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APRIL 2023 EDITION

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Lights, camera, show time

Take me out to the showgrounds, take me out to the show.

It's been a busy time in the rural sector around the South Island over the past few weeks with agricultural and pastoral shows galore from one end of the mainland to the other.

Given the pressures placed on the rural sector in recent years – through all variances of situations – the annual A&P Show has been a great way for the rural community to reconnect with their local people, especially given so many shows have fallen to the wayside in recent years due to Covid.

It's a chance to stand tall and proud and show off skills, machinery and stock and bring those who don't usually get an inside look into the inner workings of farm life in the door in a relaxed and fun environment where attention is easily grabbed.

And it's really important we are able to do that too.

A lot of places around New Zealand talk about the urban and rural divide within their regions.

Many perceive it to be not true, but there are small pockets where there's issues.



By getting out and standing proud, there's an opportunity to teach and learn and to do so in a manner where those around you are actually a lot more likely to be attentive and listen.

A Show can break down that invisible barrier that sometimes exists and help remove any potential rift and all of a sudden there's a much better understanding from both sides on how things actually work.

But it's also an opportunity for communities to reconnect. A chance to get in front of each other and check in and see how things are doing.

The adage of leaning on a gate and talking to a mate is at its most prevalent during show season as you walk your way around the grounds and see farmers talking to farmers.

That small chance to stop the struggles of day-to-day life and step off the farm and

get around like-minded people and spend some time relaxing is hugely important.

The fun isn't over yet too. The annual South Island Agricultural Field Days is just around the corner and yet again, it's a chance to drop tools and have a little down time.

If you get the chance and can make it, it's well worth the effort.

– By Matt Markham matt.m@theguardian.co.nz

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Fencing contractors appoint mental health advocate

Fencing contractors have appointed one of the rural sector's most recognisable figures as their national patron "to bring greater support to those living and working in rural communities."

The appointment of Craig "Wiggy" Wiggins by the Fencing Contractors Association of New Zealand (FCANZ), coincides with the unprecedented destruction caused by extreme weather events in January and February this year.

FCANZ President, Phil Cornelius, said the partnership with Wiggy is "important for the industry and the rural sector."

"As an association we represent the fencing industry as a whole, but our roots are very rural and the majority of our members are still strongly connected with the rural sector," he said.

Wiggins explains being patron "allows us another way to connect with another important part of the rural community and means we can continue supporting those who need it."

He said the industry is

hearing the stresses rural fencing contractors are under, trying to support their existing clients while servicing all the insurance assessments coming through as well as dealing with the impact the cyclone has had on their own personal and business lives.

"There are challenging times ahead," Wiggins said.

Wiggins is the founder of Whatever With Wiggy and his rural mental health initiatives include "lean on a gate, talk to a mate" and his Whatever With Wiggy Facebook group.

His advocacy work also includes nationwide rural health and wellbeing checks with the Carr Family Foundation, checking farmers' overall health and wellbeing at rural events and Agriconnect, providing mental health seminars for the rural service industry and rural professionals.

FCANZ had a previous connection with Wiggy when association members raised \$15,000 for the Whatever With Wiggy charitable trust through an impromptu charity auction at their annual conference last year.



Craig Wiggins receives a trophy as Ravensdown Agricultural Communicator of the Year PHOTO: SUPPLIED

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Waipara farmer comes out on top at environment awards

A data-driven approach has seen Waipara farmer Ian Knowles take out the Regional Supreme Award at the Canterbury Ballance Farm Environment Awards. The Ballance Farm Environment Awards are run by the NZ Farm Environment Trust and champion sustainable farming and growing, and shine a spotlight on farmers who are successfully reducing their farm's environmental footprint.

With farmers often under fire for the sector's environmental impact, Knowles sees the awards as an opportunity to highlight the good work farmers are doing around sustainability and environmental practice. "I think we need to go into these awards to showcase the industry as much as our own personal farms," Knowles said.

"Hopefully, it might just inspire a few people to look at their own business and tweak a few things. Often it's only little things that you need to adjust. It's not like you have to reinvent your whole farm system. If you can tidy things up without

compromising production, that's a win-win for everybody."

Knowles' Waipara farm, Glenmark Springs, is predominantly a sheep breeding and finishing operation, with some dairy support. Knowles started leasing and buying into the farm in 2015, and since then has invested significantly to increase the farm's efficiency and profitability. Judges found the property to be a great example of continually gathering data and information about the property and implementing strategies, practices, pasture, and livestock to fit the business.

"When we say 'environment', a lot of people think it's just about water quality," Knowles said.

"But for us, it's also around animal welfare, soil and soil health. We've planted around two kilometres of shelter belts to reduce wind flow and soil erosion. With waterways, we've fenced off creeks to reduce the risk of stock going where they shouldn't and planted around them. This ensures that when water does come down off the pasture area, it gets a chance to slow down and be cleaned up



Canterbury Regional Supreme Award winner Ian Knowles. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

before it hits the waterway."

Knowles has found the awards experience nerve-racking but rewarding, welcoming the feedback from judges on the strategies implemented on his property. With Knowles moving into the next round of the awards, a new panel of

judges will be looking into the farm operation. "I'm obviously very nervous because, being a farmer, it's your business, your home and your family all wrapped up into one," Knowles said. "The judges are lovely people, though, and they really make you feel at ease. They are

genuinely interested in what you do and how you go about your day. If you look at some of the names on the panel, they are as good as you can get in the industry, so it's pretty nerve-racking having them around your dining table. In the final report, you get lots of constructive criticism. It's not like they judge you and then walk away and leave you to it. They are there for support, and if you want to talk afterwards. They are all pretty open and caring people."

Knowles was presented with the award at the regional finals awards night held in Christchurch on the March 9, and will go through to the national finals in May along with the other Supreme Winners from each of the eleven regions involved. Regional finalists will be considered for the Gordon Stephenson Trophy, with the trophy's recipients becoming 2023's National Ambassadors for Sustainable Farming and Growing.

By Claire Inkson
claire.inkson@theguardian.co.nz

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He gained his credit by successfully running and managing his parent's town-supply dairy-farm operation at Ashburton Forks, giving him hard-to-come-by deep insight into the rural economy and community dynamics.

Alongside farming, Jeff was a distinguished General Manager within the exploration drilling and resource industry across Mexico, Africa and Australia. Here, he managed and negotiated complex clients, projects and contracts with a \$60M annual turnover.

Throughout his time abroad, Jeff has always maintained strong connections with his farming operations. He is a man of integrity and equipped with vast local knowledge and market trends of the Ashburton area and its surroundings.

His customers will enjoy stress-free and quick property transactions with minimal fuss and can count on receiving a seamless experience with expert guidance and support at every step of the way. What makes Jeff an ideal partner is his vested interests in mid-Canterbury. He is well connected with a lifetime of networks through the region's business ventures, deeply valuing his roots and area as the most prosperous place to live and invest in New Zealand.

If you are in the market to sell or buy in mid-Canterbury, get in touch today for a no-obligation discussion with Jeff to explore what options work best for your needs!

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New start for CLASS franchise

Carrfields Group managing director Craig Carrfield has signalled the end of an era with the CLASS Harvest Centre franchise being re-acquired by Australasian agricultural machinery distributor, Landpower.

Landpower for 30 years. "While it's the end of an era for our family with the CLAAS harvest centre franchise, we know our people at each location will have the opportunity to further develop their careers within the wider Landpower network," Carr said.

The five Canterbury Class Harvest centres will join the Landpower Australasian network of 33 sites when the sale takes effect on July 3rd. The sale will include all stock, motor vehicles, plant and equipment but the Carrfields' Group will retain ownership of the sites and lease the properties back to Landpower.

Landpower's chief executive, Richard Wilson, has reassured customers that the addition of the Canterbury CLAAS harvest centres would continue to be based on local relationships. "The valued customers, suppliers, and local teams of the CLAAS harvest centres in Canterbury can expect the same dedication to service and quality that Carrfields has built its local reputation on."

By Claire Inkson
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PHOTO: SUPPLIED

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The Farming Fast Five: Marcus White

We ask farmers five quick-fire questions about farming, and what agriculture means to them. Here is what 2023 Tasman Young Farmers Regional Chairman Award winner, Marcus White, had to say.

1. What did your journey into farming look like?

My farming career started as a 6-year-old gate-opener during school holidays, helping with tailing or pushing sheep up at an older guy's property near Waikari, as I am not off a farm. Throw in some orphan lambs, Country Calendar, and reading books about the high country, and I was hooked on farming, and it stuck.

I've loved every step and wouldn't change it for the world. I've also had some inspirational local guys who have pushed me to where I need to be and always given me a helping hand and advice. I work for the best employers I have ever worked for on Mt Bengier in Hawarden, North Canterbury. They are very supportive and always want you to be the best version of yourself, both farming and personally. These things have led to me running a Dorset Down stud on my lease blocks

around the area for the past six years, with 60 ewes plus 30 odd commercial ewes and rams that'll be sold.

2. Tell us a little bit about your farming operation.

We are a 2800-hectare breeder/finishing farm in Hawarden North Canterbury, ranging from irrigated flats to rolling hills to steep hill country. We take everything through to the works, so summer is busy with lambs, and winter is busy with r2 cattle.

We currently run around 400 Angus Hereford Shorthorn cross breeding cows, which is a great three-way cross for us. We also run 5,700 Romney Longdown crossbred ewes, 2100 hoggets and 200 R2 heifers and 204 R2 steers, which will be finished over the winter and sold. There are currently 650 sale lambs left on farm that will be sold once they are up to weight. Most summers, there are about 9,500 lambs. We're a self-contained unit apart from the odd outside contractor for silage and wrapping. Over the winter, we have fodder beet and kale in for the R2 cattle, and upright grass for hoggets. Over summer, we have leafy turnip and lucerne on the flats for finishing our lambs.



Hawarden farmer Marcus White. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

3. What challenges have you faced in your farming business, and how have you tackled those challenges?

My first two years out of school were the last bad drought in North Canterbury, so it was a tough start and insight into farming. You

must plan as best you can, be proactive in your approach to the situation and look for the little milestones to get you through the hard times.

Farmers are resilient and passionate about what they do. Although there are hard times, it only takes a good day of saving a lamb's life or mustering on a beautiful clear morning with the sunrise to remember the reason you do it. It's a challenge, but there are always learnings, positives, and things you can reflect on and change for next time.

4. What has been a major highlight for you in your farming journey?

The opportunity to have my own lease blocks outside of work to grow my own stud and commercial ewes to get into a farm of our own someday. At 16, I was running 150 ewes plus my stud ewes. I've just finished doing Level 5 Primary ITO. I enjoyed doing the theory side to support the practical side of things.

I've also been the chair of the Hurunui Young Farmers for the last seven years, which I've loved. I recently won the Tasman Regional Chairman's award, which was a great surprise and honour for my

hard work for the club and the community. I won the Tasman Regional Service award two years ago for my service to the Young Farmers. My fiancé Ally and I are the junior vice chairs of the Hawarden A&P show, which we've enjoyed being part of and bringing together a great community event.

I love the rural farming community and how a tight-knit community is always there to support and help each other when needed.

5. What advice would you have for the next generation of farmers?

Enjoy every day and take learnings from the hard times. Never be afraid to ask questions if you don't know. The more you ask, the more knowledge you have, which will help you to become a better farmer and person. Do the core things right and to the best of your abilities. If you make a mistake, learn from it. Don't beat yourself up, as guys who have been farming for 50 years still make mistakes. Enjoy it, have fun and get stuck into it. It's a fantastic lifestyle, leading you down some great paths and meeting some great people along the way. I wouldn't change it for an office job, even on a -8 frost, or a snowy day.

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All Living Little homes come with a five-year domestic use guarantee on all workmanship and can be delivered anywhere in the country. Living Little can take care of your building consents and foundations for permanent homes, to make the whole process simple and stress-free. Off-the-grid options with composting toilets are also available for an eco-friendly alternative.

If you are thinking small – it is a must to view Living Little homes and experience the beauty and simplicity of the down-sized lifestyle. If you are coming to Christchurch any time soon contact Sophie at Living Little at Sophie@livinglittle.co.nz to make a time to view. In the meantime, take a sneak peek on their website at www.livinglittle.co.nz.



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Stop the freeloaders – taking down the dirty rats and mice

The distinctive smell, the piles of dark brown droppings, gnawed wood, nests, and the scratching sounds are all-to-familiar signs of the destructive and disease-carrying presence of rats and mice.

The scourge of grain producing areas including Mid Canterbury, they are among the most serious mammalian pests known to man. For the ravenous omnivores, almost nothing is off the table. From cereals, seeds, stock feed, and fruit, to eggs and chicks - everything is fair game. Gardens to lifestyle blocks, orchards to farms.

In terms of maintaining general good property hygiene, monitoring and control is best practice. A single rat can produce 50 droppings and 50 mL of urine daily. They also carry potentially harmful diseases which they can spread indirectly by way of fleas and mites.

Rats' powerful jaws also give them the ability to damage buildings and other assets - gnawing holes in grain sacks, and wood, and building nests in



roofs and in machinery.

There's no doubt they can be a challenge. Rats have not earned themselves the moniker "cunning" for nothing.

UPL NZ Ltd Northern South Island Regional Manager, Pete de Jong, says controlling them effectively demands a combination of hard science

and advanced rat psychology. He reckons Generation Soft Bait rodenticide has it nailed.

"Generation Block Bait, still has its place and its long-time users and advocates, but Generation Soft Bait has quantifiable advantages. When I'm explaining it to people, I tell them that, from a rat's

perspective, the difference between the wax-encased block and soft bait, is like the difference between chewing on a candle and eating peanut butter. Soft bait is totally irresistible to them."

He says that attraction is to the point where the bait beats other food sources, hands-

down. It also out-performed competitor baits in trials.

"Rats are both naturally cautious and are creatures of habit. But even where you've got fairly established, bait-shy populations, Generation Soft Bait works really well."

He says the specially developed vegetable oil and crushed grain-based formulation gets rats' attention faster, with the soft bait's paper ensuring the tempting aroma disperses more widely. Pete says it's also very easy to deploy by skewering the plasticine-like bait on the metal rod, or wire within the Generation bait station. "It's quick, clean, and convenient."

The smallest non-dispersible bait on the market, Generation Soft Bait kills rapidly and in a single feed. 2-3gs kills a rat and 0.3-0.4g a mouse. To put that into perspective, a rat's average daily dietary intake is 20g/day while for a mouse it's 3g/day.

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The value of quality stock feed is something everyone in the agricultural industry is acutely aware of. Stakes are high, and cutting corners or missteps can have a real impact.

But damage can also come from unexpected quarters. And by stealth.

UPL NZ Ltd. Otago Southland Regional Manager Tom McDonald has seen the impact on seedlings up close. He says the potential for loss of crops through slug attack shouldn't be underestimated.

Tom says one Central Otago farmer's recent experience was a real wakeup call.

"45 hectares of high-value SovGold Ultrastrike-treated kale seedlings were under heavy attack from slugs. With potential average yields of around 10-14 t DM/ha, and suited to both cattle and sheep grazing systems, it was a crop that the farmer was naturally very keen to save.

"The irrigated kale, which was direct drilled, suffered a severe and potentially catastrophic outbreak."

Direct drilled crops are at increased risk from slug damage, as the pests are not killed by paddock's being turned over by conventional tilling. Added to that, drill slits provide an attractive refuge for slugs, exposing seedlings to slug feeding.

Fortunately, in the case of the SovGold kale crop, the farmer, and, ultimately, their stock, there was an effective solution at hand. Ironmax Pro molluscicide from UPL NZ Ltd was spread by helicopter at 6 kg/ha.

The results rewarded the decision.

Tom says Ironmax Pro made an extremely good job and supported the crop recovering and getting well established.

"The client was happy, and they said they saw an almost instant result."

Slugs are often under farmers' and growers' radar. But, Tom



warns, you've got to keep an eye on them.

Unchecked, grey field slugs (*Deroceras reticulatum*) and their close relation brown field slugs have the potential to wipe out entire crops. The voracious feeders cause damage across a broad range of plants, but are especially tough on vulnerable seedlings.

Tom says he's seen them destroy 200 hectares of young plantain. That destruction seemingly came out of nowhere. "Slugs can cover a lot more ground than people think they do. We put out a slug mat and there were 180 slugs under it the next morning!"

New Zealand's temperate climate is especially slug friendly. The pests are active year-round and able to produce 300-500 eggs in their 13-month lifespan.

"In my experience, you need to be actively looking for slugs. We say; monitor and measure!"

Particularly in heavy soils and wet areas, slugs can

be destructive. Slugs are dependent on moisture for their survival, activity and growth with moisture forming up to 80 per cent of slugs' body weight. Surface trash gives them an ideal home, so keeping areas cultivated helps with control.

But there's a proviso.

Even in paddocks and ground that have been worked conventionally, low and no tillage areas (such as areas around troughs and streams, and along fences) allow slugs to find a safe refuge and beneficial environment. From there, they can move out to feed on plants and seedlings.

Slugs' mottled colour also enables them to go largely unnoticed. Tom advises a structured approach. "Put down a slug mat or a damp hessian sack. Leave it there overnight and check it next morning. Even one slug signals that you've got a potential problem."

Manufactured by French company DeSangosse, the global leader in molluscicide

technology, Ironmax Pro is just as effective as sister product, and industry leader, Metarex® Inov. With the added value of solid green credentials.

Tom says the BioGro NZ organic certification that is making Ironmax Pro increasingly popular with farmers and contractors.

"There's a demand for products that are safer for the environment, and more pleasant to work with, without compromising efficacy. Apart from anything else, Ironmax Pro's low odour has been welcomed. People have noticed there's not that distinctive smell when you're in a tractor cab or truck."

Another thing, which separates Ironmax Pro from conventional slug baits, is its Colzactive® technology. Colzactive is made up of specially selected oil seed rape extracts. Tom says 20 plant species were evaluated and 50 potential molecules identified based on their appeal to slugs.



Otago Southland Regional Manager Tom McDonald.

Two extraordinarily attractive and palatable molecules were selected in the end, which facilitate rapid detection by slugs, enhance Ironmax Pro's taste and how quickly Ironmax Pro works compared to other baits.

Research shows slugs even actively prefer feeding on Ironmax Pro to feeding on seedlings. Ironmax Pro contains the optimized active ingredient 24.2 g/kg ferric phosphate anhydrous, referred to as IPMax. Iron (ferric) phosphate is a natural component of soil. In Ironmax Pro, it works as a stomach poison on slugs and is fatal once ingested. Feeding stops almost immediately.

Ironmax Pro is manufactured with the finest durum wheat using a unique wet process which makes it very rain fast. IPM-friendly, the slug bait has limited impact on beneficials including earthworms and the slug predator carabid beetle.

Ironmax Pro has a recommended application rate range of 5 to 7 kg/ha. With 60,000 baits per kilogram, Tom says the product has excellent ballistic properties. "The uniform pellet size and innovative Ironmax Pro manufacturing process mean bait can be spread at widths of up to 24 m."

Talk to your local technical representative for more details on Ironmax Pro.

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Mayfield Playcentre offered rides for children on their custom-built miniature train.



Fairlie's Mackenzie Highland Pipe Band led the grand parade.

PHOTOS: SUPPLIED

Mayfield's 75th A & P Show a roaring success once again

The atmosphere in Mayfield was buzzing with the sounds of tractors, horses, sheep, and even pigs when the gates opened on the annual 97th Mayfield A&P show on March 11th.

With last year's event cancelled due to Covid restrictions, the enthusiasm for one of the longest-running and most important events on the community's calendar was at an all-time high.

"The Mayfield show is special because the whole community gets behind it," president Andrew Mackenzie said. "That creates the atmosphere."

With the event aimed at families, there was plenty of entertainment on offer for all ages.

Mayfield Play Centre got creative, treating children to rides

on their custom-built miniature railway made from plastic drums towed by a side-by-side, while Mayfield School provided a scavenger hunt. As always, the pig racing, terrier racing and tractor pull were popular attractions, with new additions to the show programme of helicopter rides and a tug-of-war proving a success.

Trade sites and stall holders were in abundance, with the show site and trade space bigger than previous shows. "We are enthusiastic about growing the show, not just maintaining it," Mackenzie said. Quigley's Contracting, with their signature pink tractor, took out first prize for best trade site.

The shearing section offered spectators the unique opportunity to watch two-blade



Mayfield locals Gordon McCormick, judge of the produce section, and Hamish Marr catch up for a yarn.

shearing world title winners, Allan Oldfield and Tony Dobbs, compete in the sixth round of the Mark Marshall Memorial

Blade Circuit. A machine-shearing open competition also ran throughout the day. Entry numbers were high

for both machine shearing and equestrian events, with some entries coming from the Cheviot Show, which had also been scheduled for Saturday but was cancelled due to wet ground conditions.

The Mid Canterbury Vintage Machinery Club pulled out all the stops, with twenty tractors on display that proved a firm favourite in the grand parade. For club patron Mike Ross, the enjoyment comes as much from the journey to the show as the event itself. "It's travelling to the show as well as meeting people," Ross said. Ross has been a club member since 1983, with both tractors he brought to the show being a much-treasured part of his family's farming history. The Case tractor was purchased by

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Mayfield Lions Club members Graeme Dickson, Kevin McNab, John Milne, Shane Edwards and Ron Cross. With their chocolate wheel, the club raised \$1500 for the Cyclone Gabrielle relief effort.

his father in 1967, while the Farmall was initially owned by his father in the 1960s before being traded. Ross purchased the tractor back in 2016.

The Mayfield and Districts Lions Club ran a chocolate wheel throughout the day, which raised \$1500 for Cyclone Gabrielle relief efforts. The club intends to continue fundraising for those affected by the cyclone through firewood sales over the

coming months.

The Mackenzie Highland Pipe Band from Fairlie added to the event's magic, leading an impressive grand parade. With around 5000 visitors through the gate, spectacular weather and community spirit by the truckload, there is no doubt the 97th Mayfield Show will be one for the history books.

By Claire Inkson
claire.inkson@theguardian.co.nz

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The Hawarden A&P Show a sheepish affair – in a good way



Bubbles and Squeak from Funtime Parties entertain children in the community hub. PHOTOS: CLAIRE INKSON

Fashion show MC Sam Chisnall with Rural Support Trust ambassador, Matt Chisholm.

The Hawarden A&P Show celebrated food and fibre as the community gathered together for the association's 117th show on March 18th. With last year's show one of the many around the

country cancelled due to covid restrictions, the committee were determined this year's event would go ahead. "I think because we didn't have it last year, it makes you realise and appreciate how much it means

to everyone," co-president Anna Buist-Sidey says. "It's the one thing that brings our entire community together."

The show's 'sheepish affair' theme inspired a fashion show in the Our Fare area that shone

a spotlight on wool with a range of 60 garments by 12 designers. Locals turned cat-walk models took the stage, joined by Rural Support Trust ambassador and television presenter Matt Chisholm. An

advocate for mental health and passionate about New Zealand agriculture, Chisholm also lent his skills as a judge at the show and was on hand for a 'coffee and a catch up' with locals in the show's information hub.



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“I seriously think we need to celebrate our farmers every day,” Chisholm said. “An A&P show is one of the best days of my calendar year. We talk about bridging the gap between town and country. Well, A&P shows have been doing that for 150 years, and it’s really special to be a part of that. I feel very privileged to be here.”

The food and fibre theme continued with an evolution of shearing display that walked spectators through the history of shearing with machine and blade shearing demonstrations. Entries were high in the sheep section, with Andy Sidey picking up the Supreme Sheep award for his Corriedale, while his father Doc Sidey was presented with the prestigious R.A.S Medal for Excellence in Agriculture by the National A&P Society.

A community hub with a sand pit, bouncy castle and even clowns kept children entertained, while a variety of retail stalls and trade exhibitors meant there was something for all ages. AGS Contracting picked up the prize for the best heavy trade exhibit, while Cochranes won the best large trade site. Murchison Homes took away the best small site award. The day ended on a high note, with a lawnmower race taking place in the main ring, followed by a community bar-be-que.

By Claire Inkson
 claire.inkson@theguardian.co.nz



Greg Costello drives a vintage Massey Ferguson owned by 13 year old Keygan Philp.



Locals turned cat-walk models took to the stage to show off wool garments.



Martin Murchison is presented with the award for best small site by co-president Anna Buist-Sidey.



Robert and Lorna Giller’s vintage Chevrolet truck joined an impressive line –up of cars and vintage tractors in the grand parade.

With trialling, does the dog pick you?

DOG TRIALLING: A dog taught NZ captain Guy Peacock the tricks of the trade, **Kem Ormond** learns



As an 18-year-old Smedley farm cadet, Guy Peacock had the opportunity to have his own dog, and attend sheep dog trials. In fact, it was expected that all the cadets enter their dog into the local A&P show competitions.

That was when a good 4- to 5-year-old broken-in sheep dog would cost you \$800 to \$1000. It is much tougher for young shepherds nowadays, as a similar dog will set you back \$5000 plus.

The first championship dog he had was a heading dog called Hutton, which he bought as a pup and trained while attending Smedley Station in the mid-90s. He was an absolute natural when it came to working sheep.

As Guy put it: "Hutton taught me everything I know."

It was this dog's ability and determination that really set Guy onto the path of success he has had as a sheep dog triallist.

With the seed sown, Guy wanted to learn more and getting a job on Tuatane Station alongside manager Bob Bryson, a top sheepdog triallist, was a great opportunity to gain more knowledge about the fine art of sheep dog trialling.

Since Hutton's passing, there has been Pound, Frank, Falcon, Tom, Chief and Slim, all showing their talent at championship level, and



Left, Chief and Slim are ready for action; Above: New Zealand captain Guy Peacock (right) shakes hands with Australian captain Mick Hudson.

several other open class dogs, but Hutton, who Falcon and Slim are both descendants of, was the one who started it all for him.

Guy has represented New Zealand three times, competing against Australia – the first time in 2018 as part

of the four-man team in Sydney – 2019 in Nelson, and again as captain of the New Zealand team in 2022, in Tasmania.

Sacrifices and dedication, as well as a good dog, is what it takes to make a winning partnership. "It is the qual-

Hutton taught me everything I know.

– Guy Peacock

ity of time spent with a dog that makes all the difference," says Guy.

The evenings are when Guy manages to find that quality time with his dogs. During the day, Guy is a fertiliser consultant for Waipukurau-based PFP fertiliser, and after a day dealing with fertiliser he has 72 hectares at Te Uri, Dannevirke, that needs attending to.

Shepherding is a natural progression into sheep dog trialling – if you are keen, you need to find the right dog.

Often it is the dog that seems to find you in a strange sort of way and each dog needs to be trained on its own merits. You will soon know whether you have found the right dog.

There are plenty of seasoned triallists out there and if you show you are keen to learn, they will find the time to offer encouragement and advice. Plus check out the local sheep dog trial clubs in your area as they are always keen for new members.

Guy often runs training days or gives his time at shows to work with owners of sheep dogs, teaching them simple commands and full-proof methods to enable them to get the most out of their dogs to enjoy working them and to make theirs dog the best they can be.

That special dog will be the difference between competing at sheepdog trials and being a successful sheep dog triallist. You have to hope that special dog finds you! ■

Gotland fleece holds lustre in sun

DIVERSITY: Rare sheep breed has a number of unusual characteristics, **Kem Ormond** discovers.



While visiting friends, I noticed a sheep pelt laying on their couch. It had beautiful defined crimping, a high lustre fleece and was silvery grey in colour.

When I asked where it came from, they said "a Gotland sheep".

Gotland sheep? I had never heard of them. In New Zealand they are considered a rare breed. They are New Zealand's only true coloured sheep. That is to say that other breeds of sheep are either white or coloured, but the Gotland is always coloured.

One thing to note is that their wool does not discolour in sunlight.

The breed originated on the Island of Gotland in the Baltic Sea, off the east coast of Sweden. In the 1920s, through intensive and selective breeding, Sweden produced the modern Gotland sheep that we see today.

This multipurpose breed produces wool, pelt, and meat.

Their colour ranges from silver to the softest shade of grey and these are highly desired by spinners, knitters, and weavers. The wool ranges from 29 to 33 microns with the wool from a lamb being as fine as 20 microns.

The cutest black lambs are born and as they age their fleece turns a beautiful silver grey.

With many unique characteristics, Gotland sheep are often chosen for their high lambing rate, strong



Vanessa Dickie with her Gotland sheep.

mothering instincts, abundant milk production, hardy nature, being short tailed and hornless and their small stature and calming nature. It goes without saying their wool and pelts are like pure silk to the touch and their meat mild, but flavoursome.

Vanessa Dickie from Three Sticks in the heart of Waverley, Taranaki, and her husband raise Gotland sheep.

She said she chose the breed as they were beautiful, interesting and

a little bit different. Ten years ago, she purchased eight Gotland ewes from Otago, to use for meat and to graze the driveway.

Deciding the pelts were too beautiful to be discarded, she had some professionally tanned and was thrilled with the finished article.

Now with 100 breeding ewes in the flock, she has diversified into selling the pelts online and the demand is strong. Not only do they now grace

furniture in homes, but they are also shipped overseas or given as gifts for new-born babies.

Many of the flock started life as family pets and did the circuit of the local school pet day. So, rounding them up is what Vanessa's children love to do ... no dog needed, they know the call from the children and come running.

"Having a retired father to help with advice and encouragement has been a big advantage with this new venture" says Vanessa. "They do need a regular pedicure every six weeks or so as they have feet very much like a goat and are susceptible to a bit of foot rot."

Vanessa's long-term vision is to have some of the wool spun and made into beautiful products. She also feels there is an opportunity to promote the meat as a specialty meat due to its fine texture and the fact it has less fat than an average sheep.

But the diversity does not stop there, with 60,000 manuka trees planted, they harvest the manuka to be made into beautiful oil and oil products such as lip balm and first aid gel.

At present they have a project on the design board using manuka oil and all its healing properties, along with Gotland wool to produce a healing dressing.

With dairy farming their main income, the Gotland sheep and manuka oil are a pleasant distraction while adding to the diversity of their farming operation. ■



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We need to talk about over-regulation

COMMENT: Farmers are under-appreciated and face too many rules, writes **Todd Muller**.



The kitchen table has a special place in all Kiwi farming homes. Regardless of what sector we come from, they're all remarkably similar.

They aren't just a place to share meals, memories, and laughter – they're the heart of rural family life, where bills are paid, budgets are balanced, and conversations had.

Over the past two decades, I have spent many hours sitting around kitchen tables across the country listing to the unique stories of the Kiwis who produce food and fibre for the New Zealand market, for other Kiwi businesses and, importantly, for export.

Those farming families haven't just shared their stories with me but also their hopes, dreams, fears, and challenges – an experience that has been simultaneously heart-warming and heart-breaking.

These farmers and growers have an absolute love of the land and the lifestyle, but can slowly see their ability to do what they have done for generations being eroded by waves of regulation and added costs.

As summer turns to autumn, the conversations happening around those kitchen tables are underscored by a relentless feeling of stress and

financial pressure that's sucking the joy out of farming.

In my view, farmers are over-regulated and under-appreciated. About 25,000 farming families produce enough to feed 50 million people and generate \$52 billion in exports that underpin our economy and, therefore, the lifestyles of us all.

New Zealand's food and fibre producers are among the highest quality and lowest carbon in the world, yet we don't often hear that celebrated. Instead, farmers are told by sometimes faceless Wellington bureaucrats or local authority officials – often with no practical farming knowledge – how they can and must improve the way they farm.

Thirty years ago, New Zealand's farmers were too lightly regulated. That was clearly wrong, but now things have swung too far in the opposite direction. Farmers are being told what they can farm, in which paddock, and how to go about it, with constantly changing rules about water quality, biodiversity, climate change, fertilisers and everything else you can imagine. While each of these expectations might sound reasonable to the urban ear, the cumulative effect of more rules, reporting, paperwork, costs, and criticism, with little regard for fairness, pragmatism or common sense, make it all the harder to get out of bed at 4am for milking. At the same time, competitors in Europe and America are celebrated and financially supported to improve.

Some farmers are at the end of their tether.

National backs New Zealand's



farming sector. All human land use has an impact and National's approach is to work with the primary sector to encourage ongoing improvement in minimising environmental harm and to build on what New Zealand is already good at – not to grind a sector down so it folds in on itself. Let's refine our regulations to make them more workable, improve immigration settings to get in people who can help on the farm, and really shake the tree of innovation so science helps farmers in reducing

The tranche of regulations is taking the joy out of farming, says Todd Muller.

Photo / NZME

greenhouse gas emissions.

National is also committed to addressing the cost of living for all New Zealanders. We're the party of lower tax. Labour is the party of higher tax. National says people should keep more of what they earn. We want to lift incomes so all Kiwis can get ahead.

National is the party of law and order, and we've announced policies to tackle gangs and combat youth offending. National also thinks vital infrastructure has been neglected and just last week we announced our Local Water Done Well policy – which will restore the ownership and management of drinking water, stormwater and wastewater to local councils, instead of Labour's Three Waters proposal with four mega-entities with co-governance forced on them. In addition to water standards, we'll set rules so that councils have to ring-fence investment in water infrastructure – not use that money for other things.

This year, New Zealanders get a choice about the direction of the country. I'm committed to National having the best policies to help rural families and rural communities. Many are struggling, recent weather events have caused incalculable losses for some, and sector and political leaders need to not be afraid to admit where mistakes have been made. I'm not afraid of those conversations, and National won't be either. ■



Todd Muller is the National Party's spokesman for agriculture.



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Pitching in to help when it matters

COMMENT: Seeing the destruction brought a few tears, writes **TERRY COPELAND**

As I reflect upon spending a few days in the Hawke's Bay recently, there is no doubt this adverse event and national state of emergency are among the very worst this country has ever experienced (if not the worst).

It is important to remember that whilst the Hawke's Bay was affected the hardest, there are isolated pockets of communities from Northland, Auckland, Coromandel, Gisborne, Wairoa, Tararua, Wairarapa, and significant damage in Manawatu.

This goes across 25 territorial authorities, multiple branches of support agencies like Rural Support Trust, and lots of organisations wanting to help and make a difference.

Having lived through the Christchurch earthquakes in 2010-11, resulting in my family losing our house, I can completely relate to the shock, vulnerability, exhaustion, and fear of not knowing how you can "get through this" feels like.

I will admit to shedding a few tears when seeing the devastation through the Dartmoor Valley where there were no people, and an almost-lunar scene devoid of anything above ground level because everything was covered in a layer of silt and whole orchards had disappeared.

On one of the mornings Federated Farmers provincial sales and engage-



ment adviser Salli Baldock, Feds Hawke's Bay president Jim Galloway and I, alongside Beef + Lamb CEO Sam McIvor and a couple of his local team, went to meet with a group of farmers in Otane (Central Hawke's Bay). One of the farmers I knew quite well, and

I asked him how his place was affected.

He owns a large, high-value-crop arable farm and he explained that of his 740ha property, all but 20ha was still under water 10 days after the fateful night the Cyclone hit. Luckily, his house and main implement shed were spared. He was more concerned about the damage to some of his neighbours who are dealing with animals cut off in inaccessible paddocks, local roading, and what impact further rain would have.

I am often inspired and uplifted by the true sense of community our farmers and growers have for each other. They all pitch in to help each other when it really matters. This pragmatic approach and simply rolling your sleeves up and get stuff done is their way of coping.

The number of bridges destroyed across the North Island may end up in the hundreds.

The forestry slash across the Hawke's Bay beaches is quite extreme, and obviously up in Tairāwhiti this is an ongoing issue. However, it's not all forestry slash.

The bridge at Rissington was swept away due to whole trees planted as

I am often inspired and uplifted by the true sense of community our farmers and growers have for each other.

part of the riparian plantings along the riverbanks. Weeds building up on riverbanks have grown significantly across the Hawke's Bay due to stock being fenced off and no longer are these weeds grazed and kept under control. This added to river levels flowing at a higher rate in many instances along with the lack of shingle removal raising the bottom of the river plains. This is a regional council responsibility, and we saw this from the Canterbury flooding in 2020, so no excuses ...

Concerns were raised on the lack of information people were able to access when everything except battery-operated radios were rendered useless. Why wasn't national radio used to convey information that help was coming, which areas were affected and what was being done?

That's one of many issues I have brought back to Wellington about the lack of a "Civil Defence radio". The lack of information about who was cut off, and where. Another was the military grounding private helicopter companies from making crucial food and medicine drops as they wanted to have clear skies for themselves and could handle the situation. Why didn't they simply bring these helicopters and pilots under their command and cover a greater area much more quickly?

The vital roading infrastructure is going to take a long time to fix.

In Christchurch, the roading system took 10 years to fix the affected roads and that was in just one (large) geographic location. Its decisions like those that need to be made ahead of serious recovery projects getting underway. ■

Terry Copeland is chief executive of Federated Farmers.

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They're Caroline and Paul Whitbread, who six months ago bought the French Farm Winery in the idyllic and picturesque settlement of Akaroa, about an hour from Christchurch.

The Whitbreads were initially focused on just the house on the then run-down winery property at Banks Peninsula. It was a new start after fire had destroyed their Geraldine home of 18 years in August 2021, and after Paul was initially

keen just to rebuild. Caroline, though, had other ideas, a bigger vision maybe and a desire to be closer to her two daughters in Christchurch. The stars aligned, with the French Farm Winery on the real estate market in an opportunity too good to turn down for the pair and their much-loved pooches Maisy and Poppy.

And it wasn't too long that news of the ownership change, and overhauling what they called an "overgrown jungle" of a garden, saw enquiries coming through.

"When are you reopening?," they were asked.



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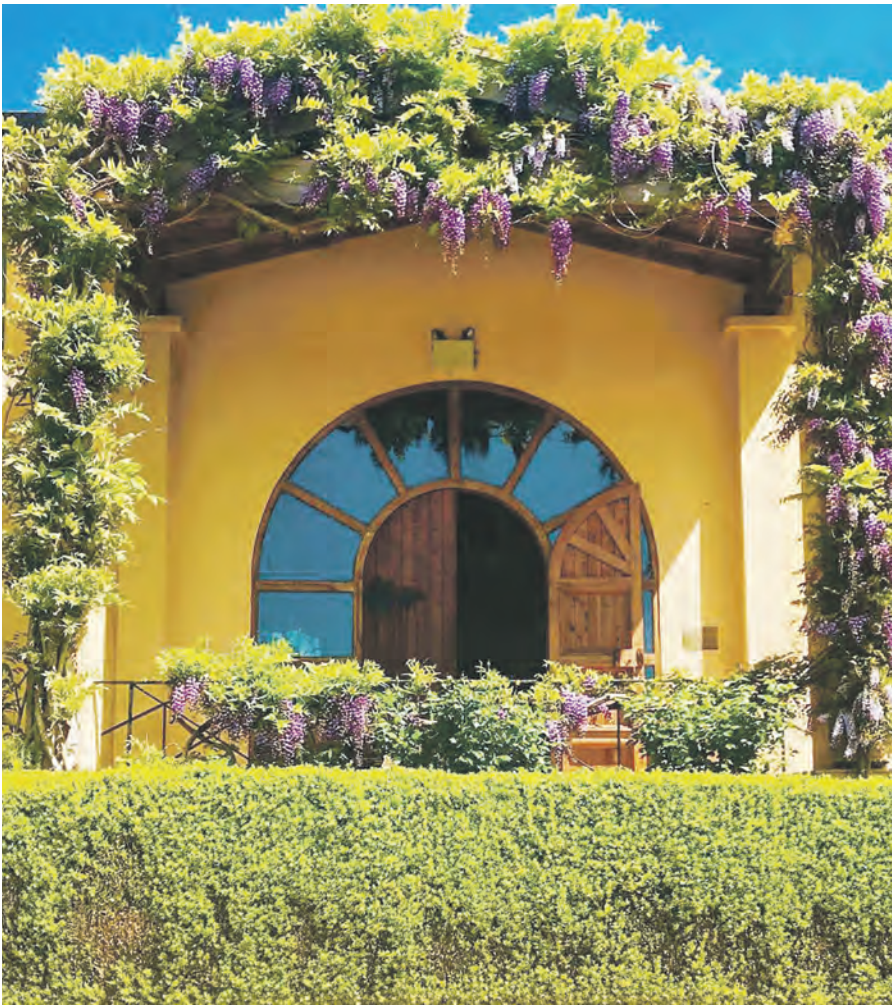


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Alluring indeed: Akaroa's French Farm Winery is under new ownership, with big plans and developments set to transform it to a whole new level.

“What have you got planned?”

Fans with fond memories of French Farm, which has been such a well-known and popular establishment on the banks of the peninsula for over 30 years, could not hide their excitement.

The Whitbreads, hospitality worker virgins as such, were nevertheless very business minded and savvy worldly travellers. They'd seen and experienced what worked internationally. They knew what they liked in the hospo and tourism venue game. They also had the hospitality-working experience of daughter Emily to call on.

And that's why they decided to take a calculated punt by reopening the winery's existing pizzeria, but that was never going to be enough. Suddenly a picturesque garden bar and deli concept arose and that opened several weeks ago, quickly becoming an instant attraction. Stunning water features, stonework and varied seating options add to the atmosphere.

And the food? Oh, the food. Local and New Zealand-made delicacies abound. Think cheeses, meat, crackers, fruit, and platters galore. And it

doesn't stop there, with pizzas, pies, and the like, to select from. And how could we forget the delicious wines from local and nearby wineries that have helped make the peninsula and Akaroa such a go-to location. So, it's certainly all systems go but this is only the beginning for the Whitbreads' French Farm Winery reinvigoration. They want it to return to its glamorous but affordable venue status, with a special vibe that appeals to all.

But they're also aiming high, with a boutique lodge in the old winery building a key part of their plans. Hosting events, like mid-winter Christmas parties, is also part of their thinking. Their new vision is already captured in the name with it now called: French Farm Winery - Garden Bar & Deli, Special Occasions, Weddings & Accommodation.

And when it's all completed, the main refurbishments and improvements done and dusted, the Whitbreads just want that wow factor back. Back where it belongs at French Farm, with all its magical and unmatched views.

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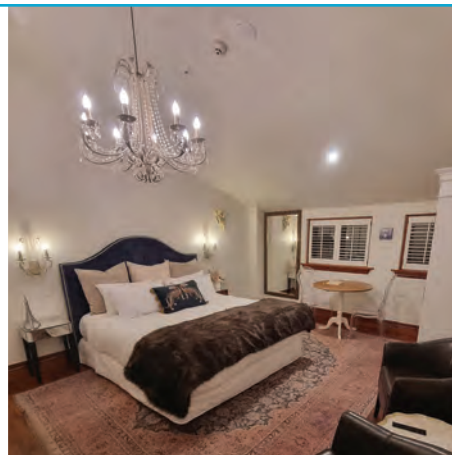
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Dairy Focus

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Mycoplasma bovis programme depopulates infected farms

The Mycoplasma bovis Eradication Programme began in May 2018 and is jointly funded by Government (68%) and DairyNZ and Beef + Lamb New Zealand (32%).

Key numbers:

- Three current infected properties (278 since the start of the programme)
- More than 3 million tests have been completed
- \$235 million has been paid out in 2829 claims
- 183,000 cattle culled

The Mycoplasma bovis Programme has depopulated all Confirmed Infected properties in the Wakanui area of mid-Canterbury and cleaned and disinfected these farms.

The Controlled Area put in place in October was lifted on Friday 17 March, confirmed Programme Director Simon Andrew.

“Wakanui farmers will be able to farm free of M. bovis when we revoke the Controlled Area Notice (CAN) that was declared to help eliminate infection from the area,” he said.

“These farmers have had to farm with M. bovis in their region since December 2017 when the first M. bovis farm in

Ashburton was discovered.

“As we have not found M. bovis outside of Canterbury in more than two years and this has been one of the last remaining pockets of confirmed M. bovis infection, we needed to take a different approach to protect farmers and their cattle.

“We will continue to monitor the area closely and are taking a cautious approach, so we can act quickly should there be reinfection in the wider national herd.”

To ensure swift action can be taken, the feedlot will remain under an RP notice for a period while precautionary surveillance activities are undertaken, and we are assured our actions have been successful.



Mycoplasma bovis Programme director, Simon Andrew.



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Andrew said the CAN has been an important step towards ensuring this pocket of infection is eliminated.

The eight cattle properties in the 'high-risk' area have been cleared of stock, including the removal of infected and in-contact cattle. Stringent testing and monitoring for infection in cattle during the past six months in the 'at-risk' area has not identified the presence of *M. bovis*.

"We know the last four and a half years for farmers in this area have not been easy.

"We recognise the hard work and sacrifices these farmers have made and we are continuing to work closely with them, to provide support where needed."

The Programme's national background surveillance screening is continuing to give confidence that *M. bovis* infection is not widespread. These programmes will continue for a further four years, to quickly detect any last remaining infected farms and gather the necessary evidence to declare freedom from *M. bovis* in New Zealand.

"It's critical the farming community maintain good on-farm biosecurity standards so the Programme can continue to build on the progress made."

"Keeping NAIT records up to date is crucial to our ability



to monitor risk and track down potentially infected animals before *M. bovis* spreads to other farms.

"We are as close to moving to

the next phase of eradication as we have ever been, but we could not have got this far in the eradication effort without the hard work and sacrifices made

by farmers in Wakanui and across New Zealand.

"While this is positive news, it doesn't mean the job is done. It is likely that we'll find

more infected cattle before we declare success and if we do find any infection, we will deal with the situation quickly and carefully."

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Farm profits expected to drop by a third as costs increase

Farmers' incomes could drop by as much as a third this season as deflated demand reduces farmgate returns amid ever-increasing input costs.

Industry group Beef+Lamb NZ estimates farm profit before tax will drop 31 percent this season to \$146,300, which is below the average for the past five years, as prices ease from record highs after demand from the country's biggest buyer, China, dropped during Covid-19 lockdowns, reducing export profits by a third.

Beef+Lamb NZ's chief economist Andrew Burt said lower farmgate returns alongside rising farm inflation was squeezing margins.

"Inflationary pressure is causing on-farm costs to increase sharply, eroding the benefit of what are still historically pretty good farmgate returns," Burt said.

"As a country, we've got lamb exports down about 10-12 percent, that's at least 10 percent less being generated for the country, and exports are down about 8-10 percent



Beef+Lamb said farmers have sought to reduce costs by deferring repairs and maintenance and reducing fertiliser use. PHOTO: SUPPLIED / BEEF+LAMB NZ

for beef, so at least an 8 percent decrease for beef.

"It's like any activity or any business, or individual working

to get paid and that then leads on to the things that they can afford."

Added to the cost pressures,

overall farm expenditure had increased as essential inputs became more expensive.

"Fertiliser, lime, and seeds

expenditure is forecast to increase by 6 percent to average \$102,100 per farm, following a 15 percent increase last season," Burt said.

"This is the largest area of expenditure for sheep and beef farms at around 19 per cent of farm expenditure in 2022-23."

Burt said interest rate rises and increased overdraft borrowing was forecast to increase interest expenditure 12.5 percent above last season.

"As farmers refinance and extend overdrafts while receiving lower farmgate prices, managing cashflow will be a challenge this season," he said.

Farmers had sought to reduce costs by deferring repairs and maintenance and reducing fertiliser use, but those measures would only go so far in such an inflationary environment, Burt said.

An uptick in global sheepmeat and beef trade was expected, with generally solid fundamentals in key markets and tight global supply levels, he said.

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Staffing solutions available for dairy farmers with Rural People

Paula Hems started 'Rural People' just over six years ago and is still very much involved in her business on a daily basis. Rural People has grown out of Paula's desire to support dairy farmers across the South Island with their ongoing staffing challenges.

"To me farmers are the backbone of the country so I started the business to support them with their staffing needs," Explains Paula.

"To compliment this I diversified and have been offering dairy farmers a lot more with regards to HR, immigration and pastoral care services as well as educating farmers on the best ways to retain their staff, because retention is far cheaper than recruitment."

Rural People sources suitable candidates nationwide as well as offshore from places such as Ireland, UK, Cuba, Sri Lanka, Philippines and Nepal.

"I have the time to sift through all the applicants and I look at every single one and assess them fairly, so that I can find the exact fit for my farmers".



Paula Hems' process involves taking the time to get to know her farmers.

Paula explained that not all recruiters are the same. "Anyone can call themselves a recruiter, however there are two distinct ways of recruiting". "There is what we in the industry call a 'bums on seats'" whereby the recruiter puts anyone in the job just to make a fee, or you can be

what we are, a professional services company specialising in recruitment and HR consulting."

A point of difference that Rural People has is Paula's process, she takes the time to get to know her farmers. "I will come to the farm, so that we can sit down and get a in depth

understanding of what you are looking for and then I go about matching the candidate not just to the skill set, but I also look for the things you can't teach such as ethics, morals and personality."

After people are placed on farms Paula continues supporting the transition and

find solutions if there are problems.

"After I place a person on farm, I stay in touch with both our farmer and the worker to ensure everyone is happy and if issues do arise, I go back to the farm to find solutions".

"I never finish recruiting and say, 'see you then, have a nice life' (again that is what a bums on seats recruiter would do), I have open and honest discussions with my farmers, as it's not always the candidates that are at fault if things go awry."

With many in the dairy sector in multiple locations throughout New Zealand reporting an ongoing struggle with finding, and retaining, suitable staff, perhaps it's time to explore what Rural People has to offer.

"Yes, we do have a major staff shortage in the industry but there are good people out there, we just have to look a bit harder these days, which is where I come in," adds Paula.

To speak with Paula about your staffing issues call her on 027 511 8814.

Rural People finding rural people



We offer a range of services including but not limited to:

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- Immigration service in conjunction with our licenced immigration advisor
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- Tailor made advertising
- Labour market testing
- Performance management
- Candidate care
- Farm Consulting



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winners focus on environment

Southland/Otago Dairy Industry Award winners

Share Farmer Merit Awards:

- DairyNZ – People and Culture Award
- Ecolab Farm Dairy Hygiene Award
- Federated Farmers Leadership Award
- Honda Farm Safety, Health and Biosecurity Award
- LIC – Animal Wellbeing, Recording and Productivity Award
- Meridian Environmental Sustainability Award
- Ravensdown Sustainable Pasture Award
- ANZ Business Performance Award
- Landpro Emerging Talent Award

Dairy Manager Merit

- DeLaval Livestock Management Award

Michael & Shahn Smith
Hazel Baquita & Leo Panaligan
Hazel Baquita & Leo Panaligan
Hazel Baquita & Leo Panaligan

Ben Franklin
Michael & Shahn Smith
Ben Franklin
Michael & Shahn Smith
Emma & Jamie Hansen

Nicole Barber

- Fonterra Dairy Management Award
- Vetsouth Environmental Sustainability Award
- Cow Manager Pasture & Feed Management Award
- Shand Thomson People & Leadership Award
- ANZ Personal Planning & Financial Management Award
- Regional Ford Emerging Talent Award

Dairy Trainee Merit Awards:

- DairyNZ Practical Skills Award
- Dairy Holdings Ltd Emerging Talent Award
- MilkMap Farming Knowledge Award
- FMG Communication & Industry Involvement Award

George Lysaght-Dodson
George Lysaght-Dodson
Nicole Barber
George Lysaght-Dodson

Nicole Barber
Torina Harimate

Ann Kristin Loferski
Arib Frankln Pelayo
Ann Kristin Loferski

Ann Kristin Loferski

The winners of the 2023 Southland/Otago Dairy Industry Awards Share Farmer of the Year category say they love to see people thrive and progress through the industry and believe there are still many opportunities in the dairy industry.

Michael and Shahn Smith were announced winners of the region's Share Farmer of the Year category, announced at a dinner at Bill Richardson's Transport World in Invercargill on Tuesday night. The other big winners were Nicole Barber who was named the 2023 Southland/Otago Dairy Manager of the

Year, and Ann-Kristin Loferski, the 2023 Southland/Otago Dairy Trainee of the Year.

The Smiths saw the Awards process as an opportunity to reflect on their business. "We wanted to push ourselves with goal-setting and have conversations with like-minded people regarding the future of farming and the legacy we can leave the future generations."

Prior to entering the dairy industry, Michael worked as a Land Management Officer (Riparian) for the Taranaki Regional Council. "My education is environmental-based, and I'm passionate about leaving the land

better than we found it."

The couple have progressed through the industry and are now 50/50 sharemilkers for Peter and Margaret Smith on their 187ha property at Otautau, milking 620 cows. They won \$11,200 in prizes plus three merit awards.

The first-time entrants want to ensure their business is profitable and sustainable. "Despite additional pressures from compliance and interest rates increasing, the future is positive."

The Smiths say during harder times they are motivated to care for the environment and the people within their business. "We

love our animals and we love that we can support our family with the business, and can work with our extended family and support their businesses too."

Michael and Shahn would like to educate children through garden to plate programmes to help break the cycle of ignorance that exists in public perception of dairy farming.

"The general public have a disconnection with where their food comes from and are entirely unaware of the amount of compliance that is required to farm."

"We employ women in our business and support them to

progress in the industry. We still find gender barriers within farming and work to support out team by limiting business with sexist individuals or companies and by calling out poor behaviour."

Michael (36) holds a Bachelor of Science with a double major of Ecology and Zoology and a Postgraduate Diploma of Science in Zoology. Shahn holds a Bachelor of Applied Science majoring in Medical Imaging Technology and a Diploma in Business majoring in Leadership, and is currently working as a radiographer at Southland Hospital.



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The nutritional requirements of the pasture-based dairy cow

Pasture-based dairy farms in New Zealand have continuously increased their productivity, enabling farms to remain competitive in light of rising costs. Unfortunately, for the cow, this represents some challenges. Increased stocking density tends to coincide with greater pasture utilization AND increased concentrate feeding. Both activities reduce the level of fat-soluble vitamin intake (vitamin A, D and E) as well as the vitamin biotin, which is dependent on high roughage, low concentrate diets for adequate levels.

In properly managed pasture, micro minerals (minerals presented as ppm or mg/kg) are often adequate for low production cows. However, as milk production increases, their requirement increases and the substitution of pasture with silage or bought-in feeds reduces the intake of cobalt, copper, zinc, iodine, and selenium. Increased stocking density increases mud and transfer of disease between cows so there is a requirement



for a greater concentration of vitamin A, D, E and the minerals Se, Zn and Cu to boost immunity.

This means that in the modern pasture-based dairy farm we have often increased our requirement for vitamins

and minerals and decreased our inputs!

Cows only have five nutritional must haves,

everything else can be considered an additive that should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The Big Five are Energy, Protein, Fibre, Fat soluble Vitamins and Minerals. The use of vitamins and minerals should not be looked upon as a feed additive, but as replacing what is a normal requirement of the cow on a year-round basis. Any cow will not function properly in the absence of one of these 5.

Before you think of feed additives as a solution to a problem, regardless of whether they are organic minerals, yeasts, B-vitamins, protected and unprotected amino acids, essential oils, ionophores, antibiotics, buffers, make sure you have the big five right first, otherwise they won't work as well.

It is also important to concentrate on nutrition year-round. Many of the benefits are cumulative, a great example of this is the effect of Biotin on hoof integrity and structure.

– Dr Joe McGrath,
Sollus Head Nutritionist

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Irrigation, getting it right

The biggest opportunity to improve how efficiently water is used is by irrigation scheduling (making informed decisions about when to start and stop irrigating), especially during the shoulders of the season.

Deciding when to start/stop irrigating

It is important to know who has the responsibility of deciding when to start and stop irrigation, and how that decision is made.

Consider these factors before irrigating:

- Soil temperature – check soil temperature before irrigating. Grass growth is slow below 10 °C at 10 cm depth. Drier soils warm more quickly than wet soils. Also, applying water can cool the soil further.
- Soil moisture status – Check soil moisture status is between refill point and field capacity (with room for irrigation and rainfall).
- Weather forecast – check forecast for rain.
- Water restrictions – check for water supply restrictions, annual volume allocation limits or water delivery roster.
- Effluent – in areas where effluent is applied, ensure irrigation does not result in ponding.
- Stock – Preferable graze in advance of the irrigator. This means the soil is at its driest and minimises soil compaction and pugging.
- How much water the irrigation system can apply.
- What the evapotranspiration (ET) rate is.

Irrigation scheduling

When irrigating, the objective is to:

- apply water when the plant needs it, to maximise plant growth
- not overfill soil, which wastes water.

There is no value (only cost) in applying more water than the soil can store, but if water isn't applied before critical soil water deficit is reached, pasture



growth will slow down. If the irrigation system and water supply arrangements allow, irrigation should happen when the soil moisture level reduces to refill point. Up until this point, moisture levels will not limit pasture growth and no visual signs of plant stress will be occurring.

Centre pivot length and application rate

With a centre pivot, the outside span needs to travel faster than the inside span in order to keep in line. Because the outer span covers greater distances, the application rate varies along the length of the pivot to achieve the same application depth.

At the centre, it will be a low application rate (light drizzle) and at the end span,

a higher application rate (heavy downpour). The longer the pivot, the greater the application rate will be at the end span.

This can cause problems, especially on rolling country, if the application rate is too high and the water is being applied faster than the soil can absorb it, increasing the risk of puddles and run-off.

Because of uneven infiltration into the plant zone, grass production can also be reduced. Any steps that reduce very high application rates will be beneficial. For example:

- installing sprinklers with greater coverage and which spread water over a larger area
- decreasing the application depth for each watering and returning more frequently.

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1. The irrigation system is efficient
 2. Irrigation is scheduled
 3. Operators are trained
 4. Auditable records are kept
- The Irrigation System is Efficient**

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- Any new development,

- upgrade or redevelopment is commissioned to demonstrate it has achieved its design performance parameters.
- All irrigation systems have an annual performance assessment (a Bucket Test) to demonstrate they are performing efficiently.



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Irrigation is scheduled

- When scheduling irrigation, water use must be compliant with your consent conditions - this is a legal requirement.
- There are two ways to schedule your irrigation, these are
- Soil moisture monitoring

- Soil-water budgets

Operators are trained

- Training is key for everyone involved in irrigation and must include health and safety considerations.
- IrrigationNZ runs practical irrigation manager and

irrigation development training days and workshops that provide a great way for irrigators to upskill and be safe.

- IrrigationNZ has developed a number of resources for irrigators including guides, templates and checklists,

these are available free to all IrrigationNZ members, or provided free as part of the training.

Auditable records are kept

- Records are key to SMART Irrigation. Without evidence you cannot be accountable.

- Records also provide a useful tool for analysis of performance and continual improvement. The guide to water management during the irrigation season provides some simple tips for you to manage your irrigation efficiently.

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The Mackenzie Highland A&P Show gets the royal treatment this Easter

The 125th Mackenzie Highland A&P Show is set to shine this year, having the honour of hosting a royal event in the sheep section. The royal event status is only given out by the National A&P Association once a year, making this year's show an important one in the sheep breeding sector. A record number of entries is expected, with the coveted Supreme Champions Medal and red, white and blue ribbon up for grabs. "Some of the best sheep in the South Island will be on display at this year's show," Mackenzie A&P Show president Chris Hampton says.

The sheep section is close to the heart for Hampton, a second-generation sheep farmer. "We've got three sheep studs, my father started the farm with Suffolk's in 1969, and now we have my daughter Elizabeth coming on. She will be a third-generation breeder," Hampton said.

Continued on P38



It's Mackenzie Highland A&P Show time! Here's what you need to know for a great day out

Getting there

The 2023 Mackenzie Highland A&P Show will be held in Fairlie on Monday April 10th. Plenty of free parking will be available, and you can find the visitor car park entrance off School Road. The show gates will open at 8 am to the general public, and the show will run until 5 pm. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$5 for under 15-year-olds and pre-schoolers are free. Tickets can be purchased on the day at the gate.

Dogs

Since the show is held on a working farm, the committee asks that you please leave your dogs at home to prevent the spread of sheep measles. Guide dogs and assistance dogs are welcome.

Alcohol

The Mackenzie Rugby Football Club will be serving alcohol from the booth bar from 12 pm-5:45 pm.

Timetable and Programme

The show timetable and programme will be available on the show website, www.mackenzieshow.co.nz, a fortnight before the event.

Entertainment

The Barwood's Entertainment stage will showcase author Craig Smith, local musician Brad Staley and the Mackenzie's Got X-Factor talent quest throughout the day.

Mackenzie Highland A&P Show

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Our purpose is for every young woman who attends Waitaki Girls' High School to leave as a responsible, respectful, and resilient citizen, ready to follow her aspirations, make the most of the opportunities in life and find her place in the world.

At a Glance

- Waitaki Girls' High School is a state Year 9-13 Boarding School for young women, situated in the heart of Oamaru, North Otago.
- Waitaki Hostel is small with an emphasis on providing a safe, positive, and nurturing environment for young women to live and learn in.
- Our classes are small, and we offer a wide range of options to cater to all learners.

- Our students have performed above other similar secondary schools and national averages
- We offer top-quality teaching and learning environments.
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From P36

Hampton's wife, Annabelle, is convenor for the equestrian section and is the third generation in her family showing horses. Hampton's daughter Elizabeth is also on the show committee and is involved in organising the rodeo display, which includes the roping of a plastic calf.

Entertainment for all ages will take place across the day, with traditional favourites wood chopping, sheep dog trials and

carnival rides joining an exciting programme of newer events that will, no doubt, be crowd favourites. The Silverstream Hotel will run a gumboot throwing competition, and children can test their farming skills in the Country Kids Agri-sports Challenge. The Wonky Donkey's Craig Smith, sponsored by Fairlie Early Learners, will entertain young children. A talent quest, Mackenzie's Got X Factor, will give budding stars a chance to be in the limelight.

The gift lamb competition, sponsored by BX foods, will allow spectators to view a live sheep auction, with funds raised going back into running the show and helping fund an annual university scholarship donated by the Mackenzie A&P Society.

"There's something for everyone, young and old," Hampton said. "Whether it's livestock, horses, tractors, or stalls. There will be a very big trade display and craft and home industry stalls. You name it, it's

there. It's the last show of the season, and it's Easter weekend, so it's going to attract a lot of people from out of the area."

The Mackenzie Highland A&P show was first held in 1899, with visitors arriving by trap, sulky, horseback and train, and attracted 178 entries. Since then, the show has grown from strength to strength, returning after five cancellations since its debut on the show calendar. The polio epidemic in 1925, World War II in 1943, the infantile paralysis

epidemic of 1948 and the more recent covid restrictions of 2020 and 2022 closed the show gates. Still, the committee has worked tirelessly to bring the much-loved event back to life each time. Now with around 1000 classes and an expected 15,000 visitors through the gates on Monday April 10th, the 125th Mackenzie Highland A&P Show is now Australasia's biggest one-day show, and one not to be missed.

- By Claire Inkson

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PHOTOS: SUPPLIED

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The Mackenzie Highland A&P Show has got the X-Factor

The stage will be set at The 125th Mackenzie Highland A&P Show when the Mackenzie's Got X-Factor Talent Quest kicks off on Easter Monday. The talent quest is hosted by Bedford Entertainment, who have run other similar events at shows throughout the South Island.

"Our talent quests have been run in many towns and cities but fit the A&P show format and ethos particularly well. We've had all sorts of entries, from dancers to magic acts. We even had a puppet show one year," says Bedford Entertainment's Jae Bedford. "People can do anything and

be anything they want. We get singer-songwriters and people playing contemporary covers. The most important thing for us is that people get the opportunity to express themselves." The talent quest will be held in sections throughout the show day, with other acts slotted in between to keep

crowds entertained. Spectators will be treated to a Bedford Entertainment showcase, and the South Island's very own country rock artist, Brad Staley, will also take the stage. With limited spaces available, keen competitors in the talent quest are encouraged to register before the event. Prizes are up for

grabs, including the opportunity to attend a workshop at The Bedford School of Music, which focuses on creativity, entertainment and education. To register, email Bedford Entertainment at jaebedfordentertainment@live.com.
- By Claire Inkson
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Tips for farm budgeting and planning for the year ahead

Having a budget for your farm is a great way to plan and track the financial performance of your business. Creating one can be simple, you just need to know where to get started.

The financial side of things can sometimes take a back seat to the daily challenges of running your business. You may have to deal with weather extremes, fluctuating commodity prices, seasonal labour shortages, or the demands of environmental compliance.

It's not uncommon for farm owners and managers at different stages in their farming lives to need some guidance on how to manage cash flow and budgets, as there can be times when a drop in cash flow meets a sudden rise in costs, and a farm's viability can take a hit.

Things to include in your farm budget

A budget focuses on estimating your income and expenditure for the 12 months ahead. Things such as:

- income from different sources



Being prepared and having a solid budget on the farm is a great way to track financial performance.

- (e.g. milk or stock sales)
- your farm's working expenses (e.g. power, fuel, repairs, and maintenance)
- interest, fees and lease payments
- loan principal repayments
- planned capital expenditure (e.g. stock, vehicles, or equipment) – it's also worth considering different ownership models, i.e. leasing vs buying
- future tax payments
- your personal drawings or shareholder remuneration
- 3–5 year savings goals and ideal cash reserves (a safety

net for more challenging seasons).

The benefits of having a financial plan

By creating a farm budget, you're also generating an accurate, real-world view of how your year will pan-out. Of course, things can and will change, but it gives you some key markers to hit over the next 12 months, as well as a checklist to measure your farm's financial progress against.

See the bigger picture

At the end of the day, a budget isn't just about being better equipped to raise finance or better manage debt. It's about the bigger picture – having some clear financial goals for your operation, and a plan for achieving them.

Many industry groups, like DairyNZ and Beef+Lamb, offer budgeting tools and workshops to help you understand the cash flows and financial performance specific to your sector. These can help you evolve your business thinking and get to know how others are managing their financials too.

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Feeling the financial pinch

Finance plays an essential role in every business, including the food and fibre sector. Related to this are matters such as debt management, tax management and business structures.

Usually you can see a way ahead when working with your accountant and bank, but sometimes you feel financially stuck. You may want to discuss this with someone and we're here to help.

Below is information about some assistance we may be able to help you tap into.

Funding to get advice for struggling farmers

This is an initiative funded by banks and the government offering support for farmers and growers struggling with business debt.

The government has allocated \$200,000 for the Farm Business Advice Support Fund, which is managed by Rural Support Trusts.

For a qualifying farmer or grower, the Fund will provide up to \$6,000 to pay for financial or business advice from an independent consultant.

The National Council of Rural Support Trusts and New Zealand Bankers' Association signed the agreement for the fund back in 2020. Under the agreement, the RSTs

will provide up to \$3000, depending on an assessment of need, and the relevant bank will match that dollar for dollar.

RST National Council chair Neil Bateup says the fund is for a farmer or grower who is feeling pressure. "This might be because there's been some change or their bank has indicated they need to discuss their debt situation. The hope is that there may still be options available so that the wishes of all parties can form a solution for going forward.

"There's a recognition it's in everyone's best interest for a farmer or grower to have up-to-date business and financial plans," says New Zealand Bankers' Association chief executive Roger Beaumont. "This will inform conversations between the farmer or grower and their bank."

Rural Support Trusts will take an application from, or on behalf of, a farmer or grower who might qualify for assistance.

The consultant will provide a report, which will be given to the farmer or grower and their bank.

This initiative involves ASB, ANZ, BNZ, Heartland Bank, Rabobank, SBS Bank, TSB and Westpac.

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– Ben Smith, Triple Oaks Holdings, large scale dairy farmer with equity partnerships in Canterbury and North Otago

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NZ's longest running Field Days back for another year

South Island Agricultural Field Days is one of the oldest and largest agricultural events in the South Island, going back over 70 years.

It focuses on opportunities to view machines in their working state and reinforces the relationship between farmers, service providers, scientists and technical experts.

The main aim of the South Island Agricultural Field Days (SIAFD) is to give farmers and others in the rural sector the opportunity to see the latest in agricultural machinery and services that are available on the market, particularly home-grown products.

In past years the event attracts approximately 20,000-30,000 visitors over the course of three days.

SIAFD is:

- New Zealand's longest running Field Days
- New Zealand's biggest demonstrative Field Days
- The South Island's largest 2023 Field Days
- A non-profit organisation – all surplus goes back into



PHOTO: SIAFD FACEBOOK

developing the site, running the event or are given away as community donations or scholarships

• One of the few Field Days to allocate sites based on industry – making it easy for visitors to find and compare

products
• Committed to the development of its volunteer members

The 2023 edition of South Island Agricultural Field Days is set to be held on March 29, 30 and 31 at Kirwee.



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She's a full house at SIAFD 2023

The no vacancy sign is already up for exhibitors at the 2023 South Island Agricultural Field Days.

At the end of January organisers of the hugely successful event were able to announce the event was a sell out with all exhibitor sites snatched up with a waitlist created for anyone who missed the cut but still wished to be a part of the event.

And that will mean that anyone with an interest in agriculture and a desire to be up to date with all the latest trends, equipment and machinery will want to be on site on one of the three-days of this year's event on March 29, March 30 and March 31.

Held every two years, the event has continually grown in stature and still remains New Zealand longest and biggest demonstrative Field Days.

Controlled, organised and run by a tireless group of volunteers who work hard to ensure that each edition runs without a hitch, there's been a huge amount of work once again go into the 2023 Field Days which will again be held in Kirwee.



PHOTOS: SIAFD FACEBOOK

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Speaking to media, committee chairman Hayden Dorman said with the shackles of Covid rapidly disintegrating there was strong expectation for a huge crowd to be in attendance this year and with news of the full

house sign going up, there's going to be a bit of something for everyone.

And in turn, with Covid supply chain pressures easing, exhibitors will be able to showcase some of the latest,

most exciting products on the market.

"The exhibitors, who are either already booked, or about to, appreciate having the space and facilities to showcase and demonstrate

their equipment to visitors who mean business, who are coming because they want to see just how well it performs in field," Dorman told the Otago Daily Times.

Work has been undertaken

since 2021 when the event was last held to upgrade and improve the facilities at Kirwee including an expanded electricity provider, new paved roads and a new-look water supply.



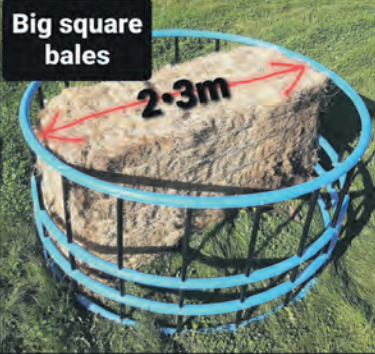
The 2023 South Island Agricultural Field Days are a sell out with all exhibitor sites snapped up.

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Mark's doing his

Mark Etheridge is keen to see New Zealand taking positive steps towards food security and he believes a simple hydroponic vertical farm system he has franchised could be one of those steps. He talks to Sue Newman about the zero waste, minimal human input system that he is trialling in a container on his farm as he prepares to showcase it for the first time publicly at the South Island Agricultural Field Days this month.

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Mark Etheridge says he'd never call himself a farmer, but when it comes to food security in New Zealand, he's determined to do his bit.

The Drummond and Etheridge owner is a diesel mechanic whose stock and trade is farm machinery, and he's now diversifying into marketing a vertical farming system where vegetables are grown hydroponically in racks with minimal human intervention.

It might seem light years away from his family's traditional business, but it's still about food production, Mark said.

D&E has a research and development division and the vertical farming idea was first spotted by division manager Paul Galletly at an Australian field day. Impressed by what he saw, he brought the idea home to the D&E board. They liked what they saw.

"I was particularly keen on it. I guess what I liked, was that it was something that worked around full automation and the ability to do something where

you didn't have to rely on a lot of people. It fits in well with our rural farm business and with our core beliefs in the business," he said.

And what he also liked was the low energy and low water use of the system and the fact that everything used in one cycle of food production was reused again and again.

"It's something that works towards food security, because that's an issue worldwide and it's something we need to start thinking about in New Zealand. There is no doubt farming indoors will be a growing trend for food security. I was committed to this before I saw it. Someone has to take a punt," he said.

The recent upper North Island floods and the subsequent loss of fruit and vegetable crops were definitely a nudge in the direction of looking at food security systems, Mark said.

It took six years, however, from first sighting of the system to its arrival in New Zealand - Covid took out

a slice of time and there were other big projects the company had to complete first, Mark said.

Mark and his board agreed to buy the franchise for the vertical farm system for New Zealand and the Pacific Islands. That done he's currently preparing a site on Seafield Road alongside the company's farm machinery retail base, for the demonstration farm. He's also established a miniature test farm in a container at his home.

"This way we can run the system, test it here and better understand the installation and maintenance costs, all the things we need to understand when we're selling the product. This is something different for me and I'm enjoying the challenge."

Each cell has its own harvesting unit and Mark has added an automated packing system using compostable bags to the demonstration model.

"The whole idea is to create an eco-friendly, low-staff model."

His mini trial unit is

producing crops of spinach and rocket on a 28-day rotation. He's had seven harvests, each yielding 1 1/2 - 2kg of spinach. Coriander is next on the trial list.

It's a simple system using a growing medium of reusable clay pebbles, carefully measured water and nutrients and light for 17 hours per day. The labour input for a single cell is about three hours per week.

"It's a pretty recyclable system and we're trying to keep to zero waste," Mark said.

There is a long list of vegetables that can be grown in the vertical farm and there will be opportunities to trial new vegetables both in his unit and at home base in Australia.

The first produce is anticipated to be ready for harvest in the Ashburton demonstration farm in August. Groundwork on the site is underway with Timaru's Thompson Engineering committed to having the build completed by mid June. The plant will be installed by the end of July. Mark's already

several steps ahead.

"I've been working out systems on how to set up and operate so I have a head start, so I can fully understand the system and teach someone else. It's fascinating, I love it and there is something satisfying about growing things," he said.

Mark will install a single cell demonstration unit at his Seafield Road site, with plans to install a second cell set in the future.

The vertical farm will have its first public outing at the South Island Agricultural field days at Kirwee on March 29 - 31. The container containing the test bench will be on site.

He's already received potential orders and said by the end of this year he'll be comfortable promoting and selling the system.

It's a niche product, one that can be expanded as required. Because it is built on a single cell system, the vertical farms can be established on a large commercial scale or they can be an add on to an existing farm business.



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Checking your resource consents

Resource consents are the lifeblood of many farming operations. Given their fundamental importance, and how vital they are to our businesses, how often do we get them out of the filing cabinet to check and review them?

It's important that they are periodically reviewed to ensure there is full compliance, that they accurately reflect what we are doing and also that they still enable us to do what we'd like to be doing.

It is easy to overlook consents until compliance issues arise, or they're nearing expiry. Asking questions like whether all elements of the consent are being met, whether it accurately reflects our needs, and when it expires, is crucial.

It's not uncommon for consent holders to wish their consent was different, for example that they allowed a higher flow or a different daily or weekly volume. Altering consents to reflect these changes is often straightforward. Contrary to popular belief, changing a consent won't risk losing part of what it authorises, nor will it give the regional council an opportunity to impose unrelated new conditions.

Aqualinc offers a consent WOF service, which involves reviewing your



Matt Bubb, consents and compliance business manager with Aqualinc.

consents to ensure they enable you to do what you need to do. This process considers what may be required when replacing the consent and identifies what can be done now to help with the renewal process.

Don't overlook the importance of regularly reviewing your consents. Call Aqualinc today to discuss your needs and ensure your consents accurately reflect your requirements.

Visiting the South Island Agricultural Field Days this year?



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WELCOME TO SOUTH ISLAND AGRICULTURAL FIELD DAYS

MARCH 29-31 2023, KIRWEE

We are one of the oldest and largest agricultural events in the South Island; going back 70 years. SIAFD focuses on opportunities to view machines in their working state and reinforcing the relationship between farmers, service providers, scientists and technical experts.

THE EVENT

The main aim of the South Island Agricultural Field Days (SIAFD) is to give farmers and others in the rural sector the opportunity to see the latest in agricultural machinery and services that are available on the market, particularly home grown products.

Nowadays the event attracts between 20,000 and 25,000 visitors over the course of three days.

DAY 1
29 MAR 2023

DAY 2
30 MAR 2023

DAY 3
30 MAR 2023



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Innovation and technology a high-light at the field days

The countdown is on for the 2023 South Island Agricultural Field days, held in Kirwee on the 29th-31st of March. Farmers will have the opportunity to view emerging agri-technology that looks to provide practical solutions to everyday farming challenges, as well as issues like greenhouse gas emissions and water quality improvement. With a focus on innovation and technology, the Field days Innovation awards will showcase an exciting line-up of entries from agri-tech exhibitors.

Ecopond, developed by Ravensdown Ventures in collaboration with Lincoln University, is a contender for the award and one most farmers will already be familiar with. The Ecopond system reduces methane emissions in dairy effluent ponds by 99% using an additive typically used in drinking water. The innovative technology also reduces nitrate leaching from treated effluent by 90% and E.coli from drainage water by 99%.

Fieldmate, another Canterbury-developed



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

innovation for protecting the electric motor in seed drills, is also entering the awards. Ruts Plus have two entries, with technology aimed at farmers dealing with issues with centre pivots.

"The heart of the South Island Field Days are the

rural communities who our exhibitors rely so much upon. It is an event to celebrate not only the latest and greatest in equipment and machinery, but also the innovation and inspiration that our rural communities generate," committee chairman Hayden

Dorman said.

Around 50 active equipment demonstrations be running throughout the three-day event, giving farmers a chance to 'try before they buy'. Despite the tough time machinery distributors have had in the past two years in sourcing

equipment and parts due to shipping and covid delays, organisers report that all brands have stepped up with their best and latest equipment for farmers this year. "The field days provide an opportunity to really do your homework on what the best purchase decision may be, after some of the challenges in the past couple of years," Dorman said.

A planted crop of maize on the Kirwee site will show the different outcomes of three different drill types, including a strip till drill. With climate change, maize is becoming a more viable option in Canterbury, with maize silage a high-value feed crop commonly grown in the North Island holding strong appeal for southern farmers. "We have doubled the area put into maize this year for demonstrating drilling methods and harvesters in response to a lot of farmer interest in the crop as an option to importing more expensive supplements as costs have risen in the past year," demonstration coordinator Andrew Stewart said.

By **Claire Inkson**
claire.inkson@theguardian.co.nz

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What you need to know from campervan parking to coffee

GETTING THERE

Getting in and out of the 2021 South Island Agricultural Field Days will be quick and easy for anyone arriving in Kirwee from any direction. The Field Days will open at 8am each day and will close at 5pm, with all routes into the event well sign-posted for easy traffic flow.

FOOD AND REFRESHMENTS

There will be a number of lunch, coffee, and food stalls available on site with the SIAFD preferred caterer. This will be the only official licensed site. SIAFD will be accepting a very small number of other food vendors.

ALCOHOL

The SIAFD bar will be open until 6pm on Wednesday to Friday.



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ATM

There will be an ATM on site located near the office.

BEST SITE AWARD

A prize valued at \$500 for the best large site and best small site will be awarded by the SIAFD committee.

The winning sites will be those that attract a large number of genuine enquiries, are active stands with demonstrations likely to attract attention, and are tidy and staffed efficiently.

CAMPERVANS/ MOTORHOMES/ RVs

Overnight parking or camping is not permitted on the SIAFD site or in the carpark, however less than 5 minutes down the road the Courtenay A&P Showgrounds in Kirwee are offering camping. Charges: \$10 per night for power, or \$5 per night non-power sites.

CATERING & FOOD VENDORS

There will be a number of lunch, coffee, and food stalls available on site with the SIAFD preferred caterer.

They will be the only official licensed site and will be accepting a very small number of other food vendors.

COFFEE

There are many coffee options around the grounds including one at each entrance.



PHOTOS: SIAFD FACEBOOK

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