

# Winter Grazing Action Group

## Tuesday 2 June 2020

### MINUTES

<b>Date:</b>	Tuesday 2 June 2020	
<b>Time:</b>	1:00pm – 3:00pm	
<b>Location:</b>	Skype	
<b>Attendees</b>		
<b>Winter Grazing Action Group</b>		
Lindsay Burton	Independent Chair	
Ash Keown	NZ Veterinary Association	
Caroline Murray	Dairy Companies Association NZ	
Helen Thoday	DairyNZ	
Julie Geange	Federated Farmers	
Milton Munro	PGG Wrightson	
Miranda Hunter	Farm consultant	
Pania King (joined at 1.20pm)	Sheep & beef farmer; Taskforce member	
Peter Young	Farm consultant	
Tony Pearse	Deer Industry NZ	
Will Halliday (joined at 1.20pm)	Beef + Lamb NZ	
Leonie Ward	Manager, Animal Welfare Sector Liaison	
Penny Timmer-Arends	Animal Welfare Sector Liaison	
Gray Harrison	Manager Animal Welfare & NAIT Compliance	
<b>Apologies</b>		
Tim Driscoll	Dairy farmer	
<b>Ministry for Primary Industries staff</b>		
Tinta Tan (agenda items 5 & 6)	Senior Service Designer	

## **1. Welcome**

The Chair welcomed the members, and noted an apology from Tim Driscoll.

## **2. Minutes from 19 May 2020**

The minutes were agreed as a true & accurate record of the last meeting held on 19 May 2020, subject to minor amendments to the final section on backfencing. These will be placed on the MPI website for transparency.

The Group went through the actions from the previous meeting and noted them as complete or in progress.

Gray reported back on legal advice he received to use the Tb Free database contact list of graziers. The threshold to overcome the Privacy Act has not been met to provide MPI with contact details, but there may be a possibility for Tb Free to send info out on behalf of the Action Group.

## **3. Update on wintering research**

Penny provided an update on the two Sustainable Food & Fibre Futures research proposals the Action Group had discussed at a previous meeting. The final DairyNZ-led proposal is awaiting a decision from the SFFF programme. The final VetSouth proposal has only just been submitted and is being assessed.

Helen provided an update on research DairyNZ will undertake at the Southern Dairy Hub this winter, with input from the AgResearch animal welfare team. They will be monitoring metrics around cow lying and comfort, and soil moisture. This will then be related to what ground conditions look like (videos & photos) to help farmers understand assess their wintering paddocks. Helen also advised the group about a SeedForce trial on a Southland farm, which will graze cows on strips of Fodderbeet and grass, to provide resting area and balance the diet.

Penny noted Virginia Williams is compiling a literature review for sheep, deer and beef cattle on muddy conditions. This will be used to help the WGAG identify research gaps, as well as for NAWAC to progress their code review work. The review should be completed in the next month.

## **4. Action for healthy waterways**

Penny provided a brief overview of the *Action for health waterways* announcement from the Ministry for the Environment. This includes regulating Intensive Winter Grazing to limit environmental impacts; which will remain a permitted activity within set parameters. Landowners who cannot meet the requirements will need to apply for a consent. More information can be found on the Ministry website [here](#).

The IWG requirements won't impact animal welfare directly, but may result in less area sown in winter forage. Unless replaced with other systems of wintering, this could reduce feed availability during winter.

## **5. Report back on behaviour change 101 session held 26 May**

Helen organised an online session on behaviour change held 26 May, led by DairyNZ's Francie Turner. Francie spoke about the social science of behaviour change, and some strategies to implement change. An example given was changing how the backing gate was being used on-farm, to reduce lameness. A reduction in lame cows isn't seen for several months, and doesn't provide the immediate positive feedback people need to continue forming new habits. Instead workers were rewarded on a weekly basis for using the backing gate correctly.

Those who attended the session found it useful, and Helen was asked to set up a second run-through.

#### **6. Discussion document – short-term expectations**

Ash had revised and circulated the document titled *Winter Grazing Action Group short-term expectations* prior to the meeting.

The Group agreed Ash has done an excellent job progressing the document & incorporating feedback from the members. There was discussion around how animal welfare plans for winter could be integrated into existing environmental or animal health plans. As well as some more detailed word-smithing.

Ash will circulate the document with feedback from today's meeting out-of-session, with the aim of finalising the text at the next meeting.

#### **7. Communications**

The Communications plan for winter 2020 has not yet been updated with feedback from the 19 May meeting. It will be circulated with the next set of meeting papers.

Communicating the *short-term expectations* was discussed, and will be captured in the communications plan.

Engagement with regionals councils was raised. MPI have links with Environment Southland and the Otago Regional Council, but as mud can be an issue across NZ, additional work is needed to engage with the other regions.

Caroline requested a recurring agenda item on media activity be added to future meetings.

The Chair closed the meeting at 3:00pm.

#### **Next meeting**

Tuesday 16 June at 1:00pm

<b>New actions</b>		<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Timeframe / status</b>
1.	Discuss opportunity to use Tb Free database to send out comms to grazier on WGAG's behalf	MPI Lindsay	ASAP
2.	Contact Helen for further information about the SeedForce trial if interested	All	If required
3.	Follow up on questions about MfE IWG regulation	Penny	For next meeting
4.	Helen to set up 2 <sup>nd</sup> behaviour change session for people who couldn't attend the first one	Helen	
5.	Gray to check the grazier-animal owner section aligns with responsibilities under the Animal Welfare Act	Gray	For next meeting
<b>Previous actions</b>		<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Timeframe / status</b>
6.	Discuss animal welfare requirements that could be included in the Federated Farmers grazing contract	Julie MPI Milton	
7.	Contact RMPP to see whether wintering information can be shared with those Action Groups with a grazing focus	Will	ASAP
8.	Share PGG winter grazing contract when finalised	Milton	When available