

What a shock for the whole country, especially for the large number so badly affected.

The rest of us send you our very best wishes for recovery as rapidly as possible, with no more quakes!

This Newsletter is coming from mainly farmers, to mostly farmers, who are suffering so much in these dreadful circumstances, because it is one thing repairing or replacing a home, but some of you will lose money by having to (when milking is possible) spread your milk on your land, until roads and bridges are repaired, after the power is back on, and after milking and other facilities are repaired. Often these will be done by yourselves, because trades people will be booked for weeks, and you need them immediately. Where rotaries can't be repaired for a while, farmers should consider walking their cows to the nearest available milking shed (not in the heat of the day) and to pay the farmer for it and for grazing.

If power is off, you may be able to borrow a generator. Always know where local ones are. There is one in Puketaha. The first thing to do is to slightly starve your cows to reduce milk production.

The main reason for this Newsletter is to mention the need for you all to help, care and keep in contact with all affected people in your area, and to comfort each other, especially the remote and single ones. There is nothing as good as company.

There are social organisations to help, so please use them. New Zealanders are generous, so donate funds, and other countries are helping us now, so please be sure that you, and all those you know, get some of the help and funds available. Speak with people, listen to the news (cell phones and battery radios) and read publications to learn what is available.

Federated Farmers should approach the government for financial assistance to farmers with colossal costs which will help them earn some overseas exchange. The government spent \$5 billion on promoting tourism in China, which earned the \$7 billion they boasted about. When dairying earns more every year, the government gets some income tax from it.

An almost impossible cost for some farms will be repairing parts of the farm - some will be irreparable, but please ask for help if the repairing is impossible for you to do, but a bulldozer, etc., could do it, and may be available on free loan from a donor. A company lent the NZ Fieldays one, which made an otherwise impossible job easy. They delivered it and showed me how to use it. People are wonderful, and most like and feel good about helping.

I realise that some will have no power so won't get, or be able to access this. Cell phones can for a while, but it will be filed in Newsletters with the other 143, so always available.

We all wish for no more quakes, or floods.

Vaughan Jones www.grazinginfo.com