

Tabled at Hearing on 4th November 2015

David & Jude Sleigh

Submission for Plan
Change 3
South Coastal Canterbury
Streams

3 November 2015

My Name is David Sleigh

My wife Jude and I farm our family farm at Upper Hook, we have two children, Isabella 6 and Harry 4

My parents, now retired still live on the farm.

The farm is 300 ha

The hook river forms our north eastern boundary, with river frontage of approximately 2 km,
between Andre and Youngs road.

The farm is unirrigated and has 275 ha of clay downs and 25 ha of stony river flats

Our current farming enterprises are sheep, beef and dairy support

My family started farming in 1950 when my grandparents bought 100ha at Upper Hook

In 1970 my father bought out his parents

In 1972 my father bought the adjoining 170ha farm

In the last 11 years there has been the transition of management and policy decisions from my father to Jude and myself, with complete decision making handed over in 2012

The current farming system consists of:

- 1700 Breeding Ewes with average 160 % lambing
- Lamb Finishing
- Dairy grazing: 70 Rising 1 year olds
130 Rising 2 year olds
320 Dairy cows wintered

We run a farm that feeds animals

The main source of income is from sale of lambs for slaughter.

For our family, farm income is our only source of income.

My parents focused on debt reduction through their farming career, with my parents having everything invested in the farm.

The Farm will need to support my parents in their old age and in turn also us!

For our family farming business to be sustainable it needs to be able to:

Support my parents in their old age

Make any settlements with siblings

Thus service more debt

And provide sufficient income for our family to live off

This is a farm of marginal scale with the current farming enterprises.

Up until this point we have been able to make it work by expanding on the previously sheep dominated farming enterprise, introducing dairy grazing.

Often having to stretch our resources to make it work, and this often meant working longer

The sustainability of this is questionable. Let alone convincing the next generation to want to do it for a living

A restrictive nitrogen base line will further hamper our ability to use the farm to support our family in the future.

The question could be asked is it possible to further develop a dryland farm.

A current example is Fodder Beet, which has the ability to grow double the yield of kale crops or pasture, thus doubling the amount of animals that can be fed on the same area.

The growing of more of this crop will push us over our nitrogen base line

If we are limited to lower intensity farming, the only option to grow our business would be to acquire more farming land. But should the proposed nitrogen allocations occur, we may not have the equity we currently have, in effect devaluing our land, with its value being determined by its land use rather than its productive potential.

Therefore our ability to borrow against the land will be diminished.

Real world costs that our family is likely to face in the future are:

- Inflation of the cost of living
- Paying out siblings
- The cost of elderly care for my parents
- Servicing debt

Living off the smell of an oily rag is not going to be an option

If intensification is not an option how are lift incomes?

Do we sell land to cover our costs?

How would this affect the sustainability of the farm in the future?

How will this effect the ability of our children to take over the family farm?

Solution:

Equal allocation:

How a farmer chooses to use their allocation is up to them.

They can choose to use it to run a milking cow heard on their farm

Another farmer can choose to use their allocation to grow winter feed crops for livestock

But if for example, a dairy farmer who normally winters their cows off farm, chooses to winter his cows on the dairy farm, they would be in breach of the rules

This would be double dipping, with two high emitting activities

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David and Jude Sleigh: Farmers

- 300 ha
- Hook river Frontage of 2km between Andre and Youngs road
- 275 ha clay downs
- 25 ha stony river flats
- Currently farming sheep, beef and dairy support

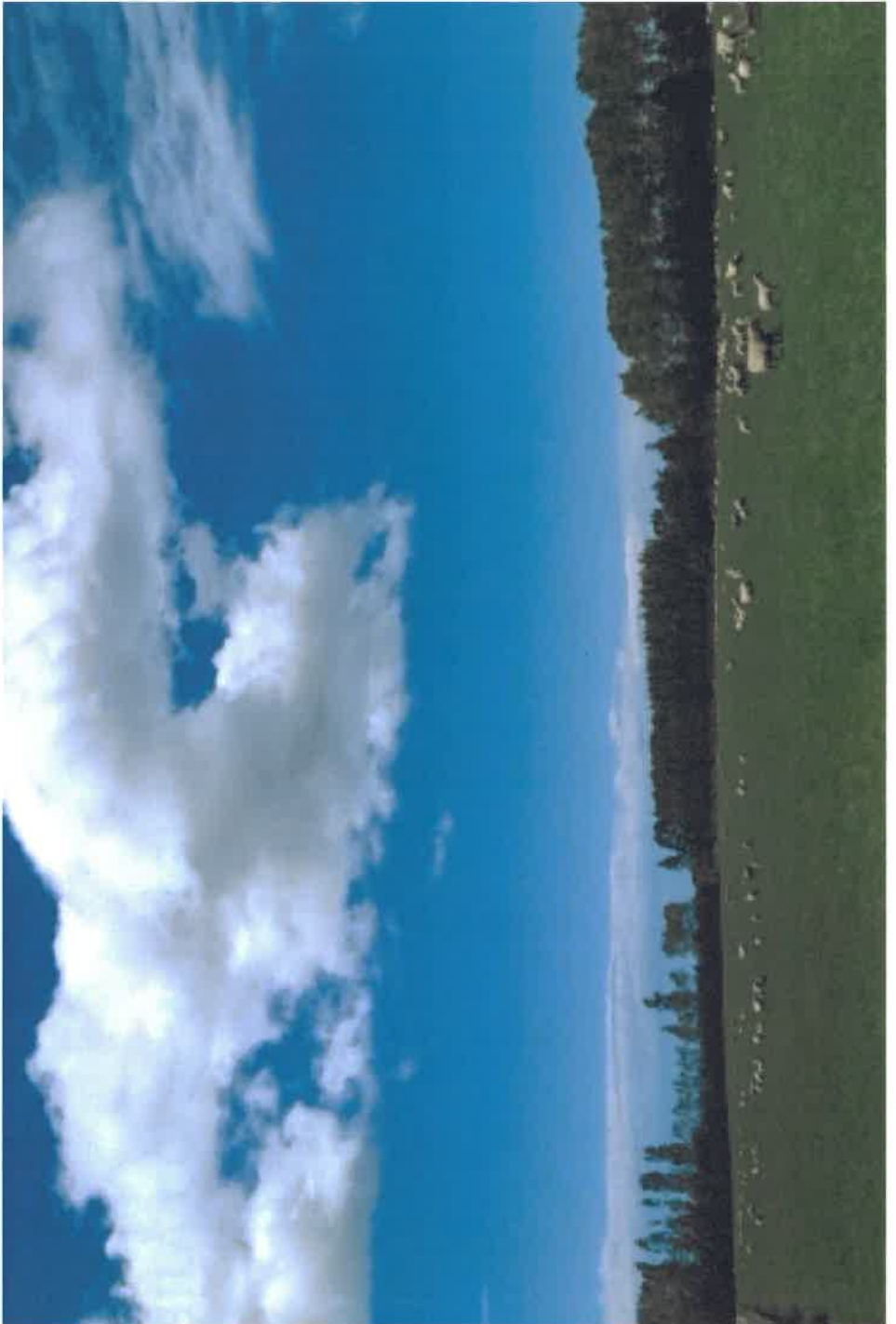


Families Farming history

- 1950, first 100 ha purchased by grandparents
- 1970, David's father bought out parents
- 1972 bought neighbouring 170 ha
- 2004-present, transition of management and policy decisions from my father to Jude and myself

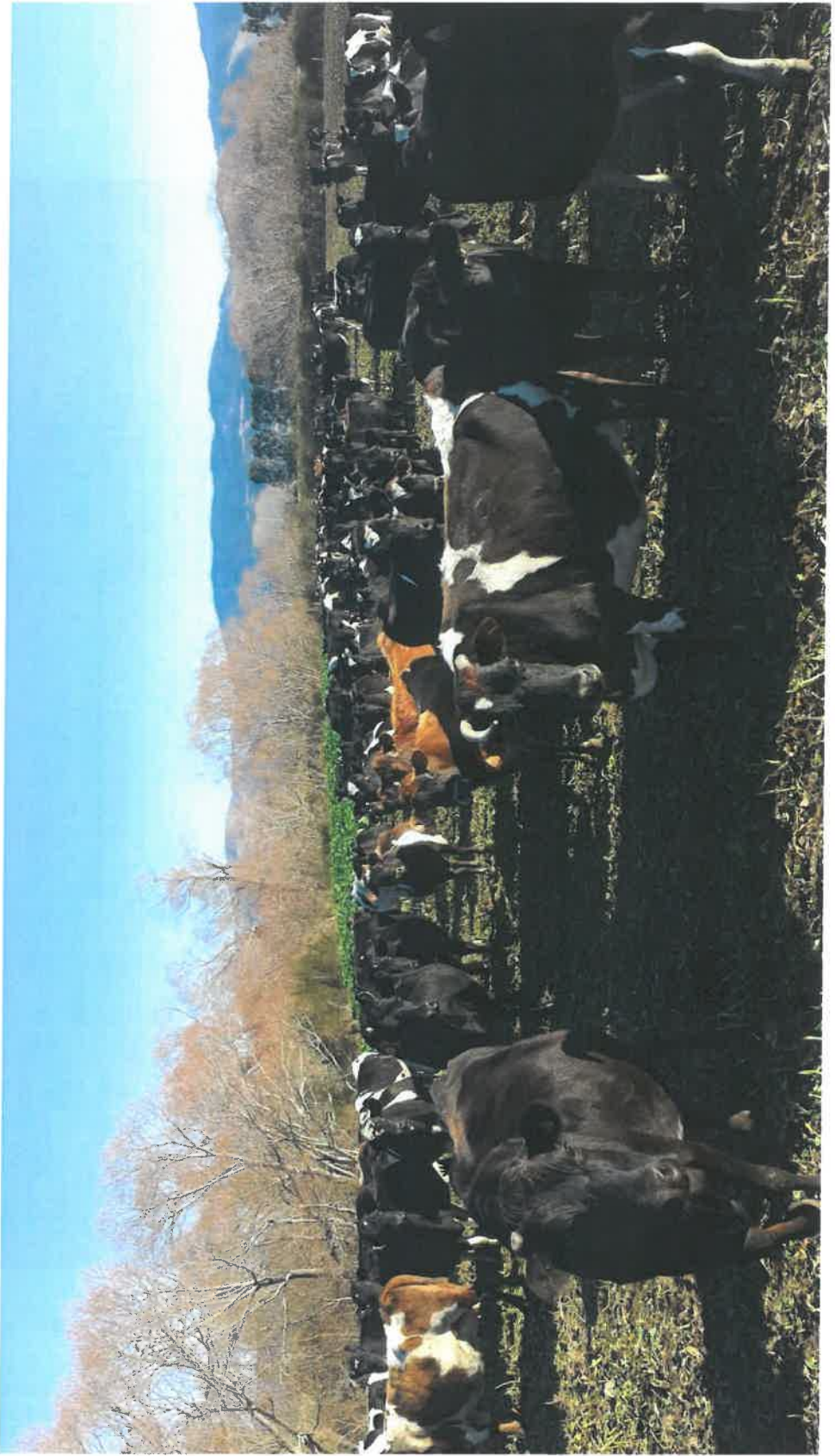
Current System

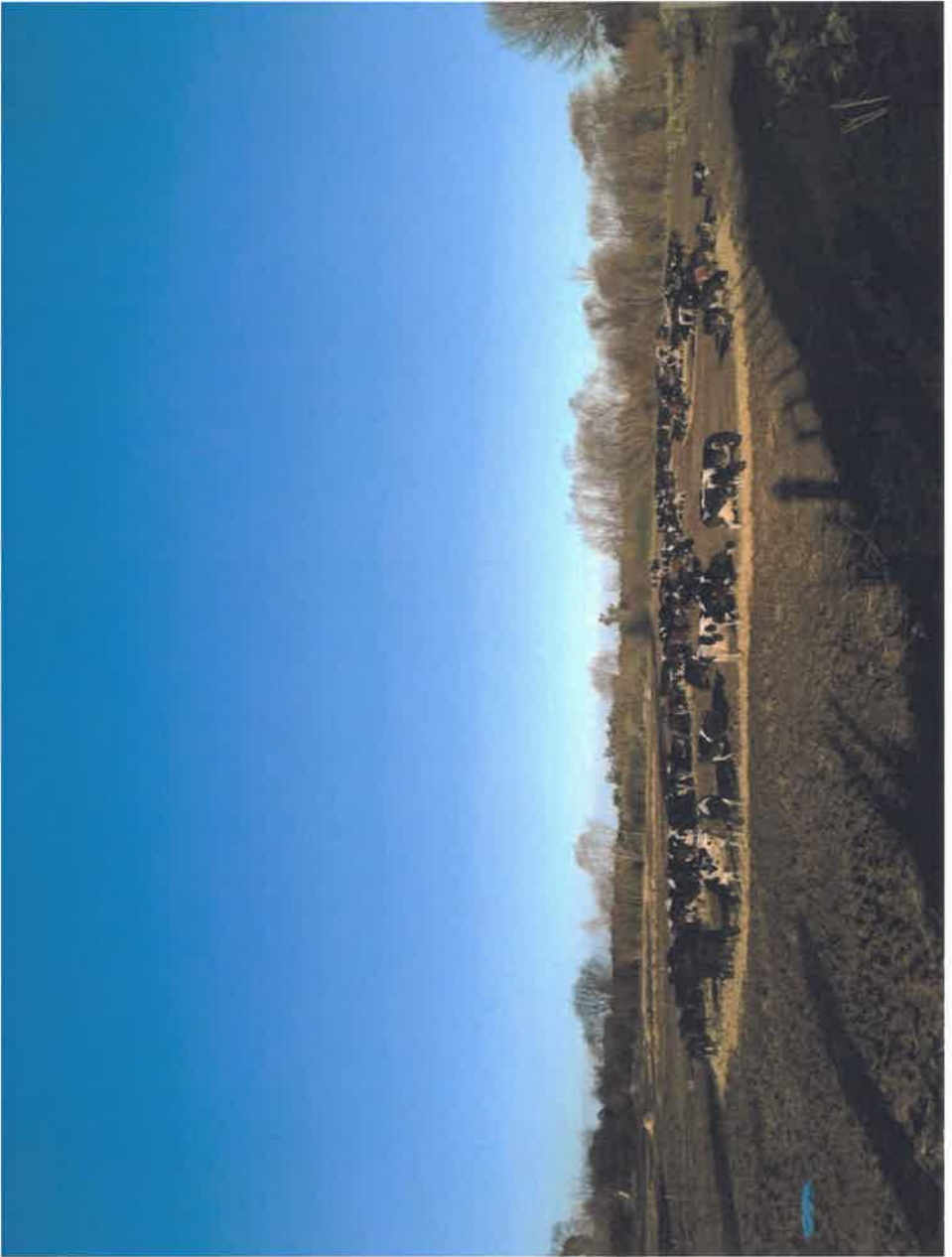
- Breeding ewes 1700, average 160 % lambing
- Lamb Finishing
- Dairy grazing: rising 1 year olds – 70
 rising 2 year olds - 130
- Dairy cows wintered, 320











- Main income from sale of lambs for slaughter
- No off farm income
- Parents focused on debt reduction through their farming career
- Everything parents have is invested in the farm

For the family farm to be sustainable:

- Support parents in old age
- Pay out siblings
- Service more debt
- Provide sufficient income for current farming family



