

Rural women make the most of opportunities

By LAURA RICHARDS

JOURNALIST, editor, photographer and sheep farmer are all words that can be used to describe Beaconsfield, Manawatu, resident Liz Brook.

She is also a keen member of the Rangitikei-Manawatu Women in Farming group, which meets on a monthly basis, and in late May, Ms Brook hosted the group along with Kelvin O'Neill of Drench Gun Services based in Palmerston North.

Group members took a variety of old and newer drench guns with them to the meeting to ask questions about their particular models.

Looking at the practical side of drenching, Mr O'Neill said flushing out drench guns after use would increase their life span and protected the washers.

"It is good to keep them (the washers) moist," Mr O'Neill said.

Cleaning the drench gun would improve performance, he said. "Grit and grass will get into the valve.

"When putting back together, remember spring goes forward. Lubrication is good, but make sure it is the right kind, he said.

"Do not use cooking oil but a product with silicon in it," he said.

Mr O'Neill passed around a box with small, clear plastic squirt bottles holding silicon liquid for that job.

"If your drench gun is not working, check your washers," he said.

Mr O'Neill said when drench guns and vaccinators from all over the country were delivered to his business, he tried to work on them the day they arrived.

He gauges how much work needs to be done based on the state the appliances are in when upon arrival.

Mr O'Neill took over the business from his father-in-law who started it as a pump clinic. "It went from there," he said about the evolution of the business.

These days it can cost \$22 plus the cost of parts to have a drench gun cleaned and overhauled and \$18 for a vaccinator to be done.

One of the drenching hints shared during the morning by one of the Women in Farming members was to attach a collar to the drench gun to hold a sponge laced with food colour to mark the sheep which had been drenched.



Kelvin O'Neill is checking to see if a particular drench gun works.

