



One Stop Ram Shop



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AFFCO's view of MWNZ levy expenditure.

Stuart Weston (CEO) 4-5-09.

Market Development.

"MWNZ spent considerable amounts on lamb promotion but to little effect."

"\$11.17 million of farmer levies was spent from 2004-2007 on UK lamb promotion returning \$11.26 for every dollar spent this dubious claim of such a fantastic return needs informed debate."

"It is unrealistic to expect any meaningful impact on farmer returns from MWNZ expenditure."

"We do not need MWNZ to help us talk to our customers."

Keith Cooper, (CEO, SFF) made similar comments.

FW, Nov, 2008.

Innovative Uptake.

"We debate the worth of spending farmer's money in the areas of processing innovation-"

"MWNZ is not a processor and farmer's money is better spent in their own production."

Overall Levy Expenditure.

"AFFCO would like to see MWNZ look at how to reduce the total levy burden to farmers."

All written by a CEO who knows MWNZ have wasted levy money in areas where they propose to keep spending.

Leverage.

MWNZ is obsessed by the word. By squeezing money out of others, justification for levy expenditure is guaranteed, somehow. It is not! Worthwhile results from 5 years of leverage is not obvious. Forget about leverage.

Referendum 2009.

"Only one proposition and you vote no, we shut down."

Peterson, FW. 25-5-09.

"With the vote an 'all or nothing' on the organisation's future."

Peterson, RN. 7-7-09.

Peterson has been misleading about voting because although MWNZ will lose all their funding (which the NO vote will achieve) there is plenty of time to replace it with a simpler organisation.

Confirmed by David Carter, Minister of Ag, CW, July.

Report Card for the 'new' MWNZ 2004-09.

Talks loudly outside the Boardroom but all the talk has achieved very little. Leadership believes its own hype but gives no direction. Needs to decrease its 'activities' and concentrate on Research and Development.

It has been too influenced by its dysfunctional parents

PREDICTIONS - July 2009

- \$7 million of Wool Board funds will be dispersed.
- Banks will lower their interest charges.
- Trading Silver Fern Farm (SFF) shares will finish the company.
- MWNZ gone and replaced by a small organisation.
- More super-rich, immature sports idiots causing mayhem when inebriated.



Robin with a baleful, pet 18-year-old iguana. Loreto., Baja.

and is shaping up to be identical.

Poor, expensive performance; C-.

This mark would have been even lower if MWNZ's effort to merge with the Meat Industry Association (MIA) had gone ahead. Fortunately the MIA voted against the merger, saving a nasty backlash for MWNZ from irate farmers.

Whatever were they thinking?

MWNZ had an expensive 'farewell' dinner for Tom Mandeno, a long serving, pleasant director. Why should levy funds still be used on such extravagances?

If this dinner were funded only by those who attended, would there be a dinner at all?

MWNZ is a clone of the old Wool Board and the old Meat Board.

MWNZ has lost it: no direction, no clout, no power.

In 13 years the old Meat Board and Wool Boards spent \$840 million. MWNZ have spent \$175 million in 5 years. All Farmer's money. \$1,015,000,000 spent; For what benefit? Vote **NO** to all proposals

Analysis of MWNZ discussion document, April 2009.

Representation and Influence. MWNZ has **NO** power or influence so this activity should be ignored. This is **NOT** a core activity. "MWNZ has no political mandate" Peterson, pers comm; so why get involved politically?
Save \$1-2 million.

Information and Analysis. This is an historical activity which has failed to produce dollars for farmers. It is useful to competitors, in NZ and overseas.

MWNZ: only 750,000 lambs remain for the winter kill. Processors dispute the number. "We (NZ) are trying to promote 52 week lamb supply so a low forecast like that is not helpful"

Keith Cooper (SFF) FW, July 2009

Drop this activity asap.

Save \$ 2-3 million

Innovation and Uptake. Opportunities for 'investment' here are scarce. What is a portfolio of tools? Research still needs to produce results; Ovita has **not** put money in farmer's pockets, farmers pay for the its development and the right to use the product (**double charging?**).

Nimmo-Bell's analysis was totally unconvincing. MWNZ has wasted levy funds on research. Reduce research spending. Farmers want **quality** research.

Save \$ 7 million.

Market Access. Not a MWNZ business and five years of effort have been an abject failure; no return to farmers. MWNZ interfered commercially. Stuart Weston (AFFCO) and Keith Cooper (SFF). Providing information of a technical nature to Government is politics again. Governments do their own thing even if they politely ask MWNZ's opinion. No interfering.

Save \$ 2-3 million.

Market Development. Not a MWNZ business say Federated Farmers. Scott Champion may have some experience but who else does? For MWNZ to **subsidise** companies for market development is **not** required. Processor/exporters fail or succeed by their own efforts in the market place. They know best; leave it to them. Again CEO's have acknowledged MWNZ failure and interference.

This activity should be dropped.

Save \$ 10-15 million.

Skills and Education. This core business for MWNZ and should be retained. **Possible savings \$30 million**

Conclusion:

There is **no** justification for increased funding. MWNZ needs to **downsize** and get back to core business.

MWNZ must be prepared to **provide a return** to stakeholders for the money spent.

MWNZ lacks commercial expertise, and should stay away from the marketplace.

Huge savings could be made immediately.

Reminder: MWNZ should 'bat' for farmers. It doesn't.

With a few core activities, an organisation could do them well

Vote ☐ NO to MWNZ proposals and bring about change to a smaller organisation.



Wonderful potato crop grown by Ron Frew (MWNZ) at Waiouru. Fertile volcanic soils and pristine views. Feb 2009.



OSRS farm and stock impressed Norbert who had made a special visit. OSRS genetics will go to his Argentinean farm. Colin Burlace and Norbert Taron on Maire Hill above the Makaretu River. May 2009.



French Pass. Bill Weber with two tooth Finn-Texel-Romney ewes. Excellent, robust, active ewes, May 2009.



Cockroach. A panicky winery asked help of Robin. How did this insect get into a bottle? It's condition proved it had dropped into an open bottle, not at bottling time, but a year later.

Hastings, Jan, 2009.

They said.

Graeme McKillop came back to OSRS for the first time since working on the farm for six months while having his OE between medical studies at Toronto University.

"I marvel at the passage of time. You have changed little Robin, I remember your energy, enthusiasm and curiosity, and 25 years later, they seem undiminished. Amazing." Email, 15-4-09.

Thousands have visited OSRS. Many return, much to our delight.

Graeme paid \$47.00 for 2kg of boneless lamb at Marewa, Napier. His mother paid only \$25.20 for the same NZ lamb in Toronto.

John Key. "This government views agriculture as the key driver of the economic engine." FW, 6-7-09.

*John Key is the **Key**. NZ rests easy with Helen gone.*

An Australian farmer rang for the translation of some Portuguese words which surprisingly we correctly gave.

She spoke of the horrible January/February bush fires near Bendigo, Victoria.

"Fires raged only 50kms away. It was so hot it was like living in an oven; temperatures reached 45.5° C and we just stayed inside. After 10 years of drought only Texel and Finnsheep remain. It was so hot all my five chooks died on one day. Everybody has their farm on the market but who would buy them? We all survive on government assistance. This is the worst I've seen on the farm, but we're young enough to see it all through".

What guts; Australian farmers are resilient.

"Hi Robin, Have just got home and said hello to the new arrivals. My goodness--- they are stunning looking girls!! Thank you for arranging them for us and really look forward to meeting you at a later date."

"I really like those girls too and described them to a visitor as 'stylish'. They will get a lot bigger and retain the superb body". Robin.

"Stylish is a good word. I like that".

Wendy Mouldey, Carterton.

Tony Turnbull, 'Jedburgh', Blenheim.

Ewes: Finn, Texel, Rom. Sire; same and Texel-Suffolk.

Mated; 15 March. 335 killed, 5 November.

Age; approx 82 days.

Anticipated carcass weight (CW) 15-16 kg.

Result, CW 18.8kg. Value \$102.01, levies out.

"These lambs and ewes seem to put the turbo on when things are good".

Keith Milne. Waicola, Otautau.

23% of dorper sired hogget lambs, born 13-10-08, were killed at Lorneville, 14-1-09.

LW 35.5 kg. CW 17.28 kg, Yield 48.7%

Red Meat Yield 54.05%, 89 lambs, Value \$84.44.

Your newsletters are a bit different; not boring like all others.

OSRS hogget wool sold **46.3% above valuation**. Why?

"This line attracted strong bidding as buyers were eager to purchase this fine micron line for Chinese interests. This line will be processed into hand knitting yarns and will be blended with halfbred types. Your wool sold **well** ahead of expectations." Barry Chamberlain, WPI.

"Robin. I'd like to thank you for making your flock available to AgVet, for field trials over summer. I was there on treatment day and we were given great support by Peter. John Messer, Bayer NZ.

OSRS flocks are always being used for field trials.

Peter is always very accommodating.

"The ewes travelled well and have settled down fine. One of them has learnt to eat bread already, the other is more resistant but we will wear her down soon! Thanks again". Dawn & Rob Mills, Taranaki.



Ken Buckingham, Southland, collected roadside mistletoe seed, posted it to Robin who grafted many onto garden native trees. This time success, hopefully. March 2009.



John Little returned to OSRS for the eighth time. One task was to build a timber rack for stored native timber, another was building huge wooden compost bins. Jan 2009.



Prime sire progeny test at Poukawa. Drought had struck by the time this OSRS Texel-Suffolk ram was bought to enthusiastic, but very light ewes at the Research Station. March 2009.

NORTH AMERICA VISITED, May – June 2009.

LOS ANGELES.

"The recession is not noticeable in Los Angeles". This statement bought a weird look from a lawyer. "It's not a recession it's a depression. It is really bad; people are losing their houses. There are signs up everywhere by people wanting work; any work. There is no-way people can maintain their standard of living. They think they are hard done by". 17-3-09

"People are not used to being accountable for their spending. There has never been a worry about 'putting it on the card'. Lesser economies than CA (World's No 8) just slow down, don't spend and survive. Americans are having a real test of character.

"It's not easy to blame yourself".

The economy is turning green slowly. Cars are smaller, farmer's markets well supported. "Organic premiums are reducing to standard prices". Wholefoods, San Francisco. Company logos are becoming less strident and green, friendly flowers, green leaves everywhere. Happier colours. A gentle response to the ill economy. Service in US is outstanding as everybody wants to hold their job.

Sheepmeat, if present, is priced top on most menus. Supermarket lamb prices are similar to previously reported in newsletters.

Dick Cheney is back into full 'scare mode', already blaming Obama for the 'next' terrorist attack in US.

"Once again Cheney is using lies and fear to try to gain political advantage – this time to rewrite history and escape accountability for the failed Bush presidency".

Frank Rich, NY Times, 31-5-09.



Milk or gold? Wanted, one litre of milk and two cups. Six phone calls later four litres of milk arrived. Cost NZ\$43.50. Could somebody, somewhere please speak English?

Sheraton, LA. May 2009.

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SAN JUANICO, BAJA, MEXICO

"Hey what have you guys been doing in Baja, surfing?" an American asked. I could not reply fencing or surfing so I said building. I was so busy I didn't even **surf** the internet.

Although village building work has ceased the amount of completed since July 2008 is remarkable. Mexico is a big economy which can remain partly independent of US fiscal hiccups. Baja's potential for tourism is recognised by the government which benefits from money generated. La Paz the capital is growing and modernising, Constitution the food growing centre is booming.

Booming is right. A bus band on Saturday night opened up with a 200 decibel music blast which could be felt at 300 metres. Suddenly a fire engine jingled its way past, then a police car, lights flashing. Too loud for us, we decided to leave for our motel. Peace and quiet briefly. Behind the motel flashing lights appeared. Grabbing a camera the Kiwis flew off to see the action!

The coloured flashes came from the Police vehicle seen earlier, but here it was being pushed down a dirt road by a very round police officer. No photos attempted.

Very strange things happen in Baja.

Deserts are full of life. Birds galore, Jack and Bob-Tail rabbits, deer, snakes, fox, large cats, coyotes mingle with the odd goat, sheep and cattle beast. Soil types vary from large volcanic stones to silty areas of fine talcum dust. Striking changes occur within metres, tracks disappear, ravines or cacti block the motorcyclist completely. GPS would be ideal for a Kiwi farmer negotiating these wilds and hoping to survive. Exciting, interesting, a challenge.

Aged surfies are like fishermen; always looking for the big one. They chase waves, they talk waves. Wind blown, sun kissed the wrinkled surfie is very recognisable. They know every surf mecca world-wide and love San Juanica for its 24/7 surfing. Every surfer knows NZ weather well because from NZ oceans come the best swells of all. Surfers have wives, partners and offspring everywhere but where they are present.

Fencing Baja, NZ style is excellent exercise. Motivation to complete the job is enough, no need for personal trainers. Placing tyos on fences at about 1/2 metre/hour is strenuous. Hours of squats, arm extensions, wire pulling and standing strip surplus kilograms rapidly. The end result is neat and effective, adding privacy to sections. As each job is completed veiled requests come from others to please 'do' their fences. Walls, fences, masses of colourful plants have changed the suburb forever as now others aspire to follow suit.

San Juanico temperatures range from 65° F to 80° F daily with evenings chilly. Winds were consistent and dust laden; the Pacific Ocean cold. For 3.5 weeks the ocean carried a red tide of algae which was killing masses of marine life, turtles, jellyfish, moray eels, crayfish etc. Some days the beach had 2-3 dying fish per metre, a feast for sea birds that left on the next tide. Animals die of suffocation as algae clog their gills. Fishing was poor for the fishermen who just wanted the ocean to warm so the algae would disperse. Dust full of iron, blown off the desert fertilises the seas and initiates the algal bloom.

Next project, building a house.

Baja just clears the brain.

Perhaps now there is a gap for some Spanish words?



1. 'Asty do you want these cacti for your garden?' 'Robin the question is, do **you** want the cacti for **your** garden?' La Purisma Road.



2. Iron cactus Baja plants



3. Orange plastic cactus. Comondu.



4. Bra cactus. Insurgents, Baja



5. Polka dot bra cactus. San Juanico.



6. Wrecked, old NZ boots were left by dumped pairs of Mexican shoes in 2008. Apparently someone needed a boot. San Juanico, June 2009.



7. Local cattle enjoy green garden waste. Rubbish is burnt, but much remains in this arid locality.



8. Stickers. Ferocious seeds with numerous barbs cling to boots and truck tyres. Capable of penetrating leather, they are handled carefully.



9. Odd-shaped mesquite poles and plenty of hi-tensile wire. Stock kept out, cacti in.



10. Angles and strainers are footed. Barb wire strained.



11. 'Taranaki' gates. Simple effective fences keep people away; they respect ownership.



12. 300cu metres of trucked in soil levelled. Fertile earth, with water grows **plants fast**. House site.



13. Shovelling soil **up to posts**. Ram, add water; it's tight.



14. Tyos are the trimmed ribs of palm fronds. They are tied to the barbwire 1/2m/hr, strenuous.



15. Tyos topped, vines planted, drip irrigation added. Neat tidy, 5 man days to build this fence.



16. One year later, flowering bougainvillea.



17. Doubling the shade house; area. adding shelves.



18. Happiness is seeds and cuttings from all over Baja growing. Shelter, warmth, water, good soil.



19. Fencing the corner section prior to building. Materials come from Constitution, 2.5 hrs away.



20. House view; **absolute seaside**. Surfing, fishing, sailing, differing seascapes. San Juanico.



21. Highlands. Ranch house on the mountain backbone of Baja. Some pickings for stock. Have water, have ranches.



22. Yuca, a convolvulus vine. Vivid, conspicuous flowers attract pollinations. Comundu.



23. Seeds are collected, identified, cultivated. Searing heat, aridity, hurricanes; plants are tough.



24. Comundu settled in 1707 was Baja's capital for two centuries. 300 live here in a fertile valley, lots of water and isolation.



25. San Javier another **48kms** of rough road, which took **4.5 hours**. 103 degrees F. Destination for Loreto tourists, only 30 minutes away. San Javier



26. **Pedicure**. Fencing wounds were cleaned and skin nibbled. In LA similar pedicures costs \$US100. A new business for Baja?



27. A delayed camera shot was a bum shot. Too quick for the kiwi cyclist to pose. Pacific Coast., Baja.



28. Dead porpoise. A fox and her offspring were disturbed eating fresh meat, lungs and liver.



29. Turkey vultures squabbled and gorged themselves..



30. Parched skin, backbone, skull, no meat. **5 days**. Each animal dying shares this fate. Everyone is somebodies supper.



31. Six am, desert sunrise; miles from habitation.



32. Dawn shadows.



33. Stones or boulders? Through this, Kiwi's motorcycle.



34. Vehicles marks are visible; then invisible.



35. Temperature is climbing. From nowhere, the road appears. (arrow)



36. Incessant winds lift desert dust and hide San Juanico's windmills. Mineralised dust fertilises the sea causing algal blooms.



37. Red tide Algal blooms produce red tides, which kill huge quantities of marine life.



38. Alive; moray eels are eaten by birds. Thousands of fish died, turtles, rays, crabs.



39. A helpless crayfish, gills covered by algae suffocating. Returned to the sea, it just rolled back to the beach and inevitable death.



40. Cat footprints dwarf a glove. Animals favour man made tracks.



41. Injured pelican; a meal tomorrow for somebody.



42. San Juanico Day. Politicians promise, Priests bless, bands make music, villagers make merry. Four noisy days. San Juanico, June



43. Rain drops! Never seen in Baja before by Robin.



44. Life is sustained by drops of condensed coastal moisture. Meager quantities sustain much wildlife.



45. 4000 tourist homes/apartments are being built along with golf courses and fishing facilities. International airport, beautiful coastline, Seaside. Loreto.

ONE STOP RAM SHOP WEIGHING

Texel Suffolk. 29-4-09.
Ram Hoggets, 500, Av 61.5 kg, range, 50-79 kg.
Ewe Hoggets, 52.8 kg
Dorper.
Ram Hoggets, 200, Av 54.2 kg.

Rein in MWNZ.

Since being formed in 2004, Meat and Wool New Zealand has spent more than \$175 million. These "investments" have not put observable money in farmer's pockets.

I have long been concerned about this expenditure and its value to farmers. I am not convinced by the proposals in the discussion document. To propose an increase in levies is ridiculous.

MWNZ needs to downsize, undertaking the core business of quota allocation, uptake of skills and education. Information analysis is interesting, but always presented after the event. It should go.

Neither market access nor market development is MWNZ business. It interferes in commercial business for which it has no qualification.

MWNZ does have a role in allocating research funds but needs to ensure farmers benefit from that research. Nimmo-Bell's effort to show value for every dollar spent by MWNZ is ludicrous. A huge disclaimer makes their role very clear.

The real answer to the success of MWNZ activities should be in farmer's balance sheets, i.e. \$175 million dollars plus. It is not there.

MWNZ should be "an organisation with aspirations limited to what is practically achievable by a body whose only power is persuasion" as MWNZ board member Ron Frew said in *The NZ Farmers Weekly*.

I agree.

Robin Hilson, R D 1 Waipukuau. FW, May 2009



Science knows little about this species **Banded sand snake** caught while fencing. Non-venomous it 'swims' through sand.



People just 'turn up' out in the desert. **Look closely** at this photo. San Juanico



Colin Burlace with Richard Hilson taking blood from a lamb from Waikato with facial eczema. Tarata, April 2009



Actually, heavy work, 60kg ram lambs were being checked. Crutching was stopped and any dags pulled off. Overseas visitors were coming. Paratu. April 2009.

OSRS: Developing a Facial Eczema Tolerant Flock.

Capital stock, pure Finn Texels, were bought from Duncan Johnstone, Whatawhata. Only Finn-Texel sires had been used by Duncan for 15 years and no precautions against facial eczema were taken. This area is known for very high spore counts annually. Hoggets were exposed to a major challenge before coming to OSRS in March where they were blood tested.

On 15 May, 206 ewe hoggets (minus 27 rejected for high GTT levels i.e. response to FE toxins) were mated with Finn-Texel x Coopworth rams from Robert Carter. These rams were Robert's best for FE tolerance i.e. .6 mg of sporodesmin per kg of LW, the highest tolerance level tested in NZ.

Facial Eczema spore counts rose dramatically in Feb-March through the NI and parts of the SI. Clinical cases were widespread and affected conception rates in early lambing ewes. Finn-cross ewes again handled the challenge very well.