

## Food and Fibre Conference - Report Back on Food & Fibre Industry Working Group

This MPI hosted Working Group involved around 50 industry leaders. A key idea the group has elicited is the need for a pan-sector Vision for New Zealand

When they asked for a volunteer to present...I was the only one left in the room

### Key Themes

1. Food and Fibre Future Industry Working Group expressed a range of views (Joking)
  - The Wine guys felt we were all in silos...but did point out this was not a bad thing in their industry...except for the red noses
  - Some of our friends from the Forestry sector suggested the....Urban/Rural divide was a fire break
  - The Seafood team felt pretty cool having admitted that they weren't perfect in a recent ad campaign
  - And the Dairy guys liked the idea of having Ritchie on their team
  - Not to be outdone...the meat industry representatives did their best to say Amberger...and like Inspector Clouseo realised this was impossible.... and then realised they had created the impossible Amberger
  - But Justine from MPI soon stropped us all into line...explaining that everything had changed since that episode of the Simpsons where Mr Burns ate a three eyed fish – now everyone wants healthy rivers and we need a social licence to operate.
  - And when it comes to food...ever since they invent Viagra there seems to be a new food concoctions every week...science is very much in our food

So on further reflection we agreed that currently the affable Mr Magoo was doing a better job than us....when it comes to a clear vision for the future

Most of us could see horizon one, a couple squinted and felt that horizon two was survivable and everyone agreed that by the time horizon 3 arrived we would be somewhere between Mad Max and the Martian.

Its then that light bulb went on and we agreed the need a pan-sector vision for Food & Fibre

- One to proactively consider longer term time frames
- One that can articulate New Zealand's unique positioning
- A story that resonates both at home and abroad
- To create the future we want in a way that enables people to engage on the journey
- In short....We need to collaborate

Potatoes, potatoes, potatoes the Irish once said and no one listened...so one day they decided to liven the party up with 'Origin Green'....there new ditty has put us on notice...the luck of the Irish is sending us a clear message.... lead follow or get out of the way

2. We need a ditty of our own
  - A vision that will articulate where we want to get too with a concise and united message
  - One that sets out our strategic challenges and finds ways to deliver solutions
  - To engender aspirational discussions

3. The problem definition

There is a saying that you are half way to solving a problem when you acknowledge you have one

Take for instance the industry I come from:

Since 1904 the year when the first Hamburger debuted at the World's Fair in St Louis we have never looked back

Last year there were 11.2 billion beef servings in American restaurants

For many it seems inconceivable that red meat will be pushed to the side of the plate or become a reluctant choice in the next horizon

Yet at the same time we know that the World is changing rapidly that alternative protein is taking a hold at retail and in restaurants

That there is rising consumer demand for heather and more sustainable foods...that where meat and protein used to rhyme now plants and protein sound fine

I ask myself are we as an industry doing enough in responding this global threat

Consider the super computer we all carry in our pocket and the 46 industries it has disrupted. Consider also that the same brains that have developed and marketed this so well are now focused on the food industry.

And I say the same to you that this is true at a Pan sector level – In this new world

- Are our food and fibre industries heading for a reputational crisis
- Are we spending too many resources duplicating activities
- Do we have pan sector systems and processes to channel our thinking
- & to respond to disruptive and emerging trends
- Are we being brutal enough about what could 'knock us over'

#### 4. Who will deliver the vision

- NZTE got us underway go ...open hearts, open minds, open spaces....
- Ian Proudfoot has scared the proverbial out of us with his predictions of the future...and given himself a heart attack in the process
- MPI have shown some leadership...Justine has done a remarkable job breaking down the silos
- But...It must be led by industry....
- Industry Bodies...
- We need to seriously consider the role a Pan Sector Board can play
- We need a bus we can all ride on together
  
- We can't predict the future with total accuracy
- But we can do better than Mr Magoo
- We can create a world leading position

#### Slides:

##### The Essential Components of a Vision (**read slide**)

- Where do we want to get to
- What is stopping us from getting there
- What can industry do (what do we need and why)
- What can Government do

##### Some suggestions for themes a vision might include (**read slide**)

- Natural Capital – water, soil, environmental impacts, climate change, our oceans, biodiversity
- Human and Cultural Capital – people, entrepreneurial mind set, achieving 'lift and shift'
- Our reputation – our province story, production systems, consumer insight and routes to market....our cultural values & our history....sustainable, integrity our unique story.
- Investing for the future – we need to make our entrepreneurial engine more connected and move the dial with smart R&D, scale and funding systems

Consider our failure to harness the potential of our Maori culture. Martareki is a good example of an festival we could use to underpin our food and fibre messages. Instead we argue whether or not there should be fireworks.

#### 5. Opportunities (**read slide**)

- Our small size supports agility...that number 8 wire is in our blood
- We already have a reputation for premium
- We can see disruptive trends
- We can use technology

#### 6. The Big Scary Issues (**read slide**)

- Our Mindset
- Sustainable production
- Biosecurity

Interestingly Mindset is seen as our biggest issue – not some off shore threat, but our own reluctance to change

#### 7. Next Steps (**read slide**)

- Agree on a vehicle to enable a vision to develop
- Define an outline of what we want for New Zealand
- Let's be proactive, let's play as one team
- Both Industry and Government have a part to play
- The Minister needs to own this space....leadership in creating a Vision for the Food & Fibre sector could be a defining achievement for his term in office. Leadership is needed now as we have a 3-5 year window to define our own future and if we don't we will be responding to the initiatives of others.