



Background information

Regional Action Plan for Taranaki

Dairying and Clean Streams Accord

The purpose of the Dairying and Clean Streams Accord is to promote sustainable dairy farming in New Zealand. It focuses on reducing the impacts of dairying on the quality of New Zealand streams, rivers, lakes, ground water and wetlands.

The Accord is an agreement between Fonterra Co-operative Group, regional councils, unitary authorities, the Ministry for the Environment, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry to work together to achieve clean healthy water in dairying areas. The goal is to have water that is suitable, where appropriate, for fish, stock water and swimming (in areas defined by regional councils).

The six priorities for actions and **national targets** outlined in the Accord are:

- Fonterra and regional councils to develop regional action plans for the main dairying regions to implement this Accord by June 2004.
- Dairy cattle excluded from 50% of streams, rivers and lakes by 2007, 90% by 2012.
- 50% of regular crossing points to have bridges or culverts by 2007, 90% by 2012.
- 100% of farm dairy effluent discharges to comply with resource consents and regional plans immediately.
- 50% of regionally significant wetlands to be fenced by 2005, 90% by 2007.
- 100% of dairy farms to have in place systems to manage nutrient inputs and outputs by 2007.

The Taranaki Regional Action Plan adapts the national targets to Taranaki conditions. See inside for Taranaki targets.

Regional Action Plan

The Accord targets are minimum targets that are to be achieved on a national level but allow for flexibility in setting regional targets to eventually meet the national targets in the Accord. The purpose of the regional action plan is to identify local commitments by the Taranaki Regional Council, Fonterra and Taranaki farmers to support the Accord's principles of developing actions that:

- are applicable only to dairying areas throughout New Zealand and are able to be adapted for different situations to reflect catchment characteristics
- will make a real difference, recognising that greater benefits will be achieved when multiple actions are adopted
- are cost-effective
- are practical to implement in the context of existing farming operations
- clearly recognise the practical and financial constraints to implement timeframes.

The Regional Action Plan for Taranaki is a result of the Taranaki Regional Council, Fonterra and Federated Farmers working together to prepare an Action Plan that is tailored to the Taranaki situation.

This Regional Action Plan provides a verifiable and accurate mechanism for Taranaki farmers to meet the requirements of the Accord, and ensure the long-term sustainability of dairy farming in Taranaki .

Harry Bayliss

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Dairying & Clean Streams Accord

May 2004

Taranaki targets

Dairy cattle are excluded from streams, rivers and lakes and their banks

90% of dairy farms are to have a property plan by 2010

- The Taranaki Regional Council will prepare a property plan, in conjunction with the property owner, for each dairy farm by 2010.
- The property plans include the fencing and planting of riparian margins.

50% of property plans are to be implemented by 2010, 90% by 2015

- This target requires each plan holder to implement the proposed works of their property plan.
- The timeframe for this target is extended for Taranaki due to the need to phase into on-farm management programmes.

Bridges and culverts to be constructed where stock on farm races cross through watercourses regularly (more than twice a week)

By 2007 the Taranaki Regional Council will have established an understanding of the issue in Taranaki and identified options to address the issue

By 2010 required crossings will be identified on each dairy farm's property plan

- This will provide a clear understanding of Taranaki's progress toward achieving the target.
- The Taranaki Regional Council will develop an information sheet on design options and minimise resource consent requirements.

50% of regular crossing points are to have bridges or culverts by 2007, 90% by 2015

- The timeframe for this target is extended due to the need to phase into on-farm management programmes.

Farm dairy effluent is appropriately treated and discharged

100% of dairy farms are to have a farm dairy effluent discharge consent that complies with regional plans by 2004

- More than 99% of farm dairy discharges currently hold resource consents.

Existing regionally significant wetlands are fenced and their natural water regimes are protected

60% of regionally significant wetlands are to be fenced by 2005, 90% by 2010

- Regionally significant wetlands will be identified on each relevant property plan.
- There are 25 significant wetlands on dairy farms and at least 16 are already fenced.

Nutrients are managed effectively to minimise losses to ground and surface waters

100% of dairy farms are to have in place systems to manage nutrient inputs and outputs by 2007

- Fonterra will monitor compliance with this target during the annual farm dairy assessment.

For the 2004/2005 season the Fonterra Suppliers Handbook requires suppliers to develop an implementation plan to meet its environmental policies.

In Taranaki, a Taranaki Regional Council prepared property plan, together with its associated monitoring programme, will enable suppliers to meet this requirement.

The key elements of this approach are:

- Taranaki Regional Council property plans are prepared at no cost to the farmer
- It builds on previously established work programmes - it is business as usual
- Target areas directly link to core Council functions for which monitoring and reporting systems are established.



Monitoring and reporting on targets

The Taranaki Regional Council currently monitors and reports on the discharge of farm dairy effluent, implementation of proposed riparian works and wetland protection for statutory, consent compliance and policy effectiveness purposes.

From 2005 the Taranaki Regional Council will report to Fonterra at an aggregated **regional level** on the following:

- Implementation of property plans
- Number of farms with a property plan
- Percentage of regular crossings with bridges or culverts
- Farm dairy effluent discharge compliance with resource consents
- Protection of regionally significant and important wetlands.

From 2010 the Taranaki Regional Council will report to Fonterra at an aggregated regional level and comprehensively at an individual property level against all targets.

Note 1 This approach ensures that there is no duplication in information collection and reporting. From the 2005/2006 season, Fonterra will not collect Accord-related information from Taranaki suppliers that the Taranaki Regional Council will collect.

Note 2 Fonterra intends to establish an information sharing agreement with Taranaki suppliers for the Taranaki Regional Council to report directly on these targets.

Note 3 This information is provided to Fonterra only for the purposes of the Regional Action Plan targets.

Key principles

- The purpose of this action plan is to implement the Dairying and Clean Streams Accord at the regional level.
- This action plan has been prepared specifically for the Taranaki region by the Taranaki Regional Council, Fonterra Co-operative Group and Federated Farmers of New Zealand (Taranaki branch).
- The action plan recognises the work already done by the Taranaki farming community across these target areas.
- The monitoring and reporting mechanisms will ensure that there is minimal cross-agency duplication in functions.
- Fonterra recognises the significant financial benefit of this approach in Taranaki. As such these savings will benefit the Taranaki dairying community.
- These targets will be reviewed in 2010.