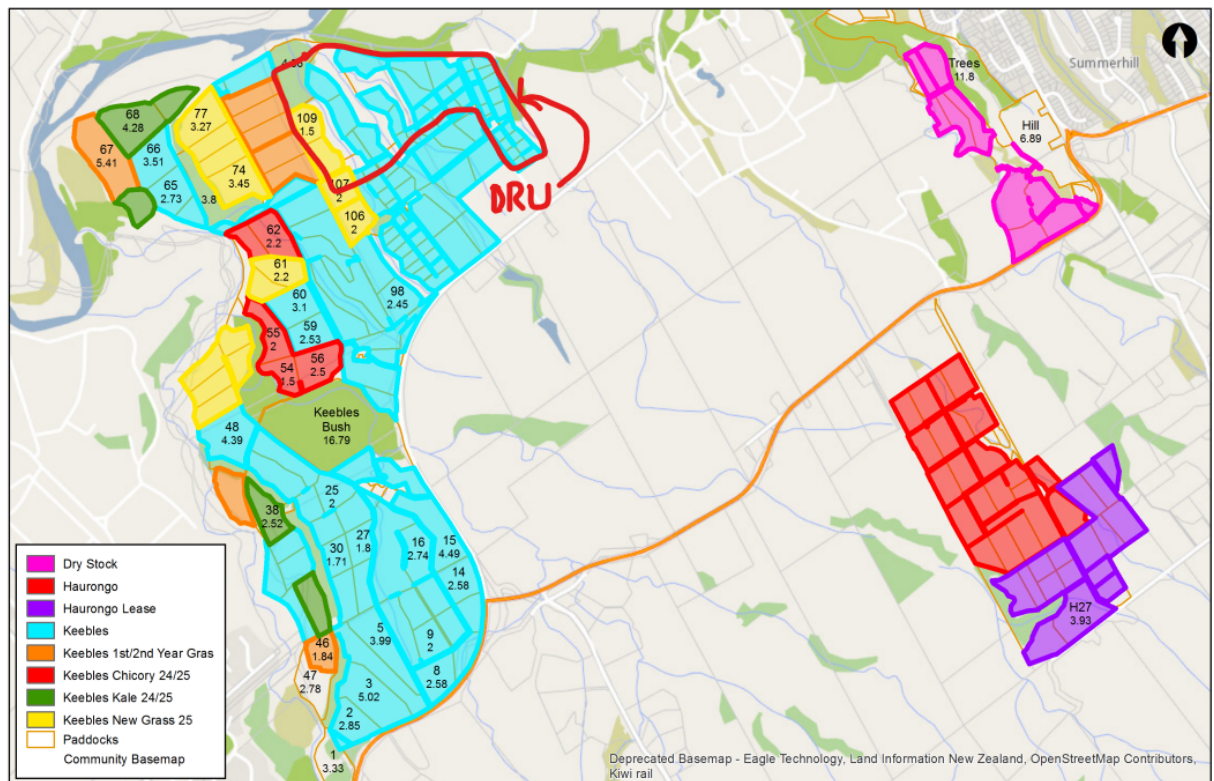
Year	pH	Olsen P	SO₄	K	Mg
2006	5.7	35	6.7	6.9	27
2010	5.6	31.8	10.0	5.6	27.8
2012	6.0	27	12.6	5.4	25.9
2016	5.9	29	11.3	3.6	26.2
2018	5.8	23	12.6	4.2	20.2

2020	5.8	24	12	7	25
2022	5.9	31.7	5.5	7.4	31.7
2024	5.9	37	6.2	8.2	32

Maintenance Fertiliser program 2025 is as follows:

200 kg/ha of Sulphur Super Selenium (0-17-0-30).

Massey Sheep, Beef & Deer 2025 - Sheep, Beef & Deer Fert Plan Blocks



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Deer Research Unit Farm Map

