



NZ Game Animal Council, SCI (NZ), NZPHGA Media Statement

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Hunting industry requires domestic support

New Zealand's guided hunting industry has been severely impacted by COVID-19 and is appealing for support from domestic hunters looking for a unique hunting experience.

"Guided hunting was worth over \$50 million a year to the New Zealand economy and provided primarily international visitors with fantastic Kiwi hunting experiences on both private and public land," says Game Animal Council General Manager Tim Gale. "It has also been an extremely important employer in provincial regions and has a low impact on our environment."

"It really has been a New Zealand tourism success story."

"The reality is with COVID-19 having decimated the international tourist market hunting guides, game estates and other commercial operators are facing a very uncertain time and many may be forced to consider their future in the industry," says Safari Club International New Zealand President Mike Knowles.

"With New Zealand leading the world in combatting COVID-19, the recovery period presents a unique opportunity for New Zealand hunters to get out there and support local New Zealand businesses while having some fantastic hunting experiences."

"Our members would love to take Kiwi hunters on guided hunts, where they can go after the trophy of a lifetime or put high quality free-range meat in the freezer," says Knowles. "At the same time, they can learn new hunting skills from some of the very best hunters in New Zealand."

Many hunting operators are reconfiguring their offerings to cater to the different skills, experience and budgets of domestic hunters.

New Zealand Professional Hunting Guides Association President James Cagney explains that the travel and logistics of going hunting can be difficult and typically involve a significant investment in both money and time.

“With many hunters having less time on their hands due to work commitments post-COVID-19, the benefit of going on a guided hunt is that they can maximise the time they have with the best possible opportunity for success.”

“This applies to both managed herds on private land as well as using local guides to hunt for high quality animals on public conservation land.”

While Kiwi hunters are rightfully proud of our ‘get-out-there and do-it-yourself’ attitude there will be many that have often thought they would like to do a trip with a guide or on a game estate,” says Tim Gale. “Well, there will never be a better time, and what better justification is there than to help support Kiwi businesses struggling in the aftermath of COVID-19.”

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