

7 May 2025

GE Free New Zealand
Wellington

For – Jon Muller, Secretary
By Email – jonm123@me.com

Tena koe Jon,

Official Information Act Request – Livestock Feeding Trial

As advised in their letter to you on 29 April 2025, the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) has transferred to AgResearch questions 2-6 of your official information request to the EPA which you made on 28 March 2025. I write to you to respond to those questions, which are set out below with the corresponding answers:

2. How many animals are involved in the trial?

24 sheep were involved in the feeding trial – 12 eating HME ryegrass and 12 eating Null ryegrass (no HME-associated genes/traits)

3. The duration of the trials?

There was only one trial, which ran for 11 days - 7 days in pens + 2 days in crates for acclimation + 2 days in respiration chambers for gas emission measurements.

4. Are they contained in a secure facility?

The sheep were fed in a facility only accessible to suitably trained AgResearch staff. The grass had been processed and rendered non-viable prior to being fed to the sheep, and the sheep have not entered the petfood or human food chain.

5. Will it be approved as a field trial?

AgResearch has not submitted any applications for HME ryegrass to be used in a field trial. Any use of HME ryegrass in a field trial would require the approval of the regulator.

6. When will the required Annual Reports of the trial be available for public view?

Annual reporting for this research is not required. A summary of the findings from the trial are expected to be made publicly available by early-May 2025. A manuscript for peer-reviewed publication in a scientific journal is also currently being prepared.

The balance of the questions you asked in your request (1, 7 and 8) will be addressed by the EPA directly with you.

AgResearch Limited
NZBN: 9429 038 966 224

Corporate Office and
Lincoln Research Centre
19 Ellesmere Junction Road, Lincoln 7674,
Private Bag 4749, Christchurch 8140
T +64 3 321 8800

Ruakura Research Centre
10 Bisley Road, Hamilton 3214
Private Bag 3121, Hamilton 3240
T +64 7 856 2836

Grasslands Research Centre, Hopkirk
Research Institute, Te Ohu Rangahau Kai
Tennent Drive, Palmerston North 4410
Private Bag 11008, Palmerston North 4442
T +64 6 356 8019

Invermay Agricultural Centre
176 Puddle Alley, Mosgiel 9092
Private Bag 50034, Mosgiel 9053
T +64 3 489 3809

If you wish to discuss any aspect of our response, please feel free to contact me.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of our response. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely,

Nick Barraclough
Chief Legal Counsel