

# Office of the Mayor

29 August 2013



Mr Sam Robinson  
Chairman  
AgResearch Board  
Email: sam.robinson@agresearch.co.nz

Dear Sam

Thank you for taking the time to talk to me this week. I found our conversation positive and productive.

You asked me to provide you with a one-page summary to take to your Board on 30 August, briefly outlining where we are coming from and what the tenor of our submission to the Board is likely to be. Please find below information to that effect.

## **Invermay Summit**

On Wednesday, 14 August, a Summit was held in Dunedin and more than 50 civic, business, farming, union, tangata whenua, tertiary education and science leaders, plus Members of Parliament from Otago and Southland, attended. They came at rather short notice and contributed to a series of workshops that sought to discern a positive way forward.

As you would expect there is strong opposition to the AgResearch proposal for Invermay.

It was decided at the Summit that the Dunedin City Council would co-ordinate a response to the Board and to the Minister for Economic Development Hon Steven Joyce. These pieces of work are nearing completion and from them we can indicate the content of the draft documents.

## **The Submission**

The submission is currently being finalised and will present an authoritative case for enhancing, rather than reducing, the role of Invermay. The key points are:

- The AgResearch proposal has generated substantial regional dismay, much more than one might expect from the loss of 85 jobs from the area.
- We view the proposal as a serious strategic error for New Zealand, both for the primary production industry and for science.
- The removal of animal genetics/genomics/breeding from Dunedin where it has been, and grown, for about 30 years, will have severe negative consequences.
- Comments on other matters including the company's history in restructuring initiatives, campus assets, staff retention, and the relationship with the University of Otago are made.
- We conclude by expressing the hope that the chance may present for us to talk about a more positive future for Invermay.
- This submission is the first of what we hope can be an on-going communication, on paper and face-to-face.

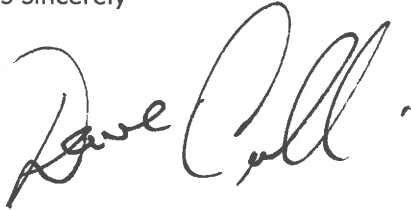
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We envisage that the submission will be circulated widely in the near future, but in the first instance we are very keen to present it to your Board.

We would hope a meeting could be arranged for some time next week. We have undertaken to distribute our submission to regional leaders by 13 September, but feel it would be appropriate to present it to you first. We would be happy to meet with a sub-group of Board members if that is a more realistic option.

We would appreciate you coming back to us as a matter of priority.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave Cull". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D' and a trailing flourish.

Dave Cull  
**Mayor of Dunedin**