

Inside Dairy

February 2018

Your levy in action



Clear Vision

Protecting the environment for future generations

DairyNZ 

Dairy Tomorrow
Our six core commitments

Better herd repro
The planning starts now



over the fence...

'Yesterday is not ours to recover, but tomorrow is ours to win or lose' – Lyndon B. Johnson, US President 1963-1969

To win tomorrow is exactly the intention of the refreshed strategy, *Dairy Tomorrow*, launched by the dairy sector near the end of last year.

And now, we need to all step up to put the commitments made into action.

It's widely acknowledged by many business leaders and politicians that dairy will continue to be a vital player in the New Zealand economy.

Our challenge now is to up the ante so dairy's land use is significantly more sustainable than it has been in past decades, all the while protecting – and growing – dairy's profitability.

In this issue of *Inside Dairy* we look more closely at the *Dairy Tomorrow* strategy, which lays out six commitments ranging from protecting and nurturing the environment to building the world's most competitive and resilient dairy farming businesses.

We can rightfully claim dairy is underway on achieving these goals. The hard work to date has set us up very well. However, what all those who contributed to *Dairy Tomorrow*, including many farmers, ask is that the bar be raised; that each of us in dairying join wholeheartedly in this challenge.

Over the coming months, *Inside Dairy* will help bring to life the *Dairy Tomorrow* commitments with stories and images that will inspire and inform. We start with this issue. Our cover story is about Canterbury farmer Andy Palmer who epitomises 'protecting and nurturing the environment' with the riparian work he's been doing for the past two decades.

These are challenging – and exciting – times. You'll be proud to know your levy is hard at work, and smartly at work, not just securing, but also growing and enhancing the future of dairying in New Zealand.

I welcome your feedback – email me at tim.mackle@ceo.dairynz.co.nz

Tim Mackle
Chief executive
DairyNZ



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It may be early in the year, but now's the time to start planning for calving and mating.

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On the cover: After more than two decades of riparian planting, Canterbury dairy farmer Andy Palmer (seen above with son Jethro) has created a legacy of clean water and flourishing riverbanks.

TAKE 5... TIPS FOR FARMERS

1. Want to milk smarter?



DairyNZ's Milksmart is back for 2018. Come along to gain practical solutions from farmers who are saving time and money through efficient milking. Sessions are tailored to experience levels – bring the whole team. Register now for an event near you at dairynz.co.nz/milksmart

2. Unlock your farm's potential

Streamline your business and get your team heading in the same direction with FarmTune, a dairy farm-specific programme built on the principles of lean management. To see what other farmers are saying about FarmTune and to find out more, visit dairynz.co.nz/farmtune

3. Can't get good staff?

If you're wondering how to get great people asking to work for you, head along to one of DairyNZ's People Expos in 2018. We're bringing in some experts to tackle the big issues. Invercargill: Wednesday 21 February
Palmerston North: Thursday 22 February
Register now at dairynz.co.nz/peopleexpo



4. Look after number one

It's a hot, dry summer and this brings extra pressure and worries. Stay connected with friends. Keep active and drink plenty of water. Get adequate sleep. Eat well and take time out for off-farm interests. For more tips check out dairynz.co.nz/wellbeing or farmstrong.co.nz

5. Make time for timesheets



Looking for a more efficient way to record hours worked? A growing number of farmers are making the shift to electronic systems. DairyNZ has reviewed some of the most commonly used timekeeping apps – see the results at dairynz.co.nz/timesheets

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We appreciate your feedback

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The vision of Dairy Tomorrow

We've agreed on a set of ambitious goals and commitments for our sector – and now the real work starts, says DairyNZ chair Jim van der Poel.

Over the next few months, the plan for how our dairy sector will implement its new strategy, *Dairy Tomorrow*, will be unveiled. When we launched the strategy last November, we described this phase as the 'hard work' part of the strategy. That's not to underestimate the substantial effort last year of our project team, industry partners and farmers in coming to an agreement on our future goals and priorities. But following through with a well-thought-out plan about how we'll achieve these 22 goals requires significant collaboration and boldness.

The new Agriculture Minister Damien O'Connor joined us at the launch in Wellington (see photos below and to the right) and provided considerable insight into his priorities for the sector during his Government's tenure. The Minister congratulated us

on the strategy, saying it's a great initiative for the sector – a sign that our work over the past year has led to a strong base of commitments and goals that go to the heart of our communities' and stakeholders' priorities. He also emphasised that while the sector can expect some changes under the new Government, change isn't necessarily a bad thing. Many of his comments aligned with our *Dairy Tomorrow* goals – the need for dairy to follow through with our promises to communities, the necessity for transparency, and the need for New Zealanders to have pride in dairy.

The impacts of land use changes and the growth of the dairy sector has put the spotlight on dairy farming over recent years. *Dairy Tomorrow* reinforces our belief that sustainable dairy farming has a critical role to play in dairy's social licence to operate, and therefore New Zealand's future prosperity. But we need to do more to demonstrate we're taking action around the environment and natural resource use, and the sector must provide options and solutions for farmers to help them farm sustainably.

The process of creating *Dairy Tomorrow* made it clear that farmers are incredibly ambitious for the sector. To achieve their ambitions, the strategy has six core commitments that cover specific areas the sector wants to make progress on, in order to be trusted and valued, productive and competitive. These goals commit us to proactive leadership to address these challenges, and to really improve lives through dairy.



Hon Damien O'Connor, Minister for Agriculture, addressing the crowd at the Dairy Tomorrow launch late last year.



Former DairyNZ chair John Luxton, DairyNZ strategy and investment leader Rick Pridmore, and Dairy Women's Network chair Cathy Brown.

1 To protect and nurture the environment for future generations

Midway through this year we will announce milestones to help us take more of a leadership role in improving our waterways and helping New Zealand meet its international climate change commitments. Under this commitment we also want to work with other sectors to develop a sustainable land use blueprint, and have all farms reporting under certified farm sustainability plans, both by 2025.

2 To build the world's most competitive and resilient dairy farming businesses

Under this commitment, many goals involve improving farm performance by leveraging new and existing technologies. This includes working to develop and implement a co-funded, sector-led 'National Science Challenge' by 2020, which will deliver the next generation of tested, cutting-edge science and technology solutions for future farm systems.

We want the ability to assess farm performance to capture the improvements – this involves ensuring our farmers have better data connectivity by 2020. We also plan to develop initiatives to reduce the risk of biosecurity incursions.

3 To produce the highest quality and most valued dairy nutrition

We plan to grow New Zealand dairy exporters' access to open dairy markets to equal 30 percent of global consumption, and by 2020, we will implement a strategy to promote the unique value proposition of New Zealand milk.

4 To be world leading in on-farm animal care

We will achieve this commitment by creating a future-focused framework that ensures every animal is valued and treated with care and respect, and we'll have all farmers implementing and reporting under this framework by 2023.

5 To build great workplaces for the dairy sector

We want the dairy sector to be seen as a quality work environment operated by vibrant and proficient farm teams. By 2020 we will implement a Workplace Action Plan committed to a work-life balance, and roll out new initiatives to inspire, attract, grow and retain dairy talent.

6 To help grow vibrant and prosperous communities

The pretext of this commitment is to ensure dairy farming creates social and economic value for New Zealand's urban and rural communities. We will do this by strengthening community connections and leadership, and helping our regional communities secure infrastructure and services necessary for their economic and social wellbeing. We hope this will see the sector become a highly trusted business sector by 2025.

To read about all 22 goals within *Dairy Tomorrow*, visit dairytomorrow.co.nz



DairyNZ chief executive Tim Mackle.



Federated Farmers President Katie Milne, Hon Nathan Guy, Ministry for the Environment deputy secretary Penny Nelson, and Federated Farmers communications manager Leigh Catley.



DairyNZ's new chair Jim van der Poel (left) with Fieldays chief executive Peter Nation.

FARM FACTS

Andy Palmer

LOCATION: Temuka, Canterbury

FARM SIZE: 146ha (effective)

HERD SIZE: 540 cows

TREES PLANTED: 6000 approx.

A man wearing a white shirt, sunglasses, and a cap is fishing in a stream. He is holding a fishing rod and reel. The background is a lush green landscape with tall grasses and trees under a clear blue sky.

Labour of
love for the
environment

Protecting and nurturing the environment for our future generations is a key commitment in the refreshed strategy, *Dairy Tomorrow*. Many farmers already have their sleeves rolled up doing inspirational environmental work throughout New Zealand. They include third generation dairy farmer Andy Palmer.

It was a chance remark he made back in the late '90s that got Andy started on what has become a labour of love spanning two decades. And it's a passion that's resulted in an extraordinary legacy of lush riparian planting of native species on his farm near Temuka, which he owns with wife Sharon Collett.

Along the way there've been plenty of blisters, blunted spades and water-logged gumboots – and plenty of visitors to admire the work and learn from it.

For Andy and Sharon personally, the net result today is water that's gin-clear in the arm of the Ohapi Creek meandering past their house and through their land. With that water quality come trout and salmon, visually pleasing plantings and prolific birdlife.

It all started when the couple took out the traditionally styled garden around their home, replanting it with native species Andy had enjoyed seeing on his frequent tramping trips in the bush.

One day, when Andy mentioned he'd like to extend the native garden along the creek, their landscape designer immediately saw he needed help – and knew where he'd get it.

She told him to call Environment Canterbury (ECan), which was at that stage keen to get some riparian pilot projects underway in the South Canterbury region. ECan wanted work that could be showcased to inform and inspire other farmers in the years to come.

"In those days, a lot of farmers saw ECan as the bully boys," says Andy. "However, from the start they've been constant in their support. In fact, one weekend some of the staff came out with the local Fish and Game people to help plant."

Along with hands-on support, ECan connected Andy to sources of funding to help with transforming the creek which,

"From the start they've (ECan) been constant in their support. In fact, one weekend some of the staff came out with the local Fish and Game people to help plant."

like a number of waterways around the country, had taken a toll during the farming of the land – sheep, cows and pigs, as well as cropping including grass seed, wheat, barley, potatoes, carrots and onions.

Fast-forward to today and Andy enjoys the flourishing riparian planting that now stretches along about three kilometres of the creek, and which he adds to every year – either to extend it or grow plants in areas where vegetation is a bit sparse.

Logging the good work

As with most farmers, Andy didn't pay much attention to documenting his work over the years – he just rolled up his sleeves and got on with it. And so he welcomes the recently launched initiative to create, for the first time, a national database of all established riparian buffer zones around the country.

Set up by NIWA with DairyNZ's support, the database project aims to capture the riparian work carried out by farmers, with the focus on sites more than five years old. That's perfect for



After losing plants to frosts in the early days, Andy now sticks to hardy species like carex, toetoe, flax and cabbage trees.

At 22, Jethro Palmer was born around the same time as his father started riparian planting. Naturally, he shares his dad's passion.



Andy and he's now ensuring his work is recorded, and urges other farmers to do likewise at riparian.niwa.co.nz

The information logged will also assist water quality scientists at DairyNZ and NIWA to improve understanding of how riparian buffers benefit waterways, and why some work better than others.

Taking a leaf from Andy's book

A past Ballance Farm Environment Award 'Best Dairy Farm' winner, Andy's advice to farmers who are either getting started with riparian buffer zones, or have stalled with their work, is: "Only do an area you can look after – there's no point putting in thousands of plants if you can't look after them."



Andy runs his irrigation lines close to the creek so young plants can be watered and, of course, he ensures stock are fenced out.

He recommends identifying areas to plant out and developing a plan to progressively plant, beginning with clearing the likes of willow clogging waterways – he took the digger to his – and then spraying invasive species such as blackberry, gorse and broom.

Using a residual spray that will last 12 months, Andy then sprays a circle where he will place each plant.

“This ensures each one gets a good start, and then I use glyphosate around the growing plants to keep the weeds at bay. If you let the weeds get away it can be very depressing trying to rescue plants.”

Andy’s farm uses irrigation, and he runs the lines right up near the creek so young plants can be watered if necessary.

In his early riparian days, Andy lost some plants to frosts, and now he selects more hardy species like carex, toetoe, flax and cabbage trees for the first stage, avoiding the broadleaves that don’t survive a freeze. Other native species he favours include pittosporum, ribbonwood, coprosmas such as mingimingi, and gossamer grass.

Another of his imperatives is fencing, of course, and fencing that’s kept live at all times to deter stock. “Even one or two cows can destroy two years of work.”

Flow-on effects

An unforeseen fringe benefit of Andy’s riparian commitment has been the appreciation of his sharemilkers over the years.

“We’ve been fortunate that our sharemilkers have tended to stay around for a while, and have understood the role riparian planting plays, as well as enjoying the nice environment it creates.”

Currently, Eugene and Sarah Cronin are 50:50 sharemilkers on the property, overseeing 146ha (effective) and 540 cows. They’re in their second season there.

“Two of our previous sharemilkers have gone on to own their own farms, and both are doing riparian zones,” says Andy.

They are Aaron and Frances Coles, and Karen and Kevin

“Only do an area you can look after – there’s no point putting in thousands of plants if you can’t look after them.”

O’Kane, who both farm a short distance away.

The Coles’ farm is at the source of the Ohapi and, while fencing was already in place, Aaron and Frances were keen to get planting to further improve the water quality and biodiversity.

“It’s about improving the land for future generations – we want to leave it in a better state than we received it,” says Frances.

The Coles received support from ECan for the plants – nearly 4000 have been planted in the first phase of the project, and they’re flourishing. As a number of farmers and garden owners in the region have done, they sought the local knowledge and expertise of contractor Chris Goad, who also just happens to be married to one of their staff members.

Likewise, after their experience of riparian planting with Andy, the O’Kanes were quick to line up planting spades when they bought their farm in 2014.

They worked with two neighbouring farmers, also roping in family and friends, to plant native swamp-loving species around Horseshoe Lagoon, a coastal wetland bordering their land. The lagoon has Canterbury’s only known population of the native giant kōkopu fish, and the Department of Conservation had already fenced it and dealt with the willows. ECan provided the plants.

Now the couple is progressively planting other areas of their farm “as we have the time and the funds”, says Karen.

If you’ve been inspired by these farmers and would like help creating a riparian management plan for your farm, go to dairynz.co.nz/riparian-planner today.

Quizzing DairyNZ's new chair

Inside Dairy puts some questions to DairyNZ's new chair Jim van der Poel, who was elected in November 2017 after former chair Michael Spaans passed away following a long illness. Jim has worked his way through the sector, from sharemilking to governance.



Describe the moment you knew you wanted a career in dairy farming?

I always wanted to be a dairy farmer. I went to a catholic school and remember at age six being asked by a priest what I wanted to be, and I replied 'a dairy farmer'. It was what I always wanted to do – always.

What do you see as New Zealand dairying's greatest challenge, and greatest opportunity?

There are a number of things around new farm systems that we must embrace as we move forward – ensuring we are productive and competitive, and set the standard as far as environmental goals go.

Nutrient management, effluent management, riparian planting and protecting natural resources are things DairyNZ is looking to help farmers with, while also working with regional councils to help create the right environment.

DairyNZ is in a unique position because we cut right across the industry. We represent every dairy farmer and have good relationships with all industry players, so we can help bring all those things together.

What achievements are you most proud of?

I am proud of my family. We have two kids and eight grandchildren now. It is wonderful watching them start their own families.

I am also proud of the great businesses that Sue and I have grown, thanks in no small amount to the great partnerships with great people along the way. Governance roles with DairyNZ and in the wider industry have also brought me a lot of pleasure.

Who taught you the most about dairy farming?

I was introduced to dairy through my parents, so that is where it all began. But as we moved through we learnt from all sorts of people – as sharemilkers we had good relationships with people we worked with, and they became mentors.

Then we started working more with DRC (Dairying Research Corporation) and consulting officers. At the early stage you are learning, growing, finding out who does what best and learn at discussion groups.

A number of people mentored us over the years, at different stages of our careers.

What is it like being on DairyNZ's Board of Directors?

It's a great board. I am glad to be part of a group who are so passionate and keen to add value for dairy farmers.

The Board gives clarity on future needs and how to add value for farmers, and we build our relationships with stakeholders in dairy companies, research entities, central government, industry organisations and so on.

Who do you admire most?

I admire people who make a difference in all walks of life; people who stand up and go out of their way to help others; people who are selfless.

What do you do to unwind?

We go to the beach, Mount Maunganui. We also travel – our favourite trip was to Botswana for our 30th wedding anniversary. We've seen some beautiful places but it's great to come home. New Zealand is a great place to live. I watch a lot of sport and we have grandkids now too.

A mighty career and big influence on dairy

As we farewell Dr Rick Pridmore on his retirement, Tim Mackle reflects on Rick's contribution to the dairy sector.

It would be hard to talk about Dr Rick Pridmore's legacy for New Zealand's dairy sector without first reflecting on what the sector was like when he joined us 10 years ago.

Rick joined Dexcel, as we were then in 2007, having been the CEO at NIWA for five years. He came to the dairy sector at a time when looking after the environment was seen by many as a 'nice-to-do' hobby once the farming work was completed.

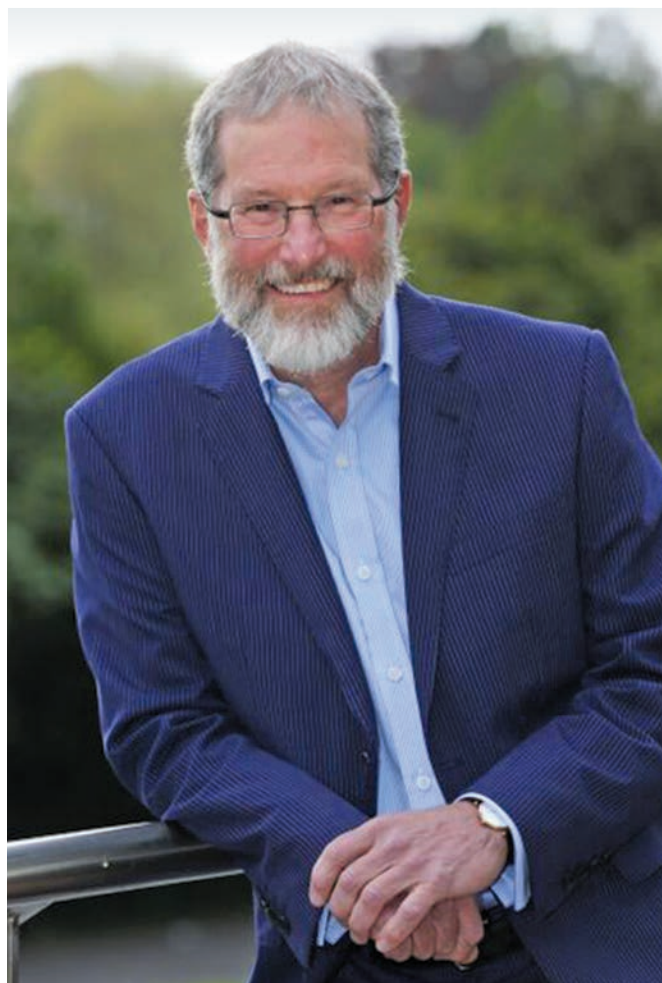
DairyNZ had a very small environmental and sustainability team at the time. The issue of the environment was a relatively small one, although growing, and the focus of the time was on biodiversity. Effluent management was, for some, a complete mess. I've heard it described as the 'wild west' where councils were coming up with individual policies, and dairy often felt out in the cold. There were no standard practices and limits were starting to be reached as we were coming to the end of the pioneering growth phase of dairy.

Now fast forward ten years, and we are in an entirely different situation and in a large part due to Rick's dedication and clear vision on what needed to be achieved.

His first hurdle was to agree with government and councils on what the problems were that needed to be solved. He worked tirelessly to build DairyNZ capability, bringing in some of the best minds in the country, mentoring and leading them, to understand that problem and get the science right. He worked with other research agencies, such as NIWA and regional councils to gain acceptance and clarity on the issues and then worked with them to find the solutions. This was no small feat and took critical thinking, time and a lot of talking.

Rick set about to learn from farmers, get to know them and then work on their behalf. He spent many hours on the phone to farmers. He travelled the country attending meetings and building relationships. He was a crucial player in efforts

"Rick set about to learn from farmers, get to know them and then work on their behalf."



to gain funding support from government and others to find environmental solutions to water quality and climate change. He is absolutely one of this country's leaders in both these spaces.

I believe that Rick's legacy is in part that the environment is now part of our language. It is no longer something farmers do as a hobby. It is a core part of almost every farm and you'd be hard pressed to find a dairy farmer who isn't doing their bit to protect their land and waterways for future generations. And because of this, we are seeing results.

The Dairy Environment Leaders and the results achieved through the Water Accord are two such initiatives that will be around for many more years to come and are a credit to Rick's vision for a future in which the dairy sector is leading the way for the environment. Like so many in our sector, including farmers, I've greatly appreciated and enjoyed Rick's support and wisdom over the years and he'll be missed. That said, he won't be disappearing because in recent years Rick became a part owner in a dairy farm, and I like to think that perhaps dairy has given Rick as much as he has given dairy.

Leading in a changing world

Leadership is a critical component of the long-term challenges facing dairying. Here we talk to some of the leaders in our dairy sector about their approach to the future.



Dairy Women's Network members taking part in a leadership workshop in Queenstown last year. Photo / Craig Brown.

What is leadership?

For DairyNZ, leadership means being ahead of the game by taking a long-term view, taking positions on farmers' behalf and supporting them in their work, says DairyNZ strategy and investment leader Dr Bruce Thorrold.

"One aspect of this approach is DairyNZ's research into areas that will affect dairy farming in the next decade. If we'd started the research into nitrate leaching when regional councils proposed environment limit setting 10-12 years ago, we'd be in trouble. Instead, farmers are already reaping the benefits from 20 years' research," says Bruce.

"Levy-funded research is also underway into antimicrobial resistance and greenhouse gases.

"These are just three examples of DairyNZ thinking ahead to achieve growth and success for Kiwi dairy farmers, and our sector as a whole."

Future challenges

"Accepting that we will continue to farm animals, how we farm in future will always be a big challenge," says Bruce.

"We need to design farm systems that deliver products consumers are willing to pay for, care for our animals to a high standard, and make farms attractive places to work in. And we need to do this in a way that meets our environmental obligations and maintains farming as a viable and attractive business.

"It's not just about how we drive the cost of milk production down; we must get all these other things right as well."

Developing women leaders

Traditionally, women haven't been the decision-makers in the primary industries. But with levy investment in the Dairy Women's Network (DWN) and the Agri-Women's Development Trust (AWDT), women now have more opportunities to develop

leadership skills.

DWN chief executive Zelda de Villiers believes in identifying future leaders through DWN's 36 regional groups, and providing them with coaching, mentoring and help to identify suitable development courses.

"Developing leaders is an integral part of what makes DWN unique. Our philosophy for leadership development is 'leadership by doing'. We aim to provide numerous opportunities for women, some training essentials, a splash of inspiration, and then with coaching and guidance, let them get on with it."

Meanwhile, since its founding in 2010, AWDT has delivered leadership and governance, and business development training and support, to more than 2000 women now making a positive impact in farming businesses, boardrooms, management and communities.

AWDT won the 'Outstanding Pathway to Governance Leadership' category in last year's Women in Governance Awards, which recognised the organisation for helping women progress into governance leadership roles.

Each year 14 women are selected for a nine-month AWDT Escalator programme. It equips participants with the tools, confidence and support to successfully lead and govern in their chosen fields.

Farming scholarships

Another way emerging agricultural leaders are being nurtured is through various levy-funded scholarship programmes, such as the Nuffield Farming Scholarships and Kellogg Rural Leadership Programme.

Each year, up to five Nuffield Farming Scholarships are awarded and the chosen scholars embark on a 12-month global learning experience, with a view to fast-tracking the development of emerging leaders in the agri-food sector.

The Kellogg Rural Leadership Programme develops emerging agribusiness leaders to help shape the future of New Zealand agribusiness and rural communities. Each course (two per year) brings together 24 participants – from farmers to agribusiness professionals – to develop their leadership skills and industry knowledge, and network with sector leaders. Each course is six months, with three residential blocks of presentations, discussions and workshops, as well as a personal research project.

Anne Hindson, general manager of the Rural Development Trust, which oversees both programmes, says: "Alumni are making significant contributions and influencing New Zealand's agri-food sector through on-farm innovation, governance, management and political leadership, applying their skills, knowledge and networks gained in the programmes."

Dairy environment leaders

Farmers are committed to reducing the environmental footprint of dairying, and this work has been underpinned by DairyNZ's Dairy Environment Leaders' Programme initiatives, which began five years ago, driven back then by DairyNZ's Rick Pridmore and farmer/consultant Martin Bennett.



The programme develops and empowers dairy farming leaders to shape a sustainable future for the sector and enhance the communities they live in through regional initiatives and an annual forum where around 100 farmer leaders meet to develop leaders in responsible dairying.

One of the farmer leaders is Jenny Sinclair, who farms with her husband Pete near Te Awamutu in the Waikato. Jenny says she didn't consider herself a leader but, when lawyer May Chen told the forum in 2014 that it was important to get involved early and not to complain at the other end, she took that advice on board.

"The DEL programme has shown me there are ordinary people out there doing amazing things, stepping up in their communities, becoming part of collaborative policy processes in local government, and telling the good stories to a wider audience."

For further information

DairyNZ has strategic partnerships with many organisations and contributes levy funds towards leadership development.

Check out the opportunities on these websites:

awdt.org.nz

dairynz.co.nz/DEL

dwn.co.nz

fedfarm.org.nz

kellogg.org.nz

nuffield.org.nz

youngfarmers.co.nz



Climate work ramping up

With climate change champions, partnership farms and greenhouse gas roadshows in the pipeline, the Dairy Action for Climate Change is accelerating its work in 2018. Here are some details from DairyNZ senior policy advisor Kara Lok and developer Nick Tait.



Rural professionals taking part a Greenhouse Gas Course at Massey University hear how nitrous oxide is measured in research.

The aim of the Dairy Action for Climate Change (DACC), launched in June last year, was for the dairy sector to proactively take action to mitigate against agricultural emissions. This initiative, by DairyNZ and Fonterra, has come at a time when it is increasingly imperative for the dairy sector to take leadership on such challenges.

At a climate conference in Germany late last year, Climate Change Minister James Shaw said New Zealand would be a world leader on climate change. The Government is looking to have the Zero Carbon Act in force by the middle of this year, which will enforce a net zero emissions target by 2050, and set up an independent Climate Change Commission that will decide whether agriculture should enter the Emissions Trading Scheme. Regardless of the outcome, it has never been more important for the dairy sector to take action on agricultural emissions.

Since June last year, the DACC has made significant progress. DairyNZ's rural professional workshops attracted more than 400 people, our Greenhouse Gas courses at Massey University have been fully booked, and our partnership farm pilot in Canterbury has been a success. This year will see 10 partnership farms chosen from the 15 case studies currently underway, 12 climate change champions announced, and planning for the farmer

greenhouse gas roadshows underway.

The partnership farms are a key component of the DACC. DairyNZ is currently in the case study phase, where our group of scientists, rural professionals and leading farmers are working closely with each of the 15 farms around New Zealand to come up with potential mitigations for each farm taking part.

These mitigations are important because analysis carried out late last year showed an average dairy farm emits around 10 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions per hectare. The amount of emission is dependent on stock numbers, feed eaten and fertiliser use.

By June this year, the 15 case study farms will be cut down to 10 partnership farms, and each will become a leading farm for our sector. Our hope is the mitigations taken by our partnership farms will eventually become wide-spread practice around New Zealand, allowing us to surpass our international competitors and meet the sustainability targets of our communities. This is in line with the new *Dairy Tomorrow* strategy – where we have committed to building the world's most competitive and resilient dairy farming businesses.

Visit dairynz.co.nz/climate-change to learn more about DACC.

Dairy farmers battling drought

DairyNZ's been working with the Rural Support Trust to support farmers affected by drought. We're also planning farmer discussion events and we share our tips for coping with a dry summer on the farm.

In December and January, the Government declared drought in parts of Taranaki, Wellington, Manawatū -Whanganui and the West Coast's Grey and Buller districts.

Announcing a medium-scale adverse event triggers additional Government support for farmers and growers in affected areas. The classification gives Rural Support Trusts a funding boost to help serve their communities.

Although it rained in most areas in January, others missed out or have been dry since and are still short of feed.

DairyNZ has been working with Rural Support Trust to ensure dairy farmers in the worst affected regions have access to timely information and support.

Taranaki acting regional leader Simon Sankey says drought events held in his region were well attended in January.

"Rural Support Trust has been hosting events, which we, along with other organisations, supported through January. Farmers at the events have been largely optimistic, especially after the rainfall we've had over the last few weeks.

"There is still a lot of the season to go and while we don't know what the next few months will bring, the key is to make little decisions often – because when the pressure is on it is easy to become overwhelmed," says Simon.

"The focus in the next few months will be on planning ahead to next season. Many farmers have dipped into supplement held for winter, and they may need to consider different options early in terms of winter crops or importing feed."

Discussion groups in drought-affected regions over the next month will focus on topics to help farmers respond to the weather conditions. For an event near you visit

dairynz.co.nz/events

Tips for February



In response to the hot, dry start to summer, DairyNZ has created a series of questions and answers, which are available at dairynz.co.nz/summer

One of those questions was:

What do I do for winter feed if I use my winter supplement through summer/autumn?

- Be prepared to cull and potentially dry off early. Redo budgets to evaluate replacement feed.
- Look for opportunities to graze replacements off longer.
- Apply nitrogen if soil moisture levels are sufficient (in areas with rain), otherwise when it rains (or rains again) to help increase pasture cover and to encourage ryegrasses to tiller. Check with contractors and book early.
- Consider the protein levels of supplements, e.g. use pasture silage for milkers and maize silage for dry cows as good pasture quality silage will have a higher protein content.
- You may need to consider new approaches to pasture renovation, e.g. under-sowing annuals/hybrids pastures that are recovering poorly this autumn.
- If winter crops are normally used for winter feed, can the farm system and finances work with extra land in crop?

For more information, including questions and answers, visit dairynz.co.nz/summer



DairyNZ senior consulting officer Sarah Payne talks to farmers at a Drought Decision-Making workshop in Patea on January 10.

Redesigning our dairy systems

What could our future dairy systems look like given the massive challenges facing our sector? A levy-funded DairyNZ project called Leap21 aims to answer that question.



As you read earlier in this issue of *Inside Dairy*, the new strategy *Dairy Tomorrow* charts a bold future that will be quite different from today. Delivering on that is a tall order, and our sector will need to make transformational changes in the long run.

Optimising and improving our current farming practices will not be enough, given the diversity of the sustainability challenges we are facing. These challenges include price volatility, the increased power of supermarkets, the availability of milk alternatives, the need to reduce our environmental footprint, increasing demands from society for positive animal welfare, and the need to consider farmers' wellbeing.

These are interconnected issues that cannot be tackled in isolation. In some ways, it is like a Rubik's Cube, where trying to solve one face at a time will run the risk of ruining the others. We need to look at the whole system. That's where DairyNZ's Leap21 project comes in.

A bold leap forward

The aim of Leap21 is to redesign production systems that take into account the many challenges facing our sector, and the varying needs and perspectives of our stakeholders. Those stakeholders include farmers, the New Zealand public, the consumers of our products, and the animals.

Leap21 is about finding integrated systems, starting from an understanding of our stakeholders' needs and goals, rather than starting from anyone's 'pet' solution. What we're trying to do

is look at dairying from outside of dairying – seeing it through the eyes of the world. Why? Because for New Zealand dairy to be sustainable and successful in the long-term, we must make products the world loves, and make them in a way that would be a source of pride for our communities.

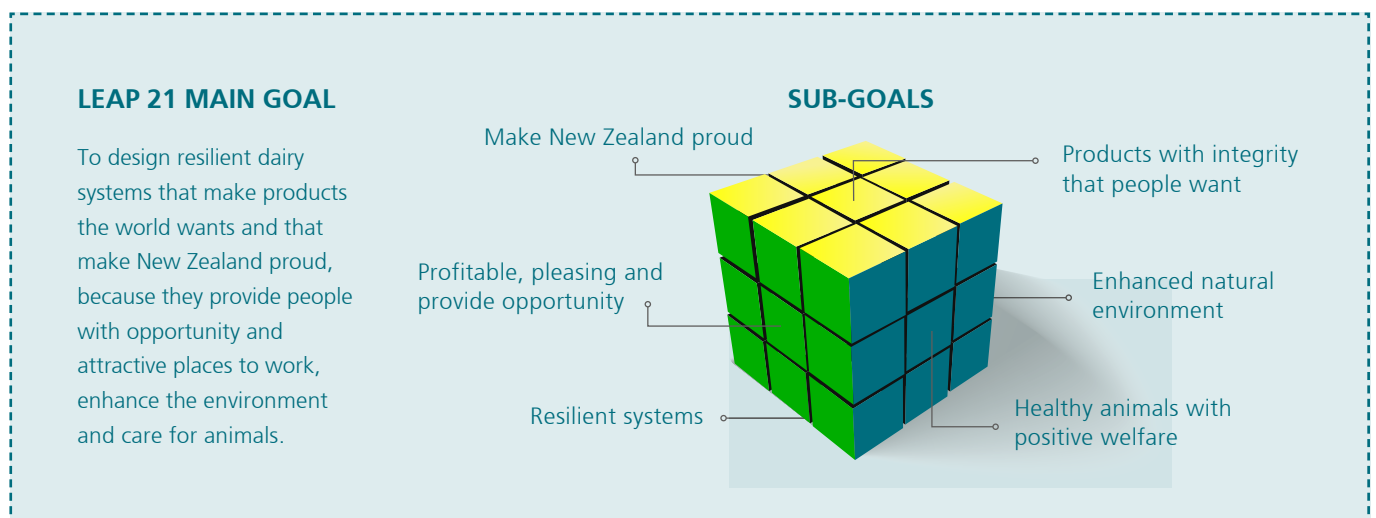
Two new concepts

Working in collaboration with international experts, such as those from Wageningen UR Livestock Research in the Netherlands, DairyNZ spent the last year analysing information and doing interviews and workshops with stakeholders. Then we invited a group of highly creative and forward-thinking people from across the dairy sector, and more widely, for a three-day workshop.

Together we established some inspirational design goals (see the box below) and developed two conceptual designs: 'Local & Global, Naturally', focused on natural solutions; and 'High-tech, High control', which applies whatever technology is needed.

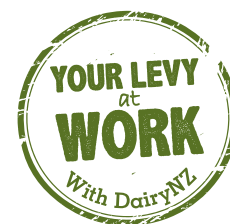
These concepts are now being tested with different stakeholder groups, including members of the public, to gather their feedback and support. We will then work with experts, including farmers, to refine these concepts, add more details, and keep ensuring they reflect the needs of our stakeholders.

Check out a visual representation of these two concepts and learn more about the project at dairynz.co.nz/leap21



Data helping shape farming's future

It's the power of information – hundreds of farmers have put our sector in a stronger position by contributing on-farm data to DairyNZ's Baseline Project.



Collecting and recording on-farm information through DairyNZ's Baseline Project plays an important role when it comes to developing new legislation.

DairyNZ senior economist Matt Newman says having access to Baseline's reliable information helps inform decision-making and enables DairyNZ to answer questions quickly.

"Without it we wouldn't be able to do all the things we do, including speaking on farmers' behalf when new legislation is discussed," he says.

Baseline is operated out of DairyNZ's DairyBase. However, farmers provide more detailed physical information for Baseline than is required for DairyBase, so comprehensive Overseer files can be created.

"Baseline has put dairy in a strong position by providing data to help inform regulation development and solutions to reduce emissions."

For example, in DairyBase, a farmer would usually record the amount of feed and fertiliser used. For those taking part in the Baseline Project, more detailed information is collected, such as the timing around feed, how it's fed, when fertiliser is applied, at what rates, and where.

Baseline has collected data for the last five years, with 400-500 farms contributing each season.

Matt says the data is helping shape the future for dairy farmers.

"For example, greenhouse gases are now in the spotlight, and Baseline has put dairy in a strong position by providing data to help inform regulation development and solutions to reduce emissions.

"The data was used to quickly assess the impacts of proposed environmental taxes pre-election, and will again be used once policies are drafted by the new Government.

"If we had to collect the relevant data from scratch, you're talking about a year's worth of data collection before you can do anything. Through Baseline we're collecting data ahead of the need to use it."

Want to play a part?

DairyNZ is seeking more owner-operators to join Baseline, especially in the Lower North Island and Canterbury regions. If you're interested, contact DairyBase on 07 858 3890 or info@dairybase.co.nz



About 400-500 farms contribute detailed data to Baseline each season.

Strong base for decision-making

Every day, farmers throughout New Zealand are using DairyNZ's DairyBase to make better-informed decisions. More than 2000 farmers are using the online database, which lets them compare their financial and physical data to industry standards.

Cambridge dairy farmer Neil Kirk is one of many drawing value from the tool, and his information is also used in the Baseline Project.

"We wouldn't make a single major decision without checking DairyBase," says Neil, who recalls the data helped identify an issue with mastitis.

"We were getting a higher rate of early season clinical mastitis than the target suggested by DairyBase (less than 8 percent). This caused us to closely examine what we were doing, and eventually resulted in us increasing the glycerine in the teat spray. This seemed to make a difference. We wouldn't have realised there was an issue had it not been for that DairyBase data."

Join today at dairynz.co.nz/dairybase

Better herd repro starts now

Planning for calving and mating starts now, during mid-late lactation, not in the few weeks before mating starts. DairyNZ senior developer Mark Blackwell explains.

You'll have just completed pregnancy testing, and used a detailed Fertility Focus Report to review your herd's 2017 reproductive performance.

So, how did it go? If you saw a gain in performance then you should celebrate success and consider how to build on that next season.

If your herd's repro performance went backwards, you'll no doubt be feeling frustrated that your efforts during mating didn't deliver the desired results.

Either way, you're probably asking yourself, 'What does it take to get a much better result in spring 2018 and again in 2019?'

To achieve that result, you need to start the set-up now. It's about all the things we can do in the six months before mating, rather than focusing only on what we do during the mating period.

It means sitting down with your key advisors to identify exactly where your herd's potential gains lie, and to set priorities beginning now, in February.

If you look at the InCalf 'herd fertility cake' below, you'll see eight ingredients. The five management areas on the left side of the diagram create the set-up for both calving and mating.

These five management areas contribute directly to maximising the pre-mating cycling rate, so the cows are in a fertile state before mating start date.

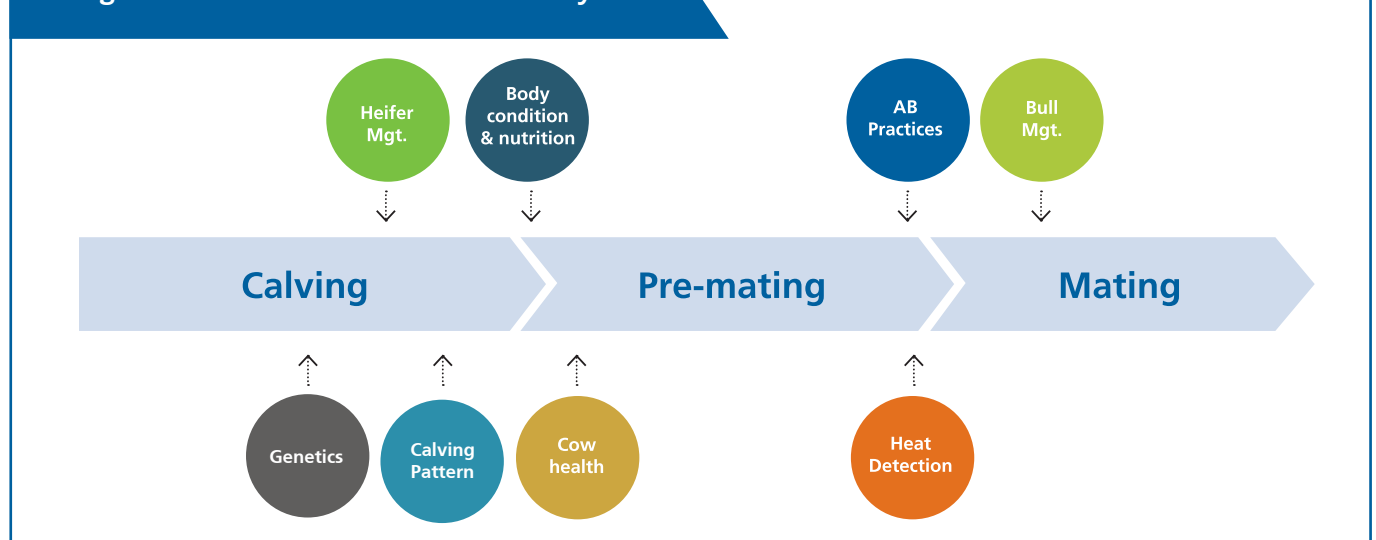
A high pre-mating cycling rate gives a herd the potential to achieve a high submission rate and conception rate throughout mating, thus driving high in-calf rates via the three mating management areas to the right.

Consider these five areas:

- 1 Genetics:** Have you reviewed your artificial breeding (AB) sire selection criteria, and thought about secondary selection for high-fertility breeding values long-term?
- 2 Heifer management:** Are your calves and heifers on a weighing programme this autumn and tracking on target?
- 3 Calving pattern:** Have you run an expected calving report for spring 2018, which is a direct reflection of the in-calf rate graph for 2017?
- 4 Body condition:** Does your body condition scoring (BCS) and drying off protocol consider separately a) the rising three-year cows, that have a BCS target 5.5 at second calving, and b) mature cows with a BCS target of 5.0?
- 5 Cow health:** Have you updated treatment events into electronic records in anticipation of an animal health review, including endometritis, mastitis, and lameness, for example?

Looking for a comprehensive guide to help improve your herd's reproductive performance? Visit dairynz.co.nz/incalf to download your PDF copy of *The InCalf book for New Zealand Dairy Farmers*, or to order a hard copy of the guide (free for levy payers).

8 ingredients of the InCalf herd fertility cake





Tiller Talk farmers Kathy Crow and Logan Bowler.

Staying on track in a soggy season

It's been a tough season for dairy farm owner Kathy Crow but, as one of 19 Tiller Talk farmers, she's been willing to share her learnings with other farmers.

Kathy and partner Logan Bowler own a 96ha farm near Marton where they milk 230 cows. This season the Rangitikei farm, like many around the country, faced an extraordinarily wet autumn and spring.

"It has been a challenging season as far as the wet goes and we've probably done more pasture damage than ever before," says Kathy.

"There was a week in September which was the toughest week I have had on a farm anywhere. We have very heavy clay soils and it was just raining and raining – and where do you put the cows without damaging everything?"

Kathy and Logan are among the 19 Tiller Talk key farmers nationwide who are supported by an agronomist and a small number of nearby farmers as they discuss and trial new practices to make performance gains. Their progress has been documented and shared for others to learn from.

In September Kathy and Logan hosted their first Tiller Talk workshop where agronomists and nearby farmers (group of seven) discussed seasonal issues, including the wet weather, and how Kathy and Logan were tracking. The visit was timely.

"It is always refreshing to hear that everyone is in the same boat and to know you aren't alone," says Kathy.

"Having the agronomists and some skilled people available, who have knowledge around grass and science, has really encouraged me in the areas of measuring and utilising grass. Those are some of the best things about the programme."

Kathy and Logan were originally part of the Agriseeds Grass into Gold programme, which Tiller Talk is modelled on. Kathy says their

pasture skills have developed through both programmes.

"We are much more focused on measuring pasture; we were doing that before, but we have developed that skill further."

For information and updates on the Tiller Talk farmers visit dairynz.co.nz/tillertalk

Farmers invited to Tiller Talk events

The Tiller Talk programme will be discussed at events nationwide over the next few months.

Key tips around autumn pasture management and updates on the Tiller Talk farmers will be provided at the events.

Tiller Talk project manager Elodie Ganche says this is the first opportunity for farmers outside the project to ask questions of the host farmers, participant farmers, and the agronomists involved in the project.

"Tiller Talk has been running for almost a year and each of the farmers has implemented strategies to improve their pasture management and pasture and crop eaten. There will be plenty of information that farmers will find useful especially as they look to set up for autumn."

The Tiller Talk events are: March 6, Cambridge; March 14, Morrinsville; and April 5, Marton. Full details at dairynz.co.nz/events

Farm visits link town and country

Youngsters in Northland are getting the chance to experience dairy farming thanks to two couples taking part in DairyNZ's Find a Farmer programme.



Creating a link between urban and rural communities and showcasing farming to the next generation are just two reasons why Terence and Suzanne Brocx and William and Robyn Hori host school visits.

Suzanne feels the connection many city families once had to relatives in the country has largely been lost. The Brocx and Horis say joining DairyNZ's Find a Farmer service has been their attempt to re-establish that connection.

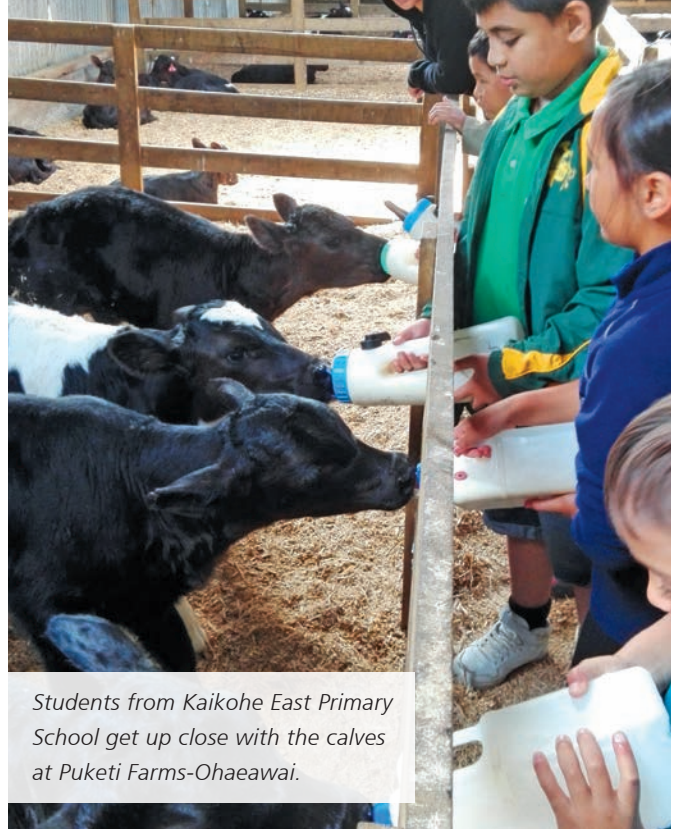
Twice every year, the joint owners of Puketi Farms-Ohaeawai, just west of the Bay of Islands, host two school visits to their autumn calving farm. Suzanne has been pleased with the results, saying students and accompanying parents and teachers leave knowing at least one new thing about dairy farming and rural life.

"Tamariki learn about milking, calf rearing, what we feed our cows, where our milk goes and what food it goes into, as well as about effluent management and how we look after our waterways," says Suzanne.

"While it does cost our business to host children, it's a great opportunity to showcase farming and rural life. We see ourselves as role models for dairy farming, not only as a career, but a way of life. At the same time, we're giving children an appreciation of where their milk comes from."

To help educate the children on various aspects of farm life, the Puketi Farms team sets up four themed stations for the children to visit in groups. One of these stations gives children the chance to make their own butter by shaking cream, and then enjoy it spread on bread. The hosts also set up a station where children can learn to read ingredient labels and choose everyday items that do and don't contain dairy products.

Puketi Farms has been hosting school visits as part of DairyNZ's in-school programme since 2014. The programme, developed by DairyNZ and education specialists School Kit, is



Students from Kaikohe East Primary School get up close with the calves at Puketi Farms-Ohaeawai.



Smiling faces all around: The Puketi Farms-Ohaeawai team seen here with students, parents and teachers from Kaikohe East Primary School.

"We see ourselves as role models for dairy farming, not only as a career, but a way of life."

aligned with the New Zealand curriculum and covers Levels 1-11, using dairying as a context for learning. It aims to help kids understand where milk comes from and what a varied, interesting, and significant sector dairying is, presenting it as a career option.

Schools that have been using DairyNZ's education programme in the classroom can then register for Find a Farmer to link with a local farm. A field trip is a popular learning experience that reinforces the classroom work.

WE NEED YOU!

If you would like to host school visits to your farm, please complete the registration form at dairynz.co.nz/find-a-farmer



Seepage wetlands work wonders

A recent review commissioned by DairyNZ may surprise you at just how effective wetlands can be at preventing contaminants from reaching waterways. DairyNZ water quality scientist Aslan Wright-Stow explains.



Wetlands are often referred to as the kidneys of the land – they filter, absorb and transform water contaminants and, therefore, help to reduce excess reaching waterways. In particular, wetlands can be highly efficient at removing excess nitrogen by creating unique environments whose chemistry and hydrology are ideal for treating, in particular, shallow sub-surface flow, and also runoff from dairy farms.

A recent review of scientific studies in New Zealand, undertaken by NIWA for DairyNZ, found seepage wetlands can

reduce the amount of nitrate – a problematic form of nitrogen – entering them by up to 75-98 percent. That's higher than we previously thought.

We already knew protecting and enhancing on-farm wetlands reduces contaminants reaching waterways, but this review has highlighted just how effective they can be.

Wetlands are also great at trapping sediment and sediment-bound phosphorus, reducing faecal bacteria, and providing a habitat that improves biodiversity, while also mitigating flooding risk.

Wetlands are areas of land where the soil is permanently or temporarily covered by water, saturating the soil. As farmers, you'll know these areas, where ponding quickly occurs and remains after rainfall, where springs emerge and where soils pug easily.

Seepage wetlands are commonly located where surface and sub-surface flow converge, often where there is a change of slope in the landform.

The main process of treating nitrogen entering a wetland is called 'denitrification'. It involves bacteria converting nitrate into harmless nitrogen gas before it can reach a waterway.

Wetlands work by creating the right environment for these bacteria to thrive. Nitrate removal is maximised through increased soil-water contact periods; water travelling deeper into the soil where oxygen is absent; and plentiful sources of carbon, which comes from decaying leaves and sticks. Some nitrate removal also occurs through uptake by microbes and plants.

There are steps farmers can take to improve wetlands' function and, therefore, their ability to reduce the amounts of nitrogen reaching waterways. These steps include restricting stock access to prevent pugging and soil compaction, promoting the right sort of vegetation cover, reducing preferential surface flow paths and minimising surrounding earthworks.

To make wetland protection and enhancement easy, DairyNZ has partnered with regional councils and Landcare Research to develop regional planting guides and the national Riparian Planner, free to use at riparian-planner.dairynz.co.nz. The tool helps you map farm waterways and wetlands, and assists with plant selection, budgeting and the recording of actions needed to meet Water Accord and regulatory requirements.



Typical seepage wetland landscape. Note the change of slope and non-pasture plant species. The bottom image highlights the critical source for protection and suggested fence location (white line).

How do you find the right support?

Support comes in many shapes and sizes and it can be difficult working out the right mix for your needs. DairyNZ developer Carolyn Bushell has some advice.

Running a dairy farm business is increasingly complex and it's easy to feel overwhelmed sometimes. The good news is you don't have to go it alone.

New Zealand's dairy sector is known for being one of the world's most transparent and supportive. This level of cooperation and support is something we should all embrace and get involved in.

Dairy farmers typically seek input from others when looking for technical advice or information to aid decision making, or for personal support or social interaction.

There are many people, groups and organisations able to help but how do you know who to bring into your business, and when and how to use them effectively?

Firstly, who you seek out for help will depend on your:

- stage in the farming journey
- level of clarity around what you want to achieve and how you will get there
- skill set across the different areas of the farm system and your motivation to grow that skill set
- personal preferences, areas of interest and drivers.

The types of support you can access are also varied: professional or informal, paid or unpaid, operational or strategic, one-off or long-term relationship.



Bay of Plenty dairy farmer Jodie Mexted (right), gets some help from her vet, Dr Sarah-jane Healey.

When setting up a relationship of any sort, it's a good idea to ensure the person you're working with understands your big picture and wants to help you achieve it. Find someone who has a good reputation, who offers an unbiased perspective and who's a good listener. It's also important the person is willing to work with others and say what you need to hear, not what you want to hear.

If you're thinking of trying something new on-farm, or facing challenges and would like to speak to someone with experience, visit dairynz.co.nz/dairyconnect

Find a certified dairy farm systems consultant near you at dairynz.co.nz/nzipim

ADVICE



GENERAL FARM SYSTEMS ADVICE
– farm systems consultants/advisors



OTHER FARMERS
– people who've been there and done that



SPECIALIST ADVICE
– accountants, human resources consultants, vets and bankers



GROUP SUPPORT
– DairyNZ discussion groups/specialist topic groups



COMMUNITY, FAMILY & FRIENDS



INDUSTRY GROUPS
– Dairy Women's Network, NZ Young Farmers

Tips for building a top support team

1. Take ownership – seek support and advice but remember you're in the driver's seat.
2. Think outside the box – support can come from many sources, such as mentoring.
3. Be clear about your expectations and everyone's roles – vague expectations get vague results.

Pasture renewal: getting the best bang for your buck

When it comes to pasture renewal, think big. DairyNZ developer Elodie Ganche looks at how to get the greatest return on your investment.

It typically costs between \$900 and \$1200 per hectare to renew pasture. That's a significant investment, so how do you get the greatest production gains for your money? The answer is to renew paddocks that are underperforming – rather than those already doing well.

The chart below is an example of how to rank paddocks based on their annual dry matter (DM) performance. Lifting the poorest paddocks (numbers 14 and 2) by 3 tonnes of DM/hectare (3t DM/ha) would bring these paddocks to the average annual DM yield for this example. Boosting these paddocks' yield to the highest-performing level would more than double the yield and, therefore, the opportunity for return on your investment.

How to identify your worst paddocks

Try to collate pasture growth data from every pasture cover assessment (pasture walks) to obtain a total growth figure per paddock, using pre- and post-grazing cover records. There are a number of pasture management programmes on the market that

get a good idea of how well a paddock is performing by the number of grazing events and silage cuts per year.

We also recommend using the Pasture Condition Scoring tool (free to download at dairynz.co.nz/pasture-condition-score-tool) in spring and autumn to assess the proportion of grass and clover versus weed species in your pasture. This tool is most useful when used in addition to one of the above methods. Visual assessments are central when investigating underlying issues, such as pests, weeds and ponding.

Fix underlying issues

It's important to plan your pasture renewal at least 12 months before sowing. First, complete a soil test and correct any nutrient deficiencies according to soil type. Renewing pastures with poor soil fertility will negate any gains from the new pasture.

Also, check insect populations and use a cultivar that contains the endophyte that will deter attack from the insect/s present, such as AR37 endophyte for black beetle.

Where weed burden is substantial, consider sowing a break crop or seek expert advice on the appropriate herbicide and broadleaf sprays to use as part of your pasture renewal programme.

Lastly, you'll need to correct any drainage or soil compaction issues before establishing new pastures.

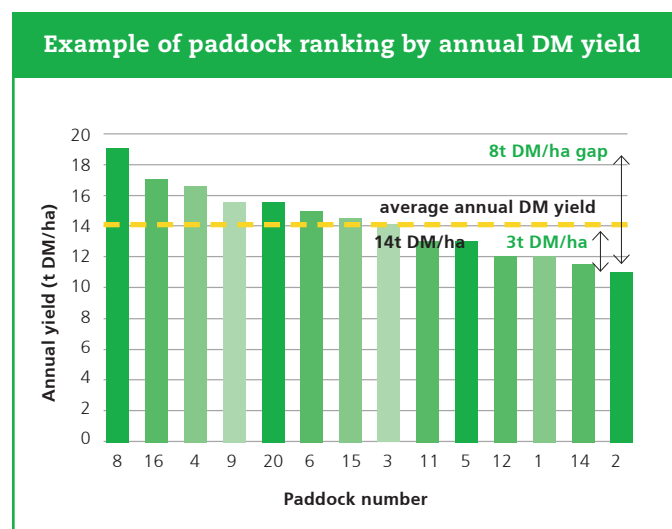
Select the right ryegrass cultivars

DairyNZ's Forage Value Index (FVI) provides a one- to five-star rating based on independently calculated economic values and performance values for each cultivar's seasonal DM production. Go to dairynz.co.nz/fvi to select the ryegrass cultivars and endophyte combinations best suited to your region.

Next steps

Selecting paddocks with the greatest potential for extra DM production, and correcting any underlying issues, is a good start. But to ensure the best results, it's also critical to focus on pasture establishment and its management in year one.

Visit dairynz.co.nz/pasturere renewal to learn about these steps.



provide calculated annual DM yields and paddock ranking.

If you don't have continuous pasture cover records, you can

Judging kicks off in dairy awards



Last year's NZDIA overall winners (left to right) Chris and Siobhan O'Malley, Hayley Hoogendyk, and Clay Paton.

New Zealand Dairy Industry Awards (NZDIA) judging is now underway for the Share Farmer of the Year, Dairy Manager of the Year and Dairy Trainee of the Year awards.

Entrants will be looking forward to the announcement of the regional winners, starting with Hawke's Bay on March 1 and ending with the West Coast/Top of the South region on March 27. All regional winners will progress to a national final in Invercargill on May 12.

The NZDIA is supported by national sponsors DairyNZ, Westpac, DeLaval, Ecolab, Federated Farmers, Fonterra Farm Source, Honda Motorcycles, LIC, Meridian Energy, and Ravensdown, along with industry partner Primary ITO.

Full details of the events can be found at dairyindustryawards.co.nz

Put some time aSIDE

SIDE (South Island Dairy Event) is being held at the Dunedin Town Hall on June 25 and 26, marking the 20th year of New Zealand's premier dairy conference.

This year's event theme, 'It Starts With Us', focuses on how all of us in the dairy sector can take ownership of our future wellbeing and success.

Run by farmers for farmers, SIDE lines up industry experts to deliver keynote addresses, networking sessions and practical workshops in a revitalised format.

Details will arrive in South Island mailboxes soon. Visit side.org.nz



SAVE THE DATE
June 25th - 26th, 2018
Dunedin Town Hall

IT STARTS WITH US

Future farmer

As part of DairyNZ's Rosie's World competition, dairy farmer Darryn Coulter sent in this great snap of his son Olie, age 1, loving farm life. Check out all the entry photos and our winner at rosiesworld.co.nz/competition



Dairy Environment Leaders' Forum inspires

About 90 dairy farmers met in Wellington in December for the annual Dairy Environment Leaders' Forum (DELFL). The Dairy Environment Leaders' programme is an active network of dairy farmers who promote sustainability at regional and national levels.

The forum brings the farmers together for a three-day programme to support, develop and empower to lead positive change, shape a sustainable future for the dairy industry and enhance the communities we live in towards a better New Zealand.

Speakers at December's event included businessman and environmentalist Sir Rob Fenwick, Australian author and science communicator Julian Cribb, businesswoman Mavis Mullins, DairyNZ strategy and investment leader Bruce Thorrold, and dairy farmers.

DELFL is in its fifth year and now has more than 250 dairy farmers involved in the programme. There are 50 new recruits this year. Learn more at dairynz.co.nz/delf



Northland farmers join forces

Farmers in Northland are taking a ‘two heads are better than one’ approach as part of Extension 350, a project to help lift the performance of farm businesses in the region.

Extension 350 was launched early last year to help farmers in the region share knowledge and gain access to specialist advice. Northland dairy farmers Lachie McLean and David Robinson were among the first farmers to join the project.

Ten clusters of farmers are involved – three sheep and beef, and seven dairy – and each cluster has five target farmers who work one-on-one with a mentor farmer and a consultant. After six months, five associate farmers are invited to learn alongside the target farmer.

“I think we’re all gaining something from it. I’ve even picked up pointers to take back to my own business.”

David, who farms in Tangiteroria, is mentoring Lachie and offering him advice alongside local agriculture consultants. He’s enjoying the opportunity to share his experience.

“I think we can all gain something from having a few more heads around a table. Sometimes we just get bogged down in our own little world and you can’t see the light at the end of the tunnel.”

David purchased his property 12 years ago and added a neighbouring farm a few years later. Prior to that he’d followed a traditional pathway from waged positions to contract milker, 50:50 sharemilker and an equity partnership.

His passion for the sector is one reason he agreed to take part in Extension 350.

“I thought it was a wonderful project and my way of giving back to an industry I’ve been involved with for a long time. If I can help someone else a little bit, that’s very fulfilling,” says David.

“I think we’re all gaining something from it. I’ve even picked up pointers to take back to my own business.”

Waipu farmer Lachie was pleased to be paired with David, who’s been on a similar journey to himself.

Lachie was milking 120 cows on 72ha until 2012, when he amalgamated his land with his cousin’s similar sized property and followed this up by buying 113ha from another neighbour.

“I joined because I’ve just put three farms together and I’ve

spent three years trying to get the infrastructure right – and now want to make the farms more efficient.

“The project has made me more focused on measuring and monitoring in the way we’re using our feed. We’re now farming more profitably, using the land in a more effective way. We’re up on last year’s production, even though we’ve come through a difficult spring. I would recommend it (Extension 350) to other farmers. It’s positive and its challenging.”

Extension 350 is supported by Ministry for Primary Industries, Northland Regional Council, DairyNZ, Beef + Lamb NZ and Northland Inc (Northland’s regional economic development agency).

More clusters are being formed so if you’re interested in being involved or would like more information, email Extension 350 project manager Luke Beehre at luke.beehre@northlandnz.com

Lachie McLean (left) and David Robinson are working together as part of Extension 350.



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

February events

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
			1	2 NTH OTAGO / STH CANTERBURY FarmTune workshop series		4
5	6	7	8 LOWER NI Heifer Rearing Field Day - showcasing good management practices for heifer grazing		10	11
12	13 NORTHLAND MilkSmart in Action 2018 – Tomarata		15 NTH WAIKATO Elstow/Springdale Discussion Group – investigate the host farm's system		17	18
19	20	21 TARANAKI MilkSmart in Action 2018 – Taranaki		23	24	25
26	27 TARANAKI Waverley Discussion Group. Triggers for decision making		28			

DAIRYNZ.CO.NZ/EVENTS

NORTH WAIKATO

Milksmart is back for 2018. See theory turned into reality with our case study farmers Bruce and Donna at their farm in Tatuani, on Wednesday February 14.

Get practical tips, advice and ideas for milking smarter with New Zealand's leading experts, who will present, and answer your questions. The sessions are tailored to experience levels and lunch is provided, so bring the whole farm team.

Find out more and register at dairynz.co.nz/milksmart

SOUTH WAIKATO

Want to streamline your milking process? Head along to Milksmart on Thursday February 22. Milksmart focuses on practical ways to save time and money through efficient milking, and it will benefit your whole farm team. Presented by some of New Zealand's leading experts, this year's South Waikato Milksmart event will be hosted at Shaun and Chris Poole's farm in Pirongia.

Visit dairynz.co.nz/milksmart for details.

BAY OF PLENTY

If you're keen to know what's happening in Bay of Plenty, DairyNZ's regional team has a few ways to keep you updated. Our monthly regional newsletter covers local events and national items of importance. We also have an events email that summarises what is coming up, with links to venue details. Also, our event text messages now include a shortened link to each event's webpage, making it easy for you to know what is on and when.

Email alice.dott@dairynz.co.nz if you have any other suggestions for how we can keep you in the loop.

TARANAKI

Launched late last year, the 'Our Milky Ways' dairy exhibition at Aotea Utanganui (the Museum of South Taranaki) in Pātea will provide a glimpse into the history of dairying in South Taranaki.

Fifty objects have been selected by museum staff and the community, and these tell the region's stories of the men, women, cows and bulls that have helped create a farming history unique to this part of the world. The exhibition will run until June 2018 – don't miss it.

Find out more at museumofsouthtaranaki.wordpress.com

LOWER NORTH ISLAND

DairyNZ's People Expo is returning for 2018. This practical event on February 22 will give you tried and tested tools so you can run a farm business that everyone wants to work for.

Hear from three experts who will give you the latest insight into effective farm leadership, how leaders keep themselves and their teams well, and what it takes to attract and retain the best people for your team.

Register now at dairynz.co.nz/people-expo

TOP OF SOUTH ISLAND/WEST COAST

Follow the weekly pasture data and monthly updates of Tiller Talk, which includes Tasman dairy farmer Michael Shearer.

Passionate about pasture performance and calculating the numbers, Michael says getting the best out of his soil and pasture has been a tough challenge on his 160ha farm near Nelson.

Track his progress to see how he and others are adapting to the summer conditions, and get timely tips to help you make smart pasture management decisions.

Visit dairynz.co.nz/tillertalk

CANTERBURY/NORTH OTAGO

DairyNZ is seeking more Canterbury owner-operators to join Baseline. The Baseline Project, operated out of DairyBase, provides valuable data used for dairy industry statistics, and helps provide input into other DairyNZ projects and research.

If you're interested in contributing your data to help the dairy industry, contact DairyBase on **07 858 3890** or info@dairybase.co.nz

SOUTHLAND/SOUTH OTAGO

Can't get good staff? The People Expo in Invercargill on February 21 will provide employers with new ways to lift performance, get the best from staff and create efficiencies.

Hear from leading experts in people management and discuss what you can do as an employer to make your business more attractive.

Speakers include Crusaders personal development manager Virginia Le Bas, who will reveal how this rugby franchise has created a winning culture; and general manager of the Pamu Academy, Rebecca Keoghan, who will discuss Pamu's change in safety mindset from compliance to safer practices and safety leadership.

Register at dairynz.co.nz/people-expo

DAIRYNZ CONSULTING OFFICERS

Northland

Regional Leader	Chris Neill	027 499 9021
Far North	Denise Knop	027 807 9686
Lower Northland	Mark Forsyth	021 242 5719
Whangarei West	Chris Neill	027 499 9021

North Waikato

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

South Waikato

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

Bay of Plenty

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

Taranaki

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

Lower North Island

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

Top of South Island/West Coast

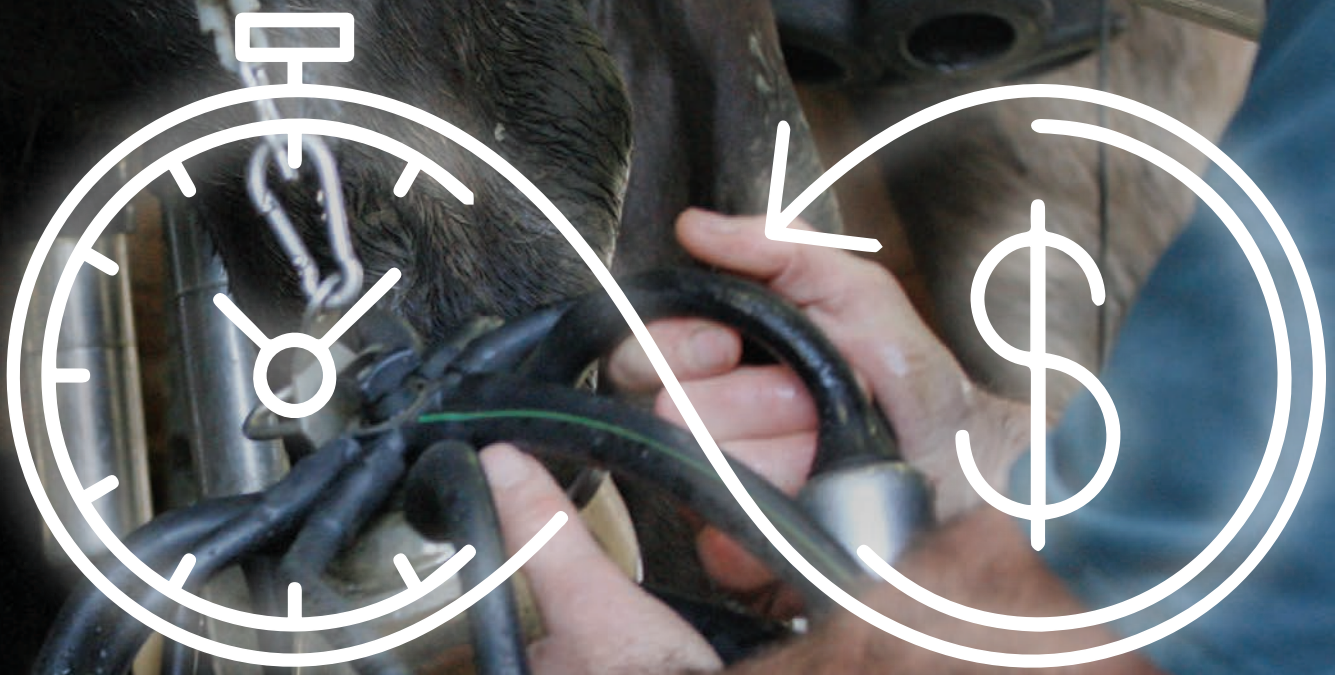
Regional Leader	Wade Bell	027 285 9273
Nelson/Marlborough	Mark Shadwick	021 287 7057
West Coast	Angela Leslie	021 277 2894

Canterbury/North Otago

Regional Leader	Virginia Serra	021 932 515
North Canterbury	Teaghan Lourie	021 246 2775
Central Canterbury	Natalia Benquet	021 287 7059
Mid Canterbury	Stuart Moorhouse	027 513 7200
South Canterbury	Virginia Serra	021 932 515
North Otago	Trevor Gee	021 227 6476

Southland/South Otago

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



SAVE TIME + MONEY MILK SMARTER



- ✔ Learn practical tips, advice and ideas to milk smarter and minimise mastitis
- ✔ Hear from farmers who have made efficiency gains

Events take place throughout February and March. Find out more and register for an event near you at dairynz.co.nz/milksmart

DON'T MISS OUT - NUMBERS ARE LIMITED



DairyNZ