

OCTOBER 2003

Hi All

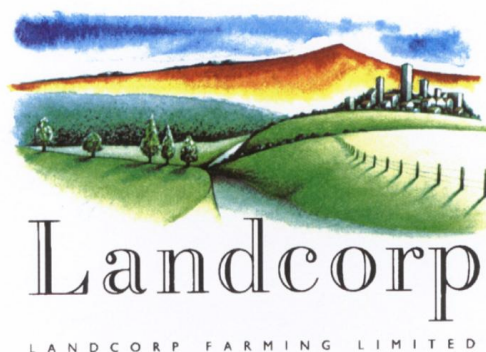
This newsletter, is as always, to announce the call for abstracts for the **Annual Conference 28th – 31st June 2004**. The Hamilton organising committee are well under way. We had a volunteer come forward to be Editor, one who has had a great deal of experience editing our Proceedings on a previous occasion. You will find the publication deadlines that Denis will adhere to in this Newsletter. There are also a number of announcements from the Committee seeking applications for Animal Science Awards and nominations for the 2004 Sir Arthur Ward and McMeekan Awards and nominations for Honorary Life Membership. Details for all these awards can be found later in this newsletter and on the website. The Management Committee looks forward to receiving your abstracts and award nominations.

There is no soapbox this month. Just a ghastly feeling of hypocrisy. You see a year or so ago the sheep farm diagonally opposite our own was bought by a dairy farmer. During the tough winter conditions they needed some stoney ground to put the cows on which was not expensive pasture. Sadly, the stones are there because it is old river bed, nestled between two lovely little streams. Well they were lovely little streams until the cows waded in and chewed off all the native stream plants like *Carex secta* and *Juncus gregiflorus*. Even the tough old flax bushes got a hammering. How dare they? Then I went out and bought some rimu furniture which I am sure must have left a gaping sad hole in a native forest somewhere! Then just last weekend during the D.I.Y. refit I was horrified at the realisation that next year our lovely ambience-creating open fire is on the endangered heating list due to Canterbury Regional Council's clean air policy. I can't help wanting to hiff rocks over the neighbours fence, but I must be mindful of the excess on the insurance policy covering my own precious glasshouse! Do you behave sustainably?

Scobie
Newsletter manager

The opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of the author and not necessarily those of the NZSAP.

The Society is grateful for the sponsorship provided by



PRESIDENTS PIECE

It's spring! It must be, because while there are daffodils everywhere and the sun was shining nicely yesterday, the latest south-westerly front is now peppering my window with rain, sucking cold air in from Antarctica and it is supposed to turn into sleet over the weekend. I had hoped to be walking along a stream bank somewhere today flinging little flies at trout sipping mayflies from the surface of the water. Instead I have the editor telling me I am holding up the newsletter because I haven't written this, but to be brief with whatever I write about because there isn't room for me anyway. I mention this not because of all the newborn multiple-born lambs that must be struggling in these conditions, but because of the political winds that seem to be blowing backwards and forwards at the moment. Our country badly needs the foreign revenue generated by exports from our valuable primary production sector, but certainly does not want the gases produced as a by-product of that system. Biotechnology has been identified as a one of the key sectors in transforming New Zealand from a commodity to knowledge-based economy, and yet we face a level of protest and distrust in science that I certainly have never seen before. The next few months are going to be very interesting times with the lifting of the GM moratorium and the ongoing debate on carbon taxes, which will have an impact on many of the members of the NZSAP. While it is easy to get discouraged in times like this, it is very important to remember that science is the major part of the solution, and we all have a role to play in that. It is important that we all get involved in the debate at whatever level we have influence, even if that is just to your neighbour over the fence.

The management committee has plenty on its plate at the moment. We are working towards incorporating our proceedings into the SciQuest system to make them easier to search and reach a wider audience. You will also see in this newsletter that following the AGM, we have changed the procedure for the Young Members Award to hopefully make it a simpler process. So, encourage suitable candidates to submit an abstract and hopefully the system will run smoothly this year!

Neville Jopson

ANIMAL SCIENCE AWARD REPORT

John Roche, a nutrition scientist at Dexcel, attended the American Dairy Science Association annual meeting in Phoenix, Arizona during June 2003. He presented a paper by Roche, JR, Petch, S and Kay, JK "**Effect of dietary cation-anion difference on the milk production of early lactation dairy cows**" – and was a co-author on 3 other presentations. All presentations were well received and the quality of research presented from all New Zealand delegates was of the highest standard.

There were many interesting symposia and presentations on nutrition of the transition cow (the period around calving), conjugated linoleic acid, mammary physiology and alveolar apoptosis. An additional, and often underestimated, benefit of attending international conferences is making contacts, and John's attendance at the American Dairy Science Association annual meeting was no exception. In addition to renewing acquaintances, he met with numerous other scientists working in the field of nutrition. It was obvious that New Zealand science and scientists are very well respected internationally and several world renowned scientists are keen to collaborate with us in New Zealand. In particular one highly respected mineral nutritionist is keen to undertake a sabbatical in New Zealand. These contacts are one of the major benefits of attending an international conference, and with so many delegates attending, this annual meeting is probably the most appropriate conference for anyone working in dairy science.

Prior to the conference, John visited the research staff at the University of Arizona in Tucson, where he is co-supervising a Ph.D. student. He met with scientists working in the area of mammary physiology and milk fat synthesis and was able to discuss their research program and inspect their research facilities. He also presented research results from the Genotype comparison trial being undertaken at Dexcel, the differences between the respective dairying systems, and the reasons for these differences.

John said that one of the most important things for him on this trip was the realisation that the major research areas of interest were "The nutrition of the transition cow" and "CLA research", although "Mammary physiology" still carried a heavy weighting. This was particularly important as Dexcel has put a high priority on research into the transition cow in recent years. Many of the findings in transition cow research supported recommendations that Dexcel had been making to farmers over the last few years, but there are still many unknowns that require research, particularly in New Zealand's pasture-based system. There was an increase in the amount of pasture-based research from countries such as Switzerland and Ireland.

NZSAP ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2004

Planning is underway for next year's conference in Hamilton (June 28 Monday pm - 31 Thursday noon). We are planning to hold the conference in the new lecture theatre at the Newstead (Dexcel/LIC) campus, which is an excellent venue to present in. While contract sessions with a dairy theme are being developed, Tony Pleasants is also organising a unique session that will explore the potential synergies between us animal production types and medical doctor types. Throw in a field trip that will take in the hottest agricultural research on the planet, a couple of interesting evenings sampling Hamilton's nightlife (yes, there is one), and you should have a great conference to look forward to in 2004!

Eric Kolver
2004 Conference Publicity Officer
eric.kolver@dexcel.co.nz

REMEMBER

7 NOVEMBER 2003	CLOSING DATE FOR ABSTRACTS
Mid December 2003	ACCEPTANCE CONFIRMED
1 FEBRUARY 2004	SUBMISSION OF FULL PAPERS
8 MARCH 2004	REFEREES TO RETURN PAPERS
1 APRIL 2004	CONTRACT PAPERS (REVIEWED AND CORRECTED)
12 APRIL 2004	REVISED PAPERS DUE
10 MAY	COMPLETION OF SETTING
14 MAY	GALLEYS TO AUTHORS
01 JUNE	TO PRINTERS
15 JUNE	DELIVER TO RUAKURA
28 JUNE	CONFERENCE BEGINS

MEMBERSHIP

The New Zealand Society of Animal Production warmly welcomes 11 new members since our recent newsletter:

Simon Carthew, Turnberry Farm, Eketahuna	Vanessa Crowley, Lincoln University
George Cruickshank, Sheep Improvement, Napier	Horace Miller, Glenaray Station, Waikaia
Steven Nichol, Outram, Otago	David Pinckney, Christchurch
Gerald Pinckney, Opotiki Vet Centre, Opotiki	Mel Prouting, Lincoln University
Lynne Rhodes, L. Rhodes AI Services, Darfield	Allan Richardson, Otago
Michaela Soper, Lincoln University	

One resignation was accepted, leaving a current membership of 533.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Nutrition Society of New Zealand Annual Conference "Too little, Too much" Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, 6-7 November 2003. Contact tim.green@stonebow.otago.ac.nz.

AGRICOM Legumes for Dryland Pastures, Lincoln University, 18 – 19 Nov 2003. For more information contact the Professional Development Group, PO Box 84, Lincoln University, Phone: 03 325 2811 Fax: 03 325 3685

Third International Wildlife Management Congress, 1-5 December 2003 Christchurch For more information wildlife@cont.canterbury.ac.nz or website <http://www.conference.canterbury.nz/wildlife2003>

GUIDELINES FOR THE PREPARATION OF ABSTRACTS

An abstract is the basis on which the Management Committee accepts or rejects your offer of a paper for presentation at the Conference. You will increase your chance of acceptance by complying with these guidelines. The abstract should be self-contained, readable and easily understood by people not intimately involved in the field. You should emphasise not just the science of your work but also the value of it to the science and/or farming communities you are serving. The abstract should contain clear objectives, appropriate data (with statistical parameters such as standard error of means or probability estimates) and conclusions as appropriate. Unnecessary jargon and abbreviations, and information not relevant to the objectives and conclusions should be avoided.

Please ensure that:

1. The title and names of all authors are provided.
2. The name, address, phone, fax number and email address of the corresponding author are given to facilitate contact regarding your submission.
3. The abstract is set (excluding title and authors) in 12 point Times Roman. A maximum of **350 words** is allowed. **Do not include tables, equations or references.**
4. If possible please submit the abstract electronically to the Executive Secretary. The abstract form can be downloaded from the website or requested from the Secretary. E-mail the abstract in Microsoft WORD format to **nzsap.animal@xtra.co.nz**. The abstract may be mailed to the Executive Secretary if you do not have access to e-mail.
5. Abstracts must be received **by 7 November 2003**.

NOTE CHANGES TO THE YOUNG MEMBER AWARD

The Young Member Award is one of the most prestigious of the Societies Awards. The purpose of the award is to encourage excellence in research planning and execution and communication of results by young members to the Society's annual conference. To be eligible to enter, the young member must be:

- a full or student member of the Society; and
- under the age of 35 at 31 March in the year the paper is presented and less than 2 years since completion of PhD (if PhD is held); and
- the first senior author of the paper concerned, having made a substantial contribution to the planning, execution, analysis and preparation of the information; and
- making their first or second technical presentation by the member at the Society's annual conference.

In the past the young members have had to meet these criteria at the time of abstract submission in November. This was raised as an issue at the AGM, as honours students in particular have had problems in meeting these criteria at a time when end of year pressures are at their greatest. It was resolved at the AGM that a group from Lincoln University should write a submission to the Management Committee outlining the problems and suggesting any solutions.

The outcome of this is that the Management Committee has agreed to change the application process to the following:

- the eligibility requirements remain the same as listed above
- persons wishing to enter the Young Member Award will now only have to indicate their intention to enter on the abstract submission form
- the person will be sent a form outlining the eligibility requirements which must be completed by the due date for submission of the full paper for refereeing. They must be a financial member of the society at that date, and have evidence that all the other requirements are met

Hopefully this will remove any confusion relating to application for the award. This will apply for the current year. With the call for abstracts in this newsletter, you all should be thinking about encouraging young members to submit a paper. Please check the full rules on the website: <http://nzsap.org.nz/young.html>

**New Zealand Society of Animal Production
Abstract Submitted for 2004 Annual Conference**

Title	_____		
Authors	_____		
Corresponding Author	_____		
Address		Email	
		Fax	
		Phone	

Do you wish to be considered for the Young Member Award? Yes/No

Abstract *(Maximum 350 words. Do not include tables, equations, or references)*

Abstracts will be selected on the basis of relevance and scientific merit. Judgement can only be made from what is presented in the abstract. Where appropriate, conclusions must be accompanied by data and appropriate statistical evaluation. Acceptance of an abstract by the Management Committee invokes a binding commitment upon the author, and the institute where the work was undertaken, to provide a written manuscript for publication in the Society's Proceedings. NZSAP will own copyright of material published in the Proceedings.

This form can be downloaded from the NZSAP website <http://nzsap.org.nz/con04/ab-frm04.rtf> in rich text format (compatible with a range of word processors) or email nzsap.animal@xtra.co.nz for a copy.

McMEEKAN AND SIR ARTHUR WARD AWARDS, LIFE MEMBERSHIP

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 Management Committee is also seeking recommendations for the conferment of **Honorary Life Membership**. The Committee shall consider recommendations from members and a formal nomination will be read at the 2004 Annual General Meeting. **Honorary Life Members** shall be persons who have rendered significant service to the cause of animal production. In the past two years Life Membership has been conferred on Mac Hanna, Marc Ulyatt and Neil Clarke

Nominations for these awards should be sent to the Executive Secretary, Lynne Smith by **November 15th**.

NZSAP ANIMAL SCIENCE AWARD APPLICATIONS

The **Animal Science Award** is to promote and advance Animal Science and Production. Specifically it encourages early career development and supports contact with AAAP activities. Applicants must normally have been a member of NZSAP for at least one year prior to application and be a current financial member. Applications should be sent to the Executive Secretary by **31 January 2004** for consideration by the Management Committee. The application format is available from the Executive Secretary and on the NZSAP website.

DUNCANS BIG BEEF BOOK

A book on beef production has just been produced by the NZ Beef Council and was co-sponsored by the New Zealand Society of Animal Production. It is called "**Profitable beef production, a guide to beef production in NZ**". Edited by Duncan Smeaton and his committee, it has Chapters covering all aspects of beef production. Beef cow management is excluded. "I was keen to see this produced," said Duncan, "because I got sick and tired of rattling around in my office or in libraries, looking for the large amount of scattered research information on beef production. With this book we have tried to rectify this situation and we believe we have been largely successful. Comments from one critique, (Duncan's mother) included, "very readable and informative." You may obtain a copy from Duncan through Nadine Shaw at Ngahere reception, AgResearch, Ruakura. A sample copy of the book can be viewed in the Ngahere main entrance foyer.

The book is 220 pages long, is free to all meat levy payers or \$35 incl GST to all others. Cheques should be made out to: Meat NZ. GST receipts can be provided.

Chapter heading list: Ch 1, The world of beef and its markets; Ch 2, Systems of beef production; Ch 3, Nutritional requirements for beef cattle; Ch 4, Requirements of artificially reared beef calves to age 6 months; Ch 5, Feed requirements of beef calves from age 6 months to slaughter; Ch 6, Optimising beef production from pasture; Ch 7, Cattle animal health; Ch 8, Genetics; Ch 9, Factors affecting carcass composition and beef quality; Ch 10 Management to minimise environmental damage; Ch 11 Market information, other data collection; Ch 12 Management, principals, processes and techniques; Ch 13 Measuring farm profitability; Appendices 1 to 4: Feed values, Assessing pasture mass, facial eczema, spore counting.

Duncan Smeaton

A CHAMPION TAKES AT STAND AT ANZCCART

I attended the ANZCCART conference “Lifting the veil: finding common ground” in Christchurch in August. The conference was trying to address concerns at secrecy in the regulatory processes governing animal research. Two extreme views were presented by Sue Kedgley, Green Party MP in her plea for transparency in animal experimentation, and David Palmer, Lincoln University in his passionate response. The following are the speech notes David used, for which he received a rousing cheer prior to his presentation on a sheep model of Batten disease, which was just as stimulating. Good on you David – it is time to take a stand.

“My first remarks are addressed to [the absent] Sue Kedgley. Sue, I was going to say how brave I think you are to sit all day in room full of Frankensteins, but you would probably realise that would be facetious of me, so I will put it directly. I was insulted by your presentation yesterday. It is dissembling to say that you cannot find out what we do. The work I am going to talk about has been cited over 1000 times in publicly available scientific articles. Some of those quoting it do not even speak English, so I am confident it is accessible to you. In those references, many of which are referenced in this article, you will find descriptions of how animals are bred, kept, what manipulations they undergo and how they are killed. This is a normal part of the discourse in the scientific literature. In this respect there is no veil of secrecy to lift. When this was pointed out to you yesterday you said you did not care, which brings me to the conclusion that you do not really want to know what we do, you only want to find evidence of the evil you want us to be up to. I’m glad you struggle to find that evidence and I am glad that the system insulates me from such mischief.

You said we hide our activities behind an exaggerated sense of threat from activists and suggested that we contrive to do so. You talked as if you have no role in this but yet you appear to encourage trouble. A majority of the people protesting outside are earnest youngsters who want the world to be a better place. They could be our children. It is not pleasant walking in here past these innocents who believe what you say, and so believe we scientists are members of a secret society with an uncontrolled predilection to torturing animals. Such strong sentiments elicit strong emotions; evidenced by the vehement accusations of animal torture I experienced on my way here this morning. Strong emotions can lead to intemperate action. It is disingenuous of you to claim that your actions and words have no effect on the climate of threat and hostility we experience, and that it contains no danger.

Which brings me to my second concern. I am not here to apologise for the use of animals in the work I am about to describe, in fact I am proud of it, but I am concerned at an underlying sentiment yesterday that all animal experiments are at best unfortunate, and we should be trying to avoid them. Animal models of disease are bred, maintained and studied for the express purpose of developing a better understanding of human disease. This is an active process and the more good animal models we have and the more good studies that are done on them the better our knowledge of the human condition. Thus there are circumstances where it is desirable to increase the number of animals being used in experiments.

Of course it is best if usage is open and seen to be reported. A civilised society should have processes for that, and to ensure that animal use meets the standards of that society. Wonton use is rightfully proscribed by law. Procedures need to change with changing social attitudes. It is a comfort to experimenters that our work has been sanctioned by society, particularly given the concerns above, but this can be taken too far. We are also morally cognisant sentient beings capable of taking moral responsibility for our actions, and we need to do so. We need to be the front line when it comes to making ethical decisions. In the final analysis the public will hold us responsible for any wrongdoing, regardless of the legal niceties. In this respect I resent the imputation that only moral guidance from the priests of animal ethics stops us sliding into the grips of an innate immorality. Particularly concerning is the notion that objectivity in ethical judgement is purest in those ignorant of biological science, and more valuable in the profoundly ignorant at that. I fail to see how this confers a superior wisdom or morality.

Lastly I want to return to another theme of yesterday when there was considerable questioning of the public’s appetite for animal research. All my research on animal models of disease has been funded by the public through contestable grants. Major taxpayer funding has been granted by the United States National Institutes of Health. Charitable funding has been obtained from the Wellcome Foundation trust, the New Zealand Neurological Foundation, the Canterbury Medical Research Fund, the Child Health Research Foundation, the Batten Disease Support and Research Association (USA), and the Children’s Brain Disease Foundation (USA). All these agencies represent the public and they want us to succeed. They know we do animal research. It is our responsibility to them to make the most of the opportunity and resources. We should remember that when considering public attitudes to animal research, and not be overly influenced by others with loud opinions but no stake in the outcomes.”

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The current Management Committee is:

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An electronic version of this newsletter and other information on the Society is available at:
<http://nzsap.org.nz>

Any contributions to the Newsletter should be forwarded to: David Scobie, AgResearch, PO Box 60, Lincoln. Email: scobie@agresearch.co.nz

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