



HAWKE'S BAY FUTURE FARMING
TE MATAU A MĀUI AHU WHENUA - HĪKINA TAIAO

Hawke's Bay Future Farming Trust

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Annual Report – 30 June 2022

The Trust held twelve monthly meetings over its last financial year, ending 30 June 2022.

Current Trustees are Liz Krawczyk (chair), vice-chair Phil Schofield, treasurer Scott Lawson, John van der Linden, Tim Aitken (replacing Greg Hart), Tom Belford and Will Foley. Backgrounds of all Trustees are furnished in the Trust website: www.hbfuturefarming.org

The Trust also maintains a Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/HBFutureFarming-104458421275553/

Trust activities have been supported on a contract basis by David France, serving as project manager, as described further in this report.

Our **MISSION** is to:

“Promote, inspire and celebrate profitable farming systems that enrich the environment and the community.”

Our **VISION** is to make Hawke's Bay farming the pride of our community by promoting, inspiring, and celebrating profitable farming systems that enrich the environment and our communities.

The Trust builds partnerships to help develop & implement projects that challenge convention, promote holistic farm performance, use state-of-the-art technologies and sustainable farming practices.

We sponsor on-farm research and outcome monitoring. Sponsor and conduct demonstration workshops and field days. Prepare case studies and videos that provide hard evidence about innovative or alternative practices. Communicate leading edge farming information through our website, e-newsletter and social media.

Projects Undertaken

The Trust aims to establish to farmers and growers – using evidence we develop here in Hawke's Bay – that more beneficial environmental practices and better financial performance go hand-in-hand.

We work with leading edge farmers and growers, documenting the success of their overall farming systems and – hopefully – making their practices irresistible to others who are watching expectantly or sceptically from the sidelines.

Our Trustees are united in the belief that our long-term focus must be on healthy soils, and the land, plant and animal management practices – label them however you like – that yield healthier, carbon-enriched soils.

Our focus on soil carbon in particular recognises that the benefits of increasing soil carbon – indeed ‘farming’ it – are manifold – deeper rooting systems, increased water and mineral holding capacity, a richer, healthier soil biome ... leading to increased plant resilience to drought and environmental stresses and reduced soil loss and nutrient leaching. A win/win outcome today, with the additional potential for establishing future economic value of on-farm soil carbon in an ETS framework.

To that end, in FY22 we continued to develop two major, multi-year demonstration project proposals to MPI.

Carbon Positive

The first of these, Carbon Positive, a six-year \$3 million project, will be undertaken in partnership with LandWISE, using their experimental farm to compare the results of alternative arable farming practices implemented across ## test plots on the farm. Results examined will include soil carbon and overall soil health, water and nutrient retention, need for external inputs, and crop productivity.

In FY22 the Trust received preliminary confirmation of \$2m in MPI funding. Other partners in the project include Heinz Watties, McCains, Balance and HBRC. We expect formal announcement of the project in early FY23.

Farming for Carbon

Our second proposed major project – aimed at making similar comparisons of alternative farming practices in a catchment-wide, pastoral setting (in partnership with the Mangaone Catchment Group) progressed more slowly in FY22, with indications that it will need to be scaled back to win MPI support.

Re-casting of the project is now underway, with an objective of looking more specifically at documenting soil carbon growth associated with alternative farming practices.

Both of the MPI-involved projects consumed considerable Trust attention and resourcing over FY22. Dave France was retained as a consultant to project manage the development of these projects – programme definition, budgeting, corporate/iwi relationships and funding, MPI negotiation.

Soil Carbon Investigation – Dairy farms

Indicative of the soil carbon investigations the Trust would like to undertake on a wider scale is the project begun in FY21 and continuing this year to assess soil carbon growth on three dairy farms in Patoka owned by John Kamp. Our soil analysis was completed in FY22,

indicating clearly that regenerative practices were indeed yielding more soil carbon as these practices carried on.

The Trust conducted a field day on the property in November attended by 40 guests, and documented the project in this [10-minute video](#) which has received over 1500 views.

Workshops

In July 2021 the Trust sponsored three well-attended HB presentations offering an introduction to alternative pasture and grazing systems that can regenerate better soils and build soil carbon. These workshops were delivered by Siobhan Griffin. Siobhan has spent 25 years managing her own farm. She coaches farmers to build topsoil working with their livestock, grazing deep-rooted and diverse pastures to build and regenerate soil carbon on New Zealand sheep/beef and dairy farms.

Other activity

The Trust is increasingly asked to support other innovative on-farm projects in the region and we have done so with respect to an almond farming trial in CHB and the Regional Council's Managed Aquifer Recharge project, also in CHB. We supplied funding support for water quality monitoring technology to the Mangaone Catchment Group. Also, for HBRC's Regional Water Assessment project, Trustee Phil Schofield completed a desktop review of overseas research on the water retention capacity of carbon-rich soils.

Communications

From a communications standpoint, the Trust is implementing a strong commitment to recognise and celebrate all sorts of initiatives Hawke's Bay farmers and growers are making to improve – which means lessen – their environmental footprint. Those could range from riparian planting or establishing wetlands to improving water efficiency or planting erosion-prone hillsides.

Our website has ramped up in content over the year and now includes over 60 articles, added to weekly, as well as other programme content. The site is supported and promoted by the monthly e-newsletter we initiated in FY22 as well as our Facebook page. A priority for the coming year is building our online audience and stepping up relevant 'local innovation' content reporting.

Funding and financials

The Trust seeks to supplement its initial 3-year funding from HBRC with funding from government and community sources, both for project-specific resources (as noted earlier successfully for the Carbon Positive project) and for long-term operational support.

Regarding the latter, we were pleased to enlist Napier Port, Bayleys Country and Hastings District Council as Sponsors, with their support commencing in the FY22 year. We also receive welcome in-kind support from BM Accounting.

As at 30 June 2022, the Trust had a cash balance of \$322,112. The Trust's financials for fiscal year through 30 June 2022, are prepared by BM Accounting and now under

independent review, as required by our charter. After review, they will be published on the Trust website.

Next Steps

Our immediate focus in the coming year is coming to closure with MPI on our two major project proposals, and formalise and activate the working relationships with our wide range of partners involved in those projects.

We plan to conduct farmer workshops on a regular basis to demonstrate alternative farming practices, as well as sponsor broader public education events regarding Hawke's Bay's farming challenges and future. Our workshop/field day agreement with HB Regenerative Group for the coming year and our August public forum featuring Minister Damien O'Connor and Rod Oram are pertinent examples.

We also anticipate future engagement with catchment groups in the region, as illustrated by our administrative support of the Between 2 Rivers (B2R) catchment group.

We will expand the content on our website and Facebook page, and grow our reach HB farmers and growers and the wider agribusiness community.

We will also review Trust composition and continue to explore ways to involve Māori landowners in our mission.

Submitted by:

Liz Krawczyk (Chair)

Scott Lawson (Treasurer)

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