

Call for leaders

Federated Farmers runs two leadership courses for up-and-coming farming leaders. The programme is important to the Federation's succession planning. Programmes are highly interactive, delivering information using practical methods and workshops to suit hands-on types. The two courses promote both leadership and team building.

If you think that you can make a difference with some polished leadership skills give your President, Gifford McFadden a call (07 333 8079), to discuss attending a course.

2008 COURSE DATES:

Getting Your Feet Wet
26-27 November 2008

Advanced Leadership Skills
3-4 December 2008.

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Federated Farmers Rotorua/Taupo

publishes regular newsletters to keep our members informed

Provincial President: Gifford McFadden, 07 333 8079
Treasurer: Jamie Paterson, 07 332 2818
Meat & Fibre Vice-chairman: Julian Hughes, 07 333 2725
Dairy Vice-Chairman: James Houghton, 07 882 8244

Secretary: Tina Marshall, 07 332 2226
Meat & Fibre Chairman: Neil Heather, 07 357 2142
Dairy Chairman: Joy Thomas, 07 333 8655
Sharemilkers' Chairman: James Houghton, 07 882 8244

Committee:

Barbara Hunt, 07 362 4883; Wendy McGowan, 07 332 3586; Lachlan McKenzie, 07 332 3440; Jocelyn Reeves, 07 372 8178; Gaylene Brough, 07 366 6751; Diarmid Somerville, 07 376 5552; Stuart Morrison, 07 332 3500



ROTORUA | TAUPO

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

Federated Farmers Rotorua/Taupo is looking for a representative for the Board of the Waiariki Polytechnic.

If you are interested in filling this position please contact Gifford McFadden, 07 333 8079.

Employment Seminars

Mark your diary now!!

21 October 2008, 9:30am
Western Bay REAP, 21 Pyne Street,
Whakatane

21 October 2008, 2:00pm
RSA, 16 Oxford Street, Te Puke

22 October 2008, 10:00am
RSA, 1072 Haupapa Street, Rotorua

22 October 2008, 2:30pm
RSA, Horomatangi Street, Taupo

23 October 2008, 10:00am
War Memorial Hall, Queen Street,
Wairoa

23 October 2008, 2:30pm
Federated Farmers of NZ
295 Gladstone Road, Gisborne

\$65.00 per person

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

FRIDAY FLASH

Are you receiving Federated Farmers of New Zealand's weekly electronic newsletter?

It features the latest news, events and notices for members.

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LOCAL VOICE

PROVINCIAL NEWSLETTER

ROTORUA/TAUPO



AUGUST 2008

Drought takes it toll

Thank you to all our members who attended our Annual General Meeting. It was a successful event, as were both the Dairy and Meat and Fibre annual meetings. I was re-elected as Rotorua/Taupo's provincial president, Joy Thomas was elected Dairy Chairman and Neil Heather was re-elected Meat & Fibre Chairman. James Houghton was elected as both the Sharemilker and Vice Dairy Chairman. Jamie Patterson was re-elected Treasurer. Chris Paterson, Gaylene Brough, Barbara Hunt, Jocelyn Reeve, Wendy McGowan, Diarmid Somerville and Julian Hughes were elected to the Management Committee.



There is no doubt that we will remember 2008 for the drought. For me it was the worst in 40 years of farming. I cannot remember a drought that killed the browntop in the pastures. I changed three of my policies, which made a bad situation worse; I did not under sow in the autumn of 2007, put in a late 2.5ha of turnips instead of the normal early 10ha and bought in maize silage to milk on in March. For my trouble, I achieved a 30 percent reduction in production and a large overdraft. According to my bank, I am not alone with the overdraft.

The only positive for the year is the under sowing looks a picture, as it should given how the drought killed the competition. Like everybody else I await the day, within the next couple of months, when grass growth exceeds grass demand and this season becomes last season.

In March, a large group of policy staff from MAF, with some additions from the Ministry for the Environment and Treasury, came up to take a look at Lakes Taupo and Rotorua.

On their way through we organised to meet with them and used the Reporoa Pig Hunters club as a base to show them what a real farm was. Due to time constraints we could only show them the differences between a two pond system and effluent irrigation, and a riparian strip that was 300 metres wide and full of blackberry.

The purpose was to make the point that there are no simple answers to water quality.

Thank you to those members who made their 4x4 vehicles available to take the group around. For some of the policy staff it was the first time they'd had an informal face-to-face meeting with farmers.

The next day they met with us and the Rotorua Lakes and Land Trust, which is a joint venture between Federated Farmers Rotorua/Taupo and the Te Arawa Federation of Maori Authorities.

We met in the Ngati Whakaue Tribal Lands woolshed above the airport. On the day Murray Sherwin, CEO of MAF, was present and said they wanted a closer relationship with farmers. I put it to him that MAF needed to support farming in central government. I got a big surprise; MAF had restricted resources and had other stakeholders they had to take care of. Based on this, a couple of questions came to mind; Why bother attending the meeting? And who is representing the farming sector views in central government? I advised him that Federated Farmers Rotorua/Taupo also had scarce resources, and what advantage was in it for farmers meeting with them?

LAKE TAUPO

There will be no progress on Lake Taupo until there is a realisation that the Environment Waikato (EW) solution of pines to pasture is totally flawed. There was never enough money to achieve it and making up the shortfall by only paying farmers a small percentage for their land is not the solution. Federated Farmers of New Zealand has committed over \$200,000 in Environment Court proceedings, our position was farming should be a permitted activity and we need solutions not regulations.

While it is no comfort to our Taupo members, the scheme will collapse and will have a major change in direction if not started again. John Kneebone's statement at the field day that Variation 5 was like a zoning change, it was just bad luck that farmers would get a



big drop in value, is rubbish. By that measure people who live where the new motorway is going should not get full value for their houses.

LAKE ROTORUA

After six months the Land Use Futures Board is not performing how it should. We are having a meeting to set up a strategy to make it more effective. The Land Use Futures Board is a good idea, but has been captured by the Rotorua District Council, so needs sorting out.

HYDRO LAKES

Federated Farmers Rotorua/Taupo set-up the Upper Waikato Community Consultation Project. As a starting position we put forward to make the Upper Waikato "Drinkable, Fishable and Swimable." So far there has been support and we will now meet with Environment Waikato to get some farming effect facts that we can look at. The starting position of Environment Waikato is that farmers need to cut nitrogen outputs from 48kgs to 24kgs to allow for future production increases. To achieve that presently means cutting the stocking rate by half. We don't have to do anything, but I would be willing to have "with out prejudice" talks to see what we can do.

**Gifford McFadden -
Rotorua/Taupo President**



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An informative three days

Well another winter is not far from being over and hopefully we can look forward to a better year, both weather wise and price wise.

FEDERATED FARMERS CONFERENCE

Federated Farmers of New Zealand national conference (One Event) held in Christchurch was a great three days. Some of the highlights included:

Haley Moynihan, Senior Analyst, Dairy and Animal Proteins Rabobank International, spoke about:

- The emergence of new markets and the speed with which market opportunities can both develop and disappear.
- The emergence of global food supply chains/footprints.
- The importance of a market focus and knowing how to extract payment for product attributes.
- The importance of recognising emerging market competitors.

Simon Gatenby, Chief Executive Officer, Taylor Preston Ltd, spoke on:

- The importance of processors meeting the competitive procurement market to secure stock.
- The need for farmers to decide what they want from the industry and to then work out how they can achieve it.
- The extent of processing overcapacity in the industry.
- The expectation of significantly increased returns leveraged off market share strength will be very difficult to achieve in the UK market.

John Perriam of Wool Grower Holdings and the owner of Shrek spoke on:

- The background to the recent developments in the strong wool area.
- The development of the current proposal has been difficult and time consuming.
- Opportunities exist to provide a world-class product by building the right relationship within the industry.
- Growers must take control of the process and market their product with pride.

All very interesting and informative speakers.

A good turn out

On Wednesday 7th May 2008, the 47th annual general meeting was held for our province. We changed the location this year to Reporoa to be more central in the hope of more members attending. As hoped we had a better turn out than in previous years. We appreciate those who made the effort to come out on such a cold night to support the management team who put in a huge effort during the year to take care of our farming interests. The meeting was followed by dinner at the Reporoa Woolshed and the highlights were great speeches from Annabel Young and Charlie Pedersen, both of who are leaving their positions within the Federation.

As a result of the officer elections the Management team for the 2008/2009 year is made up of:

President:
Gifford McFadden, Ph 07 333 8079

MEAT & FIBRE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Bruce Wills of Napier is the new Federated Farmers Meat & Fibre Chairman. Bruce farms 10,000 stock units with his family. He has been farming in his own right for four years having previously spent 20 years in the banking and investment industries.

Jeanette Maxwell is our national Vice-chairwoman. Jeanette farms in partnership with her husband in the foothills of Mid-Canterbury.

Other national executive members are Hamish Cave from Gisborne, Tony Gray from Northern Manawatu and Dugald McLean from North Canterbury.

I think we have a great team and look forward to working with them and seeing the flow of information fed back to all the members of Federated Farmers Meat & Fibre.



ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION

On another note could everyone look at the National Animal Identification and Tracing discussion paper? I am alarmed at what I have learnt. It appears that sheep were always going to be included and this scheme was going to be used as a part of the ETS and reported what stock is held on farm. It is also of concern that local government will have access to this. So could you all have a read and give us some feed back on what you think.

Have a good spring.

**Neil Heather - Rotorua/Taupo
Meat & Fibre Chairman**

Treasurer:
Jamie Patterson, Ph 07 332 2818

Chairman Meat & Fibre:
Neil Heather, Ph 07 357 2142

Vice Chairman Meat & Fibre:
Julian Hughes, Ph 07 333 2725

Chairman Dairy:
Joy Thomas, Ph 07 333 8655

Vice Chairman Dairy:
James Houghton, Ph 07 882 8244

Team Members:
Wendy McGowan - Kaharoa
Barbara Hunt - Rotoiti
Chris Patterson - Kaharoa
Jocelyn Reeves - Mangakino
Stuart Morrison - Rotorua
Diarmid Sommerville - Wairekei
Lachlan McKenzie - Kaharoa
Gaylene Brough - Rerewhakaaitu

Environment issues continue

Environmental issues continue to be one of our areas of concern, in particular the responses of the Regional and District Councils to them.



Issues of nutrient losses to water and water use are being worked on for Lake Taupo, Rotorua lakes and the Upper Waikato.

There is a lot at stake for individual farmers and informing the debate, especially among those council staff with a regulatory mind-set, continues to be a challenge.

Federated Farmers recently had their annual conference where Charlie Pedersen, former Federated Farmers of NZ President, highlighted a case illustrating the effect on individuals caught up on the wrong side of environmental regulation.

For the Rotorua lakes, given the impact on individuals of the approach put forward so far by the council, we are not convinced of the soundness of the environmental plan; in terms of the mix and emphasis of solutions involved, in particular, the lack of economic analysis.

In Rotorua we are emphasising a search for solutions to nutrient loss through research efforts. At the same time as continuing to push for an approach that does not destroy dairying in the catchment, but rather sees it as being part of the vision for the future of the area.

The Regional Council have cooperated in setting up a group that includes farmers known as the Land Use Futures Board. This will examine how landuse management and landuse change can be achieved to improve the Rotorua Lakes, this is going some way towards collaboration and is an opportunity to put forward our perspective and influence the outcome.

Environmental pressures around water, its use and the losses of nutrients to it, will increase. In Environment Waikato's area the Firth of Thames is being considered as a sensitive catchment and Horizons in the Manawatu are very much concentrating on nitrogen losses. Councils may need to become a bit more flexible in their thinking on this to get workable solutions. Farmers urgently need the tools to deal with this.

Other issues on the table are Rotorua District Councils rate review and their 10 year plan, the national identification scheme, carbon emission policy and Fonterra's capital restructure.

Stuart Morrison - Rotorua/Taupo Dairy

Drought Buster Night

As a treat for our members, in the middle of the worst drought in recent times, we thought we would host a social event to bring some cheer to stressed out farmers. So on the 16th May we held a quiz night at the Tirohonga Hall.



The night was a real success with locals filling the hall and having a great time. We had many prizes thanks to: Farmlands Rotorua, Vet Plus Rotorua, the SPCA, Merial/Ancare and Tokoroa Veterinary Services.

Although Federated Farmers hosted the night, the Rural Trust came forward in covering most of the costs for additional prizes and supper (of which the locals also made an enormous contribution).

Many thanks also go out to Wendy Hilhorst for her help in organising the event. It would not have been such a success without her.

**Tina Marshall - Rotorua/Taupo
Administrator**

Common ground

Rotorua/Taupo president, Gifford, called for the community to work together to solve the Rotorua lakes problem in a speech given at the Lakes Water Quality Society Symposium in Rotorua.

Gifford gave a speech that detailed actions farmers in the area are taking to combat nutrient loss from farms, and talked about what else needs to be done in order to ensure lake water quality improvement without destroying the local economy.

To read Gifford's full speech visit www.fedfarm.org.nz and go to Our News, Speeches.



Nuffield travels with Ali



At the beginning of July, half way through my Nuffield global focus tour, I realised that I was starting to think about agriculture and politics and farmer networks in

a much bigger way than just New Zealand. Travel has broadened my perspective. It occurred to me that this is exactly what the Nuffield Scholarship tour was meant to do, encourage me to think bigger and bolder and have confidence in myself.

When I first saw the Nuffield tour programme I felt overwhelmed at the pace and schedule that was being set for us. It turned out not only to be a logistical feat, worthy of being called 'The Amazing Race', it was also a physical endurance challenge. To spend 42 days travelling with 10 other people literally around the world to discover farming on four continents seemed an ambitious and slightly foolhardy task. How could we possibly make any sense of it? Yet that is exactly what we did. We shared meals with New Zealand, Irish, French, American and Chinese farmers, kicked dirt in their fields and debated issues. We saw produce markets, met with bankers and town planners. We met up with cooperate farmers, peasant farmers, farmers who lived on subsidies and farmers who had to sink or swim on their own initiative.

Farmers in each of these countries took the

time to explain their philosophy about farming and what they dreamed of. It has been a humbling and totally motivating experience for me.

I have now set off on my Nuffield solo travels searching for some ways to resolve the urban-rural disconnection. The pace will slow down and I will get to spend more time with people and to develop my thinking. So far everyone I have met has affirmed my study topic and shown an interest in being involved in it. I think that it is true that farmers around the world are feeling the same pressures from negative urban perceptions.

Over the next three months I will participate in a leadership course in America, work for two weeks with leading rural advocacy groups in the UK, meet with some French farmer activists and, I hope, co-lead a workshop with German and Austrian environmentalists and farmers. In between times I plan to visit past Nuffield scholars and learn more about farming and farm politics. There is a lot to do and take in. I aim to work hard and use this opportunity to really extend myself.

If you are interested in putting yourself forward for a Nuffield scholarship drop me an email: aundorflay@fedfarm.org.nz, I'd be more than happy to answer any of your questions or help you out with an application.

Regards

**Ali Undorf-Lay, Federated Farmers of NZ
Provincial Communications Coordinator**

It can take just a phone call

When George and Marjorie Morrison rang Don Nicolson, President Federated Farmers of NZ, with the idea that Federated Farmers should look at the Canadian farmers' 'Farmers Feed Cities' campaign, I don't think he realised that we would have the opportunity to visit their campaign manager in Toronto.



One of the great things about being a Nuffield scholar is the emphasis on spontaneity; being willing and able to follow a lead. Because I was visiting the Farm Bureau (the American version of Federated Farmers of New Zealand in Washington), it was relatively easy and cheap to hop on a plane and fly up to Toronto.

I found Scott Allison, campaign manager for Farmers Feed Cities positive and enthusiastic. We had a great meeting where we talked over urban-rural politics and issues that we had in common. Scott said that their campaign was the Ontario farmers' response to the

increasing lack of understanding that city people had about rural matters. The farmers wanted to remind their city neighbours that the food they ate was a healthy local product grown by people that they knew. They were also keen for city people to realise that the Canadian countryside was a working farm landscape, which was highly productive and profitable.

These arguments are the same that we use in Resource Management Act district and regional planning submissions when we want to remind councils that regulation should not be set so high that it removes the right to farm. Farmers need to be able to work their land and grow food without having to constantly think about what consents they might need.

I was impressed with the Farmers Feed Cities campaign and I think it could work well here in New Zealand. I was also pleased that Federated Farmers is an organisation where a member feels welcome to ring a national president with a suggestion. We all have to take responsibility for making our organisation a more effective lobby group. George and Marjorie's story shows how even a phone call can make a difference.

If you are interest in reading more on Farmers Feed Cities visit their website: www.farmersfeedcities.com.

**Ali Undorf-Lay - Federated Farmers of NZ
Provincial Communications Coordinator**