



Newsletter

New Zealand Grain & Seed Trade Association Inc.

December 2011

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President:	John Duncan 03 318 8514
Past President	David Melhuish 03 372 0807
Chair: Forage & Turf Section	Brent Stirling 03 347 7950
Chair: Vegetable Seed Section	Mark Johnson 04 972 1613
Chair: Grains Section	Barry McCarter 09 307 0000
General Councillors:	
George Gerard	03 372 0892
Duncan Storrier	03 308 1265
Stephen Tait	03 339 1756
Executive Director:	
Ann Harper	03 341 6059
Administration:	
Tricia Radford	03 341 6059

New NZGSTA President

At the NZGSTA Annual General Meeting held on 1 December 2011 John Duncan was elected President for a term of two years.

John has been in the grain and seed business for 39 years with a wide range of roles in several organisations, and is currently Operations Director at NZ Agriseeds.

Changes to the NZGSTA Executive Council

Two new Councillors were elected at the Annual General Meeting and one retired from the Council.

Chris Green retired after 7 years as a councillor and was thanked for his services by the outgoing President, David Melhuish.

George Gerard was reelected for a further term of two years.

Stephen Tait of Canterbury Seed and Duncan Storrier of Midlands Seed were elected to the Council to replace John Duncan and Chris Green. They are elected for two years.

David Melhuish remains on the Council as the Immediate Past President

John Duncan welcomed the new councilors and noted the combination of youth and experience in the Council which he felt would serve the industry well.

Conference 2011

Members have given excellent feedback on the Conference, so it looks as though the format of section meetings on Wednesday followed by the AGM and presentations on Thursday is working well. The workshop on PVR was well received so a workshop will also be planned for future conferences.

Delegates enjoyed the tour of the Port of Tauranga and were impressed with the size and scope of the port and freight moving through it.

As usual the social events went with a swing and members had plenty of time to network and catch up with old friends.

Subscriptions for 2012

At their meeting on 30 November 2011, the Executive Council decided that the subscriptions should be set at the same rate as the previous (year ended 31 August 2011) rate. Invoices will be sent out before Christmas 2011 and members will be issued with a current Certificate of Membership as soon as the invoice is paid.

Application for Membership

An application for membership has been received from Ravensdown Ltd.

Ravensdown are a cooperative and are suppliers of fertiliser, agrichemicals, animal health products, nutrition products and seed to their members.

Scholarship for 2012

The winner of the NZGSTA Annual Scholarship is Lachie Boleyn from Lincoln University. Lachie and his family will be known to many mid Canterbury members and it is rewarding to be able to help someone through University who already has connections and career prospects in the grain and seed industry.

New Seed Industry Office

At last NZGSTA has a space to call home again. The Seed Industry Office has relocated to

14a Leslie Hills Drive, Riccarton

We have the same telephone number 341 6059

After months of uncertainty a full business service can now be provided with Ann Harper working full time and Tricia Radford employed part time in smart new offices in a business hub of Christchurch.

Section Reports

The section reports in this edition of the Newsletter are the reports from the conference meetings, as reported to the AGM on 1 December 2011.

Forage Section Report

B Stirling reported on the meeting held 30 November 2011

There were two main topics of discussion at the meeting

1. Soil in Seed tolerance

There have been changes to the regulations on exporting seed from NZ whereby if a country doesn't state what its soil percentages for importing into that country are, MAF will set a tolerance level of 0.1%.

Concern has arisen as in the past the tolerance might have been 0.3% and the members feel that NZ is going to be disadvantaged in the future where other countries export to the same markets at a higher soil percentage and are able to get their seed in, but NZ has set this level of tolerance of 0.1%.

In response to that discussion Peter Johnson from MAF indicated that most countries have got a zero tolerance in the import requirements and MAF are trying to work with our industry at this stage and have put a 0.1% percentage in, which is based on our import soil percentage. MAF will continue working with the different countries around the world to see if we can lessen that amount or should I say allow that tolerance to get up to about 0.3% where it was in the past, so that discussion will continue on.

2. ASW in exports to the UK.

The other point that was discussed at our section meeting was the export of ryegrass to the UK where the UK authorities now have put a restriction on any seed going into the UK that may have Argentine Stem Weevil in the seed. If that stem weevil is alive the only option left for the exporter is either to have the seed destroyed or reshipped. There is no option at the moment for fumigating that seed.

If there are dead stem weevils found, but the shipper is able to produce an endorsement saying the shipment was fumigated before departure, it would be allowed entry into the country on that basis.

Grains Section Report

B McCarter reported on the meeting held 30 November 2011

There were 4 additional items for discussion over those that were tabled in the written Annual Report.

1. Royalties

If royalties continue to be lost, then the long term cash flow impact will mean breeders cannot afford to fund new initiatives.

This led on to discussion about the PVR Act. Some years ago we reached agreement between the growers, Federated Farmers and industry representatives on how the farm saved seed issue was going to be handled. This was passed over to MED so it would be incorporated in the redrafting of the PVR Act. That Act has been redrafted, not necessarily to the satisfaction of the industry and has sat in the top drawer of officials in Wellington for some time. It has not been top priority for a first term government. The question I think really is whether it will be a priority for this government in its 2nd term.

2. Contracts

In the season that has just passed there has been concern in the industry about farmers fulfilling their contracts in terms of quantity.

After much debate we came to the conclusion it was not so much a contract issue, as an issue of communications between merchant and grower over the contract wording, and a question of enforceability and desirability of enforcing the terms of the contract in a legal sense.

1. Imported grain

An observation from South Canterbury was that there was increasing importation direct to smaller end users of grain in recent years. We wanted the comfort from MAF

that the established protocols were in being applied in these cases.

4. AIMI

The last question concerned the arable marketing initiative and whether or not we were supporting or funding that from the Grain & Seed Trade Assn. I think most of you are familiar with the background of AIMI that started as a FAR Grower initiative, it spread if you like and is now under the greater umbrella of AFIC and in that sense is funded and supported by this association.

Vegetable Seed Section Report

Mark Johnson reported from the meeting held 30 November 2011

There were more than 20 people at our section meeting and there was a range of discussion points.

Firstly we had quite a long discussion about a review that MAF is doing to the tomato seed import regulations. All of the tomato seed in NZ that is sown is imported and so there are significant implications to members potentially. But it was useful we had Conrad Black and also PJ at our meeting and they were able to put us in the picture of the timeframes and what changes may be coming out.

We also talked about some of the work that ISF has been doing around the phytosanitary area and talked about the changes to the ISPM7 and 12 which is the international agreements relating to phytosanitary and phytosanitary certification.

We discussed vegetable seed market access where we don't have that many markets that we have access to for the amount of vegetable seed we would like to export. NZGSTA has a number of on-going projects about opening up new markets for access to the vegetable seeds.

We had a discussion about a possible remit for the future to include the use of the SCID isolation programme into the NZGSTA handbook and this is something that as a section we are going to be working on in the next 12 months with a view to bringing a remit to the next conference.

We talked also about the withdrawal of the organophosphates and carbonates which has already been discussed here at the conference and we also talked about the code of practice which the vegetable section has in place and we will be having a meeting early next year with a small sub-committee to work on that further.

Services to the Seed Industry Section Report

Vincent Luisetti reported on the meeting held 30 November 2011

We had a good discussion mostly around points that came out of the NZ Seed Processors Meeting which was held last month.

We talked about Cocksfoot bag size and bag design. A lot of merchants and a lot of processors have had problems with cocksfoot bags (which are shaped like a 44gallon drum) trying to stack them on pallets so we feel that is a health and safety issue and there has been some new bags designed with a square bottom which are much more satisfactory and we have asked the industry to convert to these bags.

We went over the charges that NZ Seed Processors have recommended to their members to charge over and above seed cleaning.

The members of NZ Seed Processors feel that we are being asked to do more and more services which a lot of merchants seem to think are included in the price of seed cleaning when in actual fact it is not so. We had a small subcommittee meeting where we calculated the **costs** of the services provided, i.e. forklift time, man hours etc. and we announced these **costs** to our members. We have analysed the following:

Palletising, shrink wrapping, re ticketing, supplying pallets, resampling, declaration and conformities, courier costs, redressing, storage, tipping bags into bulk and bagging from bulk.

We have recommended to our members that charges be made for these services and this has now been clearly signalled to NZGSTA. It was made clear that it is up to individual store owners to charge what they like or to not charge at all.

NZ Seed Processors also had a meeting this year with NZPBRA who are concerned about counterfeiting of novel entophytes and farmers saving their own seed. Out of that meeting we realised there was a lot of ignorance in the industry amongst seed processors with regard to that. We have agreed to support NZ Plant Breeders Assn. in a publicity campaign to bring this to the attention of our customers. We also felt that the problem wasn't perhaps as big as what NZPBRA believed it was as we had a straw poll amongst our members and there were very few lines of seeds in stores that we didn't know what it was.

As many of you will know there is currently a project on to upgrade the AsureQuality Database and the computer access to grower registrations of paddocks etc. for the certification system so we are in the middle of designing it at the moment and there are people who are involved on that here today. David Geary, Brent Stirling and Evan Johnston so if anyone would like to have any import into that they are most welcome to approach any of those people.

We also had a discussion on audit costs from AsureQuality, a perennial subject. It came up in our meeting yesterday and also came up in the NZ Seed Processors meeting and I have been asked to write to AsureQuality to let them know we are not happy with the audit costs.

Seed Quality Management Authority is currently reviewing the certification procedures and many of you will be aware of that and they are looking for input.

Next Executive Council meeting

Thursday 2 February 2012. Please advise Ann Harper if there are any matters you would like raised at this meeting