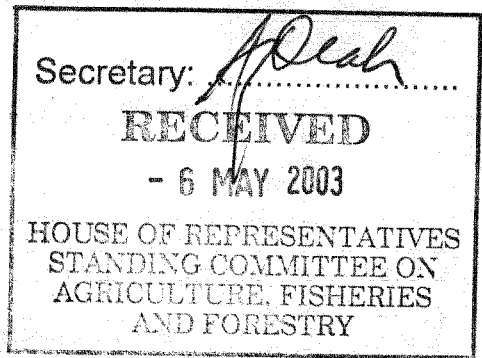


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2nd May 2003

Alex Olah  
Principal Research Officer,  
Standing Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House,  
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Dear Mr Olah,

Thank you for your e-mail of 1st April 2003 in reply to my e-mail of 31st March 2003.

I am sorry I did not get the chance to meet with the Inquiry panel when they were in south-east Queensland but that is not important as long as they obtain the information that I have for them.

Firstly, my Fodder Factory Farm idea is based on the Fodder Factories produced by Peter Ryan of Wingham in New South Wales (<http://www.fodder.factory.com.au>). While he and his staff are producing Fodder Factories for sale, my idea is that moneys be found to build Farms of Fodder Factories in various locations around Australia so that the disastrous effects of drought, fire, flood and dry-land salinity can be reduced or even eliminated from our wide brown land.

As each Fodder Factory produces a crop every eight days I envisage having eight, concrete slabs large enough to take the largest model Fodder Factory (the 960) and a grain silo next to a permanent water supply for each Fodder Factory Farm. Trucks would turn up every day, after the seventh day, to take that day's crop to the graziers in that area.

This will allow for a more economical use of water for the production of fodder as less water:-

- will be needed for each kilogram,
- will be lost to evaporation
- will be lost from seepage past the plant roots to groundwater

because the water use is indoors and controlled.

These Fodder Factory Farms would be organized by government, preferably Commonwealth, with assistance from State and local governments with expertise in local conditions. This does not necessarily mean that funding will come from the taxpayer, it could come from government revenues or from the private sector through corporate sponsorships.

My second idea is to bring Wetzone Engineering fire-fighting airships (<http://www.wetzoneeng.com>) to Australia during our summer months for the purpose of fighting bushfires, aerial rescue operations, watering crops and reforestation work. The advantages of these airships are that they:-

- are so large that they are not affected by updrafts from bushfires as smaller aeroplanes are,
- can carry an enormous load of water and fire retardant that can be delivered at the rate of 10,000 to 20,000 gallons an hour and
- can stay on station 24 hours a day and seven day a week if required.

Therefore, less of our precious reserves of fresh water will be needed to put out bushfires, water crops and pastures, and for reforestation work.

These airships would also prove invaluable for search and rescue operations, traffic monitoring and police work so the cost of bringing them to Australia may be spread over many organizations and jurisdictions.

Hoping these ideas will help the Inquiry's deliberations.

Yours sincerely,

  
Glenn E Fordyce