



AMURI IRRIGATION CO  
**ENVIRONMENTAL COLLECTIVE NEWSLETTER**  
ISSUE 1: AUGUST 2017

**Welcome from the Chairman**

The Collective was established by the Amuri Irrigation Company (AIC) in early 2013 when the Hurunui-Waiau Zone Committee asked AIC to take a leadership role and establish an Environmental Collective. The aim of the Collective was to help deliver better water quality in exchange for a delay in the implementation of increased minimum river flow limits on the Hurunui and Waiau Rivers.

Following on from work that the Pahau Enhancement Group began, I knew that the farmers of this community were up to farming towards the quantified and industry led standard known as Good Management Practice (GMP). The road towards GMP is a challenging one, but the effort will be shown in the audit results. I believe that this community can become leaders in irrigation and resource management.

AIC was the first collective to adopt an Irrigation Scheme Management Plan in Canterbury. This meant that the rules for our operation weren't written before we were up and running, so in effect AIC led the way. You should be proud to be part of the farmer movement demonstrating that we are responsible operators who are constantly working towards minimising environmental impact whilst providing substantial economic benefit in our district, helping to make it a vibrant place to live.

Your farm's GMP is assessed via auditing of its Farm Environment Plan (FEP). Even if you were awarded an 'A' grade with your first audit that doesn't mean the job is done. It means that you are now able to lead the way as GMP never stops improving. Likewise, if you received a 'D' grade it doesn't mean you're a bad farmer, it just means you have the opportunity to improve and you need a formalised plan to improve on what you have in place.

The Collective membership now extends beyond AIC shareholders to include most larger irrigators across the Amuri, Hawarden and Hanmer Basins. Other farms that wished to be involved, have been given the opportunity to become a member. Farms that are independent to AIC pay for the service as AIC's farmers pay as part of their water charge.

We hope you find the newsletter informative and helpful – if there is anything you think we should cover in future editions or have any suggestions how we can improve it then please let us know.

David Croft  
Chairman  
AIC Environmental  
Subcommittee



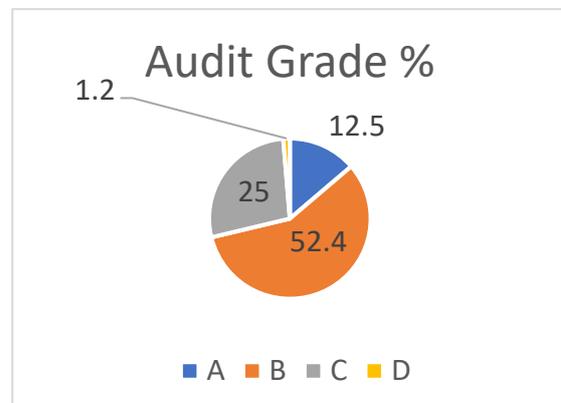
**2016-17 FEP Auditing Results**

In late 2016 and early 2017, 51 farms were audited. 14 of these were first audit beef and sheep farms, 24 were first audits on dairy farms and 11 were re-audits on dairy farms.

Analysing the audit results tells us a lot about where most farms are at GMP and where we need to be working with farmers to make progress.

The distribution of audit grades for first audits was similar to the previous year, when 55 dairy farms had their first audit. In 2016/17, almost 65% of farms were awarded an 'A' or 'B' grade, indicating they are operating at GMP or are well on track to meet GMP requirements within an agreed timeframe. 25% of farms were 'C' grade with some work to do in one or more areas with only 1.2% of farms receiving a 'D' grade.

**Distribution of first FEP Audit grades 2016/17**



Farms that were re-audited in 2016/17 after receiving either a 'C' or 'D' grade in 2015/16 showed particularly encouraging results. All farms

showed an improvement at the second audit: all C's went to 'B' and the 'D's either went to a 'B' or 'C'. In general, farmers are doing a good job in terms of managing environmental risks, but there is room for improvement, particularly in managing irrigation and nutrients from all sources.

We are committed to working with Collective members and will be making resources and training available (usually free of charge) to improve overall performance, with a strong focus on improving irrigation and nutrient management.

We believe there are many opportunities to see an improvement in reducing the loss of nutrients to water and reduced costs on farm by focusing on improving efficiency of resource use.

### **Collective Membership: From 'The Peaks' to Hanmer Springs**

With four irrigators in the Hanmer area joining the Collective, membership now extends from Hawarden, south of the Hurunui River to the Hanmer Basin in the north. There is a lot of work to be done getting FEPs on several new members farms, but by early 2018 we expect to have FEPs on approximately 162 farms.

This is a huge achievement and shows a considerable commitment from the irrigating farmers across the Hurunui and Waiau Zone to meet their obligations under the Hurunui and Waiau Rivers Regional Plan (HWRRP).

### **Revised Fee Structure**

At its meeting on the 11 July 2017, the Environmental Subcommittee revised the annual membership fees for the Collective.

AIC shareholders contribute to the running of the Collective and other environmental related work, such as water quality sampling and advocacy work through their annual water charges. This amounts to about \$1,800 per farm.

Non-shareholder members are charged an annual membership fee. For members of local irrigator groups (Waiau Independent Irrigators and Hurunui Independent Irrigators) this annual charge will be \$1,300 per year and for independent members who are not members of these local groups the fee is \$1,800 per year. These new fees will be applicable from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018.

### **Introducing the Team**

**Alastair Rutherford**  
**Environmental Manager**  
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Alastair joined AIC in early 2014 with the task of setting up the Environmental Collective and securing ECan approval of AIC's environmental management plan to enable Collective members to meet the requirements of the HWRRP. Alastair has a BSc. Hons. in Soil Science and Plant Nutrition from London University. After graduating in 1986 he managed a horticultural enterprise in Zambia before returning to England where he started an 18-year career in agricultural and environmental policy, first with the National Farmers Union and then with various agencies until 2006 when he emigrated to New Zealand with his wife Elaine to seek a new direction in life.

Alastair and Elaine live in North Loburn, where Elaine runs North Loburn Equestrian Centre. They both share a passion for horses and Alastair is a listed Dressage Judge and a member of the Brackenfield Hunt.

**Renee Dampier-Crossley**  
**Environmental Administrator**  
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We have been recently joined by Renee Dampier-Crossley two days a week in the Culverden Office. Renee and her husband Ben farm a sheep, beef and dairy support farm in Rotherham and have three children, with the two eldest attending Rotherham School. Renee has been heavily involved with many local community groups, most recently the Rotherham Rogaine and Waiau Pony Club.

Renee will be helping Alastair with the Collective's work and is currently preparing for the next round of FEP Auditing which will involve more than 100 farms and will run from this November and conclude in April 2018.