

The original concept was put together by Ali Undorf-Lay, a Nuffield Scholar and the Federation's provincial communications co-ordinator. On her overseas travels, Ali found that farmers world-wide often feel misunderstood, undervalued and, at times, threatened.

A nationwide open Farm Day was held on 1 March 2009 with the intention of closing the rural/urban divide.

This province's Farm Day was held at Wairakaia Station and, for a first attempt, it was a very successful day. About 70 to 80 members of the public were treated to a wide variety of farm activities including field work,

poplar nursery, shearing, sheep handling, seed maize, dog work, organic citrus orchard, irrigation, static displays and much, much more.

We received great support from many people as well as Gisborne Transport, Vet Ent, Ravensdown, beekeepers, PGG Wrightson and the Waipaoa Cadet Scheme (Lawrence Burkin arrived with a team of young lads to man the hand-pieces). Several local ladies spun wool and the Cave girls delighted children with their face painting. Members of the public and helpers alike were well catered for with donated local produce, barbecued fresh and processed meat, fruit, corn and

watermelon etc.

A big thank you goes to the team of volunteers, especially the Wairakaia team, Rob and Sandra Faulkner as well as Bruce and Jo Graham and Ina. The extremely dry conditions were making life stressful enough, but they still managed to host a great event.

Perhaps the biggest benefit of Farm Day was the great publicity we received. The media were enthusiastic in promoting, attending and following up on the event. In a year beset with bad news, I suspect we all found it refreshing to be involved in something so positive.

Len Hall

Tough weather conditions continue

The weather in 2009 for growing grass can only be described as challenging for farmers in this province.

The Drought Committee has held five meetings across the province (from Ruatoria to Putere), which were generally well attended. I would like to take this opportunity to thank those people and businesses for their time and support.

Recently we have been involved in the Gisborne District Council's District Plan (GDC) – chapter six soil conservation mediations and submissions on the GDC, LTCCP and GDC weed and pest management strategy review. Hilary Walker, Federated Farmers East Coast Policy Advisor, does a great job preparing and writing these submissions.

The local executive are looking to develop a "pod system" for the province, with a pod in



Wairoa, two in Gisborne and one on the coast. We would like to ask members to join a pod and work on area specific issues, with most of the work being done by email or phone. If you think you may like to be involved and help the province please make contact.

At the Gisborne/Wairoa AGM we had a great line up of speakers with plenty of opportunity for discussion. The AGM was well supported by members.

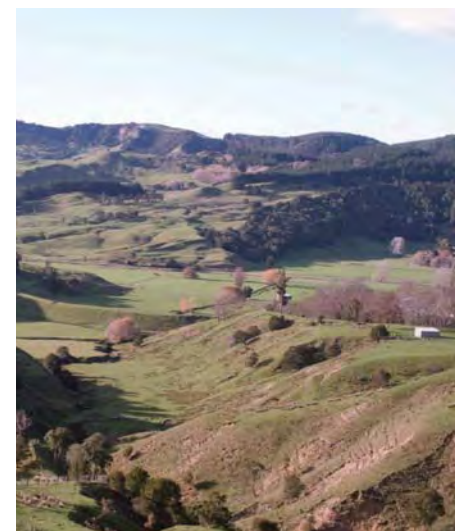
Thank you for your membership and let's hope the dams continue to fill, and stock prices remain favourable.

**Hamish Cave - President
Gisborne/Wairoa**



Wairoa District has had a difficult year

The majority of farms in the Wairoa District have experienced a difficult year weather-wise, but those able to feed lambs for the winter market will be well rewarded as prices nudge \$6/kg.



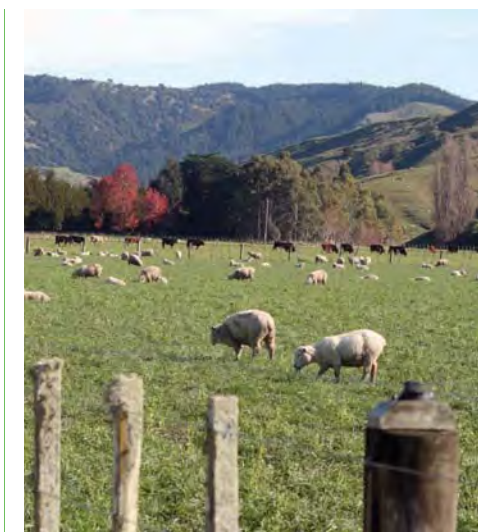
May has been cold and wet, with little opportunity to build feed covers for winter. So it will be tough on cattle over the following two to three months. However, soil moisture levels are well up on what they were two months ago.

Anyone needing or selling supplementary feed should check out Federated Farmers website www.fedfarm.org.nz if you haven't already or phone 0800 DROUGHT.

On entering the website click on Our Work - 2009 drought. Among the post drought information is a farmers' feed list and contact details for the Rural Support Trust.

I hope members put in submissions to the Wairoa District Council (WDC) Draft Annual Plan, as this is the only way to get changes made. Some of the notable items in Federated Farmers submission to WDC are:

- Council make every effort to ensure that rate increases do not exceed the rate of inflation.
- Recommend that council introduce a reduced registration fee for working dogs.
- Council should advocate to central government for a 90 percent financial assistance rate for local roads (about 66 percent now).
- Undertake a review of the roading differential split between rural and urban rate-payers.
- In relation to seal extensions – at the very minimum traction seal is needed in the areas identified in the 2008 road survey.



A submission was made to the Hawke's Bay Regional Council's (HBRC) Regional Plan supporting the status quo for the way goats are managed in the region. We want to ensure a non-regulatory solution for Wairoa farmers in the HBRC long term goat management plan. This is vital for farmers using goats for weed control.

John Ross - Wairoa Branch Chairman



Step up and get involved

Step up and get more involved was the mantra at the Federated Farmers Gisborne/Wairoa provincial executive meeting in June. Members came together to work on ideas that aim to strengthen grassroots membership.



While the province has a keen executive, which is active in many district and regional farming issues, members felt that it was time younger farmers started to get more involved. Political succession is vital if this province, and agricultural leadership nationally, is going to stay strong and dynamic.

These younger men and women are the ones farming into the future and it is important that they begin to take part in negotiations with the council and government officials. If younger farmers stay silent in these debates, they might find that farm practices become tied up in red tape and their back pockets leached of cash.

Getting involved in farm politics doesn't have to be a big job. The Federation has a strong voice at both the regional and national level and we can offer members good resources and support. Being active in rural issues also has positive spin offs for your farm business. It makes good sense to develop your leadership skills and Federated Farmers is a great learning ground.

The Gisborne/Wairoa province will be inviting farmers to a dinner and sales pitch on Wednesday 28 July, at Zest. The aim is to encourage younger farmers to think about stepping up and getting more involved.

We will be inviting younger farmers to lead small, issue focused email discussion groups of between five and ten people. We think these groups will work best when they are made up of people farming in the same community. It could be a small group of friends who meet over the internet once a week to share their views on an issue.

Once the group has tossed some ideas around and farmers have had their say, the group leaders can pass these comments onto the Federation's policy staff. A couple of half hours a week (at your choosing), is probably enough to keep a handle on the issues and stay informed.

These email groups will also be a good way for the Gisborne/Wairoa provincial executive to keep in touch with what is happening throughout the region. If any farmers feel they are being picked on by a council, we will hear about it quicker and can offer our support.



Our province has a sound base and we have an experienced executive who are prepared to encourage and support young farmers. We also have the financial resources to sponsor members onto Federated Farmers leadership courses. Put simply, if people are willing to step up, we'll definitely work hard to support them.

Hamish Cave - Gisborne/Wairoa President

Meat & Wool NZ – Commodity Levies Act

I will attempt to be brief. This year farmers have the opportunity to vote on the amount of levy paid per class of stock. To my mind the most contentious areas revolve around Market Access and Market Development.



Market access has to be number one and Meat & Wool acknowledge this in their narrative. I quote *"our ability to enter markets with the lowest possible impediment is critical to the industry here in New Zealand. While market access issues are government-to-government agreements, Meat & Wool New Zealand plays a critical role in advising the New Zealand government about the priorities for the sector. This is arguably our most important activity area ..."*

Definitely no argument from me over this.

I do struggle with funding market development to the proposed tune of \$15-16million.

The question I have is, why not let the exporting companies deal with market development, for aren't they in the business of selling the product?

The "recovery" of sheep meat prices has more to do with a lower exchange rate, lower volumes and reduced margins for the supermarkets. New Zealand benefited from United Kingdom farmers being able to increase their lamb exports to France, both in terms of volume and financial returns. To claim otherwise requires a vivid imagination.

Whatever your view, take the time to read Meat & Wool New Zealand's proposal, attend the meeting and ask questions.

In ending, I wish to thank Len Hall for his contribution and for filling in for me over the past 12 months. Finally we must acknowledge our sponsor Rabobank for their continual support, it is much appreciated.

Wayne Gault - Gisborne/Wairoa Immediate Past Meat & Fibre Chair

Policy round-up

1. SUMMARY OF POLICY INVOLVEMENT 2008-09

- Gisborne District Council (GDC) and Wairoa District Council (WDC) Annual and LTCCP submissions.
- GDC's Variation 176 Hill country erosion.
- GDC's Variation 118 Soil conservation.
- GDC's Chapter 4 mediations – activities in overlays.
- Provincial submission on the proposed National Water Quality Standards
- WDC 'Gateway to Mahia' roading options comments paper.

Whilst each of these submissions and mediations has a specific purpose and process, most of the issues we are dealing with can be grouped under a couple of broad categories.

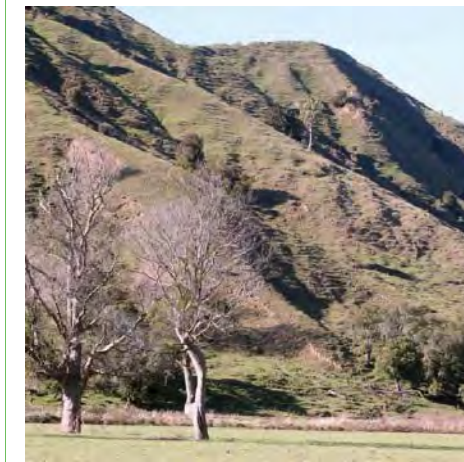
1.1 Rates

Currently, we are amidst the dreaded LTCCP season, where the policy team is frantically submitting on 66 of the 85 New Zealand councils' draft plans.

1.2 Vegetation clearance

Rules around indigenous vegetation are found in every district plan across the country. They are there to help councils meet their Resource Management Act (RMA) obligations to protect significant vegetation and habitats, enhance biodiversity and protect soils. Federated Farmers understands and acknowledges these obligations. However, given the potential to affect land

use activities we are very interested in how these responsibilities are discharged.



1.3 Soil conservation

Once again, there are rules around land disturbance in every district and regional plan in New Zealand. The purpose this time, broadly speaking, is for soil conservation and protection of amenity values. Variation 176 was bought in to address soil conservation aspects and after a concerted effort from ourselves, affected landowners, and Agfirst consultants, we were successful in achieving enough meaningful changes to give us a level of comfort to work with the process rather than against it. These changes related to definitions, activity status, compliance costs and link to the ECFP funding.

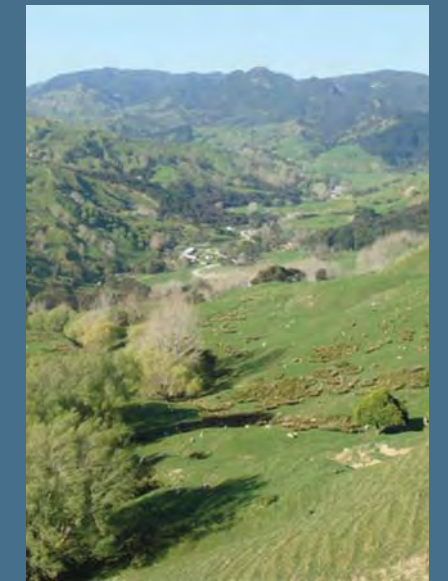
Hilary Walker - Federated Farmers of NZ, Policy Advisor - East Coast

On the road

I have now been with Federated Farmers for just over a year.

I have been assigned to the Hawke's Bay and Gisborne/Wairoa regions and am constantly improving my understanding of how the Federation works.

I also plan to visit the Hamilton office to see how things are done on the 0800 FARMING hotline, which is an important aspect of membership recruitment.



I am keen to get a lot of things done in this job, but to do so, I need your help. With your support, we can have a good crack at boosting the region's membership.

Caroline Rau - Recruitment Officer

Nuffield update with Gregg Pardoe

Kia ora everyone



I am now into the third week of my Nuffield trip.

We started off with three nights in Canberra where we had a day which included listening to 16 speakers! These people covered all topics that affect Australian agriculture.

The next day was spent visiting national Institutions like the museum, art gallery, old Parliament House etc. Then we went on a tour of Parliament House, which was hosted by an MP who was also a Nuffield Scholar.

We then travelled to Manila via Sydney and visited the International Rice Research Institute before heading off to China for 10 days.

In the USA we visited a good range of farming operations, including the largest cat fish farm in the world (with 6,000 acres of ponds), cotton, soy beans and corn operations as well as the Mississippi State University.

I am in Canada and as I write this I have know idea where my bags are. I have been off to a mall to buy the essentials before going out to visit a soy bean grower, a potato grower and a Hutterite colony.

Gregg Pardoe - Nuffield Scholar



**Future Thinking
FFNZ Leadership Courses**

AGMARDT

Are you interested in attending a Federated Farmers of New Zealand Leadership Course, then contact Hamish Cave, phone: 06 863 9861.

Getting Your Feet Wet is an orientation course for members wanting to learn more about the Federation, the lobbying process and leadership skills. The next course dates are:

13-14 August 2009
18-19 November 2009

Shining Under the Spotlight is a more advanced course designed to support current and future provincial and industry group farming leaders. The next course date is:

25-26 November 2009

PROVINCIAL CONTACT LIST

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