

CERES^{NZ}
ENVIRONMENTAL

All done and dusty

by Robyn Edie

The Southland Times

Te Karere o Murihiku



\$50,000 giveaway
Win 1 of 100
Vegepods

Find the daily code inside and enter at stuff.co.nz/vegepod

Doughnut disturb
Three mini wonders **LIFE**



All done and dusty

Here's the demolition crew who brought down the 43 buildings in the first stage of the Invercargill CBD redevelopment.

The crew, from back left, of Victor Shaw, Jake De Clifford, Chris Morris, Rachel Finnegan, Ian Burrell, Di Rizzi, with Phil Robertson in front, are part of the Ceres Environmental New Zealand workforce, which has its head office in the United States.

Demolition of the Invercargill CBD redevelopment area started in January, was halted during the Covid-19 lockdown, and was finished on Saturday morning.

Invercargill Central Ltd project manager Geoff Cotton says: "The demolition went according to plan."

ROBYN EDIE/STUFF

Get competing, says Parker



Skills shortage
Evan Harding
evan.harding@stuff.co.nz

Trade and Export Growth Minister David Parker has taken what he says is a "hard-arse" approach to concerns the Government isn't doing enough to bring overseas workers into New Zealand.

Sectors facing skills shortages include shearers, agriculture machinery contractors and the horticulture industry, which will soon need fruit pickers.

Parker was questioned on the issue yesterday by Southland Chamber of Commerce president

Neil McAra during a trade breakfast hosted by Export Southland in Invercargill.

McAra said it was a major concern that not enough was being done to bring skilled workers into the country during the Covid-19 pandemic, in a safe manner, to ensure the affected sectors weren't under-resourced.

Parker said: "I am a hard-arse there. Compete for labour - that's my first and strongest message."

McAra said there was a "short-term market gap". But Parker said there had been a medium-term market aberration caused by low-cost immigration into New Zealand that had under-



Trade Minister
David Parker
yesterday told employers to "compete for labour".

mined wages, particularly in tourism and some other industries.

He said the Government would "probably not" get lots of workers through the border for seasonal and other work this year, given overseas experience had shown it was very hard not to have holes in border systems during Covid.

"We also have a Bill of Rights and constitutional obligations to returning New Zealanders."

There was already a constraint on the return of New Zealanders due to the limited number of places with managed isolation facilities, he said.

Unemployment was higher in New Zealand than it had been in years and those people could be employed and trained to do the work, he suggested.

He also suggested affected industries could ask universities to change their semesters to coincide with seasonal peaks.

"There's lots of things that can be done but it's going to be a tough business for people relying on imported labour for the next year, until we get a vaccine [for Covid]."

Parker was also asked about the aquaculture industry by Rex Chapman, a member of the Southland aquaculture working group.

The group applauded the Government on its aquaculture strategy, but the impediment to growth was the regulatory framework in the Resource Management Act, Chapman said.

Parker said the group should bring a "realistic model" to the Government regarding the renting out of aquaculture farming space.

The group's chairman, Mark O'Connor, later said its concern was that there didn't seem to be an urgency from the Government to take the strategy forward.



The Southland Times

All done and dusty