

Inside Dairy

April 2018

Your levy in action

LOVE YOUR JOB?

Tips for creating
a great workplace

PROTECT
OUR FUTURE.

Biosecurity submission form
inside – please respond to
have your say.



Nitrate leaching
Humble weed an unlikely hero?

Milksmart 2018
Saving farmers time and money

DairyNZ



over the fence...

This edition of *Inside Dairy* is dedicated to building a great workplace and creating a motivated team.

It's something I'm personally passionate about as I know from my years of being a chief executive that you're only as good as the people around you.

Building a strong, engaged and quality workplace, where people get up excited about the day ahead, go the extra mile and support you in what you're trying to achieve, is the crux of any good workplace.

And it takes time, patience, care, effort and constant attention. It takes recruiting the right people, treating them well and investing in them. It takes managing poor performance quickly. Sounds easy, right? As many of you will know, it's never quite as simple as that.

In this edition, we hear from farmers with advice on what works for them and what they've learnt over the years. We explore the vast array of DairyNZ tools and training available to support you, and some tips we've picked up along the way.

Keeping the focus on what needs to be delivered is also crucial and, to this end, I want to share with you some of the changes happening at DairyNZ.

I believe that to deliver the best DairyNZ for you, we need to constantly review what we're doing and how we're doing it. It's vital we make sure we're delivering the right stuff to our farmers that supports the vision and actions for the future of dairy, outlined in the *Dairy Tomorrow* strategy.

To do this, I've just completed a restructure to bring a new focus on how DairyNZ delivers extension activities. Through the newly formed Farm Performance Group, you'll begin to see some changes in how we provide the information you want, in a way you want to receive it.

This is a time of renewed effort, sharpened focus and working towards a united vision – something you'll read all about in this *Inside Dairy*.

As always, I welcome your feedback – please email me tim.mackle@ceo.dairynz.co.nz

Tim Mackle
Chief executive
DairyNZ



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On the cover: Carterton farmer Clarence Stolte (centre on cover) with farm assistant Noah Firth (left) and herd manager John Simpson (right). This photo was taken while the motorbikes were stationary, both farmers have helmets to wear but removed these for the photo.

TAKE 5... TIPS FOR FARMERS

1. Don't miss out!

Fewer than 10 places remain on DairyNZ's multi-day business course, Mark and Measure. Take control of your future by learning key business concepts and skills for personal and business success. Taupo: 21-13 May, Queenstown: 5-7 June. Register at dairynz.co.nz/markandmeasure



2. Make progress

Farmer progression groups have been developed by DairyNZ for those who want to enhance their skills and career options. Read our case studies on farmers who've attended a progression group and register your interest in future groups at dairynz.co.nz/progression

3. Minimum wage rises

From April 1, the adult minimum wage increases by 75 cents to \$16.50/hour. Starting-out and training wages increase from \$12.60/hour to \$13.20/hour. Read the minimum pay rules for a summary of who can earn what at business.govt.nz



4. Heifer development planner

A new heifer development tool will help you plan the first two years of a heifer's life. You can use the tool with your grazier to set expectations for animals' weights, feeding levels and animal health requirements. Check it out at dairynz.co.nz/heifers

5. Getting shade sorted

Do your cows get enough shade? Providing shade for stock contributes positively to animal welfare, and with scientists predicting hotter and drier summers, autumn's a good time to make plans for planting trees that provide summer shade. For more information, visit dairynz.co.nz/trees



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We appreciate your feedback

Email insidedairy@dairynz.co.nz or call us on 0800 4 DairyNZ (0800 4 324 7969). Alternatively, post to: Inside Dairy, Private Bag 3221, Hamilton 3240. For information on DairyNZ visit dairynz.co.nz



Creating top workplaces for our staff to thrive



The call from farmers for skilled and motivated people to work in our sector has grown louder over the past few years. Farmers have realised the value great people can bring to their business, and the damage underskilled and disengaged people can do.

Having a pool of talented people available for farms is only one side of the equation. There has to be a quality work environment for talent to thrive. Recently, poor compliance with employment law has been highlighted in the media. This is not a good look for the sector and doesn't help attract the quality people we need. It is up to all of us to do our bit to ensure dairy farming has a reputation as a great place to work.

One of the six commitments in the refreshed industry strategy, *Dairy Tomorrow*, is to build great workplaces for New Zealand's most talented workforce. To achieve this aspiration, we will collectively need to achieve several goals including:

- ensuring all farm businesses have best employment practices and quality work environments operated by vibrant and proficient farm teams
- implementing initiatives to inspire, grow and retain dairy talent
- ensuring everyone gets home safe and well every day
- implementing programmes to support and integrate new entrants into the sector and our rural communities
- implementing programmes to build and sustain our

governance and management skills-base through diversity and leadership.

The levy is being used to bring about gains in both the talent pipeline and to support farmers to achieve a quality work environment.

Talent pipeline

DairyNZ is working with *Dairy Tomorrow* partners, the Government and others to attract, grow and retain the people we need. More than \$5.4m is invested in engaging with schools and tertiary institutions, vocational or tertiary training, scholarships, leadership development, rural professional accreditation, mentoring, workforce planning and policy and advocacy to ensure farmers have access to an effective learning and training system that supports a culture of learning in the sector.

Underpinning this investment is research that has shown every dollar an employer invests in staff training results in an extra \$3 to \$15 profit. That's a significant payback. The returns are highest for agribusiness management training.

Quality work environment

The *Sustainable Dairying Workplace Action Plan* (dairynz.co.nz/WAP) sets the foundation for the dairy sector to gain a reputation as a great place to work. The WAP was developed by DairyNZ and Federated Farmers to help the country's 12,000 diverse dairy businesses adopt good workplace management practices. Launched in 2015, the WAP defines five pillars of good practice needed to create a work environment where good people want to stay, grow and contribute. The five pillars of good people management are:

1. balanced and productive work time
2. fair remuneration
3. wellness, wellbeing, health and safety
4. effective team culture
5. rewarding careers.

More than 1500 farmers have signed up as friends of the Workplace Action Plan and are receiving support to improve this aspect of their dairy business. Currently, it is estimated that 70 percent of farms meet the criteria, so there is still plenty of room for improvement.

Around \$2.3m of the levy is invested annually to support various initiatives under each of the WAP pillars. These include projects to reduce hours worked on farms and drive efficiency, such as FarmTune, Milksmart, once-a-day milking (OAD) and the Roster Builder (dairynz.co.nz/rosterbuilder). Other initiatives aim to support farmers to implement good people management

practices by understanding the areas that could be improved, and making change so teams are more motivated and engaged.

Monitoring progress

Both the talent pipeline and work environment goals have scorecards which measure progress against targets. The high-level measures are published each year in DairyNZ's annual report (dairynz.co.nz/annualreport). The most recent data indicates good improvement in some of the indicator measures, including

having regular days off, set by a roster system within the employment agreement; and not working more than four hours in any day before a break is taken. Other measures are proving stubborn to lift, such as working fewer than 50 hours per week. On the talent side, training volumes are down and farmers are continuing to report challenges with having the skills they need for their farm businesses.

The *Dairy Tomorrow* strategy has made a commitment to build great workplaces for New Zealand's most talented workforce. DairyNZ will continue to partner with others and invest levy funds to help farmers achieve this aspiration. But ultimately, it will be up to farmers themselves to take ownership of their vision and invest in attracting and developing the people they need in their farm businesses, using the many opportunities to grow talent and working hard to understand and deliver a great workplace for this talent to thrive.

"The levy is being used to bring about gains in both the talent pipeline and to support farmers to achieve a quality work environment."



SHARING KNOWLEDGE AND SUCCESS MAKES A GREAT TEAM

Still in their early 30s, Carterton farmers Clarence and Elise Stolte are already a little less 'hands on' these days, thanks to their skills in improving staff capability. They say it's all about applying and sharing knowledge with their people and being upfront about everyone's strengths and weaknesses – including their own.

The Stoltes are in their third year of running two sharemilking operations in the Wairarapa as part of their farm sharemilking business, Stolte Ag. One operation is an equity partnership investment in the 165-hectare (ha), 500-cow family farm (originally owned by his parents Willem and Roelie Stolte). The other is a nearby 135ha property that's home to a 450-head herd share-milked for NEER Enterprises. Applying and sharing their knowledge – and accepting the frailties that go with being a manager or an employee – have been key elements influencing how the Stoltes have grown their business and their people, while also achieving a better work-life balance for themselves and their staff.

In 2013, a part-time consulting role with Baker Ag was a catalyst for change. "At the time I had a very good second-in-charge (2IC) staff member working with me who really deserved to move up to manager, so I gave him that opportunity and I

could do the consulting work," explains Clarence. The consultancy work also highlighted what he was doing right on the farms. "It was a great way to see how other farmers approach their challenges, and to develop a level of professional skills too."

Three years later, the Stoltes moved on from the consultancy work, picking up a second sharemilking job instead. They built two tightly run operations with two full-time staff on each, using seasonal staff during calving and mating periods.

'Dashboard' does the job

For Clarence and Elise, building a tight, committed team of staff isn't just about how to keep the good ones – but also how as employers they can help them to fulfil their potential over time in their roles. "That means making sure they know what we mean when we say 'good' and that they have some input



“ It’s important to surrender some of your ego as a manager of staff and acknowledge personal weaknesses as an employer. ”



FARM FACTS

Wilton's Road Dairy

LOCATION: 5km south of Masterton

FARM SIZE: 165ha milking platform plus 120ha support block

HERD SIZE: 500

PRODUCTION (kg MS): 200,000

Riverslea Farm

LOCATION: 3km north of Masterton

FARM SIZE: 135ha plus 120ha support block

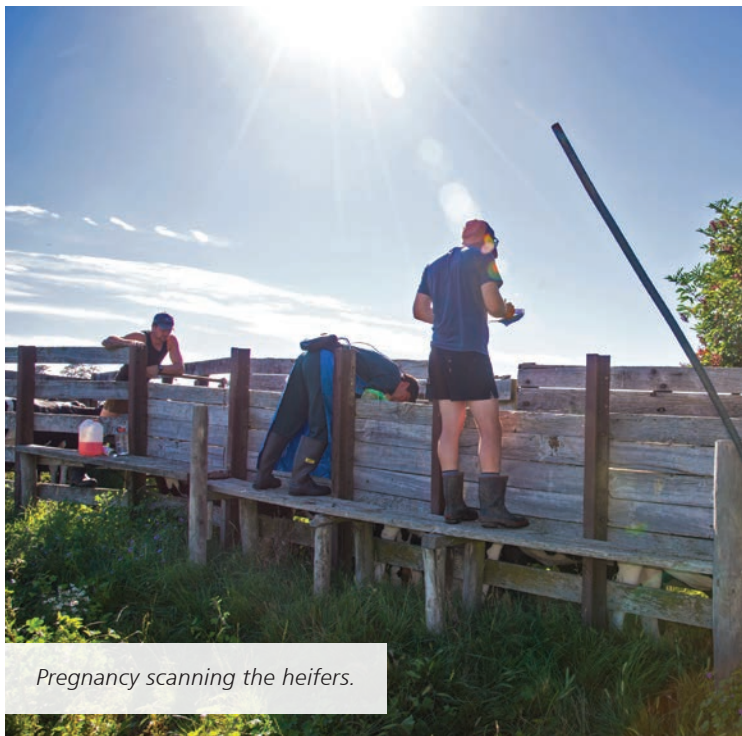
HERD SIZE: 450 cows

PRODUCTION (kg MS): 170,000

Clarence (far right) pregnancy scans the heifers with herd manager John Simpson and local vet Daniel Green.



Clarence (with farm assistant Noah Firth and John Simpson): monthly dashboard team meetings are the heart of the Stoltes' team focus.



Pregnancy scanning the heifers.



Riverslea Farm manager Derek de Jong says Clarence has helped him to learn how to listen and empathise with people.

into how 'good' is achieved," says Clarence.

At the heart of this are their monthly 'dashboard team meetings' that cover five key areas: tracking farm costs; identifying monthly focus areas; setting key performance indicator (KPI) measures relevant to the time of year; reviewing health and safety; and creating and updating a jobs list for repairs and maintenance. "As part of these meetings, it's my responsibility to provide the right goals which will encourage each of my team's self-discipline," notes Clarence.

Using the tools

Clarence gives his staff access and time to attend courses to lift their skills (for example, often including DairyNZ field days on calving preparation), and he's hosted a Milksmart workshop and supports staff to achieve their Industry Training Organisation (ITO) level papers. "At the Milksmart workshop, we found we were already doing much of what was being discussed on hygiene and milk harvesting, so this was great for both our confidence and our staff members' – we were on the right track."

The DairyNZ HR Toolkit has also proven particularly useful in helping Clarence set up early employment policies. "In fact, it became a template for what we use today," he says. "We also constantly refer to DairyNZ's *Facts and Figures* book and our staff use its apps on their phones. I tell them that if they are excited by dairying then this is a great resource, so make the most of it

“ People will have self-discipline, but it is my responsibility to provide the goal to drive it. ”

as it's well laid out online and very accessible. Plus we've taken part in DairyNZ's progression groups and we encourage our staff to do that too. These groups take you out of the 'cows and grass' thinking and help you develop a pathway for your career."

Sustainability and animal welfare

In providing a great workplace for his talented workforce, Clarence is also focused on environmental sustainability and the wellbeing of his animals. "These aspects are now at least as critical to dairy operations as any ability around grass and animal management. It's not just about cows and grass, and how to get more out of both," he says.

"Any animal welfare decisions are also fully discussed with the team before we do anything on the farm," he says. "Just as we aim to treat each other with respect, we also apply the same philosophy to our animals, knowing good practice makes for happier, healthier and more productive cows."

Strengths and weaknesses

Clarence says surrendering some of his ego as a boss and acknowledging his own weaknesses as an employer really



CLARENCE'S 5 TOP TIPS ON SUCCESSFUL STAFF MANAGEMENT

- 1 Make sure your idea of 'good' matches your staff's.
- 2 Encourage your staff's self-awareness of strengths and weakness: model this yourself.
- 3 Don't break trust. Say you'll do something and do it; apologise if you get things wrong.
- 4 Never let your anger or frustration drive your communication.
- 5 Give credit when credit is due: share your success around your entire team.

helps to improve both his own and his employees' personal and professional strengths. "I know for me, my weakness is in attending to details. I've made a point of letting my staff know that, so they can feel confident about pointing that out when it comes up. That then gives them the confidence to know they can make mistakes and learn from them too. If they see me working on my weaknesses, they're far more likely to work on their own. Sometimes we might also need a simple quiet conversation to point to what they need to work on and provide guidance going forward."

Clarence is also careful not to over-correct staff when decisions are less than optimal. "There's little to be gained in pushing the point when someone makes a mistake. Most people know, usually without even being told. It's more constructive to talk about what might be done differently next time, so people don't become gun-shy about making decisions."

Listen and learn

Meanwhile, Riverslea Farm manager Derek de Jong says one important skill he's acquired working with Clarence has been the ability to listen and empathise with people. "This probably was not my biggest strength when I started over two years ago. But I have since seen how Clarence deals with people across a number of relationships, including with the farm owner." Derek says farming will always involve working with a variety of people, and it's important to be able to see what they may be struggling with, and whether they themselves are aware of it. "You have to learn to have some patience with people."

Derek has also found Clarence's flexible approach to letting him get jobs done and managing his time day-to-day has enabled him to attend courses off the farm, like DairyNZ's Milksmart workshops and the local farm discussion group. "We have also started talking about our future here and how we may be able to



fit into the business as it grows. Clarence believes it's possible to get the business to change and fit around the people he has."

While some farmers may complain about staff issues, Clarence believes no modern farmer can succeed without developing their interpersonal skills to get the best out of good people. "We see it as a privilege, not a chore, to have people working on our farms supporting their families and living here. It's up to us to provide a good workplace, one they look forward to working in. It's a responsibility we feel we have to our staff, and as an obligation to the sector."

EMPLOYER RESOURCES AND INFO

To get all the advice and guidance employers and employees need, including all of our latest tools and publications, visit dairynz.co.nz/people

Other resources you might find useful include:

- DairyNZ HR Toolkit dairynz.co.nz/hrtoolkit
- Facts and Figures dairynz.co.nz/factsandfigures – check out the apps too
- Dairy Progression groups dairynz.co.nz/progression

Learning and improving teams with FarmTune®



Southern Dairy Hub team members are learning how to 'map out' common processes, dig deep into efficiency gains and use visual tools to show how tasks are done. That's thanks to FarmTune®, DairyNZ's levy-funded 'Lean Farming' programme, as FarmTune® specialist Sarah Watson explains.



The Southern Dairy Hub or SDH (southerndairyhub.co.nz), located on a 300-380 hectare property in Southland, is a research and education partnership venture between DairyNZ, AgResearch and the Southern Dairy Development Trust.

Hub employees have recently started using FarmTune® to create an environment where they want to work and where they're always learning and developing new skills. FarmTune® is a proven method that allows a business

“Not only will it be easier to train new employees, we know everyone will get the same message, so tasks will get done more consistently. This will save us time as well as giving us a better result.”

to systematically simplify and improve work practices, resulting in improvements in efficiency and productivity.

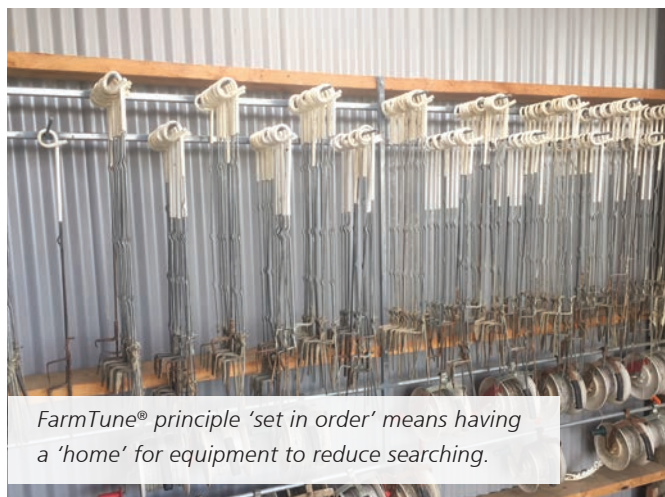
FarmTune® is setting up the SDH team to be more involved and take on more responsibility, while identifying opportunities for improvement. This means work gets done easier, better, faster and safer. Having good team engagement is also a great way of supporting the business to meet their obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2016.

When people are engaged and feel valued, they benefit and so does the business. Change won't happen overnight though: it's a gradual process to build and maintain the culture we want.

“We're after a 'tell it as it is' culture, focusing on the process not people when things go wrong – and on dealing with issues quickly and efficiently,” says Guy Michaels, Hub operations manager. “FarmTune® is the programme we're using to help all of us at the Hub achieve this.

“Not only will it be easier to train new employees, we know everyone will get the same message, so tasks will get done more consistently. This will save us time as well as giving us a better result.”

While the FarmTune® programme might not suit every farm, farmer experiences to date are showing it does work for most farms and that once trained, people start getting tasks done much more efficiently and effectively. The results have been truly spectacular on some farms.



FarmTune® principle 'set in order' means having a 'home' for equipment to reduce searching.

FarmTune® and related programmes

- **FarmTune®** is a comprehensive programme that supports you and your team to implement 'Lean' thinking through your business.
- **GetSorted** introduces one of the 'Lean' principles that helps in organising the workplace for success and safety. It's a good starting point if you are looking to see if FarmTune® thinking might work in your business.
- **WasteHunt** is the online DIY six-step process to help you identify and remove some of the waste and costs from your day-to-day operation.

Find out more about these programmes and how to register for them – visit dairynz.co.nz/farmtune

Mycoplasma bovis update

The current number of 'active' *Mycoplasma bovis* (*M. bovis*) Infected Properties (quarantined under movement restrictions) at March 9, 2018 is 28.

Early last month, the Government announced funding commitments to support farmers impacted by *M. bovis*. DairyNZ, and other industry partners, had been working closely with the Government for weeks to agree a funding agreement for *M. bovis* and the contribution from the dairy, beef and meat sectors. It was agreed through Cabinet that the industry partners would, in principle, contribute \$11.2m in funding support.

The details of this financial contribution are still being worked out and we'll keep you updated on how we will fund our portion of the \$11.2m and what it gets spent on operationally.

In the meantime, biosecurity measures on-farm and completion of NAIT records remain a priority to manage the risk of *M. bovis* getting onto farms. Check out our photo montage of a few on-farm biosecurity measures.



DairyNZ's readiness and response manager Chris Morley discusses *M. bovis* with a large crowd at the Dunsandel Community Hall in February.



Come clean go clean: footwear can carry diseases and weed seeds.



Sophia Whatley, Olivia Whatley and Paul Whatley use the boot cleaning station at Owl Farm Open Day.



Make sure machinery and equipment is cleaned and disinfected between farms to prevent the spread of diseases and weeds.



DairyNZ has a significant role to play in making our sector a great place to work.

DairyNZ leverages people leadership

Dairy NZ’s people team leader Jane Muir explains how future farms need to be designed around people, not just the cow, if we want to attract and retain capable staff and increase the desirability of dairying as a career. She also outlines DairyNZ’s initiatives aimed at helping the sector and its farmers do this.

He aha te mea nui o te ao?

What is the most important thing in the world?

He tangata, he tangata, he tangata

It is the people, it is the people, it is the people
Maori proverb



Whether it’s getting the right staff or keeping them, it’s highly likely you have lost one or many nights’ sleep worrying about people.

Probably the biggest challenge to address is people – because every decision requires a person to make it and every action requires a person to do it. If you have skilled people making good decisions and motivated people taking good actions, our lives become more enjoyable, our businesses more profitable and our environments more sustainable.

Dairy farms have been primarily designed around the cow, but future farms will need to be designed around people so that we can attract and retain capable staff, increase the desirability of dairying as a career, enhance productivity and increase the safety and wellbeing of people and animals on-farm.

DairyNZ is working on a range of initiatives (outlined on the following page) to meet the sector’s workforce and workplace

goals. These initiatives cover tools and resources farmers can use right now, working with partners and government to create workforce pipelines right through to identifying and researching innovative people-focused farm systems. You can find more information about them at dairynz.co.nz

DairyNZ has a significant role to play in making our sector a great place to work and contribute for all people and, as outlined above, we are committed to doing our bit. We ask you to do the same.

DairyNZ info and tools online

- dairynz.co.nz/milksmart – Milksmart
- dairynz.co.nz/planning – get started with your business planning
- dairynz.co.nz/WAP – creating a quality workplace
- dairynz.co.nz/farmtune – Farmtune@ programme
- dairynz.co.nz/scholarships – dairy scholarships
- dairynz.co.nz/DSIR – Dairy Industry Standard Roles framework
- dairynz.co.nz/OAD – once-a-day milking
- dairynz.co.nz/farm – farm systems
- dairynz.co.nz/immigration – recent changes/impact on dairy industry employers

GREAT WORKPLACES FOR A TALENTED WORKFORCE: DAIRYNZ INITIATIVES



✓ MILKSMART

Smart milking is about making milking as efficient as possible using proven research, technology, farm design and stockmanship. This project encourages farmers to understand their three key components of milking – farm infrastructure, people and cows – to improve their kilograms of ‘milk solids harvested per hour worked’ metric.

✓ FARMTUNE®

A dairy farm-specific programme built on the principles of ‘Lean management’: doing things easier, better, faster and safer. Developed and owned by DairyNZ farmers who’ve completed the workshop series (delivered by trained consultants) and have become more efficient, improved their systems and engaged their teams, reduced work hours and saved money.

✓ IDENTIFYING THE GAP

Providing tools to farmers so they understand what’s holding them back on-farm around their people and what might help. It’s also about ensuring our sector makes year-on-year improvements against the Sustainable Dairying: Workplace Action Plan, by detailing our commitment to quality workplaces on all New Zealand dairy farms.

✓ PROVIDING LEADERSHIP AND MOMENTUM FOR ‘GETTING TO GOOD’

Working with farmers and all possible channels to ensure dairy farm businesses know and meet their legal obligations – the focus in 2018 is on time recording, minimum wage and holiday and leave records, payroll systems and wellbeing, health and safety.

✓ PROVIDING KNOWLEDGE AND SOLUTIONS FOR ‘GETTING TO GREAT’

Providing and/or connecting farmers to solutions which improve their people management capabilities and work environment. This includes the DairyNZ Roster Builder, our comprehensive webpages, workshops, People Expos, Workplace Action Plan (WAP) friends and our work within our regional teams and with training organisations.

✓ ATTRACTING AND SUPPORTING TALENT

Working with schools from year 1 through to year 13 by having New Zealand kids, their teachers and career advisors exposed to the range of career options the sector offers through age-specific curriculum, teacher days out and experiences. We also mentor young adults who gain DairyNZ scholarships to study agriculture-related courses, work with industry training providers and ensure they have access to our tools and resources to assist their students in their on-farm roles.

✓ INFLUENCING LABOUR MARKET CONDITIONS

Working mainly with government and cross-sector initiatives (e.g. Growing NZ) to ensure the right information is used in developing policy. This will assist dairy to have access to the labour supply we need, e.g. by making submissions around immigration policy changes, employment legislation, working with the Ministry of Social Development and primary industry initiatives.

✓ SUPPORTING PEOPLE THROUGH TRAINING

DairyNZ is heavily involved in the establishment, coordination and maintenance of professional and industry standards, including the certification of rural professionals, the Dairy Industry Standard Roles (DSIR) framework, certificates and diplomas.

✓ VARYING MILKING INTERVALS

Dairy farmers generally work long hours, with a significant proportion on milking activities, and so variation to the standard twice-a-day milking can make for a better balance for people on-farm. For example, DairyNZ continues to look at the impacts of once-a-day (OAD) milking, and the production, profit, cow, environmental and people impacts of such a change.

✓ NEW DAIRY FARM SYSTEMS

In the longer term, we want to test new systems to help achieve people productivity and efficiency without compromising profit. The aim will be to create knowledge and guide development of dairy farming systems focused on people, by being engaging and attractive workplaces with a reputation for innovation and vibrancy.



Flexible hours achieve business and people goals

Adapting to changing employee expectations, finding out what staff want, and combining this with a flexible approach to working hours is going great guns for DairyNZ board director Ben Allomes and his farm team.

In the spring of 2016, Ben decided to do a strategic review of the business he owns in equity partnership with the Cassell family of Pahiatua. He says trying to be all things to all people when it came to staffing wasn't working, so he decided to change to a more flexible modular workplace where employees choose the hours they want to work and are matched with the hours required to run the farm. Farm manager Nick Bailey plots this information on a graph to provide a visual picture – much like a feed wedge – and the jobs are split among a team of 12. Ben says this approach is more efficient and shows more accurately where time is spent.

"We cater for a range of age groups from 17 to 67. Everyone in the team has different work priorities. Some work mornings, some at weekends and some while their kids are at school. We rotate roles so staff get the opportunity to try out different jobs.

"We take account of the seasonal pattern of labour on the farm but overall, we plan on 8000 hours a year," says Ben.

"We farm because we love the flexibility the lifestyle offers, and the same applies to the people who work for us. Staff members are self-directed and take responsibility for building

their expertise in certain areas which connects with their pay rates.

"Our work plan structure of matching supply to demand, and people with specific jobs, helps us to motivate, engage and retain staff. That means we have a readily available local workforce and it reduces our risk of being short staffed at critical periods," says Ben.

Key points



1. Change your systems to suit your team, not the other way around.
2. Have a flexible workplace with regular reviews; make changes when necessary.
3. Using an hourly measure highlights where efficiencies can be made.



Ben Allomes: Matching supply to demand and people with specific jobs helps motivate, engage and retain staff. Photo: Farmers Weekly



PROTECTING OUR FUTURE FROM EXOTIC PESTS AND DISEASES

Important – please respond!
It's as easy as 1, 2, 3.

1

Answer three quick questions



2

Tear out, fold and seal



3

Send – no stamp required

It's that simple.

We need your submission by 19 April.

For more info, visit dairynz.co.nz/GIA

HAVE
YOUR
SAY...

You may remember the yellow packs we delivered to you last October, asking for your feedback via online submission on our proposal to sign the Government Industry Agreement (GIA) for Biosecurity Readiness and Response. Well, we had great responses from our social media, but only 35 direct submissions. Because joining the GIA is such an important issue, we want to make sure you've had every possible chance to have your say.

We know it was busy before Christmas and we've had feedback that a hard copy submission form may have worked better for you. We listened. You'll see a form on the next page which you can send back to us for free. It's that simple.

Submissions close 19 April.

It might feel like a no-brainer but without your feedback – your 'yes' or 'no' – we may not get government endorsement to sign the GIA.

Through your DairyNZ levy, you already invest in managing New Zealand's biosecurity risk. When decisions need to be made on how we prepare for or respond to an exotic pest or disease incursion, we are 'in the room' but it's the government that makes the final decision. That's why we're seeking your support to join other primary sector groups in signing the GIA. If we don't get your support, we won't have direct influence on your behalf on biosecurity decisions.

You can find everything you need to know at our website dairynz.co.nz/GIA

Why is your response important?

Well, if you want us to be able to represent you at any decisions by government on costs, activities and responses for pests and disease incursions, then we need to hear that from you.

If we don't join the GIA then these decisions could happen with minimal input from the dairy sector. Our ability to have a say on your behalf would be reduced.

Have your say!

VISIT
dairynz.co.nz/GIA
for more information
about the GIA proposal



GIA CONSULTATION SUBMISSION

We welcome your feedback! Please complete the form and send it back by 19th April.

Name: _____ Email: _____ Supply NO: _____
Phone: _____ Postal address: _____

Please answer all the questions and print or write clearly.

Signing the GIA Deed

DairyNZ proposes to become a GIA signatory. Our sector will benefit from biosecurity readiness and response activities implemented to address exotic pests and diseases that impact on the production and quality of milk. Joining the GIA provides an opportunity for DairyNZ to work in partnership with the Government and other primary sector organisations to share the decision-making, responsibilities and costs of preparing for – and responding to – biosecurity incursions. We believe joining the GIA is in the best interests of our sector.

Question 1: Do you support DairyNZ becoming a GIA signatory?

Yes | No

Please explain the reasons for your answer:

Representing the views of dairy farmers in GIA decision-making processes

DairyNZ proposes that dairy farmers' views in GIA decision-making processes will be represented through the DairyNZ Board and/or its delegated representatives. The Board will appoint representatives to serve on the GIA Deed Governance Group and the Livestock Sector Council. These could be the same or different people. The DairyNZ Board will also make decisions regarding our sector's entry into GIA Operational Agreements.

Question 2: Are you satisfied with how DairyNZ proposes to represent dairy farmers' views in the GIA decision-making processes if it becomes a GIA signatory?

Yes | No

Please explain the reasons for your answer:

Funding commitments under the GIA

DairyNZ proposes to use our existing milksolids levy to fund our GIA minimum commitment and readiness activities. Legal restrictions prevent us from using the milksolids levy to fund biosecurity responses. We therefore propose to fund these through a new levy under the Biosecurity Act. The levy would initially be zero-rated (i.e. no levy collected). DairyNZ would only start collecting a levy if our sector decided to commit to a significant incursion response. DairyNZ's contribution would be limited by a pre-agreed cap for a particular response. The cap is designed to make sure DairyNZ's investments in biosecurity responses are fair, appropriate and broadly align with the benefits the response will deliver to dairy farmers.

Question 3: If DairyNZ becomes a GIA signatory, do you support the proposed funding approach for DairyNZ commitments under the GIA, including the proposal for a new biosecurity response levy?

Yes | No

Please explain the reasons for your answer:

Please use and attach more paper if there is not enough room for your answers here.

Cut along fold and return form



Secondly, fold here and then tape down.

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DairyNZ 

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Waikato Mail Centre
Hamilton 3240

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DairyNZ 

0800 4 324 7969 | dairynz.co.nz

Significant Milksmart gains for farmers



An efficient milking system is one where cows, facilities and people work in balance. DairyNZ's Milksmart in Action 2018 has been turning theory and research into reality, with significant time savings and other benefits being achieved across our 10 case study farms, as DairyNZ people developer Daniel Schmidt explains.



An holistic approach to farming for Dunsandel farmers Matthew and Jennifer Davison has meant consistent routines for the cows, efficiencies for the staff and profit for the business.

Taking part in Milksmart in Action 2018 enabled them to hone their 1100-cow milking system with gains for their cows, their staff and their business.

Milksmart in Action 2018 saw DairyNZ working nationwide with 10 case study farms, ranging in size from 300 to 1100 cows and including herringbone as well as rotary milking sheds. As part of this initiative, DairyNZ also partnered with consultant Josh Wheeler to do on-farm visits to talk through efficiency goals with the case study farmers.

Working with Josh over the last three months, the Davisons set their platform to MaxT time (maximum milking time – dairyNZ.co.nz/maxt-rotary), which aims to shorten the milking duration of the slowest milking cows, and ensured no cows go around on second rotations.

These changes, in-conjunction with other improvements, increased cows-per-hour from 280 to 373, which saved the Davisons a total of four hours' milking time per day, allowing them to increase cow numbers while still offering a six and two roster to their staff. "Bulk milk cell count also dropped after we introduced MaxT, so we have better milk quality, faster milking and more time outside of the shed. It's a win-win," Matthew says.

Consultant Josh Wheeler adds that "the implications and savings for individual farms and the sector as a whole are huge. We've seen the case study farms, some of which were already very efficient, all save at least 30 minutes per milking and continue to improve." Josh says the most common improvements came from:

- confidence to change milking machine settings, including automatic cup removers (ACRs) and pulsation, to better suit



Making changes through MilkSmart has saved each of the 10 case study farms at least 30 minutes per milking.

their milking routine

- improved staff cupping techniques, allowing them to keep up with other efficiencies
- using an efficient milking routine for herringbones and setting an appropriate rotation time for rotaries
- understanding what a good row/round time looks like and what each dairy's potential is.

Learn practical tips, advice and ideas for milking smarter, save time and money, streamline your milking process, and hear from farmers that have made efficiency gains – visit dairyNZ.co.nz/milksmart

Keeping safe: think about risk

DairyNZ's people management specialist Juliette Maitland outlines the benefits of our Safety Sorted workshops. These levy-funded events are receiving rave reviews from farmers who've used them to get thinking about safety, health and wellbeing on-farm.



From 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2015 there were 16,432 injuries on dairy farms (2350 involved a week or more away from work). As a dairy farmer, you'll be used to thinking about risk in relation farm performance, but it's equally important that you use the same approach when it comes

to addressing the safety, health and wellbeing of people working on or visiting your property.

DairyNZ's Safety Sorted workshops define these three focus areas as reducing accidents (safety); reducing exposure to harmful elements (health); and improving daily enjoyment of working on your farm (wellbeing). Northland farmer Gaeline Wright has attended one of these workshops, and she's very impressed with what she came away with. "The Worksafe representative was excellent and it was great to have real stories and experiences shared. The templates and handouts were also very helpful."

She and other farmers at the workshop also admit that in the past, they've been complacent at times when completing tasks they've been doing for years. "That's when accidents can happen," says Gaeline. To help overcome that, she and her

husband now record new hazards in a farm diary as a reminder to discuss with their team. She said it's important to remember that "hazards change all the time".

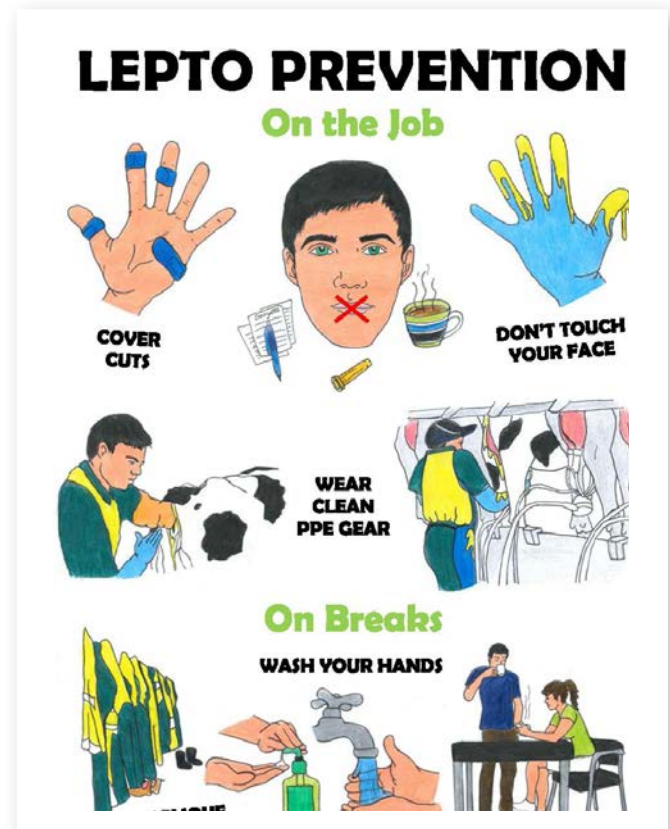
"We also keep all texts and emails as evidence of communication around health and safety," says Gaeline.

"We had read about health and safety before and it seemed very complex, but the workshop showed us it wasn't what we thought. Writing new hazards in the diary is now an important part of managing health and safety on our farm, as it reminds us to have the conversation with our employees."

Safety Sorted's top three practical suggestions to support a safe workplace

1. Start by identifying the risks on your farm that can cause the most severe harm.
2. Don't get swamped in paperwork – just write down and date any new risks you identify in the diary, ready to discuss with employees.
3. Keep it simple: use the *Safety Sorted* templates when planning or documenting of risk management is needed.

You'll find a whole suite of health, safety and wellbeing resources online, including our Safety Sorted health and safety forms, templates and fact sheets. Visit dairynz.co.nz/healthandsafety



This leptospirosis poster above, developed by the DairyNZ research farms, is a typical example of practical health and safety management which is encouraged during the Safety Sorted workshops.

How to give your new staff the best start possible

As a new season draws near, Southland sharemilkers Michael and Ruth Prankerd share their approach to successfully managing employees, so new members of the team get off to a good start and have all the tools they need to stay motivated and do their job well.



The Prankerd family form their own happy team.

1. Sharing the vision and goals

“This is a must for employers and employees to get to know each other,” says Michael. “We share a business prospectus with everyone at the first interview. It has our vision and purpose, what we’ve done in the past and what we hope to do in the future.”

The Prankerds discuss

prospective employees’ goals during their second interview, where decisions are also made about their overall fit within the team.

“Working together in a successful team means you’ve got so much trust in each other.”

2. Aiding progression

The main focus for Ruth and Michael is to take employees from farm assistants through to second-in-charge (2IC) within the three-year period of a herd-owning agreement, so those employees are ready to apply for farm management roles. It’s been a successful model and one which fits with their goal of helping others to progress. “The ladder, while it’s changed, still exists, and we feel like we’re offering employees an opportunity to progress through the first few steps,” says Michael.

3. Developing employees

Members of the team are engaged in all aspects of the business, ensuring everyone is capable of running every part of the dairy farm. The Prankerds have seven key strategies to achieve this:

- Personal and business goal-setting is important for the whole team.
- Everyone can learn every skill to a high level.
- Business goals are shared and the team discusses progress and ideas to achieve them.
- During weekly meetings, every team member understands they’ll do every kind of task on-farm that week.
- Monthly health and safety meetings are chaired by different staff members on rotation.
- Performance reviews include goal setting, training/development, how goals are tracking and what employees enjoy the most and why.
- People’s motivations are used to tailor an approach suited to each individual employee.

4. Establishing long-term relationships

Michael and Ruth’s ‘farming family’ approach has seen them build long-term relationships with like-minded people. They aim to develop their employees’ potential to invest with others in sharemilking roles and partnerships, as well as sharing the joy in achieving goals. “Working together in a successful team means you’ve got so much trust in each other, so the world does feel like your oyster. In the future, we may meet again and have further opportunities to work together,” says Michael.

Ruth agrees. “We aim to give our employees confidence. Be realistic about what you can achieve in the sector and in your lifetime – but to some extent, shoot for the stars as well. Our employees help keep us on track and true to our values as well.”

For more information on introducing staff to your farm, visit dairynz.co.nz/people

DAMIEN O'CONNOR TALKS PEOPLE AND POLICY

In this opinion piece, Minister of Agriculture Damien O'Connor shares his thoughts on the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead across the entire dairy value chain.

As our largest export earner, an employer of 50,000 people and with expected export revenue of \$16.8b for the year to June 2018, the dairy industry must be supported as a high-performing, innovative and sustainable industry.

This is why this Government will undertake a comprehensive review of the Dairy Industry Restructuring Act this year and I encourage you to have a say.

Terms of reference for the review, to be led by the Ministry for Primary Industries, will be finalised soon and publicised to create the most robust debate possible. The review is important because the dairy sector is vital to New Zealand and we want it to be on the best footing possible.

You are all well aware of the key issues facing the dairy sector, including environmental impact, Fonterra's obligations to collect milk, flatlining milk growth, and consumer demand for

sustainable food production. The review will also be important for other milk companies, including Westland Milk Products, which recently partnered with Southern Pastures to take four million kilograms of milk solids a year. The partnership is one example of how the sector is adapting over time to meet the issues facing it.

New Zealand's ability to sustainably produce high-quality, nutritious food for a growing global population is crucial to our economic future. Reaching higher up the value chain we can continue to deliver what international consumers demand and in a way that is sustainable and leverages our competitive edge as quality food producers.

"The reality is the pace of change is quickening and we must all be agile to respond to these challenges."

The dairy sector workforce must share in these returns. As one smart farmer recently put it: "First we look after the people, then they'll look after the animals and everything else will follow." He realised he had an unhappy workforce – they didn't want to own a farm or go sharemilking; they wanted to put their kids through school and buy a house. So he created job-sharing flexibility for couples, which paid off with increased productivity and happier workers.

He said: "I used to think I couldn't find anyone but when you start listening to people and giving them what they want, you find people."

Talking to farming families around the country over the past few months, I've been impressed by their ideas for the future and their keenness to improve farming operations.

The dairy industry has faced tough challenges recently, including the *Mycoplasma bovis* outbreak and both cyclones and drought. I want to thank you for your perseverance and for working together with the Ministry for Primary Industries, the Rural Support Trusts and others on the ground.



Damien O'Connor: [Talking to farmers I've been] "impressed by their ideas for the future and their keenness to improve farming operations."

All questions aSIDE, it's a great event

It's 20 years since the South Island Dairy Event (SIDE) was established, providing people in the South Island dairy sector with a forum to gain and apply the knowledge, skills and technology needed to continually improve their business. DairyNZ's Belinda Jeursen spoke to SIDE events chairperson Robyn Williams about this year's June event.



SIDE events chairperson Robyn Williams

SIDE has moved to Dunedin for 2018. Why the change?

It's our 20-year anniversary so we're doing things a little differently, changing the venue and reducing the event to two days. There'll still be plenty of time for some fun with our keynote speakers and workshops though, and Monday night's dinner at Forsyth Barr Stadium features a surprise twist. Slightly longer morning and afternoon tea breaks also provide a better chance to network and chat with peers and potential mentors.

SIDE's 2018 theme is 'It starts with us'. What does this mean?

We're good at putting other people first while not paying enough attention to our own needs. Our personal wellness provides a strong foundation, better equipping us to help our people and our businesses grow. It also enables us to take on and adapt to new innovations and technology, all of which will

help to keep our sector strong. 'It starts with us' includes telling our good news stories nationally and internationally.

What other topics will SIDE's workshops address?

All the sessions are focused on addressing the big issues affecting dairying, such as people, water, nutrients and herd performance.

- Innovation and Technology looks at using technology and innovation to maintain New Zealand's position at the forefront of global dairy markets.
- People and Business Growth gives delegates an opportunity to refocus their energy and work on taking charge of their direction, challenging delegates' thinking around their current situation.
- Media, Community and Environmental Engagement looks at the part we all can play in engaging with our wider communities, telling and celebrating our stories.

Can you tell us about a couple of your keynote speakers?

Each of our four keynote speakers will provide insight into how they have achieved their goals and what motivates them. They include:

- Ian Taylor, Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit (CNZM), a former television presenter. He will talk about embracing technology and change to enhance business performance and sustainability.
- Shayne Currie, NZME's managing editor, will provide us with a fantastic insight into why media pick up stories, what they look for, and how dairy can work with them to share positive stories.

SIDE aims to support anyone involved in dairy farming – and this year's event is a great opportunity for them to enjoy a combination of networking, catching up with friends, personal development and further education.

IT STARTS
WITH US

SIDE 2018 :: JUNE 25/26, DUNEDIN CENTRE

Don't miss out! There's still time to register for this event. Visit side.org.nz



Connecting paddock and plate

DairyNZ's education programme continues its Dairy Doing Good campaign, with the help of Rosie the Cowbassador and her adorable mate, Nate.



The Dairy Doing Good adventure continues this month as Rosie takes her co-star Nate behind the farm gate, exploring the ways in which New Zealand dairying links with people in local communities and throughout the world.

The latest Rosie videos feature themes that teach children about the life of farmers and the dairy chain, while illustrating dairy's contribution to local communities and the economy in language kids can relate to.

Further fun and interesting facts can be found on rosiesworld.co.nz and, as always, there's a competition involved. Kids must watch the videos and read the facts to discover answers to weekly quiz questions for a chance to win a 'farmtastic' prize pack.

Adding to the buzz, the competition is being promoted across social media and on popular kids' TV show *What Now!* The competition is now open and the winner will be announced on *What Now!* on April 29.

DairyNZ's external engagement manager Phillipa Adam says, "This is the second phase of the Dairy Doing Good campaign.



Last time, Nate and Rosie looked at the nutritional value of dairy products and whipped up some delicious dairy recipes in the kitchen.

"Now, the pair are checking out life on the farm, and the people who work there, as well as looking at all the jobs linked to dairy farming and its supply pipeline," says Phillipa.

"The videos are entertaining but also educational, designed to share the good stories about dairy farming, broaden the knowledge of both urban and rural kids and get them thinking about the dairy sector's contribution to New Zealand."

.....
Check out how DairyNZ's education programme is helping children learn about dairy in the classroom at ourfarmvisit.co.nz
.....





Grazing systems and less N leaching: plantain trials look promising

Reducing nitrate leaching by adapting grazing systems to alternative plant species and cultivars is a major focus of the DairyNZ-led Forages for Reduced Nitrate Leaching (FRNL) research programme, as DairyNZ forage scientist Mike Dodd reports.



DairyNZ’s Forages for Reduced Nitrate Leaching (FRNL) research programme is a six-year programme which aims to reduce nitrate leaching losses by 20 percent through delivering proven, adoptable and profitable pasture and forage crop options.

One plant that has emerged as a prime candidate from lab and field studies over the last decade is the pasture herb, plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*).

Its main effect in dairy cows is to reduce the concentration of nitrogen (N) in the urine, reducing soil N concentrations under their urine patches, allowing plants to take up a greater proportion of the N, which in turn reduces leaching. Two recent grazing trials we carried out in the Waikato (early and mid-lactation) looked at specific forage combinations in mixed pastures for their effect on dairy cow milk production and urinary N excretion.

We compared ryegrass and tall fescue-based pastures with and without plantain (cultivar Tonic), using lucerne as the legume to support mid-season forage production in this summer-dry environment. Measured over a year, the pastures with plantain grew 1.6-2.6 tonnes more dry matter (DM). While plantain tended to suppress the grass component in winter and spring, this didn’t lower pasture nutritive quality.

During both trials, half of the herds were consuming between 40 to 50 percent of their DM intake as plantain. Total DM intake and milk production of all the herds was similar, but there was a significant decrease in urine N concentration in the herds grazing plantain – 38 percent in summer and 21 percent in spring. Because plantain is a low DM percentage forage, the cows were consuming more water, which was only partially offset by them drinking less trough water.

This indicates that dilution via increased water intake does appear to be a factor in reducing urine N concentration in cows grazing pastures with high plantain content. On these pastures, lucerne intake was lower, which also resulted in lower N intake, so this was likely another contributing factor to lower N excretion.

DairyNZ will be carrying out further FRNL research to determine the minimum quantity of plantain needed in the cows’ diet to achieve a significant effect on urinary N concentration.

Key points



1. Spring-sown Waikato pastures containing 40-50% plantain grew 1.6-2.6t DM/ha more than pastures without plantain in the year following sowing.
2. Grazing these pastures containing plantain reduced urinary N concentration by 38% in summer and 21% in spring.
3. Both N intake and total water intake are key factors affecting N leaching risk from grazed pastures, influencing the total amount of N excreted in urine per cow per day and the concentration of the urine.

*The FRNL research outlined in this article has been conducted with the plantain cultivar Tonic, because this is the most used cultivar in New Zealand. FRNL has not looked into differences between cultivars.



Research was completed as part of the FRNL programme with principal funding from the New Zealand Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment. The programme is a partnership between DairyNZ, AgResearch, Plant & Food Research, Lincoln University, the Foundation for Arable Research and Landcare Research.

To find out more about FRNL research reports, our monitor farms, publications and other online resources, visit dairynz.co.nz/FRNL

Commitment + combined approaches = effective training

Providing training opportunities for your employees pays big dividends in boosted motivation, job satisfaction and helping retain good people.

Training can be formal, non-formal or informal. Formal training (such as primary industry training/ITO courses) end in a qualification. Non-formal training can include things like vet courses and DairyNZ's Milksmart and CalvingSmart workshops. An example of informal training could be a manager showing their employee how to treat mastitis. To get the best business outcomes, a combination of all three is usually best.

The decision to enrol an employee in industry training (whether formal or non-formal) requires commitment from both sides – the employee makes a commitment to learn new skills, and the employer makes a commitment to support their employee in their learning and gives them opportunities to practice and improve their core skills.

Equally importantly, the employer must make time for the training to occur. It should be a normal rostered-on work day and recorded on timesheets as worktime – this is standard practice across all industries. Training is usually planned by providers so trainees can still be involved in morning and afternoon milking.

Off-farm training is designed to align with the dairy seasons, so trainees are learning skills they can apply immediately on-farm. Often training is delivered by tutors who are themselves farmers, giving good context and examples to the learning resources. Where possible, training is taken onto farms, with trainees handling livestock, using vehicles and working with the farm infrastructure. Many farm employees learn by doing, so they're more successful in the on-farm learning environment than in a formal classroom setting.

Top tips for training

1. Formal, non-formal or informal training? A combination is best for business.
2. Match training styles to people's individual needs and work styles.
3. Successful training requires commitment from both employer and employee.

Modern dairy training caters for all types of learners. It offers activities and a learning experience that is engaging and non-threatening for people who may have experienced difficulties with the education system historically.

Technology is allowing students to be assessed through verbal and photographic collection of evidence, reducing the requirements of long written assessments. Students at all levels are being recognised for their knowledge and task competency, not their ability to write lengthy explanations. This benefits your employee and your business.

Getting started

For more about providing effective training on your farm, including how to assess skills, identify training needs and put together a training plan, visit dairynz.co.nz/training

Dairy industry standard role descriptions

For descriptions of the dairy industry standard roles on dairy farms, visit dairynz.co.nz/DISR

Primary ITO

If you'd like to talk to a Primary ITO training adviser, email info@primaryito.ac.nz, or visit primaryito.ac.nz to find out more about options available or to register an employee for training.

Don't forget your own training

If you'd like to grow your skills, career or business, the Diploma in Agribusiness Management may be just what you need. Know your budgets like the bank manager, work more sustainably with your land and resources, and grow a team that will grow the business. For more information visit primarytodiploma.co.nz

Stay on the pulse this autumn

For many parts of the country, good rainfall has lifted pressure on feed supply. Keep your finger on the pulse to ensure body condition score (BCS) and average pasture cover targets are met at dry-off, says DairyNZ developer Sally Peel.



Average pasture cover targets

A non-negotiable target in pasture-based farm systems is average pasture cover (APC) at dry-off. By taking into account the target APC at calving and factoring in pasture supply (growth rates) and demand (cows on the platform) during winter, you can calculate what the target APC needs to be at dry-off.

Then the focus during autumn is to ensure pasture management and supplement use enables this target to be met. To achieve the APC target, cows can't be eating more pasture than what's growing. That's equivalent to spending more money than you're earning with a financial budget.

Body condition score (BCS)

Drying cows off with enough time and feed to achieve target BCS at calving is the most successful strategy. In autumn, pasture quality improves (compared to summer) and lactating cows should start to gain BCS. However, even when feed is plentiful (and/or once-a-day milking is applied), the amount of body condition that can be gained will be limited until cows are dried off.

Assessing cows in mid-February to mid-March will provide the herd's average BCS and spread. It's important to identify individual cows at risk of not achieving BCS targets at calving and ensure appropriate dry-off dates are planned. Thin early-calving cows are the highest risk. The table below outlines the number of days dry that a cow needs to reach BCS targets at calving, assuming her starting BCS in autumn.

Feed budgeting

A feed budget will consider the farm's autumn feed supply and cow demand (for production and BCS gain), taking into account targets for BCS and APC at dry-off. Once the gaps between the current BCS and farm APC and the targets at dry-off are identified, a feed budget can be developed.

Budgeting tools such as the 'simple feed budget' are useful for checking that feed supply and demand are balanced (dairynz.co.nz/feedbudget). This tool can be used at any stage of the season but it's best used as a partial budget for the following periods:

- As an autumn budget through to May 31 or dry-off cover target.
- As a winter budget from May 31 through to planned start of calving.
- From planned start of calving through to balance date.

Set up a feed budget now. For copies of feed budgets and calculators go to dairynz.co.nz/feedtools

An autumn feed budget:

- matches feed supply and demand over autumn to enable BCS and average pasture cover targets at dry-off to be met
- sets up the following season through well-conditioned cows and appropriate pasture cover.

Body condition score		Days cow needs to be dry before calving	
Mature cow	Rising three-year-old	Autumn pasture (days)	Autumn pasture and high quality supplement fed above maintenance (days)
3.0	3.5	160	120
3.5	4.0	130	100
4.0	4.5	100	80
4.5	5.0	70	60

Bobby calf deaths continue to fall

Bobby calf deaths between the farm gate and works are down to six calves in every 10,000 – a result of the hard work being done by dairy farmers and others across the supply chain.

The mortality rate has again dropped by more than half, from 0.12 percent in 2016 to 0.06 percent in 2017, according to the Ministry for Primary Industries.

This represents a concerted effort by farmers and the wider sector to improve bobby calf welfare, and it comes on the back of new regulations introduced in 2016.

Owl Farm offers a taste of dairy

More than 550 people came along to experience a taste of dairy farming at last month's Owl Farm Open Day in Cambridge.

Highlights included patting the calves, getting a photo with Rosie, sitting in the cab of a milk tanker, taking a tour of the rotary milking shed, and free ice cream.

Owl Farm demonstration farm is a joint venture between St Peter's School and Lincoln University. DairyNZ is a supporting partner.



Logan Marsh tries out the milking cup with help from Owl Farm's Doug Storey.

Ahuwhenua finalists announced

Onuku Māori Lands Trust near Rotorua and The Proprietors of Mawhera Incorporation near Hokitika are the finalists in this year's Ahuwhenua Trophy BNZ Māori Excellence in Farming Award for dairy.

The finalists were announced at a function hosted by Nanaia Mahuta, Minister for Māori Development, and Damien O'Connor, the Minister of Agriculture. The Ahuwhenua Trophy Management Committee chairman, Kingi Smiler, says it is great to once again see top dairy farms selected as finalists for this prestigious trophy. They are performing very well in challenging times, he adds.

The winner will be announced on May 25.



L to R: Hon Nanaia Mahuta, Minister for Māori Development, Moyra Bramley, chairperson Onuku Māori Lands Trust, James Russell, chairperson Proprietors of Mawhera Incorporation and Hon Damien O'Connor, Minister for Agriculture.

Farmers join DairyNZ as new associate directors

Two dairy farmers from Canterbury and Dunedin will join DairyNZ's Board of Directors this year.

New associate directors Cole Groves and Anne-Marie Wells have been selected to join the DairyNZ board, with each working alongside the directors for six meetings. Cole began in March and Anne-Marie will join the board from October.

DairyNZ chair Jim van der Poel says the associate director roles have been in place for five years after being established to support the sector's future leaders.

"These roles are a way for interested dairy farmers to gain governance experience and support the board in decision-making and strategy discussions."



Ashburton-based dairy farmer Cole Groves.



Anne-Marie Wells runs a 640-cow dairy farm in Otago.

BOP project's comparison data makes decisions easier

Bay of Plenty farmers are gaining insight into their businesses through a project that is collecting data to identify trends in the region. Find out how.

The project is using DairyNZ's benchmarking tool, DairyBase, to collect and monitor financial and physical information. This identifies top-performing farms and creates good datasets that farmers can use to inform decisions. More than 50 farms are involved in the project, which was initiated seven years ago by farmer-led group Bay of Plenty Focus on Dairying.

Karen McLeod and Troy Doherty are two of those farmers who've been involved in the project since the beginning. They started entering data into DairyBase in their second year of sharemilking on their Awakeri farm during the 2009/10 season. "Being able to compare not only your physical key performance indicators, as well as financial data with farms from our area, is hugely valuable," Karen explains. "There aren't many other businesses or industries where you could get such detailed information to benchmark yourself against your peers."

"This kind of information and data sharing is something the dairy sector is very good at and it provides huge value. The DairyBase reports we receive are easy to understand and provide a valuable tool to allow us to see where our strengths are and identify where we need to improve. We also use our reports to communicate to staff where we could improve and to show how we compare to other farmers from our area."

The farmers involved in the project have access to a range of benchmarks, including those generated from within the project group of 50 farmers. This allows them to compare like with like and make effective decisions. "We could see that compared to others, our income from stock was low, which led us to seek opportunities for greater returns from stock sales," says Karen. "As a result, we've started using wagyu bulls over our heifers which has meant higher returns for both feeder and weaner calves (we rear 50 wagyu-cross calves up to 90kg). This has also

meant we had almost no bobby calves last season.

"Our financial data is combined with the farm owners' data, so we can compare how we are doing in relation to other sharemilkers, as well as to other owner operators. The reports are also a useful tool to use when we sit down with the farm owner and review the previous season and discuss any operational or system changes that might be required."

The project is open to all Bay of Plenty dairy farmers. If you would like to know more, contact DairyNZ senior consulting officer Ross Bishop at ross.bishop@dairynz.co.nz



Troy, Karen and their daughter Ani.

"This kind of information and data sharing is something the dairy industry is very good at and it provides huge value."

For the full list of what's on near you, visit dairynz.co.nz/events

April events

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
30						1
2	3	4	5 LOWER NORTH ISLAND Marton Tiller Talk Gear up for next season and gain confidence for your pasture decisions		7	8
9	10 NORTH WAIKATO People Expo Lift team performance and attract the best applicants	11 TARANAKI People Expo Lift team performance and attract the best applicants			14	15
16	17 TARANAKI Waverley Discussion Group hosted by Ben and Belinda Price		19 BAY OF PLENTY Waimana/Opotiki Discussion Group: chat about current issues and upcoming seasonal topics		21	22
23 LOWER NORTH ISLAND Rangitikei One Plan update		24 SOUTHLAND/SOUTH OTAGO Once-a-day Discussion Group hosted by Angela Nicholson and James McGill			28	29

DAIRYNZ.CO.NZ/EVENTS

NORTHLAND

The Northland discussion groups for April will focus on seasonal topics, including autumn management and best practices and also drying-off procedures according to Body Condition Scoring.

Find a discussion group near you at dairynz.co.nz/events



Farmers at a recent discussion group in Northland.

TARANAKI

Want to have great people asking to work for you? Get loads of ideas at the Taranaki People Expo in Stratford on April 11.

Have a chat with the experts and with other like-minded, motivated dairy farming colleagues. Discuss what works and what doesn't, along with new ideas and practical tips and tricks.

Find out more or register at dairynz.co.nz/peopleexpo

WAIKATO

The People Expo in Hamilton on April 10 will feature All Blacks assistant coach Ian Foster as keynote speaker, alongside Fonterra manager of social responsibility Matt Trent and Everest Consultants human resources specialist Tani Hansen.

Learn how you can lift team performance, ensure your business attracts the best applicants when recruiting, and get the whole team to work effectively towards a common aim.

Register now at dairynz.co.nz/peopleexpo

LOWER NORTH ISLAND

Gain confidence in your pasture management decisions by learning from DairyNZ's local Tiller Talk farmers at the Marton Tiller Talk field day on April 5.

Hear how they've responded to a wet spring and dry summer, discuss what cropping and pasture renewal options are planned for autumn, and receive the latest research to help you on-farm.

More details at dairynz.co.nz/events

TOP OF SOUTH ISLAND/WEST COAST

The Top of the South/West Coast regional winners of the New Zealand Dairy Industry Awards will host a field day on April 19. This will provide farmers with an explanation of why the category winners were judged winners of this year's competition.

The Share Farmer of the Year, Trainee of the Year and Dairy Manager of the Year were announced at the regional awards dinner on March 27.

See the results and get the field day event details at dairyindustryawards.co.nz



Last year's West Coast/Top of South DIA winners.

CANTERBURY/NORTH OTAGO

Learn skills to use in everyday conversation with your partner, family, employees and rural professional networks at the Central Otago Coaching Conversations event on April 5.

This free event from Dairy Women's Network, funded by dairy farmers through DairyNZ, will help you adopt a coaching mindset to get the most out of the greatest asset on your farm – the people.

More information at dwn.co.nz/events



SOUTHLAND/SOUTH OTAGO

As we head towards the winter months, four wintering field day events will be held around the region on April 4, 5 and 6 with split sessions for management and junior staff.

This will also include presentations on the outcomes and learnings from a recent trip to Ireland – by DairyNZ, AgResearch and local Southern Dairy Hub farmer representatives – to look at joint venture wintering options research.

Event details at dairynz.co.nz/events

DAIRYNZ CONSULTING OFFICERS

<i>Northland</i>		
Regional Leader	Chris Neill	027 499 9021
Far North	Denise Knop	027 807 9686
Lower Northland	Mark Forsyth	021 242 5719
Whangarei West	Aaron Traynor	021 809 569
<i>North Waikato</i>		
Regional Leader	Phil Irvine	027 483 9820
South Auckland	Jamie Haultain	027 486 4344
Hamilton North	Jaimee Morgan	021 245 8055
Matamata/Kereone	Frank Portegys	027 807 9685
Morrinsville/Paeroa	Euan Lock	027 293 4401
Hauraki Plains/Coromandel	Annabelle Smart	021 242 2127
<i>South Waikato</i>		
Regional Leader	Wade Bell	027 285 9273
Te Awamutu	Stephen Canton	027 475 0918
Otorohanga	Michael Booth	027 513 7201
South Waikato	Kirsty Dickins	027 483 2205
<i>Bay of Plenty</i>		
Regional Leader	Sharon Morrell	0274 922 907
Consulting Officer, Special Projects	Wilma Foster	021 246 2147
Central BOP (Te Puke, Rotorua)	Kevin McKinley	027 288 8238
Eastern BOP (Whakatane, Opotiki)	Ross Bishop	027 563 1785
Central Plateau (Reporoa, Taupo)	Colin Grainger-Allen	021 225 8345
Katikati, Galatea, Waikite/Ngakuru	Jordyn Crouch	021 619 071
<i>Taranaki</i>		
Acting Regional Leader	Simon Sankey	021 228 3446
South Taranaki	Ryan Orchard	021 246 5663
Central Taranaki	Sarah Payne	027 704 5562
Coastal Taranaki	Anna Arends	021 270 0074
North Taranaki	Lauren McElDowney	027 593 4122
<i>Lower North Island</i>		
Regional Leader	James Muwunganirwa	027 499 9020
Horowhenua/Wanganui/South Taranaki/Southern and Coastal Manawatu	Scott Cameron	027 702 3760
Wairarapa/Tararua	Abby Scott	021 244 3428
Hawke's Bay	Gray Beagley	021 286 4346
Central/Northern Manawatu/Rangitikei	Jo Back	021 222 9023
<i>Top of South Island/West Coast</i>		
Regional Leader	Wade Bell	027 285 9273
Nelson/Marlborough	Mark Shadwick	021 287 7057
West Coast	Angela Leslie	021 277 2894
<i>Canterbury/North Otago</i>		
Regional Leader	Virginia Serra	021 932 515
North Canterbury	Virginia Serra	021 932 515
Central Canterbury	Natalia Benquet	021 287 7059
Mid Canterbury	Stuart Moorhouse	027 513 7200
South Canterbury	Erin Christian	021 243 7337
North Otago	Trevor Gee	021 227 6476
<i>Southland/South Otago</i>		
Regional Leader	Richard Kyte	021 246 3166
South Otago	Mark Olsen-Vetland	021 615 051
Central/North Western Southland	Nicole E Hammond	021 240 8529
West Otago/North Eastern Southland	Liam Carey	027 474 3258
Eastern Southland	Nathan Nelson	021 225 6931
Western Southland	Teresa Anderson	027 702 2219

Troubles with timesheets?

Struggling with staff scheduling?

Headaches with holiday pay?

Make life easier!

Farmers said:

"I now spend just minutes (instead of hours) doing payroll – and I enjoy it. It's so simple. Wish I'd got the app AGES ago!"

"With the Roster Builder, rosters are colour-coded and visual – it's easy to generate a roster and pass it on to the team. Staff love it - I don't mind doing rosters now."



Payroll – Tips for choosing a payroll system to best meet your needs
dairynz.co.nz/payroll



Time recording – We put the most popular timekeeping apps to the test – find out how they rated
dairynz.co.nz/timekeeping



Rosters – Create customised farm rosters quickly and easily with the DairyNZ Roster Builder
dairynz.co.nz/rosterbuilder

