

Last week I spent time sitting in the critical care unit at Auckland Hospital, watching the amazing job being done by the staff with the latest technology. And it got me thinking how conducting research into, and understanding the basic principles of how things work, enables us to do this...and that there is still so much we don't know and understand about a wide range of things (across the broad spectrum of science, not just things medical).

We don't know what caused the scary moment that resulted in us being there, and probably never will. But a working hypothesis was confidently developed and treatment was implemented on the basis of this. The hypothesis was based on sound understanding of how things work - the type of science that I am afraid gets neglected with the current push for developing a 'product or tool'. It is the kind of science that needs robustness and rigor and may take many years to complete. And within animal production, the type of science the Society has a role to maintain and safe guard. It is also frustrating that we are also losing people and capabilities in fields that are currently not 'funded' yet are critical to maintaining cost effective animal production in New Zealand. These people cannot simply be 'acquired' the next time they are needed as they have taken many years to develop their skills. It is hard to suggest a way to overcome these problems given the current funding structure. We have made massive leaps in understanding in many fields but for this to continue we need to ensure we still manage to incorporate components into our studies that enable us to keep building on the basic research that under pins it.

We also need to understand and celebrate how we got to where we are today. So, not just reading the latest references but also how it all got started, maybe 30 years ago. And maintaining a record of what also did not work – a 'wrong' answer is an answer in itself. So while it is with sadness I note the passing of colleague Jim Peterson at AgResearch, its important that we celebrate and acknowledge the contribution he made while working with many Society members. As such, we will publish a summary of the Colloquium that is being held At AgResearch next week in this years proceedings. Jim worked with many Society stalwarts and past McMeekan Award winners and I am sure you will find their contributions interesting.

Short and sweet from me - last week had a positive outcome so I am off to do some celebrating! We will be heading to Opotiki for the Dairy Excellence Awards, to support entrants in the Sharemilker of the year competition. It will be a blast !!

Penny Back
NZSAP President

VERY IMPORTANT NOTICES

1. YOUR SUBS ARE NOW **OVERDUE** – IF YOU HAVE A YELLOW SHEET INCLUDED IN THIS NEWSLETTER – PLEASE SEND THEM TO JANE KAY, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY ASAP

The opinions expressed in this Newsletter are bloody good ones, but are not necessarily those of the NZSA

NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY OF ANIMAL PRODUCTION CONFERENCE 2010

23rd - 25th of June at Massey University in Palmerston North.

The conference organiser is Steve Morris. There will be a range of accommodation options from Hostel rooms to nearby motel and hotel rooms in Palmerston North. It is the intention to include an associated farmer day in conjunction with Sheep and Beef Councils of Meat & Wool NZ on the 23rd of June. A number of contracts are also being proposed by various groups. An active social programme is planned including continuation of the very successful quiz evening run at Lincoln University.

Registration Deadlines

- Early Bird Registration Deadline 10 May 2010
- Standard Registration Fee applies from 11 May 2010

Registration Fees

- All fees are inclusive of GST @ 12.5%.
- All fees are in New Zealand Dollars.
- Registrations for both the conference and accommodation can be done on-line via a secure encrypted server.

Full registration includes: attendance at all conference sessions, morning, afternoon teas and lunches, Conference Programme, Satchel, attendance at social events.

- Early Bird fee (by 10 May 2010) \$430.00 pp
- Standard Fee (after 10 May 2010) \$480.00 pp

NZSAP Conference 2010 Secretariat, Conference Services, Massey University
Private Bag 11 222, Palmerston North, 4442; Tel: 06 350 5117 / 06 350 5352; Fax: 06 350 5669
Email: conferences@massey.ac.nz

NZSAP WEBSITE

Details of 2010 conference are available on the website at <http://nzsap.org.nz/con10/index.html>

Papers from last years Conference can be viewed on the website as well as information about Awards and Grants. Past Newsletters can also be retrieved. Please let Scott know if you have any news that you think is relevant to NZSAP and should be posted on this site.

2010 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 70th Annual General Meeting of the New Zealand Society of Animal Production Inc. will be held at the Conference at Massey University.

Agenda

Apologies
Minutes from 2009 Meeting
Matters Arising
Presidential Report
Treasurer's Report
Editor's Report
Publication Manager's Report
Election of Officers
Next Conference
General Business

Signed: Executive Secretary

NOMINATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 2010-2011

Nominations for committee members are requested by April 28th, to the Executive Secretary. The nominee, nominator and seconder must be members of the Society. The committee will be elected by postal ballot with the result announced at the Annual General Meeting, except that the Vice-President automatically becomes President, and the current President automatically becomes Immediate Past President.

The management committee consists of the following:

President	Vice-President
Immediate Past-President	Secretary
Convenor of the Conference Organising Committee	Publications Manager
Treasurer	Website Manager
Editor of Proceedings	Newsletter Manager

All offices except the President and Immediate Past-President are open for election.

Presently the committee meets three times a year, immediately before and after the Annual Conference and once in December to evaluate abstracts of papers submitted for presentation at the next conference. In addition to that it holds two or three telephone conference calls each year. To understand how the various officers contribute to the strategy and operations of the Society, speak to current and past committee members.

To nominate somebody for a position on NZSAP Management Committee, please send the following to the Executive Secretary, Jane Kay:

- Position
- Name of Nominee (Printed) and signature of Nominee
- Proposer (Print name) and Proposer's signature
- Secunder (Print name) and signature of Secunder
- Date

WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECEIVE YOUR NEWSLETTER BY E-MAIL?

To reduce demand for paper and therefore free up more land for conversion from trees to dairying, we are now offering you the opportunity to receive a nice crisp PDF of our newsletter delivered to your Inbox!

If you'd prefer to get your newsletter the modern way – just email Jane Kay, Executive Secretary at nzsap.animal@xtra.co.nz and she will make it so.

MEMBERSHIP

A warm welcome on behalf of NZSAP to our new members:

BRONWYN SMAILL, AGRESEARCH, INVERMAY	GRANT SMOLENSKI, AGRESEARCH, HAMILTON
MHAIRI SUTHERLAND, AGRESEARCH, HAMILTON	FRASER LAIRD, WANGANUI

3 resignations were received from members and 40 were deleted for unpaid subscriptions, leaving a Current Membership Total of 448.

NEW DIRECTION FOR MEAT AND WOOL NEW ZEALAND

Introducing Beef and Lamb New Zealand Ltd

In August 2009 sheep and beef farmers rejected wool and goatmeat levies but voted to support the continuation of sheepmeat and beef levies to fund Meat & Wool New Zealand's activities on the farm, in our markets and in building skills within our workforce.

Following the referendum, we began the challenging process of working through the implications of the result, to effectively deliver on the proposal voted on by farmers.

One obvious consequence of the referendum was the need for a name change. Adopting **Beef and Lamb New Zealand** as our new name will allow us to move into a new era with a meat-only focus. There will also be considerable merit in sharing the name with our partner in domestic beef and lamb promotion, Beef + Lamb New Zealand Incorporated.

The new name was unveiled in March at our Annual General Meeting in Te Kuiti. At the same time, we also launched our Strategic Plan which defines the way in which we will do business through to 2014.

Our focus will be areas where Meat & Wool New Zealand can make a difference for sheep and beef farmers, and increased engagement with, and delivery to those farmers. We're looking to deliver tools and services that are relevant for farmers and their businesses.

The development of our Strategic Plan was a comprehensive and rigorous process. We started by looking at the issues facing the industry, considering how the industry needs to respond, and then looking at what role we can play in that response. We were also conscious of the strong messages farmers gave us during the referendum.

Farmers wanted better communication about the tools and practices that will help them be profitable on a sustainable basis. So while the plan retains a lot of the organisation's current activity that farmers supported in the referendum, it introduces some new activities, and importantly ups the ante on delivery and extension.

We've implemented organisational changes which have seen a shift of staff from Wellington to the regions and there will be an increased focus on extension work, with a dedicated extension team now operating in the regions.

Richard Wakelin will continue to lead the "Farm" team, which includes research and development, extension and uptake, farm survey economic service and genetics staff. **Gary Walton**, formerly the South Island Regional Supervisor, takes on the role of Extension & Uptake Manager, with **Aaron Meikle** supervising the region-based Extension Managers.

Mark Young is responsible for Sheep Improvement Limited, which is developing search tools to assist in the identification of high performing genetics. He now adds responsibility for beef genetics, with Beef Genetics Co-ordinator **Russell Priest** reporting to Mark.

Getting more farmers using tools like Land & Environment Plans, Wormwise, genetic information from Sheep Improvement Ltd and forage planning tools like ForageMaster and FeedSmart, will provide significant gains for the sector. We know farmers using these practices feature amongst the top performers in our industry.

Tapping into what high performing farmers are doing and extending that information across the industry is another key plank of the plan.

Meat & Wool New Zealand is also looking at a new initiative for 'demonstration farms' that would feature scientists demonstrating leading-edge science to farmers and working with them to develop and refine its application in real-world situations. This differs from the well-known and well-established Monitor Farm programme which has farmers working with farmers to adopt new technologies.

We are currently undertaking a review of the Monitor Farm Programme because we are aware that while some of the programmes are working well, there is a need for a revamp in others to make them more relevant to current farming needs.

It's important that Meat & Wool New Zealand's investment in research, development and technology transfer is genuinely driven by the needs of farmers. We will be building a project portfolio that addresses the top priorities identified in needs analysis and putting emphasis on projects that develop farm practices to benefit whole farm businesses.

Spearheading this aspect of our work are Research Manager, **Maitland Manning** and Research Project Manager, **Andy Bray**, both of whom will be based in Canterbury. Maitland is responsible for managing our research and development investments to maximise outcomes for farmers, and ensure this activity achieves a favorable return on investment for our farming community. Andy's experience, knowledge and skill will be invaluable in helping us to develop innovative solutions for optimising whole farm systems.

A key aspect of the Strategic Plan is the development of an industry strategy. We are committed to leading an industry strategy that identifies high level opportunities and challenges for the sector and examines what can be done at an industry level to address these. We believe this is important to help us better engage with government and to help guide a range of activity, including research and development.

In the market, Meat & Wool New Zealand will be providing more market insight through detailed market research and analysis and creating better linkages to align trade and technical policy with the promotional approach for sheepmeat and beef. We're working to more closely integrate our promotion of New Zealand meat with commercial processor and exporters.

We will continue to provide independent analysis and advice to assist farmers in their decision making, and influence regulators and decision-makers on and offshore in ways that are positive for New Zealand's sheep and beef farmers.

Alongside this, we will be working to achieve more centralised data and information collection and new distribution channels using cost effective technologies to ensure farmers and other stakeholders have better access to critical information.

AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF ANIMAL PRODUCTION CONFERENCE 2010

The dates for the conference are **12-15 July 2010**

The theme of the conference is Livestock **Production in a Changing Environment** and sub-themes will include sessions on food security, education, extension and research relevant to the theme.

We encourage submission of as many papers as possible; the review of "4 page" papers is being coordinated by CSIRO publishing for a special issue of Animal Production Science. As in previous years "1 page" papers and papers that do not fit APS editorial requirements will appear in an edited proceedings "Animal Production in Australia".

For details, visit: <http://www.asap.asn.au/asap28/>

TRAVEL AWARD APPLICANTS RECEIVE \$20,000 FROM JANUARY 2010 FUNDING ROUND

The NZSAP Management Committee and the AgResearch Genomics Award Selection Panel met in November 09 and February 2010 to consider applications for the NZSAP Animal Science Awards, the inaugural Ruminant Reproduction Symposium Award and the AgResearch Animal Genomics International Travel Award.

We are pleased to announce that the following applicants have received funding.

NZSAP ANIMAL SCIENCE AWARD (FEBRUARY 2010 ROUND)

Kuljeet Singh (Senior Scientist, AgResearch, Hamilton): To attend the the 10th International Symposium on the Biology of Lactation in Farm Animals (BOLFA), which will be held on 23 August 2010 in conjunction with the annual conference of the European Association of Animal Production (EAAP) on the Island of Crete, Greece (August 23-27, 2010). As an invited speaker, Kuljeet will speak about her recent results from a FRST funded collaborative research programme between AgResearch and Livestock Improvement Corporation (LIC). This research has recently highlighted critical cell signalling and epigenetic mechanisms that regulate milk production of the dairy cow.

Chris Morris (Senior Scientist, AgResearch, Hamilton): To attend the 'International Society for Animal Genetics' Conference in Edinburgh, Scotland, July 2010, and to visit science groups in Scotland, Ireland and Wales. Visits are scheduled to include Scottish Agricultural College stations in Edinburgh and Dumfries, Agricultural Research Institute of Northern Ireland, Hillsborough, and The University of Wales, Aberystwyth, Mid Wales.

Karin Schütz (Scientist, AgResearch, Hamilton): To attend the International Society for Applied Ethology's (ISAE) 44th conference in Uppsala, Sweden (3 – 7 August, 2009). The ISAE is the largest conference in applied animal behaviour and provides a unique opportunity to meet other scientists. Karin sees it as important to be able to attend this conference in order to keep up with the latest theories and practises in the field.

Jean Margerison (Senior Lecturer, Massey University, Palmerston North: To attend the 14th Animal Science Congress of the Asian-Australasian Association of Animal Production Societies (AAP), Taiwan, 23-27 Aug 2010. Jean will be representing NZSAP at this conference.

RUMINANT REPRODUCTION SYMPOSIUM (RRS) TRAVEL AWARD (NOVEMBER 2009 ROUND)

David Wells (Principal Scientist, AgResearch, Hamilton): To attend the 8th International Ruminant Reproduction Symposium in Anchorage, Alaska (September 3rd to 7th, 2010). Dave plans on submitting an abstract for a poster presentation on aspects of his research on somatic cell nuclear transfer in cattle.

Chris Burke (Scientist, DairyNZ, Hamilton): To attend the 8th International Ruminant Reproduction Symposium in Anchorage, Alaska (September 3rd to 7th, 2010). Chris has been invited to present an invited plenary titled "The evolution of reproductive management practices in New Zealand: what will the future hold in a consumer-driven, environmentally conscious, export-driven marketplace?".

Anne O'Connell (Scientist, AgResearch, Mosgiel): To attend the 8th International Ruminant Reproduction Symposium in Anchorage, Alaska (September 3rd to 7th, 2010). Anne plans on presenting findings from her work on embryonic survival in prolific ewes.

AGRESEARCH ANIMAL GENOMICS INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL FUND (FEBRUARY 2010 ROUND)

Jin Han (PhD Student, Lincoln University): To attend the World's Agriculture Biotechnology International Conference (ABIC 2010), which will be held in Saskatoon, Canada from 12th to 15th September, 2010. A paper, from Jin's preliminary research work entitled "Allelic variation in the ovine Myostatin gene coding region detected by PCR-SSCP" will be presented during the ABIC 2010. Jin believes that it will be a good chance to attend the conference to get some valuable feedback and guidance from the agbiotechnologists worldwide. It will also help Jin with better understanding of this research topic by interacting with the top bio-scientists in this field.

Long Cheng (Paul) (PhD Student, Lincoln University): To attend the the the 2010 annual meeting of the American Dairy Science Association/American Society of Animal Science meeting (ADSA) in Colorado, USA from 11-15, July, 2010. Paul will be presenting a poster entitled: Investigation the relationship between nitrogen use efficiency and N isotopic fractionation in dairy cows using milk samples collected at the morning and afternoon milkings.

Applications for the next round of travel awards closes on **31 July 2010** (for travel after 1 Oct 2010). Details on the NZSAP website and application forms from the Executive Secretary.

8TH INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON THE NUTRITION OF HERBIVORES (ISNH8)

'Herbivores in a Changing World'

6th – 9th September 2011, Aberystwyth, Wales UK

"We would like to invite you to attend the Eighth International Symposium on the Nutrition of Herbivores (ISNH8) in Aberystwyth, Wales in 2011. Animal agriculture is at a crossroads; competing pressures for land with alternative forms of land use, the need to both mitigate against and adapt to the effects of climate change combined with the need to meet societies demand for safe nutritious food produced at low costs.

This symposium presents a unique opportunity for scientists and other stakeholders to work together to shape the future of herbivore production.

For further information and to register your interest, see www.isnh8.org

AWARDS APPLICATIONS

- **Animal Science Award Applications to Executive Secretary**
- AgResearch Animal Genomics Award applications to Executive Secretary

- **31st January – for travel after 1st April of the year of application**
- **31st July – for travel after 1st October of the year of application**

The Animal Science Award is to promote and advance Animal Science and Production. Specifically it encourages early career development and supports contact with AAP activities. Applicants must normally have been a member of NZSAP for at least one year prior to application and be a current financial member. Applications are to be sent to the Executive Secretary by 31st July for consideration by the management committee in August/September.

The objectives of the **AgResearch Animal Genomics Award** are to facilitate research in the wider field of animal genomics including gene discovery, gene function (physiology) and gene inheritance (animal breeding) studies. In particular, the Award is intended to support conference travel and/or the acquisition of new technical skills by technicians and research associates.

Application forms are available from the Executive Secretary, or on the website <http://nzsap.org.nz>

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

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An electronic version of this newsletter and other information on the Society is available at:
<http://nzsap.org.nz>

Any contributions to the Newsletter should be forwarded to: Aaron Meikle, Meat and Wool New Zealand,
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