NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY OF ANIMAL PRODUCTION (INC.)

ANNUAL REPORT 2014/2015

Reporting period
This report describes the main activities and achievements of the Society during the period between Annual General Meetings (30 June 2014 to 29 May 2015) which coincides with my term as President. However, for legal purposes, parts of the report relating to the memberships, awards and audited finances relate to the 12 month period ending 31 December 2014.

Membership
The Society had 297 members at 31 December 2014, which was a decrease from the membership last reported (443). Since December 2013, we have been updating our membership lists and remove members who have been inactive for two years.

Finances
The net assets of the Society at year end on 31 December 2014 were $638,427. Total revenue for the period was $67,198 and expenditure $91,886. This resulted in a net deficit (after impairment of investments) of $23,318. A full set of accounts, describing details underpinning the revenue and expenditure, was tabled at the Annual General Meeting.

Travel Awards and Sponsorship
Expenditure on travel awards from the Animal Science Fund during this period was $17,750. The Animal Science Awards benefited three members of the Society, William McMillan, Sally Anne Turner and Mhairi Sutherland who attended international conferences in diverse disciplines. The AgResearch Animal Genomics fund was awarded to Ken Dodds and Caroline Walker to attend conferences and visit overseas labs. The Society continued the sponsorship of the Otago Science Fair.

Award Recipients 2014
No McMeekan Memorial Award was made in 2014. Andrew Sykes was elected a Life Member of the Society. University Jubilee Awards for top animal science undergraduate students were received by Racheal Wilson (Lincoln University) and Kate Edwards (Massey University). The 2014 Young Member Award was won by Birch Jenkinson for his paper entitled “Grazing behaviour, dry matter intake and urination patterns of dairy cows offered kale or fodder beet in winter”. The living legend address was delivered by Geoff Nicoll. The Sir Arthur Ward Award was awarded to Derrick Moot in 2014.

Society Objectives and Activities
The objectives of the Society include promoting collaboration through the annual conference, being forward looking in nurturing young members, and developing new ideas for improved animal production, and promotion of the value of science in animal production.

During the past year we conducted our usual activities such as YMA session and awards, travel awards administered by the society, publication of the conference proceedings, developed a new Occasional Publication, our newsletter and the annual conference to meet Society objectives.

We have continued recognising our long-serving members by having the Living Legends session as part of the Annual Conference. We have upgraded the website, making it more visually attractive, which is a key to attract attention of the new generation. We are exploring the potential to make our proceedings free access, which would increase the reach of our science, both nationally and internationally. Although the number of Young Member participants was down this year, the Society has made a commitment to the objective of nurturing young members by providing financial support to young members to come to the conference to present their findings.

2015 Conference
The 2015 Conference was held in Dunedin and was well attended. Again a highlight of the conference was the young member section. The Society continued with the policy of financial supporting all finalists. The Living Legend address examined the outstanding contribution to Animal Production of the Invermay Agricultural Centre, with excellent delivery led by Grant Shackell. Lee Leachman delivered an excellent lecture, supported by Beef+Lamb New Zealand Genetics, on ‘how to build a profitable beef herd’. A field trip to Central Otago and surrounding districts displayed the diversity of land use in a challenging environment. I would like to acknowledge and thank John McEwan, an excellent chair of the organising committee, and his team for the superb Conference. I would also like to thank our major sponsors of the conference: AgResearch, DairyNZ, AGMARDT, B+LNZ Genetics. Their contribution is key to maintaining the conference costs down for benefit of the members.

Occasional Publications
The Society is scoping an update of the “Pasture and Supplements” OP, rather than developing a whole new book on ‘Pastoral-based Farming Systems’, as previously intended. Our Publication Manager will start the process by contacting original authors to determine interest in updating chapters.

Representatives to Other Associations
The Society nominates representatives to other external organisations. On behalf of the Society, I would like to express our gratitude to David Scobie for serving as
the Society representative on the National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee. He has been replaced by Karin Schutz from AgResearch. John McEwan is our representative on the AgResearch Genomics Awards Committee.

Management Committee

A special thanks to the year’s Management Committee for the time and effort put in running the Society. You have all made and important contribution outside your day to day jobs in ensuring The Society meets its objectives. The Management Committee continues to have good representation across Islands, Universities, CRIs and industry. To the ongoing committee members, I would like to acknowledge Chris Logan (Vice-President), Nicola Schreurs (Secretary), Thomas Lopdell (Treasurer), Racheal Bryant (Newsletter Manager), Rebecca Hickson (Website Manager) and David Pacheco. John Booker and Mark Illston made important contributions to the committee as farmer representatives, and kept the committee well grounded. To our paid positions, many thanks to Kate Crookston (Executive Secretary) for her running of the day-to-day operation of the Society, and to Sam Peterson, our Editor. Sam has continued to maintain the high standard of the Proceedings of the Society. Thanks to all those that contributed to the editorial process by refereeing papers.

Grant Edwards