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## FROM THE EDITOR

**By Andy Cowan**

You should have recently received a letter from Nigel Barry, the Chairman of ADH & Co Products. In his letter, Nigel outlined the reasons why ADH is subcontracting the operations of the Velvet Pool this year. The letter, reproduced on P4, explained that ADH has contracted the operation of this season's Velvet Pools to Tasman Velvet Processors (TVP). TVP is a New Zealand company. ADH has dealt with it in the past (2009) when TVP joined forces with PGG Wrightson Velvet (PGW) to form a new company NZ Velvet Marketing Co Ltd. TVP's strength is in processing and marketing. The company has been in business for about 30 years. Its Australian representative is Andrew McKinnon. Of course, there will be other buyers roaming around looking for velvet but I would hope that many of us would be prepared to support ADH, as it is one of the "constants" of our industry. If we can learn one thing from recent New Zealand experiences in velvet marketing, it would be that the wheel does not necessarily need to be reinvented.

In the President's Report, Andrew Hansen has given us a timely reminder of our responsibilities to our stock. The question of how to treat a sickly calf has always concerned me. Fortunately, they do not appear all that often so I can get on with other farm jobs - velveting, hay and silage making, pasture renovation etc. It is a busy time of the year and, to further complicate things, there is the Christmas "break". Also, we live in Australia - be prepared for bushfires.

There is a push in the UK to try to control the wild deer population. Currently, there are an estimated two million deer wild in Britain. The argument is that such large numbers of deer are at risk of disease, starvation and being hit by cars (an estimated 40,000 to 70,000 are killed on the roads each year). It appears that the majority of wild deer are "managed" by landowners, including the Forestry Commission and the Ministry of Defence, who cull around 300,000 a year. It is believed that, to even keep the population at its current level, another 200,000 need to be shot annually. Until recently, around 80 per cent of Britain's culled venison has been exported to the continent. At the same time, supermarkets were importing venison from New Zealand. With the exchange rates at existing levels, exporters from Australia and New Zealand might welcome this idea. See hypothetical on P.16.