

LOCAL VOICE

PROVINCIAL NEWSLETTER



WAIKATO

MARCH/APRIL 2010

President's message

Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Claims (Waikato River) Settlement Bill

The hearing for the Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Claims (Waikato River) Settlement Bill held on Wednesday 24th February. We are deeply disappointed with the consultation process so far. Most of our issues are with regulatory law, the effect on the RPS, and district and regional plans. The settlement clearly signals those rules have to give EFFECT TO the Vision and Strategy of the Settlement, but without the checks and balances of due process and robust consultation.



The largest industry in the Waikato is agriculture; most of which is within the catchment boundaries of the Settlement. We have the responsibility as the largest agricultural industry grass roots primary food producers lobby group to be proactive. Farming families elect to subscribe to be members of Federated Farmers who expect us to secure their interests.

The "consultation" process which is obviously articulated by Guardians Establishment Committee and the Maori Affairs Committee is adequate in their view. I have members in Waikato Federated Farmers, who are well read in matters of constitution, who have serious concerns on the ramifications to farming families if the Bill is made into Statute in its present form.

What should be a concern to Fonterra shareholders, in my opinion, is the way their representatives were invited to verbally present to the Maori Affairs Committee. It was organised that the presentation of Fonterra's concerns on the Bill were alongside the representative of WaterCare Auckland; which had no commonality at all to Fonterra's. To

be fair, the WaterCare representative looked uncomfortable in that situation preferred by Chair Tau Henare.

WaterCare's presentation was an eye opener, they are so impressed with the quality of water they extract from the Waikato River at Tuakau, their future plan is to take 50 percent of Auckland's 'Super City' drinking water needs from the river. To secure that they demanded to be included on the Waikato River Authority (WRA) that will have the Statute Law to potentially control primary food in the Waikato.

Water Allocation Variation 6

That alone of course adds to the serious concerns of Environment Waikato's (EW) Water Allocation Variation 6 future matrix of water allocations for our next generation of farmers in the Waikato.

I have to acknowledge Paul Quinn MP, member of the Maori Affairs Committee, who appreciated my interaction with him during our verbal submission. He did advise the appropriate protocol to nominate to the Crown, a suitable nominee to the WRA. I duly approached a suitably skilled person to be considered who, unfortunately (after reading all the documents), withdrew due to concerns on the workability of the document.



Tom Dick and Harry!!!

Well it seems many councils and "Tom, Dick and Harry commentators" are giving some thoughts on how local government should be constructed for the 2013 election process. Super cities, super councils, unitary authorities and other suggestions on what should be. There has been no formal information on the topic from central

government for all stakeholder participation in this most important issue.

I will be seeking views from my membership on what their preferred governance at district Federated Farmer AGM's.

Super City Auckland from this October election will encompass over one million of New Zealand's population; we really don't need 84 other councils for the other three and half million New Zealanders to administer communities' needs. There will be some rationalisation of local government in New Zealand.

**Stew Wadey - President
Waikato Federated Farmers**



Junior vice-president appointed

Federated Farmers Waikato has appointed provincial Federated Farmers Dairy chairperson, James Houghton, to the position of junior vice-president, in accordance with the unwritten succession plan. We congratulate James and we will be watching closely for future achievements.



Field Officers

Please join us in welcoming the Field Officers who will be seen out and about throughout the Waikato.

Pearl Hamid - 021 158 1767
Waikato and Bay of Plenty

Lyndel Stone - 027 7217 695
Lower Waikato, Rotorua/Taupo,
Ruapehu, Wanganui, Manawatu-
Rangitikei

Jobs hard to find for employees



Job positions are in short supply for employees looking to progress, as many people are looking for security and staying put, as good jobs are hard to find. There are very few 50/50 sharemilking jobs available this season.

Federated Farmers and Fonterra held an information day in Cambridge covering the upcoming changes to payout and dividend payments, this was well attended with both sharemilkers and farm owners wanting to seek a better understanding of the impact in relationship to the sharemilking agreement.

National Animal Identification and Traceability (NAIT) looks like it is going ahead this season. With over 50 percent of the costs passing onto dairy farmers. Our industry needs be aware of the cost of NAIT and to insure that this is streamlined as much as possible. If it is run like many other government organisations we all need to be scared!

Farm purchases and interest in them have increased lately with more realistic prices being reached; some people who purchased during previous market hypes are now being forced to sell, with some large losses in land values being reported. Lately farm interest has increased; the one concern is that many of these are being looked at by foreign owners.

The cost of fertiliser is once again rising, with DAP already having increased and signals are there that Urea will increase shortly, this is a concern as it then flows onto increasing farm running costs.

Federated Farmers have a plan to improve dairy farmer compliance with regional councils. We plan to standardise farm inspections and improve all farmers'

awareness and performance. We would like a 'warrant of fitness' style yearly inspection by independent staff that will be able to help the farmer improve, with the aim of decreasing the negative impact that dairy farming has on the environment.

The dairy industry is also looking forward to the implementation of the Code of Practice for dairy effluent manufacturers and installers.

The Dairy Industry Awards were held on the 12th March and this was a great opportunity to showcase our regions pick of the crop and to celebrate *Dairy Excellence*.

After good summer rains farmers can now focus on other issues.

Maize is in plentiful supply, despite the lower levels of planting and the late, slow start. There is maize still available from last year and good crops this year combined with better summer conditions on farm will provide opportunities for people.

**James Houghton -
Chairman
Federated Farmers Dairy**



Biosecurity tour

On 26th November a Waikato Federated Farmers delegation of 28 visited the Ports of Auckland and the Auckland Airport. We wanted to see, firsthand, how these ports of entry into our country ensure there are no biosecurity incursions. Our province, like the rest of the Federation's membership have voiced concerns over possible risks to our agricultural, horticultural and forestry industries, especially now there has been a reduction in MAF staffing levels.

After viewing a 4,000 plus container ship at the Ports and watching the movement of the containers; there is always the possibility of an unwanted moth or creepy crawly bug hitching a ride first class and on arrival taking a liking to our wonderful climate. The very construction of the containers from the base to the hinges and locking mechanism provides many likely places for an insect's safe passage.

What a huge task it is for the Auckland Airport's dedicated personnel and their well trained dogs to cover the job on a 24/7 basis. To see what people try to bring or smuggle into the country is mind boggling, to say the least.

Subsequently we wrote to Paul Stocks - Deputy Director General Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and also to Hon David Carter - Minister of Agriculture, providing comments on the reduced staff



numbers. Would this compromise the level of biosecurity protection, especially when a large number of people will enter the country for the World Rowing Champs and the Rugby Union World Cup? We were advised that a recent review of border operations was completed. The analysis suggested that reductions in staff numbers could be made without compromising levels of biosecurity protection and service delivery.



If it weren't for tight biosecurity we would probably have had diseases such as foot and mouth many years ago. Unfortunately each year a number of new weed varieties enter New Zealand causing large sums of money to be spent on eradication.

Crops

In spite of a slow start to the growing season the maize crops, in general, are looking very healthy. So we can say we have had two good growing seasons in a row. A smaller area of maize was planted last spring so all the crops should find a home.

Some early crops have already been silaged and as more mature the silage harvest will be in full swing. As per usual most farmers have not sourced sufficient hay for winter carryover, so silage, grass or maize seem to be the basic winter early spring fodder.

The area to be harvested for grain will not become apparent till the silage harvest is over, because this is a 'two way' crop.

By the look of the maize crops, the grain harvest should be a good one and go a long way to satisfying internal demand, as well as bringing growers a reasonable return.

**Syd Fraser-Jones -
Chairman Federated
Farmers Grain & Seed**



Pleasant surprise for sheep & beef farmers

On the economic front sheep and beef farmers have a few pleasant surprises in that lamb and beef prices have held up well, against what was predicted.



Wool has also improved somewhat since Christmas, but nothing to get too excited about. I would like to hear details of the outcome of the taskforce setup by the Minister of Agriculture, but I haven't been able to find any! I am somewhat annoyed at Nick Nicholson's comments that we (farmers) are wasting time and money on promoting wool in the United States and European Union, because only two to four percent of our wool is exported there. Surely there must be good opportunities in more affluent countries to sell a quality natural product rather than giving it to China where quality means little, price is king and turns the product over with no promotion, no quality controls, or identity as to its origin.

I am annoyed that good hill country farms producing young stock for the store market are being converted into trees for carbon sequestration. The infrastructure that has been built on these farms is being ransacked and sold just to support the crazy idea that this will stabilise our climate! Yet we encourage people to travel (tourism) and build more roads, close our industries in New Zealand. We encourage trade in raw commodities by free trade agreements and increase its carbon footprint, whilst paying freight both ways. I'm afraid I'll have to join the skeptics about this global warming theory, because it smells more and more like a money shuffling scam and doing lip service to reducing carbon emissions. The cost to the consumer of this emissions trading scheme has not been explained enough.

**André de Haan -
Chairman Federated
Farmers Meat & Fibre**



2010 Waikato Federated Farmers ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS



WAIKATO

Stew Wade, President Waikato Federated Farmers, hopes you were/are able to attend either an Annual General Meeting in your District or the Waikato Regional Annual General Meeting.

Please see some upcoming dates to put in your diary. For further information contact your District Chairman or our Regional office.

DISTRICT

Te Awamutu
Waitomo

DATE

1st April
21st April

Waikato Regional Federated Farmers Annual General Meetings:

11 am, Thursday 6th May 2009

Hamilton Airport Motor Inn & Conference Centre, Airport Road, Hamilton

- Federated Farmers Dairy
- Federated Farmers Meat & Fibre
- Federated Farmers Grain & Seed
- Regional Annual General Meeting



Investment Seminar

High income, low risk investing

Educate yourself so you make good investment decisions.

This two hour presentation is run by Geoff Buchan, a senior portfolio manager for Craigs Investment Partners, the largest private portfolio advisory firm in New Zealand, with five billion dollars under management.

- Fixed Interest
- Bank deposits
- Currency
- Interest rates
- Commercial Property
- Tax minimization
- Income protection

WHEN: Tuesday, 20th April 2010

TIME: 1.00pm

**WHERE: 5th Floor President's Room
Waikato Federated Farmers' Building
169 London Street, Hamilton**

Please note the only available parking on-site is 'WFF' parks situated at the rear left-hand side of the car park.

PLEASE RSVP to Gaylene Bamford, Regional Assistant, Waikato Federated Farmers Phone: 07 858 0820



Unwanted or Expired Agrichemical Collection

Waikato - 14th & 15th April 2010

Book your unwanted or expired chemicals for disposal with Agrecovery before 8th April.

Freephone 0800 247 326 or visit www.agrecovery.co.nz

**DON'T MISS OUT
BOOK DISPOSAL TODAY!**



Information from Putaruru Police - Re Scrap metal dealers

A group of ex-Eastern Europeans are travelling the Upper North Island buying, and at times stealing, scrap metal items from rural farms and sheds. Please keep an eye out for people in your area. If you are concerned at all, or have nay information please contact SW Maddren, Community Constable, Putaruru.

Policy update

It's been non-stop for Federated Farmers policy advisors making sure the rural voice is heard in councils around the Waikato. Whether it's rates, strategies or district plans, your policy advisors always have their tail paint ready to identify policies that should be trucked off to the works.

Regional Policy Statement

The Regional Policy Statement (RPS) has reached "draft" stage with Environment Waikato (EW) looking to open it for public submissions around June this year. The RPS is a huge document and will set the tone for council policies and rules for the next 10 years.

The RPS has objectives and policies for managing natural resources like water, soil and biodiversity. Federated Farmers is scrutinising the document to keep EW's head out of the clouds with regards to unrealistic and unachievable aspirations.



Federated Farmers considers that the RPS should guide regional and district plans to have permitted activity standards. This will ensure that the majority of compliant landowners do not have to face blanket consenting regime when only a few non-compliant landowners are driving the Council's decision to increase regulation.

Federated Farmers is also urging EW to direct regional policy away from managing and regulating activities, and towards managing effects instead. The risk of managing activities is that opportunities for innovation and technology advances could be reduced.

Stock Truck Effluent Strategy

Federated Farmers has been involved in the EW working party, and also submitted on the Regional Stock Truck Effluent Strategy. Federated Farmers considers that the aim of zero discharge onto roads is unattainable and the strategy is set up to fail; which will result in more regulation.

The Strategy reports that the reason that many processing companies are closing access to their stock truck effluent disposal

facilities is because of compliance costs attributed to local government bylaws. This is a great example of how over-regulation can create bad environmental outcomes.

Everyone involved in livestock transport has a part to play, from farmers standing stock before transport, truck companies having enough effluent storage on board, and processing plants and saleyards having facilities to empty effluent tanks and wash down trucks. Facilities also need to be provided en route at practical locations so as not to add unnecessary kilometres travelled. A voluntary and co-ordinated industry approach to the issue will result in a better outcome than over-regulation.

Waipa District

Federated Farmers have met with Waipa District Council to discuss the district plan review. One of the topics up for discussion was the "long association" subdivision rule, where a small retirement lot can be subdivided when the property has been under the same ownership for at least 15 years. Council have been concerned that these lots are sold on, and lifestyle movers in aren't aware of normal rural noises and smells. Options are: to increase the size of the lot from 5,000m² to 40ha; increasing the time of association to 25 years; or allowing for another dwelling to be built on the original property instead of subdividing off a separate title. Federated Farmers wants to hear what members think of these options.

Annual Plans

Councils around Waikato will be rolling out their Annual Plans in March and April, looking at rates for the next 12 months. Local government relies overwhelmingly on property value based rating systems. Because farms are land intensive businesses, and because the value of a property does not bear a good relationship to income, farms are hit particularly hard by this tax on their key asset.

Our key messages to councils will be to keep their spending under control and make sure that the rates people pay reflects their use of or benefit derived from council activities. It's too late to have your say once the bill hits your letter box, that's why it's vital that we are involved in the Annual Planning process early on.

Federated Farmers policy advisors will be combing through the plans and preparing submissions, but a crowd of farmers turning up at hearings really hammers the message home.

**Rhea Dasent -
Regional Policy Advisor for
Waikato Federated Farmers**



WAIKATO FEDERATED FARMERS PROVINCIAL CONTACT LIST

Provincial President:

Stewart Wadey, 07 888 1808

Vice-president:

Walter Scott, 07 889 7144

Junior Vice-president and

Federated Farmers Dairy Chairman:

James Houghton, 07 872 4560

Federated Farmers Meat & Fibre Chairman:

Andre' de Hann, 07 873 8631

Federated Farmers Grain & Seed Chairman:

Syd Fraser-Jones, 07 887 5780

Sharemilkers' Section Chairman:

Jeff Bolstad, 07 889 7475

Sharemilkers' Provincial Executive:

Graig Littin, 07 883 6040

Sharemilkers Employers' Chairman:

Tony Wilding, 07 883 4802

Rural Women of NZ:

Ann Rawson, 07 870 1070

Waikato/BOP Young Farmers' Chairman:

Jason Hoyle, 027 531 3188

Waikato Hauraki/Coromandel

Rural Support Trust: 0800 787 254

Regional Assistant:

Gaylene Bamford, 07 858 0820

BRANCH CHAIRMEN CONTACT LIST

If you would like to attend a meeting, these are the people to talk to. You would be most welcome.

CAMBRIDGE

John Searle, 07 827 3924

HAMILTON

Tony Armstrong, 07 829 8609

MATAMATA

Ivan Knyvett, 07 888 5029

MORRINSVILLE

Dave Fish, 07 887 3826

NORTH WAIKATO

Don Coles, 07 825 4942

OTOROHANGA

Roy Johnson, 07 873 7874

TE AROHA

Stuart King, 07 884 5857

TE AWAMUTU

Kees Rombouts, 07 871 3848

TOKOROA

Mary-Ann Mathis, 07 886 9493

WAITOMO

Charles Digby, 07 878 8642