

Minutes of Council of the New Zealand Groundspread Fertilisers Association Meeting held on Wednesday 12th February 2020; 9:00am – 4:30pm at Sprig Room, Miramar Golf Club.

Present: John Schultz, Nick Hyslop, Lee Cooper, Graeme Martin, Grant Anderson, Jeremy Begg, Dean Brookes, Howard Pedersen, Melanie Dingle, Lisa Carruthers, Bryan Inch (Ravensdown), Ant Boyles (Ravensdown).

Apologies: Bill Hilliam, James McCloy

1. Meeting was opened with guests Bryan Inch, Ant Boyles and Jeremy Begg being welcomed and informed they would have the opportunity to present to the group later in the meeting.

Minutes of the previous meeting on 27th November 2019 were accepted.

Moved - Grant Anderson, seconded – Lee Cooper /Carried

Matters Arising

HSNO regulations application to fertilisers - (2b)

Lee indicated there had not been much progress clarifying how the HSNO Act was interpreted with regards to blends of fertilisers. Graeme indicated that Andrea from Weallans was also working on understanding the interpretation around the classification of hazard goods. **Action: Lee to contact Andrea with a view to working together to clarify.**

Minimum Standards for Driver Training

Minimum standards for driving training have been set with the Lisa having updated the “Minimum Requirements for NZGFA Approved Spreadmark Operator Trainers”. Lisa pointed out these updates needed to be approved. Trainers then needed to update their training material to reflect changes. Changes needed to be reviewed by NZGFA. Then implemented by trainers with the aim of having updated courses finalised before Conference 2020. Review of and approval of changes to requirements deferred until later in the meeting.

2. Actions from previous meeting

2a. Financial administration to March 31, 2020

Melanie Dingle discussed the transfer of managing finances from Federated Farmers to NZGFA. There is the option to manage in-house however, MD would need support until familiar with the system. Based on the new charge out rates from Federated Farmers the cost of managing internally or using Federated Farmers is likely very similar. Dean Brookes suggested NZGFA reconsider using Federated Farmers to manage finances at least in the short term (12 months).

Action: Melanie to review cost of Federated Farmers vs internal financial management and circulate a recommendation to the Council.

Melanie Dingle discussed the need to complete submit to the Inland Revenue an IR401 Form – Appoint an Executive Office Holder to act on your behalf. This form must be signed by John Schulz as the President.

Melanie also discussed the need to update the Master Mandate for ANZ to authorise signatories for NZGFA accounts. It was agreed that if NZGFA manage our accounts ourselves there will be the need to remove Terry John Copeland, Deborah Jane Lee, Paul Frederick Le Miere, Gillan Mary

Bright and Kevin James Damien Geddes. Maurice John Schultz and Graeme Fraser Martin were to remain and Grant Anderson and Melanie Dingle are to be added.

If Federated Farmers continue to manage accounts then all signatories will remain the same except Kevin James Damien Geddes will be removed and Melanie Dingle added.

Action: Melanie to progress completion and processing of these forms.

2e. Update on review of awards criteria

Awards criteria updated. Opening date for nominations is Friday 14th February. The upper age limit for the 'young achiever' has been changed to 35. There is an emphasis to get people to apply. Co-ops a good medium to encourage entries.

3. Finance Update

Melanie Dingle presented the financial statements to 31 December 2019 showing \$119,611 in bank accounts and term deposits.

Action: Melanie to unravel the \$5k Honoria comment and ensure payments are correct and accounted for correctly.

4. Branch Updates

Northland – No councillor present.

Waikato – In draught. Did have good spring rain in Dec but windy in January. Little activity other than lime being applied. Composting has been popular. If rain – lots of work in the short term. There is pressure on the farmgate spend meaning potentially less for fertiliser application. A few operators are buying new equipment and there is a reasonably positive feel about how Autumn.

Taranaki – Had a good spring – but windy. Dry at the moment with spreading at a standstill. There was a branch meeting on 8th February. During the meeting Tom Cloke stepped down as Secretary after 22 years. He was acknowledged with a life-time membership to the Taranaki Branch. Noted that Bert Sandford has passed away. An article on Clean and Fresh Water in Taranaki noted that chemicals were virtually undetectable in water.

Central Districts - Very dry. Lime is going on when it is not windy. Plenty of work when there is rain. Branch meeting planned for early next month.

Nelson/Marlborough – Area is dry but still green on the hills. There have been heavy dews and recent frosts. The dews are keeping the fire index down. Busy enough in the region – looking forward to the rain. Training days in the region have been well attended.

Canterbury – Fairly dry in parts but other areas are OK. Been busy due to staff off over Christmas break. Farmers are still spending money and Autumn looks like it will be busy.

Otago/Southland – Wet spring. Very short dry spell (summer?!) of 17 days followed by flooding. Applications are looking good for next month as it is fairly green with farmers wanting to apply before

the rain. Farmers are a bit nervous with spending. Flood impact was devastating – potentially higher rates of N will be applied rather than regrassing?

5. Committee Updates.

Lime & Fertiliser & FQC – It was noted there is an issue with spreading a number of fertiliser blends. Testing is being done by Ravensdown the behaviour of different mixes being trialled e.g. Catalyst, N-Protect (pink and blue), Super-flexi. They are currently focussing on N-protect. It was noted that in general N & Super are difficult to spread together. Comment was made the DAP may be an option – however it is not great solution from an environmental perspective. There are issues with there being too many fines in lime in Southland, with air-spreaders not wanting to use it. In the Waikato lime dust has also been an issue at times.

Ravensdown confirmed they are aware of issues are undertaking testing. They also indicated they need feedback to track the cause of spreading issues as there can be various reasons for issues with products. It was noted that approximately 99% of complaints re associated with lime.

There are issues around the advice being provided by advisers – mainly around blends and the behaviour and compatibility once combined. Does there need to be a qualification for advisers offering advice on fertilisers.

FQC Update

- attended meeting in January
- FQC is planning a strategic review which they are intending to do internally
- FQC funded by co-ops with levy coming for across all tonnage and funding by CAA
- NZGFA raised fertiliser quality (imported and local) – although issues more associated with blends and physical and chemical compatibility.
- SpreadMark may need to be reviewed to accommodate blends

Training & Transport

Discussion around Professional Development courses deferred until later in the day. All agreed with updates to “Minimum Requirements for NZGFA Approved Spreadmark Operator Trainers”.

Action: Howard to contact training providers to notify there have been changes, that courses need updating and that updated courses need to be reviewed/approved by NZGFA. Once approved courses submitted then review needs to be carried out.

A circular put out by the Road Transport Forum “New warning step for offending drivers with class 2 to 5 licenses” were discussed. It suggested operators sign up to TORO to monitor drivers licence status. Some had experienced TORO not being very timely in terms of notifications. Several questions were raised such as what is the matrix for behaviour trigger a warning, and practicalities for enforcement i.e. what is considered a commercial driver?

Action: Melanie to contact RTF to clarify points from the circular.

It was asked whether it was the role of National NZGFA to provide training checklists for staff? After some discussion it was decided this was up to individual businesses due to the business specific nature of what needed to be covered.

Action: Possible magazine article at some stage (Lisa) reminding members of training obligations and areas to consider during training.

Promotion & Membership

Lisa had updated the “Minimum Requirements for NZGFA Approved Spreadmark Operator Trainers”. Progress being made on stickers for certified spreaders with the ‘sticky bit’ on the right side. Lisa suggested that if branches wanted to create/update/refresh logo’s then Matt was available to assist. All agreed to having a standardised life membership certificate template available in the members only section.

Action: Lisa to standardise certificate and upload to member only section of website.

Magazine

The first issue of the magazine under with Lisa Carruthers editing is near completion. It was noted that the model of advertising paying for editing the magazine is not appropriate. It was discovered that advertising is already heavily discounted (meaning the supposed budget was not relevant) and that the previous of putting in unedited articles required less work.

Action: Lisa to calculate the shortfall for this edition of the magazine once all costs are available. Melanie to review 20/21 budget to determine whether there will be any funds available to manage the shortfall going forward.

Health & Safety

Spotlight is beginning to be used (more in the South Island than the North Island). There was discussion around the more information that is available in Spotlight the more valuable it can be as a tool for ground-spreaders. For example, if common scenarios are identified, training efforts could be concentrated in these areas.

Action: Lisa to put an article in magazine encouraging the use of Spotlight.

Graeme mentioned some Health and Safety software (Kendra) that could be an option for businesses that have none. There was uncertainty as to whether another software would be suggested to members.

Action: Graeme to circulate information about Kendra to council members.

It was noted that Ravensdown have reviewed their Traffic Management Plans. These changes will impact on members. One of the more significant changes is that tarps are to be managed from the ground. The comment was made that if these are not workable – please provide feedback. They would also be interested in hearing of examples where drivers have made activities safer.

Action: To include this point in the next monthly newsletter.

6. Visitor Update

Ballance - Overall Balance is down on tonnage sold, however volumes are ahead on N and behind on P, K & S. There is an expectation that later in the season things will be busier. There is plenty of stock on hand with South Island floods having impacted stock levels i.e. more in stock. Storage will be tight due to current stock levels. Caroline Steer has moved back to her previous employer. The spreaders email is still being checked. There will soon be preliminary results of the quality survey looking at degradation as product moves across the country. Overall, there have not been too many recent issues however, there have been issues around ‘tramlines’, particularly around blends, also when spread width is too wide. Some discussion around Plan Change 6 meaning organic farming may become more common place given inability for consents to be granted. Both Balance and Ravensdown commented that the organic business is too fragmented for them to service.

Ravensdown – Bryan Inch (GM Ravensdown) raised some issues with what he considered information in the last magazine that was not factual and the difficulty he has with getting members of his team to attend the annual conference, as they felt they received a lot of criticism and not much support. He acknowledged and commended the work being done to reposition NZGFA by partnering with the co-ops, updating communications and its commitment to FertMark and SpeadMark. It was suggested there may be some guidelines for Branch reports? Ravensdown repositioned their strategy about 2 years ago and are investing in research science and technology e.g. Hawkeye – which traces product through the supply chain. The buy cheap and sell attitude has changed. In response to the letter sent from NZGFA around managing product quality and complaints it was noted that everyone will be better off with better and fact-based communications. They have set up a customer.centre@ravensdown.co.nz email to enable complaints to be directed to one place. This then enables greater oversight of any issues rather than issues being addressed at store level where the bigger picture may not be identified.

Action: Lisa - Include Ravensdown and Ballance ‘complaint’ email addresses in this edition of the magazine (too late for an article). In the next edition put an article on why to use this system rather than telling local stores.

Ant Boyle (Logistics Manager) also attended and reported there are Urea supply issues in Canterbury. There was a situation of fines being created during vessel discharge. Product is being screened into store to prevent this in future. Store hours were discussed with councillors mentioning the strict 8.30am – 4.30pm hours can be problematic. Apparently, there is flexibility in these times and they are not a ‘head-office’ directive, so if really a problem then ask to see if they can accommodate your requests. Ravensdown are looking to implement a system whereby an order can be uplifted from any store (Ballance already have this facility).

7. Annual Event Summary

The idea of an annual event summary was discussed. It was agreed that this would be developed and kept on website.

Action: Melanie to develop an annual event summary.

8. Draft Budget

A draft budget for 20/21 was table. Some spending was clarified.

Action: Melanie to finalise 20/21 budget and send to Council for approval.

9. Professional Development Workshops

Ballance have agreed to run Professional Development Workshops again this year in around July this year, most likely in Hamilton, Palmerston North, Christchurch and Gore. We need to ensure all information is available to go in the May Magazine. It was decided that the workshops would focus on training and look at areas where training was needed and how to record training to meet any required regulations.

Action: Melanie/Lisa to be in touch with Jeremy to ensure course content is what is required. Lisa – ensure professional development courses (times and locations) are included in the May magazine.

10. Conference 2020 - Canterbury

The Canterbury had a meeting in the New Year to get things started. They need to create a delegate form and a sponsor form. The idea is to have a field trip on Sunday afternoon. They are at a point where they are determining timeslots for business sessions. It was decided National needed sessions

for the AGM, Strategic Action Plan and Fresh Water Policy. The National Council is to invite delegates from Australia – of which we will pay for 2 to attend.

Action: Melanie to contact AFSA with conference details for delegates.

2d Spreadmark Training Farmer Spreadmark testing charges

There was discussion around charging users of the SpreadMark brand. Testers are testing, certifying and trading using the SpreadMark standard but there is no income to NZGFA for the use of the brand. It was discussed that SpreadMark testers pay to be on an “Tester register”, it was also suggested that each test that is SpreadMark certified using the brand be charged. Non NZGFA members also need to pay if they want to be certified. It was discussed that communications for changes could be made at the testers meeting at the conference however, information would need to go out prior to this.

Action: Melanie to put a paper together identifying how this system may work.

11. Other Business

It was agreed that a pre-drafted submission be made to the CAA on the “Review of CAA Fees, levies, and charges 2020 – specifically “how the Authority might recover the ongoing costs of its functions under the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996 (HSNO).

Action: Melanie to make submission prior to 14th February.

12. Progression of Strategy

Councillors prioritised areas of activity based on information summarised from the strategic plan. It was decided that “Embed ‘accurate nutrient placement’ as the essence of our brand” and “SpreadMark is in all farm QA plans because it’s valued by the whole industry” were the area to concentrate on.

Meeting closed at 4pm

Next meeting 20th May at same location