IN THE ENVIRONMENT COURT I MUA I TE KOOTI TAIAO O AOTEAROA

IN THE MATTER

of the Resource Management Act

1991 (the Act)

AND

of appeals under clause 14(1) of the

Schedule 1 to the Act

BETWEEN

FEDERATED FARMERS OF NEW

ZEALAND

(ENV-2019-AKL-000063)

WESTERN BAY OF PLENTY

DISTRICT COUNCIL

(ENV-2019-AKL-000070)

HORTICULTURE NEW ZEALAND

(ENV-2019-AKL-000072)

Appellants

AND

BAY OF PLENTY REGIONAL

COUNCIL

Respondent

Environment Judge D A Kirkpatrick sitting alone under s 279 of the Act IN CHAMBERS at Auckland

CONSENT ORDER

- [A] Under s 279(1)(b) of the Resource Management Act 1991, the Environment Court, by consent, <u>orders</u> that:
 - (1) the appeals are allowed subject to the amendments set out in this order;
 - (2) the consent order resolves the following aspects of the Appellants' appeals:



- (a) Western Bay of Plenty District Council reasons for appeal and relief sought as set out in paragraphs 18-29, and 38-41 of the appeal;
- (b) Horticulture New Zealand appeal points 4(insofar as it requests the insertion of a new clause (e)), 6, 11 and Appendix 1 of the appeal;
- (c) Federated Farmers of New Zealand Appeal paragraphs 7(h), paragraph 10 (to the extent it is relevant to the appeal point), and Schedule 1 appeal point (h).
- [B] Under s 285 of the Resource Management Act 1991, there is no order as to costs.

REASONS

Introduction

[1] These appeals concern the Bay of Plenty Regional Council's (**Regional** Council) decisions on Proposed Plan Change 13 (Air Quality) to the Bay of Plenty Natural Resources Plan (**Plan Change 13**).

Agrichemical Spraying

- [2] Western Bay of Plenty District Council (**Western Bay**), Horticulture New Zealand (**Hort NZ**) and Federated Farmers of New Zealand (**Federated Farmers**) have appealed the Regional Council's decisions on Plan Change 13 in relation to the agrichemical policy and rule.
- [3] Federated Farmers sought amendments to setback distances in rule AQ R15 and other changes to that rule.
- [4] Western Bay sought rationale for, or a reduction in the height for drone application of agrichemicals, changes to the notification conditions for spraying, and amendments to the definition of 'public amenity area' as it related to spraying activities.
- [5] Hort NZ sought amendments to Policy AQ P8 to ensure that best practice for agrichemical applications is used; and a number of changes to Rule AQ R15 to reflect best practice, competency, signage and notification. It also sought



changes to Policy AQ P3 by the insertion of a new clause (e), but in respect of its application to agrichemical spraying.

- [6] The parties have agreed that the appeal points can be resolved by making the following amendments to Plan Change 13:
 - (a) Amending Policy AQ P8;
 - (b) Amending Rule AQ R15 by:
 - (i) Reinstating the drone application height of 5 metres and providing a further advice note reminding users of the need to comply with Civil Aviation Authority regulations;
 - (ii) Providing for persons carrying out spraying of agrichemicals to hold either GROWSAFE® certification or a qualification meeting minimum stated requirements (to be contained in a new Schedule [X]);
 - (iii) Providing clarification around signage requirements, particularly in relation to road spraying and on private property;
 - (iv) Providing further clarification around spray risk management plan requirements.
 - (c) Including a new Schedule [X] in relation to minimum stated requirements, as outlined above under paragraph 6(b)(ii).
- [7] All s 274 parties to the aspects of the appeals settled by this consent order have signed the memorandum of the parties setting out the relief sought.
- [8] In making this order the Court has read and considered the appeals and the joint memorandum of the parties dated 24 April 2020.
- [9] The Court is making this order under s 279(1)(b) of the Act, such order being by consent, rather than representing a decision or determination on the merits pursuant to s 297 of the Act. The Court understands for all present purposes that:
 - (a) all parties to the proceedings have executed the memorandum requesting this order; and



(b) all parties are satisfied that all matters proposed for the Court's endorsement fall within the Court's jurisdiction, and conform to relevant requirements and objectives of the Resource Management Act 1991, including in particular Part 2.

Order

- [10] Therefore, the Court orders, by consent, that Plan Change 13 (Air Quality) to the Bay of Plenty Natural Resources Plan is amended to provide amendments to Policy AQ P8 and Rule AQ R15 as shown in **Appendix A** of this order.
- [11] A clean version is included in **Appendix B**.

[12] There is no order for costs.

DATED at Auckland this

day of

2020



D A Kirkpatrick Environment Judge

APPENDIX A - tracking in underline and strikethrough

1. Amend Policy AQ P8 as follows:

AQ P8 Agrichemical spraying — Te tōrehu matū ahuwhenua

Agrichemical sprayers will manage adverse *effects* on human health and the *environment* by:

- (a) Avoiding spray drift beyond the boundary of the **subject property** and into non target *water bodies* where reasonably practicable; and
- (b) <u>Mitigating and/or minimising adverse effects</u> particularly on sensitive areas where avoidance of spray drift is not possible; <u>and</u>
- Managing agrichemical spraying activities according to the risk of spray drift becoming noxious or dangerous, offensive or objectionable; and
- (d) Requiring encouraging best practice is used in all agrichemical applications; to manage potential adverse effects on air quality; and
- (e) <u>Minimising the discharge of contaminants into areas beyond the boundary of the subject property in order to avoid, remedy, or mitigate adverse effects.</u>

2. Amend Rule AQ R15 as follows:

AQ R15 Agrichemical spraying – Permitted — Tōrehu matūahuwhenua – E whakaaehia ana

All discharges of *contaminants* to air from the use of **agrichemicals** under any part of this rule must comply with the following conditions:

(1) General use of agrichemicals

- (a) The discharge must not be noxious or dangerous, offensive or objectionable beyond the boundary of the **subject property**, in any non-target *water body*, or in any non-target watercourse listed in Schedule 3 of this regional plan.
- (b) Where the use of the **agrichemical** is for the prevention, eradication or management of unwanted organisms or pests, the **agrichemical** must be used under the direction of the responsible authority under the Biosecurity Act 1993.
- (c) Where the agrichemical is sprayed using drone application, the drone must not operate more than 40 5 metres above the tallest point of the target to be sprayed while agrichemicals are being distributed from the drone. If this condition cannot be complied with, the spray method is aerial application, and conditions relevant to aerial application must be complied with.
- (d) Persons carrying out spraying of **agrichemicals**, other than the use of hand-held application methods, must <u>hold a Growsafe certification or have a qualification that meets the requirements of Schedule X.</u> be certified by an industry approved training programme, designed to encourage best practice to prevent spray drift in accordance with New Zealand Standard 8409:2004 (or its replacement or amendment).



(2) Method of application of agrichemicals

- (a) The discharge of *contaminants* into air from **agrichemical** spraying using **hand-held non-motorised application** methods is a permitted activity provided conditions 3(a) and 4(d) are complied with.
- (b) Hand-held motorised application methods or application methods using a low pressure boom is a permitted activity provided conditions 3(a), 3(d), 3(e), 4(c), 4(d), are complied with.
- (c) Any other application method is a permitted activity provided conditions 3(a), 3(b), 3(c),3(e), 4(a), 4(b), 4(c), 4(d), 5(a), 5(b), 5(c) and 5(d) are complied with.

(3) Signage

Where specified by condition (2), the following conditions apply:

- (a) Where agrichemicals are sprayed on public amenity areas signs must be displayed at every entrance where the public usually have entry to the area where the agrichemical is being sprayed (except where the entrance is from private property). Where agrichemicals are sprayed on other areas, signs must be displayed at the main entrance to the property. Signs required by this condition must clearly state:
 - (i) "CAUTION SPRAYING IN PROGRESS" or similar wording
 - (ii) the name and type of agrichemical used
 - (iii) a start and end date for spray operations
 - the name and phone number of the person carrying out the spraying
 - (v) that while signs are in place, it is not safe to enter.
- (b) Where agrichemicals are sprayed within 50 metres of any public amenity area (ground-based application or drone application complying with condition 1(c)) or 200 metres (aerial application excluding drone application complying with condition 1(c)), signs must be prominently displayed on the boundary of the public amenity area and must clearly state "caution spraying in progress" or similar wording.
- (c) Signs required by 3(a) or 3(b) should remain in place until all airborne spray has settled and the **agrichemical** has dried on its target surface. Signs must be removed within 5 days once the area is safe to re-enter.
- (d) Any vehicles being used to apply agrichemical spray on public amenity areas or public roads must display prominent signs front and back that clearly state "CAUTION – SPRAYING IN PROGRESS" or similar wording.
- (e) Where agrichemicals are sprayed on private property signs stating "CAUTION SPRAYING IN PROGRESS" must be placed at the entrance to the property, and be removed within 5 days from completion of spraying. In addition a sign must be displayed at the entrance of the property stating as minimum the following:
 - (i) The name of agrichemical used
 - (ii) The date for commencement of spray operations
 - (iii) the date when it is safe to re-enter the property and that it is not safe to enter until this date
 - (iv) the name and phone number of the person carrying out the spraying.



(4) Notification

Where specified by condition (2), the following conditions apply:

(a) The owner/occupier or agent must notify the occupier of any properties within 50 metres (ground-based application or drone application complying with condition 1(c)) and 200 metres (aerial application excluding drone application complying with condition 1(c)) of where the agrichemical is being sprayed:

EITHER

- (i) by notification, required no earlier than 72 hours, or no earlier than 20 days for spraying carried out on plantation forestry or in a conservation area, and no later than 12 hours before the agrichemical spraying. Notification must include the following:
 - the address and location of proposed application
 - the date/s of proposed application
 - name and type of agrichemical to be applied
 - name and phone number of person carrying out the spraying.

OR

- (ii) according to a notification agreement with the occupier. The notification agreement must:
 - contain (as a minimum) method of notification and minimum time for notification prior to spraying
 - be recorded in writing and signed by all parties
 - be reviewed and re-signed annually.
- (b) Details of notification (including but not limited to date and time of notification, parties notified, method of notification) must be recorded.
- (c) Where **agrichemical** spraying is being carried out by any person other than the owner/occupier or agent responsible for notification, the person carrying out the spraying must confirm that notification requirements have been met before spraying takes place.
- (d) Where agrichemicals are sprayed on public amenity areas or public roads, the owner/occupier or agent must publish on a publicly available webpage notify (according to section 2AB(1)(a) of the Act) the agrichemical spraying no earlier than 10 days, or no earlier than 20 days for spraying carried out on plantation forestry or in a conservation area, and no later than 24 hours before the agrichemical spraying. Notification must include the following information:
 - (i) The name and type of agrichemical used.
 - (ii) A start and end date for spray operations.
 - (iii) Contact details of the authority responsible for the spraying.
- (5) Spray Risk Management Plan

Where specified by condition (2), the following conditions apply:

(a) Prior to the agrichemical spraying, a spray risk management plan must be prepared and implemented by the owner/occupier or agent.



- (b) The spray risk management plan must contain the following information:
 - (i) A plan or map identifying the location of any sensitive areas and public roads within 50 metres of the land being sprayed by ground based application or drone application (complying with condition 1(c)), or within 200 metres of the land being sprayed by aerial application (excluding drone application complying with condition 1(c)).
 - (ii) Areas to be sprayed, type of **agrichemical** likely to be used during the year and the times of year that spraying is likely to occur.
 - (iii) Strategies used to avoid contamination of sensitive areas and public roads including consideration of the Draft Hazard Guidance Chart contained within Table G1 to NZS 8409:2004.
 - (iv) Strategies to mitigate any spray drift caused by particular weather conditions,
 - (v) Strategies to manage any specific hazard associated with the agrichemical to be sprayed (eg. toxicity to bees).
- (c) The spray risk management plan must be reviewed and updated each year that spraying will be carried out.
- (d) The spray risk management plan must be made available to the Regional Council and to any party located within a sensitive area as identified in the spray risk management plan upon request within 20 working days of such a request being made.

Advice Note: This rule manages the air discharge component of **agrichemical** use. Users must also comply with all other rules in this regional plan (see DW Discharges to Water and Land). Other matters that should be considered when using **agrichemicals** include: certification, personal protection equipment, storage, transport, and disposal. Users (particularly large-scale) should also comply with the New Zealand Standard Management of Agrichemicals NZS 8409:2004.

<u>Users applying agrichemicals using drones should also comply with Civil Aviation Authority regulations.</u>

For the purposes of AQ R15 "public road" means any road which the public have permission to access and use, and includes footpaths, berms and cycle-lanes in the road.

3. Provide a new Schedule [X] detailing training requirements as follows:

Schedule X – Training requirements: Application of Agrichemicals

A training programme as referred to in Rule AQ R15(1)(d) must meet the following specifications:

- Structure of the programme
- Content of the programme
- Assessment of competency.

Structure of the programme:

- 1. The training programme will include delivery of the contents set out below.
- 2. The training programme and provider of such training should be regularly reviewed and appraised by a suitably qualified or experienced external party to ensure ongoing quality and relevance of training;
- 3. The assessment process will be moderated to ensure that it adequately addresses matters covered in the course.



- 4. The programme will certify competency on the matters set out in the contents below for a period of five years which will then be reviewed through a refresher programme.
- 5. The programme provider will provide a copy of training materials to the Regional Council.

Content of the programme

The training programme should include as a minimum, and users will demonstrate competency in, the following:⁴

- 1. The hazard classifications of agrichemicals to be used and related requirements;
- 2. Adverse effects that could be caused by agrichemicals;
- 3. Relevant regulatory requirements including Regional Plan;
- 4. Agrichemical best practice for the safe, responsible and effective use of agrichemicals based on NZS8409:2004 Management of Agrichemicals as follows:

| <u>Topic</u> | Relevant sections of NZS8409:2004 |
|--|--|
| Managing environmental risks from discharges to air | Section 2 Management of Agrichemicals Section 5 Use of Agrichemicals |
| Property spray plans | Section 5 Use of Agrichemicals and Appendix M Notification |
| <u>Notification</u> | Section 5 Use of Agrichemicals and Appendix M Notification and Signage |
| <u>Signage</u> | Section 5 Use of Agrichemicals and Appendix M Notification and Signage |
| Operating equipment – nozzle selection and calibration, mixing sites | Section 5 Use of Agrichemicals and Appendix Q Application Equipment and Appendix R Handling and Mixing Agrichemicals |
| Minimising spray drift | Section 5 Use of Agrichemicals 5.3.4 and Appendix G Spray Drift Hazard |
| Record keeping – inventory, spray diaries, tracking | Section 2 Management of Agrichemicals 2.6 Documentation and Appendix C Section 5 Use of Agrichemicals 5.3.5 |

Assessment of competency:

A course participant should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the contents of the course through either a practical, verbal or written assessment.



⁴ A training programme may include other components relating to requirements of other agencies and legislation, such as WorkSafe and health and safety. However, such components are not part of the competency required to meet the objectives, policies and rules of the Air Quality Chapter of this regional plan.

APPENDIX B - clean

Amend Policy AQ P8 as follows:

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Agrichemical sprayers will manage adverse *effects* on human health and the *environment* by:

- (a) Avoiding spray drift beyond the boundary of the **subject property** and into non target *water bodies* where reasonably practicable; and
- (b) Mitigating and/or minimising adverse effects particularly on sensitive areas where avoidance of spray drift is not possible; and
- (c) Managing agrichemical spraying activities according to the risk of spray drift becoming noxious or dangerous, offensive or objectionable; and
- (d) Requiring best practice is used in all agrichemical applications; and
- (e) Minimising the discharge of contaminants into areas beyond the boundary of the subject property in order to avoid, remedy, or mitigate adverse effects.

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- (b) Where the use of the agrichemical is for the prevention, eradication or management of unwanted organisms or pests, the agrichemical must be used under the direction of the responsible authority under the Biosecurity Act 1993.
- (c) Where the agrichemical is sprayed using drone application, the drone must not operate more than 5 metres above the tallest point of the target to be sprayed while agrichemicals are being distributed from the drone. If this condition cannot be complied with, the spray method is aerial application, and conditions relevant to aerial application must be complied with.
- (d) Persons carrying out spraying of agrichemicals, other than the use of hand-held application methods, must hold a Growsafe certification or have a qualification that meets the requirements of Schedule X.





- (a) The discharge of contaminants into air from agrichemical spraying using hand-held non-motorised application methods is a permitted activity provided conditions 3(a) and 4(d) are complied with.
- (b) Hand-held motorised application methods or application methods using a low pressure boom is a permitted activity provided conditions 3(a), 3(d), 3(e), 4(c), 4(d), are complied with.
- (c) Any other application method is a permitted activity provided conditions 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(e), 4(a), 4(b), 4(c), 4(d), 5(a), 5(b), 5(c) and 5(d) are complied with.

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- (d) The spray risk management plan must be made available to the Regional Council and to any party located within a sensitive area as identified in the spray risk management plan upon request within 20 working days of such a request being made.

Advice Note: This rule manages the air discharge component of **agrichemical** use. Users must also comply with all other rules in this regional plan (see DW Discharges to Water and Land). Other matters that should be considered when using **agrichemicals** include: storage, transport, and disposal. Users (particularly large-scale) should also comply with the New Zealand Standard Management of Agrichemicals NZS 8409:2004.

Users applying **agrichemicals** using **drones** should also comply with Civil Aviation Authority regulations.

For the purposes of AQ R15 "public road" means any road which the public have permission to access and use, and includes footpaths, berms and cycle-lanes in the road.

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Schedule X – Training requirements: Application of Agrichemicals

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- Content of the programme
- Assessment of competency.

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- 3. The assessment process will be moderated to ensure that it adequately addresses matters covered in the course.



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- The programme provider will provide a copy of training materials to the Regional Council.

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| Topic | Relevant sections of NZS8409:2004 |
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