



I write this at the end of what has been a very interesting election campaign. Farmers were front and centre in the demographic groups which would be impacted by a change in government. Policy statements of many political parties want to see farmers pay more for water and undergo stricter welfare and environmental regulations. Farmers are no stranger to this conversation and as the 'writing on the wall' becomes clearer, the innovation for solutions is likely to be increasingly farmer driven. There is a lot of opportunity to enable and speed the innovation process through greater engagement between farmers and scientists. In our Annual General Meeting in July, it was apparent from members that there is a lot of support to have more involvement with farmers and this is an objective that the Committee will work towards. I would take this opportunity to encourage you to put forward any ideas you think would promote farmer involvement in Society activities, and vice versa.

The 2017 NZSAP conference, held in Rotorua, was another success and many thanks go to the organising team led by **Cameron Craigie** from AgResearch. At the conference there were a number of excellent presentations. The conference kicked off with the young member session where the finalists set the bar high with their polished presentations. Congratulations to the winner of the Young Members Award, **Charlotte Reed**, a Victoria University student and DairyNZ scholar, for her research entitled: "*Oocyte maturation and quality in dairy heifers with diverse genetic merit for fertility*". We were also entertained by our Living Legend, **Garry Waghorn**, who shared his journey with us of "*Forty-five years in the rumen; aroma, discovery, and fun*". The McMeekan Memorial Award was presented to **Steve Davis**, the Sir Arthur Ward Award was presented to **Sheryl-Anne Newman**, while **John McEwan** was recognised for his contribution to the Society and awarded Life Membership. At this year's conference we presented the 75th Jubilee Technician award to **Dean Burnham** of the Massey University Beef Research Group, recognising more than 30 years of contribution to research.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge one of the major achievements of the Society in the last 12 months in converting our Proceedings to a Journal, thanks to the leadership of **Nicola Schreurs** and **Rebecca Hickson** along with past presidents: **Chris Logan** and **Grant Edwards** who started the process and were integral in making our research more visible by making the Proceedings open access online. This year the Society invited applications from post-graduate students from Massey and Lincoln University's to act as student representatives on the committee. Thank you and congratulations to Massey University PhD student **Rhiannon Handcox** who is also conveniently based at Lincoln University.

Regarding the 2017-2018 Committee, I'm grateful for the commitment of the Team which consists of our now Past President **Nicola Schreurs**, and **Rebecca Hickson** stepping into the Vice President role. **Thomas Lopdell** continues his well-appointed role as our Treasurer and **Kathryn McRae** is our Secretary. We welcome **Sarah Pain** as Website Manager supported by **René Corner-Thomas** who looks after Publications. Our Newsletter Editor **Kirsty Hammond** continues

to keep us up to date with information. Our Farmer Representatives, **John Booker** and **Mark Illston**, continue to provide their valuable time in support of our Society. Many thanks to **Sam Peterson** and his Editorial Team for production of our 2017 Proceedings.

Finally, I'm very happy to report that organisation of the next conference is in the capable hands of **Chris Logan** and will be somewhere in the South Island. Watch this space, he is looking rather pleased with himself and his organising team. On that note, please be aware of the date for abstracts for next year's conference. Details on submitting your abstract are within this newsletter and on our website. I'd also like to remind you that we welcome nominations for our awards. There are so many people who have devoted valuable time and ideas into improving our animal production industries and the Society is very keen to recognise these people so please put names forward to any member of the Committee (www.nzsap.org.nz).

Racheal Bryant
NZSAP President

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NZSAP 2017 CONFERENCE

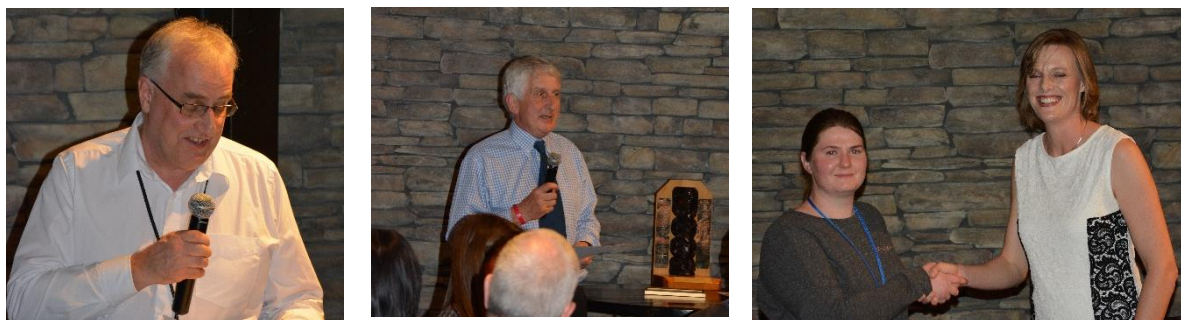
The 2017 NZSAP Conference was held at The Distinction Hotel in Rotorua (28-30th June). Attendees enjoyed a range of presentations, including a Plenary Lecture by Professor Dorian Garrick on genetic improvement, and visits to Landcorp Endeavour Farms and David and Clare Beuth's dairy farm in the Mamaku ranges. Some photos from the conference below:



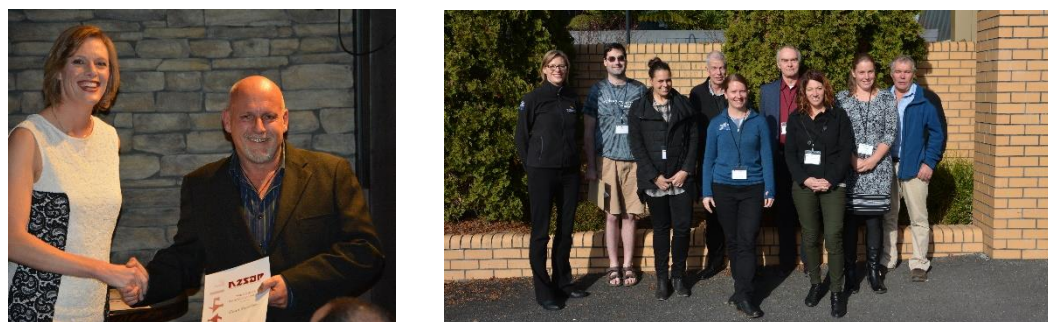
Left: Conference attendees at the Landcorp Endeavour Farms. Middle: Chris Logan listening in on herd home use at the Beuth's farm. Right: Conference organiser Cameron Craigie



Left: Sir Arthur Ward recipient Sheryl-Anne Newman. Right: Past President Nicola Schreurs and Living Legend Garry Waghorn



Left: Life Membership recipient John McEwan. Middle: McMeekan Memorial Award recipient Steve Davis. Right: Young Members winner Charlotte Reed and Past President Nicola Schreurs



Left: 75th Jubilee Technician Award recipient Dean Burnham. Right: NZSAP Management Committee in attendance at the conference.

REMINDERS

VERY IMPORTANT NOTICE

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS FOR THE 2018 NZSAP CONFERENCE

DUE: **3 PM 8TH DECEMBER 2017**

SUBMIT ONLINE AT: <http://www.nzsap.org/content/conference>

NOMINATIONS FOR NZSAP AWARDS

DUE: **31ST JANUARY 2018**

--- McMeekan Memorial Award --- Sir Arthur Ward Award ---
75th Jubilee Technician Award --- Honorary Life Membership

APPLICATIONS FOR NZSAP ANIMAL SCIENCE TRAVEL AWARDS

DUE: **31ST JANUARY 2018**

Application details can be found here:

<http://www.nzsap.org/nzsap-animal-science-award>

2018 MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION \$95

PLEASE HAVE THIS PAID BY: **31ST MARCH 2018**

Keep an eye out in December 2017 for an email notification that subscriptions are due for payment. Prompt payment is appreciated.

NZSAP CONFERENCE 2018

The organisation of the 2018 NZSAP Conference is in its initial stages and will be primarily held at Lincoln University, Lincoln, Christchurch, from **10th July to 12th July 2018**. The timing of the 2018 Conference has been chosen to fit with both Massey and Lincoln University Semester breaks and avoid conflicts with other conferences (SIDE 25th-29th June and ASAP 2nd-5th July).

There has been plenty of valued feedback from the 2017 Conference attendees on what format, theme and activities, should be incorporated into the 2018 Conference. At this early stage, the Organising Committee is considering one day at Lincoln with papers, and then a field tour, overnighting away from Lincoln, potentially visiting a North Canterbury farm affected by recent earthquake. Please continue to contribute ideas and suggestions via email to Chris.Logan@lincoln.ac.nz

Please put this date into your calendars and diaries and start planning for a conference in Lincoln. For confirmation of conference details and to keep up-to-date on conference plans visit the NZSAP conference website page: <http://www.nzsap.org/content/conference>

To submit a paper to the NZSAP proceedings an abstract must first be submitted no later than **3 PM Friday 8th December 2017**. Further information on key dates and abstract submission are available via the NZSAP website: <http://www.nzsap.org/content/conference>

NZSAP PROCEEDINGS - FREE ONLINE

The proceedings of the NZSAP is now open access and can be accessed using the following link: www.nzsap.org/proceedings

NOMINATIONS FOR AWARDS 2018

The Management Committee is seeking recommendations for the **McMeekan Memorial Award**, the **Sir Arthur Ward Award**, the **75th Jubilee Technician Award**, as well as conferment of **Honorary Life Membership**. The Committee shall consider recommendations from members and formal nominations will be read at the 2018 Annual General Meeting. **Honorary Life Members** shall be persons who have rendered significant service to the cause of animal production.

The **McMeekan Memorial Award** recognises an outstanding individual contribution made to New Zealand animal production and/or the Society, during the previous five years. Nominations must be signed by two financial members of the Society and must contain documented evidence of the way or ways in which the nominee's efforts have made an outstanding contribution to New Zealand animal production and/or the Society during the five years before the nomination. A potential recipient need not be a current member of the Society. The Award is in honour of Dr C P McMeekan a foundation member, past president, life member and distinguished leader in animal production, research and administration in New Zealand and the world.

The **Sir Arthur Ward Award** recognises the successful application of scientific research or farmer experimentation through a series of trials or effective extension when applied to an aspect of animal production in New Zealand. The nominee may be an individual, a company or an organisation, and need not be a member of the Society. Nominations must be signed by two financial members of the Society and must contain documented evidence of how the nominee's efforts have made a substantial contribution towards the adoption of a practice(s) that has facilitated more efficient animal production in terms of output per animal, per labour unit or per farm. The phrase "adoption of a practice" is to be broadly interpreted and may relate to the development of a technique, a piece of equipment, or a husbandry practice; the effective encouragement of sound principles of animal production; or the development of a new aspect of animal production.

The **75th Jubilee Technician Award** recognises outstanding contribution by an individual technician to the facilitation of quality research in New Zealand animal production and/or the Society. To be eligible for consideration the position description or job title of the nominee must reflect a technical position. Nominations must be signed by two current financial members of the Society and must contain documented evidence of the way in which the nominee has fulfilled the objectives of the Award and made an outstanding contribution to

New Zealand animal production and/or the Society. A potential recipient need not be a current member of the Society. The Award is in recognition of the 75th Anniversary of NZSAP.

To nominate somebody for an award, please send the following to the Executive Secretary:

P.O Box 955, Cambridge 3450, NEW ZEALAND. Email: nzsap.inc@gmail.com

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

TRAVEL AWARD REPORTS

Travel Reports for Animal Science Award

Rhiannon Handcock, PhD student, Massey University

The day after the 2017 NZSAP conference in Rotorua I headed off to Townsville, Queensland to attend the Association for the Advancement of Animal Breeding and Genetics (AAABG) conference. I arrived on the Saturday afternoon which meant we were able to spend all of Sunday exploring Townsville. It was beautiful and sunny and was around 24°C every day! Much nicer than the snow/sleet/hail/rain storm that welcomed me on my return to Christchurch!

I presented the paper "Expression of heterosis for live weight in growth curves of New Zealand dairy heifers" in the Dairy session on the first day of the conference. I was asked some challenging questions and I felt like I answered them really well. I moved between most of the sessions throughout the conference focussing on presentations involving dairy, live weight and reproductive performance.

We had a field trip to the CSIRO tropical beef farm research centre where we observed some steers in the rumination chambers. We also saw some Brahman cattle that Michael Lyons brought over for us to see (photos below). This was the first time I have seen Brahman cattle and they were very weirdly wonderful!

Overall, attending the AAABG conference was a fantastic experience for a young scientist like myself. I am very grateful to have been given the opportunity to present to and network with scientists involved with animal breeding and genetics and would like to thank the NZSAP for the financial assistance provided to have made this possible.



Stacey Hendriks, PhD Student, Massey University

Purpose for the award: I recently returned from California where I worked with Assistant Professor Julie Huzzey. I attended California Polytechnic State University (Cal Poly) from late March until early July 2017 and spent my time working with Julie Huzzey to organise and summarise the behavioural data that has been collected by DairyNZ over three years (2012-2014). Julie Huzzey has extensive knowledge and expertise in the area of the behaviour of dairy cows and how this relates to animal health. The assistance I received from the Animal Science award helped to assist with the travel and living costs while I was based at California Polytechnic State University. The knowledge I have gained will help me to quantify behaviour and behavioural changes that occur in dairy cows and result in subsequent ill-health and as a result provide farmers with new information for the detection of disease through the use of precision technology.

Benefits from attend California Polytechnic State University: The learning process of filtering the data for erroneous readings that frequently occur when monitoring animal behaviour and summarising the data into single meaningful data points has been incredibly helpful and I feel well equipped to maximise the use of the available data. While attending Cal Poly I was able to start retrospectively analysing relationships within the dataset between behavioural measures and phenotypic data. However, I have temporarily redirected my focus to establish a best practice method for the filtering of the behavioural data before I invest more time into analysing the data.

Since returning to New Zealand I have been focusing on a literature review of the methods that have been used to interpret raw behavioural data across activity monitors and management systems. The appropriate method for filtering data may vary slightly in grazing dairy cows compared with the method used to interpret behaviour from indoor-housed dairy cows. It is suspected that due to the grazing nature of New Zealand dairy cows, the threshold for filtering false positives may be different to what is commonly used in research in North America. Overall, my time in the United States was incredibly beneficial for my own development and understanding of behavioural technology and managing behavioural data. In addition, I was able to establish a good relationship with Julie Huzzey and she will continue to be a valuable member of my supervisory team throughout my PhD.

Lucy Coleman, PhD student

I was awarded the NZSAP animal science award in 2017 to travel to Townsville Australia for the Association for the Advancement of Animal Breeding and Genetics (AAABG) conference. I attended this conference to present a poster titled 'Breed variation in tongue colour of dairy and beef-cross-dairy calves'.

Over the three days of the conference I learnt a lot about genetics and got a few ideas about what I could do with the data collected for my PhD. The conference was attended mostly by Australians, there were a few from further abroad, and was attended by a mix of students, and experienced researchers and geneticists. The conference was filled with invited speakers every morning, presentations throughout the day, and posters in the evening before the conference dinners. I was a part of the poster session on the first day, and attracted a few good questions, sparking some more ideas.

There was a choice of three field trips for the second day. Having an interest in cattle, I chose the beef field trip. We travelled south of Townsville to the CSIRO Lansdown research facility. The Lansdown farm had Brahman-Angus cross cattle involved in a feed study and we were able to see the chambers which are used for feed efficiency studies. A nearby farmer brought some of his Brahman cattle along to show us, outlining his breeding programme. The last part of the field trip took us further into the Lansdown farm, where we saw a herd of Red Brahman cattle. The farm was using water access to record frequent weights of the herd, by erecting yards around the troughs, which were entered through a crush with a walk over weigh platform and an EID reader. The farm was also using GPS tags to record movement of the cattle.

The final day of the conference was a personal highlight, when I was awarded one of four Young Scientist Awards, sponsored by the WCGALP conference committee, for my poster. The four young scientists received free registration to the joint ICAR and WCGALP conference in Auckland next year.

The NZSAP travel award made my attendance at the conference possible. The conference was very interesting, and I learnt a lot, which will be helpful towards completing my PhD.

NEW MEMBERS

The NZSAP would like to welcome our new members:

Andrew Miller	Alana Boulton	Cheryl Quinton
Suzanne Young	Ken Greaney	Pablo Gregorini
Edgar Sandoval	Michael Lee	Carolina Realini

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Email: Kirsty.Hammond@agresearch.co.nz