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It would be refreshing to hear the Feds coming out against the ETS altogether but at least they are pointing out the obvious- why cripple your food producers in a hungry world?

Now they need to get out the message that:

-'carbon' (they really mean CO₂) is not a pollutant,

-does not need to be reduced,

-being 'carbon efficient' is a pointless exercise,

and inject some scientific literacy into their media releases!

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2 July 2012

Emissions Trading Scheme takes one step towards reality

The New Zealand Emissions Trading scheme (ETS) has taken a big step towards forward, yet remains the harshest treatment of any agricultural production system on earth.

?The Government realises even tougher measures would hurt not just agriculture but the wider economy,? says Dr William Rolleston, Federated Farmers Vice-President and climate change spokesperson.

?Both our Chief Executive, Conor English, at the Rio+20 Earth Summit and our President, Bruce Wills, at the World Farmers Organisation, got the same message; targeting primary

food production in ETS-type policies is anathema to sustainable primary food production.

?In a world preoccupied with the survival of their economies and with food security, there is no point in trying to lead where others will not follow.

?Yes biological emissions account for some 47 percent of New Zealand?s emissions profile. They also represent 68.1 percent of our merchandise exports and indeed, 100 percent of the food we eat.

?New Zealand is able to not only feed itself, but produces enough food to feed populations equivalent of Sri Lanka.

?This is why it is positive the Government has listened to Federated Farmers and will keep agricultural biological emissions out of the ETS until at least 2015.

?We have retained the one-for-two surrender obligation we asked for, along with the \$25 fixed price option. Federated Farmers also wanted offsetting for pre-1990 forests and opposed the reduction of pre-1990 forest allocations. The Government has listened to that too, but those who do offset will be penalised.

?We are pleased the Government has chosen not to further complicate matters by imposing additional restrictions on the importation of overseas emissions units.

?Despite what some Opposition parties are likely to say following these changes, our ETS remains the harshest on any agricultural production system, anywhere in the world.

?Unlike other countries where agriculture is given special treatment, farmers here, just like every other business and family, pay the ETS on the fuel and energy we use. This not only impacts a farm?s bottom line, but the cost of turning what we produce into finished goods for export.

?Australia?s new Carbon Tax is really aimed at Australia?s 300 largest companies. Meanwhile, Australian farmers are being financially rewarded for boosting soil carbon levels

on-farm.

?Since 1 January, all agricultural processors in New Zealand have been filing emission returns accounting for agricultural biological emissions. We are still counting emissions no other government is contemplating, including our cousins across the Tasman.

?While agriculture emissions here grew 9.4 percent between 1990 and 2010, the dollar value these generated for NZ Inc exploded almost five-fold. Our sector?s emission growth needs to be put into context alongside a 59 percent increase in electricity emissions and 60 percent for transport.

?What?s more former Labour Cabinet Minister, the Hon David Caygill, found emissions in every single unit of agricultural product have fallen some 1.3 percent each year, for the past 20 years.

?We do not need an ETS to improve our productivity. Global competition has done that for us.

?That New Zealand?s farmers are among the world?s most carbon efficient, is an inconvenient truth New Zealanders are not hearing from Opposition politicians.

?We can do more but that will be through productivity gains and research leadership exemplified by the Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases.

?In a world of increasing food deficit, our hope is for Opposition parties to realise being a carbon efficient food exporter is global leadership,? Dr Rolleston concluded.

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