

## Valais Blacknose – “Worlds Cutest Sheep” – Frozen Embryos USA

It has come to our attention that there has been some misinformation with regard to frozen embryos coming into the USA from New Zealand.

For one company to malign this amazing breed of sheep in order to promote their own interests (and animals) is disappointing to say the least. Having worked with many different breeds over decades, we can say they are the quietest, friendliest and cutest sheep we have ever dealt with. This opinion comes from a team of people who have more experience with animal breeding and different sheep breeds than most people in the world.

Remarkable Valais is the biggest Valais Blacknose Stud in New Zealand. We will be exporting frozen embryos to the USA. We invite you to read on if you are based in the USA and you are interested in becoming involved with this fabulous breed.



### Our Team – Remarkable Valais, NZ

A group of highly skilled industry friends got together to kick off a breeding programme and have rapidly established the largest Valais Blacknose stud in New Zealand – Remarkable Valais.



The individuals who make up the company work together & contribute in all aspects of the running of the stud.

The group includes four veterinarians, a retired veterinarian experienced in artificial breeding, a petcare business owner-operator, a farmer, a former farmer who is now a bovine reproductive consultant, a breeding centre owner-manager & one of the most experienced sheep/goat embryo transfer technicians in the world.

This highly skilled group with their diverse talents has assured the stud's progress through meticulous planning, breeding programmes & husbandry - to get them to where they are today.

Remarkable Valais already have frozen Valais Blacknose Embryos eligible for export to the USA. In conjunction with Super Sire Limited, we plan on making these available to the USA for the upcoming 2020 breeding

season.

### Frozen Embryos

It has been suggested that frozen embryos are not a sound way to commence the establishment of a new breed in a new location. The fact is, frozen embryos are the most economic and practical way to get started with a new breed – and often the only option if you want to be the first.

All foundation Valais Blacknose studs in New Zealand were started using frozen embryos which were imported from England.

The first purebred lambs to be born in the USA will be via frozen embryos.

It is likely that start-up studs questioning the reliability of frozen embryos coming into the USA will themselves be implanting frozen embryos.

The team harvesting & freezing the embryos for Remarkable Valais has worked all over the world & therefore it would be unlikely to find a more experienced & competent group anywhere in the world.

### Quality of Donor Ewes

Back at the beginning - two of our shareholders researched the breed in detail and then travelled to the UK & went to the Carlisle Show. They also travelled further afield and visited other studs in the UK – including some that didn't show their sheep. They approached their work with expertise & an open mind & at the conclusion of this process they found the stud who had the right sheep with the right temperaments for us – not only fabulous sheep but friendly characters! They were what we believed (and still believe) to be some of the best animals that could be sourced. Our shareholders did not let it deter them from getting the right animals when this turned out to be a stud which chooses not to participate directly in the show scene in England, despite using genetics from other studs who are involved & successfully showing their sheep. Our shareholders then went about selecting the specific donor ewes (& matings) from which embryos would be harvested to create the foundation of the Remarkable Valais flock.

Having said this, it is important to note that the gene pool for these sheep is relatively limited & most of the studs in the UK buy & sell to each other, thus mixing the genes & lines of stock.

Most of our donor ewes from which we froze embryos destined for the USA, were sired by Highland Montana. He is a much sought-after ram who is bred by Highland Valais Blacknose Stud - a frequent participant in show circles.



The diligence & expertise of the founding shareholders was realized when those embryos so carefully selected, were born as lambs in New Zealand in the spring of 2017. We were thrilled with the much-anticipated progeny.

From these donor ewes, we have now bred well in excess of 100 lambs through embryo transfer programmes & once more – we have been rewarded with the exceptional quality of the stock we have produced.

In producing our first embryos for export to the USA, we used four sires across these embryo donor ewes. One of our own sires – and rams from three other studs in New Zealand (one of which hails from the stud whose USA partner distributed the misinformation to which we refer).

Given all of this, we can say with confidence, that in our opinion, these embryos come from the best selection of animals and matings in New Zealand. You can also have confidence in the genetics you are purchasing as all our donor ewes have been DNA tested and have registered pedigrees.

### **Maximum Points Sheep**

There has been some discussion differentiating maximum points sheep from other Valais. These are sheep which have been awarded a maximum points score at a show. It should be noted that most studs would have some maximum points sheep if they decided to show them. Not all of the sheep in a stud would achieve maximum points if shown. Any stud promoting themselves on maximum points criteria would have a large number of animals which would not make this standard.

As well as the original mission to the UK - two of our shareholders also travelled to Switzerland to inspect the original flocks over there & were intrigued at the natural variation between individuals coming from the same old established breeding lines.

Having now bred more than 100 Valais Blacknose, our advice is not to get too hung up on promises of guaranteed perfection – including promises based on tales of ancestors deemed to be maximum points animals. We advise to always ask for photos of ewes & rams from which the progeny are directly bred. Also if possible – ask to view progeny of donor ewes & rams – this will further inform you as to the quality & types of animals from which yours are directly descended – and what has already been produced from those breeding lines.

Remarkable Valais are proud to share images of our sheep. It is relevant to note that unless otherwise stated, all Remarkable Valais promotional material & Facebook posts depict animals from the Remarkable Valais flock – the actual animals bred by the company in New Zealand.

### **Remarkable Valais NZ**

Remarkable Valais is a company which holds integrity as a core value of its operation; for us - integrity is not negotiable. To this end, we choose not to denigrate other companies as a means to promote our own. That is simply not the way we want to do business. However, given the misinformation which was promulgated recently, we have sought simply to set the record straight in order that those in the USA who are interested in this breed, are not misled.

Our professionalism and the beautiful Valais Blacknose sheep we have bred, speak for themselves.



It remains for prospective buyers from USA to decide not only which stock they believe are the best for them – but also what qualities they value in a company with whom they seek to do business.

We remain thrilled with the lines we chose originally – and the subsequent breeding we have undertaken to date. The dream is being realized for us – and we are proud to now be in a position to share that dream. We wish everyone well and hope that anyone pursuing this breed will reap the enjoyment that we have from farming these wonderful sheep.



*For USA enquiries about acquiring Remarkable Valais genetics – please contact:*

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