

FEDERATED FARMERS GOATS CONFERENCE 2009



The registration form for the Federated Farmers Goats Conference 2009 is enclosed with this newsletter. It is earlier than normal for a couple of reasons: the first is that conference is being held earlier in the year and the second is to allow you time to plan your travel to Australia.

Following on from very positive feedback from our survey earlier this year, the Board has decided to take the plunge and hold the Goats Conference for 2009 in Australia, Victoria to be precise. The dates have been set to coincide with one of the biggest goat expo's in this part of the world: "The Australasian" at Horsham (about 300km from Melbourne) on 20th and 21st February.

Because of the split response to the survey we have decided to hold the official "Conference" in Melbourne on the afternoon of Tuesday 17th (field trip) and Wednesday 18th February and then arrange the option of a bus tour to Horsham from 19th to 22nd February.

You may recall that the motivation behind our considering Melbourne as a venue for the 2009 conference was that many delegates were keen to have Dr Bruce McGregor elaborate on one or two of the presentations he made to this year's conference in Rotorua. Then someone mentioned that for next year's conference we might like to visit Dr McGregor (who lives in Melbourne) on his patch, rather than ask him to come back to New Zealand. A survey was sent out in July asking for your opinion and the answer was a resounding "yes" - so here's the plan.

The Conference venue is the Airport Motel and Convention Centre, 33 Ardlie Street, Attwood. This is only a few minutes drive from Tullamarine (Melbourne International) Airport. Courtesy buses are available from the hotel to the airport.

Motel-style rooms are available at the Centre. This year, for a variety of reasons, but principally because some of you may want to combine the conference with a few extra days holiday, we will not be booking rooms for delegates. Instead we ask that you do your own bookings direct with the hotel (this will apply to the Horsham leg as well). This can be done by emailing the hotel at reservations@airportmotelmelbourne.com.au. When booking, please quote reference **#535438**. The hotel's web site is www.airportmotelmelbourne.com.au.

We will be having the conference field trip on the afternoon of Tuesday 17th February. A bus will leave the

hotel at around 12.30pm and we will head for Hilary and Arthur Day's property at Upper Beaconsfield (in the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges) on the outskirts of Melbourne. Hilary and Arthur run around 100 goats at Koonkie Woorun Angoras and have been breeding Angoras for many years. Time permitting we also hope to visit Richard Goff Mohair (shop) that produces Mohair rugs and spinning yarn, en route.

The Annual General Meeting of Federated Farmers Goats and Mohair NZ (Inc) will be held at the Airport Motel and Convention Centre, 33 Ardlie Street, Attwood, Victoria on Wednesday 18th February 2009, beginning at 9.00am. This will include reports, elections etc., discussion on Federated Farmers Goats issues and planning, and will continue through to lunch at mid-day.

In the afternoon Dr McGregor will take over, elaborating on some of the matters that aroused so much interest at this year's conference.

The conference dinner will be held on Wednesday evening and we are expecting an old friend of our group to join us for this function and tell us what he has been up to over the past four years.

The conference registration fee has been held at the same level as for last year. It covers the cost of the bus on 17th, morning/afternoon teas plus lunch at conference and the conference dinner. The registration fee has been based on the conversion rate \$A1:NZ\$1.2 as at the end of September 2008. We hope that this will stay reasonably constant, but if there is a major adverse variation we may need to ask for a little extra. (If the movement is the other way we may be able to put an extra bottle of wine on the table at the dinner!)

The bus for those going to the Horsham event will leave the hotel after breakfast on Thursday 19th February and return by 4pm on Sunday 22nd. Recommended accommodation in Horsham is the Sundowner Horsham Westlander Motor Inn and again we are asking you to do your own accommodation bookings. Email contact for bookings is westlander@bigpond.com. When booking please quote "Mohair NZ Tour" to get the discount bulk booking deal for your room.

Standard room for a single, double or twin is \$A99 per night. Deluxe room for a single, double or twin is \$A110 per night.

THE LIKELY ITINERARY IS:

Thursday 19th February:

- Bus to Horsham.
- Afternoon at Sylvania Park Angora stud, the home of the Australian Buck Scheme. They have their own line of mohair products which are marketed throughout Australia.
- Barbeque with members of Mohair Australia.

Friday 20th February:

- Visit to Matt Gready's in the morning (farm close to Horsham and they run 500-1000 goats in a purely commercial operation).
- An information session, which will be very much targeted at existing growers. They will endeavour to make it as relevant as possible to New Zealand. There will be a couple of key speakers and also a few talks from industry people and these are likely to include:
 - A vet on mineral nutrition.
 - David Rendell on worm management.
 - Sam Gill from Sheep Genetics to talk about using their software and programme on Angoras.
 - Doug Stapleton on results, photos and fibre from the Buck trial up there, which will have just finished.
 - David Williams on world markets etc.

The aim is to have it is an update for mohair producers. Not all speakers are confirmed, but no doubt it will be an interesting afternoon. An activity in the afternoon at the Show includes doe judging.

Saturday 21st February:

- Bucks and group judging.
- Sale in the late afternoon followed by a (semi) formal presentation dinner on the Saturday night (cost approx. \$A50 per head).

Sunday 22nd February:

- Head back to Melbourne arrive by 4.00pm. Possibly visit some local sights on the way (depends how you feel!).

The registration fee of NZ\$100 for this part of the week's activities on your registration form covers the cost of the bus to and from Horsham only. All other costs including bus costs around Horsham farm tours etc. are still to be finalised and the barbeque and dinner are additional at this stage. However, we are still seeking a subsidy for the cost of the bus. If this materialises and/or numbers are greater than anticipated, it is likely that part of this fee will be applied to defray some other costs.

WICKENS TROPHY

We are reasonably confident that we have a way in which we can get fleeces into Australia. This would mean that we would still be able to conduct the Wickens Trophy contest as part of the Conference. However, it is unlikely that we will be able to bring fleeces back into New Zealand. If you tick the appropriate box on the entry form and supply us with a telephone or email contact we will get back to you as matters develop.

NOMINATION FOR BOARD

A nomination form for the position of Board Member is attached, plus a person description for Mohair NZ Board members. This year Gary Boyle retires by rotation. Gary is eligible to seek another three year term, but the rules do allow for other nominations to be made.

NOTICE OF MOTION FORMS are also enclosed

Both (Nomination and Notice of Motion) forms should be returned to:

**Bob Douglas, Mohair NZ (Inc), PO Box 665, Timaru
by Monday 8th December 2008.**

If you cannot make the AGM you can still have a say in proceedings by proxy. Forms for this will be sent out a few weeks prior to Conference with an update on bus tours, remits, reports, Board nominations etc., but please make sure the proxy forms are returned to me at:

**PO Box 665 TIMARU 7940
by 9th February 2009.**

Please send your registration forms back to Bronwyn in Dunedin:

**Goats Conference, Federated Farmers of NZ,
PO Box 5242, DUNEDIN 9058
ASAP, but NO LATER THAN 15th December 2008.**

Don't forget to indicate whether you will be presenting a fleece for the Jim Wickens trophy (*Note that entries are restricted to CURRENT YEAR's fleeces*).

MEAT & WOOL ELECTORAL ROLL

One other piece of paper that accompanies this mailout is MWNZ registration. It seems that only a handful of goat farmers are registered with Meat & Wool NZ and, apart from the right to vote in elections, it also means that non-registered people do not receive occasional updates from MWNZ. This includes information on the Goat Monitoring project. So if you do want to be kept up to date with what is happening to your levy money, fill in the enclosed form and send it off to MWNZ.

Bob Douglas
Industry Manager
October 2008