

Groundspread

Volume 199 November 2019



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Merry Christmas
and Happy New Year*

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**NEW ZEALAND
GROUNDSPREAD
FERTILISERS ASSOCIATION**

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One of the roles of President of NZGFA is to harness the energy of members. In the short time I have been president, I have been constantly heartened by the contribution to the work of NZGFA by Councillors and many others, who help make our Association great. An example of this has been the Association's submission to the government proposed National Policy Statement on Freshwater. As the applicators of fertilisers on to New Zealand farmland, we have an interesting story to tell about the technology and traceability of nutrient placement in New Zealand; in other words, the Spreadmark story. We owe an immense debt of gratitude to those far-sighted people who developed Spreadmark as an industry fertiliser placement quality assurance scheme, over 20 years ago.

Spreadmark has given us credibility in the eyes of government, in that we have an auditable management tool to mitigate risk to the environment from the applications of fertiliser and plant nutrients, accurate recording of applications and full traceability to identify any sensitive areas within farms (exclusion zones).

I want to highlight some of the points the NZGFA submission made to the 'Action for Healthy Waterways': A discussion document on national direction for our Essential Freshwater. We began by stating: "All fertiliser and plant nutrients applied to farms should be applied in a manner that meets the requirements of

the Fertiliser Code of Practice, Fertmark and Spreadmark codes of practice, which incorporate the use of GPS technology to capture the areas that fertiliser and nutrients are applied (Proof of Placement).

We then went on to say that Spreadmark technology is required to support the application of fertiliser and plant nutrients to land. Technology will provide a mitigation tool, providing evidence of application with the assigned Land Management units within a farm entity. Technology is the enabler for accurate record keeping, meeting the requirements of approved Farm Plans and a method of collating information to meet compliance.

Spreadmark is of course our Code for placement of fertiliser on farmland. It exists alongside two other industry codes. The "Code of Practice for Nutrient Management". The "Fertmark Code of Practice" and the "Spreadmark Code of Practice". The three codes have been developed to display technical integrity, environmental protection and total transparency through independent audit. It is a shame that the authors of these government documents did not know about the wider fertiliser industry's voluntary codes and give proper recognition to their value in raising environmental outcomes.

It is useful to summarise the three fertiliser industry codes and appreciate the coherence that fertiliser manufacturers, spreaders, both ground and aerial, and researchers have achieved together. The Code of Practice for Nutrient Management developed by the Fertiliser Association of New Zealand considers the use of fertiliser within the broader context of nutrient management. Nutrient budgeting is the basis of farm nutrient management planning, enabling land managers to demonstrate environmental care as they undertake profitable production. Also, the Code of Practice for Nutrient Management, gives farmers, consultants, regional council planners and the public, confidence in nutrient management practices throughout New Zealand's primary production sector.

The Fertmark Code of Practice covers all fertilisers sold in New Zealand with

the Fertmark "tick". Fertmark provides independent quality assurance on the stated nutrient content of fertilisers to all purchasers. Consistency is provided through regular sampling, independent analysis, procedures are checked, and results are subject to external, independent audit. Fertmark certified products display a green 'tick'. To ensure ongoing product consistency, regular product samples are analysed, and procedures and results are independently audited. Farmers and land managers can be confident that Fertmark fertilisers supplied from Fertmark registered companies are reliable and, used as within a nutrient management plan, are consistent with the highest food safety, animal welfare and environmental best practice.

Spreadmark is the fertiliser spreading accreditation scheme that registers fertiliser-spreading companies that have certified spreading machinery, trained operators and audited quality management systems. Spreadmark has three primary parts:

1. Machine certification - ensures accuracy of placement of nutrients, includes GPS proof of placement to ensure traceability of the placement of nutrients on the land.
2. Operator training - industry training provided by professional trainers available for all operators incorporating H&S, environmental and relevant legislative requirements.
3. Audit system - provided by an external assessor who has been audited by JAS NZ and can be included in primary producer farm audits for farmer spreaders.

Evenness of fertiliser placement is important to achieve optimal agronomic performance and optimal environmental protection from excess nutrients.

In a nutshell our submission said that our industry codes when fully accepted have the ability to meet our communities' demands for environmental protection and high standards of freshwater quality.

Keep safe out there.

John Schultz, President.

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National Council met on the 25th of September in Wellington. At that meeting councilors remembered Ian Higgins, newly appointed councilor for Nelson Marlborough who passed away suddenly in August. Our thoughts and sympathy go to Jen and family at this sad time. Council also welcomed James McCloy, new appointment as the Canterbury Branch representative. The next National Council meeting is to be held on the 27th November. Following are some of the issues your council is managing.

Essential Freshwater. Government has produced a National Policy Statement to manage water quality issues in New Zealand. Council determined to make a submission emphasising 'Best Practice' schemes rather than a blanket regulation to manage water quality across all regions of New Zealand. The NZGFA submission stated that all fertiliser and plant nutrients applied to farms should be applied in a manner that meets the requirements of the Fertiliser Code of Practice – Fertmark and Spreadmark, incorporating the use of GPS technology to provide evidence of rates of application and traceability to record the areas that nutrients are applied (Proof of Placement). Technology should be a mitigation tool providing evidence of application to enable accurate record keeping to meet the requirements of Farm Plans and a method of collating information to meet compliance recording requirements.

Dealing with the same issue, Association President John Schultz, vice presidents Graeme Martin and Grant Anderson met with Wellington based MPI officials and Opposition MPs, together with NZ AAA to describe Spreadmark and AirCare fertiliser quality assurance schemes. They found a lack of knowledge of Spreadmark within MPI very concerning, so they were able to show that the fertiliser placement industry has well developed quality assurance programs and the technology to provide traceability

at all times. They concluded that their time spent was very worthwhile.

Professional Development Courses.

Over 70 people attended this year's Professional Development Courses held in Hamilton, Palmerston North, Christchurch and Gore. Council expressed appreciation to Ballance AgriNutrients who again provided the course facilitators. The program presented, 'Building Resilience' in people and business, was well received by those who attended. The annual Professional Development Courses are a way for the Association to invest in its members, providing skills and leadership in members' business. Looking ahead to 2020, suggested topics are more technical; team building, communication, time management, product knowledge and spreading mixes, and understanding soil tests. All feedback will be welcome.

Groundspread Magazine. Council was saddened to receive notice of the retirement of Groundspread Magazine Editor Amanda Ryan. Mandy has edited the Groundspread Magazine for sixteen years and has created a colourful and well-read magazine, that is financially self-supporting. As this November issue is to be Mandy's last edition, all councillors thanked Mandy for her enthusiasm for groundspreaders and the groundspreading industry and wished her well in the future.

New Executive Officer. President John Schultz told Council that SBS in Taranaki have been employed to manage the process of getting a new EO for the Association. To date a short list of suitable applicants has been prepared. It is hoped to have an appointment made in the near future.

Fines in lime. Past President Peter Callander presented information to Council about the problem of spreading lime with high levels of fines. Some years ago, the Fertiliser Quality Council amended the Lime Product

Classification in the Fertmark Code of Practice to 'not less than 30% by volume of 0.5mm fine particles'. At the same time Massey University released trial results that showed that all lime particles were agronomically available through the season of application, but the larger lime particles took longer to be available. Unfortunately, not many lime companies are Fertmark accredited, hard limestone rock appears to generate a higher percentage of fines and farmers purchase lime for 'just in time' application, rather than maintaining a long-term stable Ph level in their paddocks. Recent FAR trials have quantified the agronomic losses from lime 'stripping' in the arable industry. As this issue is wider than the spreading industry, groundspread representatives to FQC will take the matter there seeking an industry solution to the problem.

Accident / incident reporting. Vice President Grant Anderson introduced the Spotlight accident / incident reporting app at Conference. To date only four companies have logged on and used Spotlight to record incidents. Spotlight provides a 'no cost' versatile system to record all work incidents with groundspread trucks enabling spreading companies to be fully compliant with their H & S responsibilities of recording and reporting 'near miss' incidents as well as all accidents.

Conference 2020. The Canterbury Branch is responsible for the 2020 Conference which will be held in the Chateau on the Park Christchurch, on the 5th 6th and 7th July 2020. Conference Awards will be made again at Conference, so Branches are asked to identify members who have made any outstanding contribution to the Branch or the wider industry. Awards categories will be circulated soon to enable Branch nominations to be made in good time. The objective of the Conference Awards is to encourage excellence in all aspects of our industry and to recognise our outstanding people.

Kevin Geddes
Executive Director (retiring)



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Waikato



The recent period has been a mixed bag in relation to the weather.

We all enjoyed

a kind winter and saw good grass growth on-farm. This ultimately resulted in an application of urea that was not required so missed out on that. Then ... the cold weather hit us with rain etc. so the conditions definitely changed for operations of spreading.

We are seeing lower rates of fertiliser going on this spring which is reflecting in our business being behind on average relative to past years. The fertiliser

companies both reporting a slow start and volumes are down.

We have just started November as I write this and "summer" has struck with high temperatures. Cropping is well underway so the mowers and balers are busy with the planters close behind. There seems to be an increase in crops being planted on farm so it makes things interesting as we juggle the spring fert requirements with the cropping requirements.

Much like last year there is a bit of new gear hitting the road which is a good sign and there are reports of some "older" gear being traded across the region.

The Waikato branch has scheduled

its next meeting for the 6th December which will also be the pre-Christmas get together. A venue is to be confirmed but am hoping for good attendance like last year.

There is some good expectation of the new product that is being launched by Ballance – **SurePhos**. It is always good to see innovation across the industry.

In general operators report they are busy at this time of year which is expected.

Stay safe

Rodger Scott

Taranaki



Where has the year gone? I must agree with Chairman Schultz's statement from his October report "*The months are flying by and variable weather is keeping everyone on their toes*" and this has also been the case here in Taranaki. Spring like weather through Winter and now wintery days through Spring. Climate change has a lot to answer for.

Grass growth through the winter months has been exceptional and no pugging which makes our job more pleasant.

Generally speaking, it has been a slower start to the Spring application here in Taranaki. This is mainly due to the favourable prespring conditions. October 1st was the turning point, bang! All trucks out and drivers looking for second gear or "A" into "G" as the job planner fills up.

Fresh water management is a huge topic of discussion at the moment and with submissions now closed, I hope members have also taken the time to table a submission as has the NZGFA National Council. The outcomes of this policy will have a detrimental effect on the farming arena and the wider economy including us! Spreadmark is our jewel in the crown, our trump card, our point of difference setting the Industry standard. Proof of placement is paramount, and this is why each and every NZGFA member should be Spreadmark certified so

that we can stand united and say we are professionals in precision nutrient application.

The date for the Taranaki Christmas dinner is still to be confirmed. On a lighter note, we farewell our branch Secretary Tom Cloke at the end of this year as he hangs up one of many hats that he wears. Tom has been a devoted team member of the Taranaki branch for the past 19 plus years.

On behalf of all the Branch members and partners I would like to sincerely thank Thomas for his help, support and input over the years that he has served the branch. Tom and Linda, all the best with where retired life takes you.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to one and all.

Stay safe.

Lee Cooper

Central Districts

Hello from Central Districts

As I write, the spring cropping season is in full swing here in the Rangitikei with plenty of maize, barley and green feed crops to be planted in the usual short time frame, meaning plenty of creative organisation is required to keep everyone happy. With good returns for the sheep and beef farmers, its looking like tonnages will be up, so it's shaping up to be a good season for all of us.

Things have been working well at both Ballance and Ravensdown here with no major holdups, resulting in less grumpy spreader drivers around the place.

I hope everyone else is having a good season!

Dougall Pidwell

Last few months have been steady with plenty of orders coming in and trucks doing some long hours to keep up. A lot of maintenance fert going on now; trying to stop the back log we get towards the end of the season.

Orchard spreading has come to an end with record amounts of fert being put on and a lot more orchards going in as prices are looking good for the future.

Cropping has been a bit slow with a few

heavy downpours making the ground a bit wet - something we haven't seen for a while.

Sadly, one of the local spreading companies down sized and has been sold. We wish the old and new owners all the best for the future.

With Christmas not far away temperatures are climbing with a few 28 to 30-degree days so will either be a busy or quiet dash until Christmas.

Wishing everyone a good Xmas and a great start to 2020

Chris King

Nelson/Marlborough

From Nelson

A mild winter has progressed into a mild spring here in Nelson; we've had a reasonably consistent season with average tonnages. We had a lot of overcast and wet days during early spring which slowed growth, then just when it got dry enough to get on some hill ground the howling southerlies stopped some jobs. The sun's out now, bringing plenty of growth, a lot of paddocks have been cut and everyone wants their fert on at once. Unfortunately, the predictions are for another dry summer for this area.

It was with great sadness that we lost a hardworking and respected member of our Nelson/Marlborough Branch in

September, Ian Higgins of Renwick Transport, who was the president of our branch and our national council member. Our condolences go out to his family.

No branch meetings have been held since our last scribe and the next one is proposed for later this month.

Until next time, wishing everyone a safe and enjoyable holiday season.

Mary Hogarth

Hi from Marlborough

Today was Marlborough Anniversary and what a pearler of a day it was. We have survived another spreading season in the vineyards with budburst having now been and gone. We had the usual

problems with supply of product and also quite a windy season – especially out the Awatere towards the end of the season. Pasture spreading has also been busy. Bandspreading under the vines has now also kicked into gear with mainly nitrogen-based product and will carry on for the next wee while.

In September we had the sudden and unexpected loss of our Nelson Marlborough NZGFA Branch President - Ian Higgins from Renwick Transport. Ian was a great contributor to both the groundspread and transport industry and will be sorely missed by all his family, staff, and the wider community.

Cheers Tracy

Canterbury

Hi from Canterbury, where the new season has got off to a good start. Lots of lime going on this year and everyone has good workflow without being under pressure. The comments around the stores from drivers indicate that this is an unusual season where there is work but not the usual rush.

The only problem so far has come from Ravensdown where a combination of bad luck and bad management has

seen urea running out in Canterbury. The bad management was caused by someone at Seadown sending out small dusty product to some stores that was so bad that one store manager saw fit to send it back - It just wasn't a spreadable product. The bad luck was the urea boat that was bringing in the next shipment had major issues with its unloading crane which held up the unloading for about 10 days.

Very poor communication from Mr Inch who only started giving updates on the problems after the first week. Not good enough. Just as well our clients are able to source urea from Ballance. Well done Ballance for keeping their stores stocked up during this time.

Hope everyone has a great Christmas and New Year

Roger Bruce

Otago/Southland

Hi all from Otago/Southland,

As I write this the sun is finally out and beaming down which is certainly one out of the box for us at the moment.

With having such a mild winter, the start of spring was looking very promising to be a great start.

The end of August, start of September, certainly was very busy until the rain hit which saw things just get wetter and wetter, meaning many contractors and sowers are struggling to get anything happening and with Xmas not too far away it will see us very busy leading up until then, providing the weather settles down a bit.

In August the Otago/Southland branch

held two single day Driver Training/First Aid courses at Centre Bush which was greatly supported by our members with having 74 people attend over the two days; which is great to see members taking advantage of what the branch is offering.

Also, we held a Spreadmark certified training course run by Peter Herrick from HWR seeing 15 people attend, making the most of these soggy conditions.

Here's hoping things will start drying out shortly so we can get some work under way and clear the back log of work behind us in the lead up to Xmas and manage to get a few days off.

We held a branch meeting in Gore in October seeing 15 people attend, a range of topics were discussed; one topic was seatbelts being worn at all times in bulkies. Grant attended a course in Auckland on seatbelts and improving the culture around using them within the rural industry on and off road - 32 off road fatalities related to the non-use of seatbelts. These statistics are high, and we all need to make sure everyone gets home safe each night.

Have a great Xmas and New Year to all. Keep safe out there.

Cheers

Verge

NZGFA Now on Facebook

The NZGFA has joined social media platform, Facebook, and now has its own page. The page - www.facebook.com/NZGFA - will provide a direct communication route for members. While it will primarily be a go-to channel for relevant information it is hoped that the page will help build the ground spreader community and become a place for discussion and engagement for members. In addition, being on Facebook makes the Association easier to find for non-members, stakeholders and interested parties.

The Association now invites you to 'Like' and 'Follow' this page.

In remembrance of Ian Higgins

Chairman of the Nelson Marlborough Branch of New Zealand Groundspread Fertilisers' Association and Marlborough spreading and cartage contractor Ian Higgins of Renwick Transport Ltd passed away suddenly from a heart attack on 11 September 2019, aged 68.



Ian Higgins purchased his first curtainsider truck in 1993 and "Truck n Loader" was born. Steady growth over the next 10 years meant expansion so Renwick Transport Ltd was formed in 2005.

Ian was very passionate about the business and family involvement. His wife Karen was involved in administration and eventually daughter Jax Smith joined the team in January 2005. With ten trucks and various machinery the business continued to grow under the management of a very customer focused family and team of dedicated drivers.

Daughter Jen Hall joined in 2008 so that Jax could concentrate on managing the operations side of the business with Jen running the day to day office requirements that had grown considerably.

The business continued to expand over the years and currently operates 25 trucks plus various trailers and machinery. Renwick Transport currently employs 30 staff plus seasonal casuals.

Ian Higgins contributed to both the groundspread and transport industry. He served as the NZGFA Nelson Marlborough Chairman and Councillor. His input will be greatly missed at NZGFA meetings as well as in the wider community.

Our condolences to Karen Higgins, Jax, Jen, Pip, Andrew and families, and the Renwick Transport team.

Lime and Fertiliser Report October 2019

By Grant Anderson Lime and Fertiliser Rep

With a wet start to the season it has been about getting Plants up to speed after winter maintenance.

Lime works are filled up ready to start but with the high demand in a short period we might have to deal with hot lime. As we know this sweats and can be difficult to spread and tip off.

They are saying a quick reminder to all drivers and visitors to have a look at Traffic Management Plans. Each Site has a different plan but are easy to follow.

There is some testing happening at Lincoln about quality and fines so if you are having issues please take a sample, a photo, or video of the product and hopefully we can get a resolution.

All our Fertiliser Co-ops are ready to go with plenty of stock on hand. We have some problems spreading Super and Flexi N - getting a lot of build-up and reaction causing striping.

Options could be Cropmaster products. We are working through this at the moment.

If you have any problems, remember to take a photo, record a date and time and send to me grant.anderson@hwr.co.nz your concerns. We also have a complaints email for Ballance which is spreading@ballance.co.nz. Please CC me in if you go direct so we, as the Council, know that there are complaints. Thank you.

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Health & Safety

Spotlight Incident Reporting Added to Members Benefits

Spotlight, the real-time incident reporting app, is now being offered as an official membership benefit to all NZGFA members.

This comes in light of increased interest from ground spreading teams across the country, and as vigilance around health and safety continues to climb to the top of the industry's agenda.

Grant Anderson, NZGFA Health & Safety representative, says that the Spotlight app is a really useful tool and he encourages all NZGFA members to sign up and start using it.

He says, "Spotlight enables the quick reporting of incidents, hazards and near misses. It captures and securely stores the information for analysis and learning and allows the user to promptly share data with others in the group – while guaranteeing the confidentiality of the user."

"This sharing of information could prevent a serious injury or save a life."

Mr Anderson adds that, "Honesty is the best policy. Always has been. Always will be. Taking responsibility for accidents and incidents is never not the right thing to do. In industries, like ours, where risk is high, there is no doubt that if you make a mistake you must own it, record it and report it. Only by reporting an incident can you, or anyone else, learn from it and prevent a similar incident occurring again."

More information will be available soon on the NZGFA website – www.nzgfa.co.nz. In the meantime, members are invited to contact Grant directly at grant.anderson@hwr.co.nz

Health & Safety Report

By Grant Anderson Health & Safety Rep

Hi Guys, it has been a slow start to the season which means workloads will be congested into smaller time frames. Remember; Think Safe, Work Safe and Home Safe.

Don't take risks and if you have to second guess where you are, you shouldn't be there.

Spotlight – Spotlight – Spotlight

We have a few members that have logged onto this Free!!! App. I have seen a couple of incidents so far and it works great. The easiest recording tool that all of you can use for keeping track of your own incidents and accidents.

Seatbelts

I recently attended a seatbelt workshop in Auckland with other industry people, RTF, Forestry and Worksafe. How can we solve the problems identified for seatbelt safety/non use of seatbelts?

Some of the problem statements were comfort issues, driver shortage and reluctance to discipline drivers, culture of not using seatbelts, moving around cab, getting in and out a lot, lower risk appreciation for off road.

In the period 2013-2017 there were 32 off road fatalities related to non-use of seatbelts. 30% of all vehicle related fatalities were connected with a rollover event. 37% of these were linked to the non -use of seatbelts.

Please remember to buckle up whether it is your shoulder belt or your lap belt.

Think Safe, Work Safe, Home Safe

As an industry we need to work better towards the usage of seatbelts.

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The impact of increasing vehicle horsepower and loads on tyre and wheel selection

Supplied by TRS

Vehicle technology in the groundspread industry continues to evolve constantly reflective of demand and legislation with determinants of tyre choice being vehicle horsepower, axle loading and gross combination mass.

The specialised tyres used in the groundspread industry have not evolved at the same pace as vehicles and increasingly operators will need to consider moving away from traditional tyre selections to meet operational conditions.

One example is braking efficiency where brake drum diameters have increased to an extent that the traditional 425/75R20 tyre and 13.00x20 wheel size offers minimal clearance tolerances on some models of trucks. While the 425/75R20 tyre size has been an accepted industry standard for many years, the combination of brake dimensions and load expectations are increasingly pushing this tyre option out of specification.

Enter the 445/65R22.5 which has been gaining in popularity in recent years and offers several benefits over the 425/75R20. The 445/65R22.5 offers a higher load capacity, and the rim has slightly larger internal dimensions, which offers improvements in brake drum heat dissipation. The carcass design makes it better suited to vehicles with trailers and high GCM requirements while the increased rolling circumference improves performance.

It is a common misconception that the static axle load is the only important factor in tyre selection, but the level of torque

applied to tyres with large horsepower and large loads is equally as important. Increasingly we are advising customers to adopt the 445/65R22.5 Mitas AC70G tyre to ensure we can provide a solution that meets customer performance expectations.

Moving forward we may even see the need to recommend 24" tyres in sizes such as 445/70R24 and 495/70R24 to meet operational conditions. While these sizes are common in Australia, they have previously not been preferred choices in NZ.

TRS Tyre and Wheel are at the forefront of tyre and wheel supply for this industry and have evolved solutions as the industry has evolved and we continue to make design changes to wheels and work with tyre technology available to meet market requirements.

TRS manufactured wheels are serial numbered to individual vehicles and we recommend customers that wheels should not be swapped between vehicles without first checking the specification of the wheel suits the new vehicle. Minor differences in wheels specification may mean wheels are not always transferable to accommodate any new upgrades.

TRS have skilled product specialists who with over 30 years of experience, know the requirements of the ground spread market and can offer technical advice to assist you in selecting the right tyres for your application. One of our specialist team are available to advise operators on tyre and wheel selection and can be contacted by calling us on 0508 899 899.

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Anders Crofoot, Chairman of the FQC, introduces the new members to the FQC team



There have been a few changes over the past few months at the Fertiliser Quality Council. August saw the departure of our Executive Director, Ann Thompson. Ann, a former scientist, was in

the driving seat for several years combining her work for the Council with her role as policy advisor for dairy for Federated Farmers. Ann's enthusiasm for upholding the Council's commitment to oversee the upkeep of both Fertmark and Spreadmark has ensured that the FQC remains active, relevant and visible today.

Ann has now left us to enjoy her retirement in Golden Bay.

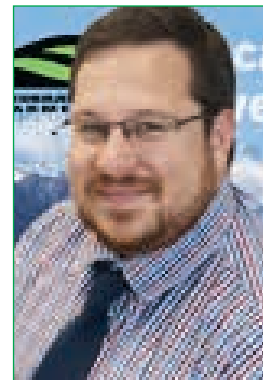
September saw the arrival of our new Executive Director, Nick Hanson. Nick too comes to us from Federated Farmers' Wellington office, from where he will build his new FQC role in alongside his current position as industry policy advisor. Nick is

no stranger to facilitating the operations of non-profit organisations and is very much looking forward to meeting and working with the team.

We also welcome Reuben Carter, an arable farmer from North Canterbury. Reuben fills a farmer representative vacancy, bolstering the wealth of industry experience, knowledge and opinion that the FQC encourages and values.

More positive change is on the horizon at the FQC with representatives soon to embrace a strategic review. The FQC's mission currently states that it will 'independently assure the quality and placement of fertiliser and promote sustainable nutrient use in primary industry to ensure the long term outcome of sustainable and profitable agriculture within New Zealand'.

The purpose of the review will be to examine this mission against today's agricultural landscape and assess how the FQC's activity meets this – now and in the future.



Nick Hanson, new Executive Director



Ann Thompson, retired August 2019

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INNOVATION IN FERTILISER TRANSPORT

NZGFA Northland Branch celebrates 60 years

By Bill Hilliam Life Member of Northland

The early developers of Northland land saw the need for plenty of Fertiliser and Lime.

In terms of global history, the transformation of Northland virgin bush to gum fields then to farming pastures has not taken very long – a 120 years or so.

Moreover, the Northland farming pioneers who faced the arduous task of breaking in and burning off gum lands and peat swamps would be envious if they could see the province today. As the land was developed it fast became obvious that the soils of Northland required large toppings of superphosphate-potash and lime.

Much of the overall transformation has taken place over the last sixty years and general improvements of fertility in the land is now obvious to all.

For this I feel privileged to thank and congratulate the Northland groundspreading contractors who, over the past six decades, have played a major part in the development and prosperity of Northland.

The Whangarei Northland Fertiliser works annually produced a quarter of a million tonnes and together with 29 Lime Millers in those days who crushed lime, our groundspread companies played a major role in cartage and spreading along with, in those days 23 topdressing planes. The annual lime output was more than two hundred thousand tonnes in 1964. There are only three planes operating in Northland now.

So, on 19 October 1959 a group of spreading and bulk store owners formed the Northland Branch of the Bulk Fertiliser Association of New Zealand to promote efficiency in the distribution and application of fertiliser and lime in the agricultural sector of the north.

Today the New Zealand Groundspread Association has become a major servicing organisation to New Zealand's main export earner, agriculture, the only basis for real growth in the economy. It is acknowledged that New Zealand leads the world in ground spread topdressing.

To our members and trucking companies, it has been an amazing achievement to have progressed from a limited number of small bulk stores, inadequate off-loading gear as a lot of tonnage of fertiliser was freighted around Northland by rail and old fashioned spreaders, to a nationwide coverage of modern bulk stores, large bulk trucks and efficient spreading equipment now in use around Northland.

The movers and shakers to form the branch in 1959 were: Sid Penny, Jack Penny, G Small, R F Cotton, J E McDonald, Jim Manderson, Dave Dunlop, K A McCardie, Tony Viteli, Ray Hampton, Ted Griffin, Ray Meyers, Jim Sommer, Greville Thurston and Noel Kelly. Ron Fletcher from Kawakawa served as secretary for 45 years.

The Branch has had 21 Presidents over those sixty years with me becoming a National President in 1982 when the name was changed to New Zealand Groundspread Fertilisers' Association.

Up to the middle eighties the branch had 32 members.

Fertiliser was supplied from three manufacturing works in Auckland, railed up as far as Okaihau in the north, and scows took bags to the Far North. Later came Bulk Barges landing at Awanui with 250 ton and then superseded by 550 and 1200 tonne barges when the works at Whangarei opened in February 1965.

Interesting to note in 1961 there was eleven manufacturing fertiliser works in New Zealand producing 1,270,000 ton - there are only five left today.

Now at this milestone in our history it gives me great pleasure on behalf of the members of Northland Branch to acknowledge with gratitude the support and assistance so readily given by members of the farming community, fertiliser manufacturers, lime millers, fertiliser merchants, dairy companies, ministers of the Crown, government officers and all bodies allied with the industry.

At this time also let us not forget those within our industry, especially those who have passed on, who had the foresight to realise the benefits of establishing the Northland Association.

In conclusion I congratulate the Northland Groundspread on reaching its 60-year jubilee.

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Driver Training

By Philip Johnson – Canterbury Driver Training Ltd

The end of Winter and beginning of Spring is always a good time to invest in training for your drivers, ideal as there is always some quieter or wet days that can be utilised, not just in regard to their practical driving skills, with yearly driving evaluations. On wet days last minute training could be organised in house for example health & safety, road code, logbook refreshers, company policies. It's an ideal time to dust off the folders that are sitting on the shelf and remind all staff, what is important in the part they play in the safe and efficient running of the business.

Several companies have taken advantage of this and in the last few months we have run several Spreader Operator NZ Theory courses around the South Island.

We have also received a good number of completed workbooks back and the following drivers have recently been awarded Spreadmark Driver Certification:

- Ellesmere Transport – Hamish Woolsey, Steven Van Buuren
- Highfield Transport – Paul McFall & Christopher Doak
- Hyslop Groundspread Ltd – Raymond Hyslop
- M A Bruce – Duane Stewart, Stuart Cawley, Richard Gosling
- Philip Wareing Ltd – Stephen Weily, Daniel Wilson, Scott Thomson, Alan Gilmour, Robert Wilson, Graham Reid
- Plains Ground Spreading Ltd – William Gordon
- Rural Transport Ltd – Harry Gibson, Michael Gillingham, Andrew Milne, Maxine Corney, Stuart Walker
- Rose Ag Ltd – Nigel Broughton
- Wilson Bulk – Mark Seale, Ian Le Grange, Robin Davis, Tony Ford, Raymond Llamas

Remember, to be awarded Spreadmark Driver Certification the workbooks must be fully completed and sent back to Candrive.

Please send them back as soon as they are completed.

Looking forward, February 2020 we are in the process of organising some Spreadmark courses in the North Island. If you would like any of your drivers to attend a course, please contact your branch or Candrive – email training@candrive.co.nz

On another note, we were saddened to hear that this would be the last issue of the magazine for Amanda. We would like to thank Amanda for all the help she has given us over the years, especially her patience with regards to the training reports.

Best wishes for the future Amanda.

Finally, with Spring well and truly here and not many weeks until the holidays, we wish you all a great Christmas and safe and Happy New Year.

Cheers Phil
& The Candrive Team

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By Ken Bell

Garth McMaster founded McMaster Engineering in 1990 in the small rural town of Winton in Central Southland. From meagre beginnings this business has grown to employ 24 staff spread out over three sites in the industrial area of the town.

Prior to this Garth did his engineering apprenticeship with and worked for Doherty Brothers Engineering in Winton who had over the years developed a very good fert spreader. When Doherty's closed up Garth approached local carrier Lou Stone about the purchase of his premises and soon moved in there. Another very handy engineer, Anthony Holland, also came to the new engineering venture and is still working alongside

Garth almost three decades later as his main man at the same site. The new company carried on building Doherty's products but also did plenty of repairs and alterations. A lot of these alterations involved shortening Fert bins that had been used on 6x4 cab and chassis units to suitable lengths for 4x4s. This typically involved cutting about 1600mm out of the bins and setting them up with hydraulic drives and computer controls.

In 1992 the company was pretty busy with steel work for the dozens of dairy sheds and pipework for cow yards which were being built with the dairy boom coming to Southland. McMasters eventually built in excess of 350 dairy sheds. This led to manufacturing and installing feed systems as well.



Leading hand Anthony Holland and Garth McMaster discuss the workings of one of the new bins not far from delivery stage



The business end of a McMaster spreader

About the same time Garth built the first of his own bins for local carrier F W McDowall and was only building about two or three bins per year at the time. Garth now builds and fits about 15 bins per year and has produced over 250 in total as well as a dozen or so elevating V-bin trailers. These trailers have in the past been built totally in house but now the chassis build is farmed out to MD Engineering who work on a low turnover, high quality product with special attention to detail and elimination of dirt traps which would encourage corrosion. V-bins have also been fitted to trailer chassis supplied by the customer with a fair amount of modification. Elevators for transfer of bulk product from tippers to bulk spreaders are also on the catalogue of McMaster products.

The standard 3.7 metre bin is now all stainless-steel construction and has a capacity of 6.08 cubic metres. The chain width is optional at either 535mm or 680 mm wide. It typically has twin spinners and other standard features include a draw beam, roll over protection structure, roll over cover, plastic side mounted toolbox, LED lights, Veijan hydraulic pump and user friendly V3 computer. They now have bushes rather than bearings minimising maintenance time.

Optional items include various wheel options, auto greasing units, central tyre inflation, blower units, single spinners and interior bin cameras, twin chains, spinner boost, boundary control to name a few which

when looking over the build records show the adaptability and custom build flexibility that the company allows.

Garth has witnessed a huge leap in dependability with the general move away from PTO driven hydraulics to live driven variants as standard on European base models as opposed to the prevalent Japanese trucks from a couple of decades ago. These hydraulics have come a long way with less oil wear and more engine power optimisation. In association with Prestige Commercial Vehicles there have been half a dozen or so spreaders set up on spec which have usually been snapped up pretty quickly. These “in stock” trucks have often replaced roll over damaged trucks at very short notice or have been bought by operators who may have to wait several months for a new order from Europe. There have also been times when bins built for customers whose base unit is still weeks away have been fitted to other customers trucks proving the worth of stocking basic specification bins.

The new models now feature twin chains which return inside of the bin which is fully sealed and totally enclosed which eliminates corrosion causing spill. Development and variation with spinner design over the years as well as innovation with grass seed vanes all improve the total efficiency of the McMaster product. There is more work in setting up the cab and chassis than there is on building the bin.

The company is right now having a huge new workshop built which will replace all three current sites they operate from. This 2500 square metre building will include 1400 square metres of workshop area which will pull together the manufacturing and fitting sections of the business which currently operate disjointly across from each other. Further to this will be office, showroom, stores and amenities as well as a 360 square metre covered yard.

Garth acknowledges the work ethic and loyalty of his staff who buy in to the processes. He values both his clients’ advice and appeals for design adjustment, after all, they work them.



A diverse range of brands of cab and chassis base units await their hoppers a few years back



Standard set up featuring rollover cover, twin spinners and ROPS as well as CTI



Garth McMaster employs 24 staff mostly from the Winton area



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By Stephanie Laird, Ravensdown Application Systems Manager

Reduce, reuse, recycle is environmental mantra now possible for Farm Dairy Effluent (FDE). Effluent is 99% water, which requires a lot of storage capacity.

Ravensdown's ClearTech dairy effluent treatment system uses a coagulant to bind effluent particles together to settle them out from the water. This clarifying process reduces freshwater use and means the newly cleaned water can be reused. Separating out

the 1% comprising particles collected from, say, the milking shed, reduces the environmental and safety risks linked with farm dairy effluent (FDE) and creates reusable water that can wash down the dairy yard or irrigate paddocks.

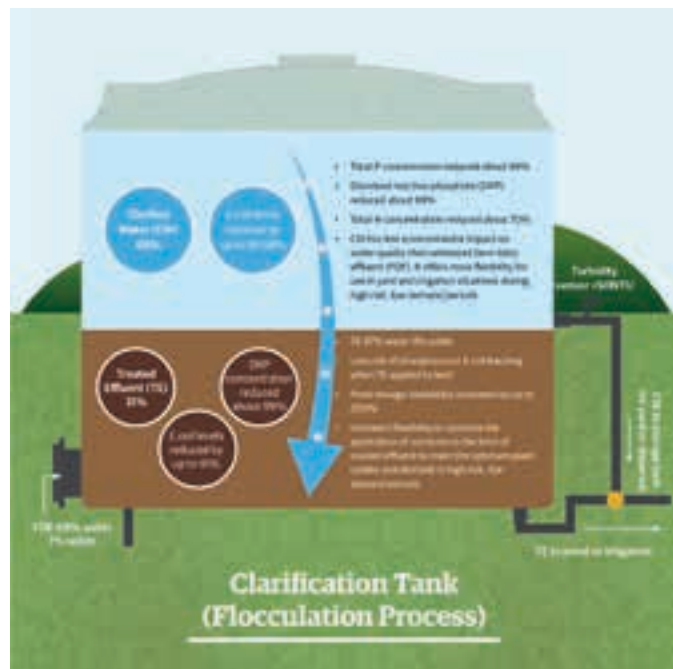
The result is a reduction in the volume of farm dairy effluent directed into existing storage and treatment, and a big reduction in environmental and safety risks.

The dairy sector's nutrient and bacterial impacts on waterways are a big issue for farmers and the nation. The sector is crying out for cost effective plug-n-play solutions that reduce costs and consent risks. A ClearTech unit on the farm allows farmers to demonstrate good farming practice to the government, regional councils and their community.

The pilot project installed at the Lincoln University Demonstration Farm in May 2018 represented a \$1.5 million investment by Ravensdown and has shown that E. coli concentrations in ClearTech's clarified water significantly reduce (by around 99.9%). Critically, the average concentration of E. coli in the clarified water was 83%, lower than the Government's limit for recreational water that we swim in.

These environmental and safety benefits are important, but commercially the system also makes sense and not just for farmers. ClearTech is also being trialled by Frews Transport in Darfield to help them handle their effluent from truck washdown.

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Ballance: Our road map to better spreading

Caroline Steer, Quality Manager

At Ballance, our vision is 'to create the best soil and feed on earth'. To achieve our vision, we need to work closely with the people who deliver our products to the soil. Your insights and



Ballance Quality Manager Caroline Steer with Ground Spreader Craig Bennett

experiences are invaluable to ensure we meet our customers' needs. To grow my understanding of spreading, I spent a day with ground spreader Craig Bennett. Special thanks to the Wealleans team for this opportunity and for taking the time to share their knowledge and experience. I left inspired - spreading is both an art and a science.

We want to support you as you strive to meet our customers' needs by continuously improving our products and services. We thank you for placing our customers' needs first and, going forward, we want to work with you so we can learn from these opportunities and improve the overall customer experience. We are also keen to hear what is working well.

To make your job easier and ensure our customers continue to be served well, we have created a quick and easy way to

contact us via the email: spreading@ballance.co.nz. Please email

us your feedback, including a description of the improvement opportunity and your contact details. We will follow up on your experience and provide you with feedback. To ensure we get to the heart of the issue, please:

- describe the issue i.e. lumpy product;
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It's often been said that of all the people who farmers come to trust to have around their farms, few compare for reliability, frequency and value as their groundspread contractor.

Eyes and ears across every paddock on the property, down the lanes, through the gates, past the pump shed and along the far tree lines, spreader drivers can see and refer to their farmer-customers, animals or infrastructure that might need attention.

But with all that activity on farm, how do you as a director of your groundspread business, keep your drivers and staff healthy and safe, and be able to confirm the well-being of all your people.

And more valuably, how can every entry and exit from farms you serve be automatically logged and and logged out, without your drivers having to stop at the gate, open an app, select the right farm, and tap whether they are entering or leaving. That's a frustrating, and hence regularly overlooked task that simplistic health and safety systems force your drivers to have to do, resulting in non-compliance or errors arising from missing check ins or check outs. Drivers have enough to think about without the burden of having to remember to manually update their H&S system.

Fortunately, there's a better way.

Precision Tracking has released its advanced health and safety system, "Precision Safety".

Unlike plain systems that require a lot of manual actions to be taken when preparing for each week's and each day's schedule, and for every entry and exit from farms, *Precision Safety* is fully automated based on geofences around each farm you service.

This means that when a truck enters a farm property, including through back gates, *Precision Safety* automatically knows from its GPS location that you have entered a property, so it logs your driver in.

Further, for farmers using *Precision Safety* too, the system automatically alerts the farmer, and any other contractors who might be on the farm already, of the arrival, and then later the departure, of your truck and driver.

There are three parts to *Precision Safety*

Precision Check

Precision Check is an easy to use checklist system, based on smartphones or tablets, that provides a pre-configured range of standard checklists, such as the start-up routine that is to be gone through by every driver at the start of every shift.

In addition to pre-configured lists (which can be modified) operators can create their own lists for any recurring tasks or processes that should be done the right way by following company procedures.

Precision Check records the completion of each checklist, requiring photos to be captured where relevant.

Precision Solo

This keeps individual staff and drivers safe throughout their entire shift.

Based on iPhone or Android smartphone apps, *Precision Solo* enables owners and directors to keep on top of staff and driver safety, ensuring they are always where they need to be, able to respond immediately to alerts, and even, with the aid of the Samsung Galaxy smart watch, able to monitor heart rate, such that should something go awry, a response can be initiated immediately to get help to a staff member in need.

Precision Drive

This third valuable feature in the *Precision Safety* system protects drivers, not only while they are driving, but also, of particular value to spreader drivers who frequently have to get in and out of the cab, while they are opening gates, moving around a bulk store, or working with loader drivers etc.

Collision detection is vitally important, the monitoring of driver behaviour, and being able to coach drivers about braking, cornering or erratic driving, and also detecting phone use while driving, all adds up to peace of mind for directors and safe work practices for staff and drivers.

Precision Safety is available now, and being set up by contractors and their farmers, providing cost-effective peace of mind for owners and directors, while providing staff and drivers with the confidence and support that their well-being is paramount in your business.



Precision Safety – the Galaxy Watch option for check-ins, GPS, heart rate, fall detection and more

Thank you to our 2019 Conference Sponsors



The Last Word

Sadly, this is my last issue as editor of Groundspread.

I have been publishing the magazine for NZGFA since 2002 – that's 17 years and 66 issues! During that time, I have appreciated the support of Kevin Geddes, the Presidents, Councillors, Branch scribes, members and advertisers. It has been an honour to be part of the NZGFA family and to be able to report on your businesses along with the changes and advances in the industry.

I admire the NZGFA for being steadfast in promoting best practice in fertiliser spreading and for embracing the challenges ahead with positivity. Your commitment to working together for the greater good of the industry is to be commended.

I look forward to hearing about the progress made and wish you all the best for the future.

Warm regards

Mandy



Spreadmark is a fertiliser placement quality assurance programme. The scheme will register spreading companies provided they have certified spreading machinery, trained operators and an appropriate quality management system which ensures that farmer/grower outcomes are met and environmental sustainability is protected.

The Spreadmark scheme is governed by the Fertiliser Quality Council consisting of representatives from fertiliser user groups, NZGFA and fertiliser manufacturers.

For more information contact:

FQC Executive Director: Nick Hanson, 027 705 3937 nhanson@fedfarm.org.nz

SPREADMARK REGISTERED COMPANIES As at 1 Nov 2019

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Barwoods Ltd	Hokonui Rural Transport	Scullys Transport Ltd
Beckers Transport Ltd	Hyslop Groundspread	Sollys Contractors
Boags Contracting	Jackson Spreading	Spreading Canterbury Ltd
Brooks Spreading Ltd	Kui Griffin & Co Ltd	Spreading FBT Ltd
Bruce Groundspreading	Mainland Spreading Ltd	Spreading North Canterbury
Cairns Groundspreaders	Manawatu Mini Spreaders	Spreading Sandford Ltd
Callander Groundspread	McCarthy Contracting Ltd	St Andrews Transport
Central Transport	McQuinn Spreading	Stubbs Groundspreading Ltd
Dirt 'n' Dust Ltd	Midland Spreaders	Temuka Transport
DT Kings Transport Ltd	Northern Southland	Transport Services Southland
Ellesmere Transport Co	Peter Sole Transport Ltd	Wheel Spread Ltd
Fertspread Ltd	R&R Spreading Ltd	Wilson Bulk Transport
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T R A K K E R



“We first bought the vehicles because we needed something that was tough. In this sector they need to be able to bounce around farmland a lot. Probably half their time is spent off-road, in paddocks and so forth, and apart from the bumps they need to be able to handle all the wet weather we get in this part of the world. And they do, they handle it all.”

Dean Frew, General Manager – Frews Transport

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