

Local farmers leading change

I'VE been speaking with our farmers recently, to understand how they are responding to changes in the environment – most recently Jo Wainer, Rob Liley and Gill and Graeme Nicoll.

Farmers are adapting their methods in response to the changing climate. For some it means calving in Autumn instead of Spring or putting rams in with ewes a month earlier because of changed feed growth patterns. They are monitoring and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

These farmers are stewards of the land and all the creatures which live there. They care about the environment. They fence off bushland, creeks and dams and plant thousands of trees to increase the productivity of the land and provide habitat for wildlife. This keeps the waterways clean and supports diversity in the soil microbes.

Some of this is just good farming, and some is a response to the warming climate. These farmers see a time when Australian agricultural exports will be rejected by other countries because of our low ambition on climate. Key organi-

tural organisations such as the National Farmers' Federation, Meat and Livestock Australia, Dairy Australia, and Australian Pork Ltd are driving research to reduce the impact of the climate on Australian agriculture. Our food exports bring in billions a year and a carbon tax at the borders of Europe and other countries will devastate this market.

As Australia heats up, we must protect the agricultural land of Gippsland. It will become the food bowl for Australia. Australian agriculture is ready to transition to a net zero carbon emissions environment. We may well lose our markets if we don't act.

I wonder what else we should be doing.

That's just as I see it. - Russell Broadbent.

**ALEX SCOTT
AND STAFF**

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