

RURAL GUARDIAN

South Island
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OCTOBER 2023

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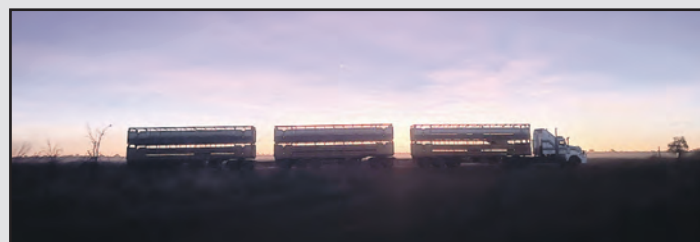


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WOOD YOU COME TO OUR OPENING?

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WITH Claire Inkson – OPINION

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Let farmers farm

I was listening to Spotify radio while driving to a friend's farm the other day when John Mellencamp's "Rain on the Scarecrow" started playing on my car stereo.

I turned it up. Loud.

It seemed so timely, so apt for where New Zealand's primary industry finds itself now.

It was middle America's 1980s battle cry for family farms, a call to arms and a call for change.

And while the issues facing rural New Zealand in the 80s differed from those in the American mid-west, there are parallels then and now for Kiwi farmers in Mellencamp's words.

In 1980s America, high interest rates, falling commodity prices, inflation and the collapse of rural banks made family farms an endangered species.

Despite promising to "make life in rural America prosperous again" and "restore profitability to agriculture," Reagan's government turned its back on farmers once in power.

Banks foreclosed and mortgage sales saw many farms that had been in families for generations get swallowed up by corporations.

Right now, New Zealand farmers are fighting to keep their heads above water while dealing with low commodity prices and some of the highest on-farm inflation and interest rates we have seen.

The older generation of farmers have seen this before and know what's coming.

Family farms will be lost if something doesn't change, just like in the 1980s.

Son, I'm sorry, there's no legacy for you now.

What we have now that we didn't have back then is crippling regulations and climate change tax on the horizon.

What we have now that we didn't have back then is the urban-rural divide.

Whether that divide is a crack or a canyon is up for debate, but there's no denying it exists.

We talk a lot about social licence these days, and some would argue farmers have lost theirs.

There is a narrative that seems to permeate the layers of common sense, telling us that farmers are environmental terrorists and that it's no longer appropriate to remind the general population that we feed them and the world.

We are not encouraged to celebrate the changes willingly implemented by farmers that have significantly improved water quality and biodiversity.

We are told to ignore other industries' impact on the environment and seemingly shoulder full responsibility for climate change. (As a side note, download the FlightRadar 24 app and check out how many planes are in the global airspace right now.)

Wool, one of the most sustainable fibres in the world, is virtually worthless.

Despite this, we have taxpayer-funded nylon carpets going into schools that

teach sustainability to our children.

We are no longer allowed to talk about agriculture being the backbone of this country. Agricultural pride is frowned upon by a seemingly elitist woke group who look down upon farmers over their fake meat burgers and almond milk lattes and tell us we need to change.

But the jig is up. This fairy tale hipster story time is over.

We have farmers under significant pressure and a rural mental health crisis because of it.

We have a country that is literally up to its neck in debt.

The only way we will get out of this is by keeping the tractor tyres of primary industry turning.

We need to stop biting the hand that feeds us.

Farmers need to be proud of farming again.

Our country needs to be proud of our farmers.

We need to tell our story and celebrate our successes through whatever megaphone we can find.

We need to remind the urban demographic and whatever government that crosses the line on October 14 how critical New Zealand agriculture is to our economic recovery.

We need to show them we are already leading the world in sustainable and environmentally responsible farming.

Step aside and let our farmers do what they do best. Farm.

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Big political questions

With voting in what is arguably one of the most important elections in recent history for the agriculture sector about to kick off, the *RURAL GUARDIAN* has asked the major political parties for their policies and comment on questions that could shape how the rural community votes.

Q: How does your party plan to support rural communities and encourage innovation as farms face increased financial pressure?



LABOUR: Labour's track record in investing in rural and provincial communities sets us apart.

Through programmes such as the Provincial Growth Fund we ended decades of neglect that saw some rural communities fall behind.

We've invested heavily in public services including schools and hospitals, in some cases doubling the investments made by the previous government. In addition, we have stood up 29 rural hubs to connect isolated communities with resources and support.

Our goal is to partner with farmers to ensure New Zealand retains its brand as a low emissions, environmentally friendly source of food and fibre.

In terms of encouraging innovation, Labour has co-invested \$568 million with business through the Sustainable Food and Fibre Future Fund for 267 projects that are about problem-solving, innovation, and efficiency on-farm.

We established the Centre for Climate Action on Agricultural Emissions to reduce agriculture emissions through research and development, including a substantial new public private 50:50 joint venture.

Labour is investing to ensure that we stay at the cutting edge of research and development to help mitigate agricultural emissions.

We have installed 400 rural cell towers and improved broadband connectivity to 84,000 homes and businesses and plans to continue to improve connectivity for farming communities.



NATIONAL: Rural communities have long been the economic driver

of New Zealand's economy. They feed our country, and millions of people overseas. In fact, 400 million people get 10% of their diet from Kiwi farmers.

We are the envy of the world in agricultural practice, yet Labour has villainised our farmers when it comes to regulation, compliance, and cost.

Rural communities are doing it tough, with more than \$1-billion cut from the farmgate milk pay out and lamb prices down 25%. National has released its "Getting Back to Farming Policy" to reduce the number of regulations and related cost on farmers.

The policy has 19 initiatives to revitalise our rural economy by removing unworkable rules and excessive red tape and compliance time for producers.

We will get rid of Labour's Ute Tax and Three Waters and introduce a no-duplication rule, where the Government can only ask farmers for information once – getting them out of the office and back on the farm.



ACT: ACT has led the way standing up for farmers in parliament. We were the only party willing to oppose He Waka Eke Noa from the beginning and to vote against the Zero Carbon Act.

We alone stood up for licensed firearms owners. We've consistently opposed the Government's freshwater rules, Significant Natural Areas, fertiliser tax, the live animal export ban, the Ute Tax, and more.

We will support farmers by getting the Government out of their way, letting them get on with what they do best. The level of compliance and red tape farmers are forced to comply with is getting in the way of their businesses.

Continued on P4

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Bureaucrats in Wellington don't realise it, but the time spent and costs accrued by filling out paperwork and following regulations is time and money that would otherwise be spent on practical on-farm improvements. ACT has already outlined many regulations it will get rid of immediately, and we expect to find more.



GREEN: The Green Party wants to see the farming sector supported to invest in emissions reduction technologies. We'll increase support for farmers to transition to more sustainable forms of agricultural production through finance mechanisms such as low-interest loans and grants, and ensure contract terms with supermarkets are fair to food suppliers.

Q: What are your party's plans on emissions, including the financial burden of any policies?



LABOUR: Farm-level emissions reporting will be required from Quarter 4 of 2024. Emissions pricing will be introduced from Quarter 4 of 2025, and work will also get underway to allow scientifically-validated forms of on-farm sequestration into the Emissions Trading Scheme, which can help reduce the cost to farmers.

Any revenue raised by the pricing scheme, will be ring-fenced to go back into research and development for emissions reduction technology.

Our plan is one that supports farmers' transition, helps secure their future export growth, and works alongside our other climate policies to continue to reduce our emissions.



NATIONAL: National's approach to reducing agricultural emissions focuses on empowering farmers and ensuring fair and sustainable pricing.

We recognise agriculture's critical role in New Zealand's economy and aim to reduce emissions while safeguarding the sector. National is committed to reducing emissions without sending jobs and production overseas.

We will provide farmers with the necessary tools to reduce emissions by ending bans on gene editing, implementing farm-level emissions measurement by 2025, and encouraging research and development investment for emissions reduction.

We'll also recognize full on-farm sequestration which means farmers will gain recognition for the carbon they sequester on farms. By 2030, we will establish fair pricing for on-farm emissions that does not harm farm productivity or drive production offshore. We'll ensure pricing remains competitive internationally and that farmers have access to emissions-reduction technologies.

Over the last five years 200,000ha of productive farmland has been converted to forest. To protect productive agricultural land, starting in 2024, we'll limit conversions of high-quality land to forestry based on Land Use Capability (LUC) classifications.

We will return the primary industries to a highly productive, sustainable sector and continue to be the best farmers in the world.



ACT: With ACT, farmers can have certainty that He Waka Eke Noa will be gone and they can carry on farming without the threat of emissions taxes hanging over their business. ACT would adopt a split gas emissions reporting approach which accurately reflects the actual warming effect of methane emissions, and tie any emissions price to that of our five main trading partners to ensure there is a level playing field for growers and producers competing overseas.



GREEN: The Green Party has campaigned for decades to reduce the impacts of agriculture on nature and the climate. We'll price agriculture emissions through fair cap-and-trade schemes, for both nitrous oxide and methane.

Setting a cap means we'll be sure to meet our emissions targets, and it then allows the market reflect the appropriate price of emissions without overbearing market intervention.

Any and all revenue generated by pricing agricultural emissions would go back into the farming sector, to aid further emissions reductions and support farmers, with an equity-focussed approach.

Q: What are your plans to protect freshwater and how will this affect farmers and the wider rural communities?



LABOUR: Labour's Essential Freshwater reforms consist of six inter-related parts: the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020 (NPS-FM), the National Environmental Standards for Freshwater 2020 (NES-F), a new freshwater planning process (FPP), a freshwater farm plan (FW-FP) system, Resource Management (Stock Exclusion) Regulations 2020, and government funding for freshwater projects.

So far, the Government has funded more than 200 catchment groups to support them to restore water quality within a generation – we don't expect communities to do it by themselves.

We have also listened to farmers and as a result freshwater farm plan regulations will be progressively phased to allow farmers time to prepare and to ensure that the rules are practical.

For Southland, this process has started on August 1 and farmers have the next 18 months to prepare their first plan.

To assist in this process, the Government has funded 44 On Farm Support staff – people who are on the ground in the regions and able to help.



NATIONAL: Our freshwater policy will be released in the coming weeks. Freshwater is a crucial matter for farmers and growers across the country – and for the environment.

National wants better outcomes for freshwater, and to empower local communities to decide catchment-level limits, not one-size-fits-all rules.

We need smart regulations that are clear and well targeted. National would repeal the government's RMA 2.0 - Natural and Built Environment Act and will work with councils to revisit whether the current Regional Freshwater Plans process still makes sense.

National will also make water storage on farmland a permitted activity by introducing a National Environmental Standard (NES) for water storage. Farmers will not have to obtain a resource consent to build larger-scale water storage schemes on land.



ACT: ACT understands that New Zealand must manage its water resources sustainably and efficiently – but Labour's freshwater reforms centralise control and create costly rules that don't result in better environmental outcomes.

ACT would give control of water resources back to regional and local councils, allowing them to work with their local communities to develop acceptable standards and rules for nitrates, sedimentation run off, and freshwater quality.



GREEN: We know our fresh water cannot keep sustaining current levels of intensive farming. The level of nitrogen in our waterways exceeds regulations in nine out of 15 regions, with Canterbury's groundwater drinking supplies nearly

double the allowable value for drinking water. This is deeply concerning for Canterbury communities.

We'll strengthen regulation of nitrogen in our waterways by implementing an evidence-based dissolved inorganic nitrogen limit, to protect the health of our waterways and the health of our drinking water supplies.

We'll also look to reduce emissions and pollution from synthetic nitrogen fertiliser by introducing a sinking lid per hectare application under the National Environmental Standard for Freshwater. This would ensure we're farming within environmental limits and not leaving freshwater pollution for taxpayers to clean up.

Q: Does your party have any plans to ease regulations and red tape for the farming sector?



LABOUR: Labour is undertaking a once-in-a-generation resource management reform. We recently passed the Natural and Built Environments Act and the Spatial Planning Act which will mean less red tape, lower costs, and shorter approval times for certain projects.

We've seen primary exports grow to over a record \$50 billion last year, and have secured a record seven new or upgraded FTA agreements since 2017. But without credible efforts to reduce emissions and lift sustainability we risk losing our competitive edge in the market.

Our plan is about supporting farmers to not just be the best in the world, but also the best for the world.



NATIONAL: Our agriculture policies support New Zealand's primary industries and aim to reduce regulatory burdens while enhancing rural economic growth.

We will introduce a "two-for-one" rule where any new agriculture regulation would require the removal of two existing ones. This would streamline regulations and cut compliance costs.

The policy also establishes a Rural Regulation Review Panel for the evaluation of regulations affecting farmers and increasing transparency. It addresses issues related to stock exclusion rules, culverts, and wetlands regulations – focusing on practicality – and we will allow normal rural activities on highly productive land.

Land-based water storage is essential for farming activities. We will increase farm productivity and resilience during dry seasons by changing the rules for water storage, allowing it to be a permitted activity on farmland.

National's approach emphasises local empowerment and efficient resource management, providing a robust framework to support the agricultural sector's growth and prosperity.



ACT: One of ACT's major priorities in government will be to rein in the red tape and regulations suffocating New Zealand's farmers.

ACT has announced that the primary sector will be one of the first four sectors to undergo a red tape review by ACT's new Minister and Ministry for Regulation. This would save farmers time and money and put stop to a new cottage industry of consultants to sign off these plans.



Green: We want to see a strong farming sector, where people can make a decent living off the land, while keeping our environment healthy.

We've introduced regulation over the last 6 years in Government to both help sectors grow and prevent environmental degradation such as the Organic Products Act.

Ensuring our products are sustainable helps to prevent climate change, which would make farming more difficult. It also results in a higher-value export for the increasing number of consumers who are seeking sustainable products.



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Groundswell's Drive for Change strikes a chord

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

Tractors will once again be rolling across New Zealand roads when Groundswell's Drive for Change travels the length of the country this September as the convoy heads to Auckland.

Following on from Groundswell's Howl of Protest in 2021, which saw tractors and utes take to urban streets in protest about unworkable regulations, the latest event focuses on the upcoming New Zealand elections on October 14.

Groundswell's message that things are bad, and that rural and urban dwellers need to vote for change, has struck a chord with farmers suffering from low commodity prices, increasing regulation and crippling on-farm inflation.

Chertsey farmer Chris Bell, who remembers all too well the difficulties farmers faced in the 1980s and 1990s, believes it is important to raise awareness of the struggles currently facing New Zealand's agriculture sector.

"What they are doing is great to raise awareness to other industries and those in urban

New Zealand to see the struggle we are having with increased taxes and increased bureaucracy."

Bell said that farmers haven't joined together yet, but with farmers under increasing financial and regulatory pressure, he feels Groundswell's Drive for Change may signal the start of a more unified approach.

No stranger to tough times on the farm, Bell fears that without change, the financial strain could be as bad as that experienced by farmers in the 1980s.

Bell said that proposed new legislation and climate change taxes are an added stress when farmers are already under the pump.

"If it's not already hard enough, there's worse to come.

"There's no light at the end of the tunnel; there's nothing to get excited about or look forward to.

"It's all bad news," Bell said.

Associate minister of agriculture, Jo Luxton, said that when it comes to addressing farming emissions, it is about ensuring the long-term success of our agriculture sector.

"Climate Change is not something that can be ignored.

"New Zealand needs to play its

part to help protect our global climate."

Luxton said that some of the biggest buyers of our country's agriculture products are signalling they want change.

By the primary industry not investing in its sustainability credentials, it risks key buyers such as Nestle looking elsewhere to meet consumer demand.

Luxton said it would be two years before an emissions pricing system would take effect.

"I know the industry recognises that we need to act on climate," Luxton said.

"It's only fair we give them the time and support to make the transition needed."

Groundswell said farmers and food producers are tired of hearing the repeated claim from the Government that consumers want to buy emissions-efficient food when New Zealand produce is already the most efficient in the world and that less efficient producers will end up filling the gap.

Taking the message "we can't do three more years of this" is at the crux of the Drive for Change event.

Groundswell co-founder Bryce McKenzie said the group was



Groundswell NZ's Bryce McKenzie and Laurie Paterson will leave in Invercargill on September 22, and arrive in Auckland October 1 for the organisation's Drive for Change event.

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

heading to Auckland because "that's where all the voters are."

"We'll go to central Auckland and try to attract people there and help them to understand that the farming and food production sector is under huge strain, and people really need to think about who they vote for," McKenzie said.

"Farmers understand exactly what is going on.

"We aren't preaching to them; we're trying to convince the urban

people."

McKenzie and Groundswell co-founder Laurie Paterson will start their journey in two John Deere tractors in Invercargill on September 22.

The pair will drive to Picton, collecting two new John Deere tractors in Wellington before continuing their journey to the Ellerslie Racecourse in Auckland.

The journey will finish with a speaking event at the racecourse on October 1 at 1 p.m.

The itinerary for the trip is on the organisation's website, and people can keep up to date with the convoy's location via the Groundswell Facebook page, McKenzie said.

McKenzie welcomes farmers and anyone else sympathetic to the cause to take part as much as they are able to.

"It's a busy time of year, so we have designed it so people can play as big or as little a part as they can.

"It doesn't have to be tractors; it can be utes, cars or even bikes if they want to.

"It's about showing up in some form to tell the Government we're not happy," McKenzie said.

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Most important election

For ten days from Sunday 22nd September tractors are travelling from Invercargill to Auckland.

What motivates two southern farmers, Bryce McKenzie, and Laurie Paterson, to drive tractors the length of New Zealand under the banner Drive 4 Change? They recognize that the election in October is the most important in their lifetime, not just for rural New Zealand, but for all New Zealanders.

At stake is not just our farming heritage but our natural environment, iconic landscapes, and way of life. Do we want a country gobbled up by corporates and overseas investors, covered in pines, and overrun with pests and weeds as farmers are forced off the land?

Or do we want a country where the world's most emissions efficient food producing farming families are valued stewards of the land, biodiversity and cultural values are an asset, and farmers who foster environmental stewardship are acknowledged and supported rather than penalized?

Do we want a country where local decision making and democracy are paramount, with councils given the autonomy to make decisions and implement actions based on their own community's needs? Or do we



Do we want a country covered in pines?

want a country increasingly controlled by the state with unworkable regulations and loss of personal freedoms?

While I have followed politics for many years, I have never been so moved to write about an election publicly.

In my various roles in local government, farming groups and now as Groundswell environmental spokesperson,

I am aware of the impact of existing and future policies stemming from the current Labour/Greens government.

In my work as a conservationist and native restoration consultant, the government policies currently being rolled out are delivering detrimental outcomes for our natural heritage – the worst since the development subsidies pre-1984.

This election is a turning point in our history. And while the differences between the major political parties may not seem huge, the outcome will be.

I do not say it lightly; this election is about the survival of family farming, rural communities, natural heritage, respect for people and property, local decision making, and democracy.

Groundswells Drive 4 Change is about all of these. If you too care about these issues, then consider supporting our calls for changes to the unworkable regulations. Check out our alternative solutions or read about The Groundswell Solution in my previous column.

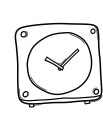
And most of all make your October vote count.

Jamie McFadden –
Groundswell NZ environmental spokesperson

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Safer Farming begins with an action sports mindset

The latest farm safety campaign has been launched that's aiming to make some inroads to improving farm safety statistics over the coming years through raising awareness and a collaborative effort with the wider industry to get as many as possible more engaged with the goal.

I love the idea of an industry driven carrot instead of the stick approach that hasn't been overly successful other than creating a culture of fear of large fines from non-compliance or in the aftermath of an accident.

Over the last decade or so we've not seen a dramatic improvement in injury statistics despite the emphasis on high vis clothing and limiting how things can be done.

Motorbike helmets have shifted some away from ATVs into Side by Sides on many farms with speed restrictions barely much faster than walking!

Downsides being that many remove the doors and nets, don't use the seat belts and in the case of two wheelers the common farm helmets don't offer much protection even if fitted properly.

Is that a path to safer farming?

It suggests people are more than likely wearing out of obligation instead of a conscious desire to operate safer.

Helmets, while I'd admit I'm quite casual with wearing mine around the farm, it is hard experience that makes me probably more sensitive to poorly fitted ones when I see them.

As a young lad I had a bad concussion after coming off a motorbike at high speed while trail riding, so ever since have worn the best helmet available when racing or riding for fun and my farm one is also well above standard.

Why I suggest we need to adopt more of an action sports mindset towards safety is what has helped me have the tools to stay safe over the years while working.

Having enjoyed many years racing motocross and trail riding, it has equipped my mind to sub consciously enter a more highly aware state, many accidents are a result of a sequence of factors like stress, fatigue, distraction or even a lack of technical capability.

The transferable skills from a risky sport like motocross comes in useful when those risk



The need for helmets have shifted some away from ATVs into Side by Sides on many farms.

factors are adding up, the mind is processing those factors front of mind, so I begin telling myself it's time to slow down or take a

moment to stop and reevaluate how I'm operating.

A while ago I was watching an interview with action sports icon

Travis Pastrana, who was asked how he has been able to achieve great things over his life while many that perceive him as being completely crazy.

He answered by saying nothing he does is out of disregard for safety or consideration of the consequences, he considered those that think that of him to be the crazy ones that he could have progressed and succeeded like he has without safety being at the centre of what he does.

My view is that as an industry we could choose the path of considering ourselves and the dynamic environments we work in, to be much like action sports athletes looking to progress and push ourselves to be better and safer. Another good example is when you see someone on the internet popping a wheelie or doing a skid, instead of thinking (or commenting!) that person is being reckless or irresponsible, they could be on a much higher level than where you are capability wise because they practice their competency.

It also helps with mental health, which is a key part of health and safety!



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Farmers find the going getting incredibly tough

2023 has been a year of mounting challenges for New Zealand agriculture, with farmers and growers hit by a quadruple-whammy of rising interest rates, increased farm input costs, falling farm revenues and unprecedented weather events across many regions.

This combination of factors has seen farmer confidence fall to multi-year lows, and it's pretty clear from the discussions I'm having around the country that many farmers are finding the going incredibly tough at present.

Despite the challenges, I can assure you of Rabobank's ongoing commitment to our food and agri clients and the wider sector. As a long-term banking partner to agriculture in New Zealand and around the world, we are experienced in dealing with the cyclical downturns in agriculture and understand this is all part and parcel of lending to the industry.

We're also well aware of the significant resilience across New Zealand's farming communities – the recent adverse weather events and Covid-19 pandemic are examples of where this has

come to the fore – and we remain confident that New Zealand's agri sector has a major role to play in providing sustainably-produced food for a growing world population.

That being said, farmers will undoubtedly need to cut unnecessary costs from their operations in the current environment, and I cannot stress enough the importance of understanding and owning your numbers and regularly communicating with your bank manager and other key farm advisers over the months ahead.

This is essential so your advisers can better understand how the current downturn is impacting your business and help keep you connected to the longer-term opportunities and sustainability of your business while you're making short-term business decisions.

One of the initiatives we've recently kicked off to support farmers in this area is our latest round of Financial Skills Workshops. These free one-day workshops are open for attendance by Rabobank clients and non-clients and help

farmers plan for, and respond to, scenarios where cashflow deviates from budget in the current season. Nineteen of these workshops have already taken place across the country this year and several more are scheduled for the remainder of 2023 and early 2024. If you're interested in attending an upcoming workshop, you can register to do this on our website.

It's also important we don't underestimate the human side of difficult financial times, and I'd urge farmers not to overlook their own health and wellbeing. Over recent years, a number of programmes have been set up to help support farmers in this area, with several of these focusing on getting farmers together to relax away from the farm. A couple of these programmes that are set to kick off in the near future, and that you might want to take a look at, are Surfing for Farmers and Rural Riders.

Finally, I'd like to thank you for everything you are doing to contribute to New Zealand's agricultural sector. Rabobank appreciates the challenges you're currently facing, but also the



Bruce Weir

opportunities, so please reach out to any of our well-qualified teams across the country if there is anything we can do to assist your

business.

– By Bruce Weir, General Manager for Country Banking, Rabobank New Zealand



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FARMINGFASTFIVE

We ask a farmer five quick questions about agriculture and what farming means to them

We ask a farmer five quick questions about farming, and what agriculture means to them. Today we talk to *HAYDEN DORMAN*, Mid Canterbury farmer and chairperson of this year's South Island Agricultural Field Days.

1. What did your journey into farming look like?

Like most of us I come from farming background, it's in my blood.

My parents and grandparents came off farms in the Selwyn and Ellesmere area. The dream of working for myself was what got me out of bed every day.

2. Tell us a bit about your farming operation?

I was working for myself dairy farming, but but for the last five months I've been working on a 430 hectare property in Mitcham.

We do a mix of drystock, dairy grazing and cropping.

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

I guess there is lots, every day.

For me personally, I am dyslexic, so when it comes to numbers, I'm great, I can do it off the top of my head.

But with reading and writing I'm not so great, so with seven staff members, I had to think how to get information across, as we all learn differently.

Phones really help, pictures and WhatsApp groups are great too.

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

Starting at the bottom and working my way up to lower order share milker, moving to 50/50 share milking and leasing a large farm.

Seeing the farm improvement.

I'm a cow mad person, so breeding cows was hugely satisfying for me.

What you can achieve in a short time frame.

Most of all though, it's the people you meet along the way and those lifelong connections.

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

Don't be scared to go against the grain.

The Dairy Industry in New Zealand is amazing, but don't be a sheep.

Bankers, consultants and lawyers will try and tell you the solutions.

But you have the guts to do what drives you, not them.

Big is not always beautiful.

Going forward, we need to stick together as farmers, whether we are dairy, sheep, beef, cropping or horticulture.

We cannot throw other farmers under the wheel.

We need to work together as one if we want to fight those who don't understand farming life.



Hayden Dorman.

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

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Safeguarding seedlings

Hessian sacks and Ironmax Pro® fighting slugs

When it comes to combatting threats to agriculture and horticulture, UPL NZ Ltd are at the forefront of emerging science, sustainability and organic solutions.

But, as UPL NZ Central South Island Regional Manager Mike Goodwin says, sometimes the old methods are still the best.

What Mike is talking about is monitoring - the key to staying on top of the destructive potential of slugs across a range of crops. And, he says, it's still hard to beat using a wet sack for slug population monitoring.

"Slugs' mottled colour often enables them to blend in with the soil and go largely unnoticed. But after even a day or two they can really get away on you. We'd recommend putting down a slug mat or a damp hessian sack. Leave it there overnight and check it the next morning. Even one slug could mean you've got a problem."

That's where, Mike says, the new science comes in.

Ironmax Pro molluscicide, with BioGro NZ organic certification, is a highly efficacious slug solution, which is gentler on the planet, on people, and on non-target animal species.

Manufactured by French

company DeSangosse, the global leader in molluscicide technology, Ironmax Pro is as effective as sister product, and industry leader, Metarex® Inov, with the added value of its green credentials.

Mike says that feature is making Ironmax Pro increasingly popular.

"People are looking 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've got the product in a tractor cab, ute, or other confined spaces."

Gerard McCarthy, Technical Field Representative at PGG Wrightson, is also an advocate of monitoring and measuring slug populations. And a fan of Ironmax Pro.

Last season, he says, 45 hectares of high value SovGold Ultrastrike treated kale seedlings in Central Otago were under attack by slugs. With average potential yields of around 10-14 t DM/ha, and suitable for both cattle and sheep grazing, it was a crop the farmer was keen to protect.

Gerard had the solution.

Ironmax Pro was spread by helicopter at 6 kg/ha.

Gerard says it did an extremely good job and supported the crop getting established. "The client rang me three days later. They saw an almost instant result."

Slugs, Mike warns aren't that 'sluggish'. "They can cover a whole lot more ground than people think they do - travelling up to 13 metres in one night."

"They're phenomenal feeders - capable of consuming more than 50% of their own body weight. Unprotected, damage to plants can happen surprisingly quickly."

Grey field slugs (*Deroceras reticulatum*) and their close relation brown field slugs (*Deroceras invadens*) have the potential to wipe out entire crops.

Stopping them in their tracks is key.

Ironmax Pro's breakthrough Colzactive® technology gives it exceptional palatability - putting it head and shoulders above conventional baits. Created by the De Sangosse research and development team, Colzactive is made up of specially selected oil seed rape extracts. Mike says the De Sangosse R&D team evaluated 20 different plant species and identified 50 potential molecules for their attractiveness to slugs.

"They ultimately selected down to just two molecules from oil seed rape for their outstandingly attractive and palatable characteristics from the slugs' perspectives. These are the basis of the technology, which enhances the Ironmax Pro bait taste and, importantly, the speed at which the baits work compared to others."

Cage trials conducted in France (2020) showed slugs actively preferred feeding on Ironmax Pro to feeding on plant seedlings.

Ironmax Pro pellets are manufactured using the finest durum wheat, which ensures slugs ingest sufficient quantities of the active ingredient to cause death. At the same time, they don't overeat, leaving enough bait for other slugs.

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.

Manufactured using a unique wet process, Ironmax Pro is rainfast and will not disintegrate in the first shower.

Ironmax Pro is IPM friendly

and does not impact beneficials including earthworms and the slug predator carabid beetle. This makes Ironmax Pro an exceptionally low hazard environmental solution. Mike says it is also safer around stock, companion animals and farm dogs.

Ironmax Pro has a recommended application rate range of 5 to 7 kg/ha. With 60,000 baits per kilogram the product has excellent ballistic properties. As Mike explains, "The uniform pellet size and innovative Ironmax Pro manufacturing process mean bait can be spread at widths of up to 24 m. That saves a lot of passes, time, and fuel." He says with farmers and growers keeping an increasingly tight rein on finances, that can make a significant difference.

And, for those who don't have old sacks - some good news. Ask your local merchant for an Ironmax Pro hessian sack.

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Selwyn setback for bovis eradication

By Sharon Davis

New Zealand's ambitious campaign to eradicate *Mycoplasma bovis* has had a setback with a farm in Selwyn testing positive for the cattle disease.

The latest infection was identified through standard milk screening and comes less than two months after New Zealand hit a *M. bovis*-free milestone.

Mid Canterbury Federated Farmers dairy chair Nick Giera said the new case was disappointing, but it wasn't unexpected.

He said it was tough for affected farmers and Federated Farmers and the Rural Support Trust had a role to support those farmers.

"The industry needs to be realistic. There may be isolated cases but it doesn't derail the objective of eradication."

Giera said farmers can't be

complacent and need to be vigilant about biosecurity and traceability.

Biosecurity New Zealand deputy director-general Stuart Anderson said a new infection was not surprising.

"We expected to identify more infected properties during spring testing - and it does not undermine our progress toward eradication."

Anderson said the ST-21 infection was the strain originally detected in 2017.

The *M. bovis* Eradication Programme was working with the farmer to cull the cattle and trace animal movements on and off the farm, as was the usual practice.

The likely source of the infection - and any other farms it may have moved to - would be identified by tracing the movement of cattle, and the number of local farms under movement restrictions would increase, he said.

M. bovis facts

The disease was first discovered in New Zealand in July 2017 on a farm in South Canterbury.

New Zealand embarked on an ambitious programme to eradicate *M. bovis* in 2018, funded by the Government (68%), DairyNZ and Beef + Lamb New Zealand.

Since then, more than 186,421 cattle have been culled from 280 farms.

The last known infected property near Ashburton was cleared of the disease early in August.

A total of 2909 claims have been processed and paid, while six are in process. More than \$256m has been paid in claims so far.

At the peak of the infection there were up to 40 infected properties across the country.

Farmers called on for ground-breaking research

By Claire Inkson

South Island sheep farmers, including those in Mid Canterbury, should consider participating in a facial eczema research programme that could help control the deadly disease.

That's the call from Beef + Lamb New Zealand (B+L NZ), which is driving the nationwide three-year research programme for the disease, which is starting to emerge in the South Island.

"We have heard from farms experiencing facial eczema in Nelson and Marlborough, and south of the Awatere River," B+L NZ sector science strategy manager Suzi Keeling said.

"As the disease is less prevalent in the South Island, it is possible that there are many cases which are sub-clinical or are assumed to be another issue."

The disease, associated with a toxin-producing fungus, affects pasture-grazing livestock, and there is no cure.

The cost to New Zealand's sheep, beef, dairy and deer sectors because of the disease is estimated to be around \$332 million annually, according to B+L NZ's economic service.

The fungus thrives in warm conditions, which has scientists worried because they think the disease could spread further as New Zealand feels the effects of climate change.

The toxin can cause permanent liver damage and stock affected by the disease will have limited productivity.

Because animals can be

asymptomatic in the early stages, farms may be carrying the disease and be unaware.

"One of the challenges at the moment is that there are no strong diagnostic tools to identify if animals have subclinical facial eczema," Keeling said.

"It's more likely to be suspected based on impacts on production, but it's one of those diseases that are not necessarily known until there are full-blown clinical effects."

By the time the disease shows symptoms, such as extreme sunburn and peeling skin, liver damage has already occurred, Keeling said.

Because facial eczema is linked to a fungus, it can be difficult to kill and behaves differently to other diseases, like *M. bovis*.

"The goal is to eliminate the impact of the disease rather than eradicate it."

The research project will investigate possible diagnostic tests, as well as treatment options, which will include farmer-led solutions.

"We want to look at all the different things farmers say that work for them and then at how we support that with science and research."

The study would involve about 350 volunteer farmers from 16 regions collecting stool samples from sheep between October and May each year over three years.

"We want samples collected from across New Zealand, regardless of whether farms have experienced facial eczema in the past," Keeling said.



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Grand opening of Goldpine's new Ashburton store



Goldpine's first store in Richmond, Nelson. Their service dates back to 1977.



Adding value to their customers through service and high-quality products.



Rob Gibson, Outdoor Timber Specialist, Manager John Haskett and Murray Thatcher, Farm Building Specialist.



PHOTOS: STU JACKSON The new Goldpine yard at Drovers Lane.

Outdoor timber specialists Goldpine are excited to announce their new store opening on Friday 29th September 2023. As a family-owned Kiwi business, Goldpine is dedicated to supporting the New Zealand agricultural industry by developing new products to better support farmers and rural workers.

Founded in 1977 by Claude Eggers and born out of Golden Downs in the Nelson region,

the business has grown with the aim of producing sustainable, renewable and natural products. Fast forward nearly 50 years and Goldpine has expanded to 22 stores across New Zealand, with the new relocated Ashburton store being the latest edition.

Goldpine, Carrfields and Calder Stewart joined forces to make the new Ashburton store a success. "There's nothing better than supporting local by partnering up with other small-town New

Zealand family businesses like Carrfields and Calder Stewart, who have grown to become great household names across the country," said Matt Eggers, the national sales manager of Goldpine.

"Our new Ashburton store is located at Carrfields' Tinwald Business Park, where we have maintained a good working relationship with them over the years. The store was completed by Milton-based company

Calder Stewart, who brought to life our vision for the new build. It's really exciting to see local Kiwi businesses banding together, working with natural materials and supporting rural communities. We couldn't do what we do without the support of our loyal customers, who have come on the journey with us for all these years and are still willing to support a Kiwi-owned business that sells natural, high-quality products that are built to last."

Goldpine, one of New Zealand's iconic rural businesses, invites everyone to join them to celebrate the opening of their relocated store from 11am to 1pm at Goldpine Ashburton, 10 Drovers Lane, Tinwald. The opening ceremony will kick off at noon, followed by a BBQ and refreshments. There will also be an opportunity to win some Goldpine merchandise while spending time with the local community. For more information, head to www.goldpine.co.nz

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A family-owned business started in Milton in 1955, for over 68 years we have successfully evolved our services into a national offering. Our capabilities include an extensive land portfolio, end-to-end property services, Design Build solutions, plus manufacturing and construction services. We have generations of proven experience on our team, we deliver flexible solutions and we're driven by a common set of values in 'Find a Way', 'Play Fair', 'Be Loyal' and 'Own It'.

A nationwide team of building expertise -

When it comes to experience and delivery in the industrial, commercial, and rural construction sectors, Calder Stewart has proven capability. Our nationwide client relationship, project management and delivery teams work in partnership with our clients to provide efficient construction outcomes. No two projects are ever the same and we have a track record of solving some of the most complex construction challenges for many local, national, and international operators.



We continue to see solid growth in the markets we serve and take pride in developing long-term relationships with our clients across New Zealand. We're focused on engaging with the best of leading technologies to deliver the next generation of efficient, quality buildings.

Times may change, but our

commitment to quality thinking, superior project execution and strong client relationships remain core to Calder Stewart. Our focus remains on the future, embracing new ways of delivering success for our growing number of clients.

"The better the relationships, the better the business" - Bruce Stewart (Founder)



Building a sustainable

future

Proud to be supporting Goldpine in the rural sector.

Carrfields Group grew from bailing business

The Carrfields Group was founded over forty years ago by Greg & Glenys Carr, who started farming in Mid Canterbury in the eighties, during a time of high interest rates and economic turmoil, which led them to start a baling contracting business.

The contracting business was the catalyst for the business Carrfields, which is today linked with farming, property and agri-business companies involving machinery, livestock, seed, contracting, honey, and natural fibres.

Carrfields Property's key focus is on developing and owning regionally-focused property investments, linked to the agricultural primary industry – such as service facilities, logistics, storage and warehousing and over several years have built and developed a portfolio of property.

In 2017 Carrfields Property purchased the Tinwald sale yard site in Ashburton from PGG Wrightson, with visions to develop it into a high-profile business park that neighboured many existing Carrfields properties and businesses. In 2020, the first shovel went into the ground, and in 2022, a 5.5 hectare business park development was completed



From left James Carr, Stacey Mc KERCHAR, Glenys Carr, Greg Carr (founder), Craig Carr and Ryan Carr.

– Tinwald Business Park.

In the initial stages of the development Carrfields had strong interest from two parties looking for a high-profile site, these being Mainfreight and Goldpine, both iconic New Zealand companies. The Carrfields way is to work with our customers to achieve the best

solution with the least hassle, and this was the case with both parties as we looked to work alongside them in an open and transparent relationship, which has today resulted in the completion of the Mainfreight building which was opened in January 2023 and the Goldpine building which opened

in August 2023.

As a family-owned business, Carrfields is proud to be associated with our newest property partner, Goldpine, another successful family-owned business, and our primary development construction partner, Calder Stewart, who has ensured we deliver a quality

property in line with our tenant's wishes.

Carrfields Property looks forward to working with future tenants, with seven sites at Tinwald Business Park still available for development opportunities.

CARRFIELDS PROPERTY PROUDLY PRESENTS TINWALD BUSINESS PARK



PRIME SITES STILL AVAILABLE FOR DEVELOPMENT
TO LEASE OPPORTUNITIES

Young Country:

Today we talk to *SHANNON BENNETT* from the Waihora Banks Peninsula Young Farmers' Club.

1. What is the name of your club, and how long have you been a member?

The name of the club is Waihora Banks Peninsula Young Farmers Club. It covers around the Lake Ellesmere/ Banks Peninsula area.

I have been a part of the club since May, when the club re-established itself.

2. What has been the highlight for you of joining Young Farmers? What are the benefits and experiences that you feel have helped you most?

The highlight has definitely been seeing the club become re-established in the area and gaining a lot of support from all the local young Agri-interested ones in the past six months.

Young Farmers clubs have such a history in this area and for it to be back up and running in the community is awesome.

Everyone involved in the club has created such awesome experiences they are a good bunch and also have a lot of social evenings planned, which is great.

The area is vast and many young farmers are spread out, so it's great to have a hub to meet and join up.

3. How did you become involved in agriculture?

I grew up on a sheep and beef farm in the Marlborough

Sounds, which my grandparents and parents ran. Growing up you definitely didn't have many options, but to help out on the farm especially in busy times when all hands on deck were required, and I'm so glad I got to taste that growing up as this really sparked my interest in the industry and I couldn't see myself doing anything else other than shepherding!

4. What is your job now?

Currently my role is a shepherd on the breeding side of the farm I work at. I have just recently started this role.

Previously I was working on the more finishing side of the farm, so I am loving having the opportunity to be more on the hills and using the dogs more mustering as this is my passion!

The farm I am based on is a 6,400ha sheep and Beef farm on Banks Peninsula. They breed 12,000 ewes and roughly 500 Angus cows.

All the lambs and calves born on farm are fattened up on the farm and sold at prime. As well, trade cattle are brought in to be fattened to prime.

So it's large scale, with a variety of work, which is awesome.

The property ranges from steep hill country to rolling developed downs, intensive valley bottoms

and flats. Being so close to the sea, and having volcanic soils, the ground is very fertile and grows good grass.

My journey so far has taken me to Lincoln University, which I loved for the networking you make there and lifelong friends.

I then did some shepherding near Springfield and moved onto a cattle stud farm on Banks Peninsula and I am now at Willesden Farms, on their hill country blocks, which I am loving as they are very pro-horse work here and you can get out and about on the horses while mustering, which is a fantastic learning experience.

5. What do you think the future of farming will look like, and what would you like to see happening in New Zealand agriculture going forward?

Currently I feel there is a lot of uncertainty in the New Zealand farming industry especially with the current prices of lamb and milk, however I strongly feel New Zealand is so unique in what we have to offer with our pasture-grazed animals that with the right people taking charge we can really utilise our premium products and stand out from the crowd.

I would love to see the producer to consumer gap be narrowed.

Currently a lot of consumers



Shannon Bennett. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

much as possible from the farm I am at currently.

I am very fortunate that all my work colleagues have such a rich knowledge of all things agricultural based and are really good role models and mentors to learn from. The best way I feel to grow is to surround yourself with good mentors and to never feel you have learnt it all, as there is always something to learn!

I am currently dabbling in my first little lease block so my long-term goal would be to own my own farm, but we shall see!

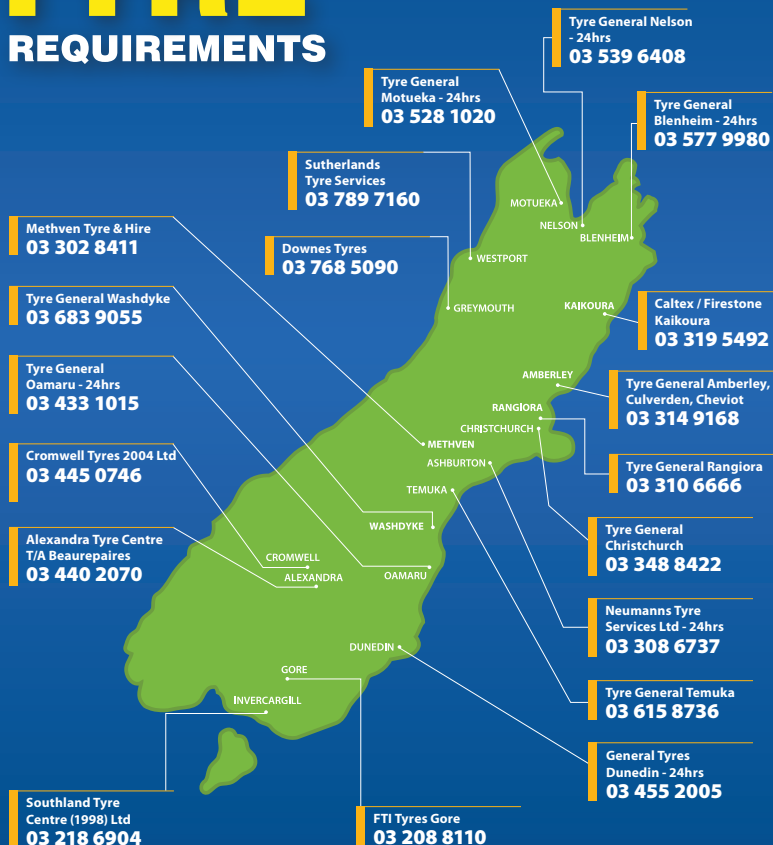
7. Who has been your biggest inspiration in agriculture, and why?

This may sound very cheesy but my grandparents and parents have been my biggest inspirations in agriculture, they started from scratch farming over in the UK and then in 2000 they upped and moved to New Zealand to the Marlborough sounds for more farming opportunities over here.

They built their farm up from the ground and created a beautiful successful farm up there.

It's been so inspiring watching their grit and determination to never quit and keep going, even through the tough seasons, and to build their lives in a different environment to what they grew up in.

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NZ-grown wheat can replace overseas imports



In terms of crop quality, NZ milling wheat is equal to imported Australian supplies.

When you pick up a loaf of bread, especially in the North Island, there's a nearly 100-per-cent chance the wheat used for flour has been grown across the Tasman, or even further afield.

Domestic wheat production was estimated to be around 113,000 tonne last year, making up around a quarter of the total market. Australia supplied most of the balance.

An arable industry milling wheat initiative, involving the encouragement of local bakers and food companies to use more "NZ grown grains" aims to change that.

New Zealand has the right cultivars, available land and a warm, dry climate to grow wheat for bread, buns, biscuits, pasta and other food products.

Growers across Mid and South Canterbury currently supply most of the South Island market and have the capacity to keep North Island flour mills and bakeries supplied with wheat.

That said, one of the ongoing challenges in growing more local wheat for NZ relates to navigating South Island to North Island freight costs and transport logistics.

When it comes to shipping costs, the Cook Strait crossing is one of the most expensive pieces of water to traverse.

Add to that are challenges around efficiently consolidating and moving regular and sizeable tonnages to key customers up North.

Ramping up production is possible, but it is dictated by land availability, normal farm rotations and simple supply and demand equations.

In terms of crop quality, NZ milling wheat is equal to imported Australian supplies.

Much of this is due to the hard work of plant breeders, who have developed and introduced new and improved cultivars to farmers over the past 40 years.

Newly bred wheat varieties have delivered various desired qualities including higher protein levels, better resistance to pests and diseases, and lower gluten levels.

And of course, higher crop yields and improved grower profits.

New Zealand growers are one of the most productive in the world and in 2017 and 2020 an Ashburton grower held the Guinness World Record for the highest wheat yield – over 16 tonnes per hectare.

Our strategy of becoming our own bread basket still has a long way to go before it replaces international imports.

– By Thomas Chin,
General Manager, NZ Grain & Seed
Trade Assn

Key points:

- NZ wheat growers, plant breeders and industry good-bodies are working on a New Zealand grown strategy to minimise the reliance on milling wheat imports

- NZ already produces the varieties that the milling and baking industry want
- The NZ wheat industry produced around 113,000 tonnes last year

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RURAL RECHARGE

Take a smoko break for mental health

Regulating our emotions

Clinical psychologist *TRACEY COLLINS* is all too familiar with the struggles facing farmers and how the weight of those struggles can affect families and relationships, especially when past trauma rears its head.

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

Tracey Collins' early career was spent dairy farming in Taranaki.

Collins and her husband were farming successfully, even picking up the 1997 Sharemilker of the Year award in the Dairy Industry Awards.

A decision to change jobs and downsize led to Collins' husband feeling a sense of isolation and failure.

"In the process, people looked at him like he was going backwards because he wasn't going to be farming larger numbers and more aggressively, which was what was expected," Collins says.

Moving to a new district had also meant moving away from his social network, a common issue in the often transient nature of dairy farming.

Sadly, he took his own life shortly after.

Collins gave up dairy farming following her husband's death.

She retrained, completing a Bachelor of Science with a double major in Psychology and Biology, moving on to complete her Masters in Biology and Biochemistry.

Collins spent the next nine years working as an IVF embryologist.

Tragedy was to strike again when Collins' sister took her own life.

Needing to regroup, Collins went to Peru and volunteered in an orphanage and home for teenage mothers, which Collins describes as an "awakening".

"There was abuse, it was horrific.

"But, I could see that my psych training was kicking in and that I could have meaning and purpose in my work."

Collins returned to study again, qualifying as a clinical psychologist.

Collins' research centred around how childhood trauma affects relationships and people's ability to manage emotions.

Collins now works with rural clients through Will to Live and the Rural Support Trust.

"I use all of my life experiences, intuition and ten years of tertiary education to help people with challenges."

Regulating Emotions

Emotional regulation is a reasonable response to stress, while emotional dysregulation can look like overly intense emotions, impulsive behaviour and inability to manage emotions.

For instance, pausing to collect your thoughts before responding to a situation is an example of emotional regulation.

Conversely, emotional dysregulation equates to someone 'losing it', Collins said. "They'll start to get angry or upset, and they'll start to feel that in their body."

That can feel like an elevated heart rate, clenched fists, and a tight throat.

"Generally, those reactions



Tracey Collins draws on her past experience, her intuition and her ten years of tertiary education when helping her clients.

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

are bigger than what the context would indicate is appropriate."

Sometimes, dysregulation can be more subtle, such as shutting down or running away from the situation.

In times of stress, we often look at ways to self-soothe rather than

deal with the situation or the emotions that have surfaced.

"We use drugs, sex, online shopping or working."

Collins said those reactions stem from childhood trauma, surfacing in the present moment and making it challenging to react reasonably and appropriately.

Farmers commonly tend to use work as a coping mechanism.

In farming families, children are often rewarded with love and attention for helping on the farm.

To regulate emotions, Collins said, it comes down to recognising patterns and understanding why those feelings are coming to the surface and if the coping mechanisms we use are working for us.

"It's tough to do by yourself.

"You are better off getting help from a professional, which also gives you accountability."

As well as seeking help, Collins recommends thinking about how to cope better when the pressure isn't as intense and you can think clearly.

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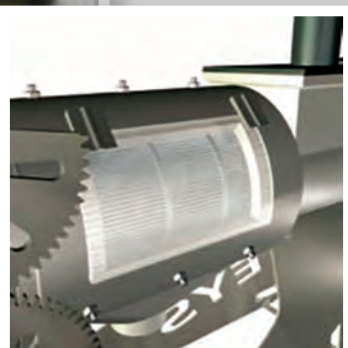
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From Farming to Glamping

WHAT'S INSIDE

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Do your boundaries meet your needs?

Fox and Associates create legacies with land

There's no time like the present to ensure that your land holdings match the requirements of your farming operation.

That's the advice from award-winning Christchurch land surveying firm Fox and Associates, who have been around for over 40 years helping families safeguard their farming futures with land planning expertise and advice.

Few things are as vital as managing your land holdings, which can involve identifying, understanding, and rearranging title boundaries to make the best use of the land resource.

Two of the best to seek help from are Fox and Associates' professional surveyors Craig McInnes and Alex Liggett.

"We are rural people ourselves and we work hard to understand our clients' goals," Liggett said.

"Once we understand where they want to get to, we can work backwards through our knowledge of planning rules to figure out how best to achieve the desired outcome."

Getting the right outcome could involve exchanging land between neighbours or moving

Alex Liggett

Craig McInnes

a title boundary to better reflect irrigation or fencing layouts. It could also mean separating valuable but unproductive assets like houses from production land.

"At a time of rising interest rates, being able to release equity in the land to pay down debt can be a really important way to keep a farming operation viable," Liggett said.

"A lot of the value of a farming operation is in the land and it's really important that this value is working for the farm as efficiently as possible. If, and when the time comes to sell land, the titles that can be sold should match up with

the realities on the ground."

When should it be done?

"A lot of these processes take time to complete and regulatory processes get more complicated as time goes on. Because of this, there's really no time like the present.

The resource management process is complicated so given the busy and often stressful work lives that many rural people have, it is good to know that the work is in the hands of experienced professionals. We keep clients' best interests at the forefront."

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Surfing a winning formula

Surfing and farming may seem an unlikely combination, but it's a winning formula for *HICKORY BAY FARM*.

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

Kristin and Rachel Savage bought Hickory Bay Farm twelve years ago, giving up city life in Wellington to try their hand at farming.

Kristin, a former teacher and keen surfer, was drawn to the beach location and what promised to be consistently good surf.

"I saw the farm advertised and thought, wouldn't it be cool to base something around surfing and eco-tourism?" Savage says.

The farm initially took precedence, and the couple, with the help of Rachel's parents, spent the first few years putting their energy into developing the 500-hectare property.

Moving from teaching to farming was a steep learning curve, but Rachel's father, Keith, was on hand to provide advice.

"Keith taught me about farming and especially stockmanship.

"If you don't get that right, you may as well forget everything else."

Savage expected the property to just "tread water", but the farm was a success, with the couple enjoying the rural lifestyle more than expected.

While the potential surfing and eco-tourism plans had taken a back seat to farm development, the idea re-presented itself four years ago after the couple had built a new home on the property, leaving the cottage vacant.

Rather than renting the cottage out or bringing in additional staff, the Savages decided to open the house for

accommodation – but with a difference.

"We wanted to do something more than accommodation.

"So it's not just an Airbnb, it's a Cold Water Surf Resort.

"It's a niche market.

"There's a lot of farms with accommodation, but not all have one of the best surf beaches in New Zealand."

In addition to the cottage, guests can also choose to stay in the cheerfully renovated cabin, a converted shearer's quarters a short walk from the beach.

The Cabin and the Cottage also offer chemical-free hot tubs, from Kiwitubs. A hot tub at the Surf Club cleverly adapted from a farm trough.

The accommodation supplements the farm income, which is handy in a climate that often brings droughts.

"It's a really wet farm, but I could see these droughts were still going to be an issue every few years.

"So anything we can do to blunt off the sharp edges with a bit of diversification helps," Savage said.

Savage also provided relief teaching at the local school when they are short-staffed. Unexpectedly, this led to her teaching some of the school students to surf.

What began as a spur-of-the-moment after-school lesson has evolved into the Hickory Bay Surfing Institute with Surf Club running over the summer months after school one day each week.

Now a charitable trust, the club has grown

with the children's parents also trying their hands at surfing and joining in the fun.

"We keep the ratios safe and have a debrief behind the electric fence before they go near the water."

An award is given out each week for the surfer of the day, with children receiving a trophy made by a local craftsman builder for the winner to keep for the week.

"They may not be the champion surfer for the week, but they will do something special or push themselves out of their comfort zone."

Afterwards, Savage lights the fire pit, and there is music and a BBQ.

When Savage heard about the Surfing for Farmers initiative, it seemed like a natural fit and reached out to the national coordinator.

"We just rang and asked them how we could help, and it just grew from there."

Many parents whose children attend

the Tuesday Kids Surf Club attend Surfing for Farmers on Thursday evenings through the summer months.

Lessons are free, and boards and wetsuits are provided.

All skill levels are welcome; and no prior surfing experience is required.

After surfing, the BBQ is fired up to give people a chance to have a yarn and connect.

"It's a really special time to get off the farm, and it couldn't be more different to having your head in farming than surfing.

"The ocean will humble you pretty quickly and make you realise that you're insignificant in the scheme of things.

"All your problems go away when you are in the water."

"It's a simple model, but it's actually a no-brainer.

"It's exercise, it's food, and it's social, so it ticks all the boxes."



Surfing for Farmers runs throughout the summer months, and no experience is needed.



Through Surfing for Farmers, all boards and wetsuits are provided.



Guests can enjoy a hot tub whilst enjoying the farm and ocean views.

PHOTOS: SUPPLIED



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Director Quinton Lankshear said RoomMate's cabins had insulation that met residential standards, with batts in the walls and ceilings - plus insulation underneath.

The company also prided itself on providing a quality service New Zealand-wide and had five-star reviews online.

"Our service is the best.

"When you deal with Roommate Cabins you are dealing with a locally owned and operated business run by people who are passionate about the area they live and work in," he said

RoomMate's cabins are available in three sizes – standard, large and extra-large – with delivery within a few days of placing an order, depending on availability, Lankshear said.

Small cabins are 3.6m by 2.4m, large cabins 2.4m wide, but have a length of 4.2m, while extra-large

cabins are 4.8m by 2.7m.

"Roommate Cabins are warm, dry and cosy. They are built like a house and made from timber - not the chilly panel-type products that sweat."

The rental price varies depending on location. Contact your local branch for a quote.

There is also a delivery fee, which varies on location, and a minimum rental period of six months. The delivery fee covers driving the cabin to your property, placing it on site, levelling it, and removing the cabin when it is no longer required.

The cabins do not have any water connections and do not require permits, Lankshear said.

RoomMate Cabins are delivered on a custom-built tipping trailer.

"If we can get our trailer to your site, we can deliver your cabin."

Lankshear said another advantage of RoomMate cabins was that they were built on skids attached to a steel base, not on wheels. This makes them more stable and stops cold air from circulating underneath the cabin.

It also eliminated the need for a big step to get into the cabin and made the cabins easy to position.

"This means that RoomMate Cabin suppliers can get your cabin into tight and tricky places that other suppliers cannot," he said.



RoomMate has a range of portable and roomy cabins for temporary accommodation or office space.



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When Petro and Peter Varrie made the decision to relocate from Invercargill to Christchurch they decided to buy a portable home.

After a lot of research, the couple settled on two potential suppliers and asked to view the units over the weekend. Sophie and John from Living Little happily accommodated their viewing over the weekend and the service made all the difference to the Varries' buying decision.

The Varries liked the aesthetics, insulation, colour-steel exterior and high-quality finish of Living Little's movable homes.

"They are like family friends – that's the kind of vibe you get from them," say Petro and Peter.

Asked why they chose Living Little, the service they received was

a big factor, along with the quality of the home and workmanship.

Their biggest fear in buying a transportable home was that they were going to be scammed and lose their money.

They felt this risk "was managed very, very well" by the Living Little team.

"You were communicated with every step of the way, every single phase you get a phone call. Hey this is what's happening. If you wanted to come and have a look you're invited on site."

Living Little also gives their clients the opportunity to register a security over their little home while it is under construction. This gives customers peace of mind about their significant purchase.

Living Little are adaptable



Petro and Peter Varrie are delighted with the purpose-designed off-grid portable home from Living Little.

PHOTO: SUPPLIED.

when it comes to what can be included in your home, which was a nice surprise for Peter, who has a building background.

"If it's important to our customer - of course we'll include it," says Sophie of Living Little.

The Varries, who took their little home off-grid, found it easy to work with John to get their solar panels on the roof.

Living Little sourced the composting toilet and installed a

Starlink internet cable.

The Varries selected a two-bedroom design, added a few extra metres, and modified the interior to one bedroom with a larger lounge and kitchen – and "a decent-sized bathroom with a laundry built into it".

"We were so excited to see the whole thing coming together," they said.

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code and get a full 50-year building consent for the fixed rather than moveable option, just the same as a traditional home build.

You can be confident that your home will be easy care, easy to keep warm and with spaces and facilities that feel real so you are not compromising the way you live.

And asked how they find living in their home now: "I wouldn't change anything. I'm very happy," said Petro.

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Red dust and road trains

By Claire Inkson

claire.inkson@theguardian.co.nz

Some people's bucket list of travel consists of cruises on Mediterranean waters or croissants in French cafes, but not Kent Patterson.

He dreamed of hitting the red dust roads of outback Australia behind the wheel of a mighty Kenworth road train.

In April, that dream became a reality for the 45-year-old Ellesmere Transport driver and former farmer.

"I was in Western Australia 25 years ago and regret not doing this then.

"I thought the opportunity had gone, and I was getting too old, so getting a licence over there might be hard.

"But then the opportunity came up."

Although an experienced driver, it was trial by fire when Patterson arrived for his first day on the job.

"When we turned up, you sit your licence, and then they give you your truck," Patterson says.

"There's no training; you just get told to put your gear in the truck and head out Monday.

"The first few weeks were pretty sketchy."

The Australian-built Kenworth T650, a 600 horsepower beast, would be Patterson's home and workplace for three and a half months as he travelled across Queensland and into the

Northern Territory, carting cattle.

Unlike stock trucks in New Zealand that measure around 23 metres with truck and trailer units, Patterson's Australian road train, which hauled a third trailer, measured around 50 meters long.

With most roads being single-lane, other vehicles were quick to move to the side at the sight of the formidable trucks, Patterson said.

"We were the biggest trucks on the road, both height and length-wise, so we had the right of way wherever we went."

The sheer height of the trailer units and the corrugated roads meant that trailers tipping over was a constant threat that Patterson had to manage, something he described as his 'greatest fear'.

"Some of the country is pretty average, and the legal height for trailers in Australia is 4.3, and we were 4.6.

"Only livestock trucks are allowed at that height and are non-weight restricted.

"Everything was volume loaded."

Drivers were based at Cloncurry in Queensland, where accommodation was a shared port-a-com, but often, the duration of the trips meant pulling over for a sleep in the truck cab, which was encouraged.

With some trips being as long as 1600 km in a single day, drivers had to be prepared to rest when



Kent Patterson's road train, powered by a Kenworth T650, measured 50 metres in length.

PHOTOS: SUPPLIED

needed.

"You have to be a bit of a boy scout.

"You just have to pull over when you are tired or hungry."

The truck cab was a comfortable two-and-a-half times bigger than Patterson's New Zealand truck, with a comfortable bed and facilities to make the long trips bearable.

"They have a fridge and a bed.

"Some guys even ran an inverter to have a microwave in

their truck."

Meals were either in a roadhouse en route or on the side of the road beside the truck, camp-fire style.

Trucks often travelled in convoy, with Patterson's crew including eight visiting Kiwis in addition to the core seasonal Australian drivers.

"A lot of people go for an adventure and then come home."

The cattle trucking season is around nine months, from

Easter to December, when larger stations are mustering.

Some paddocks can hold 10-15,000 cattle on stations that can be around a million acres, and truck drivers often can be at a single station for days at a time, carting stock from paddock to paddock.

"Some paddocks can be more than 100 km wide.

"During the muster, they bring in everything – fat cows, skinny cows, drys and weaners."

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Mickey Bulls, young bulls that should have been branded or castrated but have missed previous musters, could be challenging to load, Patterson said.

The Australian drivers were initially wary of the Kiwi driver's stock sense.

Once the New Zealanders proved themselves, their Aussie co-workers relaxed.

"They were quite standoffish initially; I think they thought they might have to babysit us.

"But once they figured out we knew what we were doing and knew our limits, they were sweet," Patterson said.

"I've got some mates here now, and we'll probably be friends forever.

"They are planning to come over here for a visit and load sheep once the season ends, which will be hilarious."

The Australian outback is not for the faint-hearted.

Even in the coolest months, the heat can be intense, with temperatures reaching 35 degrees, which Patterson jokingly describes as "the best winter I've ever had".

Drivers were always keenly aware of what inhospitable wildlife could find its way into a truck cab or be accidentally trodden on in the long grass.

"If it was a really warm day, snakes would be all over the road.

"You'd see dozens of them."

For Patterson, though, it's the landscape itself that has left the biggest impression.

"It's just endless, endless country.

"It just goes on forever, there's no landmarks."



The roads were often single lane and corrugated, meaning drivers have to be constantly aware of the high trailers tipping over.



The mustering season is from Easter through to December, which some stations cover over a million acres in size.



Kent Patterson with his Ellesmere Transport truck in Mid Canterbury.



Days behind the wheel are long, with drivers sometimes covering 1600 kilometres in a day.

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From farming to glamping

By Claire Inkson

claire.inkson@theguardian.co.nz

Starting an avocado orchard and glamping business would not be considered the traditional career path for dairy farmers, but that didn't stop Richie and Kate Bocock.

The couple gave up dairy farming six years ago and moved to the tranquil Banks Peninsula property Te Wepu to begin a new chapter in their lives.

"I didn't feel like the pressures were getting to me, but I did feel like I wasn't enjoying what we were doing any more," Richie Bocock says.

The equity partnership in their Mid Canterbury dairy farm, while successful, had run its course, and they decided it was time for something different.

Drawn to the 30-hectare property by its stunning vistas and seaside location, the couple started renovating the house while considering their options for what to do with the land.

The property could run 30-40 cattle, but Kate and Richie thought the property had potential for other income streams.

Richie noticed some Kauri growing in one of the gullies and had an idea.

"I thought, if some Kauri is growing here, avocado should be able to grow."

Avocado seedlings need to spend two years in the nursery before they can be planted in the ground, but this gave time for the Bococks to prepare the paddock they had set aside for the orchard for planting.

They ordered the 80 trees from a nursery in Gisborne and set to work getting the ground ready.

"In October 2018, we planted the trees.

"We had everything prepped, and we had done the homework on what needed to be done."

To the Bococks' relief, two years later, the trees produced their first fruit.

By the following year, the trees had produced a reasonable crop of around one thousand avocados.

Te Wepu now holds the impressive title of being the southernmost avocado orchard in New Zealand and the world.

"The avocados are every bit as good as what you get up north," Bocock said.

While the trees are still maturing and not yet at peak production, the avocados are being sold locally around Banks Peninsula via Facebook.

"If they start producing at their maximum, we will have to do something different and probably look at a wholesale market in Christchurch.

"At the moment, though, we've only got about 1500 avocados on the trees this year, and they'll go quickly over summer."

While the operation is still small-scale, the success of the trees proves that they can be grown this far south, Bocock said.

With the avocados and the 30-40 head of cattle run on the property, the Bocock's still felt there was room for further diversification.

The next idea came when the couple were chopping firewood on the top of the farm and admiring the spectacular view across Akaroa Harbour.

"We thought this view is pretty cool; we should put a seat up here.

"Then we thought, why don't we put a shed up here we can stay in? Then we thought, why not do a glamping business?"

The idea quickly grew wings.

The couple decided to do something different to glamping tents but were unsure what alternative accommodation would work at the three sites earmarked for the new venture.

The answer came when the family visited the Ashburton A&P show and stumbled across Mt Hutt Pods, who were exhibiting.

"We thought that's going to be perfect for our place, so we went to Mark Brown, who owns the business and told him we'd have six.

"He just about fell over," Bocock laughs.

The pods were helicoptered onto the three sites.

Each site has a pod for sleeping and a pod with a changing room, storage and a composting toilet.

The pods arrived in October of 2017, and with the accommodation being open for bookings that December, the couple went to work on the landscaping.



Kate and Richie Bocock bought Te Wepu on Banks Peninsula 6 years ago.

PHOTOS: SUPPLIED



There are three glamping sites on the property, where guests can enjoy views across the Akaroa harbour.

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Next, hot tubs were installed on each site from Alpine Tubs in Geraldine.

"There are cedar on the outside and stainless steel on the inside, so they are really easy to clean.

"Most other ones are cedar on the inside."

The hot tubs are emptied and cleaned after each guest, with the water being recycled and used to irrigate the avocado orchard.

Each site has a fire pit, and guests can enjoy a hamper of local produce curated by Kate, which includes Te Wepu's beef and, when in season, avocados.

"We wanted to showcase the grass-fed beef from here, and Kate has this amazing cob loaf she makes from her mother's recipe.

"Then there's fresh fruit and vegetables and Akaroa salmon."

The pod accommodation is managed by the Bococks, rather than through a third-party business.

Because of this, guests visiting Te Wepu have a much more personal experience.

Bookings have been consistent, with guests from all walks of life, from farmers and urban professionals, to rugby players and even the odd celebrity.

"We get a massive range of people, but what I enjoy is the people that have really busy lives.

"They come here, they look exhausted, but when they leave two days later, they leave happy."



The pods on the property were supplied by Mt Hutt pods, and were helicoptered into position.



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Get Dotted: The importance of communication styles

By Amy Scott

The New Zealand made Dots Communication Framework ("dots") is a proven tool that helps people not only get more out of themselves personally but also helps with tapping into the true potential of all of the people around them.

Just pause for a moment and consider the sheer number of humans that come into your orbit on a daily basis. Including but not limited to :- Family members. Partners. Friends. Work Colleagues. Advisors. Team mates. School community members. Tradies. Industry peers. Doctors. Dentists. Other health professionals. Sales representatives. Rural delivery people. Baristas. Local business people. It's a lot! And all of these perfectly imperfect humans have very unique sets of needs, values and goals.

Generally speaking whilst we're all unique (thank goodness) it's easy to identify four relatively simple yet different communication styles (dots). This is not personality profiling. Dots is far more practical, effective and empowering than that. We are all a combination of the four different dots.

After a few short hours experiencing dots - you can easily identify someone else's natural communication style ("dot") and adapt your communication to best meet their needs.

This reduces unnecessary friction, stress and miscommunication that can lead to loss of productivity, silly cock ups and generally a life that's less enjoyable!

In this short article, I'd love to quickly give you a taste of the four different dots in the hope that this will lessen some of the frustrating and completely avoidable happenings that crop up in your world from time to time.

Purple Dots

Purple Dots are people who tend to have constant thoughts and ideas that stream into their minds and then pop straight out of their mouths.

These people are fabulous at starting projects but tend to lose interest before they physically get them finished!

In any conversation you'll hear them use the words "I know". "Do you know what I mean?" "I know all about that".

They naturally turn all incoming information (even information they've just received

three seconds before) into "knowings".

You need to give them the "what" in any communication.

They need the overall big picture from the get go.

If you invite these people to a BBQ at your place kicking off at 6pm - these are the people who'll get there sometime before 7pm. Quick tip - don't wait for these people before eating!

Yellow Dots

Yellow Dots are people who need a lot of detail because as you're talking to them, they are naturally building complex pictures in their mind from the words that you are using. If possible, sketching information out onto a piece of paper, whiteboard or even just sending them a link works well for them.

These people have very high standards and tend to be organised, on time and excellent at working to deadlines. In any communication you'll hear them using the words "I see". "Can you see what I'm saying?".

In any communication these people are naturally listening for the "when".

If invited to a BBQ at your place, these are the people who'll get there 10 minutes early.



Amy Scott.

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Red Dots

Red Dots are people who talk in bullet points. No nonsense, no fluff, these people tend to think that people think like them... or should!

Red Dots are efficient with their time and their energy and are big on justice and fairness. You'll hear them using the words "I think" or "understand".

In any communication, Red Dots are listening for the "Where they fit?". As in - the relevance to them. If you give that to them first, you'll have a greater chance of them listening to you.

If invited to your BBQ, they'll be there on time and are the people who are most likely to take over cooking if they perceive you to not know what you're doing. They are also the people who are most likely to follow their own steak around the BBQ plate to ensure that some child doesn't get it!

Blue Dots

Blue Dots are people who don't mind getting their hands dirty. They love doing an honest day's work and working as part of a team. These people are super intuitive and practical. In the wool shed, sheep don't physically struggle as much with a Blue Dot shearer.

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At the end of the day, Blue Dots want to get a project finished and have everyone working well together. In any communication, Blue Dots are naturally listening for the "Why" of the communication. If you don't provide them with the why, it'll be harder for them to take in whatever important details you need them to be aware of.

You'll hear Blue Dots using the words "sense" or "feel". "I'm just trying to get a feel for that new approach". They can quickly identify anyone who is not being completely honest.

Blue Dots pick stuff up really quickly when they're given the opportunity to simply get stuck in and give it a crack. They are "hands on" people.

If invited to your BBQ, it's the Blue Dots who will check in with you to see if you need them to bring anything, help in any way and also will reach out to other friends and family to see if they're going and/or if they need a ride.

Dots in action

Purple Dots and Blue Dots naturally process information through their hearts. Yellow Dots and Red Dots naturally process information through their heads. It doesn't mean that any of the Dots are more or less intelligent than the others - they just process information differently.

Our formal education system tends to suit those who are strong (their first or second dot in their combination is) in Yellow and/or Red. Those strong in Purple and/or Blue tend to not really enjoy school. It's not hands on enough or practical. Our system is evolving - thank goodness, but we do have a ways to go!

At the end of the day it doesn't matter one iota what your personal combination is. We need all of the colours in us to thrive and innovate.

What does matter though, (if you

want to get more out of the people around you) is your ability to modify your communication style to best meet the needs of the people around you. Your partner. Parents. Children. Family members. Friends. Work Colleagues. Etc.

So much unnecessary stress and friction can be removed from our lives if we choose to communicate better. Are you ready to give it a crack?

Here's a special deal valid until 31 December 2023 - please use coupon code "ruralguardian" to access our online "Dots With Amy" course for \$199 instead of \$467.

Simply go to Amy's website - www.amyscott.co.nz, click on online course, scroll down and click "get instant access" and enter the coupon code "ruralguardian". You'll have access to all of the information for three months from when you access it. Great Christmas present!

Here's the link - <https://www.amyscott.co.nz/offers/LUWPzQCp/> checkout

For more information please do not hesitate to reach out to Amy - support@amyscott.co.nz

About Amy

Amy Scott is an internationally acclaimed speaker, mentor & facilitator who is passionate about helping people to get the best out of themselves and the people around them. She's a recognised "people expert", reformed lawyer and a former New Zealand Woman's Ice Hockey representative. Amy grew up in the stunning Maniototo where she proudly used to throw a fleece or 3 in the wool sheds during her holidays. Self-employed for the past 16 years, Amy enjoys working with a variety of industries, agencies, companies, businesses and organisations throughout New Zealand and Australia.

Cartilage loss (Part 1)

Osteoarthritis is all about loss of cartilage, changes to bone and joint structure and subsequent inflammation. The result is pain and loss of mobility. The ends of bones, such as the femur, are covered in tough, flexible articular cartilage. It may surprise that despite its tough appearance and texture it is actually 80% water acting like a shock absorber.

Cartilage is a combination of living cells, the matrix they produce and water. These specialised cells are called chondrocytes and their job is to secrete and maintain cartilage. They repair small amounts of damage as it occurs.

Osteoarthritis starts when chondrocyte cells die causing cartilage to breakdown. While there are a number of things that can damage chondrocytes, in most cases these are a combination of free radical damage from insufficient antioxidants and biochemical changes caused by trauma to the joint. While the triggers vary, the outcome is chondrocyte death and cartilage loss.

This is then followed by unwanted inflammation in the joint capsule that further damages cartilage. Eventually the bone itself becomes compromised and the net result is more pain and restricted mobility. Nutritional therapy can help, especially in reducing inflammation, slowing the rate of cartilage loss and improving the function of existing cartilage. For example, therapeutic levels (800+ mg) of chondroitin can have significant effects on the health of chondrocytes and therefore cartilage protection and repair.

Glucosamine also helps maintain cartilage while Curcumin from turmeric helps reduce inflammation and fluid accumulation.

An ex-builder contacted me two years ago with significant knee pain from advanced osteoarthritis. An orthopaedic specialist had recommended knee replacement. Two years on a personalised joint health programme and he now has very little pain and no longer needs surgery.



John Arts (B.Soc.Sci, Dip Tch, Adv.Dip.Nut.Med) is a nutritional medicine practitioner and founder of Abundant Health Ltd. For questions or advice contact John on 0800 423559 or email john@abundant.co.nz. Join his all new newsletter at www.abundant.co.nz.

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John Arts, Founder, Abundant Health



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Quality kennels built to stand the test of time

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

A journey back to his farming roots and a love of working dogs saw Richard Emsley take a career pivot three years ago.

After moving to New Zealand after a career as a gamekeeper in the U.K., Emsley returned to life as a full-time farmer, which involved purchasing a team of farm dogs for working stock.

After being unhappy with the kennels on the market, Emsley decided to build his own.

"I had quite a large Huntaway, and come lambing time, he was kennel bound because I didn't want him around lambing ewes," Emsley says.

"So I made the kennel roomy, so it was a good size if he had to spend the day in there."

That first kennel Emsley built five years ago was robust, roomy and insulated, and it wasn't long before he was getting requests for custom builds for neighbouring farmers.

What began as a side hustle quickly began to turn into a full-time business as Southern Cross Dog Kennels.

"We got to the point where we were working 60 hours on the

farm, and I was pulling some pretty long night shifts at home building dog kennels as the business picked up.

"With the mix of that and kids coming along, I had to choose whether to carry on with the kennels or carry on farming."

In 2020, Emsley gave up farming to concentrate on the business, and since then, Southern Cross has gone from strength to strength.

"As well as being better for the welfare of working dogs, our kennels are a lifetime product, not a disposable one," Emsley says.

As well as the kennels being more robust and spacious than others on the market, all kennels are insulated, which is recommended for dogs that are left to brave the cold South Island winters.

Two years ago, Emsley began offering wool insulation, which is proving an increasingly popular choice for customers, Emsley said.

"At least 50 per cent of our kennels are now going out with wool insulation."

While Emsley said wool is not necessarily warmer than the polystyrene alternative, it has better breathability and is a sustainable option.



All kennels are insulated, which is needed for the cold South Island winters.

"What I tell people is that I'd rather wear a wool jumper than a plastic one."

"It helps the kennel breathe".

Wool insulation, the same which is on offer for houses, is sourced from Terra Lana in Christchurch.

Emsley said using wool insulation is one way he can help support the wool industry, and it gives him peace of mind that he is helping farmers, even in a small way.

"Every bit helps support the industry we are in."



Southern Cross Dog Kennels are insulated, spacious and made to last.

PHOTOS: SUPPLIED

"As far as the wool industry goes, they need a vaster quantity of output to really make industry change."

All timber is sourced locally, and roofing supplies and plywood for the kennels are New Zealand-made.

"We support locals wherever we can."

Although based in Cave, Emsley ships kennels nationwide, with 70 per cent of his customer base coming from the agriculture sector.

Although the business has had its challenging times with COVID and the economic downturn, and Emsley occasionally misses farm life, he has enjoyed the career change.

"I miss the farming, the stock work and the dogs."

"I am very passionate about my dogs, and farming was hard to give up because it's so rewarding."

"But so is owning your own business and doing your own thing."

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Foothills Catchment Group working together for change

We think the Foothills Catchment Group is pretty special. Starting from small beginnings two years ago, we now have twelve landowners from Mt Somers to Mt Hutt working together to achieve environmental stewardship across the Mid Canterbury foothills.

The goal is to effect change on a larger scale than what any of us could do alone.

This month we're opening up our group to new members.

We have a community meeting planned at the Staveley Hall in October so our neighbours can hear about what we're doing and consider getting involved. Anyone living in our catchment, the area above the RDR between Mt Somers and the Rakaia Gorge, is welcome to join.

What are we about?

Every catchment group is different.

The Foothills Catchment Group is currently focused on understanding what's driving water quality coming out of the foothills.

For more than a year, we have been sampling our creeks and



The Foothills Catchment Group planting along a waterway.

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

streams looking to understand the data and how we as landowners living next to these water bodies can play a role in keeping them in good shape.

With support from the Mid Canterbury Catchment Collective, we have funded our own water sampling programme with

quarterly testing of streams.

We plan to overlay the results with data from Ashburton District Council and one of our local irrigation schemes, Ashburton Lyndhurst Irrigation, to analyse what's happening in the Upper Plains.

It may take us some years

before we get to see the full water quality picture, but we have started to put the pieces of the jigsaw together.

We are also focused on biodiversity.

In April our group planted out 1000 native plants and trees along Staveley Stream with help from

Synlait's Whakapu wai initiative, with another 1000 plants going in this October.

The plan is to plant out all suitable areas from the native bush where Staveley Stream starts to where it finishes at Boyers Stream over the next ten years.

Our catchment group wants to monitor the changes and improvements to the ecosystem of the stream, including birdlife and aquatic species.

With more than a dozen people coming together on this planting, it was a great example of community working together.

One of the biggest positives for me so far about being in a catchment group has been interaction with neighbours. We are all busy and I don't see any of my neighbours as often as I should.

The Staveley Stream planting project got us all talking and meeting up again, which was great. Now we hope to bring more landowners and residents into the group so we can build on our efforts and truly make this a collaborative community initiative.

By Foothills Catchment group treasurer, John Totty.

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Sustainable farming

A Hinds dairy farming couple have taken the goal of sustainable farming head-on.

With 33 years in the industry, Mark and Devon Slee have watched farming change and develop to the point that environmental sustainability is as important as farm production and product quality.

The couple aim to hit sustainability targets ahead of central and local government

requirements.

The Sleees have already reduced their use of nitrogen fertiliser by more than 30% over the past six years.

Mark Slee said the family farms were down to 178kg nitrogen fertiliser per hectare per year – and achieved this ahead of the Government's 190kg cap that took effect last year.

He sees sustainable farming as an opportunity.

In the case of nitrogen reduction, the environment benefited while farmers saved money by using nitrogen more efficiently, he said.

Efficient water management is also a big focus, with real-time data from a soil moisture monitoring system ensuring the farms only use the water they need.

The Sleees also reduce transport emissions by growing more grass

and clover on their farm and have reduced the number of cows to lower methane emissions.

The Hinds farmers have planted more than 12,000 native trees and plants across the farm since 2009 – including flax, pittosporum, cabbage trees and native grasses.

The extensive native plantings have attracted more native birds to the farm and provided shade and shelter for the cows.

“Wildlife is important to all Kiwis, and we want to be part of building biodiversity and continuing to reduce environmental footprint,” Slee said.

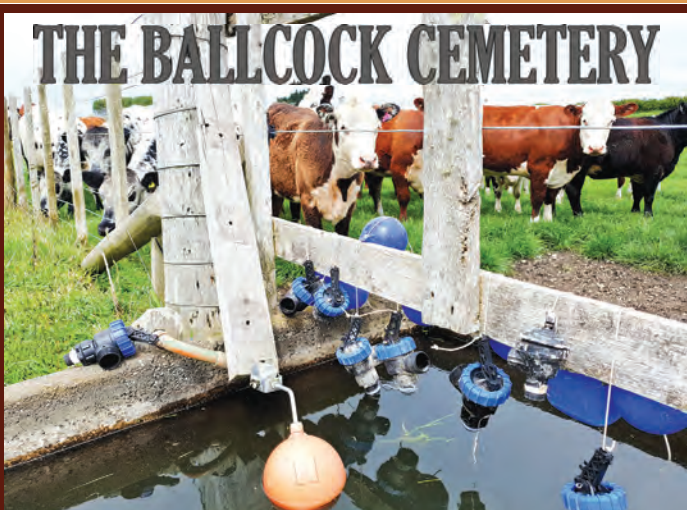
The couple are part of Canterbury's Meeting a Sustainable Future project led by DairyNZ. The Sleees look forward to new ways to meet sustainability regulations, while ensuring farm viability.

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Dairy farmers Devon and Mark Slee have planted thousands of native plants as part of their aim to hit sustainability targets ahead of central and local government requirements.

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

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Study finds long-term water improvements

Good farm management has improved surface water quality in five catchments in New Zealand, but more work is needed to reduce nitrogen levels, according to a new study.

Researchers studied water quality data over a 20-year period and found farmers' actions had improved water quality, or not changed water quality, in 70% of the measured trends.

The five dairy farming catchments were part of the 2001-2010 Best Practice Dairy Catchments project.

The five farms are in Canterbury, Southland, Invercargill, South Taranaki and Waikaito.

Monitoring of water quality and changes to farm practices continued from 2011-2020, as part of national long-term data collection.

The study found improved effluent management and stock exclusion helped to decrease the median levels of most contaminants in water.

Concentrations of phosphorus and suspended sediment in the stream water decreased the most in response to on-farm work.

Research lead Professor Rich McDowell said the findings



Dr David Burger says the dairy sector is committed to sustainable dairying and farming within environmental limits.

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

were positive, but also showed further action was needed in key catchments to maintain the momentum.

"The data shows that, over the 20-year period, many trends were improving, or showed no change. However, we know nitrogen levels

increased in many catchments due to development on other dairy farms over the same period. "This means there is still more to

do in some areas to lower nitrogen and E.coli concentrations. In some catchments, more than good management practice may be required, such as land-use change, to meet water quality expectations," he said.

DairyNZ general manager for sustainable dairy Dr David Burger said the analysis showed the good outcomes achieved through good management practices on dairy farms.

"It's good to see this dataset showing extension efforts to help farmers improve their management practices have led to water quality improvement."

He said the dairy sector was committed to sustainable dairying and farming within environmental limits.

DairyNZ continued to work with farmers to develop farm practices, provide a scientific evidence base to help inform practical and fair regulations and demonstrate the positive results of the actions farmers are taking to improve the health of waterways.

More than 70% of New Zealand's dairy farms have farm environment plans and 45% have greenhouse gas farm plans. By 2025 all farms will have both plans.



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There is no doubt that Kiwis love their utes.

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Until recently, though, if you wanted to buy one of these versatile vehicles, you would need to hike around various car dealerships to compare the different utes on offer.

Also, no dealerships were dedicated solely to utes and ute accessories.

But Christchurch locals Darren Griffith, Dan Chima and Yuri Van Toor have changed the game.

The trio opened Ute Nation two years ago, a car dealership specialising in selling a wide range of utes and ute accessories.

"Utes are still the number one selling vehicle across the country, so we thought there was an opportunity to do something focusing on just that market," Griffith says.

The vehicles Ute Nation stock have the x-factor, with modifications and accessories added to make them stand out from the crowd.

"We wanted to do something more than just white commercials."

"Most vehicles on our yard are not factory standard; they are modified in some way, whether it's wheels, tyres or racks."

As lifestyle specialists, Ute Nation stocks a wide range of



The Ute Nation team.

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

popular ute models, as well as SUVs and vans.

"We've got a really wide range."

"It's not one particular brand; there's a ute that will suit everyone."

With around seventy vehicles in stock in the Christchurch dealership at any one time,

potential buyers are spoilt for choice.

The team make buying your vehicle easy, with tailored finance packages, insurance and warranties for peace-of-mind purchasing.

And if the perfect ute for you isn't on the Ute Nation yard, they

can help you find it.

With a workshop on site, Ute Nation can add accessories such as canopies, wheels and tyres in-house to create your dream truck.

The team at Ute Nation are passionate about helping their customers find the perfect vehicle to suit their needs and lifestyle.

"We enjoy what we do and dealing with the people that come into our yard."

"We have such a broad range of vehicles, and they don't have to go four or five different yards."

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Ford announces new Ranger

The Ford Ranger PHEV is coming in early 2025. Here's some of the key news from Ford.

By Duncan Humm, NZ Farming

The Ford Ranger plug-in hybrid will deliver more torque than any other Ranger, thanks to a 2.3-litre Ford EcoBoost turbo petrol engine, paired with an electric motor and rechargeable battery system.

The EcoBoost engine is already more powerful than either of Ranger's current diesels (around 200kW in overseas markets), but Ford also promises the hybrid powertrain will have more torque than any current Ranger.

That means in excess of 600Nm which is the peak output for the current V6.

The electric motor is integrated into the transmission, meaning the Ranger PHEV is 4WD even in full EV mode.

A variety of drive settings will be offered to allow drivers to control how and when they use the battery power.

It can be driven in pure electric mode for more than 45



The new Ford Ranger PHEV will have more torque than any current Ranger.

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

kilometres.

While that is a modest electric

range compared to other PHEV vehicles, Ford says data from its

connected-car services from current Rangers shows that half of owners

travel less than 40km per day.

Continued on P36







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From P35

And with over 80 per cent undertaking three or more short trips per day, in those use-cases, the Ranger could serve as an EV for much of its daily life.

Tow rating at this stage will be 3500kg.

The battery system will have a feature called Pro Power Onboard™.

This feature offers the ability to use it much like you would if you take a generator with you for work or play, with

enough energy to power a remote camp or worksite, and power sockets built into the deck and cabin.

When it needs recharging, simply use the Ranger's engine.

With its arrival in early 2025, the Ford Ranger PHEV will join a Ford New Zealand electrified vehicle line up across passenger, SUV and light commercial vehicles that will include the Puma Full BEV & Hybrids, Focus Mild Hybrid, Escape Plug-In Hybrid and Hybrid, Mustang Mach-E BEV and E-Transit Full BEV models.

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5.5M DISC ROLLER IN STOCK - POA

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Show time

October heralds the start of show season, with the *Ellesmere, Ashburton, Amberley and Northern (Rangiora) A&P* shows.



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Ellesmere A&P Show

Show location: Leeston Show Grounds, Leeston Road.

Parking: Public entry via north east gate

President: Mr Jeff Wheeler,

Vice president: Mr Ian Fleming

Theme: Mooving Our Community Together

Opening Times: Gates open at 7:30am to the public

Ticket sales: Free admission

for children under 12, adults \$15, family pass \$40.

Key Highlights: Our 2023 Ellesmere A&P Show is packed full of traditional animal competitions along

with exciting entertainment, showcases and market stalls for the whole family.

Equestrian events starting at 8am and running throughout the day.

Kids top team competition will be running in the main ring from 12pm.

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PHOTO: SUPPLIED



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The Northern A&P Show (Rangiora)

Show Location : Rangiora Showgrounds, 156 Ashley Street, Rangiora. 7440

Parking: At the show grounds
President : Melanie Morris
Vice President : Rachael Robinson
Theme: 150th Show
Opening times : 8am

Ticket sales: \$15 Adult, \$5 for 5-15years, Under 5 free, Family pass - \$35
Highlights: Equestrian on Friday, Show Day on Saturday. Sheep and dog trials, shearing,

Horses, Alpacas, Sheep, Goats, Poultry, Home & Produce, Flower, Photography, School Arts & Crafts, National Dancing, Wood Chopping, Motor bike stunts. Craft and Food stalls, Side shows

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Ashburton A&P Show:**Date:** October 27 and 28**Opening time:** 8am**Where to park:** Across the road from showgrounds on Seaford Rd**President:** Victor Schikker**Vice President:** Ben Stock**Theme:** Let's create a buzz: Bugs, bees and butterflies**Ticket sales:** \$15 per head, children free**Key highlights:** Ruud Kleinpaste aka 'The Bugman'**Where to stay up to date:** Ashburton Show Facebook page

Ruud Kleinpaste and "friend".

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

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Amberley A&P Show:

Show location: Amberley Domain, 50 Douglas Road
Parking: Limited parking on the grounds and free parking also available at Amberley school.

President: James Hoban
Senior Vice president: Hugh Mackintosh
Junior Vice president: Sarah Dalzell
Opening Times:
 All day Saturday 28th of October – gates open 7am

Ticket sales:
 \$10 adults. Children free (under 15)
Key Highlights:
 The Hoof to Hotplate lamb and beef and North Canterbury Wine competitions are highlights

of our show and great opportunity for the public to sample and purchase some of the best locally grown produce.
 2023 will see a special vintage machinery feature with tractors, trucks, cars

and various vintage and classic machines on display.

The horse section will be well supported as always and in the sheep there will be South Suffolk and Corriedale features. There is also a well-stocked pet tent so the public can get close to a range of animals.

The pet dogs, lambs and calves, as well as a wide variety of free competitions in the produce shed and a range of wool classes all offer opportunities for anyone to get involved in some fun competition. There will be a blade shearing demonstration at the wool tent and some exciting entertainment in the ring after the grand parade with a demonstration from the Canterbury Gun Dog Club and the Stock and Station Horses.

Best place to follow for updates : Amberley A&P Show Facebook page and show day online (which has competition details and the full show schedule.

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Awareness Month

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visit the Breast
CancerFoundation NZ
website

October 4
LUDF Focus Day

Held at LUDF. For more
information visit www.ludf.org.nz

October 5
World Teacher Day

October 7-8
Southern Canterbury
Spring horse show

Waimate A&P show
grounds.

For more info, visit [https://
www.ras.org.nz/event/
southern-canterbury-spring-
horse-show-2023/](https://www.ras.org.nz/event/southern-canterbury-spring-horse-show-2023/)

October 9
Learn all things Grand
Final and Tournament
weekend

Hosted by Tasman Young
Farmers at Pemberley farm.
See their Facebook page for
more information

October 13
'Sculpture. North
Canterbury' opening
event

Held at Pegasus Bay
Winery, Waipara.

Tickets available at [https://
www.artinagarden.co.nz/](https://www.artinagarden.co.nz/)

October 13
Te Anau Young
Farmers Club Bark up

Held at Te Anau Rugby
Club.

For more information, see
the Te Anau Young Farmers
Club Facebook page.

October 14
Ellesmere A&P Show

Ellesmere A&P Show
grounds.

For more information visit:
[https://www.ras.org.nz/
event/ellesmere-agricultural-
pastoral-association-2023/](https://www.ras.org.nz/event/ellesmere-agricultural-pastoral-association-2023/)

October 16
World Food Day

October 19
Beef + Lamb Awards
dinner

Te Pae Convention centre,
Christchurch.

For more information, visit
the www.beeflambnz.com

October 19
New Zealand Shake out

Earthquake preparedness.

Visit www.getready.govt.nz
for more information

October 20-21
Northern A&P Show
(Rangiora)

Rangiora Show grounds

For more information, visit:
[https://www.ras.org.nz/
event/northern-agricultural-
pastoral-association-
rangiora-2023/](https://www.ras.org.nz/event/northern-agricultural-pastoral-association-rangiora-2023/)

October 26-29
Hurunui Garden festival

Open rural gardens
throughout the Hurunui
district. For more
information, visit The
Hurunui Garden Festival
Facebook page.

October 27
Pendarves Young
Farmers Speed Shear

Railway Tavern, Rakaia.

For more information,
see the Pendarves Young
Farmers Facebook page.

October 27-28
Ashburton A & P Show

Ashburton Showgrounds.

For more information, visit:
[https://www.ras.org.nz/
event/ashburton-agricultural-
pastoral-association-2023/](https://www.ras.org.nz/event/ashburton-agricultural-pastoral-association-2023/)

October 28
Amberley A & P Show

Amberley Domain

[https://www.ras.org.nz/
event/amberley-agricultural-
pastoral-association-2023/](https://www.ras.org.nz/event/amberley-agricultural-pastoral-association-2023/)

October 29
Amberley House Open
Day

Tour of homestead, stables
and gardens. For more
information, visit the
Amberley House Facebook
page.

October 31
Halloween

Balfour Sport Complex.

Visit Balfour Young Farmers
on Facebook for more
information.

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Raw milk is just a cost

Twice in a fortnight Fonterra reduced their farmgate milk price, the price I get paid for each kilo of milk solids I produce for the Co-operative. Like night follows day, each of the announcements were followed by calls from people with no clear understanding of how the industry works for Fonterra to do things differently. We are all obviously entitled to our opinions, but the chances Twitter user BigUns47986 has stumbled across an idea Fonterra has missed in the past 20 years seems very unlikely to me.

The first point those who earnestly opine fail to grasp is that, for milk processors, raw milk is a cost. Raw milk is an ingredient, and when the price is high it's good for farmers and bad for processors. Conversely, when the price of raw milk is low it's good for processors and bad for farmers.

When the cost of your main ingredient plummets, margins increase and profits rise. I expect every milk processor in the country to become more profitable this season on the back of paying farmers less.

But why, I can hear BigUns47986 ask, are processors paying farmers less? Surely they should add value and concentrate on niche products and pay farmers more? The answer to



When the price of raw milk is low it's good for processors and bad for farmers.

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

that is simple, the price Fonterra gets for cheese, cream cheese, mozzarella or any other high margin value added product has absolutely no bearing on what farmers get paid for raw milk.

Every fortnight there is a global dairy trade auction (GDT) at which buyers from all over

the world bid to secure various dairy products on contracts of varying length. Of all the products sold, only five are used to calculate the milk price; whole milk powder, skim milk powder, butter, buttermilk powder and anhydrous milk fat. That's it.

Fonterra are completely

transparent with how they calculate the milk price and the process is set down in law and overseen by the Commerce Commission. The cooperative calculates how much money they would have received if all the milk they collected was sold as only those five products, then

they deduct the costs involved in making and marketing those five products as efficiently as possible. The remaining figure is the Farmgate Milk Price paid to farmers.

The final refrain I hear from online experts is to reduce our reliance on China. Easier said than done when our allies either won't give us a free trade agreement (looking at you, USA) or sign a trade agreement and then manipulate their quota system so as to effectively lock us out of the market (thanks, Canada). While the volume of product China buys is important, what's more important is that they're consistently the top bidder. We don't need to lessen our reliance on China, we just need other buyers to value our product the same way China does and be willing to pay top dollar for it.

But just like night follows day, next time there is a change to the Farmgate Milk Price, the keyboard warriors with no skin in the game, no understanding of the complex world of manufacturing, global supply chains and free trade agreements, will be out in force telling us how it should be done differently.

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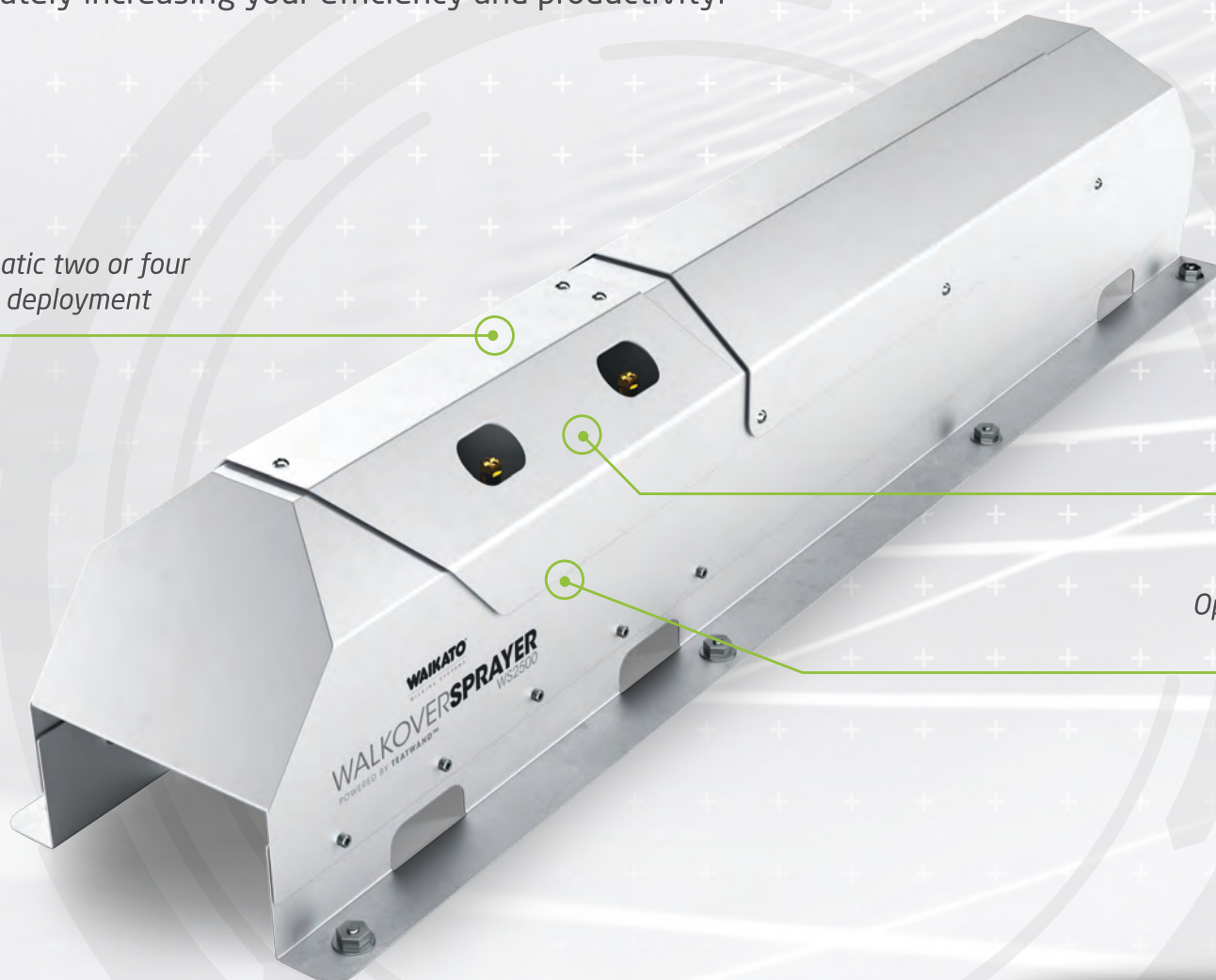
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Bovaer one step closer



Bovaer suppresses an enzyme in the gut of livestock.

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

By Sharon Davis

A feed additive that has the potential to reduce methane emissions in livestock by 30% is one step closer to registration in New Zealand.

The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) this month approved the Netherlands-based DSM Nutritional Products application for the use of Bovaer.

It took the EPA more than two years to agree to the importation or manufacture of the feed additive, which contains 10-25% of methane inhibitor nitrooxypropanol (3-NOP), a chemical new to New Zealand.

EPA's general manager Chris Hill said this was New Zealand's first application for a methane inhibitor and it was important to carry out an appropriate risk assessment.

However, the lengthy approval process has met with disapproval from farming leaders and the National Party.

EPA said concentrated forms of 3-NOP could pose significant risks and it had

put rules in place for its safe use.

The latest EPA approval does not cover the lower concentrations of 3-NOP likely to be used in the final products and some formulations may require a separate approval.

Approval from the Ministry for Primary Industries is the next step in getting Bovaer approved for sale within NZ.

When approved, Bovaer could help farmers reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from livestock.

Product tests have shown promising results. Formulations for pasture-based farming cut methane by more than 30% for up to six hours after the additive was fed to dairy cows. Beef cattle had a methane reduction of about 45%.

Bovaer suppresses an enzyme in the gut of livestock that combines hydrogen and carbon dioxide to produce methane, thereby effectively slowing the production and belching of methane.

According to the DSM website, Bovaer is already approved for sale in over 40 countries including Australia, the US and the EU.



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Winter grass growth is always welcome, no matter where you farm. But in the 100+ day winters of northern Southland, it's a rare gift.

Unless, that is, you sow a couple of paddocks in high-powered hybrid ryegrass, bred to shrug off the cold. In which case, if you're red meat producer James McKee, you get excited.

By mid-August, while perennial pastures were still at a standstill, autumn-sown Forge from Barenbrug was 'looking fantastic' at Rathfriland, the fourth-generation McKee farm at Waikaia.

"We grazed it with sheep six weeks ago, and there's probably four to five inches of grass in there now. It's pretty exciting seeing that sort of winter growth in our district."

The McKees had already tested Forge on a second property at Balfour.

Carefully grazed, an earlier hybrid from the same stable – Shogun – persisted for up to five years, and they wanted to see if they could get Forge to last even

longer.

Why? "That extra feed gives us more options," James says. "They leap out of the ground, these hybrids, and they keep moving on the shoulders of the season."

"If we can get five, six or seven years out of Forge, use it like a perennial but with extra tonnes of dry matter every year, that's worth a lot to us."

With 10,000 stock units across three farms, and aiming to finish most surplus lambs from a total flock of 6000 ewes, James says they very rarely have too much feed, and he's always keen to try new ways of growing more dry matter per ha.

Quality matters too – both Shogun and Forge are high energy tetraploid hybrids, which naturally team well with clover.

Sown on their better, easier to drill soils, Forge has a good fit with fast-growing, high value animals like finishing lambs and ewe replacements.

Likewise, it's welcome flushing feed in autumn for two-tooths, and condition scored mixed-age



ewes that need to gain weight before mating.

The only caveat is no overgrazing: "Your management has to be very good."

Forge is the latest hybrid ryegrass from Barenbrug. It grows 14% more dry matter than any other hybrid, and around 1.6 tonnes of extra dry matter per ha,

per year, over a high performance perennial ryegrass.

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