

**IN THE MATTER**

of the Resource Management Act 1991

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER**

of the proposed Variation 2 to the Proposed  
Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan -  
Section 13 Ashburton

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**STATEMENT OF PRIMARY EVIDENCE OF JAMES GREGORY RYAN FOR  
FONTERRA CO-OPERATIVE GROUP LIMITED AND DAIRYNZ LIMITED**

**15 MAY 2015**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 My full name is James Gregory Ryan.
- 1.2 Since 2010 I have been employed by DairyNZ Limited ("**DairyNZ**") as the Regional Policy Manager. I am responsible for working with local government to help ensure that policies and planning documents are developed that support the sustainability, profitability and competitiveness of dairy farming in New Zealand.
- 1.3 I am presenting this evidence on behalf of DairyNZ. Given the alignment of interests between DairyNZ and Fonterra Co-operative Group Limited ("**Fonterra**") in relation to the proposed Variation 2 to the Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan ("**Variation 2**"), the two organisations have elected to present a joint case before the Hearings Commissioners.
- 1.4 I am authorised to present this evidence on behalf of DairyNZ and am not offering evidence as an expert witness.
- 1.5 I am familiar with the aspects of Variation 2 that are relevant to my evidence.

## **2. SCOPE OF EVIDENCE**

- 2.1 In my evidence I provide a summary of:
- (a) DairyNZ's interest in Variation 2; and
  - (b) DairyNZ's commitment to supporting good management practices in the Hinds/Hekeao Plains Area.

## **3. DAIRYNZ'S INTEREST IN PROPOSED VARIATION 2**

- 3.1 DairyNZ has a strong interest in Variation 2 as it will have a direct and significant impact on dairy farmers in the area.
- 3.2 DairyNZ is the industry good organisation representing all New Zealand dairy farmers. It is funded by a farmer levy on milk solids and through partnering with government investment.

### 3.3 DairyNZ's purpose is to:

Secure and enhance the profitability, sustainability and competitiveness of New Zealand dairy farming. We deliver value to farmers through leadership, influencing, investing and partnering with other organisations and through our own strategic capability. Our work includes research and development to create practical on-farm tools, leading on-farm adoption of best practice farming, promoting careers in dairying and advocating for farmers with central and regional government<sup>1</sup>.

3.4 A key focus for the organisation is to carry out research to support good management practices across a wide range of areas that affect dairy farming including animal welfare, staff management, stockmanship, feed management and nutrient management. DairyNZ has approximately 250 staff, of which 30 are based in the Canterbury region.

3.5 DairyNZ is involved in a number of programmes that will support the implementation of Variation 2, including the Sustainable Dairying: Water Accord, and a range of extension initiatives in the area that involve supporting the uptake of good management practice.

## 4. DAIRYNZ COMMITMENTS TO SUPPORTING GOOD MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN THE HINDS AREA

4.1 DairyNZ supports community aspirations to achieve improved environmental and cultural outcomes for the Hinds Area. DairyNZ recognises the need for nutrient loss reductions over time, together with a range of other actions, if the community's values for the area are to be realised.

4.2 Variation 2 recognises that a range of regulatory and non-regulatory measures are required if the vision for the catchment is to be achieved. While Variation 2 focuses on the regulatory actions, a number of relevant non-regulatory measures are summarised in the Ashburton Zone Implementation Programme Addendum – Hinds Plains Area 2014.

4.3 DairyNZ is involved in a wide variety of activities to support good environmental management in the Hinds Area, including providing advice to farmers on effluent management, nutrient use efficiency and water management. In addition, DairyNZ is involved in a range of other programmes to support successful farm management that can indirectly

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<sup>1</sup> DairyNZ, 2014, DairyNZ Annual Report 2013/14.

influence environmental performance, including production performance that increases resource use efficiency, staff management and training. These extension initiatives complement the work carried out by dairy companies, as well as initiatives by a range of other agencies, including Environment Canterbury.

- 4.4 DairyNZ has developed a flagship environmental farm planning tool described as a Sustainable Milk Plan. Sustainable Milk Plans have been endorsed by Environment Canterbury as an approved farm environment plan under the proposed Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan.
- 4.5 Sustainable Milk Plans will help to improve nutrient management on dairy farms in the catchment by creating a farm specific, practical plan that helps landowners to focus on the actions that are essential to minimise their environmental footprint. Examples of actions that might be highlighted in the preparation of a Sustainable Milk Plan could be the need to improve planting or fencing around a waterway, an upgrade to effluent infrastructure and soil testing to help optimise Olsen P levels.
- 4.6 DairyNZ has made a commitment to Environment Canterbury to support the preparation of Sustainable Milk Plans for all dairy farmers in the Hinds Area by 2017. This involves a significant financial and resourcing commitment by DairyNZ and farmers. This process has already started with the training of farm consultants who will assist dairy farmers to prepare Sustainable Milk Plans in the area.

## **5. OUTCOME SOUGHT**

- 5.1 DairyNZ accepts that nutrient loss reductions are required to meet the community expectations for freshwater in the Hinds/Hekeao Plains Area. At the farm scale, however, it is important to recognise that every farm is different. This recognition is essential to ensure that the ongoing business viability of some farms is retained.
- 5.2 Based on the technical evidence provided for DairyNZ and Fonterra in relation to Variation 2, nutrient loss reductions and other environmental improvements can be achieved in a manner that allows the outcomes sought by the community to be realised, without placing unrealistic pressure upon farmers to reduce their outputs.

- 5.3 Simultaneously, the dairy sector is involved in a range of initiatives to deliver improvements in nutrient management, for example, through the implementation of Sustainable Milk Plans.
- 5.4 While DairyNZ considers there are good technical reasons to support aspects of Environment Canterbury's proposed approach in Variation 2, it considers that its proposed alternative solutions (as described in the evidence of Mr Willis, Ms Hayward, Dr Brown, Mr Neal, Dr Bell and Dr Fairgray) achieves the same environmental outcome at a lower cost to farmers and to the community, and therefore should be preferred. At the same time, it remains committed to working with Environment Canterbury, the Ashburton Zone Committee and other stakeholders to support implementation of the Canterbury Water Management Strategy and the proposed Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan.

**James Gregory Ryan**

15 May 2015