

# STAGLINE ONLINE

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**Stagline Online is a monthly newsletter for members of the NZ Deer Farmers' Association**

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

As I write this report, everyone's world has turned upside down. In January the COVID-19 virus seemed a long way away in China, but as we know soon spread thanks to the mass movement of people daily around the world via air travel.

A lot of people, including some world leaders, have not taken the implications of COVID-19 seriously. The world realised its error and belatedly started to lock countries down to avoid huge deaths.

Here in New Zealand with our lockdown underway for a bit over a week, we as deer farmers have our part to play as an essential industry. We should not take this task for granted or lightly, as we have a responsibility to create a safe environment for our families and employees. We need to ensure the social distancing rules are adhered to on our farms as we work so our own, and employees' bubbles are kept separate. If we all play our part we will ensure a shorter lockdown period and get the country running again, otherwise the economic carnage gets worse.

The huge issue we farmers face with the lockdown, is that many of our members are under huge stress with the severe drought conditions this year coupled with the slower kill with the reconfigured processing plants and a depressed store stock market. As individuals or through our local branches, it is very important that we call as many farmers as possible in our area to see how they are coping, and people that are struggling get the help and advice they need.

Even though we are classified as an essential industry, many of our services are not, or are working at low capacity. It would be good to hear from you how you are functioning under this environment and industries you consider need to be reclassified so we can properly farm and prepare for winter. If you consider something is essential for animal welfare and business continuity, work with your supplier to get it. Couriers and freight are operating for essential services and can deliver what retailers order.

With the cancellation of all deer industry events to the end of May at this stage, our annual conference was one of the victims of the crisis. The first time this has ever happened in our industry's history. We are now planning to hold the conference in Invercargill next year. Our DFA AGM which was to be held just prior to the conference will probably be held in conjunction with the Branch Chairs in October. In the interim we plan to hold teleconferences in some form with the North and South Island Branch Chairs to start with.

Nominations for the DFA Executive and SAP closed at the end of March with four nominations for the four available positions so there is no election needed this year. Congratulations to Karen Middelberg from the Hawkes Bay, who replaces Grant Charteris who stood down this year. I would like to welcome Karen to the Executive Committee and look forward to working with her. I retained my position along with Paddy Boyd and Leith Chick on the SAP.

Grant Charteris stood down this year after eight years on the DFA executive. I would like to thank Grant for his huge contribution to the executive over that time. Grant's clear thinking and common sense approach to how we did things and the decisions we made was greatly appreciated by myself and the rest of the executive. Grant, like the rest of us, has strong opinions on issues but he was always part of the team. The common goals we shared for the DFA and deer industry, alongside his natural ability to bring humour to any situation made it a pleasure to work alongside him for those years. I would like to wish Grant all the best in his future endeavours and I am sure we will see him involved again in Deer Industry leadership roles.

Before I sign off, remember don't be stupid, play your part in fighting COVID-19 so we can beat it, save lives and get our country back running again.

*John Somerville*

NZDFA Executive Committee Chairman

# NZDFA EXECUTIVE AND DINZ BOARD POSITIONS

## **Provisional outcomes of the 2020 NZDFA Industry positions and producer nominations for the DINZ Board**

In provisional terms NZDFA advises to the best of our knowledge (in that we have no record of any additional faxed nominations) that the NZDFA within the deer industry clearly has confidence in the incumbent members of the Executive Committee, and SAP with single nominations for the two SAP and Executive Committee positions.

Provisionally we are pleased to welcome Karen Middelberg (Hawkes Bay) to the Executive Committee alongside the return of current Executive Committee Chairman John Somerville (Southland), with Paddy Boyd (South Canterbury) and Leith Chick (Waipa) back to the Selection and Appointments Panel.

Kris Orange's (South Canterbury) nomination we understand is also the only nomination for the DINZ Board for the retirement by rotation 3 year term producer appointed vacancy. The SAP will conduct its interview process in person or online for that appointment prior to the new Board term commencing 1st July 2020.

# VELVET MARKET REPORT

Exporters report that most of the 2019 velvet harvest has been exported and is in our main markets of South Korea and China. Sales through the Northern winter have been affected by the closure of markets and retail shops, but on-line and home delivery sales have received a boost. As markets in China and South Korea reopen we would hope to see a pick up in sales of velvet.

## Headwinds likely over the short term for the NZ velvet industry

The COVID-19 outbreak and subsequent grim economic predictions by governments around the world is likely to affect the NZ velvet industry over the short term.

The immediate impact for NZ velvet exporters has been supply chain disruptions – getting product to customers. The industry is fortunate that the velvet season was nearer the end, rather than six months earlier, as the impact of COVID-19 would have been more severe. Exporters report that the majority of NZ velvet has been exported although there are still some stocks remaining in the NZ supply channel.

The key issue for the NZ velvet industry remains around the balance of supply and demand. Before COVID-19, DINZ had signalled that after 10 years of solid growth and a favourable supply demand relationship – NZ could be nearing maximum supply to meet current consumption levels. Consumption growth is slowing, yet production growth remains solid. While the result of increasing production is due to the success of the NZ velvet industry over recent years, there is a limit to what the market can take in its current state.

The NZ velvet industry has gone into this crisis in a strong position. The increase in consumption of NZ velvet as a valued ingredient in healthy food products in Korea and interest from similar channels in China, Taiwan and other markets is promising. Work continues to develop new markets with DINZ's China and Korean based contractors. And while it is early days, there are some reports that these markets are slowly recovering.

Being a well-respected health product in Asia, velvet should be less impacted than other products. However, if production keeps increasing at its current rate, it is likely that this sector will come under pressure in the short term.

As a food product, NZ processors and exporters can still operate under Alert Level 4 (while meeting strict criteria). While this is good news, exporters report that booking container space remains problematic.

Please keep your families and friends safe as we navigate these extraordinary times.

# VENISON MARKET REPORT

Our main markets remain open for our venison and exporters are working with their importers and distributors to arrange deliveries. This is the low time for consumption in our Northern Hemisphere markets, so consumption is not being too affected, but importers are being cautious about orders for the coming game season. There are some stocks carried through from 2019 in some markets and with uncertainty about when restaurants will reopen, and the economic conditions when they do; while everyone is certain that our venison will be demanded during the game season importers are taking a cautious position at the moment.

All venison importers are seeking to expand their retail offering and get more access to on-line sales. Home meal delivery is another outlet that is being developed. But competition for share of plate is increasing as other protein suppliers also seek to maximise sales through these outlets. Retail sales in USA, Benelux, Scandinavia, Germany and Switzerland are continuing, however the disruptions to seafreight and airfreight mean that New Zealand exporters are having difficulty supplying these customers' requirements.

Your venison processors have all registered with MPI as essential services and have put in place systems to ensure the safety of their workers. We are grateful to our processors and their teams for continuing to operate in this difficult time. The physical spacing and extra precautions that have been put in place mean that chain speed has slowed down and throughput is reduced. All processors are aware of the stress this is causing and are asking their suppliers to discuss their critical needs, and be prepared to delay killing where this is possible.

The disruption to the season will mean delayed stock processing. Many farmers will have to run more stock through the winter than planned and with feed shortages across much of the country this will not be easy. Some hard decisions on feeding priority stock will need to be made. Help is available. MPI is working with AgFirst in drought-affected areas to offer feed budgeting advice, **see below 'Sector wide launch of feed budgeting service for farmers' article.**

DINZ has drought and feeding advice online at [www.deernz.org/hub/feeding](http://www.deernz.org/hub/feeding) (<http://www.deernz.org/hub/feeding>).

**Another helpful link is the Beef + Lamb COVID-19 Feed Management check list >>** (<https://beeflambnz.com/news-views/covid-19-feed-management-check-list-farmers>).

# SECTOR WIDE LAUNCH OF FEED BUDGETING SERVICE FOR FARMERS

**CLIMATIC CHALLENGES COUPLED WITH SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED PROCESSING CAPACITY DUE TO THE COVID-19 CRISIS HAS FARMERS IN MANY PARTS OF THE COUNTRY STARING DOWN THE BARREL OF FEED SHORTAGES.**



***Joint media release by with Beef + Lamb New Zealand, DairyNZ, Deer Industry bodies (DINZ and DFA), AgFirst, and Federated Farmers***

To support farmers, the Ministry for Primary Industries together with Beef + Lamb New Zealand, DairyNZ, AgFirst and Federated Farmers is providing remote feed planning support to farmers including a feed budgeting service and professional farm systems advice.

In the first instance, farmers will get a free assessment of their feed planning needs by their relevant industry or levy organisation, from there they can have access to an advisor who can discuss management options and avenues for practical support.

For farmers who require more in-depth support, they will be referred to a farm systems consultant, but there will be cost to this service.

Mark Harris, who is leading B+LNZ's response in this initiative, says farmers are dealing with a number of compounding factors including keeping themselves, their families and staff safe during the COVID-19 crisis while trying to run their businesses, keep stock flowing and setting their farms up for winter and spring in the face of climatic-driven feed shortages.

He says reduced processing capacity along with the cancellation of traditional stock sales forums such as calf sales and weekly stock sales means many farmers are carrying more stock than they anticipated going into winter.

This is putting a huge strain on already stretched feed resources and farmer morale.

A feed budget can help farmers consolidate their thinking and make a plan for the weeks and months ahead taking into account various scenarios, says Mark.

"This is a service that the government along with farmer organisations can provide to farmers who may struggle to do one on their own, particularly given this time of stress and uncertainty."

As well as crunching the numbers, they will act as a sounding board and offer practical advice and support decision making.

To access this service there are three toll-free numbers:

- Dry stock sector Beef + Lamb New Zealand: 0800BEEFLAMB (0800 233 352).
- Dairy sector DairyNZ: 0800 4 DairyNZ (0800 4 3247969).
- AgFirst: 0508 AGFIRST (0508 243 477).

This service will be available until 30 June 2020 at which time farmer need will be revised.

There are a number of farmer-specific tools and resources on the B+LNZ website about COVID-19 and feed and stock management. Go to <https://beeflambnz.com/knowledge-hub> (<https://beeflambnz.com/knowledge-hub>).

***Article from: <https://beeflambnz.com/news-views/sector-launches-feed-budgeting-service-farmers> (<https://beeflambnz.com/news-views/sector-launches-feed-budgeting-service-farmers>)***

# DINZ/DFA EXEC MEETING

The DFA Executive got together via teleconference with Innes Moffat and Ian Walker earlier this week to discuss important issues at present.

- **Covid19 Overview**

- Disruptions to Market: Significant at this time and a very fast moving picture. Venison is still being packed for later delivery, and for retail accounts at the moment, but with restaurants etc closed and Freight disruptions, blockages on shipping containers, trade is sporadic.
- Venison processors: Some decrease in demand but also some effort to respond to drought response in critical areas and move livestock to slaughter in these crisis areas.
- DINZ Office Operation: All Executives are working from home somewhat restricted but all have laptops and cell phones Cloud base office and individual files still working well.
- Velvet update: Most product is through the system. An estimate of 10% remains on farm or unallocated.

- **DINZ Board Update, Key issues**

- Farmer welfare: Dry area stress
- Winter feed shortage issue

- **DFA Executive Update**

- Virtual series for conference replacement: Sarah Perriam in discussion with DINZ to prepare a series of virtual interactive meeting conferences for 1 hour industry interactive live sessions that will allow Q&A
- Working under Alert Level 4

To read the full report, please click here >> ([/sites/dinz/files/Stagline%20on%20line%20EC%20meeting%20notes%20%20April%20.pdf](https://sites/dinz/files/Stagline%20on%20line%20EC%20meeting%20notes%20%20April%20.pdf))

## RABOBANK NEW ZEALAND REPORT

Rabobank New Zealand remains committed to supporting the New Zealand food and agribusiness industry in these unprecedented and challenging times. The food and agri sectors will be crucial in helping to rebuild the New Zealand economy, and now is the time we all need to support our farmers, growers and food producers.

New Zealand's rural sector entered the COVID-19 crisis in relatively good shape, with strong commodity prices, low interest rates and a competitive Kiwi dollar. While Rabobank expects the virus will have a significant impact on the global economy, we think the sector is in a strong position to manage through these challenges. We should also remember that New Zealand farmers and growers are among the most efficient food producers in the world and this means they are better placed than most to deal with the impacts stemming from the COVID-19 outbreak.

We do expect that measures introduced to contain the pandemic outbreak of COVID-19 will reduce demand for protein in some key export markets, due to supply chain disruptions, reduced foodservice activity, and declining consumer incomes. However, there are some key mitigants to help offset the negative impact this may have on NZ farm-gate returns:

1. China's animal protein shortage due to African Swine Fever – import demand from NZ's red meat largest market is expected to bounce back strongly once the virus is contained, underpinning global protein demand in 2020.
2. Tight supplies – limited supplies out of both NZ and Australia will help offset reduced demand.
3. Falling NZD - the depreciation of the NZD will help shelter NZ farm-gate prices against declining export prices (in USD terms).

In Rabobank's recently released podcast – "Where's the Meat? COVID-19 and the Red Meat Industry" RaboResearch analysts Blake Holgate and Angus Gidley-Baird talk about the impact COVID-19 is having in the NZ and Australia red meat industries. [You can listen to their podcast here >> \(http://raboResearchfoodagri.libsyn.com/wheres-the-meat-covid-19-and-the-red-meat-industry\)](http://raboResearchfoodagri.libsyn.com/wheres-the-meat-covid-19-and-the-red-meat-industry)

Please also keep an eye out for Rabobank's Agri-Business Monthlies which will be providing monthly updates on the impact of COVID-19 on NZ agriculture. Rabobank clients will receive these directly by email, while [non-clients can access them via this link >> \(https://research.rabobank.com/far/en/regions/newzealand/index.html\)](https://research.rabobank.com/far/en/regions/newzealand/index.html) (the April edition will be available for non-clients the week starting 6th April).

Stay safe and look after each other.

Best regards,

*Todd Charteris*

CEO, Rabobank New Zealand

# NOTICE TO ALL VELVETTERS AND SUPERVISING VETS FROM THE NVSB

Notice to all velvetters and supervising vets from the NVSB - end of 19/20 Season Requirements



## Return of and reconciliation of velvetting drugs

Given the current extraordinary situation with the country in lockdown and all the restrictions in place regarding movement, the NVSB will defer the return of all velvetting drugs and reconciliation of same until the current crisis has been declared at an end and or freedom of movement has been reintroduced.

Velvetters are advised that they are to keep their drugs locked in the usual way on farm and ensure all records are up to date ready for when the time comes to return them to the relevant veterinary practice.

## Vet Practices

For any vet practice that have already reconciled, and do have drugs returned, could you please continue to update us with this information as circumstances allow. All DINZ staff are working from home and available via cell phone or email.

## Regulated Control Scheme (RCS)

An important reminder to all those farmers who have had their velvetting sheds audited and still have outstanding "awaiting actions". These awaiting actions still need to be completed by the agreed times. Any shed that is not signed off this year will be ineligible to sign a VSD or sell velvet the following season. You will need to keep in contact with your auditor and advise them as soon as possible that the work has been completed. This can be done by covering off awaiting actions with photographs.

If you have not been contacted by an auditor to date please contact Pam to ensure your farm has been placed on the audit list.

Pam MacLeman: [pam.macleman@deernz.org](mailto:pam.macleman@deernz.org) (mailto:pam.macleman@deernz.org) or 027 392 4795

John Tacon: [john.tacon@deernz.org](mailto:john.tacon@deernz.org) (mailto:john.tacon@deernz.org) or 021 242 2873

# FRANCES SWANN TRIBUTE

The New Zealand Deer Farmers Association, its Executive Committee, Branch Chairs and DFA members, alongside the DINZ Board and executives, acknowledge with sadness the recent loss of DFA Life Member **Frances Swann** after a short illness following a life well lived.

We have recollection of Bob and Frances as one of the industry's great partnerships in the foundation and establishment of young deer Industry. Bob and Frances Swann and later family in many areas led the pioneering days of the industry in terms of practical innovation, transfer of knowledge to the hopeful and new entrants. That practical knowledge was invaluable to the credibility of early deer farming under public scrutiny.

As a founding member of the NZDFA in 1975, as a founding councillor and very much a couple in the public eye, Bob and Frances made a huge contribution to the confidence of new entrants, but as much to the newly captured and relocated deer across NZ. Standards of care and welfare of deer on farms were critical in this new industry and the sound advice interest and building confidence were characteristic of Frances and Bob swan and family as people sought advice and wisdom.

The deer industry has been characterised by so many great industry husband and wife teams within the DFA, but there are few that have been more endearing and active that the Frances and Bob Swann who became DFA life members in the mid 1980's. The family's interest and progress in the world of velvet antler in terms of style, quality, leadership and innovation remain as one of the great industry stories from the time the memorable Raikaia red "Big Dad" first scooped the pool at the national velvet awards in Southland 39 years ago.

For most of the enduring memory of Frances will the cheerful quiet loyal partner and friend that attended so many industry events, always a had a quiet word about your own family and activity, had such a passion for South Canterbury and acute loyalty and commitment to Bob and family, and the wider deer farming community.

While we are saddened by the loss, the industry does thank Frances for her support, contribution and legacy of community engagement and enjoyment, very much still in evidence today through current family commitment quality to deer farming and exceptional animals and the companionship within the DFA and the national deer farming scene.

Our respect and sympathies to the Swann family. We share your loss and extend our warm sincere industry condolences at this time of reflection.

On behalf of the NZDFA, DINZ, and the wider community,

*Ian Walker*

Chairman Deer Industry New Zealand on behalf of the Board and staff.

*John Somerville*

Chairman NZ Deer Farmers Association.

Fellow NZDFA life members and DFA member deer farmers throughout New Zealand.

# NOTICEBOARD

## STUDENT LOOKING FOR ASSISTANCE

Hauraki Plains College - Gateway Programme

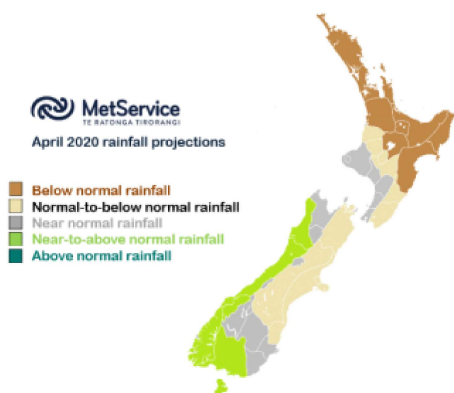
Hauraki Plains College have one student who is particularly interested in pursuing a career in deer farming. They also have other students interested in working with animals in general. They are looking for someone in the Hauraki District Council area who can offer some work experience. Ideal locations would be in the vicinity of Thames, Ngatea & Paeroa.

The Gateway Programme is a valuable learning experience for their students. A placement usually lasts for 8 weeks and is 1 day per week, unpaid work during school hours.

Students attend a Health & Safety Course being going on a Placement and sign a Confidentiality Agreement.

If you are interested in offering a Gateway placement, please contact Lesley Spencer, Employer Liaison at Hauraki Plains College, Ngatea [lesleys@haurakiplains.school.nz](mailto:lesleys@haurakiplains.school.nz) (<mailto:lesleys@haurakiplains.school.nz>) or 07 867 7029 Ext. 833

## THE APRIL 2020 OUTLOOK



High pressure and dry weather dominate the rest of this week, due to the combination of a settled Tasman Sea and a quiet Southern Ocean. However, expect the Southern Ocean to fire up and grab the reins next week, throwing some stormy (wetter) westerly weather across the country.

Fairly modest westerlies are expected over the South Island in week three, while high pressure hangs in over Northland and Auckland - keeping things drier than usual across the entire North Island. There is a hint of wetter weather for the North Island at the end of April (week 4), but confidence is low this far out.



South Island temperatures are forecast to run well above average this week, before a change to cooler than usual weather for the second and third weeks of April. North Island temperatures should run close to average through most of April, with the exception of next week (above average temperatures expected).

**Bottom Line:** Below normal April rainfall for the northeast of the North Island (Northland to Hawkes Bay). Somewhat drier than usual for Wairarapa, and Marlborough down to South Canterbury. Near normal April totals for Taranaki to Wellington, as well as Nelson and Otago. A wetter than usual April for western areas of the South Island, as well as Southland.

## Joke of the Month

An Irishman walks into a bar in Dublin, orders three pints of Guinness and sits in the back of the room, drinking a sip out of each one in turn. When he finished all three, he comes back to the bar and orders three more. The bartender says to him, 'You know, a pint goes flat after I draw it; it would taste better if you bought one at a time.' The Irishman replies, 'Well, you see, I have two brothers. One is in America, the other in Australia, and I'm here in Dublin. When we all left home, we promised that we'd drink this way to remember the days we all drank together.' The bartender admits that this is a nice custom, and leaves it there.

The Irishman becomes a regular in the bar and always drinks the same way: he orders three pints and drinks the three pints by taking drinks from each of them in turn. One day, he comes in and orders two pints. All the other regulars in the bar notice and fall silent. When he comes back to the bar for the second round, the bartender says, 'I don't want to intrude on your grief, but I wanted to offer my condolences on your great loss.' The Irishman looks confused for a moment, then a light dawns in his eye and he laughs. 'Oh, no, ' he says, 'Everyone is fine. I've just quit drinking!'



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Event	Date	Details
Various	2020	<p>Events in 2020 have been postponed. To keep up to date with details and possible reschedule dates, please follow the links below:</p> <p><u><a href="https://www.deernz.org/deer-industry-conference-be-rescheduled-2021#.XoZLtKgZPY">Deer Industry Conference &gt;&gt; (https://www.deernz.org/deer-industry-conference-be-rescheduled-2021#.XoZLtKgZPY)</a></u></p> <p><u><a href="https://www.deernz.org/deer-industry-nz-parasite-management-workshops-2020-postponed#.XoZLpKgZPY">Deer Industry NZ Parasite Management Workshops &gt;&gt; (https://www.deernz.org/deer-industry-nz-parasite-management-workshops-2020-postponed#.XoZLpKgZPY)</a></u></p> <p><u><a href="https://www.deernz.org/big-deer-tour-2020-postponed#.XoZLqKgZPY">The Big Deer Tour &gt;&gt; (https://www.deernz.org/big-deer-tour-2020-postponed#.XoZLqKgZPY)</a></u></p> <p><u><a href="https://www.deernz.org/xcell-rising-stars-competition-be-rescheduled-2021#.XoZLrqqZPY">XCell Rising Stars Competition &gt;&gt; (https://www.deernz.org/xcell-rising-stars-competition-be-rescheduled-2021#.XoZLrqqZPY)</a></u></p> <p><u><a href="https://www.deernz.org/introductory-deer-workshop-rural-professionals-balclutha-south-otago-postponed#.XoZLq6gzZPY">Introductory Deer Workshop for Rural Professionals &gt;&gt; (https://www.deernz.org/introductory-deer-workshop-rural-professionals-balclutha-south-otago-postponed#.XoZLq6gzZPY)</a></u></p> <p><u><a href="https://www.deernz.org/financials-deer-workshop-rural-professionals-balclutha-south-otago-postponed#.XoZLrKgZPY">Financials for Deer Workshop for Rural Professionals &gt;&gt; (https://www.deernz.org/financials-deer-workshop-rural-professionals-balclutha-south-otago-postponed#.XoZLrKgZPY)</a></u></p> <p><u><a href="https://www.deernz.org/environment-deer-workshop-rural-professionals-gore-southland-postponed#.XoZLsqgZPY">Environment Deer Workshop for Rural Professionals &gt;&gt; (https://www.deernz.org/environment-deer-workshop-rural-professionals-gore-southland-postponed#.XoZLsqgZPY)</a></u></p>

