

THE DEER FARM & PARK DEMONSTRATION PROJECT



An overview of Scottish deer farming and the present opportunities.

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Some history.....

During the late 1960's Sir Kenneth Blaxter was able to write of hill sheep farming :

'any meagre profit was entirely due to the amount of support. Indeed it was estimated, on the basis of careful costing, that 130 – 190 per cent of the net profit of these farms was accounted for by the subsidy payments they received.'

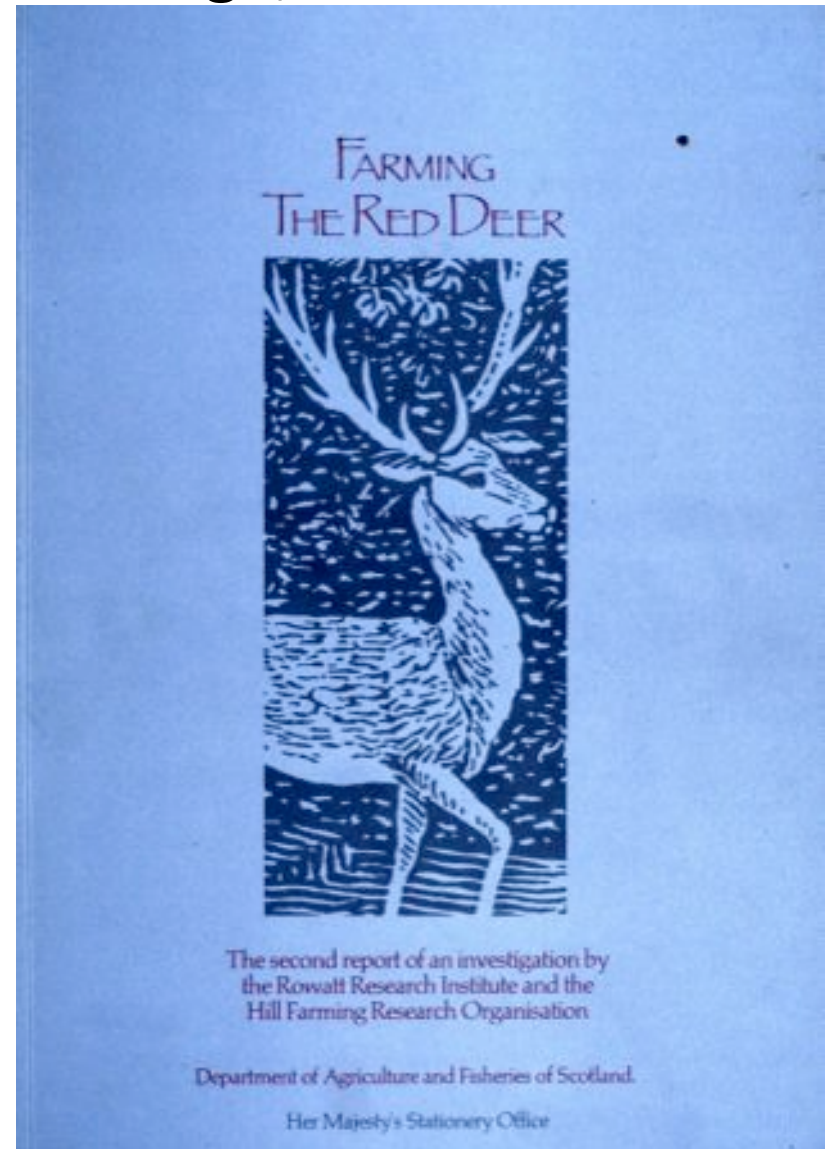
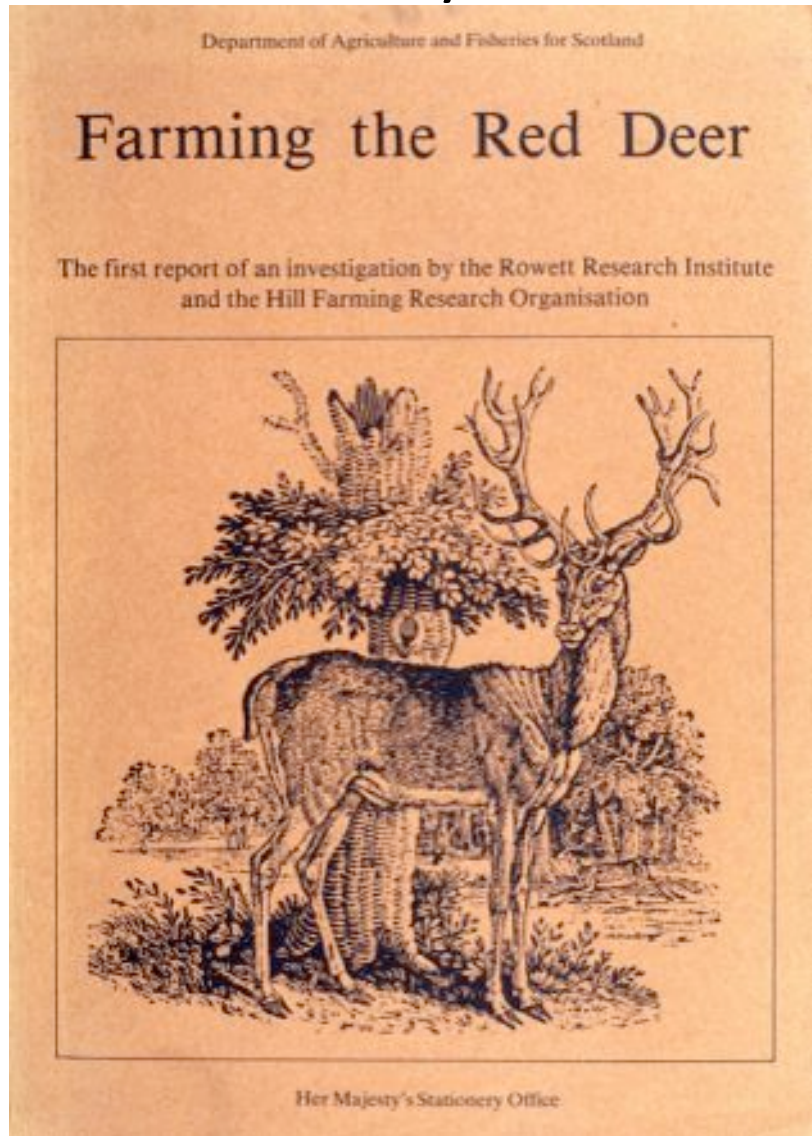
In other words not one was making a profit before subsidy and some were doing so badly that their eventual 'profit' was equal to around half their subsidy cheque.



Small beginnings in 1972
...wild caught calves
from throughout Scotland
are bottle reared to form
the nucleus of a breeding
herd at Glensaugh.



Over 130 scientific papers from 1970 to 1988.....
And many more from Cambridge, Isle of Rum...



Progress in Scottish deer farming – rise and fall

Rise (1979 – 1988):

- Beaulieu auction established 1980 – £400 for hinds in 1985
- Fuelled by enthusiasm from Glensaugh and Rahoy, calf sales established in Perth each autumn.
 - Waitrose buying at £1.30/lb in 1983.
- Strong demand in England for breeding stock encouraged by New Zealand stock agents through early 1980's.
 - Expectation that subsidies would disappear.

Fall (1988 – 2010):

- Subsidies for cattle and sheep were retained against expectations and even increased
 - Those who had invested hoping for high breeding stock prices were disappointed
 - Co-operative marketing failed – too close to the market – lack of organised market.
 - From 1987 Tuberculosis caused serious problems – delays in introducing TB Orders.
 - New Zealand exports declined
 - Prices fell, some deer farms closed



Progress in New Zealand deer farming.

- First deer farm licensed in 1970
- Rapid development – strong tax incentives, demand from Germany with a strong currency, high velvet prices, shortage of breeding stock.
- In 1984 New Zealand abolished farm subsidies and at the same time changed the Standard Values discouraging investors.
- Deer farming survived and became the most profitable livestock sector after dairy.
- Breeding stock numbers have declined – strength of Kiwi dollar, buoyant dairying.

(image courtesy DINZ)

New Zealand deer farming exports in 2013 - source DINZ

Venison export value	105 million £ sterling p.a.
Velvet export value	13 million £ sterling p.a.
Other by products	9 million £ sterling p.a.

New Zealand farmed venison sales – growing markets.

(£ sterling millions – source Deer Industry New Zealand)

	2009	2013
N.America	7.65	11.1
Netherlands	9.64	10.4
Russia	0.02	0.75
Korea	0.02	0.5

Traditional markets of France, Germany, Belgium, Austria totalling annually some 50 million pounds sterling are falling.

What is different now in Scotland?

- We will soon have a purpose built abattoir in Fife
- The venison market is organised
- Improved management systems
- We have improved genetics: AI, ET, DNA typing
- Scotland's internationally accepted freedom from TB status
- Breeding stock prices have not become overheated
- Subsidies have been decoupled
- Experience and credibility



**We will soon have a purpose
built abattoir in Fife!**



Improved management systems including winter feeding and housing – here Scottish hinds in Poland! (Rudzie)



Again in Poland – including
Scottish hinds.
(Image courtesy Rudzie)

The use of arable crop rotations to reduce winter feeding costs - here in Devon.

(image courtesy John Burdge)



Scanning for pregnancy allows better management and economies - here in Spain





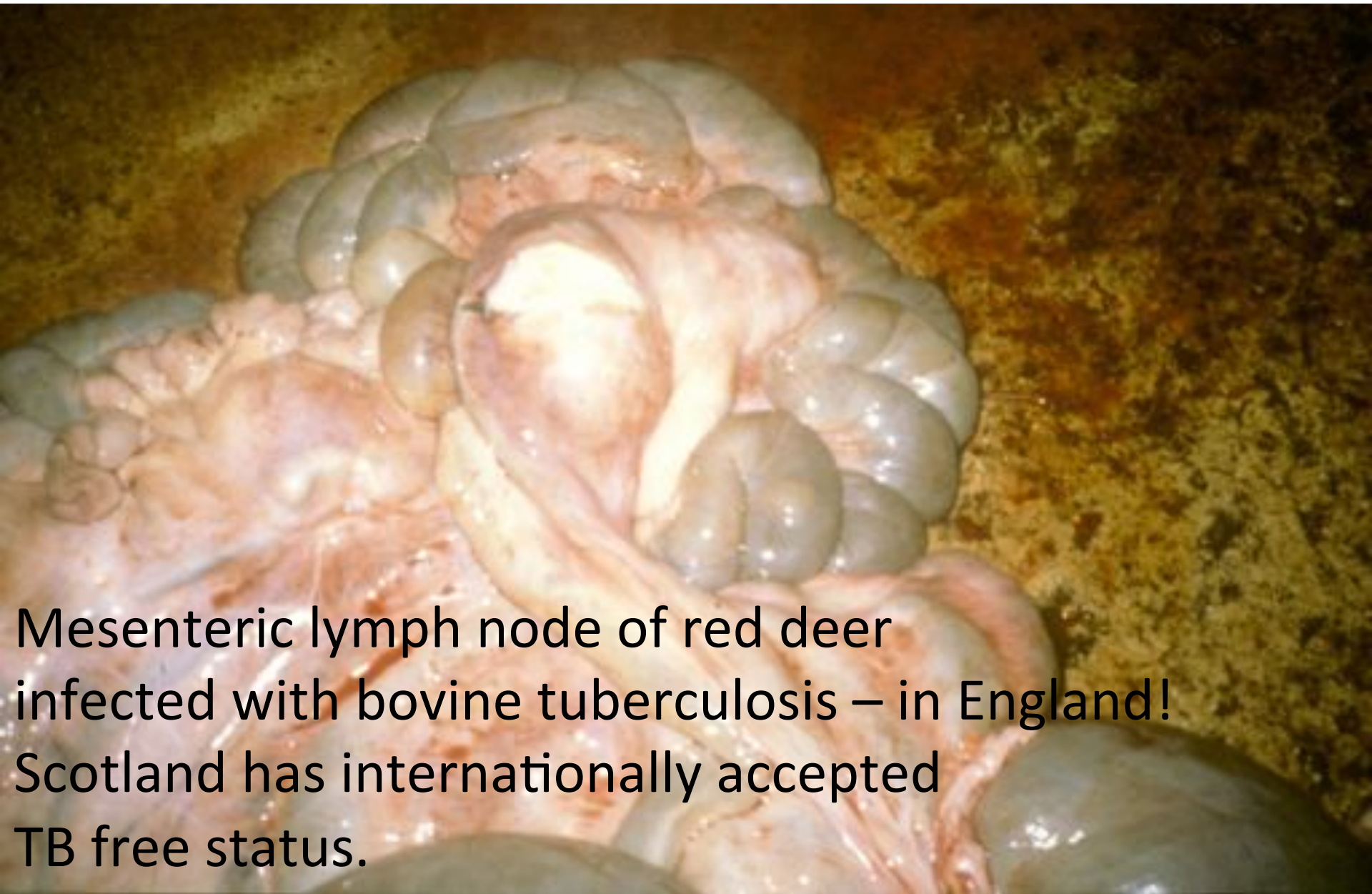
Semen collection allows rapid genetic improvement

Embryo transfer allows breeders to capitalise on high performing hinds.





Innovative wintering system preventing poaching of paddocks – Scotland!



Mesenteric lymph node of red deer infected with bovine tuberculosis – in England! Scotland has internationally accepted TB free status.



1200 hinds being gathered in New Zealand – no reason why this couldn't happen here....

(image courtesy DINZ)



- Subsidies decoupled allowing farmers to respond to markets & innovate
- Breeding stock is available at reasonable prices
- Forty years of experience and enhanced credibility

