



Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year Union News



No Xmas Cheer or Goodwill from ANZCO & AFFCO

Some meat Bosses are exhibiting no Xmas cheer or goodwill this festive season. Which is surprising considering commodity prices hit record levels throughout the year and the \$NZ has trended downwards. [Commodity Prices = Beef, venison, lamb, skins, hides, tallow, & wool] Beef throughputs have been high this season and coupled with great overseas returns & maximum plant utilisation – one would have thought the two companies that specialise in Beef exports ANZCO & AFFCO would be offering their employees significant wage increases. Instead we have ANZCO (CMP) telling all their plant officials around NZ they are financially struggling. Further, we have AFFCO failing to recognise and honour plant & core collective employment agreements. A disturbing feature of the ongoing Court proceedings with this employer has seen Management prepared to tell “porkies” under oath. Where have the days gone where a Manager and a Union Official could make an agreement and both parties would recognise a ‘hand shake’ was their word and there bond!

Both companies have chosen to coerce & intimidate their employees into Individual Employment Agreements (IEA's) that have little enforceability, pay cuts, no protection at start up & layoff and can be changed whenever the employer decides. Once workers are captured into IEA's they will have no bargaining power and the Boss will continue to erode the IEA's into worthless pieces of paper.

Meat workers need to mobilise and support each other or these two greedy employers will force those remaining employers to travel down that spiral to the bottom of the heap, low wages, higher chain speeds & poor conditions.

The 2011–12 Season

We are into the 9th week of the new season and the NZ lamb slaughter is 22.5% (707,708) down the same period last season. The NZ sheep kill is down 50% (418,059) on the same period. This is a good sign that maybe ewe's are in good condition and the sheep flock is in a rebuild stage. The South Island cattle kill is up 5.4% whereas the North Island cattle kill is behind 25%. Lamb weights are showing a significant increase at slaughter 18.28kg last season this season 19.53kg.

Meat Company Profits

The Invercargill-based Alliance Group has posted an operating surplus of \$20.7 million for the year ended September 30, compared with \$29.6m last year. We are informed ANZCO posted \$4,000,000 to Japanese shareholders last season. Silver Fern Farms has reported an operating profit of \$34.1m (2010 12 month loss of \$8.4m) for the year ending 30 September 2011. AFFCO has had another great year from insider sources.

CMP Rangitikei Lockout

Meat workers are now into their **8th week.**

Workers have been on picket duty at the entrance to the plant for the duration of this lockout.



This employer has been brutal and totally unfair in its demands for 20% pay cuts and the removal of other clauses such as night shift \$10.60. This lamb plant is only 7 years old. Workers have made every effort to make this plant productive, however, mechanically the plant has significant shortcomings.

“Brutal” = CMP puts workers on a weeks holiday and organises meetings in Community Halls where they tell workers to sign Individual Employment Agreements (with all the cuts) or they will not start work after the holiday. Further, many workers have been on short time (low wages) for many months. Again, we see an increasing trend by some meat Bosses to ignore the “Good Faith” provisions of the Employment Relations Act. Meat Workers Union has a number of legal proceedings before the Authority & Employment Court. The NZ Council of Trade Union’s fully supports our members. President Helen Kelly & Secretary Peter Conway have been in the mainstream media gaining maximum TV exposure.

**NZ Meat Workers Union is asking all Sub-branches to take up collections and to deposit into the Union’s Financial Support Fund
ASB: 12-3021-0233990-58**