

Dogs killed after sheep attacked near Te Kuiti

TWO dogs that killed lambs and injured a ewe in Te Kuiti last week have been euthanised.

The dogs were seen chasing and mauling a ewe on an Elizabeth St property at about 8.15 am on Monday.

They were tracked and seized by Waitomo District animal control officer Lucas Koroheke.

The sheep belonged to Les and Colleen Wooten who graze six hectares on the edge of town.

LAMBS KILLED, EWE INJURED

"I looked up and saw the dogs getting through a fence on the property," says Mrs Wooten.

"They skirted one larger mob, but chased three ewes huddled together in another paddock.

"I yelled out and set off some fire crackers to try to scare them off before ringing the council."

She says Mr Koroheke arrived within minutes and helped her bring an injured ewe through the paddocks to be treated.

That's when they discovered three dead lambs which had been "ripped to pieces".

Both dogs, one dark and one creamy white, had run off but the animal control officer was able to quickly track the dark-coloured dog which had returned to its Hill St home.

After talking with Mr Koroheke the owner readily accepted his dog was responsible for the attack and surrendered it to council for destruction.

The owner also undertook to visit the Wootens to discuss possible reparation.

Further inquiries led to the second dog being located the following day in Edward St. It was also surrendered to council for destruction.

ERRANT OWNERS

Mr Koroheke says the dog-owning public is generally helpful and responsible, with only a small number repeatedly failing to keep their animals under proper control.

"I've had one owner's dogs in the pound three or four times," he says.

"It's disappointing to see dogs roaming the streets and sadly, if they get into trouble it's the animals that are penalised, instead of their errant owners."

The Wootens say they are grateful to Mr Koroheke for keeping them informed about the status of the dogs and for helping them catch the injured ewe so they could look after her.

The couple has lost sheep in two previous dog attacks.

In April last year a lamb was mauled by two small dogs which were not located and about 10 years ago eight sheep were killed by two dogs which were caught by council's animal control officer and destroyed.

"Sometimes when we go into town we see dogs roaming the street which worries us," says Mrs Wooten.

"The owners just let them wander with no thought of what trouble they might create."

IN BRIEF

Paying it forward

OTOROHANGA Lions' annual \$1400 Christmas hamper fundraiser has meant an unexpected bonus for a deserving Otorohanga family.

Raffle organiser Andrew Ormsby says a person from Auckland brought the winning ticket when she stopped in the town on the way to her holiday home on Ohakune. When told she'd won the major \$750 hamper prize, she generously donated \$250 back for an Otorohanga family in need. The Lions have delivered the hamper to the Waretini/Anderson family who lost their home in a fire before Christmas.

SFF back in profit

SILVER Fern Farms has reported a net profit before tax for the year of \$1.8 million - a \$38.3 million improvement on the 2013 season.

During the same period, the company paid down \$99 million in debt as part of a plan to reduce the cost of debt servicing to the company.

Debt levels at year end are down \$99m from \$387.6m to \$288.6m - a 25.5% reduction on the previous financial year.

The equity ratio has also improved to 45.2%.

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