



## SFO investigating Natural Dairy land transactions

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The Serious Fraud Office (SFO) today confirmed that, acting on information received from the Overseas Investment Office (OIO), it had commenced an investigation into transactions between Natural Dairy (NZ) Holdings Ltd (Natural Dairy) and UBNZ Trustee Ltd; UBNZ Assets Holdings Ltd; UBNZ Funds Management Ltd (the UBNZ group)

SFO Chief Executive, Adam Feeley, said "We have received information from the OIO, together with materials received from other sources, to be satisfied that a "Part I Investigation" under the SFO Act is warranted; that is to say that an investigation into transactions involving Natural Dairy and the UBNZ group may disclose serious or complex fraud."

The transactions in question are the proposed sale and purchase of a number of dairy farms (commonly known as the "Crafar farms") currently in receivership.

Mr Feeley said that the SFO was conscious of the possible impact of its actions, and for this reason the initial investigation would be carried out with all reasonable haste.

"After the initial investigation and report, we will decide whether there are reasonable grounds to believe an offence involving serious and complex fraud may have been committed and, if warranted, undertake a further, in-depth investigation under the powers of Part II of the SFO Act."

Mr Feeley said that due to commercial and other sensitivities, the SFO would not be commenting further on the matter until the investigation had concluded.

#### For further information

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Serious Fraud Office  
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#### The role of the Serious Fraud Office

The Serious Fraud Office (SFO) was established in 1990 under the Serious Fraud Act in response to the collapse of financial markets in New Zealand at that time.

The SFO operates under two sets of investigative powers. Part 1 of the SFO Act provides that it may act where the Director "has reason to suspect that an investigation into the affairs of any person may disclose serious or complex fraud."

Part 2 of the SFO Act provides the SFO with more extensive powers where: "...the Director has reasonable grounds to believe that an offence involving serious or complex fraud may have been committed..."

The SFO's Statement of Intent 2010-2012 sets out the SFO's three year strategy and goals for contributing towards the Government's Justice and Economic Development goals. It is available online at [http://www.sfo.govt.nz/f56,555/SFO\\_Statement\\_of\\_Intent\\_2010.pdf](http://www.sfo.govt.nz/f56,555/SFO_Statement_of_Intent_2010.pdf)

