

Groundspread



NZGFA NEWS

New leadership elected

AWARDS

And the winners are ...

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CONFERENCE 2021

Resilience conference - a resounding success



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From the President



President Graeme Martin
Email: graemem@wealleans.co.nz

As this is my first editorial as the President of the NZGFA, I would like to thank members for the nomination and opportunity to represent you. As I have just returned from the annual NZGFA conference and am getting down to business I now have a good sense of how big this job will be. A special thank you to John Schultz for all his work over the past two years.

My initial thoughts on the role is to build on the strategic direction we set in place two years ago, and to look at activities that will add value to members. The actions required will be focused on the new challenges of the industry around the impact of nutrient applications and the environment. Our strategic value statement is clear – “Lead, Promote and enhance nutrient placement” and our focus is to “positively influence nutrient outcomes”.

I believe the industry has the tool kit to achieve the strategic objectives through best practice such as Spreadmark and we should all be lining up to gain this accreditation.

The new NZGFA Council has been formed with member representatives and we have assigned roles within – such as Health & Safety, Transport, FQC, Fertiliser & Lime and Training. For these roles to be successful we need input to the Council of the real issues that you as members face. This will ensure that steps can be made to improve and rectify the issues that are in play in your every day operations. So – branches must be active in the

Council business so whatever gets done is relevant to members on the “front line”.

The conference was a huge success with the theme of Resilience being very appropriate for today’s business world. The Canterbury team staged a special event in difficult times at a very special place. I hope all who attended took something home with them such as a pledge to work on something specific - be it Health & Safety, Spreadmark, business goals or personal achievements.

In closing, it will be my privilege to represent the groundspreading industry. I look forward to your questions and/or challenges and wish you well for the new season.

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Outgoing NZGFA President, John Schultz,
with wife Nivonne

Mainland Spreading, announced his decision not to continue in the role.

John's commitment to the position over his two year term has been applauded by NZGFA members. He was recognised for his stalwart and common sense approach and his unwavering leadership - particularly, at a time when he was experiencing personal loss and tragedy.

John said he enjoyed his tenure and that he sees the fact that everyone is prepared to listen to each other as a key strength of the association, and one that will carry it forward. He congratulated Graeme on his election, commending him as astute and business-focused.

procedures. Melanie said she enjoyed her time with the association working with a wonderful group of people but needed to move into a full time role. Melanie has now taken a position at New Zealand Good Agricultural Practice (NZGAP).

The NZGFA is currently looking for its next Executive Officer. Details of this part-time role can be found on SEEK and on the NZGFA website:- www.nzgfa.co.nz

Thousands raised for trust

The NZGFA has donated nearly \$4,000 to the Limbs4All Trust. The charitable organisation, created by Mark and Anne Inglis in 2007, after Mark's climb of Everest as the first and only double amputee to reach the summit, aims to help support some of the 400 million disabled people worldwide with mobility aids and wheelchairs. The money was collected via fines for humorous misdemeanours at the association's June conference.

New leadership for NZGFA

The NZGFA has elected Graeme Martin, General Manager of Wealleans Groundspreading, as its new national President. The nomination came at the association's recent AGM, after outgoing President, John Schultz of

Search is on for new EO

NZGFA Executive Officer, Melanie Dingle, also stepped down recently. Melanie has been in the role for 18 months and has been instrumental in implementing a range of new robust

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Life membership for Dean

Dean Brooks of Nelson-based Brooks Spreading has been presented with an NZGFA Life Membership Award in recognition of many years of his services and dedication to the industry. Dean was honoured to receive the award and accepted it with gratitude.



NZGFA Life Membership for Dean Brooks



Mark Inglis, founder of the Limbs4All Trust

For more information about Mark and Anne's work visit - www.markinglisunlimited.co.nz/about

New N rules now in place

The NZGFA is reminding all members that the two new rules around the use of synthetic nitrogen fertiliser (N)

are now in place. NZGFA President, Graeme Martin, says the new legislation has signification implication for groundspreading customers and, as such, it is up to members to ensure they are aware of what the new rules mean. "We are the service providers, plus we have the technology that will help farmers and growers record the data they need for their FEPs (Farm Environment Plans). It is, therefore, part of our job to assist our customers in every way we can."

Conference 2022

It has been announced that the 2022 NZGFA Conference - the association's 65th event - will take place in Taranaki next year. The Taranaki branch says it is excited to host the conference and will build on the energy of the past two events to create another successful get-together. Dates will be announced soon, however they are likely to fall within the first week of the July school holidays.

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Branch reports

Taranaki

By Alistair MacGregor

Hello from the Naki. It's been a pretty typical three months up here, a fairly strong June leading into the slower winter months.

The weather has mostly worked in our favour with ground temps holding up well. All in all a good season had by all with a good payout and lots of reports of record production. Operators are looking forward to a big spring season.

The Taranaki branch has put 25 drivers and office staff through a Spreadmark and Health and Safety course with Jim Laird, which was well received by all who attended.

The Canterbury branch can definitely give themselves a massive pat on the back with the way they ran this year's conference!

It's sure put the pressure on our branch for next year.

Waikato

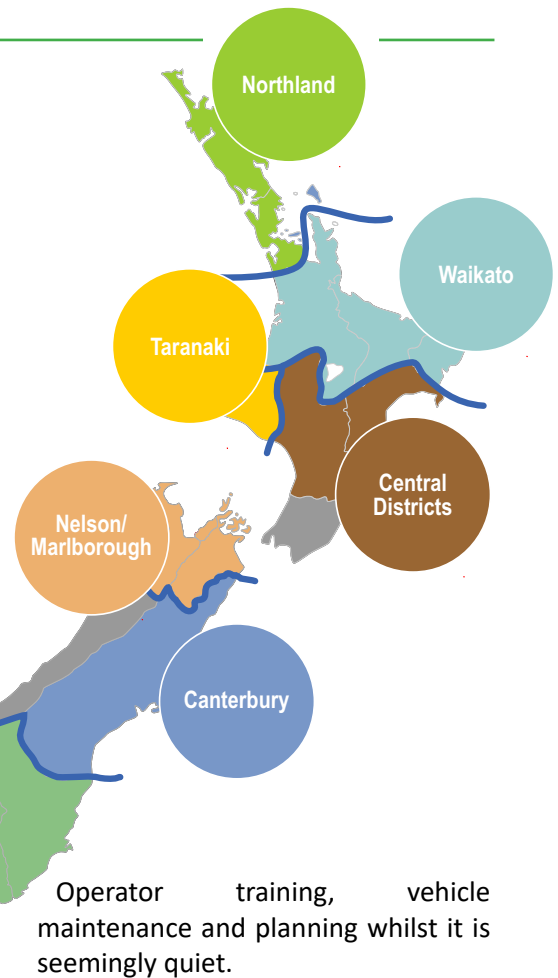
By Kylie Owen

I have just returned from the annual NZGFA conference that was held at Aoraki Mt Cook – staying at the Hermitage Hotel. Firstly, what a venue to host an amazing conference, there were a lot of 'take aways' from this event. The conference was well planned and executed with the theme of "resilience" being appropriate. Consciously or unconsciously resilience is now first and foremost within our daily routines having endured (and continue to endure) a global pandemic and as we look forward towards the new challenges of changing environmental rules.

At this time of the year (winter) we are getting ready for the spring season – taking the opportunity whilst off paddock to engage in Spreadmark

Operator training, vehicle maintenance and planning whilst it is seemingly quiet.

Regardless of the recent weather bombs, operators are reporting early



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interest in nitrogen applications including sulphur as it is relatively warm – air and soil temperatures. This bodes well for a good season and the indicators are positive for continued strong farm gate returns.

Calving around the Waikato is in full swing and the canopy crop programmes for the kiwifruit industry is getting underway. Early reports are that everything is off to a good start - long may that continue.

There is a bit of new gear going on the road, great for some operators. Truck suppliers are reporting strong interest, however the challenge of the global supply chain will make deliveries in the short term difficult. Resilience and/or patience will be required.

Looking forward, the predictions are for a good spring season, potentially an increase in crops being established. Hopefully key product supply has been planned by our main suppliers.

A special thank you to the Canterbury team for hosting the annual conference – well done, showcasing a piece of NZ paradise. It was great to be amongst so many positive, friendly and welcoming people. Finally - Congratulations to Graeme Martin as he accepted the role of President - NZGFA.

Central Districts

By Mike Hammond

Winter has had a dry start, with more regular rain events only just starting to come through. The dry ground conditions have allowed operators to continue to spread through the normal quiet time. Looking forward to spring, many are optimistic for an early start to the new season. However, the increased spreading application has stopped planned winter maintenance occurring across the region.

The first aid course was well attended by members and had positive reviews by all. Our latest branch meeting in Napier had a smaller than expected turnout. Although the social gathering

of dinner and a night out on the town was a success and enjoyed by attendants, members and partners alike.

Nelson/Marlborough

By Tracy Rose-Russell

The weather in Nelson and Marlborough the last few weeks has been wet wet wet. Although stop banks held up remarkably well with the initial event two weeks ago with the huge volumes in the river, unfortunately there still was a lot of flooding around the district. The water was receding fast, however subsequent rains have the water table very high now and ground conditions are wet and taking their time to dry out. Spreading has ground to a halt and with spring approaching there is likely to be a large bottle-neck of vineyard spreading jobs prior to budburst, especially as development vineyard blocks have been too wet to get onto, so will need to be done later in the midst of the other spreading jobs. Owners of jobs done prior to the rains are now worried whether the fertiliser is well washed in or washed away.

On a brighter note the sun is shining today – so hopefully the fertiliser stores will be well stocked up when the time comes for us all to get back into it at full noise. Conference was attended by 2 local firms and was thoroughly enjoyed.

Otago/Southland

By Nigel Powell (Verge)

Howdy all from the farrrr South. I'd like to kick it off with thanking our outgoing EO, Melanie Dingle & National President John Schultz for all their hard work, dedication & time they have put into our association and congratulations to our new National President Graeme Martin.

A big thank you to the Canterbury Branch Crew for running such an awesome conference in a really majestic part of the country, a great time had by all I'm sure.

We've had a fairly mild winter down here so far, allowing a bit of lime to still be spread about the place after the frosts have gone off and the bulkies are finished their morning gritting runs.

With the last couple of months being quieter, it's given the drivers a chance to have a break and for the gear to get some maintenance done as it won't be long before they are back out of the starting gates and into the spring season.

We are in the process of sorting out some driver training for the branch members so they can start the season off all fresh and raring to go. These training days are always well attended and a date is still to be confirmed.

Wishing everyone a great start to the season and keep safe out there.

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AND THE WINNERS ARE ...

The winners and runners up of the 2021 New Zealand Groundspread Fertilisers Association (NZGFA) awards were congratulated by newly elected association president, Graeme Martin, on their contributions to the ground spreading industry at the association's recent conference at Aoraki, Mt Cook.

The awards programme, now in its third year, saw John Whitehead of JWE Ltd scoop two of the four awards – The Innovation Award, sponsored by Keith Andrews Ltd and The President's Award, sponsored by Ballance Agri-Nutrients.

John has been manufacturing, repairing and supplying New Zealand with leading edge GPS technology and equipment for agriculture for nearly 30 years. Of particular note is JWE's industry-acclaimed V3 spreading computer with variable rate capability.

John is well recognised as an innovator of technology and builder of quality solutions for the industry.

The runners up for those categories (respectively), were Travis Churchill of Spread Test NZ – one of the country's most respected spreader testers and Matthew Blomfield of Transport Services Southland Ltd – winner of last year's Young Achiever's Award.

Nick Hyslop of Hyslop Groundspreading Ltd was awarded the Health & Safety Award, sponsored by Graymont.

Nick, an owner-operator, was acknowledged for his commitment to ensuring health, safety and mental wellbeing is a priority for everyone involved in groundspreading and his input into the delivery of regular driver-training sessions for NZGFA members.



Nick Hyslop, winner of the Health & Safety Award

The runner up for this category was spreader operator, Anne-Marie Davison, of Wealleans Bay of Plenty.

Finally, Toby Evans, of Brooks Spreading Ltd, was awarded the Ravensdown-sponsored Young Achiever's Award. Toby was recognised for his exceptional organisational skills, time management capability, positive influence on others and outstanding work ethic.

Spreadmark-certified spreader operator, Georgia Voice of Philip Wareing Ltd was the runner up for this category.



Toby Evans, winner of the Young Achiever's Award

The award ceremony took place at a Gala Dinner at the association's 64th annual conference. Chaired by mountaineering legend, Mark Inglis, the event also applauded the outgoing NZGFA president, John Schultz of Mainland Groundspreading, and welcomed Graeme Martin of Waikato-based Wealleans Ltd as the new President of the NZGFA.

Commenting on the awards, Mr Martin said, "I am in awe of the amount of talent within this industry and the commitment that industry members are making on professional and personal levels. Congratulations to all our award winners and runners up. This industry is in safe hands."



John Whitehead's double award win is accepted by Ted Miller of JWE Ltd on his behalf

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Resilience conference - a resounding success

By Rose Hyslop, Canterbury Branch

Wow, did Aoraki Mount Cook turn it on for our 64th annual NZGFA conference or what? We had snow, we had sun, we saw Aoraki in all its glory, it was awesome! The Canterbury branch welcomed 133 NZGFA members, 30 invited guests, speakers and businesses and 77 sponsor representatives to the stunning Hermitage Hotel on Sunday 27th June 2021 for a two and a half day conference all about Resilience. As a branch, who had to prepare for a conference twice after having the 2020 event cancelled due to Covid-19,

it could not have been a more fitting theme. Especially considering we were still dealing with covid restrictions thrust upon us at the last minute before the conference! We have all had to be resilient over the past 18 months, as people and as an industry.

Having all 240 of us fill a hotel that was shut down due to the pandemic last year, as its overseas market has been unable to return, was another testament to resilience and the ability of Kiwis to adapt and thrive in the face of adversity.

We are pleased to advise that the hotel has since been very busy with the local event market after our conference there. We wish Sir John, the Carnahans and all of the wonderful staff the very best moving forward in this new direction and thank them so much for being such remarkable and welcoming hosts - they absolutely helped make the conference the success that it was!

We woke up to snow falling outside on Monday morning and could see kids out playing in fresh snow - it was quite magical. Not one to be outshone by snow, our morning speakers included outgoing EO Melanie Dingle with our 2020 award winners; industry updates from Mel, President John Schultz and NZAAA President Toby Michelle; a thought-provoking Spreadmark session with James McCloy and Graeme Martin; passionate local farmer/environmentalist Jane Smith called upon all of us to challenge the status quo and then there was a very enlightening survival team challenge run by the dynamic MC Mark Inglis which very few of you survived!



The afternoon kicked off with an excellent Health and Safety session from our Health & Safety representative Grant Anderson and SBS's Rob Thomson. David Downs ended the day in the theatre with a rousing call for us to take from challenges the ability to innovate, adapt and be better than we were before.

Robert Bruce kicked off Tuesday with his tales of resilience and how he is helping others to become more resilient too with his Got to Get Out initiative encouraging mental and physical wellbeing.

Tina Powell from Southland filled in at the top table for the AGM when Mel was taken ill, she will probably never come to a conference breakfast again after being spied across the breakfast table by John and roped into this job - thank you Tina!



AGM minutes are supplied elsewhere so I will not go into depth here except to say a huge congratulations to Dean Brooks on receiving his Life Membership, very well deserved.

Also, we farewelled outgoing president John Schultz after two years in the hot seat, these have not been an easy two years for John personally after the heartbreaking loss of his boy and business partner, Cam, in a spreader truck, and yet he continued to serve us all with the strength, steadfastness and straight-shooting character that we know and love, thank you John! We then welcomed the astute and passionate Graeme Martin into this role and know it is in good hands to continue to keep us moving forward and being industry leaders in our field.

During the day, there were a number of areas that members wished to see the council investigate this year - a name change away from NZGFA to include the word 'spreaders' or 'groundspread' for marketing reasons such as google searches; more discussion/direction around Spreadmark; a vote back to the branch reports featuring in Groundspread magazine; and good debate with the Ballance and Ravensdown over how best to solve supply issues and driver shortages.

Business was wrapped up early on Tuesday to allow attendees to explore the venue, take in a big sky experience in the theatre, head outdoors for a walk, or sit in pockets about the venue in smaller groups with a drink in hand and enjoy the camaraderie and banter.

There was a lot of laughter everywhere you turned.

Gala night was an absolute ripper - the food, the speakers, the awards, the band, the open bar - it was a real celebration of our industry - one we had to wait two long hard covid years for - but hey, that is celebrating resilience right there!

Thank you to everyone that attended, to all 33 sponsors of our event, to The Hermitage, to Mark Inglis and all of our speakers, we hope you all enjoyed yourselves just as much as we did!!

See you all in Taranaki for conference number 65 in 2022!!



The Family programme

This year the family programme looked to allow more choice for partners and enable them to attend more parts of the main conference rather than being away the whole time. This was in recognition that partners are largely involved in these family businesses and that conference is no longer male-dominated, isn't this great! This year we had 27 children and 35 partners sign up for some/all of the family programme. Unfortunately, the skiing option was thwarted by the slow start to winter but there was still plenty

of fun to be had - yoga, star-gazing, playing in snow, walking the Kea Point Track, visiting a Salmon Farm, playing mini-golf, blockbuster movies at night for the kids in their very own theatre after their own private buffets, hot pools, ice-skating, spa treatments!!

If you haven't brought your family along to a conference before then you should think about it for next time. There were so many happy kids running around in their cool conference hoodies like they owned the place having a blast and making buddies!



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Forget the cost, focus on the benefit

NZGFA President, Graeme Martin is encouraging all groundspreaders not to fixate on the cost of Spreadmark certification but to consider the benefit instead. He tells the story of Wealleans' journey into Spreadmark accreditation and is honest when he says that it was a huge cost with, initially, very little evidence of any tangible or financial gain.

"For many companies, the cost of gaining Spreadmark accreditation could be perceived as simply too great to pursue," Graeme explains. "We at Wealleans certainly had to have a discussion around this before we decided to go ahead, especially as we knew that the competitive advantage of being Spreadmark certified is currently limited. We know this because only a few of our customers have started to ask whether we are Spreadmark accredited; the Spreadmark conversation simply isn't going on out there that much...yet."

Despite this, and the fact that Wealleans already had in place its own 'Quality Spread' programme - comprising operator training, truck testing, health & safety, on-farm

best practice and environmental regulations, the company decided to push on with creating a business plan for Spreadmark certification.

"The biggest thing for us was that as we continued to debate Spreadmark, it became increasingly clear that Spreadmark would, in the not too distant future, be the key to what happens next for the groundspreading industry.

Wealleans isn't the only company that is predicting that groundspreaders without Spreadmark accreditation will be marginalised in about five years time. It bases this on recent changes being implemented by government - including the new rules around nitrogen application, farm environment plans and the Healthy Waters legislation.

"We fully anticipate that regional councils will start to insist upon Spreadmark certification. Spreadmark already covers everything they want us to do. It is already a well-established and recognised industry standard. It makes sense that regional councils will harness Spreadmark and make it part of their own codes of compliance."

With that realisation, Wealleans decided that it didn't want to be one of

the companies who had to play catch up in the future. Instead, it wanted to be a front-runner and embrace the inevitable - allowing enough time to fully integrate Spreadmark across its business and embed it within the Wealleans work culture.

"The time and effort we spent on gaining Spreadmark accreditation was significant. We had piles of papers documenting our 'Quality Spread' programme and it was a challenge for us to integrate the work we have already done within the Spreadmark framework. In addition, we have a very large fleet and that took a fair bit of dedication to get every vehicle through."

Graeme says that Wealleans is now immensely proud that they took the leap into Spreadmark accreditation. "We changed our mindset. Instead of cost we saw investment. And in terms of benefit, we saw this as the right to continue operating. When you put Spreadmark in those terms, I don't believe you can argue against it. It is coming, so why not see Spreadmark as an opportunity to get organised, strengthen your businesses with robust, quality systems, invest in your people and, ultimately, grow your companies."



Spreadmark testing at Sollys

By Jim Laird

Towards the end of last year, we headed out to do some Spreadmark testing at Sollys Contracting in Takaka. The driver of the Scania is "Kelvin" and "Jarred" was behind the wheel of the Mercedes. The Scania was just new on the road, and is based in Collingwood where operator Kelvin lives. They mainly work in the area over the Takaka Hill but frequently travel over to the Motueka side when required.

A couple of years ago, when Merv Solly was considering putting on a new truck, he was in Australia and drove a Scania 500hp semi loaded to 89tonne at the Anglesea truck testing facility near Melbourne.

Merv was most impressed with the automatic transmission fitted in this truck, especially when taking off on a

quite steep slope, and the retardation when descending.

When he returned home he discussed with Scania the viability of this transmission being put in a 4wd spreader, as he believed the extra driveability, combined with the super comfortable cab should be a great combination and make for a great working environment.

This Auto is believed to be the first one in a Scania 4wd in NZ. Kelvin, who

has been operating Sollys spreaders for many years, was apprehensive re an auto at the start, but now is most happy with it and finds it a great asset to have.

This 410hp truck tested quite well over the trays, and is equipped with a very well finished bin from ERL in Ashburton.

Merv and Kelvin are more than happy with this truck, and the fuel economy of it.



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Time to change the mindset

By Groundspread Reporter

A recent hard-hitting presentation by NZGFA Health & Safety representative, Grant Anderson, carried with it a stark warning to all industry members that it's time to change the mindset around health and safety reporting.

At the NZGFA Conference in June, Grant said that, repeatedly, the reports he receives regarding accidents, incidents and near misses do not match what he is hearing on the ground. "This is a tight knit industry and information travels fast. I hear of so many accidents, incidents and near misses through the grapevine, yet these don't appear in any official reports. This is really concerning as it implies that we aren't taking incident reporting seriously enough."



Grant Anderson,
NZGFA Health & Safety representative

Grant explained that every incident that causes you to catch your breath, even for a second, is worth reporting. "This means that near misses must not be ignored. While near misses are incidents that don't cause any harm, they could potentially have caused an injury or damage. Don't be tempted to brush off near miss incidents as 'nothing' just because no-one was

hurt. Sometimes, near misses involve 'very lucky escapes'."

According to Rob Thomson of Safe Business Solutions, the reasons why staff don't report near misses can be numerous.



Rob Thomson,
Safe Business Solutions

"There might not be good processes in place to encourage easy and efficient incident reporting, or employees may be embarrassed and, if no harm has been done, may think it's quite alright to say nothing. There could also be a fear that if they've made a mistake, employees will be punished somehow. There could be peer pressure too, to not report an incident. Or, it could be that there's a lack of acknowledgment when staff do report an incident. If there's no thank you, feedback or follow-up, staff might be less inclined to say anything to management."

Rob adds that there could also be a work culture that, without realising it, promotes complacency. "Staff might be told unofficially by older or more senior peers 'don't worry about it', so they buy into the culture of not reporting incidents without question.

Employees might also avoid reporting near-misses or minor slips because they are embarrassed and don't want to be a laughing stock at smoko.

"If this is happening in your workplace, you need to change the culture to one which encourages employees to report any near-misses and use the information from incidents to review your risk assessments and control methods. By doing this, you could prevent accidents before they occur."



How to encourage INCIDENT REPORTING

- Employee participation is essential. This demonstrates that you, the employer, is invested in their safety, and will promote a positive safety culture.
- Motivate employees to contribute.
- Recognise contributions and reward participation rather than penalise or discipline staff for making a mistake.
- Collect data for performance management – identify success of your control measures and identify any that are failing.
- Communicate any findings and/or actions identified.
- Include both the individuals that reported the incident, accident or near miss, as well as any individuals that were involved or could have been affected by what occurred.
- Demonstrate to staff how the reporting of incidents can identify where safety controls are lacking or are ineffective.

Source: Safe Business Solutions

Driving safely in adverse weather

By Jason Shepherdson,
Safe Business Solutions

New Zealand is renowned for its changeable weather which means you should plan and prepare before you find yourself on an icy, wet or snowbound road. Most of the time New Zealand has a temperate climate. However, storms can hit the country with little warning, delivering heavy rain, ice and snow, especially during the winter months (usually between July and August but often into September). This is the most hazardous time of year for driving, with frost and ice occurring throughout the country and snow in areas like the central North Island and across the South Island.

The following winter driving tips will help you stay safe on the road.

Preparation and Planning:

- Always check the weather forecast and road conditions before you leave.
- Think about where you're going and what route you should take – choose safety over convenience. If travel can't be put off, allow extra time for your journey.
- Plan to drive during daylight hours when visibility is better and hazards such as ice and snow are less likely. Avoid driving at night when hazards rapidly multiply.
- If travelling long distances, make sure you are well rested and plan where to have a break.
- Dress for the conditions, carry additional warm clothes and keep a survival kit in your vehicle in case you do get stuck.
- Ensure your vehicle is roadworthy and keep at least half a tank of fuel in case you get diverted onto another route or you are forced to turn back.
- Be prepared for snow and carry tyre chains that you know how to fit and use.

Spotting ice and snow:

Look out for shaded areas caused by high banks and tall trees where roads freeze and ice may not thaw during the day.

- Bridges could stay slippery longer than other road surfaces, so slow down when crossing.
- Frost is more severe at daybreak so be prepared for this after it becomes light. While it may not be frosty at 6am, it could be an hour or two later.
- Another way of detecting ice is to watch the other vehicles around you. If you spot them sliding, or you notice vehicles have veered off the road, you have probably driven into an icy area.
- If you find yourself in a situation that makes you nervous, pull over and either wait for the temperatures to rise or find an alternative mode of transport.
- It's always a good idea to carry a charged mobile phone with you so you can notify people if you've broken down.

Driving Tips:

When driving in icy conditions, you need to leave as much space as possible between you and the vehicle in front. In normal conditions follow the 2 second rule, but in wet, icy conditions double this reaction time to 4 seconds.

- If you do hit a patch of ice, and find yourself skidding, steer in the same direction as the rear of your vehicle is sliding.
- Never take your hands off the steering wheel and don't stamp your foot on the brake as this could cause your wheels to lock up. For vehicles without anti-skid braking systems, pump the brake pedal in short rapid bursts rather than pressing long and hard to avoid skidding or sliding.
- Avoid sudden braking or turning that could cause you to skid.

Accelerate smoothly and brake gently and use your highest gear when travelling uphill and your lowest gear when travelling downhill.

- As well as other drivers, there could be winter maintenance vehicles on the highway helping to keep the road open. If you come across any of these vehicles, stay a safe distance behind them and don't pass unless you're instructed to.
- When travelling in fog, rain or snow, drive with your lights dipped for increased safety, and if severely reduced, turn on front and rear fog lights (where fitted).

Vehicle Lights:

Seeing where you are going is a pretty vital part of driving, particularly in winter when visibility can be reduced even further by adverse weather conditions.

Problems with lighting contribute to around seven deaths and more than 80 injuries each year on New Zealand roads, according to the New Zealand Transport Authority (NZTA).

- While it may seem initially to be a simple case of "it's dark, turn on your lights", there are laws around how many lights your vehicle can have fitted and how and when you can actually use them.
- Fog lights give off a short, wide beam of light that is designed to penetrate the fog, lighting up the area directly in front of the vehicle, while also illuminating the sides of the road. They should only be used when visibility is "severely reduced" - technically not just by fog, but also snow and heavy rain - and it is against the law to use them during clear conditions during either day or night, due to the risk of dazzling other drivers.
- Broadly the same rules apply to rear fog lights, except for the fact that they must be red only.

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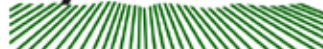


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All set for spring

By Ant Boyles,
National Logistics Manager, Ravensdown

Kia ora. It's hard to believe a month has gone by since we caught up with you at the annual conference. A big congratulations to the organising committee for putting together such a fantastic event. And well done to the award winners, and especially to Toby Evans, winner of the Ravensdown sponsored Young Achiever's Award.

The Ravensdown contingent identified a number of potential opportunities from various discussions over the three days. We are working through these so we can follow up and respond as appropriate. If there is additional information you would like to ask us about, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

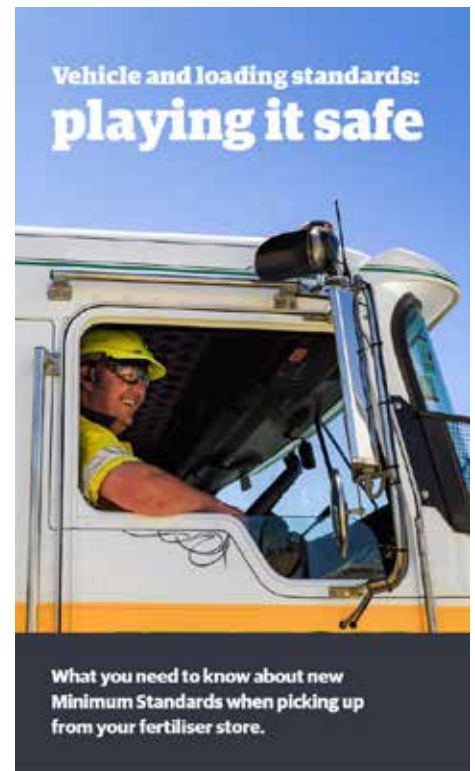
Spring planning is well underway, with fertiliser stocks starting to hit our shores in earnest. We have fired

up the manufacturing plants in Napier and Christchurch (Dunedin due to start in August), and started building stocks and moving it into the stores network.

After the disruptions to traditional transport networks last autumn, particularly in the North Island, we have made some changes to how we distribute stock so as to maximise carrier availability.

Pre-season meetings are also well underway. It is going to be more important than ever that we all collaborate closely with stakeholders to ensure positive outcomes for our respective businesses and shared customers.

Our minimum vehicle standards initiative goes live on 1 August. There have been some minor changes as a result of feedback received. The full minimum standards can be viewed at ravensdown.co.nz/ravensdown/vehicle-and-loading-standards



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Alternatively, information is available in store if you have yet to receive this directly. If you want to provide feedback to us on any subject, please contact our customer centre on 0800 100 123 or customer.centre@ravensdown.co.nz

I hope you've managed to recharge the batteries over the winter months, and all the best for a bumper spring. Take care and stay safe.

Improving our service

By Jeremy Begg,
Regional Distribution Manager

Welcome to the start of the new season, I would like to start off by congratulating the NZGFA Canterbury Branch for what was a very enjoyable conference. The organisation of the event supported by the location, the speakers, the Master of Ceremonies, and the hospitality of the staff at the Hermitage Hotel all combined to create a truly great event.

On behalf of Ballance, I would like to thank John Schultz for his time as President of the NZGFA, John has always been very approachable in this role and happy to share his thoughts and opinions. Congratulations must also go to Graeme Martin and Howard Pedersen, on being elected to their new roles on the Executive and Grant Anderson who remains as a Vice President for another term.

I am sure many of you will have heard stories around disrupted supply chains in the current international shipping climate. We have not been totally immune to these but, thanks to some great work by our procurement team, we are currently looking in good shape for the season ahead. Ballance has been reviewing the past few months while keeping one eye on what lies ahead, to see where we can improve our service offering.

As a result of this review, Ballance has engaged its transport partners to improve our ability to move products across the country throughout the season and has approved an extensive infrastructure spend to increase our

internal capabilities in key parts of the network. The results of this work should become evident as the season picks up pace in many parts of the country.

If you have any concerns or queries throughout the season please reach out to your local store, Regional Distribution Manager or send an email through to spreading@ballance.co.nz. The sooner we hear about any issues, the sooner we can address them.

Finally, a big thanks to Mel Dingle for your work as Executive Officer at NZGFA. We wish you well for what lies ahead. Stay safe, take care and happy spreading.

Council coming up to speed

By Anders Crofoot,
Chairman, Fertiliser Quality Council

The Fertiliser Quality Council's focus over the last 12 months has been on implementing processes to bring greater clarity of purpose, as well as to make itself more accountable to making progress.

We have our Executive Director, Philippa Rawlinson, to thank for much of this work, which includes a strategic plan, an operations plan, a communications plan, and a stakeholder engagement plan. The aim of this work is to raise the profile of the Fertmark and Spreadmark brands, while delivering surety and value to farmers. Philippa is currently on maternity leave and we are fortunate to have Jade McCormick overseeing the Council until Philippa's return in 2022.

Philippa's strong groundwork now coupled with Jade's skills and attention to detail means that the FQC is coming up to speed very quickly.

We are delighted to finally make sieve boxes available. Sieve boxes can be ordered by contacting Jade at director@fertqual.co.nz and completing an order form. Retailing at \$245.00 (\$281.75 inc GST) each, there is a shipping cost of \$22.00 for up to two boxes. Please enquire as to the shipping cost if you require more than two boxes.

Some interesting work is being conducted by the Test Methods Group. This is around the possible deletion of the Watkinson Dissolution Test from the Fertmark Code. The group looks to ensure accuracy across all testing methods and there is some debate around the effectiveness of the Watkinson test. A further meeting will take place soon to discuss this further, before reporting back to the FQC with a recommendation.

We are currently on the search for a new communications manager who can help Jade, and Philippa upon her return, bring the plans outlined above to life.

If you know of someone who has excellent communication skills, an eye for detail and who can generate authentic content for a range of media, please ask them to email director@fertqual.co.nz for more information. While some knowledge of the agricultural industry would be useful for this role, it is not essential.





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