

Winter Grazing Taskforce
Thursday 5 September 2019

MEETING SUMMARY

Date:	Thursday 5 September 2019
Time:	9:00am – 4:00pm (<i>tea and coffee from 8:45am</i>)
Location:	Invercargill

Agenda

1.	Welcome and introductions
2.	Review and agree 23 August meeting minutes
3.	Discuss circulated papers, including <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Summary of animal welfare requirements- Stocktake of initiatives- MPI complaints data
4.	Invited speakers
5.	Debrief
6.	Actions review
7.	Close

Attendees

John Hellström
Arnja Dale
Helen Beattie
Stephen Hopkinson
Angus Robson
Ross Monaghan
Elaine Cook
Dave Harrison
Ewen Mathieson
Pania King

Meeting summary

- The Winter Grazing Taskforce's second meeting was held on 5 September 2019 in Invercargill.
- At the beginning of the meeting the minutes from 23 August 2019 were reviewed. These were agreed as a true and accurate reflection of what had occurred.
- The primary aim of this meeting was to hear from a range of speakers to ensure the Minister's request that the Taskforce would draw on advice and expertise from various groups and individuals across the country who can inform and challenge the taskforce's thinking, was fulfilled.
- Speakers were invited to present on the challenges facing farmers using winter grazing (deer, sheep, dairy), on barriers farmers face to meeting good practice, and voice any thoughts on solutions.
- Before speakers arrived, the members discussed papers circulated on MPI animal welfare compliance statistics, a summary of animal welfare requirements in codes of welfare and the Animal Welfare Act 1999, and a stocktake of education and extension initiatives already available to farmers in New Zealand.
- Invited speakers covered a range of backgrounds and topics:
 - DairyNZ farm systems development and farmer support
 - Farmers, farm consultants and water catchment group representatives (sheep, beef and dairy)
 - Southland Federated Farmers representatives
 - Southland veterinarians (five vets from five different clinics in Southland)
 - Beef + Lamb extension services and Southland sheep farmer
 - Environment Southland
- A number of members of the Taskforce needed to leave for travel after the speakers had finished. The remaining members confirmed their wishes to have additional meetings so they could take time to discuss recommendations to the Minister.
- Some key themes identified from the day were:
 - A number of presenters observed that there are increasing challenges associated with animal wintering in southern NZ. Some referred to increased nutrition and welfare challenges; some to greater environmental challenges; and some to the overall complexity of the many considerations needed to ensure that bottom lines are met.
 - The Southland veterinarians identified higher welfare risks associated with feeding fodder beet. While some farmers manage these well, issues with poor transitioning and acidosis, the stocking rate on such a high yielding crop, and mineral deficiencies can lead to compromised welfare.
 - There is a need for clearer minimum standards to be set, and farmers to be aware of them and be held to them; more visible and audible leadership is desired.
 - There is not one solution appropriate for all farms, farmers, areas, etc.
 - The lowest performers are not being reached: good farmers are mostly finding help, guidance, and training. The poor performers need to be identified and supported to improve.

- Some constructive suggestions were provided as to how to improve current planning processes and overall wintering performance.

Action items

	Action	Person
1	MPI Compliance team to be invited to next meeting to cover MPI approach to animal welfare enforcement	MPI
2	Two additional meetings to be organised	MPI

Invited speakers

Name	Organisation
Dawn Dalley Nick Tait	DairyNZ
Ivan Lines	Farm Consultant Leader of a pan-sector farming group, accompanied by eight South Island farmers
Bernadette Hunt Geoffrey Young	Southland Federated Farmers
Louise Ingram Jill MacGibbon Mark Bryan Justin Muschamp Sid Taylor	Otautau Vets Northern Southland Vets VetSouth VetCo Clutha Vets
Olivia Ross Andrew Morrison	Beef+Lamb NZ
Fiona Young Rob Phillips Simon Mapp Karl Erikson	Environment Southland