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## FROM THE EDITOR

By Andy Cowan

We should now be thinking of culling animals that will no longer be part of our breeding program. Also, with the velvet season approaching, we need to be aware of the number of velvetters that will be culled after velvetting. If these ideas are on your radar, I hope you have contacted your meat buyer well in advance so that they can prepare their sales into the future. We are the beginning of the chain and it is important for those we deal with to have this information in advance.

Figures from New Zealand indicate that venison prices have remained relatively stable in Europe. Now is the time of the year when exporters are organising contracts for the European Autumn and Winter. It is this time when venison is traditionally consumed. The venison prices, according to "stuff.co.nz", are quite encouraging for producers. The following figures represent the average venison price for the first week of July for an average 55kg-60kg stag HCW. In NZ\$ the figures for the last 5 years are: \$7.34/kg in 2012-13; \$8.17/kg for 2011-12; \$6.93/kg for 2010-11; \$8.75/kg for 2009-10 and \$7.68/kg for 2008-09. This five year average is \$7.77/kg. The previous five year average was \$4.27/kg.

In this issue I have included the 2011 DIAA SA Branch Annual Report. As always, Milton has included many constructive points worthy of all our consideration.

The graph on P.15 could be taken as yet another statistic. I found it interesting that, over the past 130 plus years, the Alexandra PO (Victoria) has recorded many more below average years of rainfall than above average. The last generation of farmers/older people have experienced quite wet years generally.

At the moment, it appears that the Velvet Pools may be held this season. There are one or two people making enquiries as to how best do this and keep costs down to growers. Hopefully, ADH will be able to confirm something in the next few months.

The stag on the front cover belongs to Rainbow Deer Farm. He had decided to find out whether hard antler conducts electricity or not. Brief story and pictures on the next page.