

# Combined Wairarapa District Plan

Decisions on the Proposed Combined District Plan have been released and generally speaking we are pleased with the outcomes. The process from early draft and consultation stages to this version has taken around six years. It has been the tireless efforts of the presidents, executive committee and interested landowners throughout this period (along with the support of dedicated policy staff of course!) that has created the relative success for rural landowners to enjoy going forward.

Overall the experience was very positive, with the submissions from both Federated Farmers and individual landowners being well received by the Hearing Commissioners. The once highly contentious scrub clearance rules have been amended to the satisfaction of all major stakeholders and ensured that outside certain areas (i.e. identified significant natural areas) kanuka, manuka and tauhinu can be cleared as a permitted activity.



Other favourable decisions support the councils' commitment to ensure that rural land use continues and that reverse sensitivity effects do not unduly impact on primary production. Further, the deletion of Ponatahi Hills and inclusion of a legal description for Maungaraki Ridge in the Outstanding Landscapes Schedule are positive changes. Other changes were made which, in our opinion, bring the plan more in line with council responsibilities under the Resource Management Act.

There are, however, still a number of issues which didn't get resolved satisfactorily and appeals to the Environment Court have been lodged on those points. These relate to newly introduced restrictions on earthworks, continuing concerns around significant waterways, esplanade reserves, the number of dwellings per Certificate of Title in coastal areas, unnecessary restrictions on goat farming and land use rules in the Flood Hazard or Erosion Hazard areas.

As the appeals process develops more detailed information will be released and your feedback sought in relation to the issues that are still 'live'.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of the points under appeal or the plan in general then please contact me on [hgubb@fedfarm.org.nz](mailto:hgubb@fedfarm.org.nz) or phone 0800 327 646.

**Hilary Gubb - Federated Farmers of NZ Policy Advisor, East Coast**

# LOCAL VOICE

## PROVINCIAL NEWSLETTER



WAIRARAPA

SEPTEMBER 2008

## Drying out at last?

As I write this we have a beautiful sunny spring day out on the coast. Coming after a very wet winter it is really nice to see!

Last winter was quite mild and dry, which we thought was a nice way to ease out of the drought. Little did we suspect it was only a respite before another season of drought was upon us. Now after a very wet winter, soil moisture levels have recovered almost everywhere. Currently the region has a plus 20mm soil moisture deficit (locally there is a proposal in for AGMARDT funding so we can really understand what NIWA's soil moisture deficit of plus 20mm means). I take it to mean we are wet enough.



The drought has been very hard on the region and the effects will certainly still be felt through this coming year. Looking on the bright side, the Drought Shout at Mangitanoka, was a great event and people really pulled together to make it happen. Also, it brought real acknowledgment from the politicians about the importance of primary production to the economy. They still seem to be doing their best to strangle us with red tape, but at least we are no longer considered a "sunset industry".

We have been through the draft annual plan season and submitted on all the local district council plans. We were given a good hearing, but there is limited room to move in the annual plan process, as it is constrained by the Long Term Council Community Plans (LTCCP). However, the LTCCPs are coming up for review now. This is where your input can really make a difference. If you don't like what your Council is doing, LTCCP consultation is one of the better places to make yourself heard.

The Wairarapa Combined District Plan is entering the final processes before taking

effect. Hilary Gubb, Federated Farmers of NZ Policy Advisor, has written in more detail on this later in the newsletter, but we will be making sure our members' views are heard.

We are trying a new format for our monthly meetings. The Executive is meeting the second Tuesday of every month at 7pm at the Shear History Trust building. The meeting will start off with a guest speaker and be followed by discussion on issues of special interest. Then we will have the normal section reports and general business.

Peter Gawith spoke in August about the Hill Country Advisory Committee. In September Greater Wellington Regional Council spoke about the new pest management strategy and what their plans are to make sure that changes in Animal Health Board policy don't let possum numbers rebound in the Wairarapa.

If anyone has suggestions as to topics and/or speakers please let me know. I encourage everyone to come along. If you only want to hear the speaker we won't be insulted if you leave after the first half.

As a way of communicating on a more regular basis we are setting up a more extensive provincial area on the Federated Farmers web site. There is already a "Have Your Say" area on the web site where issues are posted and anyone can respond back. We will have a specific Wairarapa area, for our local issues. This blogging format is a good way for people to have input without having to drive into town for meetings. It doesn't replace meetings for important issues, but it provides another way to get feedback. Also, how often have you been to a meeting and then had a really good idea while driving back home? This will provide a way to record those great ideas you have in the car (or the shower). We will also be able to post meeting schedules and agendas.

I hope the fine weather today is a the start of a great spring and we can all have a good season to help us recover from the ravages of the drought.

**Anders Crofoot - Wairarapa President**



## Watch those trees

During the dry summer we have had several fires caused by wind blown tree branches or tops burning on power wires. In my opinion these trees have been planted too close to the power lines. Although you only need a wire clearance of one meter we all know that trees can grow very quickly and need maintaining. The local power company is not doing this adequately. I have recently observed a farmer planting a stand of trees beside a power line. With in five years the trees will be higher than the wires with branches growing or falling on wires. This has the potential to cause fire or power outage. I think we need to think things out better. It is no longer acceptable to cause others inconvenience.

In 2005 the government passed The Hazards From Trees regulations regarding powerlines. The cost of trimming is on you, the land owner. The work can only be done by an approved operator. One way to get out of this cost is to declare no interest in the tree to your power company in writing. They will then clear the tree for good.

If you need more information contact Federated Farmers of NZ or myself.



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## A welcome return

UCOL Wairarapa is pleased to be welcoming home the NZ Certificate in Nanny Education in 2009. The Nanny course was originally written, compiled and delivered by Wairarapa Community Polytechnic back in 1988.

It has been some 8 years since it was last run through the UCOL Wairarapa campus in Masterton and we are keen to get support from the rural community so we can provide placements for the students during 2009. It is an exciting time for UCOL Wairarapa and we believe that the Nanny programme will provide students with a wide range of skills that support children and their families.

If you are interested in providing placement opportunities for our students or know of families who may be interested please contact Maryann Corrigan for further information on [m.corrigan@uol.ac.nz](mailto:m.corrigan@uol.ac.nz) or phone on 06 946 2301 extension 72047.

## 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, Dannivirke

15 October 2008, 10:00am  
Cosmopolitan Club Inc,  
398 Queen Street, Masterton

15 October 2008, 2:30pm  
RSA, 200 Broadway Ave,  
Palmerston North

16 October 2008, 2:30pm  
TET Multisport Centre, Portia Street,  
Stratford

17 October 2008, 10:00am  
TET Multisport Centre, Portia Street,  
Stratford (Optional)

**\$30.00 per person**

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

Wairarapa Federated Farmers would like to help our members pursue their personal development on a leadership course. If you would like some help with fees for the New Zealand Kellogg Rural Leadership Programme or a similar program.

Please get in touch with Anders Crofoot (06 372 6465), Nigel Dalgliesh (06 372 7853) or any other members of the Executive.

## 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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WAIRARAPA

**Wairarapa Federated Farmers  
publishes regular newsletters to keep our members informed**

Provincial President: Anders Crofoot, 06 372 6465

Dairy: Graeme Stuart, 06 370 2634

Meat & Fibre: Alan Stuart, 06 372 5747

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

## News from the Provincial AGM

The Provincial Annual General Meeting of Wairarapa Federated Farmers was held on 12th May 2008, at the Tulloch Lodge, immediately after the Provincial Meat & Fibre and Dairy Annual General Meetings.

A minutes, silence was held for Florence Armstrong. Then the President, Anders Crofoot, presented his report to the meeting. He highlighted:

- The need to increase the profile of Federated Farmers in the media.
- The work that had been done in the past year on Annual Plans the Wairarapa Combined District Plan.
- There has been some movement in the battle against Canada Geese, but it has still not been resolved.
- The drought has continued to make life difficult.
- The formation of the Wairarapa Hill Country Advisory Committee has been a positive outcome from a Wairarapa Federated Farmers meeting with the Greater Wellington Regional Council the year before.

Discussions took place on:

- The status of cutting scrub under the proposed Emissions Trading Scheme. Current thinking was there would be no liability.
- The Federation's Feed Register and questions were raised about how up to date the register was. It was reported that it had been recently updated.
- The Combined District Plan, especially the restriction of one dwelling per title. Time was running out to lodge appeals. A motion was carried for Wairarapa Feds to put pressure on the Councils to abandon the house ration rule.
- Losing productive land to urban sprawl. Charlie Pedersen made the point that there are existing tools available to help control spread, but farmers hold

dear the ability to change land use. The view of the meeting was that while losing productive land was not desirable, market forces should still prevail rather than regulation.

- The perception that farmers do not pay for water, that permits and use allocation should continue to work, and to remember water is a shared resource. A motion was carried that the Federation should keep an eye on water issues and rebuff arguments that water should be charged for irrigations.



### TB UPDATE

Peter Gaskin gave a Regional Animal Health Committee report that locally there were eight Tb infected herds and minimal reactors.

Nationally there are 100 infected cattle herds and 18 deer herds, so the strategy is viewed as effective. There is a national review underway for future Tb control, with options of

- 1 No Control, Ad Hoc Control,
- 2 Containment at 2% or
- 3 Eradication.

There are issues arising from funding, roll back of testing protocols, vector management changes and maintaining the gains, remember what happened last time.

The Executive was re-elected with Anders Crofoot as President, Stephen Pound

and Chris Engel as Vice-Presidents, Nigel Dalglish as Treasurer, Murray Schofield as Fire Delegate and Mike Taylor as Minute Secretary. Also elected onto the Executive were, Roger Barton, Mike Butterick, John Carrad, John Coveney, Butch Carrington, Hamish McDonald, and Joe Taylor. Richard Reid was suggested to carry on as the Young Farmers delegate if he was willing.

### CARBON TRADING

Stewart Orme, from Woodnet and Pat Hawinkles, from MAF, gave a presentation to the Annual General Meeting on Carbon Trading. While the area is still developing and the legislation is a work in progress, the basic foundations are in place. There is an existing global market. Every farmer needs to assess their own situation but there are certainly opportunities to generate annual cash flows from either farm forestry or larger scale forestry.

Depending on how the legislation goes, there may be good potential to get paid to lock up scrubby blocks and let them regenerate. Hill country farmers are especially well situated to not only offset potential livestock liabilities, but possibly even come out ahead.

### AFTER DINNER SPEAKER

During dinner Morgan Williams, the former head of the Parliamentary Commission for the Environment and now from Future Steps, spoke on the concept of community owned infrastructure for power generation. It is a concept that is only just being explored in NZ, but has worked well overseas. People take quite a different view of a wind farm owned by a big corporate putting power into the grid for Auckland, which doesn't generate a great deal of local benefit, compared to a wind farm owned locally putting money back into the community. Given that the Wairarapa has some of the most expensive power in the country, I felt there might be some potential to tap our fantastic local resources for local benefit.

**Anders Crofoot - Wairarapa President**

## Update from the sections

Federated Farmers Wairarapa Dairy and Meat & Fibre Annual General Meetings were held prior to the Provincial AGM on 12th May.

### DAIRY AGM

Dairy Chair John Coveney reported production was down eight to ten percent for the region as compared to down four percent nationally. Input costs were up, land prices increasing and a future carbon tax could cost \$200-300/cow. There was discussion on the



carbon tax as intensive dairying has little potential to offset the cost.

Pressure groups desire for a water use tax was also discussed, as was the issue of some of the best soils ending up under housing subdivision. There was also discussion around clean streams and whether the hype had gone too far or was it more around perceived problems.

The Dairy Section elected new officers for the coming year: Graeme Stuart as Chairman, Mike Daniel as Vice-chairman, Karen Fitzgerald as Sharemilker delegate, Stewart Barton as Sharemilker Employer delegate and Alex Webster as Dairy Regional Animal Health Advisory Committee (RAHAC).

### MEAT & FIBRE AGM

Alan Stuart made the point that farmers had

## Higher store prices a cause for optimism

I hope you are coping with the above average rainfall, cold weather and low feed cover. Higher store prices have definitely given us an option not previously seen and a positive indication with a bit more optimism for the new season.

Having just returned from a family wedding in the UK (and a close look at New Zealand products within them) I can report on the very strong meat prices being sustained throughout Europe and the UK. In the ten countries we visited lamb was being sold at a good premium over all other meats. The presentation of New Zealand lamb was excellent, but inferior to the presentation of the local lamb products. Local packaging was adorned with the farmer's name, the district of origin, a picture of grassland/mountains and endorsements from local environmental groups. It will always be a difficult for us to compete against due to the contracting out to local cutting and packaging firms of New Zealand lamb, but that's the competition we're up against.

In talking to consumers, awareness of our product was high and the quality and price was attractive. This was very positive news. It doesn't, however, tell us why at retail our lamb is achieving \$NZ20-30kg (\$NZ350-550) per lamb, while our farm gate prices have been \$50-60/head i.e. less than 20 percent of the final price. I am told that retailing in large European cities costs mega bucks and this is quite believable when one views the product on site. We must bear in mind that it is currently between seasons in Europe and the UK and that our product is at the end of its supply while theirs is just starting, so high prices are in vogue in these markets.

Once must ask, however, why doesn't storage take up the slack and why is there the huge discrepancy between in-season and out-of-season prices? I firmly believe that we become a captive source of product in-season, especially in a drought when it gets as bad as it can. Note what happens in a wet season when we have feed options and prices turn our favour. A very good case for owners' account selling options.



Another point I observed is that there is very little room to increase in the marketplace at retail (due to competing meats).

The next point is that without owning a big retail store we couldn't even consider taking a bigger market share in Europe. Our product is at the top of the list now; well done to the marketers, all credit due to you, but please look after your suppliers better.

So where does that leave us?

These are only three areas left:

1. Processing consolidation and Owen Pooles' consideration of \$15 per lamb. Not a biggy.
2. A better, more even flow of product out to the market – this is our side of

done well to lift production over the past few years, but to remain viable under challenges from other land uses lambs needed fetch at least \$100. Alan thanked everyone for their efforts over the year and especially Mike Daniell and Joe Taylor. There was discussion about the closing of Oringi and the need for the industry to be more organised with marketing, staffing and plant closures.

The point was made that the meat industry didn't want to be told how to run their business any more than farmers did. A motion was passed to urge Meat & Wool and industry players to move forward on joint venture marketing for sheep meats.

Meat & Fibre re-elected Alan Stuart as Chairman and Peter Gaskin as RAHAC Chairman, for the coming year.

**Anders Crofoot - Wairarapa President**

the equation and will only work with contracts and off season price signals and promises.

I believe that this will produce far greater results all round. We have to remove the "glut-shortage" nature of our industry supply and this can only come from a pricing based on a more certain and contractual basis.

3. A more market led and supporter conclusive package rate. The lack of which has, (coupled with the drought and industry problems) helped us to produce an absolutely disastrous last two years of trading for meat and fibre producers.

This will only come from political pressure and a more business friendly government.

I don't believe there is a lot to be gained from realigning company ownership. The truth of the case – even our smallest companies in meat, wool and dairy are producing the best prices to farmers. It's the old story, the best meat produce the best results. The co-ops should produce the best results as they don't need to be capital accountable, let alone pay share dividends. But they don't. Why?

The wool story is similar. Everywhere we went retailers asked me, "Why did New Zealand abandon the Wool Mark?" It's universally known and accepted. It's a quality image we let go when trying to go it alone. Our wool quality is our niche. That's where our wool future lies, I believe.

Hope everyone has a good spring.

**Alan Stuart – Wairarapa Meat & Fibre Chairman**

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