

## **SFAG CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – 2011.**

As I seem to say at the start of each of my previous Chairman's reports, the past year has been a very busy year for the small SFAG committee.

### **Ban on use of RPM:**

This year has been no exception; however, finally we have seen the culmination of the pressure exerted back in 2006 with the implementation of the Total ban on the use of Raw Poultry Manure in the designated Local Government areas as from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011.

It is fitting that we have George Gifford here with us this evening as it was his motion, passed at the meeting of the Stable Fly Management Steering Committee in '06 that led to this ban.

Thanks George....

### **Sunset Clause:**

However, those long term followers of the stable fly saga would realise that there are still twists and turns in this issue yet.....

Along with the 'Amendments to the Poultry Manure Regulations' that implemented the ban on the use of RPM we also saw the Department of Health insert an 'expiry of regulations' clause that was basically a sunset clause from 1 September 2013.

Although we have been assured by a number of people, including the Department of Premier and Cabinet that this clause is only there because the DoH is divesting itself of the Poultry Manure and Stable Fly Breeding issue and they expect this to have occurred by sept 2013. Again, we have been assured that if by some chance this hasn't happened by that date then the original ban will be continued!

The SFAG committee continues to be extremely concerned about this development.....

### **Questions in Parliament:**

During the previous twelve months your committee has organised the asking of a series of questions in Parliament to keep the stable fly issue on the agenda, particularly of the DoH.

- In March we were concerned that we hadn't heard anything about the ban, so we asked Hon Alison Xamon to ask some questions of the Minister for Health, via questions on notice in the Legislative Council. The main question was whether the amendment to the Health (Poultry Manure) Regulations 2001 had been drafted yet. The reply was that they would be completed and tabled in Parliament in May this year.
- In May our concern was about the penalties, and again the Hon Alison Xamon asked the minister for Health: "Will the minister increase the penalty provisions for individuals or companies who do not comply with the ban?" The answer was: "The DoH has been directed to address this through amendments to the Health Act 1911" and that "the new penalties will be similar to those in the Food Act 2008"

We note that the Food Act allows for penalties ranging from \$10,000 to \$50,000. However this has all changed with a new change in direction.

### **Meeting with DPC:**

In July a delegation from the SFAG met with representatives of the DPC. At this meeting we were informed that the new focus on Fly Breeding was to be spearheaded by DAFWA, however, the regulatory matters were to be taken from the DoH Regulations and the Health Act and transferred to the Local Government arena through a potential Local Government By-Law.

The DoH is drafting a potential 'model' By-Law that could be enacted.

We invited the DoH to attend the AGM to bring us up to date with the 'model' By-Law but they declined as DAFWA was now the lead agency and they felt it was appropriate that they address our members.....

The SFAG is very concerned at this watering down of any potential regulations and penalties in this manner and subsequently met with the Gingin Shire to discuss the issue. While the Shire agreed that

placing the Stable Fly problem under a Local Government By-Law was a potential reduction in their ability to prosecute offenders, we all agreed to continue to research the issue and monitor the developments.

**Dr Cook's Consultancy:**

Following the wonderful support of the people of the Gingin Shire by paying a voluntary levy in 2010, the shire raised over \$70,000 for work on Stable Flies. With some of this money the Shire was able to employ Dr David Cook to carry out a monitoring program throughout the area to establish the extent of the SF breeding problem and the type of material that the flies were breeding in. Dave will present the results of this project later.....

**Expanded Project 2011/12:**

Following lobbying by the SFAG the Department of Premier and Cabinet announced that DAFWA was to take the lead role in future Stable Fly issues and that they had been directed to inject a further \$100,000 into an expanded R,D&E role in the Local Government areas that were effected by this problem.

A meeting was held in December at which a number of Local Governments including City of Swan, Chittering Shire and the City of Wanneroo, pledged money to go towards this project. With a total of around \$100,000 Bob Paulin from DAFWA applied to Horticulture Australia Limited for 'matching funds'.

Unfortunately this application was not successful and the project, although still going ahead will have to be scaled down.

It is worth noting that VegesWA originally pledged a sum of money in support of the original project, however this was subject to the matching funds from HAL being granted. When this was unsuccessful VegesWA withdrew their funds also.....

**Stable Flies over the 2010/11 summer:**

I think for most people the start of the 2010/11 summer was as bad as normal, however, as the presence of Dr Cook started to take effect and breeding sources were identified and treated, the latter part of the summer was better than usual.

Too late for some, who had to send horses and foals away on agistment at great personal expense. However, it does hold out some hope for the future.....

**DAFWA:**

The long-time person within DAFWA who has enjoyed dealing with the SF issues over the years, Bob Paulin, is finally calling it a day and heading for the colder climes of Canada and we wish him all the best.

In his place we are pleased to welcome Dr Ian McPharlin, who bears an uncanny resemblance to someone I went to school with. Obviously it isn't possible as he doesn't look nearly as old as me!! We look forward to working with you in the future Ian.....

**Finally, thanks.....:**

- Trevor Walker the Gingin EHO for his efforts while he was here.
- Welcome to Ron Boucher who has replaced him
- Dr Cook for his diligent work with the Fly Breeding problem
- Shire of Gingin for financial support to the SFAG with our insurance.
- The Hon Alison Xamon for supporting us with questions in Parliament
- The Hon Grant Woodhams for his ongoing support
- All the key personnel at the Shire of Gingin plus the Council members for their ongoing support.
- And finally the wonderfully hard working committee of the SFAG. We haven't finished the job yet, but by crikey we are giving it a good crack!!