

Chairs Report – 2014/15

The 2014-15 year can be best described as a year of considerable change especially with regard to personnel.

During the year, the board farewelled long time trustee, Graham Peters. His input in his tenure as chairman has been key to the Foundation's progress. We welcomed the new CEO of AGCARM, Mark Ross on the board. Towards year end the trustee's representing HortNZ, John Allen and the retail distributors, Brendan Morahan resigned due to retirement and change in employment respectively, with their replacements yet to be appointed by balance date.

A change in Business Manager also occurred with Simon Andrew officially taking up the role during the final quarter. Jenna Town is to be commended for ensuring the changeover went smoothly. The relationship with Federated Farmers as the Foundation's service provider continues to be positive and supportive.

Another good year in recycling has been had, with 230T of container plastic collected and over 2300 drums collected in its first year of inception. Chemical volumes recovered also continue to rise. There are now over 60 brands supporting Agrecovery. However, the challenge lies in increasing the container recovery rate, not only volume, along with the need to gain more participating members from the pastoral sector. The government resisted adopting priority product status under the Waste Minimisation Act, so it is business as usual for the Foundation, that is to continue promoting the provision of a simple, practical solution for farmers and growers to voluntarily recycle chemical containers and drums and choose not to burn, bury or dump. New Zealanders in general are not yet good at recycling. There is still too much recyclable waste going to landfills throughout the country.

The business manager attended the international crop life conference in November 2014. This broadened her knowledge of similar programmes run overseas. Subsequently an independent review was commissioned in the final quarter to gain a deeper understanding of the Agrecovery network and to further consider what it could look like in the future. This is especially pertinent due to the contracts coming up for tender in 2017.

Involvement in the ECAN Waste Minimisation Project and attendance of rural waste forums by trustees is helping develop a greater understanding of what is happening in the rural waste domain and assist in identifying opportunities and challenges. Continuing these conversations along with Ministry for the Environment representatives and all stakeholders will ensure the Agrecovery Foundation is well positioned to provide a meaningful service in the years to come.

I'd like to extend my thanks to fellow board members and Business Manager, Simon Andrew for your strategic thinking and level of engagement and also the efforts of the team at 3R, the programme manager.

Adrienne Wilcock

Agrecovery Chair