

Mitigation of emissions key to Kyoto

Seminar participants told everyone needs to do their bit for New Zealand to meet its objectives

By DENISE GUNN

PASTORAL Greenhouse Gas Research Consortium manager Mark Aspin opened AllFarm New Zealand's recent Sustainable Farm Profitability seminar in Palmerston North with an informative presentation on the mitigation options and challenges to reduce agricultural greenhouse gas.

With 48 per cent of New Zealand's emissions resulting from the agricultural sector, the consortium's goal is to develop methane and/or nitrous oxide mitigation measures that can be applied to New Zealand's pastoral agricultural system.

In order for New Zealand to meet its Kyoto Protocol objectives, agricultural greenhouse gas mitigation is a key focus.

"We are a small part of a big system," said Mr Aspin.

The consortium's research programme to mitigate non-CO2 agriculture greenhouse gases began in 2002, initially investigating the reduction of methane emissions from ruminant animals before expanding to incorporate nitrous oxide research.

The research programme looks at ecology, genomics, inhibitors, vaccine, breeding, forage and nitrous oxide.

Mr Aspin said there was a high level of understanding but many questions remained.

"The physics of the science is sound but how do we handle or deal with it."

And as every farming business is different a number of solutions are required. "We need to bring out lots of solutions."

Mr Aspin said the challenge was to pull back from the excitement of solving science problems to make it work in a farm business. "Everyone needs to do their bit."

AllFarm NZ business consultancy team member Andrew Roberts, a nutritionist who has worked in New Zealand and the United Kingdom, discussed world milk production and trends, how these

affected the country, along with the resulting threats and opportunities.

He said the world milk supply and demand was close and needed to be watched carefully.

"We have to keep an eye on it."

"The major threat to the export market is

the increase in domestic production of some markets and overproduction in Europe."

But the high costs of production in the USA and Europe could provide future opportunities for New Zealand.

"Over a period of a couple of years there could be a major decrease in their production."

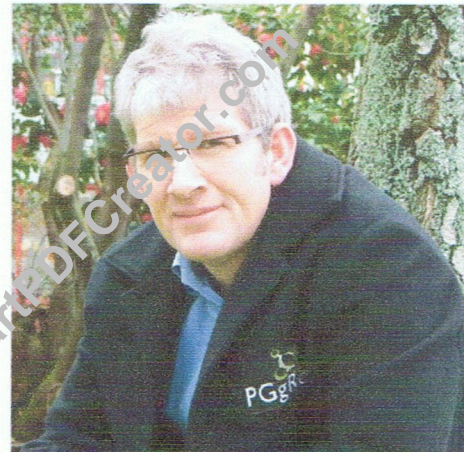
Mr Roberts said there were also opportunities available with value items and suggested looking at products with a point of difference such as high selenium

'We are a small part of a big system.'

— Mark Aspin,
Pastoral Greenhouse
Gas Research
Consortium



The AllFarm New Zealand farm business consultancy team from left: Andres Reidel, Carolina Diaz Lira, Andrew Roberts and Suzie Barra (office administration).



Pastoral Greenhouse Gas Research Consortium manager Mark Aspin spoke at AllFarm New Zealand's Sustainable Farm Profitability seminar in Palmerston North recently.

Nutrition with her topic in lameness.

Mr Reidel has a Bachelor in Agricultural Science, specialising in soil nutrition and crops.

English-born Mr Roberts has more than 25 years' experience as a farm consultant in the UK.

Ms Barra completes the team as office administrator, co-ordinating the interaction between clients and the consultants.

Mrs Diaz Lira said AllFarm rose to the challenges in the industry by making an ideal combination between best farm practices, soil fertility and nutrition; achieving an enhanced margin over profits.

"In a very stressed industry like dairy at present, we can do great margins if we keep clear our goals and ensuring after every visit the compliance of an elaborated budget," she said.

For further information contact info@allfarmnz.co.nz

bdgunn@clear.net.nz

milk, baby milk powders, and top quality cheese.

"We aren't putting enough value to our products," he said.

The AllFarm team incorporates Carolina Diaz Lira (director), her husband Andres Reidel (director),

Andrew Roberts (nutritionist), and Suzie Barra (office administrator).

Mrs Diaz Lira holds a Bachelor in Veterinary Science, a Masters in Nutrition and Parasitology and is currently working on her PhD in

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