

**Increases in production + Falling lamb numbers  
= smaller pay packets + plant closures**



# UNION NEWS

## OTHER MEAT NEWS

### AFFCO'S UNION BUSTING TACTICS - SHORT SIGHTED



Affco has decided to encourage its employees to accept individual employment agreements [IEA's] paying an extra 3% in wages, not for skill or effort, but for not being a member of the union, it has also verbally promised those accepting IEA's that they will not be laid off plus will receive a \$1,000 attendance bonus for 98% attendance. The Union is encouraging members to remain in the core collective agreement as this gives them long term stability and protection in a meat industry that is totally "uncertain". Many members have been affected by the

method Affco adopted during recent seasonal layoffs. Members of the Union have been disadvantaged as a result of being laid off, while other workers on individual employment agreements, many of whom have had very short service, have not been laid off.

The Union filed an application in the Employment Relations Authority to stop the above taking place, following a hearing in Whangarei in February. This matter has now been referred to the Employment Court and will be heard in Auckland on Wednesday 16th of March, if we are successful we believe those who have been wrongly laid off will be able to seek wages for the period of the layoff when workers on individual agreements were working in their place.

Beginning on March 21st will be another Authority hearing dealing with other issues, as the union considers that Affco has breached good faith by working to undermine the Core Collective Agreement.

### Statutory Minimum Wage 1 April - \$13

The Court of Appeal has dismissed Idea Services Ltd Appeal "sleepovers" - This means that for every hour an employer provides work the least you can be paid from the 1st April is \$13 per hour or by piecework. Up till now the Department of Labour has advised Employers they only have to pay an average of \$13 over the week. For example a meat worker earning \$20 an hour for 10 hours but you are required to stay at work for 20 hours, waiting for stock. The employer has to pay you no less than \$330 = 10 x \$20 + 10 x \$13. This would also apply if your Collective Agreement has a weekly minimum wage clause that pays less than \$13, the company has to pay the higher of the two rates. The company has to pay any make up to weekly minimum at no less than \$13 per hour. The current Government may change the Law so that employers are not required to pay per hour.

The NZMWU Head Office pictured below in Christchurch CBD. Ground floor car parking, 1st floor meeting rooms and 2nd floor National Office & Canterbury MWU branch offices. Appears to have sunk at the street entrance. At the time of writing they are unable to use the offices.



- **Terms of Trade index hits a 37- year high.**
- **Export meat prices rose 5.1% in the quarter, or 14.2% for the year. Wool prices jumped 23% in the quarter, or 34% for the year.**
- **The ANZ Commodity Price Index surged another 3.8% over the first month of 2011, to hit yet another new high. Beef 7% & Wool 11% prices, both are now at their highest levels since the start of ANZ series in 1986. Venison up 3% and sheepmeat 1%.**
- **Slaughter numbers. Lamb down 16.1% compared to this time last season. Sheep up 26.7%, cow up 21.2% and total beef up 3.6% (North Island 5.7%, South Island -3.2%).**
- **No final decision has been made on the future of Silver Fern Farms Te Aroha.**