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New Zealand Agricultural and Resource Economics Society (Inc)

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2012

2011-12

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Dear members

Hello again. I trust this newsletter finds you in good health and spirit, and will further whet your appetite for the 2012 NZARES Conference. It's not a bad idea to start thinking about papers now, as a section below challenges you to do.

AARES conference 2012

The annual conference of the Australian Agricultural and Resource Economists Society took place on 7-10 February in the historic seaside town of Fremantle about half an hour train ride from Perth. Dr Brian Bell represented NZARES as President-elect. Brian had the honour of presenting the two awards to members mentioned in the last newsletter.

The conference was well run with several high profile speakers in the plenary sessions. There were eight contributed paper sessions running concurrently offering something for everyone. For details on the conference see <http://www.aares.org.au/>. A session on the mining boom was particularly eye-opening. The boom is expected to last another 50 years, and interestingly 80% of mining is funded by non-residents. With mining concentrated in WA and Queensland a dual economy has appeared with strong growth in these States while the others tread water. Based on the presentations, Brian noted that he saw no way for New Zealand to bridge the GDP per capita gap – it will just keep widening.

Perhaps mining is something we could explore further at our NZ conference? It could deliver significant value to NZ, but do the environmental and safety risks (as highlighted by the Pike River tragedy) outweigh that opportunity? Can mining be achieved sustainably in NZ? What do you think?

Nominations please!

...for the NZARES Post-Graduate Awards

Nominations are now open for three post-graduate awards at \$1,500 each. The award is open to any graduate student with a study programme whose primary focus is: agriculture economics, natural resource economics, environmental economics, farm management, agricultural systems or agricultural extension. Nominees must be willing to give a paper at the NZARES conference during the course of their study. **The deadline for nominations is 23rd April.** If you would like to know more about how to nominate someone, email Charlotte Cudby. Letters have also been sent to universities around NZ.

The end of one Journey for Journeaux... as he embarks on another adventure

One of MAF's most long-serving employees, Mr Phil Journeaux, is soon to depart on a new adventure as a consultant with AgFirst. I'd like to express heartfelt thanks to Phil for all his hard work for MAF, in areas far too numerous to list here, and the significant contribution he has made over the years to the future of the primary sectors in NZ. Go well Phil! MAF will miss you terribly. Phil will, however, maintain a steady hand on the purse strings of NZARES (phew).

NZARES conference 2012

By now you all will of course be counting down the weeks to the 2012 conference – only 23 to go!

Theme: Green Growth - Logical Possibility or Oxymoron?

Date: 30-31 August

Location: Tahuna Conference Centre, Nelson

Look out in the next newsletter for a tentative programme and a call for contributed papers – the deadline for titles and abstracts will be 1 July 2012. If you want to organise a specialist session of 3-4 papers on a topic, please get in touch with Charlotte Cudby.

What will you contribute to the conference?

There is already a lot going on in the resource policy area in 2012. An overriding driver is the belief that NZ can achieve economic growth while also being proper stewards of our environment. The Green Growth Advisory Group recently released their report which points to the need for a broad growth strategy where all sectors take into account their environmental performance rather than focusing on a few green industries. The Land and Water Forum is also due to report back soon on governance and setting limits on water resources.

The government is also calling for more science-based decision making. Economics is a science. You are all in position to bring forward some well-reasoned and timely arguments that both support and challenge the direction of travel from these and other forums. So find some time to track these reports on the web and develop your thoughts as we lead up to NZARES Conference 2012.

Kind regards

Murray Doak
President