Issues and responses during Covid-19 lockdown for the New Zealand livestock sector

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Primary sector statistics

- 5.7% GDP (30 June 2018)
- 53% of total export revenue (30 June 2020)
- 350,000 employed
- High proportion of products exported
- Primary sector central to NZ’s wellbeing especially with the shutdown of international tourist market (international tourism was worth NZ$17.2 billion)
- MPI vision - New Zealand is the world’s most sustainable provider of high-value food and primary products

Stock type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stock type</th>
<th>Numbers ('000) – 30 June 2019</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sheep</td>
<td>26,822</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dairy</td>
<td>6,261</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beef</td>
<td>3,890</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deer</td>
<td>810</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pigs</td>
<td>255</td>
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Critical issues for the livestock sector

- Also in a widespread drought and flooding event
- Maintaining key production, processing, auditing and distribution services
- Labour
  - Skilled non-NZ workers, e.g. experienced farm and herd managers, not being able to return to NZ
  - Movement of people under lockdown
  - Specialised services normally filled by overseas people
- Social distancing constraints at abattoirs and saleyards closed.
  - Significant impacts on pork industry and livestock farmers’ ability to respond to the drought
- Transport – restricted movement of essential supplies
- Key import supply chains - stock feed and animal health materials
- Ensuring on-going access to export markets
Response

- Livestock sector supply chains and support systems, e.g. vets, deemed essential services
- Communication between primary sector stakeholders, the Minister, the Ministry and other central Government departments
- Communication with export markets and international supply chains
- Comprehensive registration and verification processes for essential services
- Development and regularly updating of guidelines and FAQs. Helpdesk established
- Distribution of pork to poorer communities and use in value-add products
- Use of hybrid systems (on-line) for stock sales.

- Govt wage subsidies, tax support and small business cashflow loans
- Support systems for drought affected regions – human and animal welfare, water, feed
- Trade in livestock products was up
Resilience

- Highlighted the on-going importance of New Zealand’s high-quality food safety system, the adaptability of New Zealand farmers and growers and domestic and international relationships

- Fit for a Better World – a 10-year roadmap and investment programme to unlock greater value for a sector vital to New Zealand’s economic recovery
  - Productivity – Māori agribusiness, innovation, resilience, practical knowledge
  - Sustainability – climate change, freshwater, forestry
  - Inclusiveness – employment, connectivity, community hubs

- Nationwide programme established (Opportunity Grows Here) - portal for newly unemployed New Zealanders to raise awareness about job opportunities across the sector

- Jobs for Nature – funding benefitting the environment, people and the regions.
Thank you