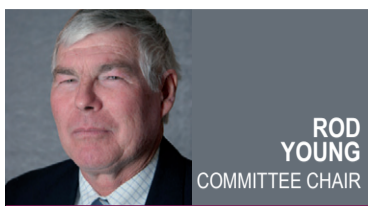


# Committee Reports

## Conservation and Resource Management Committee



**ROD YOUNG**  
COMMITTEE CHAIR

This has been an excessively busy year for CRM with issues including water, mining, land use planning, native vegetation and pest animals coming together under the theme of property rights.

In May, without any consultation, the Government introduced a Bill to amend the Mining Act 1992 and the Petroleum Act 1991. This Bill sought to overturn favorable Court decisions won by our members with the support of Association lobbying over the past several years. We were able to block some of worst aspects of the Bill but the message from government was clear – the

needs of mining must override any sensible consideration of the sustainability of agriculture and our communities.

Throughout NSW, the Department of Planning is driving local government to revise Local Environmental Plans and to introduce new zonings

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for farm land that extinguish legal existing use rights. The Association views this as a further layer of restriction in addition to native vegetation legislation, in that it is imposing management restrictions on developed farming land. At Federal level we are contending with a Murray Darling Basin Planning process that is all about environmental water - disregarding the impacts on

farmers and regional economies. Note that CRM is preparing a major grassroots campaign on this issue to be rolled out in July.

In spite of literally hundreds of hours of work by CRM, our representations regarding improved funding and coordination of pest animal control and weed control are being ignored. Wild dogs are reaching plague proportions in many regions and government's attitude appears to be that the stock losses resulting from Dingo conservation policy should be treated by farmers as a 'cost of doing business'.

CRM's detailed submission to the Federal Senate Inquiry on property rights was favorably received and influential, but I must report that on all fronts we are fighting rear guard action. Never before has the grass roots activism of our Membership been more important.



**JOHN MANWARING**  
COMMITTEE CHAIR

## Wool Committee

NSW Farmers' Association Wool Committee had another busy year in 2009-10. Our focus has been on the issues of working with Australian Wool Innovation to ensure appropriate use of grower funds, shearer and shedhand availability, lice, Ovine Johne's Disease, reviewing the draft document of Standards and Guidelines for the Welfare of Sheep and looking at wool-specific issues that would highlight wool's benefits in a carbon trading economy through AWI's Wool Carbon Alliance.

The Committee was pleased to hear AWI's commitment to continue with the popular shearer/shedhand training program at its September meeting. We were encouraged to hear that more places will be opening up as a result of reduced administration costs.

Lice are an increasing problem in NSW and the loss of Diaznon has affected many producers' management programs. The Committee was pleased to see the release of the in-shed test for lice and hopes to see this refined further to assist diagnosis. The Committee has undertaken a survey of Members on the issue of lice and received a clear mandate to investigate an eradication program. The proposed program is now in the early stages of discussion with industry stakeholders.

The prevalence of Ovine Johne's Disease continues to



**ADRIAN DRURY**  
COMMITTEE CHAIR

## Dairy Committee

The Dairy Committee has worked on a number of issues over the last 12 months. The Committee also lodged submissions into the BJD review and the Senate Inquiry into Competition and Pricing in the Australian Dairy Industry. The Committee continues to represent NSW dairy farmers at a national level through the Australian Dairy Farmer (ADF) membership.

Rising electricity prices continue to be one of the major issues dairy farmers see as impacting their future cost of production, this was reflected at the Dairy Section's AGM held on 1 June 2010. The Dairy Committee is currently pursuing this issue through the Association's Business Economics and Trade Committee.

There is information starting to trickle in regarding next

year's milk pricing for farmers. The Committee is concerned that there is pressure to reduce domestic prices, while at the same time the export price is increasing. The Committee will continue to monitor milk price announcements and report back to Members on any action taken.

The Dairy Committee is lobbying the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water for a change to the auditing processes on dairies with over 800 cows. Currently, dairy farms accommodating more than 800 animals in milk production need to hold an Environment Protection License, which may be subject to an annual random audit. The Committee is asking that DECCW notify the owner of the property 48 hours prior to their intended visit.

The Committee recognizes the importance of communication with Members and in the last 12 months, the Committee held regional meetings in Tamworth and Bega. The Committee will hold more regional meetings in the next 12 months to better communicate issues that we are working on and provide farmers with an opportunity to give feedback on issues.

increase in many parts of NSW which may lead to the current prevalence areas being altered later this year. We are monitoring this process to ensure changes are science-based and of minimal impact to members.

The Committee supports the National Wool Declaration as the way for our customers to source the wool they require and also backs the Association's policy (AC 09) on breech flystrike prevention :- "That the Association support the farmer's right to apply whatever breech strike protection is judged most appropriate to circumstances prevailing at any given time."

## Animal Welfare



**PETER ROBERSON**  
COMMITTEE CHAIR

The Animal Welfare Committee has been working on a number of issues over the last 12 months. The Committee has worked in consultation with Industry and Investment NSW (I&INSW) reviewing and providing comment on new animal welfare descriptors being developed for beef cattle, dairy cattle and sheep.

These new welfare descriptors will provide a universal language and description for the condition of livestock that could be used by legal experts and farmers alike. The Committee has discussed several concerns raised by other Committees on the classifications and descriptors. It is hoped that delegates to Annual Conference will receive a copy of the new welfare descriptors.

The Association and I&INSW are working together to create an equitable, fair and transparent mechanism that better deals with Section 8 cases under POCTA (failure to provide animals with food, drink or shelter). Consideration is being given to whether there should be a mandatory referral process back to I&INSW before the RSPCA is able to euthanize animals. The Animal Welfare Committee will continue to work with I&INSW to develop a document that is acceptable to the Association.

The Committee has also investigated the possibility of registering Virginiamycin which can be added to grain to create a safe, high protein feed for sheep and cattle that can be used during extreme drought conditions. The Committee will continue to work with I&INSW to move forward with this.

The Committee has developed a pamphlet for Association Members which provides a guide to Animal Welfare in NSW. This pamphlet is designed to assist Members to understand their rights and responsibilities under animal welfare law. This brochure will be made available to Members through the Association.



**RICHARD CHAMEN**  
COMMITTEE CHAIR

## Cattle Committee

The Cattle Committee has been dealing with a range of issues over the last 12 months including the BJD review, the review of the Stock Diseases Regulations, and the MLA Beef Levy Review. The Committee has been successful in facilitating the reinstatement of the NSW NLIS Committee, and the most recent meeting provided the opportunity to raise a number of our Members concerns with the NLIS.

The Food Amendment (Beef Labelling) Act was passed in late 2009. The Committee raised a number of concerns during debate on the Act, which included the removal of the words "budget, low grade, and low quality". As a result of industry concerns, the NSW Food Authority developed the Beef Labelling Reference Group. This Group has reviewed the Act and approved a Domestic Retail Beef Register, which addressed concerns raised by the Association. The Group have requested that the Minister involves industry during the drafting of the Regulations.

*In October 2009, the Federal Government announced a change in Australia's BSE food safety policy for imported beef and beef products. The new policy came into effect on 1 March 2010. After considerable community concern, the Government announced that in addition to a food safety assessment by FSANZ, an Import Risk Analysis will also be conducted.*

The Association developed policy, stating that a full Import Risk Analysis (IRA) and In-Country inspection is undertaken for any prospective importing country, before any importation of beef and by-products can commence. The Association also requests that any beef or beef by-products be imported into Australia should have equivalent production protocols that Australian producers are subject to for example full lifetime traceability, residue testing and food safety declarations.

Communication has been a key issue for the Committee in the past 12 months. The Committee held a producer forum at Beef Spectacular in Dubbo and will continue to hold regional meetings.

## Notice of Annual General Meeting (AGM)

**NSW Farmers' Association**  
This meeting will be held at  
Hall 2A,  
Sydney Showground,  
Homebush Bay, Sydney  
on Thursday 22 July 2010  
commencing at 2pm.