

The Max Jacobs influence

Sir,

Readers, particularly farm foresters, may be interested in observations prompted by the 'Oration' published in your February issue:

- I prefer line planting of hardwoods rather than group planting. Lines are easier to find and follow through scrub than are groups.
- Is there a reason why thinnings of eucalypts cannot be used for fuelwood (in demand every winter in New Zealand) or for pulpwood (as a substitute for tawa as the hardwood mix in pulp)?
- There is self pruning forming a sealed layer in branches up to about 0.5 cm wood diameter with eucalypts. Broken or pruned branches 0.5 to 3 cm in wood diameter will allow possible ingress of fungi. In extreme cases older *Eucalyptus deglupta* logs are often hollow, due to rot, in logged stands in East New Britain.
- Sentons, of Orini, preferred sawlogs of *Eucalyptus* species that were over one metre in diameter.
- This implies a spacing between lines of 12 metres.
- With unimproved planting stock one needs to retain selection. Having a one in six selection would mean planting seedlings two metres apart in lines.
- Near Mangakino George Fry showed me a stand of *Eucalyptus* thinned to 350 s/ha to provide 2000 tonnes of pulpwood for trials. I had the advantage of hindsight, having previously inspected unthinned stands, in which potential crop sawlog trees 'picked themselves' at about 65 s/ha – the other trees left would not contribute much, if anything, to additional sawlog volume after thinning.
- Only when using improved rooted cuttings should direct sawlog regimes, without thinnings, be contemplated.

K.D. Marten
Forestry Consultant

Institute AGM

Sir,

I believe that the recent seminar in Auckland "Investing in Forestry", organised by Profile Publishing Ltd "in conjunction with the NZ Institute of Forestry", was very good. It had a most impressive list of speakers and an excellent attendance and there were good discussions. I would very much like to have attended. However I did not feel

inclined to pay the \$600 fee out of my own pocket.

The timing of the Institute AGM, a brief two-hour session at 5pm at the end of the seminar, raised further questions about the role of Institute AGMs. Why have it at such an awkward hour? Why have it merely as an appendage to what was a high-powered business session? And why have it so soon after the last AGM? (we hadn't even got the minutes of this meeting).

These and other queries led me to seek the views of other senior Institute members. I rang A.L. Poole, P.J. McKelvie, G.M. O'Neill, A. Kirkland and M.J. Conway. Four of these considered that the seminar was a business and not an Institute affair; they all deplored the high level of the fee and the fact that the AGM was apparently, and not for the first time, being downgraded. One member said he tore the papers up straight away and destroyed them. Only one member was at all in favour. A.W. Grayburn in discussions said he was even more critical and had written to the Council complaining. (His letter was not referred to at the AGM.) These were all senior and responsible Institute members who almost unanimously felt the same way as I did. Something obviously was wrong.

Before the meeting I called on J.G. Groome to seek his views and had the good fortune to have the circumstances of the seminar explained to me by Colin McKenzie and Bill Liley. They were only partially successful in removing my worries. Their story is now written up in this issue of "Forestry". I leave it to readers to judge who is right.

I should say, however, that I welcomed the AGM decision to have the next AGM in Napier and as a "pure" Institute affair. I hope that this is the beginning of a return to the sort of successful AGMs which the Institute ran so often in the past. I wish the new Council and the revived local section all the best in running it.

A.P. Thomson

Correction

Sir,

I was interested to read of the membership of the Land Environment Crown Research Institute Board and in particular of the appointment of John Kneebone as chairperson – a very good choice.

However, Dave Allen should have checked on the information, no doubt supplied to him, on Mr Kneebone's background. I refer to the statement that he was chairperson of the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Council from 1978 to 1986.

May I point out for the record that I followed Lindsay Poole as chairman of that Council from 1978 until it was abolished on April 1, 1984 and its role taken over by an enlarged National Water and Soil Conservation Authority.

M.J. Conway

Indexed real prices for logs

Sir,

We are currently reviewing work undertaken in the agroforestry field and, during that review, have become aware of an article by yourself which is published in the November 1991 issue of NZ Forestry. This article covers the issues with respect to the debate between foresters and conservationists and the public in general. On page three, a graph is shown as Figure 1 which indicates the "long-term trends in real prices for sheep and beef products, and export logs". The graph indicates that real export prices for logs have moved positively compared to the prices for sheep and beef products.

In the NZ Meat Producer (Last Quarter, 1991) an article entitled "seeing the wood for the trees" has been submitted by the Meat and Wool Boards' Economic Service. This article also includes a graph comparing the real prices for sheep and beef with those for logs and poles. The two graphs (NZ Forestry and NZ Meat Producer) show somewhat dissimilar pictures for sheep and beef prices and with respect to the prices for logs (and poles).

The NZ Meat Producer graph appears to show a slower decline in sheep and beef prices and a significant decline in returns from logs and poles when compared with the NZ Forestry graph which shows a sharper decline in sheep and beef prices and a rise in the returns from export logs.

This discrepancy is no doubt explainable but, I am sure you will agree, does much to explain some reluctance by farmers to be convinced of the potential returns from forestry. I would appreciate your comments on the differences between the two graphs.

Ron Sheppard, MNZIAS
Assistant Director

Comment (by Chris Brown, for the Editor)

The discrepancy between the two graphs, each purporting to show indexed real prices for logs and poles compared to sheep and beef, is essentially a succinct lesson in the old cliché of there being "lies, damned lies, and statistics". As Mr Sheppard correctly assumes, the differences between the two graphs are