



AGRICULTURE &
NATURAL RESOURCES STUDY TOUR

to

AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

(February 5th-25th, 2007)

Organized by



INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURE

Trip's Purpose

Learning about and experiencing agriculture “down under”. Special emphasis on livestock agriculture, grazing, and getting out on the land and talking to producers to find out how and why Australian and New Zealand farms do what they do so well. The fact that New Zealand has no farm subsidies and Australia has very few creates a different attitude and action by their farmers and the farm industry.

We'll spend eleven days traveling in Australia, starting in the south at Melbourne, in the state of Victoria, and working our way north to Sydney. We'll visit beef, sheep and dairy operations on our way to Bega, on the east coast, where we'll visit a Wisconsin farmer who bought a dairy farm and has been operating it for the last two years. Then we head inland across the Snowy Mountains (“true” Man From Snowy River” county) to Wagga Wagga, in the heart of livestock country, where we'll visit a large livestock auction market and have our first “farm stay”. Then it's back east to Canberra, the federal capital, with visits to art galleries, war memorials and special gardens. We've also planned a farm tour and pasture walk at a friend's farm, on our way to Sydney. After a day in Sydney for gift shopping and a tour of the city, we head to New Zealand.

Our nine days of travel in New Zealand will start on the south island at Christchurch. We will make farm visits and also tour Lincoln University with its 50 bale rotary parlor and ground water pollution studies. The next two days will include beef and sheep farm visits and a stop at a 1,000-cow dairy farm, converted from a sheep operation a few years ago. We will also visit an abattoir that specializes in exporting, and we'll have our second farm stay. We then fly to Wellington, with farm industry and city visits including a terrific museum of natural history. More farm visits, a stop at Massey University for a discussion of New Zealand's animal tracking project and then on to Rotorua for Maori culture, thermal springs and the Agrodome. The last night will include a special dinner in Auckland after a tour of the city before departing for home.

Your fellow travelers will include dairy, beef, and sheep producers, extension and natural resource conservation personnel, and others in farming support industries like fence builders, equipment suppliers, etc. This tour is a significant investment of both time and money and we have organized the trip to be as useful as possible. If you think it's too long or costs too much, remember that over 1/3 of the cost is just getting down under and the extra days in the country don't add that much cost. Who can be gone for three weeks? We have learned that even with a farm or job, life goes on without us (often fairly well), and if you don't go now, when will you go on this once in a lifetime learning experience?



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General Information

- B- Breakfast L- Lunch D-Dinner
- Hotel/Motels 3-4 star based on twin share
- Breakfast daily
- Experienced tour managers, Australian guide is a cattle producer and sustainable grazing expert.
- All entrances, technical visits and seminars, and background material included

For more information:

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Reservation Form

 **Yes, I plan to join the 2007
Australia/ New Zealand Study Tour**

Name _____

Occupation _____

Address _____

Tel: _____

Fax: _____

Email: _____

Name(s) of persons who will accompany you:

**Enclosed is a deposit of \$300x (Number of
participants) = \$ _____**

**Make check payable to:
Michigan State University**

**Please mail this reservation form along with
your deposit to:**

**Michigan State University
Institute of International Agriculture
319 Agriculture Hall
East Lansing, MI 48824-1039**

Trip Cost

The cost of the 21 day study tour will be \$6250 per person based on double occupancy. The cost includes round trip air fare from Chicago O'Hare airport to Australia, air travel to New Zealand, return flight to Chicago and all transportation within country. This cost also includes all lodging, guides, entrance fees, and most of the meals. (see itinerary for meal detail). Single supplement cost is \$830.00

Personal expenses such as departure taxes, laundry, passports, and telephone are extra. Participation will be limited to 30 people. We will utilize a first come first serve basis for participants.

You will be hosted on this study tour by Andy Hager, retired Wisconsin Extension agent, Holistic Management educator, and grazing specialist, and Ben Bartlett, MSU Educator and beef and sheep producer, and their wives. Andy and Ben have previously traveled in Australia and New Zealand and feel their "down under" experience and contacts will make this a rewarding and enjoyable experience.

A deposit of \$300 per person, payable by check to Michigan State University, should be sent with your reservation. A \$200 deposit refund will be made if cancellation of your reservation is made at least 90 days (by November 1, 2006) prior to departure. If reservations are cancelled later, there will be no refund of your deposit. Full payment is due 60 days (December 1, 2006) prior to departure. A minimum number of participants is required to conduct this study tour. If the minimum number is not met, the tour will be cancelled and MSU will refund your full deposit.

Each participant must have a valid, US passport. A pre-departure orientation session will be conducted via phone conference. This session will provide reading materials, details of the trip, culture, and currency information.

Itinerary

Monday, February 5 - Depart Chicago, 3:00 pm CST, for US west coast and transfer to Australian flight.

Tuesday, February 6 - In flight over International Date Line

Wednesday, February 7 - Arrive in Melbourne 10:30 am local time. Meet Quadrant Australia tour manager, Christopher Wright, outside customs. You will have an exclusive air conditioned coach for the duration of your Australian stay. Transfer to downtown Melbourne, with overview of program and Australian agriculture en route. Check into centrally located hotel (Travelodge or similar). Time to freshen up before an orientation tour of the city, including the gardens, Melbourne Cricket Ground and the historic centers, and Port Phillip Bay as well as the various cultural villages that make up the cosmopolitan nature of the city. Evening free. Overnight Melbourne.

Thursday, February 8 BLD - Breakfast at hotel. Check out and travel northeast from the city to Healesville, in the Yarra Valley, one of Australia's oldest wine areas, now the center of a revived wine industry, with several vineyards under international ownership. Visit Healesville wildlife sanctuary, with a guided walk and talk on Australia's unique flora and fauna. Depart Healesville traveling east through the Gippsland region of the state of Victoria. Gippsland is one of Australia's important dairy regions, and you will travel via Neerimand Warragul to Bairnsdale, with a dairy and possibly boutique cheese factory visit en route. Overview of Victorian Dairy industry by representative of Victorian Department of Primary industry.

Friday, February 9 BLD - Breakfast at hotel. Depart by coach, traveling east again toward the New South Wales border. Travel through rich farmland supporting dairy cattle, beef production, and meat sheep. Morning tea at scenic Gypsy Point, before traveling to Bega in time for lunch with the Eder family. Afternoon program includes farm visit and seminar on American and Australian dairy comparisons. Dinner in Bega. Overnight Bega.

Saturday, February 10 BLD - Check out and travel west into the highlands and the Monaro region. The Monaro is a moderate altitude area of open plains and rolling hills, with relatively poor soils. Grazing for both beef cattle and sheep for wool production are the main agricultural industries. Visit one of Australia's leading Angus stud farms (seedstock producer) as well as a major Merino wool breeding facility. Demonstration and discussion on Australia's livestock Identification System (NLIS), as well as genetic development within a specific breed. Discussion and demonstrations on farm, followed by lunch. Proceed towards the mountain village of Thredbo, with a cattle facility visit en route. This is "true" Man from Snowy River country immortalized in a number of films and books. Dinner and overnight in the ski village of Thredbo.

Sunday, February 11 BLD - Opportunity to take a chairlift up to the main range for spectacular view of the Kosciusko High Plains and National Park. February, in Australia's summer, offers some of the best times to visit this area with wildflowers in full bloom. Leave Thredbo, and travel through the National Park and west to the city of Albury on the Murray River. This river forms part of the Murray Darling Basin, Australia's main irrigation and agricultural production basin. Discussion and demo of Landcare's sustainable environmental program. Stop at Victorian Winery for tour and perhaps a tasting. Continue on to the Wagga region to meet farm hosts and families. Dinner and overnight on host farm.

Monday, February 12 BLD - Breakfast, lunch and dinner with host farm families. Join in farm activities and enjoy Australian country hospitality with host farm families. Overnight at farm

Tuesday, February 13 BL - Breakfast with host families before bidding farewell and rejoining coach. Travel short distance to Wagga Wagga, one of New South Wales' largest inland cities and center of a major livestock selling facility. Visit facility and learn about Australian stock auction systems of marketing livestock. Lunch en route. Travel to Canberra, and visit a Limousin seedstock producer if time permits. Late afternoon arrive in Canberra and check into hotel.

Wednesday, February 14 BLD - Breakfast at hotel. Full day in Canberra with briefings from Cattle Council and/or National Farmers Federation. Tour Canberra, and visit the world famous War Memorial Museum, National Gallery, and National Museum. More farm visits possible. Dinner with colleagues in Canberra.

Thursday, February 15 BL - Breakfast at hotel. Farm visit at Lake George and have lunch. Continue via Goldburn to Sydney and arrive in the afternoon. Check into hotel located in the Darling Harbor area of Central Sydney. Free evening to enjoy many outdoor restaurants or perhaps a performance at the Sydney Opera House. Overnight Sydney.

Friday, February 16 BLD - Breakfast at hotel. AM sightseeing tour of Sydney, including Bondi beach. Free time to explore. Evening farewell dinner cruise on Sydney harbor. Overnight Sydney

Saturday, February 17 BD - Breakfast at hotel. Flight to Christchurch. Meet coach driver and transfer to your hotel. This evening during dinner, a speaker will provide an overview of New Zealand's low cost pastoral and subsidy free system. The share milking system will also be explained. This will 'set the scene' prior to any visits. Overnight Christchurch

Sunday, February 18 BLD - First farm visit this morning will be to an 1,800 hectare sheep property running 7,000 lambing ewes plus replacements. Ewes are mainly half-bred crossed with a Romney terminal sire plus 800 pure Merino ewes farmed for their wool. 60 hectares have been fenced for deer with 100-200 hectares being used for crops. The farm is all flat with 340 ha under border dyke irrigation. Early lunch on farm then head south to a 'syndicated' 1,170 ha property milking 3,000 cows. Farmed as 3 x 1000 cow separate herds milked through an 80 bail rotary. Irrigated by bore water with a central pivot system. Another property was previously a sheep and cattle property converted to milk 2,500 cows. Return to Christchurch for overnight.

Monday, February 19 BD - This morning visit Lincoln University - view the irrigated dairy unit recently converted from a sheep unit. Later, visit an Alliance Abattoir. Alliance is the main South Island based processor and exporter of sheep, lamb, beef and venison. If the day coincides with a farm consultancy on farm day in the region we can arrange for the group to be included. Return to the Mt. Somers regions to meet your farm hosts for the evening. Dinner and breakfast with your farm host. Overnight farm stay.

Tuesday, February 20 BL - This morning catch an early flight to Wellington. Today enjoy the iconic Te Papa Museum— a very modern, bold and innovative museum. Later visit the Karori Wildlife Sanctuary— a 250 hectare native forest that is predator free (with a state of the art predator fence). See native flora and fauna that have been reintroduced, including rare NZ flightless birds— the Weka and Kiwi. Free afternoon. Overnight Wellington.

Wednesday, February 21 BD - This morning visit the Meat and Wool Association for discussions on the NZ animal tracking project. Commence your journey at Palmerston North, and visit a techno grazing property. 162 ha bull rearing property where bulls are brought in at 18 months and reared to 2 1/2 years. 600-700 bulls are reared per year. Overnight Palmerston North.

Thursday, February 22 BLD - This morning visit New Zealand's largest agricultural university— Massey. Meet with the faculty of your choice. Then on to Rotorua, the Maori cultural and thermal area of New Zealand. Tonight you will enjoy an authentic Maori Pa (meeting place) hangi (feast) and concert. Overnight Rotorua

Friday, February 23 BD - This morning you will visit the Agrodome, an entertaining show illustrating New Zealand's sheep industry. Later see Rainbow Springs to view a Kiwi bird conservation program that is saving the NZ kiwi icon from extinction. Next stop is the Maori Arts and Crafts Institute. Here you will view wood carvers, flax weavers, and see the bubbling mud pools, boiling springs and geysers, and the silica terraces. After a quick lunch depart for Hamilton and visit the Gallagher Group. The group comprises a portfolio of companies centered around innovative animal management and business security systems. The group markets its systems and products through an established network of distribution channels in more than 130 countries. Overnight in Hamilton

Saturday, February 24 BLD - Heading to Auckland today. En route visit a dairy farm that is in its 5th season of Once a Day milking (ODM). The property is 510 acres with 730 Jerseys. The herd is milked through a 40 bail rotary with 140 young stock on farm. Livestock Improvement genetics are used and LIC are starting to identify bulls suited to ODM. Also visit a dairy heifer rearer. Continue through to Auckland— a vibrant city on the shores of the Waitemata Harbor. Your final dinner tonight at a harbourside restaurant. Overnight Auckland.

Sunday, February 25 B - This morning enjoy a sightseeing tour of Auckland and journey to the top of the Sky Tower— the tallest building in Australasia for a magnificent view of this harbor city. Free time before transferring to the Auckland Airport by 5:30 pm.