

We who enjoyed David Henshaw's cartoons and calendars will be sad about his passing. Read Clive Dalton's excellent obituary in

<http://www.tamahereforum.co.nz/2014/03/24/sun-sets-on-jock-cartoonist/>

URGENT

I don't like politics and don't like it in GrazingInfo, but our farmers, being nice gentle people are being run over in many ways by them and townie bureaucrats. If they don't start standing up against abuse, they'll continue suffering it. The Waikato Regional Council earns most of their funds from farmers, but is run mostly by townies, who penalise farmers, but don't worry about mercury coming into the Waikato River from the Wairakei Power Station, or about mercury entering from the Kinleith Paper Plant. Mercury is now the worst pollutant in the Waikato River, not cow, but it is not reported. second worst is E-coli from dogs swimming in it at the Narrows and at Dey Park.

The Hamilton City sewerage plant has effluent running into the Waikato River. It was too thick and polluting, so they added water to it!

The Hamilton Lake is the most polluted in the country, by a long way. There are signs warning dogs to not drink it, but is never reported on by the townie reporters who's children used to swim in it. There is no farm water entering it. It is town 'effluent'. A Waikato Regional Council staff member told me that there should be several collection ponds around the lake, but there is not one.

Farmers used to have political voting strength, but don't now. On this Saturday is a chance to object to the Trans Pacific Partnership.

Below is a link to the NZ medical profession's concerns about the Trans Pacific Partnership! They have planned meetings throughout New Zealand on Saturday 29th in all towns. Open this link -

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/the-press/opinion/perspective/9808666/Trade-deal-may-threaten-NZ-health-care>

They want support to send a message to the government that they do not want the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) because it is bad for New Zealand. Look at the history of our free trade agreements.

New Zealand has a trade agreement with China, but they sell us labour intensive finished goods ready to retail, while they buy mostly logs and bulk dairy products from us.

We have some free trade with Australia, but they sell us farm machinery that because it is exported, has an export subsidy, so chisel ploughs are no longer made here, because Australian subsidised ones retail here more cheaply.

Our trade with USA allows their 50% subsidised maize in, so keeps the maize price to our growers down.

Many agree that if USA is in TPPA we'll lose.

Look at the current USA Free Trade with NZ.

Some wondered why America backed off an increase in 'Free Trade' with us. It is likely to be because once their farmers heard about it they got into action and stopped it. Anyone who knows anything about USA, knows that their farming lobby has control over the country, which was a reason for the 14% lamb tariff applied on our lamb a few years ago, a reason for the 50% subsidies to their farmers continuing (our average subsidy before their removal decades ago was only 7%), and a reason how their rice growers decades ago, got tariffs into Haiti removed, and USA then dumped theirs into that poor little country, breaking their rice farmers, and later their sugar growers. Googling for "USA rice tariff + Haiti" found that in the 1980s USA 50% subsidised rice poured into Haiti, below the cost of what their farmers could produce it, causing them to go broke and rural people to lose their jobs and move to the cities.

Haiti was doing nicely. It became poverty stricken, 100% because of USA corruption.

Haiti is now the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, most living on less than \$1 a day,

because of USA cheating them.

Rice subsidies in USA totalled \$11 billion from 1995 to 2006. One USA large rice producer received over \$500 million dollars in rice subsidies between 1995 and 2006.

There are three different subsidies, together averaging over \$1 billion a year since 1998, and projected to average over \$700 million a year through to 2015.

The result? Millions of rice farmers and families in poor countries, are now in poverty.

In addition to three different subsidies for rice farmers in USA, there are also direct tariff barriers of up to 24 percent, the very same amount that USA made Haiti eliminate in the 1980s.

USA protection for their rice farmers goes even further. A 2006 story in the Washington Post found that the federal government has paid at least \$1.3 billion (yes billion) in subsidies for rice and other crops since 2000 to individuals who do no farming at all, including \$490,000 to a Houston surgeon who owned 'set aside' land near Houston that once grew rice.

Also, Haiti, once the world's largest exporter of sugar and other tropical produce to Europe, had their farmers put out of work by dumped sugar from USA. Doing this opened the EU market to USA.

USA pledged \$200 million for worldwide hunger relief, but does it in such a way that only half actually reaches the hungry people. It is processed and bagged in the US and shipped on USA vessels which take 50% of the money allocated.

USA then has the audacity to blame other countries for being ones of mass destruction, when their subsidies have and are destroying many countries and families.

USA officials here in Hamilton, in about 2002 told me and other agricultural journalists that they would eliminate all subsidies within seven years. The total subsidy figure is now higher than then.

President Obama promoting joining the Trans Pacific Partnership said it was the key to more jobs in USA and their economic recovery. At whose expense?

We have to keep USA out or we get out.

Australia's Prime Minister Kevin Rudd hailed it as a foundation stone for an APEC-wide free trade agreement.

None of these arguments stack up. All eight participant countries except Vietnam are heavily liberalised, deregulated and privatised. They already have twelve free trade deals between them.

No-one really believes that the restricted USA dairy market will be thrown open to New Zealand. Incidentally, Canada allows no dairy produce imports at all.

Pasture analysing for autumn fertilising or liming

It is important to get a pasture analysis as soon as possible to correct any deficiencies before calving. Sadly, some of you have no ryegrass, but may be able to get enough green Kikuyu, cocksfoot or Yorkshire Fog to do one. The optimum levels for all grasses are in Pasture Minerals Analysis in Free Items on the left, in columns C to Y, and can be used to calculate what to apply. Alternatively you can use some recently made silage or hay, but tell Hills and us what it is, and take the ryegrass only, not mixed, because unless the exact percentage of each is known, the figures will be useless.

On your order to the Lab write - Paddock name or number, your name and company name and address, phone, etc., Grass, Cocksfoot (or what ever it is), and write, "Do as recommended by Vaughan Jones and copy him." This saves you completing the long intricate order form.

Please tell us what you have done because large companies like Hills make mistakes.

Don't even look at the levels in the Hill Lab papers. They sometimes vary by 100% (0.5 to 1) so are useless. We 'Aim High', which was the slogan at the agricultural college I went to in 1947/8. It means aim for the optimum level of all, which I do, which therefore has to be one figure. Hills have not updated their levels for decades, despite meeting with other consultants and them several times, because they don't want to be seen to be too different to the establishment of Ruakura, AgResearch, DairyNZ, etc., and to the fertiliser companies who like calcium to be low because they don't sell it, and potassium to be high because it is about \$900 a tonne.

Testing cow blood and livers

This should be done soon to make adjustments and correct levels well before calving. If needed, increasing or decreasing Solminix, is one way.

If funds are low, do one average and one good health and good production cow. If possible, do

the two best, two average and two worst.

Till the cows came home by Clive Lind

This book is a well rehearsed and recorded one on the development of the NZ dairy industry up to the Fonterra stage. He explained how the organisers could not get national agreement from all sections (Northland, Auckland, Waikato, Taranaki, South Island), until the organisers agreed to have ten farmer directors. It then went ahead. There are now only four farmer directors. Fonterra checks those who want stand and has declined at least two I know of who would have been ideal. Obviously, the Fonterra hierarchy wants only 'yes men'. No wonder it keeps going down hill and shows no signs of getting directors and managers who are practical people close to the action to identify problems before they are disasters.

Fonterra

They have spent millions overseas teaching other countries low cost farming, but don't have their own laboratory to check their own milk. Using another lab that made a serious mistake looks like it could cost each dairy farmer about \$27,000.

As for telling the world that NZ milk production is up and that they'll be selling plenty at the next auction, so bidding goes down, shows that they obviously have absolutely no marketing skills.

Fonterra, despite having a dozen 'million dollars a year' managers, goes from mistake to mistake, and in the Herald, in reply to my comments, they stated that they don't 'issue directives to farmers'!

If they don't, why not, and who does?

This shows they know nothing about the business they are in.

Directions need to be -

1. Don't allow milking cows to graze Roundup sprayed pasture because it gets into the milk. I've seen the analyses and so has Dr Mercola in USA.

2. Don't use superphosphate because its acidity makes our already acid soils more acid, which makes the heavy metals more available, so get into the milk, and makes the good elements less available. Gafsa and LimeMagPlus do the opposite and improve milk quality.

3. Don't use pouron on milking cows because it gets into the milk.

4. New Zealand milk is popular and sells at good prices because the world wants pasture fed milk from grazing cows. Keep it that way. Milk from barns is not, and it is not as profitable as pasture fed.

Six dairy farmers went to USA in the 1970s and tried their systems here and none lasted. After only three years the expensive silos and barns stood empty.

Doug Woolerton of Peacockes' Road, Hamilton, wrote to me, "We lost our farm after following the Americans' housed cows with cut and carry feeding. It seems that there are people pushing it in dairying at the moment. They should read your down to earth practical advice backed up by years of accumulated knowledge from gaining Dairying honours 99%, Waikato's best dairy farmer in 1959, and the Queen's ONZM for service to the farming industry.

Thanks Doug, I agree.

Some are chasing higher production using supplements without doing costings. They may produce a little more milk, but at a loss and are a cause of the slight surplus that Fonterra could not handle. I know of dairy farmers who dropped feeding supplements and growing maize silage and their profit increased.

Best wishes for rain soon, only where needed, from all at GrazingInfo Ltd.