

5 June 2012

Ms Joanna Spratt
josprattnz@gmail.com

Dear Joanna Spratt

Official Information Act Request re Agri-Diplomacy Support

I refer to your email requesting, under the Official Information Act, information in relation to the agri-diplomacy work being undertaken by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and MFAT's International Development Group (IDG). In particular you requested information on the following:

- What "agri-diplomacy" means;
- What the objective(s) is/are of agri-diplomacy, what sort of work is involved for MFAT and for IDG, and what is being funded under the title of agri-diplomacy;
- Feasibility and/or scoping activities undertaken to inform the development of the agri-diplomacy work.

"AGRI-DIPLOMACY"

Agricultural diplomacy is part of a broader New Zealand Inc. effort to leverage off the country's good reputation internationally for the capability and expertise of its agriculture sector. New Zealand receives many requests from overseas for assistance stemming from this good reputation. Assistance provided ranges from such activities as short study visits to New Zealand, arranged by the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI; formerly the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry), to longer term support for agri-business initiatives in partner countries.

Agri-diplomacy is a dimension of our broader agriculture assistance under the New Zealand Aid Programme. This includes identifying opportunities for the aid programme to build on New Zealand's comparative advantages in agriculture, and the expertise and ideas of our agricultural industry, and to connect these to the needs and opportunities in partner countries.

IDG is currently developing an agriculture sector strategy for the New Zealand Aid Programme, under which any agriculture diplomacy work would sit.

OBJECTIVES

It is more meaningful to provide you with the proposed outcomes of the agriculture sector strategy for the New Zealand Aid Programme rather than with objectives for broader agriculture diplomacy work of NZ Inc. In the aid programme context, "Agricultural Diplomacy" first and foremost means drawing upon appropriate New Zealand expertise in delivering upon such outcomes.

The "high-level" and "intermediate-level" outcomes of the proposed agriculture sector strategy are as follows:

High-Level Outcomes

1. Improved farm and rural incomes
2. Improved food security

Intermediate-Level Outcomes

3. Increased farm productivity
4. Improved integration and efficiency of agricultural value chains
5. Increased sustainability and resilience of agriculture

ACTIVITIES FUNDED UNDER AGRI-DIPLOMACY

The kind of activities that are already being funded under agri-diplomacy are broadly related to:


- Biosecurity
- Horticulture
- Dairying and other types of farming
- High value niche product development

FEASIBILITY AND/OR SCOPING ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN

Key activities we have undertaken, or are planning to undertake, to inform our agriculture sector assistance include the following:

- Consultation with agriculture industry stakeholders
- An agri-business Request for Information issued in 2011 to seek project ideas and concepts from New Zealand companies and agriculture research organisations
- The use of agriculture consultants to provide expert advice to the New Zealand Aid Programme
- A Pacific agri-business scoping visit to Vanuatu and Samoa.

Yours sincerely



Barbara Williams
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade