

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Peter Fennessy

Peter Francis Fennessy epitomises all that the New Zealand Society of Animal Production stands for and we wish to nominate him for Honorary Life Membership.

A graduate of Lincoln College (M.Agr.Sc.) and the Waite Institute of the University of Adelaide (Ph.D.), Peter was one of the cornerstones of a wide variety of research at the Invermay Agricultural Centre from the mid-1970s, until his departure to continue as a consultant to the agricultural and biotechnology industries.

Among his many interests have been nutrition and metabolism, intake and growth, biological efficiency, genetics of growth and carcass traits, selection and breeding, deer antlers, pubertal and seasonality traits, photoperiodic manipulation of growth and reproduction, artificial reproductive technologies, evolution and its implications in farmed species, interspecies hybrids, gene mapping and quantitative traits. This work has been undertaken mainly in sheep and deer and perhaps not surprisingly given his interests in thoroughbreds, also in horses. Described as "a science man of astonishing breadth of knowledge in many areas," Peter has contributed immensely to our knowledge of nutrition, physiology, breeding and genetics. These efforts have significantly underpinned the growth of the deer and sheep farming and associated groups such as the NZ Deer Farmers Association and the Deer Branch of the NZ Veterinary Association. As well as his enormous contribution within New Zealand, Peter is well-respected internationally. Furthermore, he is equally at home addressing the science community, or the farming community. One of Peter's greatest attributes is the respect in which he is held by farming groups. His contributions are likely to be as an innovator or as a mentor, and his input is widely sought in both roles.

In addition to his role as a scientist with MAF, Peter was also instrumental in the development of AgResearch serving as General Manager of the Sheep & Deer



Division for 5 years, before setting up privately and later forming Abacus Biotech, mainly with a group of former Invermay colleagues.

He has also made a major contribution to the Society, presenting or being part of many conference presentations, and serving as Occasional Publication Editor, Treasurer, and as President. In his 1983 Presidential Address, which pre-empted many subsequent developments in New Zealand science, Peter called for more imagination in animal research, and particularly more

focus on fundamental research through multidisciplinary teams which would ultimately benefit the animal industries. Over two decades later, the NZ science community is still grappling with many of the issues Peter then identified. Fittingly, Peter was awarded the Society's McMeekan Memorial Award in 1990.

Perhaps his most memorable contribution to this Society is his involvement, with Ken Drew, in Occasional Publication No7, Supplementary Feeding. It is no idle claim that without Peter's input this publication would not have made the press. Peter and Ken were also the originators and key organisers behind the first International Conference on the Biology of Deer, and edited the publication from this conference.

Peter's sheer passion and enthusiasm for science and knowledge, and his ability to encourage younger people by giving them the freedom and confidence to explore ideas, have cultivated many scientific careers, including those of us within this Society.

We have much pleasure recognising Peter Francis Fennessy's outstanding contribution to agricultural science with this nomination for Honorary Life Membership of the New Zealand Society of Animal Production and believe it a most fitting recognition of an exceptional career and significant input to agricultural science. We look forward to Peter's continued enthusiasm for this Society, and for New Zealand and international science and farming.

MW Fisher, GH Shackell, JF Smith