



Rural Women New Zealand

# Manifesto

2011-2014

# Everyone has the right to fully participate in society in New Zealand/Aotearoa. No one should be disadvantaged because of where they live or work.

This manifesto is published by Rural Women New Zealand (RWNZ) to advise the Government of the issues that create disparities for rural communities, and to offer solutions.

RWNZ acknowledges that financial redress may not always be appropriate, however smarter thinking around legislative development will achieve better outcomes than are being experienced now.

The main causes of disparity for rural people, their families and their livelihoods are:

Lack of rural representation due to barriers to rural participation on local authorities.

Inequities and inadequacies of DHB funding for delivery of home care services in rural areas.

Last mile disparities (in particular cost) of broadband services.

Inadequate incentives to retain a trained rural workforce.

The ongoing inequity of population based funding for health services.

Lack of representation of women on rural boards, advisory groups and local authorities.

The continuing unintended negative impacts on rural of legislation/policy.



## Policy Goals

This manifesto outlines Rural Women New Zealand's policy priorities to ensure that:

Inequalities are addressed (with Government intervention and regulation as necessary).

The wellbeing and dynamic growth of rural communities is taken into consideration from the beginning of legislative development.

Rural people's voices are heard in all legislative decision making processes.

Policies that are working well are retained, and not changed for ideological reasons.

Rural people have fair access to all services.

## RWNZ Concerns

### Education

Rural education policies often do not reflect education needs specific to the sustainability of rural communities.

#### **RWNZ recommends:**

A greater focus on the development and retention of a skilled rural education workforce.

The urgent introduction of agricultural training/ subjects in all senior school curricula.

A reduced period for rural broadband rollout down to three years from 2012.

The restructuring of student loans to encourage graduates from rural areas to work in rural communities.

The re-evaluation of funding to early childhood education to ensure rural children are not disadvantaged.

That flexible and innovative outreach services are included in any education policy.

## RWNZ Concerns

### Social Issues

Family violence is under-reported in rural areas with little or no support for temporary or long term solutions.

The lack of women in many decision making processes leading to outcomes that fail rural families and communities. (Only 11.84% of boards with significant rural economic influence include women members – MWA August 2010; Swedish research proves the economic and social benefits of women on boards and in senior management).

Workforce inequalities, in particular pay equity.

Disregard or lack of awareness by some employers of the safety and cultural considerations of migrant workers and their families.

#### **RWNZ recommends:**

That there are more adequately funded services for rural family violence prevention programmes, with a focus on spikes that follow adverse events.

That rural boards must include at least 30% female representation.

That Government policy is to have at least 40% female representation on Advisory Boards.

That the Government better supports the migrant workforce through integrated policies, recognising its valued contribution to sustainable rural communities.

## RWNZ Concerns

### Health Issues

The Government is failing to act on disparities of payments by individual District Health Boards to home-care providers.

There is a lack of regard by the Government of the valued resource and cost benefit of the homecare workforce both in rural communities and the wider economy.

There is a lack of discussion/research in New Zealand around the impacts of mental illness on rural families and the community.

### **RWNZ recommends:**

Creative and diverse policies be implemented to avoid negative impacts on rural communities including: The Government recognising the homecare workforce as a valued resource through actively promoting fair pay and conditions through the legislative process.

Urgent solutions and action by the Government to remove the disparities of payments by individual District Health Boards to homecare providers.

More research and increased local and national resources for rigorous health programmes in rural New Zealand.

## **RWNZ Concerns**

### **Land Issues**

Disparities between legislation that protects public land while leaving private land vulnerable.

Local Authority demands on landowners are excessive in relation to the perceived problem.

Animal welfare issues remain a high priority.

### **RWNZ recommends:**

That economic and environmental objectives for sustainable land use are encouraged and supported through:

The extension of legislation that protects public property to include private property where both are affected equally.

The use of the Local Government Act to work with landowners to enshrine rights to fair and negotiable opportunities.

More consultation opportunities to ensure policies address all affected parties whether the land is private property or public land.

Practical support and promotion of the MAF Codes of Recommendations and Minimum Standards of Animal Welfare.

More MAF advisors to focus on education and support, in particular when there are added pressures of adverse events.

## Key Issues

### Smarter Government Policies

Current policies are creating greater disparities between urban and rural. Downstream effects will be more costly in the future and discourage the use of the land as an economic unit.

#### **RWNZ recommends:**

Wise legislative development that investigates all options to achieve Government's primary production goals while recognising the burden of the cost of over-regulation of land and agricultural businesses.

Universal consultation with rural organisations on all policy development.

### Effective Local Government

While rural people are the ratepayers for the majority of the land in a local authority catchment this is not reflected in rural representation on local authority boards.

Local authorities should have consistent rules that impact on a national basis, for example a consistent speed past schools and rules for movement of stock.

#### **RWNZ recommends:**

Greater rural representation on local authority boards to ensure the rural voice is heard.

That the Local Government Act provides for elected rural representatives to be reimbursed for actual costs incurred in carrying out their responsibilities.

Nationally consistent speed past schools.

Nationally consistent and practical by-laws pertaining to moving stock across roads where farms are bisected by public roads.

### School Bus Safety

Injury and deaths involving children using school buses have not reduced over the past ten years. Research shows that drivers respond to signage that includes the speed limit.

**RWNZ recommends:**

That the Government legislates for active school bus signage including the 20kph speed limit as approved signage.

That the Government legislates that all buses contracted to provide school bus services are fitted with active 20kph signage.

**Climate Change and the Environment**

Unrealistic expectations for primary producers to meet Climate Change obligations will create economic hardship.

**RWNZ recommends:**

The Government seeks smarter and evidence-based solutions that are robust, effective, and fair to meet its Kyoto obligations.

**Freedom Camping**

Recent legislation on freedom camping does not cover the rights of private landowners to have legal redress to protect their land from illegal dumping.

**RWNZ recommends:**

That legislation is extended to private landowners to give them the same legal redress over illegal dumping on private property.

**Energy**

Power stations need price rises to fund their establishment, however, once established running costs are low creating windfall profits.

Some power companies use the highest spot price to average out power costs to consumers, which is discriminatory in particular for high winter tourism areas.

**RWNZ recommends:**

That windfall profits are redistributed to ensure prices remain affordable.

That power prices are averaged out using the median spot price.



## About Rural Women New Zealand

Rural Women New Zealand is a charitable, membership-based organisation that supports people in rural communities through learning opportunities, advocacy and connections. It is the leading representative body promoting and advocating on rural health, education, land and social issues. It provides information, support, and practical learning and leadership opportunities.

Members can participate in groups or as individual members. RWNZ has a growing social media community where people can learn about our organisation. A comprehensive website is regularly updated with rural news and relevant information.

Rural Women New Zealand also produces the following print publications:

Rural Women Express (members only) published three times per year.

Rural Women Outlook (members and strategic partners) published twice per year.

Bulletin Aotearoa (360,000 readers per month) published eleven times per year.

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