



MEDIA RELEASE

30 July 2010

New President of Agcarm

Agcarm, the industry association for crop protection and animal health manufacturers and distributors, has a new president.

Justin Hurst, a vet and regulatory affairs manager at animal health company Merial New Zealand, was appointed president at Agcarm's annual meeting.

Mr Hurst said he would like to see two important pieces of regulatory work completed well before the end of this two-year term.

"Farmers, growers, and pet owners need and deserve access to the best and latest products. But New Zealand is missing out on new, more effective treatments due to data protection laws that discourage investment in introducing these technologies.

"Almost everywhere else in the world a new product supplier has ten years before the market is opened up to generics. In New Zealand we require agrichemical and veterinary medicine companies to invest in trials, which can cost up to \$500,000, to register the product and then only give them a five-year window to make back that investment. This means it is simply not economically viable to introduce some products."

"For some categories of products, such as new uses and new formulations, there is no data protection at all. New Zealand's agriculture industry and vets bear the cost through limited access to these products and lost production.

Mr Hurst is also looking forward to the government removing its double regulation of many animal medicines.

Agcarm, Federated Farmers, the New Zealand Veterinary Association and industry association ARPPA have made a strong case for an exemption for many animal medicines from unnecessary rules on hazardous substances. Human health products sold in small pack sizes already have an exemption.

Environment Minister Nick Smith has instructed Ministry for the Environment officials to work with the New Zealand Food Safety Authority and the Environmental Risk Management Authority to look at the merits of an exemption and a possible regulatory change.

“The double regulation of animal medicines is over the top and adds unnecessary compliance costs, which in turn is limiting innovation and the range of treatments available in New Zealand,” he said.

Previously vice president, Mr Hurst replaced John Yates, who retired at the end of his two-year term. Bayer CropScience country manager Jon Neal was elected vice president.

Mr Hurst began his working life in fruit growing in the Hawke’s Bay. He had various roles from self employed contractor through to operations manager for a horticultural management and consulting company.

He graduated as a vet from Massey University in 1993, and worked in mixed practice before joining Fernz/Nufarm in 1997. Roles included technical services and both product and business development in New Zealand and internationally.

He joined Merial in 2003 as manager technical services and regulatory affairs. He is principally responsible for liaison with resellers, regulators and the veterinary, agricultural science and farming industries, particularly representing the views of Merial on anthelmintics, their use and issues of worm management and drench resistance.

Mr Hurst was elected to the Agcarm executive committee in 2004 with a view to supporting sensible interpretation and enactment of the legislation affecting the animal health and agro-chemical industries – and plays a similar role on the New Zealand Veterinary Association board.

Agcarm is the industry association of companies which manufacture, distribute and sell products that keep animals healthy and crops thriving. Member companies are committed to ensuring that these products are used safely, effectively and sustainably