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Animal Welfare / Lack of Protection from Shade Across the Canterbury Plains

I wish to submit on one single subject of great long standing concern to me, “Animal Welfare”. Throughout Canterbury one can see the unbelievable loss of trees, particularly taller trees – to call it the decimation of trees is not strong enough in my opinion. The reason given is that the irrigators have required this almost total loss of significant vegetation.

In every type of weather, the freezing cold and ice of winter, to the burning sun and heat of summer, you see no protective shelter for the animals. They have to stand day in and day out in a situation of great stress. Where there might be the old remaining tree, invariably a cluster of animals have sought shade beneath it.

I have a background of a small farm holding in my youth and have had conversations with numerous farmers on this appalling outcome from the needs of irrigation. There is a compromise which could allow for regular small areas of re-planting of significantly tall trees which could be the start of replacing the loss of trees and a restart to provide the benefit of shade to the animals.

The tragedy is that when finally this desctructive result is admitted to, then it will take many decades to replace the loss of trees in our bare and destroyed landscape.

In all the debates one listens to of the results of dairy farming throughout New Zealand, I find the subject of “Animal Welfare” is never mentioned. The lack of shade and protection for animals appears to have no consequence or value in the general opinions given of the changes to our landscape. These changes are of equal, if not greater importance in the lives of the animals, alongside water and other issues of concern,

which are part of the overall consequences of what has become a major back bone to the economy of New Zealand.

I wish to speak to me submission.

Yours faithfully

Barbara Stewart

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