

# NZ GRASSLAND ASSOCIATION

Fuelled by Science, Tempered by Experience

## GRASSLAND NEWS

[www.grassland.org.nz](http://www.grassland.org.nz)

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### NZGA EXECUTIVE AND CONSTITUTION

The current Executive Committee covers the spectrum of NZ pastoral agriculture. There were some changes at the AGM in November - the current officers are:

- Chris Smith, AgResearch (President);
- Alistair Black Lincoln University (Vice President);
- Mike Dodd, AgResearch;
- Dawn Dalley, Dairy NZ;
- Sheree Balvert, Ballance;
- Fraser Harrison, Agricom;
- Julie Kearney, farmer North Otago;
- Jane Chrystal, BLNZ (co-opted).

Julie Kearney chaired the LOC in Oamaru and has stepped up to replace Laurie Copland as the farmer voice on the Executive. Laurie came on after being the LOC chair for the conference held at Waitangi.

### NZGA Constitution revision

To enable the Association to meet its legislative requirements as an Incorporated Society by April 2026 the Executive need to update the Constitution (aka NZGA Rules).

As part of this process we want to allow members the opportunity to contribute to these changes. To enable this we have put the current Rules document and a working draft of the new Constitution on the website. In the draft document the text in blue are the suggested additions/changes to the rules. Many of these are mandatory changes required by the Act.

You can download the documents to read [here](#) and the Incorporated Societies Act [here](#).

Any submission should be in writing to the President, Chris Smith at [nzgrassland@gmail.com](mailto:nzgrassland@gmail.com) by 30 May 2025.

### JNZG EDITORIAL UPDATE

Marie Casey

We have had over 60 papers submitted for Vol 87 of the Journal. If all the manuscripts as submitted this is going to make the job of the Editor and the Associate editors very busy. Hopefully those members asked to referee a paper will help us to get this done.

#### What's new?

- This year there is an updated **JNZG Style Guide** for the papers to help answer all the small queries and help us produce more consistent papers for publication.
- Artificial Intelligence - to help authors we have produced guidelines on the **Use of Generative AI**. These will be very similar to many Journals and can be found on the Author section of the Journal website. AI development is moving very quickly and NZGA needs to keep up with the challenge. Some people will be using AI tools as a methodology in their research while others may be using it to support writing where English is their second language. Any use of AI should be noted in the paper.


#### Why ORCID?

ORCID is a persistent digital identifier that distinguishes an author from others with the same or similar names or if you change surname.

A reminder that until authors verify ORCID use on the Journal site it will not appear on their paper. So if you are submitting a manuscript this year please read and follow the instructions below:

To add your **ORCID** number - Authors need to do the verification through the Journal website by logging in [here](#) and Edit their profile.

To Edit your Profile:

- Go to 
- and
- select Edit Profile
- then select Public tab

Create or Connect your ORCID



NZGA for over 80 years

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Once upon a time.... a stalwart of the New Zealand Grassland Association decided that the long history of the association might crumble into dust.... unless he took action and chronicled its records. Like the labours of Hercules or the tales of Odysseus, the weeks, months and years passed. But he emerged triumphant. The year was 2022 and the stories from his endeavours are on the [New Zealand Grassland Trust website](#) for all to see.

Ever wondered how John Caradus has reached the pinnacle of active working 'retirement'? He has recently stepped into the role of Grasslanz Chief Technical Officer, from being its CEO for 19 years. He was President of NZGA from 2007 to 2008, and his section in the annals of NZGA shows a plethora of awards and activities. John is always working on a scientific tome. Last year his invited paper on the importance of animal agriculture became two mighty pieces of work ([Improving Human Diets and Welfare through Using Herbivore-Based Foods](#)). His latest paper on genetic technologies ([Is co-existence and/or containment of genetically modified plants possible, and is it important?](#)) is likely to become pivotal in the latest GE discussion.

Dip further back and you will find stories of the men after whom buildings are named (Hudson Hall at Lincoln, the Levy building at Grasslands Palmerston North) – they were that important in our history. Or you will see that they are still active in agricultural matters. Warwick Lissaman, president from 2013-2015, is on the Beef+Lamb Farmer Council. Anders Crofoot, a current NZGT trustee, has only just stepped down from the Fertiliser Council, having served from 2014.

Deric Charlton, himself a president (1987) and now a [life-member of NZGA](#), has gathered the histories of the presidents of NZGA from 1931 to 2021. Life members, Ray Brougham Trophy recipients and notable researchers, academics, farmers and events are also covered. Of note is that some people appear in several categories.

In thanking Deric for his work, then NZGT President John Caradus wrote: *"Collectively we could not imagine anybody else who would have had the knowledge and connections to cover the material, the skill to bring the stories to life, or the persistence to ensure that the record is complete. NZGT (and NZGA) are grateful to you for your work."*

Three years on since 'completion' there are more presidents and awardees to add to the lists. Derek Woodfield, president 2001-2002, and now a trustee of the New Zealand Grassland Trust, has accepted the mantle of updating the records.

One of NZGA's strongest supporters is the New Zealand Grassland Trust. Given the fact that the Trustees are all ex-presidents of NZGA, this support is hardly surprising and occurs in several ways.

Of course there is the underwriting of all conferences, workshops and special publications. The money has come from past events and legacies and is invested so that expenditure of the interest can be targeted at ever-more activities.

The awards presented at the annual conference are probably the most visible of the activities.

The David Scott Award is funded from a legacy given by Dr Scott's daughters in his memory. David was a scientist dedicated to research in the high country. His mother, Connie Scott,

spread the colourful lupins that feature on McKenzie Country tourist cards. (The story is that she threw handfuls of seed from her car when driving around; they are called Connie lupins.) David spent a lifetime evaluating the benefits and longevity of species under grazing in the high country. The Award supports a young scientist to go to a conference with the aim of talking about their research.

Farmer awards and a local award are given in the region of the conference each year, on recommendation of the local organising committee. The concept is bringing good news farming stories to the fore, and the local award enables rural professionals to be acknowledged as well. Eighteen months ago, Byron Holdem, the son of the selected farmers, came to the Awards dinner in Rotorua. He enjoyed it so much that he has stayed in touch and last Summer worked with Grasslanz (see his article below).

The Ray Brougham Trophy ([see award winners here](#)) is not given every year, but, when awarded, is also given at conference. The bronze statue of a seed sower (a man with an apron seed sack) goes to somebody who has made an outstanding contribution to grassland. In making the selection, the trustees try to imagine if anybody else could have made such a contribution or had such an impact in the area of work. The person could be a farmer, educator, researcher, or rural professional. The key is to think what life might have been like without the work of the awardee. The recipient of the award is invited to give talks at Ruakura, Grasslands, Lincoln and Invermay, generally in the middle of the year, and a video is made for later viewing for those unable to be present. Past talks can be found on the website here.

A further activity is to support 2<sup>nd</sup> year undergraduate students studying an agriculture-focussed degree (AgScience or AgCommerce) at Lincoln or Massey. These student scholarships are given in conjunction with the Ellett Trust. Up to four awards of \$3000 each are made, and each year the trustees are delighted to see that as well as good academic grades, the student applicants are involved in activities ranging from personal sport involvement to mentoring younger students – personal growth and 'giving back'. We have also seen an increasing number of Prime Minister's Scholarship students apply for the awards and have benefitted from their interest in further interaction with us. Check the article in the last newsletter by Eibhlyn Lynch [here](#).

The work of the NZGT is positive – the trustees spend money to enhance grassland science. It is really easy to become involved. Nominate people for recognition in appropriate categories. Who do you think should be acknowledged with the Ray Brougham Award this year? Suggest activities (Workshops? Special topic publications? Webinars? Speaking tour? Good students deserving support). Become a trustee.... And that just means being President of NZGA for a couple of years, which in turn follows a term on the NZGA executive. If you'd like the delight of investing, start planning now – the NZGA needs you and NZGT will welcome you after that.



From November 2024 to February 2025, I was privileged to be a part of the Grasslanz Summer internship at the Lincoln. I was encouraged to consider an opportunity by members of the Grassland Trust after receiving an award for outstanding environmental work on farm on my parents' behalf at the New Zealand Grassland Association Conference in Rotorua in 2023.

My parents currently own a dairy farm in Rotorua and they have always worked on dairy farms. From their hard work in the industry, I got the inspiration to study agricultural science at Massey University. I am currently in my third and last year of study at Massey with the goal of accepting as many opportunities as possible to find a career for my future that will allow me to make positive changes in the agriculture sector. This is exactly what the Grasslanz internship has allowed me to start accomplishing. In this final year of university before receiving my bachelors degree, I have started looking and applying for jobs in the agricultural sector. Working for Grasslanz Lincoln during the summer has helped me recognise what direction I want to be heading in.

Three interns were taken in for the summer, Olivia Shanks from Gore, Ricardo Simari from Argentina, and myself. All of us were keen to work and grow our careers further in agriculture. We were able to take part in the mini-mult section of the business (mother seed production), which was where two types of plants were grown. These were 'Experimental': individual plants with new inductions of endophytes are able to be multiplied for trials and 'Pre-nucleus': new breeding lines or maintenance of existing lines to restore quality anywhere from 10 to 350 plants.

The tasks associated with harvesting and maintenance of the plants included heading/ anthesis dates, awn checking, weeding, staking and tying individual plots, taping, cutting bulks, threshing, drying, bulk dressing, air column dressing, and using the Kimseed machine. The Kimseed is a machine that lets a continuous stream of seeds be filtered over a grate of specific sizes to filter out doubles (two seeds stuck together) and seeds that are too large. The seeds that are filtered through the grate are then passed over a fan that separates the seed into three different weights, one of

which is the final graded seed. Once the thousand seed weight has been worked out, the seed is ready to be stored and delivered.

The three main parts of the job were prepping, harvesting, and grading the seed. During the checking stage of the job, we were tasked with identifying dates for which plot would be taped or tied for harvest and going over some of the plots to look for awns to indicate contaminated breeding. This also included general maintenance of the plots such as rogueing. Harvesting the plots entailed cutting the tied-up plants and stacking them to dry if they were a bulk harvest or bagging them individually and placing them in a drying shed if they were for individual harvest. Once the plants were dried, they were threshed to collect the seed and stored to be graded. During grading we would take plots of seeds and sift them to sort out any rubbish, then run the seed through an air column to remove light seeds and debris to finally put the seed through the Kimseed.

Having Katherine Brereton mentoring the three of us through the job, made the job feel like a hobby. Even when we were out working in the peak heat of the day or stuck grading seeds in the work shed, the group still managed to get enjoyment out of it. The mini-mult group has enabled me to make new connections in the industry and improve on my knowledge and teamworking skills.

Having shared breaks with people working for Grasslanz and Agresearch gave a better sense of community in the workplace as we came together to banter, complete puzzles, or have knockout tournaments of what the best Christmas movie is (still think they were wrong with choosing Home Alone 2).

As I move forward from this internship, I have come out with many people and working skills which will improve my studies and career development, as well as creating connections with people in the industry. Anyone looking for a summer job, I highly recommend applying to work as an intern at Grasslanz Lincoln.

## NZGA ADMIN UPDATE

**Membership dues:** Just the regular reminder that there are still membership's outstanding so check your email for a statement if you aren't sure. Membership invoices for the next year 2025/26 will be sent out in August.

**Journal Vol 87:** The Journal has been posted out to members over the last month. If you haven't received your copy then it will be either because you are in arrears or we have an incorrect address. Email me at [nzgrassland@gmail.com](mailto:nzgrassland@gmail.com) to check.

**Website refresh:** We are working on updating the website so hoping to have this ready to go before conference registration opens.





## WHAT'S ON IN 2025

### AUSTRALIAN GRASSLAND ASSOCIATION - SEEDS OF CHANGE SYMPOSIUM

The AGA is holding a symposium focussing on seed production through to pasture agronomy and future challenges. The 3 days will include a field tour.

Dates: 8<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> July 2025

Venue: Adelaide Hills Convention Centre

**REGISTRATION is now OPEN [here](#)**

For more details and the programme go to the AGA [website](#)

For more information, contact Rowan Smith at 0417 380 131

### INTERNATIONAL RANGELAND CONGRESS

ADELAIDE | JUNE 2-6 | 2025

**Working Together for our Global Rangelands Future'.**

The aim of the International Rangeland Congress is to promote the interchange of scientific and technical information on all aspects of rangelands: research, planning, development, management, extension, education and training.

The aim is that an International Rangeland Congress shall normally be held every 3-5 years for the purpose of presenting papers and reports, organizing symposia and conducting pre- and post-Congress tours.

For further details on the programme and registration <https://irc2025.rangelandcongress.org/>

### MARK the Date

**NZGA Conference 2025 Kirikiriroa Hamilton**  
**"North moving South"**

Planning is well underway for the next conference to be held at Waikato University from the **11-13<sup>th</sup>** November 2025. [Add to calendar](#)



We are excited to announce the 11th International Endophyte Symposium will be hosted alongside the NZGA conference.

The last meeting was held in Salamanca, Spain in 2018 where a commitment was made to hold the next meeting in Aotearoa New Zealand, however, the global pandemic

caused significant delays. This next symposium in this series will take place jointly with the annual conference of the New Zealand Grassland Association.

While the importance of *Epichloë* fungi of cool season grasses is well established, and will continue to be a major focus of the symposia, the 2025 meeting will be broadened to include research on all microbial endophytes of grasses. The 2025 meeting will be hence titled the 11th International Symposium of Grass Microbial Endophytes (ISGME2025). Please visit our [website](#) for more information.



Join us at the conference and experience a networking event at the Hamilton Gardens. This is definitely a jewel in the crown for the Waikato as it is rated as one of the worlds best gardens.

