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## ANDREW HANSEN, PRESIDENT IN WAITING

### By Andrew Hansen President-in-waiting

I have been a deer farmer for over 25 years and now, in conjunction with my son Tim, farm 600 red deer at Orange on the slopes of Mount Canobolas.

We concentrate on venison production, however, we also run a small herd of velvetters.

In the early days I joined NSW Deer Farmers and, for a number of years in the 1990's I was NSW DFA Western Zone representative.

I was closely involved in the establishment of the National Velvet Accreditation Scheme and have been the NVAS NSW representative since its inception.

Most of my working life has been as a partner in a mixed veterinary practice in Orange, retiring from active practice in 2005. I maintain contact with the veterinary profession by serving on a number of committees – animal ethics/Johnes Disease and as a member of the NSW Veterinary Practitioners Board.

During my life in veterinary practice, I serviced a number of deer farms and was involved in several artificial breeding programmes.

In 2000, I completed a masters degree (MVSc) in red deer production.

I have been President of the NSW Branch, and a director of the DIAA for the last two years.

Our industry has all the necessary infrastructure in place. The venison and velvet are both in demand. We now have venison and velvet processors paying a fair price on time. Rain in the eastern states is the best for a decade. What we need is an increase in deer numbers,

NSW is the only state where farmers are required to fill out annual stock returns for the Livestock Health and Pest Authority. In the five years from 2005 to 2009, NSW deer numbers have more than halved, from 23,000 to 10,820. If we lose more deer, we may fall below the critical mass required to sustain our industry.

I encourage farmers to increase their herd size by retaining selected female yearlings rather than sending them to slaughter.

How about having a chat to your ex-deer farmer friends with 'still fenced paddocks', and tell them that demand exists, prices are good and they will be paid! They may be interested in your female yearlings or restock their paddocks rather than buying very expensive ewes or heifers.

Traditional graziers may now be interested in diversifying into deer farming now that we have something to attract their attention.

I look forward to serving you as DIAA president and encourage you to contact me by email [diaa.pres@gmail.com](mailto:diaa.pres@gmail.com) if you have suggestions, comments or constructive criticisms.

