

Westland District Council Press Release

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Subject: AgFest

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Council disappointed at decision to move AgFest to Greymouth but open to future collaboration

Mayor Bruce Smith says “AgFest is a wonderful celebration of the rural sector and we’re obviously disappointed that the decision has been made for it to be moved to Greymouth.”

Hokitika has held three extremely successful Agricultural Festivals in the past which have been great for the local community.

Indeed, the Westland district’s largest employer, Westland Milk Products, is an agricultural co-operative, and agriculture makes up a statistically significant part of the Westland district’s Gross Domestic Product.

Furthermore, Farmlands, the major sponsor of AgFest is also located in Hokitika, so Westland district’s interest and connection with this event is exceptionally strong.

Bruce Smith says “We’ve worked very collaboratively with the festival organisers and we’ve offered both the Hokitika airport and Cass Square as potential venues for this event, as well as the use of additional resources such as fencing and power boxes and stages. We have significant event infrastructure available to assist events like this due to our experience holding major New Zealand events such as the Hokitika WildFoods festival on an annual basis.”

Westland District Council have not cancelled the booking for this event from the calendar so should the need arise for the Council to offer Cass square for the same dates, the Council is available to accommodate this request.

CEO Robin Reeves, adds that “We’re very open to continuing to work with the AgFest co-ordinators and look forward to seeing the event come back to Westland in the future.”

ENDS

Dated at Hokitika this 5th day of July 2017.