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The September meeting of the Council of the New Zealand Groundspread Fertilisers Association was held in the Brentwood Hotel, 16 Kemp Street, Kilbirnie, Wellington on Wednesday 25 September 2019 commencing at 9-00am.

PRESENT: John Schulz President; Graeme Martin Vice President; Grant Anderson Vice President; Dean Brooks Immediate Past President; Lee Cooper; Howard Pedersen; James McCloy; Nick Hyslop; Lisa Carruthers; Amanda Ryan; Kevin Geddes Executive Director; Caroline Steer Ballance, Steph Laird Ravensdown, Tony Michelle NZ AAA.

The meeting received a Hotel Health and Safety briefing.

WELCOME: The President welcomed everyone to the meeting and expressed the sadness of all the members of the Association on the passing of new Nelson /Marlborough Councillor Ian Higgins.

APOLOGIES: Bill Hilliam; *That the apology be received.* Moved John Schultz, seconded Graeme Martin. Carried.

MINUTES – Council 7 July & 10 July 2019. *That the minutes be accepted.* Moved Grant Anderson, seconded Graeme Martin. Carried.

Matters Arising.

- **NZGFA Safety Manual** – sponsorship. The meeting received an offer from CanDrive to print sufficient hard covered A5 Safety Manuals for training purposes each year. The meeting agreed that the NZGFA Safety Manual must be available to all trainers. Resolved that Kevin Geddes respond to the CanDrive offer, make contact with Peter Herrick HWR to arrange their support and ensure NZGFA copyright of the manual. Action Kevin Geddes.
- **Professional Development Courses.** The NZGFA Resilience Workshops prepared by Jeremy Begg from Ballance was presented to the meeting. Councillor comment was the courses were well presented and well received by over 70 members. Taranaki and Northland members joined the Waikato Course. Comment prior notice of course content would be helpful. Resolved to write to Ballance, thanks for the Courses. Follow up in Groundspread magazine. Action Lisa Carruthers and Kevin Geddes.
- **Accident incident reporting using the Spotlight system.** Grant Anderson reported a good response at Conference but slow since. Four companies have logged on and using Spotlight to record incidents. One non serious incident in Otago /Southland. Grant notes there is still a reluctance to share accident incident information – mind set against. Company policy must be, lap belt use in paddock, full belt on road. Report in Magazine. Action Lisa Carruthers.
- **Process for appointment of the new EO for NZGFA.** The President reported that discussion with NZ AAA about the double role did not work out. John Schultz and Graeme Martin have discussed recruiting an EO with SBS, New Plymouth. Ads placed in Wellington “Seek” on Friday 27 September. Ad to be placed on NZGFA website. Action Lisa Carruthers.
- **History of Spreadmark publication,** Lisa Carruthers reported she has material from Mandy Ryan. Alan Emerson has been approached to write a piece ‘Spreadmark before its time’. It was noted that the official 25 year anniversary of Spreadmark is early 2020.

FINANCE: *That the finance report be accepted and the revised budget be circulated to branches.* Moved Howard Pedersen, seconded Grant Anderson. Carried.

CORRESPONDENCE: The President stated that Councillors will be asked to contribute to the Monthly Council Report to all members

REPORTS: Branches: Waikato. Graeme Martin reported the province has been wet, but operators are having a good time. There are concerns about the Fonterra position, concerns about environmental costs and bank pressure is coming on farmers. There has been a late start to the season.

Taranaki. Lee Cooper said there has been a later start the spreading season but things are moving now, however demand is patchy.

Central Districts. Howard Pedersen said there has been a good spring season. The effect of Plan Change 6 is making dairy farmers nervous. The dairy farmer view is less fertiliser will be used.

Canterbury. James McCloy said the Banks are putting pressure on some farmers, the Regional Council and now the national Water Policy is of great concern. On the good side the province had an easy winter.

Otago Southland. Grant Anderson reported a good winter, but wet now. Air spread is 200% up on last season because of the wet. Lane work delayed. Issues, finances, slow grass growth. Farmer confidence is low because of the Fonterra non dividend and no forward payment. Grant suggested a farmer support article featuring Spreadmark /Fertmark value to the industry, giving some positive news about professionalism in the farming industry. This will show support for the total rural community. Action Lisa Carruthers to prepare synopsis and circulate.

2019 Conference report – Waikato Branch. Graeme Martin expressed thanks to Lisa Carruthers and Abi Cane and stated the payment of \$10,350 from the Conference will be available to the national Association. John Schultz thanked Graeme and the Waikato Branch and said there were accolades from AFSA representatives at the AFSA conference in Australia.

COMMITTEES:

Lime & Fertiliser & FQC: John Schultz and Grant Anderson discussed the sieve box test of lime and the problem of excessive fines preventing the improvement of lime spreading quality. There are issues with super and FlexiN. Reaction to hot product. Spread mark Test at 28/30m then to reduced to 20m because of a build up of 30mm of product on vanes. Ravensborne issue with variation in product? Coated N products like FlexiN should be off the market because when mixed with super, the coating on the urea is removed when it hits the spinner, so build up on the spinner follows, distorting Spreadmark test certification. John Schultz and Grant Anderson discussed the sieve box test of lime and the problem of excessive fines preventing the improvement of lime spreading quality. There are issues with super and coated N products through the reaction of urea to hot super. Spreadmark Test at 28/30m is then to reduced to 20m because of a build up of 30mm of product on vanes. For Ballance, Carolyn Steer said any product spreading problems should be reported to; spreading@ballance.co.nz; and while it was noted that some fertiliser store staff are paid a bonus on store turnover, this has never been a Ballance policy.

Training & Transport: Howard Pedersen stated he had attended a refresher course for drivers using the HWR course with Jim Laird. There are marked difference between our two trainers courses in the thoroughness of the course. NZGFA need minimum standards. NZGFA must have a national data base of trained drivers and a review of training material on regular basis. Farmer Spreadmark – trial training delayed by seasonal work. Resolved that NZGFA establish a national database from both training providers. Action. Kevin Geddes to contact Peter Wood to review NZGFA / Spreadmark training material to ensure both courses meet NZGFA standards.

Dangerous Goods issue. Nick Hyslop stated the South Island CVIU interpretation of fertiliser as a Dangerous Good. Lee Cooper commented that Ballance quote the need for a DG licence to carry some fertiliser mixes alleged to “present a hazard” Action Lee Cooper to get an interpretation of ‘hazardous’ fertiliser mixes from CVIU.

FQC Report. Dean Brooks reported FQC had considered the Dan Bloomer Fertsread fertiliser spreader testing system. FQC is also working on creating a standard for imported fertiliser’s physical properties. The Border Spreading performance of some imported fertiliser spreaders has been seriously questioned.

Promotion & Membership: Lisa Carruthers commented that the Conference Awards had been successful. Awards launching is always difficult. For improvement, we should focus on the Award criteria and the Award presentation. The 2020 Awards nominations will open on February 14th and close on 25th April. The Young Achiever age may increase from age 30. The President’s Award criteria needs to be refined. Committee to review proposed amendments to the NZGFA Awards criterion: Lisa Carruthers, Steph Laird, Nadine Parata, Graeme Martin. Action Lisa Carruthers. Proposed an NZGFA Facebook page - Lisa to manage. Northland branch celebrates 60 years with an article in the local paper. Website up to date - recommended that branch chairs have their picture up. Decision to move away from window stickers to spreader body stickers. NZGFA Rules reprint with an updated logo Action. Kevin Geddes.

Magazine: Amanda Ryan reported no advertiser changes for the November Groundspread magazine and printing and distribution remain the same. Mandy announced her retirement from editing the Groundspread Magazine after 16 years, and after the November 2019 issue. It may be time to review the role of the magazine, its layout and content. Mandy holds boxes of NZGFA history. The 2020 strategic plan outlines the future of the magazine. The President expressed the thanks of the Association to Mandy and wished her well in her retirement.

AFSA Conference delegate: John Schultz reported from a spreading perspective the AFSA Conference was disappointing. 18 spreaders attended the Conference and the Fertiliser Association dominance was very apparent. There is an AFSA view to take conference back to AFSA. There is a benefit to NZGFA from a liaison with AFSA. Possibility of joint conference? Work closer with NZ AAA?

GENERAL BUSINESS:

* Physical lime characteristics for Fertmark- Peter Callender presented information to Council on the problem of spreading excessively fine lime. Hard lime rocks have a higher percentage of particles under 0.5mm. FQC made lime specification changes some years ago to not less than 30% by volume 0.5mm fine particles. FQC promoted the Prof Mike Hedley paper on Lime which showed that all lime particles worked, larger particles took longer. Not many limeworks are Fertmark certified. In the FAR arable trial, fine lime used 'just in time'. Multiple lime works makes managing the issue of standards impossible. Action take the problem to FQC, look to eliminate higher % of fines. Steph Laird to recommend to Ravensdown, trials with FAR in timing of lime applications.

Ravensdown Report. Steph Laird Ravensdown Update – September 2019

The busy season has started and we have good stocks of mature super at all our locations

Service times: We are aware of all the demands on everyone through this period and we have increased our operating hours through spring. We have made improvements at a number of our sites and we have further projects planned to continue to improve service times and reliability at our key stores.

Protest action: This has occurred recently in Christchurch and Dunedin over Western Sahara. We are expecting this to continue in the future. There is further information on our website: <https://www.ravensdown.co.nz/services/product-availability/phosphate-rock-supply> If any groundspreaders encounter a protest in the future, do not engage with protesters over the issue, as this is in fact the kind of reaction they want and are usually recording their events. Contact our local team members if you need any further assistance.

Product Quality:

0. Dust has been an area of focus for us as it is a key issue on many fronts, from worker health, to environmental (water runoff on our sites) to precision spreading and proof of placement. Things we are doing about it:
1. For imported products, identifying and purchasing the best quality products.
2. For manufactured products, focus on continuously delivering a high-quality physical product with a good range of particle sizes and a lift in crush strength

Communication:

1. Important to get feedback (both positive and negative) direct from groundspreaders. There are a number of possible forums:
2. We encourage groundspreaders to raise any specific issues asap with the company through the normal complaints process. Either call the customer centre on 0800 100 123, or you can email customer.centre@ravensdown.co.nz
3. We encourage general feedback on product quality and customer service direct to the Works Managers (Napier = Andrew Torrens 021 900 481, Chch=Peter Hay 021 900 329, Dunedin=Tony Gray 021 303 802) We are redoubling our efforts to meet with groundspreaders regionally.

Essential Freshwater Plan:

I recently had a chat with our environment policy specialist about the essential freshwater plan currently on the table from the New Zealand Government. She is currently refining Ravensdown's submission, with the idea of defining the key areas for change needed, and what a solution could look like.

In terms of spreading, precision placement is becoming very important. There will be an increase in data capture, and the need to have calibrated machines. Ensuring what product, placed where, and at what rate is auditable and repeatable will be key to moving forward in this area.

There are few farming activities that are prohibited but there is likely to be increased control (through resource consents) of a range of farming activities. New Zealand is moving into a more regulated environment and ensuring the constraints are achievable for all our shareholders is Ravensdown's key objective. Membership Directory. Mandy Ryan will prepare the first draft then send to Kevin Geddes who will check, then send it to Branches to further check, then back to Mandy for printing and dispatch with the November Groundspread Magazine. Check Life Associate members.

Councillor profiles for NZGFA website. Biography bullet points and photo. Action Lisa to implement.

Strategic Review – Implementation when new EO appointed. Include the Strategic Plan with every Council Agenda. NZGFA to be posted on the Website. Action. Lisa Carruthers.

Conference 2020 – Canterbury Branch chair Nick Hyslop said the preliminary arrangements are in place, with Kylie running the ship. Initial approach to sponsors successful. Outdoor display will pay extra for prominence. Conference in one location, The Chateau on the Park. 5,6, 7 July. 2020. Propose to purchase accounting software. Zero

Essential Freshwater – submission. John Schultz and Graeme Martin and Grant Anderson met MPI along with NZ AAA. NZGFA submission should not be about nutrient levels but ‘Best Practice’ schemes v regulation. Talked about Spreadmark and AirCare. Met Opposition MPs. We should look to a joint NZGFA / NZ AAA submission. Proof of placement and auditability is important. H & S to be included. Concern a lack of knowledge of Spreadmark in MPI.

Wide wheels. LT 400 certificate is required by VTNZ unless the vehicle manufacturer certifies wide wheels. Notes VTNZ now fail for chassis rust, also requires LT 400. There are delays getting engineers. Action. Kevin Geddes. Write NZTA to check the regulations around ‘if the vehicle manufacturer certifies wheel rims, why is a LT 400 needed?’

Fertiliser Association Newsletter to Councillors. Email

Tony Michelle. President NZ AAA joined the meeting. NZ AAA have been looking for an EO for 12 months. There are synergies between AAA and NZGFA but some different skill sets are needed. From the meetings with MPI and MPs, we came to them with a solution not a problem. There has been a disappointing response from regional authorities, so we must engage with industry. The government Fresh Water Policy document presents a huge opportunity for the nutrient placement industry. Link with Ballance and Ravensdown resilience teams.

Action. Make contact with likely dairy industries. Kevin Geddes to prepare a contact list.

Next meeting: 27 November.

Closure: 3.20pm