

## CONTENTS

Pesticide packed in drink bottles listed on Trade Me	2
Summer conference gallery	3
Safety portal takes off	4
New chairman for GROWSAFE	4
Best practice for seed treatments	5
Wearing the right gear	5
Data shows industry is buzzing	6
Fresh thinking needed to control animal disease	7
Technology the answer to global hunger	8
Agcarm welcomes adverse event report	8
Agcarm welcomes new members	9
Regulator hosting conference on health and safety	10
Book this date	10

## \$600 million risk to NZ-EU trade

Proposals by the European Union (EU) to impose draconian restrictions on common crop protection products could halt about \$600 million of New Zealand exports to Europe, according to a new report.

New Zealand is a large supplier of high-value primary produce into Europe but the new EU rules will slash acceptable pesticide residues to levels far below internationally-agreed levels recognised as safe.

The proposed threshold is equivalent to less than two tablespoons of a substance in an Olympic sized swimming pool containing 2.5 million litres of water.

The substances targeted by the EU include those which it says have 'endocrine disrupting properties'. The European Commission is currently developing criteria to identify these properties.

Under the proposal, the EU will introduce a 'cut off', which is a refusal to even consider what it says are endocrine disrupting substances for use on crops in the EU.

Imported produce treated with these products to control pests and diseases will be allowed to enter the EU, but only if their residues don't exceed a limit of 10 parts per billion.

Crop Life International, the industry association for agrichemical manufacturers, prepared a report on the potential effects on global trade.

Based on the assumptions and methods used in the report, approximately €65 billion of EU imports of raw and semi-processed agricultural products from countries worldwide could be adversely affected by EU regulation 1107/2009.

In a country-by-country analysis, the report said that the proposal had the potential to affect €387 million euros (\$NZ614 million) of New Zealand fruit and vegetables exported to the EU.

"The EU's move toward hazard-based cut offs is not a rational, science-based approach and is contrary to the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreement of the World Trade Organisation, to which the EU and New Zealand are signatories," said Graeme Peters, chief executive of Agcarm.

Mr Peters said that countries affected by the EU rule should come together under a new global approach developed by CropLife International offering guidance related to endocrine disruption and other problem areas.

"Issues tied to endocrine disruption have truly become international in scope and require a more globally harmonised approach," said Mr Peters.

"They are more international in part due to the expansion of trade in both treated agricultural produce and crop technologies.

"With the prospects of free trade agreements such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership, there is a great need for more harmony in the regulation of crop production technologies. The ability of all nations to communicate with EU about the importance of science-based risk assessments for pesticide regulations is vital," said Mr Peters.

*continued next page...*



★ NEW ZEALAND'S EXPORTS MAY BE LEFT HANGING BY THE EU'S RESTRICTIONS

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...continued from page 1

## What are endocrine disruptors?

Many compounds, natural and man-made, such as sunlight, sugar and soy, are endocrine disruptors.

Endocrine disrupter is a term used by government authorities and international advisory bodies to describe a natural or synthetic chemical that effects the functioning of the endocrine system. There is no official and internationally-agreed definition.

The endocrine system is a set of glands, hormones and receptor cells which helps control the development, growth, reproduction and behaviour of animals and humans.

An endocrine active substance is a chemical that produces a temporary, adaptive response in the endocrine system but with no long-term adverse effects.

Examples of endocrine active substances include natural hormones from animals and humans (e.g. estradiol, testosterone, insulin, epinephrine), natural substances such as plant constituents, and synthetic hormone drugs developed to obtain a specific hormonal action (e.g. the female birth control pill). ■

## Pesticide packed in drink bottles listed on Trade Me

The photograph below shows a selection of soft drinks and juices - right? Well, no. It would be easy to assume this, and that's the problem.

The bottles contain pesticides, decanted into used drink bottles - one still with the Keri apple juice label attached.

The implications of this are obvious.

"This is about as serious as it can get," said Graeme Peters, chief executive of Agcarm, on the latest example of illegal pesticides listed on Trade Me.

The auction was for weed killer but it did not identify the substance.

The listing said "mix round-up approx. 100ml to 10 ltr water." It also stated "this is the best stuff".

"There is no place for agrichemicals on Trade Me, full stop", Mr Peters said.

An Agcarm member company alarmed about the listing contacted Trade Me, which removed the item.

This and other examples have been the subject of an ongoing battle with Trade Me, which should not be listing agrichemicals on its site.

Agcarm has highlighted this to Trade Me, the NZ Police, the Environmental Protection Authority, the Ministry for Primary Industries and the NZ Transport Agency.

Trade Me has refused to add agrichemicals to its restricted list and regulators appear comfortable with the status quo.

"Industry has tried to stop the sale of illegal agrichemicals on Trade Me, but they continue.

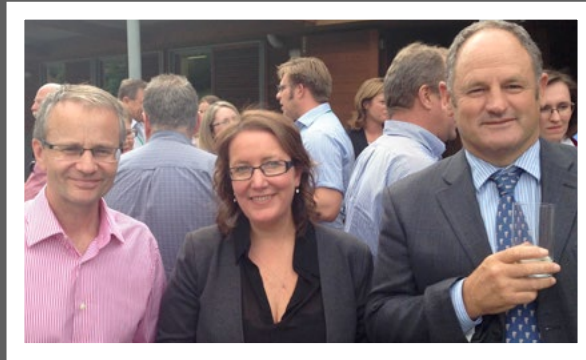
"When there is an accident, which might involve children drinking pesticides, the response from the agrichemical industry will be that we shouted as loud as we could, but nothing changed," Mr Peters said. ■



# Summer conference gallery

The Agcarm summer conference held in February, gave Agcarm members the opportunity to hear from government, regulators such as the Environmental Protection Authority and the newly-formed WorkSafe NZ, as well as specialist industry speakers. ■

Labour environment spokesperson Moana Mackey impressed Agcarm members with her extensive knowledge of industry issues, including residues, persistent organic pollutants and flystrike in sheep - the subject of her first class honors thesis.



★ MP MOANA MACKEY (CENTRE) WITH GRAEME PETERS, AGCARM CHIEF EXECUTIVE (LEFT) AND COLIN MCKAY, VICE-PRESIDENT OF AGCARM



# Safety portal takes off

Thousands of pages of safety information have been viewed since the launch of an online safety database a year ago.

New Zealand's largest agricultural retailers use the database to access information such as safety data sheets (SDS) and Haznotes on agrichemicals and animal health products.

Rural retailers provide safety information to purchasers of agrichemicals, including advice on the correct safety equipment to wear and what to do in an emergency. The information is automatically updated as it usually links directly to a manufacturer's website.

SDSs include information on using, storing, transporting and disposing of a product as well as emergency procedures. The Haznote is a concise document covering transport, storage, and emergency response.

The electronic database was launched in March 2013. In the first two months, the website had about 30 to 40 visits a week. This has grown to 250 to 350 visits, with over 42,000 pages viewed since it started.

"This is a great of tool for getting the best and most up-to-date safety information to consumers. We're very pleased with its success and would like to thank our rural retailers for their support.

"The site continues to grow and the goal is that it will eventually include safety information for all products sold," says Graeme Peters, chief executive of Agcarm.

The portal not only helps get safety

information to buyers of chemicals, it also replaces the need for retailers to maintain a physical record of SDSs and Haznotes for hazardous products at point of sale. Not having to continually update physical records saves time and space for retailers.

"The success of the portal is in part due to the support of retailers who let us know when new products are hitting their shelves and often send through the supporting SDS," says Dave Clark, publisher for Agrimedia, the Agcarm member which developed the website.

"The number of requests from retailers for SDSs that are not on the portal has reduced significantly, due to the increase in products on the site. The portal has over

2,000 products listed with their SDSs and, where available, their Haznotes."

PGG Wrightson, RD1, Farmlands, and Ashburton Trading Society partnered with AgriMedia, the publisher of the New Zealand Novachem agrichemical manual, and Agcarm to develop the database and web portal.

"The portal would be even better if more manufacturers and importers let us know when they are introducing new products," said Mr Clark.

Agrimedia has written to most manufacturers to remind them about the portal. ■

## New chairman for GROWSAFE

Dr Russ Ballard has replaced Richard Kempthorne as chair of the New Zealand Agrichemical Education Trust (NZAET), which operates GROWSAFE.



■ DR RUSS BALLARD

His previous roles include secretary of forestry, director general of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, and chief executive of Land Information New Zealand. Dr Ballard currently chairs the Plants Market Access Council, NZ School of Dance and the Sir Paul Callaghan Eureka awards trust.

In addition to his significant experience in management and leadership, he is also a research scientist by background and training.

NZAET is a non-profit organisation, formed in 1992 by primary producer groups to promote the safe, responsible and effective use of agrichemicals through the GROWSAFE training programme.

Agcarm is part of the trust along with Federated Farmers, New Zealand Winegrowers, Zespri, Pipfruit New Zealand, Horticulture New Zealand, NZ Forest Owners Association, NZ Agricultural Aviation Association and the Foundation for Arable Research. ■



## Best practice for seed treatments

Agcarm and the New Zealand Grain & Seed Trade Association have published a brochure for farmers on how to safely use seed treatments.

Released in February 2014, the brochure says 'Proper management of treated seed plays an important role in sustaining our environment and maximising the health of crops, our communities and your bottom line. That's why we strongly recommend responsible stewardship principles that result in minimal impact of neonicotinoid seed treatments on people, animals and our environment.'

Agcarm and the New Zealand Grain & Seed Trade Association also published a [Guide to Seed Treatment Stewardship](#) in

November last year. The 32-page guide is an educational tool, adapted from a United States version, covering best practice on planting, handling and disposing treated seed for seed treaters and seed companies.

"It's important that anyone handling, transporting, storing or disposing of treated seed review these guides to check they are following best practice to minimise any adverse effects. This technology has many benefits, but does need to be used responsibly" says Graeme Peters, chief executive of Agcarm.

Seed treatments are an effective tool for combating the negative impacts of diseases, insects, nematodes and other pests at the time of planting and thereafter.

Seed treatments provide an alternative to other forms of insecticide application, such as spraying, therefore helping New Zealand's farmers produce higher quality crops, while minimising impact to humans, animals and the environment. ■

## Wearing the right gear

A new campaign will remind farmers to purchase spray suits, masks and gloves at the same time they buy agrichemicals.

The campaign by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) includes displaying posters and brochures in retail stores encouraging the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) in the agrichemical sector.

It will include tips on what to wear and reading the label. The in-store PPE displays will coincide with peak sales of crop protection products in spring and summer.

Agcarm is liaising with distributor members such as PGG Wrightson, Farmlands, RD1, and ATS to support the campaign.

Although evidence of serious harm due to the use of agrichemicals is minimal, the EPA is concerned about long-term effects on people using agrichemicals and wants to improve awareness of the need to wear PPE.

Industry is supportive of the EPA's initiative in wanting purchasers of

agrichemicals to receive guidance on the importance of wearing the right PPE, including tips on what to wear, keeping PPE in good condition, ensuring it fits properly, as well as reminders to read the product label.

As part of the project, the EPA will also produce advertising material for use in distributor magazines, newsletters and websites. ■

## Data shows industry is buzzing

The number of registered bee hives continues to rise, and if the upward trend continues there will soon be more than half a million managed hives in New Zealand.

According to official data, the number of bee hives rose by nearly 50,000 or 10 percent to top 496,000 hives as at the end of February.

Collected as part of the American Foulbrood national pest management plan, the data showed that the number of beekeepers jumped 11 percent to 4,767, the highest number since 2000.

The good news follows a glowing report released by the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) which said that more bees foraging and favourable flowering conditions resulted in a massive 72 percent jump in the honey crop to 17,825 tonnes in the year ending June 2013. Prices paid to beekeepers increased for all honey types due to strong world demand.

New Zealand honey exports reached 8,054 tonnes and \$145 million, an increase of five percent in volume and 20 percent in value on the previous corresponding period.

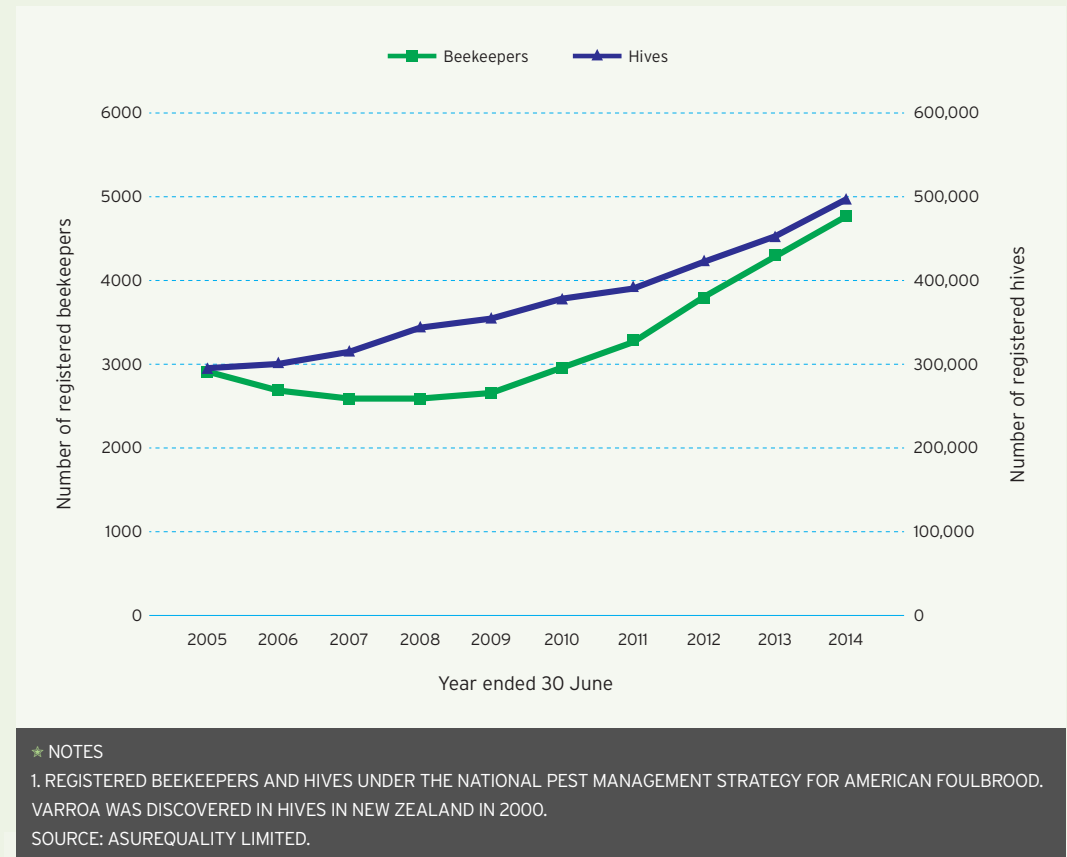
Both sets of data show the bee industry is enjoying good growth across key benchmarks and conflicts with claims that bee numbers are in decline.

MPI said that the bee industry faced a range of issues including pests and diseases, biosecurity, varroa resistance to miticides, and neonicotinoid insecticides.

Neonicotinoids are subject to controls imposed by both MPI and the Environmental Protection Authority. MPI concluded that "there is little scientific evidence that neonicotinoid pesticides, when used according to the label, are influencing bee health in New Zealand."

Though 2012/13 was a bumper year, the current season is not looking as good due to cool weather in the crucial Christmas flowering period, which will result in lower volumes but higher prices.

The next MPI report will be released at the end of 2014. ■



# Fresh thinking needed to control animal disease

High costs and red tape are creating barriers to new medicines - increasing the likelihood of serious epidemics, a new report says.

The International Federation for Animal Health (IFAH) white paper was launched at the Royal Society in London.

IFAH commissioned global analysis and advisory firm Oxford Analytica, which was supported by independent experts in animal health, to examine barriers to research and

development, commercialisation, and the use of veterinary medicines.

The barriers are demonstrated through case studies, cited in the report, on avian influenza, bluetongue, West Nile fever, classical swine fever, equine influenza and the use of antibiotics.

The report's findings include:

- Barriers to research and development: high costs to develop medicines, lack of veterinary experts to respond to outbreaks, passive or reactive surveillance systems, and changing virus strains hindering vaccines development.
- Barriers to bringing veterinary medicines to market: burdensome regulations, divergent legislative frameworks, and a lack of a streamlined approval process causes delays and increases costs.
- Barriers to the use of veterinary medicines: logistical problems, lack of government support, and a lack of veterinary capacity and infrastructure.

The rapid increase in human population and wealth has resulted in unprecedented demands for livestock products around the world, as well as increased transportation of livestock for trade reasons. As pathogens evolve and mutate, the likelihood of further serious epidemics will grow. This will not only impact animal health, but human health, given that 75 percent of emerging animal diseases are zoonotic.

IFAH commissioned the white paper as a launch point for wider collaborative discussions with international stakeholders on what future efforts would be required to

**\$200bn**  
Estimated cost of emerging animal disease outbreaks in the last decade

**75%**  
Proportion of animal diseases that can be transmitted to humans and vice versa

**\$200m**  
Potential cost needed to develop a major new animal medicine

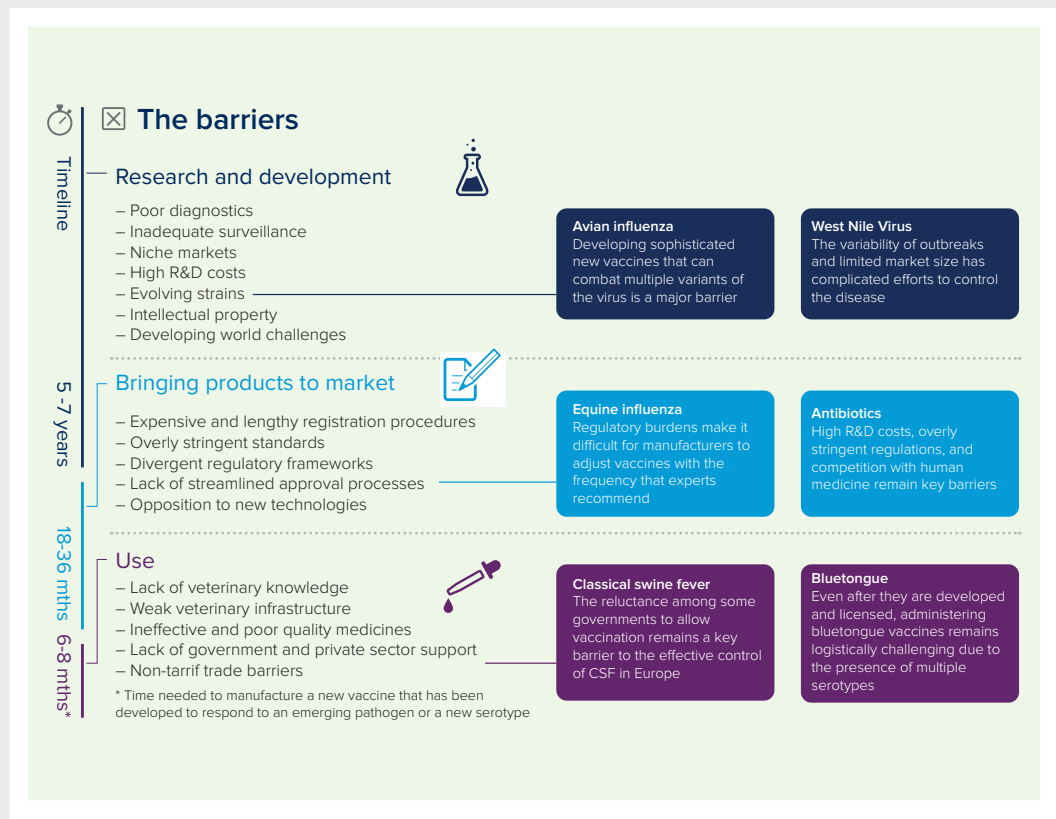
**7-10 years**  
Time required to develop a major new animal medicine, from R&D to end use

**25%**  
Average increase in cost to register new animal health products between 2006 and 2011

overcome barriers that limit our ability to control emerging and re-emerging diseases.

Regulatory harmonisation, empowering veterinarians, public-private partnerships and cooperation between the animal and human health sectors are vital to ensure that we can respond to and control disease outbreaks.

The report concludes that increased investment in education, research, and institutional effectiveness is required at the local, national and global level to minimise risks to animal and human health and encourage long-term economic growth. ■



# Technology the answer to global hunger

With the world's population expected to reach nine billion by 2050, an increase in agricultural production is needed to feed the planet.

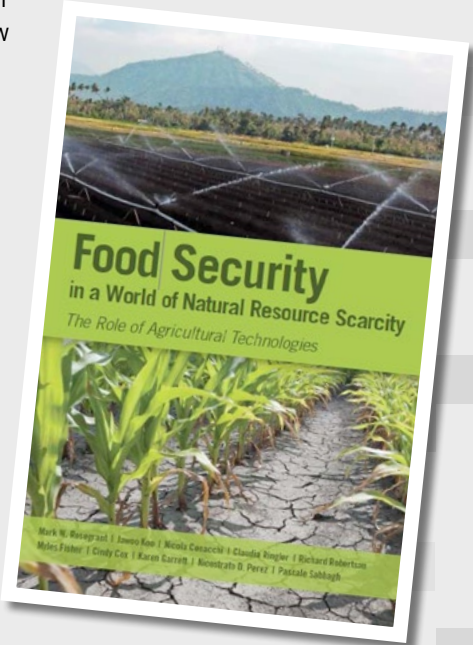
A new report by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) shows how agricultural technologies can fight hunger, reduce food prices and the use of natural resources on a global scale.

The study, [Food Security in a World of Natural Resource Scarcity: The Role of Agricultural Technologies](#), evaluates 11 technologies - including three plant science-enabled practices: no-till; drought tolerance; and crop protection, and determines which will help farmers improve global and regional yields of maize, wheat and rice.

IFPRI estimates that people at risk of hunger in the developing world will grow to more than a billion by 2050.

"The price of food in emerging countries such as India and China is rising, compromising the nutrition of these populations," said Shenggen Fan, director-general of IFPRI.

The Washington DC-based institute introduced an [Agritech Toolbox](#), which can be used to work directly with the study's data to show how agricultural technologies to control weeds, pests and diseases can increase yields.



Agcarm chief executive Graeme Peters said the report showed that farmers will need to integrate multiple technologies into their agribusiness to increase productivity.

"As farmers face the daunting challenge of feeding the world's growing population under tough climate and growing conditions, new biotechnology will be crucial to achieving food security through maintaining and increasing crop productivity under heat and drought conditions, as well as helping crops more efficiently use nitrogen," Mr Peters said. ■

## Agcarm welcomes adverse event report

Agcarm vice-president, Colin McKay reflected on industry successes at the Agcarm summer conference.



COLIN MCKAY

A notable achievement was the introduction of adverse event reporting of incidents involving veterinary medicines by the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI).

"Animal health members requested adverse event reporting to be able to identify patterns in this area. Raising awareness of adverse events is the first step to creating change. One of the end goals is to see trends which could potentially lead to fewer adverse events involving veterinary medicines," Mr McKay said.

Other objectives are to ensure risks are appropriately managed and that the industry and regulators maintain public confidence in the registration process.

Adverse event reports are made to product registrants and to MPI by veterinarians, pet owners, and farmers.

"A summary of adverse event reporting is common overseas and the MPI should be commended for introducing a public summary in New Zealand," Mr McKay said.

The data collated for the reports is used by MPI to review processes and improve methods for summarising adverse events. It provides a tool to monitor veterinary medicines to ensure they are safe, efficacious, of acceptable quality, used appropriately and that the product labels have sufficient information for correct use.

The report summarises findings from 179 adverse events from August to October last year, none requiring major regulatory action. Subsequent reports will be released on an annual basis.

Mr McKay said that another area of progress is data protection, with the government responding favourably to Agcarm's suggested method for introducing protection of safety and environmental data from unfair competition.

Mr McKay also congratulated Agcarm on an increase in membership which sees Agcarm member numbers climb to over 40. This "demonstrates our success as an organisation" said Mr McKay. ■



# Agcarm welcomes new members



## Sinochem

Sinochem has joined Agcarm as a crop protection manufacturer member.

Sinochem Australia is a subsidiary of global chemical firm Sinochem Group. It supplies agricultural chemicals into the Australian and New Zealand markets, including Monsanto's range of Roundup products.

Head office is in Melbourne and Sinochem will be working to establish networks in New Zealand. ■



## Medicines New Zealand

Medicines New Zealand joins Agcarm as a corporate associate member. It is the industry association representing companies engaged in the research, development, manufacture and marketing of prescription medicines.

The association aims to get New Zealanders access to the right medicine when they need it and to get innovative medicines recognised as a leading health intervention. ■



## Glenmark Veterinary

Glenmark Veterinary (GVL) has joined Agcarm as an animal health manufacturer member.

GVL is a New Zealand owned company which specialises in developing and manufacturing innovative animal health products that specifically meet the needs of New Zealand farmers. ■



Ben Vlaming

Ben Vlaming has joined Agcarm as an individual associate member. Ben leads animal health research at Eurofins Agrosience Services NZ (formerly Agrivet Services) in Hawke's Bay. He manages animal and pastoral studies, usually conducted to Good Clinical Practice or Good Laboratory Practice standards.

Ben has a PhD in animal science and conducted research on livestock methane and endophyte toxins prior to starting at Agrivet almost three years ago. ■

## What is Agcarm?

Agcarm is the industry association which represents crop protection, animal health, and rural supplier businesses. Agcarm members distribute and sell the majority of veterinary medicines and crop protection products in New Zealand. Agcarm members promote responsible use of products right through the product life cycle, from research to disposal.

Agcarm is also a positive voice for its members and lobbies for a progressive regulatory environment.

For information on joining Agcarm, go to [www.agcarm.co.nz](http://www.agcarm.co.nz)

## Regulator hosting conference on health and safety

Interested in finding out how the upcoming changes to hazardous substance health and safety will affect your workplace?

The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and WorkSafe are hosting a Hazardous Substances Conference on 8 - 9 May at Shed 6 in central Wellington.

The conference explains the changes to hazardous substance health and safety within the workplace, including the roles and expectation of both government and industry.

### Highlights of the conference include:

- changes to the workplace safety regulatory landscape
- new roles of the EPA and WorkSafe and how they will work together
- test certification changes
- the occupational health advisory group
- safety data sheet study findings and next steps for education and enforcement
- the EPA public awareness campaign results
- a delicious conference dinner with a surprise guest speaker.

Register at [www.epa.govt.nz/conference](http://www.epa.govt.nz/conference) or email [conference@epa.govt.nz](mailto:conference@epa.govt.nz) with any questions. ■



### Hazardous Substances Conference

A new era of health and safety

8-9 May 2014

Shed 6, Wellington CBD

## Book this date

The Agcarm annual conference will be held on 24 July 2014, in Wellington.

Further details will be available on the [Agcarm website](#) soon. ■