

From The Editor

For the first time since the 1980's the DIAA (through the Australian Deer Horn P/L) was not directly involved with the collection of deer antler. Some people, generally the small growers, were concerned about the possibility of bad outcomes stemming from the lack of concern for growers when dealing with road buyers. Others thought the lack of competition would push down prices or payments would be slow. There was genuine fear that the system would collapse. The ADH P/L Board were aware of these possibilities but did not feel that the risks were so great that they should not proceed with a similar system used last year. All went well and, with ADH P/L not taking part in the collection of velvet, the grower automatically saved themselves 2%. Many thanks to the McKinnons and Tasman Velvet Processors Ltd for presenting growers with their money within two weeks. Thank goodness that the people who make decisions about velvet grading have simplified the system but I feel there is still more room for further grading efficiencies!!

The next velvet collection time will be in February 2014.

We have included in this issue a couple of forms that will hopefully aid members with their membership and velvet accreditation audit updates. We hope to have these forms available for download from the net in the near future.

The SA Branch has gone all out to host the AGM/Conference next year. There is an advertisement on P.6 which gives you a rough idea of dates. Please let Marika know well in advance if you intend to go to the AGM which will be held in mid-May 2014.

Michael Coffin has sent in a very interesting article about how some interrelated facets of velvet production affect each other. His theory is that stags may well be able to predict and react to future weather conditions which in turn affects their antler production. Michael comes to this conclusion based on serious long-term record keeping.

In the last issue, I indicated that I would write a small piece about Buxton Red Deer Farm - a farm without a pure red deer. I hope that readers will find the story interesting even though it is a condensed version.

I wish all members of the DIAA a safe Christmas and a happy 2014.