

Don't get caught out!

The transport section has been quiet, but some problems have surfaced with serious results.

Farm machinery that is used for contracting comes under the Log Book Regulations. Farm machinery used for farmers own work does not come under the Log Book Regulations, I hope I make myself clear on that.



We have a case of a tractor driver being checked for not having over-dimension flags/panels by a police officer while driving the tractor on road for a contractor. The driver was found not to have a Log Book and was issued with an offence notice, \$500 fine and 35 demerit points. The driver already had 70 demerit points so he now has no license for six month and no job.

According to Federated Farmers of New Zealand that is not correct, but according to police the Log Book rules apply to contracting.

My thoughts are this is wrong. Take for instance a silage harvester working to harvest crops having to stop and let the crop spoil because they exceed the Log Book time. I expect that reasonable police officers appreciate the problems involved with these regulations, but the people who write the regulations instruct the police to enforce them. This has to be reviewed, even if we have to go to the Minister of Agriculture.

Finally I'd like to thank farmers who supported the recent transport protest. Garry Johnston, Jeremy Talbot and Peter McCaully and Hilton Haulage for organising hundreds of trucks into Timaru and at the same time gaining the support of the population of the district.

John P Hughes - South Canterbury Transport Chairman

Ballance Farm Environment Awards



CONGRATULATIONS to Mark and Nicky Morrow of Ashburton for being the winners of the prestigious 2008 Ballance Farm Environment Awards for the Canterbury region. They also won the Silver

Ferns Farm Livestock Award. A large number of farmers and rural professionals attended the field day on their award winning property.

The overall objective of the Ballance Farm Environment Awards programme is to promote sustainable land management on New Zealand farms believing that role models and education are effective tools to improving farming practices.

This objective is achieved by:

- The judging process, which we aim to keep mutually enjoyable and informative
- Our commitment to practical solutions, which benefit people as well as the land
- Our support for diversity – there's never one right answer, it's about what works
- Our deed requires us to use objectives criteria to determine sustainable management where practical.

Entries for the 2009 Awards programme

close on Wednesday 15 October. You can obtain entry information by visiting the official website for the Awards programme at www.bfea.org.nz or by contacting the Regional Coordinator for the Canterbury region, Nicola Hunt on 03 353 9711.



Employment Seminars Mark your diary now!!

- 31 October 2008, 10:30am/1:30pm*
Federated Farmers, Unit 8
35 Sir William Pickering Dr, Christchurch
- 4 November 2008, 10:00am
Federated Farmers Building,
cnr Tancred & West Streets, Ashburton
- 4 November 2008, 7:30pm
Farming House, 23 Butler Street, Timaru
- 5 November 2008, 9:30am
RSA, Itchen Street, Oamaru

**For more information or to register phone:
0800 327 646**

*Optional

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This special interest rate is only available on Business Interest Accounts opened by Federated Farmers' members. Terms and conditions apply. Interest is calculated daily, and paid on the last business day of each month (less resident withholding tax). Transactions and service fees apply. The interest rate shown is current at 28 February 2008 and is subject to change at Westpac's discretion. You can get a copy of Westpac's general terms and conditions, a copy of the current disclosure statement for Westpac New Zealand Limited and a copy of the investment statement for any securities for which an investment statement is required from any Westpac branch in New Zealand free of charge. Westpac New Zealand Limited.

Federated Farmers South Canterbury publishes regular newsletters to keep our members informed

- Provincial President: David Williams, 03 685 4818
- Dairy: Jim Stevenson, 03 689 9030
- Meat & Fibre: John Gregan, 03 689 5514
- Grain & Seed: Michael Tayler, 03 615 8667

For comments on this newsletter or if you wish to join Federated Farmers please contact:

SOUTH CANTERBURY

JULY 2008

Provincial catch-up

I'd like to take the opportunity to thank South Canterbury members for their continuing support of the provinces annual conference, held this year on 14 May. The highlight for me was our after dinner speaker Allan Hubbard who presented a great example of what determination can achieve.

Congratulations to those re-elected on to South Canterbury's Executive and welcome to Michael Tayler who is our new Grain & Seed Chairman.

This season has been quite different from past seasons, with part of our industry booming and other parts not. Autumn was very dry this year, which hasn't helped our industry. The early part of winter has been very mild and good food use has definitely given us some respite.

The Federated Farmers annual Conference was held a month earlier than usual, which was good from my perspective - as far as the winter weather woes go. This year's conference produced an interesting range of speakers:

- Brett Ashley - General Manager Merchandise Fresh Foods, Progressive Enterprises.
- Doug Steel - Senior Economist, Westpac.
- Professor Jacqueline Rowarth - Institute of Natural Resources, Massey University.

There was also a Political Forum with David Carter, Sir Roger Douglas, Peter Dunne, and Damien O'Connor and a panel discussion entitled "Water - The great divide". The panel

comprised Terry Heiler, consultant and well known expert on water issues, Mark Solomon, Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu along with Hugh Ritchie - Water Spokesperson for Federated Farmers of New Zealand.

My congratulations to Federated Farmers newly elected President, Don Nicolson, Vice-president, Frank Brenmuhl and Board members Donald Aubrey, Bruce Wills, Lachlan McKenzie, John Hartnell and Phillip York.



At the Grain & Seed industry group conference a new Chairman was elected, Ian Morten, who hails from South Canterbury, congratulations Ian.

Many issues still confront us, especially the meat industry's woes and how to proceed toward a better future. I urge all shareholders in co-operatives to partake in voicing your opinion to encourage a better direction for the industry; in its present form it is unsustainable. All the meat companies need to consolidate in one form or another to give some future to the industry - whatever the model may be. The wool industry is suffering the same woes and like-wise growers need to commit for there to be a better future.

These issues with the meat and wool industries are creating a large imbalance and driving people to different land use. This is fine, where it can be carried out, but there is a lot of country that we cannot change the land use of.

At the moment our input costs have been steadily increasing which is putting more pressure on the sector. An increase in Government spending of about six percent is very unproductive for our whole industry. The increase in the price of fuel and fertiliser, prices is definitely going to bite in to the coming year.

Federated Farmers has again submitted on all the annual plans around the country and

some district plans coming up for review, so we have to grapple with these now. I would like to thank all members for their input into this process.

We are living in changing times and I would like to acknowledge the members who have decided to exit the industry. Thank you all for your input into our organisation and the very best wishes for the year ahead.

Finally, I've been working closely with the South Canterbury Rural Support Trust, as a drought is still very imminent in our area. The Southburn areas are especially dry, only recording around 140mm of rain up to mid July. There are other areas further north of the Southburn areas that are also extremely dry. There has been one round of well supported farmers' meetings discussing the situation and options that these people can take.

Meetings were held in Southburn, Waihaorunga and Cave coinciding with a visit from the Minister in late April to look at the situation in the Mackenzie. I would also like to thank Terry O'Connell for the work he has done for the South Canterbury Rural Support Trust and wish him well in his new job. Terry will remain a member of our committee. If you have any suggestions on how we can combat our current predicament please contact myself or David Hewson.

The South Canterbury Rural Support Trust has distributed a card to all rural box holders for future contact. We also have a free phone number, 0508 327 646, set up. We are looking to have further initiatives in the near future to help decision making through the spring period.

Good luck for the coming year and I look forward to your help and support. Any ideas or suggestions you may have please don't hesitate to contact me with them.

For the dairy and cropping sector, keep going forward for the season, our overall industry needs it. We all are still a vital part of this country's economy. Without us the country would sink.

David Williams - South Canterbury President



WWW.FEDFARM.ORG.NZ

Not a dull moment in the meat industry

Not a dull moment in the meat industry at the moment with Silver Fern Farms shareholders having much to think about before they vote on a merger with PGG Wrightson. Rumours abound that Alliance will be putting something in front of their shareholders at meetings they



Photo courtesy of Neville Wallace, Taranaki

intend holding during August. The good news is they all seem to agree that we will see a considerable lift in prime lamb prices this season. Realistically, though, with fertiliser, fuel and land prices more than doubling, in some cases, over the last 12-18 months the \$100 lamb we all dreamt of will need to be \$120 plus to ensure sheep farming can become viable.

I congratulate Meat and Wool for showing some initiative in creating the new wool company. The announcement that Teresa Gattung will be the independent chair of this company shows some real vision.

In looking at some expertise outside our industry we are finally showing the maturity that may see our wool sit where it belongs and returns to farmers increase accordingly. I encourage farmers to support it even though it may not be exactly as we all wanted. A consolidation of the clip and a move away from the auction system has got to help improve returns, but this can only happen if we, the suppliers, support this new initiative.

The continuing very dry conditions in the province are a cause for real concern with spring almost upon us and farmers in desperate need of some moisture so we can grow some grass when the weather warms. Very little reserves are left and the cost of any that are available has put them out of the reach of many sheep and cattle farmers.

As ewes get more heavily pregnant the need for high quality feed is going to increase, it is important we look out for each other in the farming community, so do not hesitate to get in touch if issues involving animal welfare look to be emerging.

John Gregan - South Canterbury Meat & Fibre Chairman

Demand for grain remains high



start. Although the growing of the crops seems to be the easier part these days.

Due to the ever-changing markets the once straight forward decisions that arable farmers made, marketing and selling their crops, has now become more complex. Making the right decisions at contract time has now become just as important as the agronomic decisions we make out in the field.

We look forward to continued strong prices we also look forward to rapidly rising costs.

What we gain on price we can lose with input rises. Unfortunately we can't seem to have one without the other. As the increasing world demand for food, and to a lesser extent the bio fuel industry, pushes up food prices, demand on inputs to make that food increases also. Since 2001 world demand for fertilisers has grown by 14 percent, which is the equivalent of the total size of the US fertiliser market.

How does all this affect us as grain growers? To offset the rises over the last 12 months in fertiliser alone on a 10t/ha crop we now need another \$26/tonne to achieve parity with last year.

As the costs of inputs continue to rise the challenge for us is to keep our industry profitable and avoid falling back to low prices and squeezed margins.

Michael Tayler - South Canterbury Grain & Seed Chairman

Animal ID

Federated Farmers is seeking member feedback on a discussion document that describes a proposal for enhancing New Zealand's animal identification and traceability systems. The MAF Biosecurity proposal seeks to establish a central registry of animals, properties and people so that New Zealand can get better leverage off existing schemes to meet market access requirements and better enable animal tracing from farm to point of slaughter. Submissions on the discussion document are due Friday 1 August.

Nick Clark - Federated Farmers of New Zealand Manger - General Policy

Climate change

The Federation is continuing to work hard on climate change policy. Putting aside the issue of the science of climate change, we are focusing on ensuring that the policy does not harm the viability of our industry and the competitiveness of the economy. The proposed emissions trading scheme in its current form will be very damaging for agriculture and the economy in general. The Bill to enable the scheme, has been referred back from Select Committee to Parliament and the Government is trying to find support to pass the Bill.



Meanwhile, the Australian Government has released a draft proposal to introduce an emissions trading scheme very different to New Zealand's. The proposal for a 'Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme' to be introduced in 2010 covers all gases, but not all sectors. Agricultural methane and nitrous oxide emissions will not be included in the scheme until 2015, assuming a decision is ever reached to include them. It is proposed to include forestry, but Australia is looking to exclude deforestation, with land clearance already heavily regulated. Federated Farmers is working closely with its counterpart across the Tasman while Australia works through this proposal, because how Australia proceeds will have a huge impact on how the New Zealand government approaches its proposed scheme.

Nick Clark - Federated Farmers of New Zealand Manger - General Policy

Water programme continues to flow

Sustainable Water Programme of Action continues to flow. Federated Farmers has been actively involved in a Primary Sector Partnership Group which has recently launched a leadership document where sector groups commit to various actions to improve water quality. A copy of the document is available from the Federation's website http://www.fedfarm.org.nz/f184,17642/17642_Water_Partnership.pdf.

Two National Environmental Standards have been released for consultation – one on Ecological Flows and Water Levels and the other on Waste Water Systems. We will be submitting on these documents in the coming weeks. Meanwhile, a National Policy Statement on Freshwater Management has

been released for consideration by a Board of Inquiry. Again, we will be submitting on the NPS.



Nick Clark - Federated Farmers of New Zealand Manger - General Policy

Our own freshwater management ...

A water forum discussion was held at the recent Federated Farmers of New Zealand annual Conference. Among the panel were Terry Heiler, an expert in water issues, and Mark Solomon. The discussion and questions focussed on what our options are available for the future to have an assured supply of water for irrigation, domestic and industrial needs without having a negative effect on the environment.



I took the opportunity to describe the Opuha Dam storage development in South

Canterbury. For eleven seasons there has been storage capacity of a 95 million cubic meter lake on the Opuha river, which is a tributary of the Opihi River system. This has allowed us to have reliable water to supply Timaru City with domestic and industrial water, and maintained variable minimum flows all year round in the river and supplied reliable water to irrigate up to 16,000ha.

There is also capacity to generate up to 7.5 megawatts of power.

The irrigating farms have recently bought out the Alpine Energy share of the project and now own and operate the whole scheme.

I believe this scheme is the blueprint for the future and could be duplicated anywhere in rural New Zealand. The benefits would flow through to the whole community.

This article is in reply to the many questions asked during the Federation's recent annual conference.

Tom Henderson - South Canterbury Resources

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Management Strategy

Locality-based Stakeholder Meetings on the Uses & Benefits of Water

(30 July-13 August 2008)
5:30-8:00pm

Coffee, tea, orange juice and finger food supplied at 5:30pm

Wednesday 30 July
ARAROA

Duvauchelles Hotel, State Highway 75
Duvauchelle Bay, Araroa Harbour
03 304 5803

Thursday 31 July
RANGIORA

Chervier Centre, 41 Victoria Street
03 313 6285

WAIMATE

Waimate District Council, 125 Queen Street
Canterbury
03 689 8079

Tuesday 5 August
METHVEN-RAKAIA

Mt Hutt Memorial Hall, Main Street,
Methven
03 302 8463

Wednesday 6 August
HURUNUI

St John, 23 Montrose Avenue
Culverden
03 315 8306

TIMARU

Environment Canterbury, 75 Church Street
03 688 9069

Thursday 7 August
ASHBURTON-HINDS

Hotel Ashburton, Racecourse Road
03 308 3059

OMARAMA

Heritage Gateway Hotel, Highway 8
0800 809 805

Tuesday 12 August
DARFIELD

Darfield Recreation Centre, North Terrace
03 318 8234

Wednesday 13 August
CHRISTCHURCH

Environment Canterbury, Waitaki Room
58 Kilmore Street
0800 324 636

Thursday 14 August
FAIRLIE

Mackenzie District Council
Community Centre, Main Street
0800 685 8514