

BEFORE THE Canterbury Regional Council independent hearing panel: David Sheppard (Chair), Raewyn Solomon and Rob van Voorthuysen

IN THE MATTER OF The Resource Management Act 1991 and the Environment Canterbury (Temporary Commissioners and Improved Water Management) Act 2010

AND
IN THE MATTER OF Variation 2 (Section 13 (Ashburton) of the proposed Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan

EVIDENCE OF MICHAEL SALVESEN FOR COMBINED CANTERBURY PROVINCES, FEDERATED FARMERS OF NEW ZEALAND

Dated 15 May 2015

Michael Salvesen
Wakare Ltd
405 Upper Downs Road, RD8 Ashburton
P: 03 303 9173
E: salvesen@farmside.co.nz

Evidence statement from Michael Salvesen: Hearing for Variation 2 (Ashburton)
Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan

I, Michael Salvesen, and my wife Nicky, have farmed at Wakare for the last seven years, having moved here from below Mt Somers. The property lies in a basin towards the head of the south branch of the Hinds River.

The farm is just under 1500 hectares and is around one third cultivatable, with the balance in hill pastures. Previously the farm was breeding and finishing sheep, cattle and deer, but now we farm only cattle and deer, due to the irreparable state of the woolshed.

Our timing was good, by luck probably, in that the price for ewes had gone from \$50 to \$140 in the three years we had sheep here. The money raised was put to extra deer fencing. One of the concerns we have in the way the plan is written, is that for low leaching situations like ours, the ability to change our practices slightly and to respond to markets as we see them, will be impaired.

To do riparian fencing and the like, especially with deer fences, is expensive and therefore to do the job properly requires time but also the ability to earn extra to pay for it. So, to put it in a nutshell, to retire some areas and to improve the environment whilst reducing runoff and the like, requires a small increase in production to offset the lost areas. To make this quite clear, I am not referring to wholesale system changes, just tweaking at the edges.

Another example of this would be the change from wintering our young stock on crops of kale, to crops of fodder beet instead. This seems a simple change but it is not— it has changed our whole regime during the winter. By growing fodder beet, we now have the ability to feed-crop for longer, starting earlier and finishing later.

The fodder beet crop is also far more of a complete diet for animals and so we require much less in supplementary feed for the stock, either silage or baleage. This means that we can grow more grass for grazing and less for feeding in the winter. Apart from the obvious benefits of less tractor work during the winter, there is much less mess in the paddocks, the stock are more contented and they don't have to rush to the feed in the morning, the fodder beet is there all day. Added benefits include improved growth, earlier sale, better cash-flow and so on.

In the upper plains area we are quite limited in our options for farming in what we can do. The main limitations are altitude, soil type and aspect (in no particular order). The farm's aspect is mostly south and east— we can't over-winter dairy cows here, mainly because of soil type and the harsher and longer winter experienced.

This means that to compete with other farm types elsewhere, we have to be smarter in how we operate. This can often mean using new or latest technologies or farm systems. The requirements on each farm are different, mainly because of the level of debt carried.

The critical factor for us, for all of the reasons above, is that we need to retain some flexibility, at farm level in how we can operate.