

companies seemed to have stopped signing contracts for maize, which is a concern for new growers (mostly sheep and beef farmers trying to diversify for improved returns).

With the very high price of fertiliser (112 percent increase in DAP over the last year) any drop in the maize price could bring margins below last years. Cedenco are leasing ground for sweetcorn in the Wairoa area. Its been a good spring for cultivation with wetter paddocks being prepared three or four weeks earlier than normal. Let's hope that the present global financial crisis moderates and brings more stability to farmers prices, after all it was only six months ago that the world food shortage was on everyone's minds. People must eat regardless of the world financial crisis.

Expectations of the newly elected National Government are high and we will be relying on them for a clear direction forward and some recognition of agricultures contribution to New Zealand's economy.

Tagging of herd sires prior to slaughter is dangerous. Farmers are being penalised by 15 to 20 cents/kg on cattle killed without primary or slaughter AHB tags. Local farmers have asked Federated Farmers to find a solution to this problem as they are unfairly penalised. I think if we had some decent rain now all would be forgiven.

John Ross - Wairoa Branch Federated Farmers Chairman

PROVINCIAL POLICY WORK OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS

Gisborne/Wairoa Federated Farmers has been very busy at a local level, responding to media queries, lodging written submissions, attending stake holder meetings, presenting at hearings and responding to individual member queries.

We have written submissions and attended hearings and mediations on behalf of the Gisborne/Wairoa members, on the following:

- Gisborne District Council Annual Plan 08/09
- Gisborne District Council Variation 176 - Sustainable Hill Country Project
- Gisborne District Council Variation 118 - appeals
- Gisborne District Council District Plan Chapter six - appeals
- Gisborne District Council District Plan Variation - subdivision
- Wairoa District Council Annual Plan 08/09
- Wairoa District Council Mahia Road options
- Hawke's Bay Regional Council Annual Plan 08/09
- Hawke's Bay Regional Council Coastal Environment Plan
- Hawke's Bay Regional Council Long Term Goat Management Plan.

Hilary Gubb - Federated Farmers Policy Advisor, East Coast

GISBORNE/WAIROA & HAWKE'S BAY



INTER-PROVINCIAL TEAM BUILDING WEEKEND

Members, families and farm staff are warmly welcome to attend the inter-provincial team building weekend.

13-15TH MARCH 2009

LAKE WAIKAREMOANA MOTOR CAMP



'Intrigue, secret deals, hedged bets, blackmail, treachery, meat exports and murder' all have a role to play at the **'Mystery Dinner Party'** at the Saturday night banquet of the inter-provincial Federated Farmers Gisborne/Wairoa and Hawke's Bay team-building weekend.

Have fun, no scripts to read, determine your own fate.

Become part of this great weekend by marking the date in your diary today.

Good accommodation, shared food, heaps of fun, time for kayaking, fishing and political debates.

We've blocked booked the camping ground, but you can choose your style of accommodation by emailing Colin and Gladys Adams at the motor camp, mistry@lake.co.nz or by ringing them on **06 837 3826** and saying that your are part of the Federated Farmers team. You can visit their website at www.lake.co.nz to see what they have to offer in the way of accommodation.

Interested but have questions, please phone Ali Undorf-Lay, Federated Farmers, 0800 327 646.

CHRISTMAS 2008 NEWSLETTER



GISBORNE | WAIROA



*Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year*

END OF YEAR ROUND-UP

To be honest I was feeling a bit hesitant when I arrived at the Stortford Lodge sale yards in Hastings on the 29 September to help launch the Federation's T150 campaign which targets returns of \$150 a lamb.

I am totally supportive of the T150 initiative, but I have to admit I was a bit anxious about how others might react on the day. Support has been really amazing and encouraging.

People at the sale yards got in behind us including other farmers, auctioneers and truckies. I believe that everyone realises that our low returns for lamb is not sustainable and that farmers need to get a fair price for their products. If we don't, even more sheep meat farmers will leave the industry.

Being at the sale yards and taking part in the campaign was a great reminder for me about the role of Federated Farmers in our industry. Our industry is distracted at the moment with a lot of debate centred around ownership and the structure of our meat procession section, rather than the reality that not many sheep farmers are earning a sustainable income.

I was really glad that I stood up and became part of the campaign; I am glad to be part of the team that has put a stake in the ground. We need \$150 a lamb, anything less doesn't warrant the work and capital required to produce the stock.

MANIFESTO

There was no doubt what Federated Farmers political bottom line was going into elections earlier this month. A week before the election Don Nicolson released our Manifesto, which clearly set out our policy expectations for the new government. You can access this document from Federated Farmers' website www.fedfarm.org.nz - Our Work - Campaigns - Manifesto-Election 2008.

ELECTION SHAKE DOWN

Gisborne Wairoa is well serviced with members of parliament, we have four in our region and all have promised to work hard for us.

Ann Tolley, the MP for East Coast and the new Minister for Education, has promised to look at rural schools including staffing, technology and funding allocation. The province has a good working relationship with Ann and we look forward to continuing this into the future.

Moana Mackey is the Labour list MP. I have met up with Moana a couple of times and have found her approachable and interested in farming issues.



Parekura Horomia, MP for Ikaroa-Rawhiti continues to hold the Maori seat.

I will set up a meeting with Ann Tolley within National's first 100 days and use this opportunity to remind her of our hopes for reform to the Resource Management Act and Emissions Trading Scheme. I will use the Federation's email system to advise you when this meeting will be on, everyone is welcome to attend.

NUFFIELD SCHOLAR

I was pleased to read that Gregg Pardoe, Operations Manager for Arai Matawai Incorporation, has been selected as one of the Nuffield New Zealand 2009 scholars. It is good to have someone from our area selected to go aboard.

Some years ago I was fortunate enough to be selected for a Rotary Group Study Exchange to the United Kingdom. I know that the experience extended me and definitely made me more aware of world economics.

Hamish Cave - Gisborne/Wairoa President

MEAT & FIBRE ROUND-UP

Recently Hamish Cave and I attended a two day Federated Farmers Meat & Fibre meeting in Wellington. I found the time spent there informative, encouraging and enjoyable. It is good to know that farmers are well served by not only Federated Farmers, but other service organisations as well. There is widespread recognition that sheep and beef returns are totally inadequate and much effort is going in to rectifying that.



Day one of the meeting saw a big line up of speakers from both inside and outside the industry. Doug Steel, Westpac, covered economics in the immediate future, most of which will now be obvious to readers. Dr Ganesh Nana, Chief Economist and Editor of BERL Forecasts, gave a very enthusiastic and informed presentation. He outlined New Zealand's poor economic performance in recent decades, especially our low productivity compared to other countries. He also demonstrated the difficulty our Reserve Bank has in steering the economy with interest rates (OCR) being the only instrument of control. The fact that the New Zealand dollar is the ninth most traded currency in the world probably says it all.

Theresa Gattung, Chair of Wool Partners International (WPI), explained the logic

behind WPI seeking strong brand partners overseas, especially in the US, to try and lift strong wool profits.

On day two remits were dealt with and discussion (very animated at times) on the proposed National Identification and Tracking (NAIT) scheme took place. As one delegate stated, the original concept seems to have grown arms and legs. Federated Farmers supports the idea, but is strongly opposed to the scheme in its current format.

Bruce Wills, Federated Farmers Meat & Fibre Chairman, made a passionate appeal to support the T150 launch (targeted at a good mid season lamb being worth \$150 within five years).

By far the hardest hitting presentation came from Julia Hoare, Partner in charge of PricewaterhouseCoopers New Zealand - Climate Change Services Practice. She has been working on the implementation details since 2002. Delegates sat in stunned silence as she demonstrated what carbon is going to mean for all of us. With a change of government perhaps sanity will prevail, especially in regards to agriculture. However, the scheme as a whole looks to be here to stay and now seems less about climate change than reducing pollution and waste resources.

Most farmers will be dismayed at the huge reversal our short-term prospects have taken in recent months. That said, the likelihood of receiving fair reward for effort in the near future is much brighter. May I commend Hamish Cave for his hard work on our behalf and others who sacrifice their time and energy to advance our cause. Here's hoping you all have a kind farming year and enjoy the festive season.

Len Hall - Gisborne/Wairoa Meat & Fibre Vice-chairman

SPRING IN WAIROA

The Wairoa district has enjoyed, generally, favourable conditions this spring and we are expecting average weather for the rest of the year.

I have reports from Ruakaturi of 140 percent plus lambing percentages and some farms in the district have achieved an incredible low five percent loss of lambs between scanning and docking. Obviously they avoided the facial eczema that clobbered a lot of the sheep around Wairoa.

Nearer the coast it has been drier, but timely rain has given reasonable grass growth. However, some farms are still short of feed, especially for cattle.

For those that haven't noticed all the sprayed or cultivated paddocks around Wairoa farms, Ewan Powdrell from Powdrell Services reports an increase in cropping this season with the majority in maize due to the price advantage over sweetcorn. However, grain