

PAANZ Newsletter 7

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FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the 7th edition of the PAANZ newsletter, which has an international flavour. I report on the 10th European Conference on Precision Agriculture. We have some reflections from Jemma Mulvihill, of Agrioptics Ltd, on the practical realities of PA observed during a recent visit to Europe and the US. This edition also includes advanced notice of a major international precision farming conference to be held in New Zealand in 2017. But first up, we have the Chairman's Report, presented to the PAANZ AGM recently.

Enjoy.

Roger Williams, Editor.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - AGM

Craige Mackenzie, PAANZ Chair, provided attendees at the AGM, held in Christchurch on November 11th, an update on what PAANZ has achieved over the last year and an idea of what's to come. The Chairman's Report follows.

As a starting point I would like to take this opportunity to outline the goals of the Association. In all we do, we are primarily focused on the following:

- To increase and influence the adoption and direction of Precision Agriculture by land based primary industries in New Zealand;
- To facilitate the technology transfer of Precision Agriculture developments between researchers, advisers, land users, industry facilitators and others;
- To engage in, promote and support research & development undertaken for the purpose of advancing the adoption of Precision Agriculture systems in New Zealand land based primary industries;
- To improve the understanding and management of in field variability and validate Precision
- Agriculture systems for increased profits and protection of the environment;

To connect all participants in the Precision Agriculture value chain to one common organisation. This includes land users, researchers, commercial companies, regional councils and students.

Thank you also to all the members who have joined the Association this year. It is your continued support that makes it possible to run this organisation and allow it to support improved outcomes for agriculture in New Zealand through the use of Precision Agriculture. PAANZ has 26 Foundation members, which include industry, research and farmers.

We thank you greatly for your on-going support.

Our general membership is growing but this is a challenge with some sectors under pressure. We believe that Precision Agriculture will continue to have a lot to offer New Zealand Agriculture. We currently have 43 members in total which is an increase of 17 on last year.

There is a lot of interest in the benefits of Precision Agriculture for both environmental and financial viability of our farms but we have a challenge ahead to get greater engagement with more farmers and companies in this sector. We are also being approached by local and central government for advice but this not turning into a significant increase in members.

We have been involved in many events throughout the year where our members or committee have presented on Precision Agriculture. We have also supported and promoted other events where we have common goals. We have taken the approach this year to promote Precision Agriculture as a whole through other organisations events as well being more visible at these events.

Our year started with the FLRC conference at Massey University, which brought Jim Wilson to New Zealand for the conference. We had the privilege of hosting Jim in the South Island, in conjunction with FAR, who funded Jim's travel to the

South Island. A big thank you must go to Massey University and Ian Yule for funding Jim's international travel and organising the event, which was very valuable for all those who heard him.

Some of our members attended the MobileTech conference which provided an interesting look at some of the new Precision Agriculture technology being introduced and how it might be of valuable to the agricultural sector.

I had the opportunity to attend and present at the Future of the Heartland conference at Te Mania which was a great opportunity to raise the profile of Precision Agriculture as other speakers included the Prime Minister and Hon. Nathan Guy. This provided a platform for some good discussions about future opportunities for farmers.

We attended and supported the LandWise conference in Hastings. As usual, Dan Bloomer ran a very interesting conference. It is good to be able to support the work Dan is doing.

UAV's continue to be a hot topic and as an organisation we have attended several events and hosted demonstrations of several of the new additions to the market. These will continue to be of interest as we find ways to get useful data from them.

The development of new Precision Agriculture software which has integrated affordable satellite images as well as being able to send and receive application files to give proof of placement. The use of such software to store and handle data will continue to be as important as the technology used in the field.

We had a year of getting our Strategic document fine-tuned to help with the future direction of the organisation. We are aware we have not run any specific events under the PAANZ umbrella but there are some planned for early in 2016 so we hope you will all participate in these. The focus for these events will be on water and nutrients.

In October 2017 we are hosting the 7th Asian-Australasian Conference on Precision Agriculture, which is to be held in Hamilton. This will be the first time the event will be held outside of Asia so it will be important to make a success of it. Planning is underway with an organising committee taking charge of the early details but we are open to input from members as we get closer to the event. This event will also include the Spatial Livestock conference for NZ and Australia which will add further value to the one location.

I would like to thank all of the committee this year and appreciate all the time that you give up both personally and from the organisations that support you.

Without this support we would be unable to function. I need to make special mention of Jim Grennell and CDC who give an enormous amount of time and support which is greatly appreciated.

I would like to thank committee member, Anton Nichols, for his input of the last two years. Anton is standing down but we hope to keep his involvement and promotion of Precision Agriculture in his area of expertise.

Once again thank you to all of you who have attended today and your ongoing support.

10TH EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON PRECISION AGRICULTURE

Roger Williams, Editor (also Plant and Food Research)

The Volcani Centre, just outside Tel Aviv in Israel, was the venue for the 10th European Conference on Precision Agriculture in July this year.

The conference provided a broad-ranging overview of the state of precision farming around the world, albeit with a focus on European production systems. Alongside some useful updates on progress with robotics, remote sensing and decision support tools, the conference included two thought-provoking plenary lectures.

One of these lectures challenged delegates to consider whether the current 'digital revolution' was as, or more, significant than the industrial revolution. The author, Shekhar Rafaeli, advanced the notion that bits are replacing atoms, that information is becoming more valuable than physical assets. He also noted the potential impact of 3-D printing and the associated process of converting bits into physical objects. So I don't think we're done with atoms just yet.

The second lecture that particularly caught my imagination focussed on the future role of nano-satellites. These small, lightweight satellites are far cheaper to launch than conventional ones opening up the possibility of small companies, or even individuals, owning their own satellite. Israel has been particularly active in the development of imaging technologies with reduce payloads. Although the bandwidth and resolution of these instruments doesn't match conventional technology yet, progress is rapid and agronomically-useful nanosatellites may be just around the corner. In combination with our own, home-grown Rocket Lab launch vehicle technology (see <http://www.precisionagriculture.org.nz/news/rocket-lab-satellite-launches-filling-up-fast/>) we could see a revolution in the application of satellite data capture in agriculture.

Whilst at the conference, I took the opportunity, on behalf of PAANZ, to invite delegates to the 7th Asian-Australasian Conference on Precision Agriculture to be held in New Zealand in 2017. More about this later in the newsletter.



[MORE INFO](#)

PAANZ MEMBERSHIP - WHO DO YOU KNOW?

Keen to grow the Association's membership, we'd love to hear from you if you know of an organisation, individual or group you think could benefit from joining.

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PRECISION AGRICULTURE IN PRACTICE

Jemma Mulvihill, Agri Optics NZ Limited

Recently I was lucky enough to have a very generous boss who let me take 12 weeks out of our Precision Ag business to travel the UK & Europe, with a short stint in the USA on the way home for good measure. I was travelling with my husband and while the trip was mostly personal and about sightseeing, we still made sure we got out and about in the countryside getting some fresh air visiting farms and observing local agricultural practices.

During our travels we were very lucky to be hosted by lovely friends and family friends who were happy to show us around, answering our silly questions regarding precision agriculture on their farms and why they do things the way they do.

Firstly, we started our farm visits in the south of England, near Steyning, where friends from NZ were working on a big estate - on the stock side of the operation. It was lambing time so it was all go and we got in amongst it. The estate also had an arable enterprise associated with it and grew mostly wheat and canola, all activities completed using auto-steer. A lovely spot made all the nicer by the balmy English weather we encountered there.

We next moved on to Redhill, Bristol where we visited the Alvis family and their business, Lye Cross Farm. Johnny is a Nuffield Scholar in the UK whose study topic was "Achieving more from less – maximising dairy farming profitability using limited resources". We had a great afternoon and evening with the Alvis family also taking a look around their dairy farm, cheese-making business and arable farmland as well as talking farming late into the night. We were really blown away by the size of their operation and how they're doing such a good job through the length of the supply chain from feeding cows and producing milk right through to their involvement with primary schools (they are opening their farm to expose young kids to what goes on in agriculture and bridging the knowledge gap of where food comes from). Well done Johnny, Jo & family!

The precision agriculture highlight of the trip was visiting and staying with Jim Wilson, director of Soil Essentials (a Precision Ag company covering the UK, based out of Scotland) and his wife Gill. We had a wonderful afternoon and morning with them enjoying their area and getting insights into some of their research projects, the work that they do with farmers and some of their exciting new developments.

All in all it was an amazing trip and we saw some amazing things. It was made even better by getting out and about in the countryside, meeting both the locals and farmers. We both came back very refreshed and invigorated about NZ agriculture as a whole, and with ideas and opportunities for the businesses we were stepping back into.

MOBILETECH 2016

MobileTECH 2016 is taking place next year in Rotorua and we're delighted to be supporting the event again.

For more information and to register for the event, visit <http://mobiletech.events/> .

SPECIAL: Group Registration Rate (50% discount)
\$449+gst (per person) **BEFORE 29 January 2016***



mobiletech
primary industries 2016
Innovation through Connectivity

30-31 March 2016, Rotorua, New Zealand
Agriculture • Horticulture • Forestry

Creating a platform for change
Bringing together our rural industry leaders, technology developers,
engineers, researchers, entrepreneur's, innovators
and early adopters

Key Technologies

- Rural connectivity • mobile hardware • big data • aerial drones • online software • M2M
- remote sensors • cloud platforms • robotics • satellite mapping • communications
- productivity apps • electronic tagging • automation • data ownership • field capture tools

“ Smart technologies will revolutionise how we operate and run our
businesses throughout the primary industries ”



SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS, INCLUDE:



* Additional discount rates are available for members of our supporting organisations.
For details please contact Gordon on Email: gordon@mobiletech.co.nz or Mob: (064) 27 275 8022

www.mobiletech.events **CONEX**

If you are a PAANZ member, you will have received information from us relating to a special registration rate you are able to take advantage of. For queries relating to this, please email us on info@paanz.co.nz .

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PAANZ Membership



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THE 7TH ASIAN-AUSTRALASIAN CONFERENCE ON PRECISION AGRICULTURE 2017 - IN NEW ZEALAND

Armin Werner, Group Manager - Precision Agriculture - Lincoln Agritech

International forums for presenting and discussing the latest achievements in scientific research and technical development in Precision Agriculture (PA) are important for advancing this subject. Three independent international PA conferences take place biannually – all with a focus on plants. These include:

- International Conference on Precision Agriculture (ICPA; 12th in August 2016; USA)
- European Conference on Precision Agriculture (ECPA; 10th in July 2015; Israel)
- Asian Conference on Precision Agriculture (ACPA; 6th in November 2015; China)

In October 2017, the 7th Asian-Australasian Conference on Precision Agriculture (7ACPA) will be hosted by the Precision Agriculture Association of NZ (PAANZ) in New Zealand. To be held at Hamilton's Claudelands Event Centre, the conference programme will include workshops, seminars and exhibitions. Two days of excursions and technical tours will conclude the programme.

Traditionally, international conferences on PA have had a clear focus on crops and more increasingly, horticultural production. In 2003, the European Livestock Farming Conference was initiated to provide a focus on Precision Livestock Farming.


The programme for 7ACPA in 2017 will include the first Asian-Australasian Conference on Precision Livestock Farming (1ACPLF). In contrast to the European Conference on Precision Livestock Farming (ECPLF), the 1ACPLF will have a strong focus on pasture based Precision Livestock Farming. This conference is to succeed the Australian-New Zealand symposium series on Spatially Enabled Livestock Management (SELM) and introduce additional research and technology topics. SELM has been conducted annually in Australia or New Zealand since 2009.

Other scientific associations that could be interested in hosting a workshop or focus group during the conference should contact PAANZ to discuss. For more information, contact details and for a copy of the conference brochure, published with the support of the Canterbury Development Corporation, visit the conference website - www.7ACPA-2017.org.

With the support from NZTE and the NZ-Consulate in Guangzhou, PAANZ chair, Craige Mackenzie, and 7ACPA chair, Armin Werner, will invite participants and key stakeholders in PA in Asia and overseas to the 2017 conferences in New Zealand when they attend the 6ACPA in Guangzhou later this month.



READ MORE

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