

Winter Grazing Action Group

Tuesday 5 May 2020

MINUTES

Date:	Tuesday 5 May 2020
Time:	1:00pm – 4:00pm <i>The group took a brief pause at 2:05pm and 3:00pm, as is good practice for virtual meetings.</i>
Location:	Skype
Attendees	
Winter Grazing Action Group	
Lindsay Burton	Independent Chair
Ash Keown	NZ Veterinary Association
Caroline Murray	Dairy Companies Association NZ
Helen Thoday	DairyNZ
Julie Geange	Federated Farmers
Milton Munro	PGG Wrightson
Miranda Hunter	Farm consultant
Peter Young	Farm consultant
Tim Driscoll	Dairy farmer
Tony Pearse	Deer Industry NZ
Will Halliday	Beef + Lamb NZ
Leonie Ward	Manager, Animal Welfare Sector Liaison
Penny Timmer-Arends	Animal Welfare Sector Liaison
Gray Harrison	Manager Animal Welfare & NAIT Compliance
Ministry for Primary Industries staff	
Tinta Tan	Senior Service Designer
Jordache Mackenzie	Graduate, Service Design
Guest	
Dr Karin Schütz	AgResearch, Senior Scientist Animal Behaviour & Welfare
Apologies	
Pania King	Sheep & beef farmer; Taskforce member

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed the members, and noted an apology from Pania King.

2. Minutes from 21 April 2020

The minutes were agreed as a true & accurate record of the last meeting held on 21 April 2020. These will be placed on the MPI website for transparency.

The Group went through the actions from the previous meeting and noted them as complete or in progress.

3. Terms of Reference

A revised version of the Terms of Reference was circulated to members prior to the meeting, with the changes discussed on 21 April highlighted. These were accepted and the Terms of Reference is now considered final. It will be placed on the MPI website for transparency.

As requested, Helen circulated a draft DairyNZ Winter Grazing Policy document for dairy farmers. Members can send feedback to Helen directly.

4. Discuss research proposals

The Chair circulated two confidential research proposals to members prior to the meeting. One project is initiated by DairyNZ, the other VetSouth. The Action Group were asked to consider and determine whether the research proposals align with the Winter Grazing Taskforce recommendations.

Generally members expressed concern that for the investment required more detail should have been provided in the proposal documents. There was some concerns about the ability to deliver on aspects in both of the proposals, and whether they are fully aware of the body of literature already available. There was broad agreement that the proposals do align with the Taskforce recommendations.

The Chair will provide feedback to the MPI Sustainable Food, Fibre and Futures investment programme on behalf of the Group.

5. Overview of MPI assessment tool for dairy cattle in winter grazing

Dr Karin Schütz joined the meeting from 2:15pm to 3:00pm to present an overview of the *“Assessment Tool for dairy cattle in muddy conditions”* that has been developed for MPI Compliance. The assessment tool is an internal MPI document to assist Animal Welfare Inspectors, (AWIs) to assess whether the Animal Welfare Act & codes of welfare are being complied with. The assessment tool is not a compliance intervention.

The assessment tool currently focuses on dairy cattle welfare due to the breadth of scientific information available. Work is underway to assess the practicality of using it on other species (deer, sheep, beef cattle) with greater flight distance.

Covid19 caused the cancellation of the in-person training. Currently the tool hasn't been paddock tested in its entirety, (however the individual criteria have been tested). Over the coming months AWIs will apply the tool as part of their standard on farm assessment.

MPI will hold an internal debrief later in 2020 to review the results and analyse the completed assessments.

6. Discussion – ‘*what does good look like?*’

Ash led the Group through the discussion document he was asked to draft at the previous meeting. Using the seven outcomes that should always happen or never happen provided in the Taskforce report (refer to pages 6&7 in the [report](#)), Ash had drafted descriptors of what good looks like in a wintering context.

The members discussed the descriptors of good practice proposed in the discussion document. The Chair thanked Ash for his work, and requested members provide feedback directly to Ash so the document can be progressed further.

7. Other business

Lindsay advised the Group he would be meeting with the Minister along with John Hellström on Monday 11 May to discuss progress.

The draft communications plan was discussed; what messaging could be put out in May, and in the longer-term. Careful transition management and contingency planning for adverse weather are pertinent to early winter.

The Chair called the meeting to a close at 4:00pm.

Next meeting

1:00pm Tuesday 19 May 2020

New actions	Responsible	Timeframe / status
Contact RMPP to see whether wintering information can be shared with those Action Groups with a grazing focus	Will	ASAP
Contact Ospri to see whether NAIT identifies graziers who aren't levy-payers to DairyNZ/B+LNZ, and if this could be used to disseminate wintering info	Gray	ASAP
Check if the Fed Farmers grazing contract can be shared with WGAG, or the AW sections	Julie	ASAP
Send any feedback on the winter grazing policy for dairy farmers to Helen	All	ASAP
Send any additional feedback to Lindsay on the SFFF proposals	All	By Friday 8 May
Ash to further develop the straw person out-of-session for discussion at the next meeting.	Ash	ASAP
Previous actions (21 April)	Responsible	Timeframe / status
Upload the minutes from 24 February 2020 and 21 April to the website	MPI	ASAP
Edit & circulate the Terms of Reference for approval out-of-session	MPI	ASAP
Discuss options for communicating with graziers around good wintering	Helen Will Julie	In progress
Share PGG winter grazing contract when finalised	Milton	When available
Review the draft Communications plan	Ruby Caroline Helen Penny	Met 12/5/20 to discuss