

## RECAP

Last year 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*

## Industry Group newsletters online

The Federation produces newsletters for each of the seven industry groups.

- There are five electronic newsletters:
- Arable Bulletin - Grain and Seed
  - Dairy Alert - Dairy
  - Butchers Blurp - Rural Butchers
  - Rambull - Meat and Fibre
  - BIG Picture - Bee Industry Group.

The newsletters keep members with special interests, informed of issues and events that relate specifically to them.

Visit our website, [www.fedfarm.org.nz](http://www.fedfarm.org.nz) and go to 'Our News/Publications' to find these informative newsletters online.

### Federated Farmers Gisborne/Wairoa

publishes regular newsletters to keep our members informed

**Provincial President:** Hamish Cave, Phone: 06 863 9861  
**Meat & Fibre:** Wayne Gault, Phone: 06 867 8565  
**Dairy:** Vacant  
**Recruitment Officer:** Caroline Rau, Phone: 06 867 8597

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



GISBORNE | WAIROA

# LOCAL VOICE

## PROVINCIAL NEWSLETTER



SEPTEMBER 2008

GISBORNE/WAIROA

## Busy few months for new president

It certainly has been a busy start since I was elected as Gisborne/Wairoa Federated Farmer's Provincial President at our annual general meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2008.

At the end of May Gisborne/Wairoa Federated Farmers was well involved with the hearings process at the Gisborne District Council with the Land Overlay 3A Ruling/ Variation 176. The process was well supported with excellent submissions from the affected landowners and Federated Farmers of New Zealand East Coast Policy Advisor, Hilary Gubb.

Unfortunately that ruling has now been confirmed so we will be meeting with the affected landowners to further discuss the exact wording and strategy going forward.

Len Hall and I presented a submission to the Gisborne District Council on the 2008/2009 Draft Annual Plan (written by Hilary). We commended the council on its transparency, use of targeted rates and other funding options. There are however, ongoing concerns relating to the way roading differentials are applied. It is more appropriate to address these issues in the 2009 Long Term Council and Community Plan review and council was advised we are looking forward to being fully involved in that process.

Federated Farmers of New Zealand's



conference, the 'One Event', was held late in June where all sections of Federated Farmers met in one venue in Christchurch. The theme for the national conference was 'Food for Thought' with an excellent line up of speakers, including a supermarket executive, an economist, the head of Ngai Tahu and an expert on water. It was a very good conference with plenty of opportunity for discussion and debate.

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Gisborne/Wairoa Federated Farmers held its annual general meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2008. It was pleasing to have all positions filled with:

- John Ross, Vice-president and Chairman of Wairoa Branch.
- Wayne Gault, Chairman of Meat & Fibre

- Len Hall, Vice-chairman of Meat & Fibre.

I would like to thank them for all their support to date. I feel that the region has a great team representing our members. I would also like to say thank you to Jean Martin for her four years of hard work as Provincial President and for her continued support as I settle into my new role.

The annual general meeting was well supported with excellent presentations from Bruce McNab (now retired Federated Farmers Board Member), Mark Ross, Federated Farmers of New Zealand General Manager of Policy and Advocacy, Hilary Gubb, Federated Farmers of New Zealand East Coast Policy Advisor and Rob Davison from Meat and Wool New Zealand.

It was a great opportunity for members to meet and discuss issues with Federated Farmers staff.

I hope the spring goes well for the region and we look forward to seeing you at the Federated Farmers stand at the Gisborne A&P show.

**Hamish Cave - Gisborne/  
Wairoa President**



## Fed's courses well worth attending

During the winter I attended two leadership courses in Wellington run by Federated Farmers of New Zealand.

The first course was an advanced leadership programme. It has a lot of input from Toastmasters and covered public speaking (both off the cuff and prepared speeches),



introducing and thanking speakers, how to be an effective chairman, dealing with motions and debates.

We were given opportunities to practice what we learnt and at times there was a lot of pressure, but the course was very interesting and entertaining. I would highly recommend this course to people who are in a position of office or considering taking up a position.

The second course was for new provincial presidents and covered topics like policy debates, how to write a remit, dealing with the media, Federated Farmers governance and working as part of a collective.

It was great to meet the staff and learn how the organisation works and see the resources that are set up to assist the provinces.

Recruitment and growing the province's membership was also talked about, a real issue with many people exiting the industry, but still an area for growth in Gisborne and Wairoa.

We met Don Nicolson, President of Federated Farmers of New Zealand and Don Nicolson Conor English the new CEO and had time to discuss current issues with both of them.

**Hamish Cave - Gisborne/  
Wairoa President**



Conor English

## Compliance costs on the rise

Over the last three years meat and fibre producers have experienced diminishing returns, coupled with unsympathetic climatic conditions and more recently escalating costs. I would imagine that most people have focused on survival and have had little time to look outside the farm gate.

However, lurking outside that farm gate are issues that have as much of an impact on your balance sheet as does a drought. Here are some that are sitting and waiting to have some effect on someone somewhere:

- Water Allocation
- Sustainable Hill Country Project (erosion control)
- Animal ID (NAIT)
- Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS)
- MIAG – meat industry consolidation.
- Wool industry consolidation.

For those that have experienced the recent dry period I hope that we have all learned that Mother Nature is all encompassing, she giveth, but also takes back with interest. If you didn't have a drought strategy then now is the time to reflect and make plans to counter the next one. If your plan is to rely on buying in feed, then good luck, as; one you need

plenty of dollars to compete against the dairy industry, and two there has to be a surplus of feed somewhere else in the country and thirdly someone has to organise the collection and distribution. Relying on the services of a few volunteers from Federated Farmers is not a good strategy, particularly when these services are abused.

For the majority of hill country farms the easiest way to feed your stock is to de-stock.

MIAG has featured prominently in recent times and by the time this newsletter is out we will know the outcome of the proposed Silver Fern Farms/PGG Wrightson merger.

In all the discussion papers (independent reports that I have read) I have yet to find any reference to the one issue that probably has the biggest influence on returns to the producer, that of the currency. We can create a mighty conglomerate, however, if the current government of the day domestic policy requires an inflated New Zealand dollar, then we are no better off. Having one, two or three major meat industry players will make no difference unless we have a currency that is beneficial to exporters.



Finally, I would like to acknowledge the time, work and effort that Hilary Gubb, Federated Farmers of NZ policy advisor, does for our region. Not only does Hilary cover the Gisborne/Wairoa region but is also responsible for the rest of the East Coast down to Wellington.

Without the likes of Hilary and the Federations' other policy advisors we would be over run with bureaucracy we don't understand.

**Wayne Gault - Gisborne/Wairoa Meat & Fibre Chairman**

## Working hard in your area

My name is Caroline Rau and I work for Federated Farmers of New Zealand as a recruitment officer. I live and help out on the farm in Matawai with my husband and three children. We own our farm, which has been in the Rau family for two generations and we lease another. I have a vast background in all aspects of farming (horticulture, viticulture and agriculture).

I started working for Federated Farmers in February 2008 and work in the Gisborne/Wairoa Region. My job is to recruit new members, which is very important role for the Federation, as the more people that we join up, the stronger our fighting voice.

I will be at the upcoming Gisborne A&P Show so come by and say hello. You will find us in the Williams and Kettles sheep pavilion. We will be there from 8.30am on both days (Friday 17<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> October).

The Gisborne show committee has organised Jamie McKay from News Talk ZB to be at this year's show. He will be in the rural focus area, between 12noon and 1pm and there will be a wonderful prize up for grabs.

Federated Farmers has a wonderful deal for anyone who signs-up during the show:

- 10 percent discount off your membership

- A free copy of Federated Farmers Employment Contract (a value of \$40.00)
- Go into the draw to win a bag of goodies.

Only available to those who join Federated Farmers at the show.



Hamish Cave, Gisborne/Wairoa's provincial President will be at the stand from 9.30am-10.30am on Friday and Hilary Gubb, Federated Farmer of New Zealand policy advisor for the East Coast, will be joining us as well. So please show your support for me and your province by dropping by, it will be great to meet you. Don't forget to bring along any non-members you know of.

Just a reminder of what the Federation does for you:

- Federated Farmers is a powerful fighting voice, with a team of policy advisors fighting bureaucracy to lower rates and

stop laws that create extra costs or unfair outcomes for farmers.

- Free advice and free information to members.
- The Federation offers a range of useful products and employment agreements at discounted rates.
- Federated Farmers provides you an opportunity to network with other industry groups at a provincial or national level.
- Special discounts on various deals and rewards are also available.

For more information don't hesitate to contact me, Caroline Rau:

Federated Farmers of NZ, PO Box 447, Hamilton or Phone: 06 867 8597, Fax: 06 868 6244, Mobile: 027 289 5053 Email: [puketia@farmside.co.nz](mailto:puketia@farmside.co.nz)

### 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. **Sign up today.**

## Dairy conversions increasing

The Gisborne and Wairoa are areas that have some potential for dairying and to date there are two or three conversions going through the initial stages.

One confirmed conversion is planning on milking 500 cows through a 54 bale rotary in 2009, increasing up to 800 cows in following years.

Wairoa already has a number of well established milking platforms and we are now considering that our province may need to have a Dairy Section representative. If there is someone who is interested in filling this position, please contact me to discuss further, Hamish Cave phone: 06 863 9861.

**Hamish Cave - Gisborne/Wairoa President**



## Petrol tax refunds

Did you know that farmers are entitled to a rebate on petrol tax used on farm in non-licensed vehicles etc. (e.g. motor bikes, chainsaws, pumps etc.)?

Claims are made quarterly on fuel used and can be claimed up to two years in arrears (will be reduced by 10 percent for lateness).

The rebate from 1st July 2008 is 42.524 cents per litre (NB: includes ACC Levy – also refundable – and GST).

The rebate rate for the next quarter is going up to approximately .50 cents/litre.

### For more information contact:

The Excise Duty Officer  
Economic Compliance Unit  
NZ Transport Agency  
PO Box 1947  
Palmerston North  
4440  
Phone: 06 350 1895  
Fax: 06 356 5017

**Len Hall - Gisborne/Wairoa**



## Where to from here?

Decision made. Hill country land use regulation approved – where to from here ??

A new level of land use regulation not previously seen in New Zealand before has been adopted into the Gisborne Combined Regional Land and District Plan. After an anxious few months of waiting, the Hearing Commissioners have released their recommendation that Variation 176 and Plan Change 36 (which is designed to regulate pastoral land use on the worst eroding land of the Gisborne District) should be approved, albeit with some modifications. This decision is disappointing given Council's main motivation for developing this regulation was to try and appease an impatient Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

MAF has often used a 'carrot and stick' analogy to justify the pressure to regulate land use activities on erosion prone land in the region. The inference that the lack of progress with soil conservation has never been supported by the Federation. Our response has always been that a lot has been done to address erosion and sedimentation issues already and whilst it is acknowledged that more work will be required over time, it is inaccurate to suggest that regulation is required to force this further work to take place.

We certainly put up a good fight and Federated Farmers had an impressive turnout at the hearings. A number of members along with other affected stakeholders gave very powerful oral submissions to the hearing commissioners. It certainly gave the Council staff and decision-makers something to think about and resulted in the Council taking some time out to consider the issues further and identify areas where improvements could be made. This has resulted in some useful modifications to the original proposal. The other encouraging aspect of the decision is that the Commissioners resisted the urgings from MAF, DoC and Landcare Research for erosion controls to go much further and include a much larger land area for retirement.

However, the reality is the decision has been made and so now we need to move forward and figure out what the modified regulation will mean at a practical level. If it proves to be unworkable then we have the option (until the 13 October) to appeal the decision to the Environment Court.

A meeting is being held at the Tolaga Bay (refer to the Notice of Meeting) to discuss this issue in detail, however, a brief summary of the regulation follows:

- The regulation applies only to Land overlay 3a land (LO3A), identified as being the most erosion prone land in the region. (All affected landowners should be aware of this already.)
- Essentially any activity where the total area of this LO3A land is five hectares or more will be controlled by a Works Plan. A Works Plan will describe the works proposed to achieve the establishment and maintenance of effective tree cover.
- The definition of effective tree cover essentially requires either trees or shrubs to be planted and protected, or indigenous vegetation established so that within 10 years they will have formed a canopy and root network to provide protection from soil erosion. In some circumstances it will be necessary to include works on land not identified as LO3A in order to achieve this.
- Any activity which is not in accordance with a Works Plan or which disestablishes, or fails to maintain certified works will be a discretionary activity.

If this issue concerns you then please come along to the meeting on the **23 September 2008** or contact Hilary Gubb at [hgubb@fedfarm.org.nz](mailto:hgubb@fedfarm.org.nz) or phone 0800 327 646.

**NOTICE OF MEETING**  
Gisborne District Council  
(Overlay 3a Land)



GISBORNE | WAIROA

**5pm, 23 September 2008**

**Tolaga Bay Golf Club  
Banks Street, Tolaga Bay**

Light refreshments provided from 5.00pm and the meeting will commence at 5.30pm.

Gisborne/Wairoa Federated Farmers provincial members and landowners with Overlay 3a Land are invited to attend the above meeting.

The Gisborne District Council has confirmed their decision to regulate land use on the worst eroding hill country in the district (Overlay 3a land). The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the regulation and how it will affect landowners as well as deciding where to from here.