

## New look website for the Federation

The new and improved Federated Farmers website is up and running and will soon be a one-stop shop for members. Shortly members will be able to purchase and pay for items through the website as well as find possible employees for their farms. Both functions farmers have asked for.

A working group, comprising provincial presidents and Strategic Communications staff, worked in the development of the new website with the purpose of providing members a more functional and easier to use website. Feedback collected from members and staff drove the changes for the website.

Communications Advisor, Kara Tait says that the new website was an ideal place to showcase the Federation's new branding while also providing a more professional image for Federated Farmers.

Among the many new features on the website are 'Have your Say' and 'Polls'.

To date, the 'Have your say' feature has been extremely popular with members having the chance to air their opinions on topics such as, debating control in the meat industry and whether or not NAIT is on the right track.



The online polls, viewed in the members section, allow members to vote on various topics such as what they see as the biggest issue facing farmers. It also shows the results and gives an indication on how other members feel.

The feedback from both staff and Federation

members has been positive, with both parties excited about the future enhancements in the not too distant future. The new look website went live in July 2008.

Phase two, of the website development project, will allow members the ability to pay their membership fees, purchase contracts or agreements, as well as access rural job vacancies across the country. It is planned that phase two will roll out in the next six months.

Phase three will allow members to update their details online in a more streamlined manner. The release date for phase three is to be confirmed.

While there are a number of new features on the website, the website address is still the same. Visit [www.fedfarm.org.nz](http://www.fedfarm.org.nz) for a look at the new and improved site.

## 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](mailto: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**

Hawke's Bay Federated Farmers  
publishes regular newsletters to keep our members informed

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



HAWKE'S BAY

# LOCAL VOICE

## PROVINCIAL NEWSLETTER



HAWKE'S BAY

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2008

## Beyond reasonable drought

On 14 May 2008, myself and three other representatives on the Hawke's Bay Drought Committee, flew down to Marlborough to attend a field day called "Beyond Reasonable Drought". The purpose of this field day was to see if we could learn anything that might be applicable to Hawke's Bay farmers after back to back droughts.

The field day was extremely well attended with around 420 people from across the country. The field day was on the property "Bonavaree", owned by Doug and Wendy Avery and son Fraser who is the operations manager. This 1100 hectare property has experienced 11 years of below average rainfall, which historically had been 576mm, but is now 481mm per year. After eight years of this, Doug said a moment of realisation came over him. He said he suddenly understood he couldn't keep doing what he and generations before him had been doing, it was economically and environmentally unsustainable. The hills were eroding, stock performance was falling and the bottom line was regularly in the red.

In 2004 concerned local farmers formed a group to address the issues with the assistance of the NZ Landcare Trust. The group is named the 'Starborough Flaxbourne Soil Conservation Group'. The Landcare Trust stepped in to fund the project together with Sustainable Farming Fund, Marlborough District Council, Marlborough Research Centre and Transpower.

What followed was a complete redesign of the farming systems, moving away from lucerne supplements and ryegrass based feed to one based around lucerne being eaten directly by lactating ewes and their lambs. Lucerne now covers over 25 percent of the farm with annual grasses and barley filling the late winter feed gap, while the hills are only lightly grazed to help protect the fragile soils. Pre-weaning lamb growth rates average 390 grams per head per day as the Avery's aim is to maximise income in the safest part of the year rather than the at-risk or recovery periods.

Bonavaree follows an annual cropping rotation, from grass to barley to fallow (to

conserve moisture over summer) to lucerne. Lucerne crops will last 10-15 years if well managed and the Avery's have learnt plenty as they have adapted their systems. Because lucerne is low in salt, salt blocks are always available to stock and access to roughage is also important. Soil ph levels in excess of 5.8 and good fertility levels are essential for the successful establishment of lucerne.



*Bonavaree hoggets move across a new stand of 'super-sonic' (winter active) lucerne.*

Before going onto pure lucerne paddocks, stock are introduced to transition paddocks. These are old lucerne blocks with plenty of volunteer grasses available. This is done because it takes two weeks for the gut to adjust. Grazing intervals for lucerne are very important and will vary depending on time of year. Resting the plant for flowering in late summer is also a must.

The Avery's run a 2,450 breeding ewe flock with 650 ewe hoggets, 150 breeding cows, 60 trading cattle and grazing dairy cows/heifers when conditions permit. Lucerne seed crops add to the income as the area of lucerne increases. Last season ewes weaned 134 percent, hoggets 88 percent with 90 percent of the lambs finished before the summer dry. 18 month old cattle are finished on lucerne before summer also.

A major aim of intensifying the easier country was to ease the grazing pressure on the hills prone to erosion. We learnt that these hills only grow 2,000 kilograms of dry matter per hectare per year - less than half what the driest Hawke's Bay hills grow. The Avery's have experimented with planting areas in saltbush and tree lucerne to both

protect the soils and provide a fodder source. While these plantings looked healthy, the area planted would have to increase markedly to have a major influence on soil erosion. In collaboration with the Marlborough District Council, the Avery's have identified several Significant Natural Areas (SNAs) and protected them from stock. An impressive wetland and regenerating gully are two such areas.

Discussion among our Hawke's Bay group about take home messages was interesting. We all thought tree planting for stock and the environment was probably a better accepted message in Hawke's Bay than Marlborough. But, accepting that climate change was upon us, we have to adapt to survive and prosper - the Avery family and support group are way ahead of us. Nowhere in Hawke's Bay is as dry as this part of Marlborough. With a vision and support from associated groups, a new system is evolving that will enable sustainable, profitable livestock farming to continue.

Irrigation is the key to large areas of our province's prosperity. Water harvesting will become more important as water takes from rivers and aquifers come under increasing pressure. Where irrigation is not an option, alternative feed sources that need less water to grow will become necessary and lucerne and deeper rooting grasses/crops come into play. Planting saltbush and tree lucerne blocks on some of Hawke's Bay's drier hills could also help feed stock during drought periods.

Before any of the above is contemplated however, a comprehensive analysis of your property and your stocking systems is needed to ensure any changes made are economically and environmentally sustainable. The enthusiasm and dedication of the Avery family was a pleasure to behold, I hope it rubs off.

Many thanks to MAF and the Hawke's Bay Primary Producers Adverse Events Trust for sponsoring this trip, it was well worth it.

**Kevin Mitchell - Hawke's Bay President**



## The outlook for the year ahead

For the third season in a row sheep and beef farmers have been subject to poor product prices, often below the cost of production. On top of that are successive droughts which have severely affected the southern half of Hawke's Bay. If 2007 was one of the toughest seasons in recent memory then 2008 was the toughest for most who farmed south of Hastings.

Hawke's Bay Federated Farmers has been involved in a provincial drought committee to monitor and help alleviate the insidious effects of drought on farming families and businesses. Federated Farmers thanks those people and organisations who contributed to helping our fellow farmers.

A direct repercussion of the drought is the huge drop in sheep numbers. MAF recently released a document titled 'Situation and Outlook' which reports that the national flock is currently 34.4 million, down from 38 million last year. Also contributing to the decreasing sheep numbers is the change from sheep to dairy, dairy support and cropping. MAF forecast 9.3 million less sheep available for killing next year.

The forecast is for a substantial lift in lamb returns (around 20 percent) without any currency effect. With fuel, energy and fertilizer cost inputs rising rapidly, NZ sheep farmers need over \$90 for a 17 kilo lamb, just to stand still. This is a distinct possibility with world supply and demand factors firmly in our favour, as well as a depreciating NZ dollar.

Beef prices in the 2007/2008 season have been reasonable for finished stock, but with the drought a lot of stock ended up on the store market. This drove the prices down all

over the country. Current manufacturing beef prices in the US are at an all time high due to two main factors; the economic downturn resulting in the US beef consumers turning to cheaper alternatives, for example hamburgers instead of steak, and the feedlot costs rising as grain is diverted into the biofuel industry. The forecast price for a 300 kg bull in November 2008 is \$4.67 per kg, which is \$1.40 ahead of last year.



Wool prices during the 2007/2008 season have been the lowest real returns for over 50 years. The 'Wool Industry Network' (WIN) strategy to reposition strong wool as a premium fibre, using a vertically integrated model, is an aggressive and positive move. WIN is prepared to work with current brokers, exporters and agents who support the new initiative. I urge strong wool producers to support WIN.

The NZ Meat Industry is now in a 'watershed' position. Decisions made by shareholders of Silver Fern Farms (formally PPCS), concerning the proposed merger with PGG Wrightsons, could potentially change the way meat is marketed overseas. Until we get a marketing company or a group of companies

controlling close to 80 percent of the sheep meat market, we will forever be price takers and not price makers.

Dairying continues to lift its profitability. Future returns for milk solids are forecast to be nearer to \$6 per kg but continue to look good as world demand for protein sources grows, particularly in Asia.

Venison prices have risen above \$8 per kg for the first time in over eight years and this is up 58 percent up on this time last year. Deer farmers now have a problem supplying markets with year round venison because deer numbers have dropped hugely over the last few years. Velvet returns have been disappointing in recent times but are forecast to rise slowly as the Korean economy recovers.

The impact of farming on the environment is currently the most challenging issue facing Federated Farmers. Sustainable farming is the aim of the vast majority of NZ farmers but that must include economic sustainability. The most contentious issue is the proposed Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS). An average NZ sheep and beef farm would be paying \$40,000 per year at a world carbon price of \$25 per tonne and it is suggested the price of carbon will rise even further in the years to come. No other country in the world has included agricultural emissions in their Kyoto obligations.

The outlook for pastoral farming is bright with product prices being driven up by a world shortage of protein. Tempering this optimism is the ever increasing cost of farming inputs and government driven compliance costs.

**Kevin Mitchell - Hawke's Bay President**

## No major Tb issues

As there were no major issues over Tb outbreaks in Hawke's Bay this last year, our RAHC committee met only five times during the year. This included a very successful field trip we organised to show AHB staff, regional councillors and our local politicians the issues facing vector management in the Hawke's Bay hinterland.

The bus trip traversed Raupunga, Putere, Waikaremoana, the Ruakituri Valley to Te Reinga, the Whakapunaki TV tower and on to



Maru Maru and the bottom end of the Wairoa buffer. My thanks to the sub committee that organised the day, Denis Mitchell, Terry Hynes, Alec Olsen and Owen Harris who gave an excellent commentary as we drove around the area.

We started the year with three infected Tb herds in June 2007, peaked at five herds in August and finished the year with four infected Tb herds.

There were no major outbreaks during the year, but a feral pig was found with Tb through a proof of freedom survey carried out in the Gwavas forest. The REA type of M Bovis was 115, the common Central North Island strain. This result indicates a high probability that the pig became infected locally from infected possum, although the possibility that the pig was relocated from an endemic area cannot

be ruled out.

The Hawke's Bay Regional Council is working closely with the Animal Health Board to transition AHB Vector control operation over to the PCAs once AHB funding is pulled from an area. The Ohuia area will be the first attempt at this transition in the Wairoa area.

After six years as Chairman, I feel it is time to move aside and I know the committee will give Dennis Mitchell their full support as the new chairman. I wish to thank the committee and AHB staff for their support in the past and I look forward to helping the committee in the future.

Thank you also to the AHB's regional coordinator Terry Hynes and our secretary Kate Taylor for their work through the year.

**Dan von Dadelszen**

## The Building Amendment Bill

The Building Amendment Bill, the legislation that puts in place the legislative framework for dam safety has been enacted, and the Building Amendment Act 2008 came into force on 15 March 2008.



The current position is as follows:

- Small dams (those under three metres in height and 20,000 cubic metres of water) will not require a building consent. This will be good for most of our members as 20,000 cubic metres of water is equivalent in size to 5-6 olympic-sized swimming pools. The definition of small dam provides a loophole for farmers in that they can get out of needing a building consent by either keeping the height of the dam below 3 metres or by ensuring that the dam holds less than 20,000 cubic metres of water.
- Small dam owners do not need to certify their dam for potential impact. No small farm dams will be classified as medium-high potential impact dams unless there is 'immediate danger' if they fail. Hence small farm dam owners will not need to prepare a dam safety assurance program or submit an annual compliance certificate - unless there are special circumstances.
- Larger dams will require building consents. In addition, their status will need to be reviewed every five years or at any time building work that requires a building consent is carried out on the dam.
- Owners of medium and large dams will also have to seek the assistance of a

recognised engineer to classify their dam for its potential impact in the event of a failure. It is likely that most farm dams will be classified as low potential impact dams owing to the fact that they hold relatively small amounts of water and are in rural areas - hence are unlikely to harm large numbers of people. However, it is possible that some may have moderate to high impacts.

- Dams which are classified as having medium to high potential impacts will have to submit a dam safety assurance program and annual compliance certificate to the regional authority. These measures will cost the dam owner.
- There was a proposal for dam owners to become accredited, which would have exempted them from the need for an annual compliance certificate, but this has been scrapped as the costs of accreditation for the owner would be higher than the cost savings from becoming accredited.
- Dam owners will have 27 months from

30 June 2008 to get their dam certified (if required) by a recognised engineer.

An important issue will be the implementation by regional councils. It is possible that those wanting to build large farm dams will encounter difficulty getting a building consent and there will be compliance costs surrounding dam safety assurance programs and compliance certificates. Regional councils are looking to cluster into several providers to share the work (rather than each of the councils doing their own thing and establishing their own bureaucracies) so this might help in that respect. It is unclear whether the monitoring and site inspections costs will rise due to large travel distances, but this is a possibility.

Federated Farmers continues to be involved in a Regional Authority Working Group that is discussing the implementation of the Dam Safety Scheme.

**William McGimpsey - Federated Farmers of NZ, Policy Advisor/Economist**

The table below shows the estimated costs of the Dam safety scheme for Dam owners. Please note that discussions have led me to believe that these figures may underestimate the true costs to dam owners.

	High Potential Impact	Medium Potential Impact	Low Potential Impact	Total
Estimated percentage of all dams	20 percent		80 percent	100 percent
Estimated cost per dam (NZ\$)	2,250	1,350	600	-
Estimated initial regulatory costs for dam owners in the first three years (NZ\$)	-	-	-	\$1.2 to 1.8 million for all public dams \$800,000 to 1.2 for all private dams
Approx 690 public dams and 460 private dams				
Cost of preparing a dam safety assurance programme per dam (NZ\$)	6000	6000	-	-

## FRIDAY FLASH

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

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

Register today by emailing "subscribe to the Friday Flash" to [mail@fedfarm.org.nz](mailto:mail@fedfarm.org.nz), login to our website, [www.fedfarm.org.nz](http://www.fedfarm.org.nz), or phone 0800 327 646 to receive by fax.

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## NAIT news

### RECAP

Last year Federated Farmers Meat & Fibre delegates passed a resolution supporting, in principle, the electronic identification and traceability of cattle. No detailed information was available at that time, but it appeared a reasonable and worthwhile idea based on biosecurity and market assurance issues.



In July 2008 the Meat & Fibre executive received the National Animal Identification and Tracing's Biosecurity Discussion Document giving the first detail of the proposal and were asked for submissions by 1 August 2008.

A number of issues are of concern:

1. The financial analysis doesn't stack up. Costs outweigh the benefits. Some of the assumptions regarding on farm benefits

are wildly optimistic.

2. The scope of the NAIT document has grown enormously and now suggests inclusion of sheep. There are also onerous on-farm compliance requirements.
3. There is reference to the NAIT database being used for other purposes including the emission trading scheme.

This is a very different proposal to what was outlined 12 months ago. Farmers would be burdened with yet more cost and compliance for little proven benefit. The NAIT concept has taken on a life of its own and farmers are again faced with more rules, regulations and costs with no apparent commercial gain.

### ACTION TAKEN

Meetings and discussions were held with the NAIT Governance Group and their funding organisations (Meat & Wool New Zealand, Dairy NZ, DINZ, MIA, and DCANZ) to seek further information and clarification. Most of these groups share Federated Farmers concerns and many are also talking with NAIT. At this stage Federated Farmers awaits clarification on issues raised with NAIT before forming its final view. The close off for the Federated Farmers submission has been delayed until this information has

been supplied.

### MEAT & FIBRE'S POSITION

There are some positives around electronic identification and traceability. However, Federated Farmers remains unconvinced over the commercial drivers and overall benefits and see little reason to support the NAIT proposal in its current form. Federated Farmers is also concerned about use of collected data for other purposes. The Federation is not convinced that enough consideration has been given to a more cost effective alignment within existing capabilities and structures like the Animal Health Board. Members can be assured that Federated Farmers will continue to pursue the above issues to ensure that the interests of Meat & Fibre producers are protected.

### HAVE YOUR SAY

If you wish to have your say about the issue, the easiest way is to use the Feds blog. You can also find it in the "Our Work/Have Your Say/Is NAIT on right track?" part of the Federated Farmers website [www.fedfarm.org.nz](http://www.fedfarm.org.nz)

*Extract from The Rambull*

*The newsletter from Federated Farmers  
Meat & Fibre Section*

## Tb Committee Update

*Hawke's Bay TB Free Committee  
(Previously known as Hawke's Bay RAHC)*

The Animal Health Board supports 15 Regional Animal Health Committees (RAHCs) to maintain effective links with the farming community and stakeholders at a regional level.

These committees advocate for the Tb programme in their regions and are an important source of advice and feedback to the AHB on policy and operational issues.



The Hawke's Bay RAHC is now known as the Hawke's Bay TB Free Committee and meets every two months in Napier to hear reports from AsureQuality on ASD and tag compliance at our region's sale yards, vector management (Owen Harris from the Hawke's Bay Regional Council), district disease control (Garth Pannett from AsureQuality) and regional AHB coordinator Terry Hynes (who is based in Dannevirke).

**Contact:** Dennis Mitchell - Chairman  
Hawke's Bay Tb Free Committee Phone:  
06 834 0302.

## Sound advice for the young

Alec Olsen, a member of the Hawke's Bay Executive regularly has agricultural students on his farm as an extension of their classroom learning. He is often asked to address these groups. When he was asked to comment on agriculture and what students need to learn, he said ...

- "Communication skills are very important. Successful farmers need to have a good standard of spoken and written English, not the least so that they can self educate for the rest of their lives. If you find English difficult, don't give up. Get enough help to get the basics under control. Coping with the ever increasing bureaucracy in agriculture involves extensive reading and comprehension."
- "Mathematics is important too. While farmers don't often need calculus, they do need a good working knowledge of fractions, percentages, ratios and arithmetic in general. If you find you're behind in this area, get some help to catch up."
- "Don't limit your studies to just agriculture if you have passions in the wider field. You may have a love for speaking French, making fine joinery, indulging in art and drama, or playing cricket? That's great! All these things will make you a better farmer, and it's often surprising how practical connections with your passions turn up. Amongst my neighbours and colleagues some of the best farmers began in such fields as engineering, bookbinding, house painting, newspaper publishing, commercial fishing, construction, and even law. Farming needs a wide variety of people with wide interests."



*Students from Fiji on a farm tour, getting up close and personal with some Mohair goats.*

- "The primary industry involves more than people working directly on the land. Opportunities also exist in farm service industries: finance and banking, engineering, environmental, fertiliser, retail, electronics and communication, and much more. Take for example the new general manager for PGG Wrightson Hawke's Bay, Steve Goodman. I understand he began as a shepherd on a large South Island run, changed to farm finance with Westpac, then to the stock and station business."
- "The next generation involved in primary production will need to be much more aware of the existence and impact of the RMA and relevant Local Government Management Plans. Increasingly the natural conflict between various land uses is producing more regulations, and those at the 'points of impact' will need to be armed with enough knowledge to defend their positions and broker sensible compromises."

## 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](http://www.farmersfeedcities.com).

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



FEDERATED FARMERS  
HAWKE'S BAY



**NEXT MEETING**  
HAWKE'S BAY

The next meeting of the Hawke's Bay Federated Farmers Executive Committee will be held:

**6pm, Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2008**  
**Fruit Growers Association Offices  
Stratford Lodge, Hastings**

All members are most welcome

On the agenda will be National Animal Identification and Traceability (NAIT), Carbon and Farming.

**Come and hear what Federated Farmers is doing for you.**

## Primary sector united on water issues

New Zealand's primary sector groups released a document that reconfirms their commitment to the sustainable management of the nation's valuable freshwater resources.

The release of the Primary Sector Water Partnership Leadership Document sets out a collective action plan which has been endorsed by all the partners. There are also some sector specific targets.

The Partnership group consists of Fonterra, Dairy NZ, the Foundation for Arable Research, Horticulture NZ, Meat and Wool NZ, New Zealand Forest Owners Association and NZ Farm Forestry Association, Irrigation New Zealand, Fertiliser Manufacturers Research Association and Federated Farmers.

Partnership chairman, Hawke's Bay farmer

Hugh Ritchie says the document is designed to establish a basis whereby the sector can engage with regional councils and co-ordinate the efforts of the primary sector and research organisations with the objective of improving the management of freshwater in New Zealand.

The focus of the plan is to achieve real positive change in water use and quality. He says the Partnership has already talked to some regional councils and more consultation is planned shortly to ensure available financial and human resources are directed towards where the greatest gains can be made.

"The Partnership has also taken the step of engaging with environmental and recreational organisations to explain what the group is trying to achieve and to seek constructive

feedback on what has been proposed. We are also encouraging other primary sector organisations to join the initiative.

"The various organisations in the partnership have been working on this initiative for two years and this demonstrates that the primary sector recognise the importance of carefully managing water resources and how committed they are to dealing with the matter".

Two of the key goals outlined in the document are about maintaining and enhancing water quality from primary production land and the group has achieved demonstrable improvements in water use efficiency by the primary sector within five years.

**Contact: Hugh Ritchie on 027 444 1224**

## Call for leaders

Federated Farmers of NZ 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 and using practical methods and workshops to suit hands-on types. There are two courses which promote both leadership and team building.

If you think that you can make a difference with some polished leadership skills give your President, Kevin Mitchell a call, 06 834 0301, to discuss attending a course.

**2008 COURSE DATES:  
Getting Your Feet Wet  
26-27 November 2008**

**Advanced  
Leadership Skills  
3-4 December 2008**

## Employment Seminars Mark your diary now!!

14 October 2008, 10:00am  
Angus Hotel, Railway Road, Hastings

14 October 2008, 2:00pm  
Services & Citizens Club  
1 Princess Street, Dannevirke

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,  
295 Gladstone Road, Gisborne

**\$30.00 per person**

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

## Carbon farming

Whether you believe in the science or not, "Carbon Farming" as a result of climate change appears to have arrived and many large land owners are making enquires. MAF has set up a programme called the Permanent Forest Sink Initiative (PFSI) that promotes the establishment of permanent forests on land that was previously unforested. The growth of these new trees gives the owner the ability to accumulate carbon credits, which is based on the carbon being stored in the growing trees. This process then allows the owner to generate income through the sale of these carbon credits to industries that wish to offset their carbon footprint.

For the purpose of "Carbon Farming" MAF has a rather unique definition of what a forest is and the simplest way to tell if your block qualifies is to visit their website [www.maf.govt.nz/forestry/pfsi](http://www.maf.govt.nz/forestry/pfsi), which takes you through a flow chart.

There are a few basic requirements though. The block of land has to be at least one hectare and has to be at least 30m wide which eliminates many shelter belts. The establishment of the forest also has to be as a result of human intervention through planting or seeding. The land also has to not meet the definition of a forest as of the 31<sup>st</sup> December 1989. The easiest way to explain this last rule is via some basic examples, which are also shown on the MAF website. If you began with bare farmland as of the 31<sup>st</sup> December 1989 and were converting this to forest, this would most likely qualify for credits. Land covered in gorse that could be planted out or left to naturally regenerate into forest would also probably qualify. Scattered Manuka or Kanuka would also likely meet the criteria, as would a forest of fast growing exotics planted after the 31<sup>st</sup> December 1989, such as poplar or willow.

Examples of land that would not qualify include dense Manuka or Kanuka, or land that has been in a regular forest harvesting cycle. Other non qualifiers would include an exotic forest established before the 31<sup>st</sup> December 1989.

Interestingly, it is possible to harvest a certain amount of timber from a permanent forest under these rules, as long as a certain canopy is retained. The best land suited to being a permanent forest is not land involved in regular rotation forestry. Ideally it is land that can be retired permanently due to erosion issues or possibly where the cost of extracting trees is economically prohibitive. Obviously it is difficult to say how much this process could be worth to a farmer as it is going to be market driven. However, much

of the land that would be suitable for this purpose currently provides little or no income to a farmer so this can be a way of maximising productivity. Many farmers are considering retiring land that is at the back of the property, partly due to the cost of fuel to get to these areas. This then allows focus to be delivered to the more productive areas.

Although the election is imminent, policies from the National Party indicate that this initiative will stand.

Once you have located land that is to be retired it has to be measured. The Surveying Company has been providing this type of measurement service as part of their QEII Covenant work for many years and is looking at applying these abilities to this new initiative.



If you have any questions regarding the above you can research the website [www.maf.govt.nz/forestry/pfsi](http://www.maf.govt.nz/forestry/pfsi) or simply give The Surveying Company a call, as we have the necessary contacts 0800 TO SURVEY (0800 867 878).

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**CARBON SEMINAR**  
*Carbon - Coming ready or not*

Meeting: Hawke's Bay Farm Forestry Association

Venue: Havelock North Community Centre

Date: 18th September 2008

Cost: \$20.00

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**THEME CARBON... COMING READY OR NOT!**

9:30am Registration, Morning Tea

10:00am Key Note Speaker Julia Hoare  
PricewaterhouseCoopers - Carbon Overview

11:00am Pat Hawinkels & Dean Evans  
- MAF - Current Policy on Carbon, Status of ETS

12:00pm Lunch

12:30pm Three Case Studies -  
*15 to 20 minutes each*

1. Peter Weblin - PF Olsen - Marketing Manager
2. Greg Hart - Elsthorpe Farmer & Air New Zealand Green Partner
3. Neil Woods - GM Sustainable Forestry Management Ltd.

1:45pm Les Probert - Mayor - Wairoa District Council

1:50pm Prof. Bruce Manley - Canterbury University

2:45pm Panel discussions for all speakers

3:15pm Federated Farmers wrap up - Alec Olsen & Bruce Wills

3:30pm Afternoon tea and close

## Carbon Seminar - Bios

**ANDREW NEWMAN** is the Chief Executive of Hawke's Bay Regional Council, having taken up the position in May last year. Andrew has a strong background in the forest industries and before returning to New Zealand worked in Sydney as the Chief Commercial Officer of Ensis, the joint venture for CSIRO and SCION's science and technology activities across the forestry industry. Andrew was previously General Manager Forest Research Australasia in Sydney and Manager Strategic Development at Forest Research in Rotorua. Andrew trained as a soil conservator and has skills in strategy, business development and marketing.

**JULIA HOARE** is the leader for the PricewaterhouseCoopers team specializing in Climate Change Services. Julia first became personally interested in carbon issues around 2002 when she was involved in critiquing the framework for how a carbon tax may be implemented in NZ. She realised that the effect of a price on carbon would have significant economic implications to NZ organisations and it was critical all New Zealanders understood how a price on carbon would impact on their future actions and activities. She therefore set up a climate change team within PricewaterhouseCoopers to help assist clients in carbon readiness.

**PAT HAWINKELS** is a Senior Programme Advisor with Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF). A forest owner, he has had 20 years in the forestry industry, and before joining MAF he worked for CHH on harvesting and procurement. He says there are some very good opportunities for farmers and foresters to get into this carbon environment. "I don't believe it is going to go away in a carbon constrained world." For those with marginal land there are opportunities to make something out of carbon. "People need to be aware of what is out there and what is coming up and what the different schemes are. The more I work with carbon the more passionate I am about it," he says.

**PAT AND DEAN EVANS**, also currently with MAF and with 20 years involvement with forestry and a five year spell with the Department of Conservation, will give a joint presentation on Current policy on Carbon and the Status of the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS).

**PETER WEBLIN** is the Marketing Manager for PF Olsen Ltd. Peter will speak on the opportunities he sees for farmers and foresters for trading in carbon. Peter has worked with PF Olsen for five years and started out as a forestry trainee with the NZ Forest Service and has held a range of operational, management and planning roles with various companies including Rayonier, Works Infrastructure and Fletcher Forests. He is focussed on finding ways for forest owners to benefit from the carbon market.

**GREG HART** farms a 610ha sheep and beef property near Elsthorpe in Central Hawke's Bay with his wife Rachel. His interest in sustainable agriculture has led to appreciating the role trees play in a productive farming system, and they have formed a partnership with Air New Zealand through their recently established Environment Trust. They have begun to plant a 40ha gully in native trees and incorporating trees into the landscape. This year more than 36,000 trees have been planted on the farm.

**NEIL WOODS** the general manager of Sustainable Forestry Management who has the first PFSI registered forest in NZ, and is in a joint venture with Ngati Porou. He's had a 25 year career in corporate forestry and consulting with Poyry Consulting, and joined SFM in January this year. Although he's always been based in NZ and focussed on the plantation forestry industry mainly in the central North Island, he's done a lot of offshore work including plantings of paulownia and bamboo. He says about carbon is that it fits his personal belief that we have to do more for the environment than we are currently.

**LES PROBERT** is the current mayor of the Wairoa District Council. Les will speak on the goal of Wairoa's goal of becoming carbon neutral.

**BRUCE MANLEY** is an Associate Professor in Forest Management & Head of the NZ School of Forestry Convenor, and the NZ Institute of Forestry Forest Valuation Working Party. In 2007 he was Project Technical Manager for the PFSI Carbon Accounting Design Team. In 2008 he undertook a project with Piers Maclaren & final year forestry students "Carbon trading and forestry decision-making".