

# Inside Dairy

November 2018

Your levy in action

## SECOND NATURE

Easy and inexpensive  
on-farm biosecurity



**Fruitful advice  
on biosecurity**

Kiwifruit grower  
shares Psa-V journey

**Fat's making  
money**

What this means for  
your breeding plan

DairyNZ



## over the fence...

In this November issue of *Inside Dairy*, we focus on a topic that is front of mind for many of us right now: biosecurity.

We look at simple, easy and cost-effective ways for anyone on-farm to reduce biosecurity risks. Many of you have expressed your concerns to us that good biosecurity can be expensive, time-consuming and difficult to implement. In this issue, we'll address those barriers and show that simple things, like boot-washing and sign-in processes, can make a massive difference.

We hear from Sharn and Billy Roskam in Southland, who have been long-time advocates for good hygiene and biosecurity practices. They offer great insights that are applicable for many of us. We also hear from Hugh Le Fleming of the Morven Action Group, a farmer leadership group aimed at improving our on-farm biosecurity.

We'll look at how biosecurity is more than just diseases, even if the focus right now is on protection from *Mycoplasma bovis* (*M. bovis*) and foot-and-mouth disease. Every farm border presents an opportunity to be a second control point, and is as important as national border control. This is something I'm passionate about, as I see the opportunity for collective responsibility and the difference that will make.

We also take the opportunity to share some of the process we've been through around *M. bovis* in the last year, and the learnings we and the whole sector have had (of which there have been many).

In other news, we're excited to be launching a 'movement' that will showcase the work by dairy farmers to improve New Zealand's waterways, as well as motivate the public to do their bit. You'll see 'The Vision is Clear: Let's improve our waterways' on *The NZ Herald* website, in advertising online, and you'll hear about it on the radio. You'll also receive something from us in the post soon.

And finally, a big thanks to those who attended our Annual General Meeting. Thanks also to all who voted for our new Board member. You can find out who that is on our website and we'll be introducing you to them in our next *Inside Dairy*.

I'm always thrilled to get your feedback, so please email me at [tim.mackle@ceo.dairyNZ.co.nz](mailto:tim.mackle@ceo.dairyNZ.co.nz)

**Tim Mackle**  
Chief executive  
DairyNZ



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Global demand for high-fat dairy products has prompted a change in 2019's Breeding Worth rankings. Find out what's behind them and what it means for you.

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On the cover: Billy and Sharn Roskam (pictured above with dog Camo) say biosecurity is like wearing a seat belt – it quickly becomes second nature.

# TAKE 5... TIPS FOR FARMERS

## 1. Pasture Summit – don't miss it



Register now for this month's Pasture Summit, supported by DairyNZ. Join other farmers as we work together towards a profitable future for dairy farmers and stakeholders. Choose from two events: Hamilton (Nov 26/27) and Ashburton (Nov 29/30). Register and find out more at [pasturesummit.co.nz](http://pasturesummit.co.nz)

## 2. Summer wellbeing

Spring is nearly over and summer is on the way, so now is a good time to recharge the batteries and think about your and your family's wellbeing. One way is to consider the five principles of wellbeing: *connect, give, be active, keep learning and take notice*. Read about these principles and much more at [dairynz.co.nz/wellbeing](http://dairynz.co.nz/wellbeing)

## 3. Chewing the fat

Now that Fonterra's Fat Evaluation Index (FEI) is in effect, DairyNZ's palm kernel extract (PKE) page has been updated to help you manage your FEI. Under the FEI, farms are graded A, B, C and D and penalties and deductions are applied to C and D farms. Check out FEI questions and answers at [dairynz.co.nz/pke](http://dairynz.co.nz/pke)

## 4. Win with GoDairy

How about a Skellerup Summer Survival Pack, including Red Bandals, a cap, singlet, bag and NZ gumboot design t-shirt? Go to DairyNZ's dairy sector careers website, GoDairy, and share your summer survival tip to win – [godairy.co.nz/win](http://godairy.co.nz/win)



## 5. Free biosecurity signs

The Ministry for Primary Industries, with help from DairyNZ and Beef + Lamb New Zealand, has produced biosecurity visitor signs for farmers. You can collect one for free from your local Farm Source, Farmlands or PGG Wrightson store. Be in quick before they run out.

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#### We appreciate your feedback

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



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# Dairy's future depends on us all

New Zealand's economy and prosperity is driven by our agricultural products. To protect that, we all have a collective responsibility to take biosecurity seriously: otherwise the cost will be far greater in the long run, says Tim Mackle.



We all have a role to play in protecting our country for future generations.

For the most part, our geographic isolation and a strong biosecurity system, have kept us safe from many of the animal diseases, weeds, and pests other countries have had to live with for decades or longer. Our 'unique' position in this sense has helped us as dairy farmers become incredibly efficient at producing the world's best dairy products.

However, that geographic isolation is less relevant now. No biosecurity system can protect your farm, or our country, from all the risks in this ever-changing environment. Also, existing weeds, insect pests and diseases, that can't be eradicated must also be managed, costing more than \$1 billion every year.

## What's happening now

Foot-and-mouth disease (and its potential \$132-million-dollar impact on New Zealand's economy) has always been our focus as far as major risks are concerned.

However, right now *Mycoplasma bovis* (*M. bovis*) is the crisis we dairy farmers are facing. The cost of eradicating it is high,

**“On-farm biosecurity doesn't have to be expensive, it needn't take up much time, and it will make a difference.”**

but if we don't do this, the cost of living with this will be much greater.

There have been other biosecurity issues experienced in New Zealand over recent years. The kiwifruit industry was hit hard by (but recovered from) Psa-V nearly 10 years ago. Currently, sectors of the arable industry are dealing with a pea weevil incursion and velvetleaf. We also have myrtle rust and kauri dieback threatening the futures of some of our iconic native tree species.

## What we can all do

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) knows it must show leadership and commitment to protect our country. To support this, we must all practise ongoing vigilance and action – every individual and collective effort can make a difference. DairyNZ is passionate about ensuring our farmers' voices are heard at every level, so practical biosecurity solutions can be identified that are easy to understand and to integrate into what you're doing on-farm.

In working hard on your behalf with the government and others, DairyNZ is involved in the response to *M. bovis*, helping affected farmers plan for recovery and providing advice and resources to farmers to protect themselves. We're working within the *M. bovis* response headquarters in Wellington in governance, technical and planning roles, and in the field with affected farmers. We're helping to ensure the response delivers what farmers need.

Other examples of DairyNZ's biosecurity-related activities include:

- working with stakeholders in the MPI-led Biosecurity 2025 project and other national initiatives
- involvement in science and research aimed at identifying weeds, insects and disease risks so we can limit their impacts now and in the future
- education projects recently developed by our staff, featuring resources and videos focused on biosecurity for the agribusiness curriculum for year 12/13 students.

### What's the 'real' cost?

We know from talking directly with dairy farmers that many of you perceive biosecurity as something that only happens at the border. We also know many farmers think that trying to 'do' biosecurity on the farm is expensive, time-consuming and difficult to carry out.

The reality is that on-farm biosecurity doesn't have to be expensive, it needn't take up much time, and it will make a

difference. There are many practical things you can do that start reducing the risks posed by animal disease, insect pests and weeds straight away. Just take a look at this month's lead story on the Roskams – they know how to make this stuff work (pages 4 to 8).

And where cost is a factor, consider the value of your herd and your pastures: is investing some time and money into biosecurity really any different than purchasing insurance for your other assets? So, why wouldn't you do it?

Also, for those farmers who haven't properly bought into the National Animal Identification and Tracing system (NAIT) and/or don't follow its requirements, I would argue that the 'cost' of complying with it is cheap compared to the potential cost of a disease reaching your farm in the future.

### Sharing the knowledge

In this issue of *Inside Dairy* you can read about what other dairy farmers are doing to protect their farm and the farms around them. Several other stories throughout this issue also show how DairyNZ is using your levy to help strengthen New Zealand's biosecurity system and ensure it works for our farmers.

Finally, remember it's always worth having a look online too – our website has a wide range of practical information and tools you can use to help you improve biosecurity on your farm.

Find out more about biosecurity at [dairynz.co.nz/biosecurity](http://dairynz.co.nz/biosecurity) – regularly-updated information about *M. bovis* can also be found at [dairynz.co.nz/mbovis](http://dairynz.co.nz/mbovis)

"I would argue that the 'cost' of complying with it (NAIT) is cheap compared to the potential cost of a disease reaching your farm in the future."

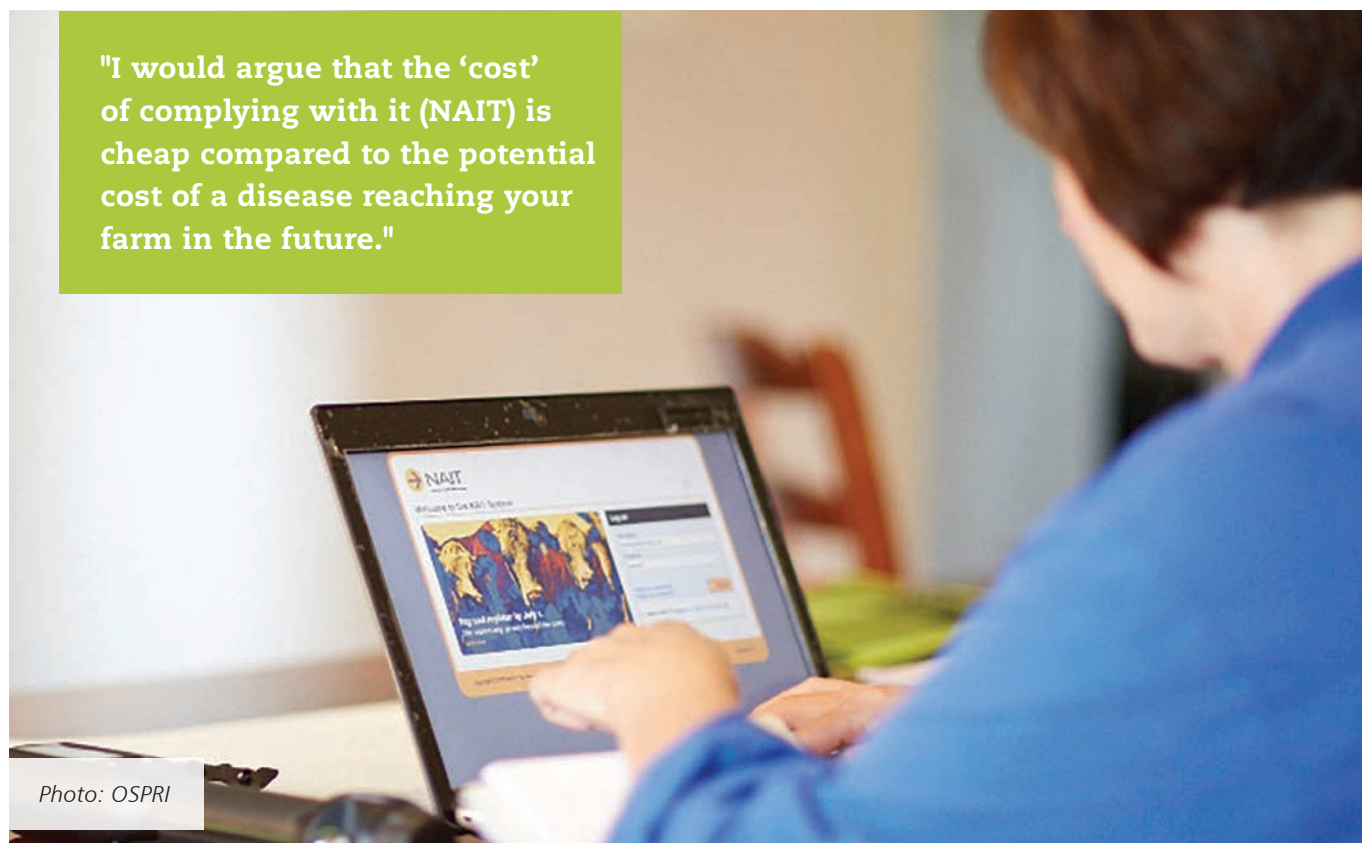


Photo: OSPRI

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# BIOSECURITY SECOND NATURE FOR SOUTHLAND SHAREMILKERS

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Easy and inexpensive biosecurity measures are simply a force of habit for Billy and Sharn Roskam. The sharemilkers are long-time advocates for good hygiene practices to prevent the spread of disease, pests and weeds on their farm near Winton, in Southland.



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NOT JUST WHEN  
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DISEASE TO  
WORRY ABOUT."



*Sharn Roskam (pictured) and husband Billy describe their farm as a castle whose borders must be protected at all costs.*



## FARM FACTS

**OWNERS:** Blackwell Family Trust

**50:50 SHAREMILKERS:** Billy and Sharn Roskam (pictured)

**LOCATION:** Winton, Southland

**FARM SIZE:** 200ha milking platform, 51ha runoff, 65ha wintering and cropping block

**HERD SIZE:** 600 crossbred

**PRODUCTION:** 256,400kg MS

We've been hearing a lot about biosecurity lately. There's been the kiwifruit Psa-V bacteria, myrtle rust, the Queensland fruit fly, Varroa mite, kauri dieback disease and, of particular concern to farmers, *Mycoplasma bovis* (*M. bovis*). The threats keep coming and with them, risks to New Zealand's economy.

Long before *M. bovis* became a problem here, the Roskams were practising farm border control. They say it's not been hard or expensive to do.

"We believe a good biosecurity routine is always essential – not just when there's a major disease to worry about," says Billy. "If you work on a farm or have contact with farm animals, everyone can play a part in making sure good hygiene practices are in place.

"Before the arrival of *M. bovis*, we'd already put up better fencing along our boundaries to protect us from incursions of bovine viral diarrhoea (BVD). And we're planning to double-fence all our boundaries and plant evergreen trees to create a hedge in the future. The trees will serve two purposes: they'll offer protection and provide us with a steady source of firewood," says Sharn.

### Comings and goings

Biosecurity signs are the first line of defence against infections coming onto the Roskams' farm. These are backed up with a parking area, a sign-in process and a boot-washing station. Staff who aren't based on the farm leave their boots there – another simple step to help minimise the risk of transferring diseases and pests between farms.

If truck drivers are delivering something and not moving beyond the tanker track, Sharn and Billy aren't too worried about them bringing disease onto the farm.

"However, everyone has to use the footbath and the stock crate has to be clean," says Sharn.

The farm's bobby calf collection area is separated from the heifer-raising area and features its own boot-washing station.

"We have a separate and fully-enclosed shed where the truck driver collects the bobbies. It is completely independent from the bobby-raising and heifer-raising facilities," says Billy.

"We have a runoff, and if we're transporting animals from the farm to the runoff, the crate has to be cleaned so we know we're dealing with a clean slate, so to speak. This isn't always possible, so we quiz the drivers about where they've been. Contractors generally clean their equipment between farm visits and I hope they keep that practice up."

### Staying weed-free

The Roskams protect their farm from troublesome weeds by being fully self-contained – they import no feed onto the property.

"We grow kale and fodder beet for winter feed and any grass seed we buy is from accredited suppliers. It may be a little bit more expensive, but it's worth it for the security of knowing that it's weed-free," says Sharn.

### Staff on board with biosecurity

Sharn and Billy's team of four staff are aware of the farm's biosecurity policies, and don't need to be reminded.

"Our staff genuinely have an affinity for the stock and care about them, but of course if we don't have a herd, they don't have a job. But all jokes aside, the team would be gutted if any of our stock got sick," says Sharn.

"We don't have to crack the whip. They're very good at topping up the disinfectant baths and making sure the cleaning brushes are there, looking after the boundaries and that sort of thing. It's become the norm. It's like wearing a helmet or a seat belt – you have to consciously remember at first, then it becomes second nature."



## Pest control

Farm owner Mara Blackwell runs a rigorous possum and rat control programme, with eight bait stations around the farm and rat and mouse traps around the buildings. Pigeons and hares, which have also been identified as pests, provide target practice for Billy and the locals.

“Someone came in to shoot hares and got 68 one night. I take care of the pigeons, but not near the sheds because we don’t want to fill them (the sheds) with holes,” says Billy.

## Accidents can happen

The Roskams recently had a biosecurity breach over a 48-hour period. It started on a Thursday, when Sharn went to check the stock at the runoff, which has a double-fenced drain between it and the neighbour’s boundary.

“The girls were all happy sitting down and looked at me as if to say ‘what are you doing here?’ When I went back again at lunchtime on Saturday, the yearlings were all at the top of the paddock having a good yarn with seven or eight white faced beefies,” says Sharn.

“YOU CAN THINK YOU’RE  
DOING THE RIGHT THING BUT  
EVEN WITH A DOUBLE FENCE,  
ACCIDENTS CAN HAPPEN.”

“Somehow, the neighbour’s stock had got in and were jammed up between our fence and the end of the drain on a small piece of grass. I wondered what we were going to do.”

Sharn rang the neighbour and asked them if they were aware of the health status of their animals. Were they free of BVD and *M. bovis*? Because the farm manager was away, Sharn couldn’t get answers so she contacted her vet, Briar Cooper, from Vetsouth Winton.

“I told the vet what had happened. There was nothing we could do if there was an *M. bovis* problem, but we could do something about BVD. Briar said we had only a couple of options: we could get the neighbour’s stock in to blood-test them for BVD, or we could vaccinate our stock immediately and then again in three weeks’ time.

“The concern was that it may not be sorted by the time mating started. So we decided to vaccinate, and if any of them got BVD through the fence, a vaccination programme would stop the others from getting it. So \$600 to \$700 and a couple of yardings later, we hope we’ve got it sorted.

“You can think you’re doing the right thing but even with a double fence, accidents can happen. You need to be ready for the worst, and prepared to act fast if something does go wrong,” says Sharn.



Keeping their boots clean are vet technician Stephanie Allison and vet Elena Knupfer, both from Vetsouth Winton.



Stephanie and Billy discuss a dry cow therapy trial and decide which cows to draft for milk sampling.



As well as double-fencing all their boundaries, Sharn and Billy are planning to create evergreen hedges to provide extra protection in future.

## Keeping up to date

Billy and Sharn keep an eye out for new information, act on it and implement different things.

"We don't necessarily have to spend money. Most of the stuff we have for biosecurity has been free. We went to an MPI (Ministry for Primary Industries) meeting in Winton and they give us some signs, but we've also had signs made for the tanker track and for certain entry/exit points on the farm and the runoff," says Billy.

"You can easily make footbaths out of used containers," says Sharn, "The only major thing I've bought was a long-handled brush for scrubbing boots. I splashed out \$25 for that."

## Using DairyNZ resources

Billy and Sharn have used DairyNZ's *Biosecurity WOF* (Warrant of Fitness) checklist to help them identify ways to protect their farm. They are also considering changing mating management this season and are using the *M. bovis* information on the DairyNZ website to look at the pros and cons. They also attend *M. bovis* meetings and are grateful to have proactive vets.

■ Words: Christine Hartley ■ Photos: James Jubb

## BILLY AND SHARN'S TOP TIPS

1.

PUT IN PLACE SOME CHEAP AND EASY BIOSECURITY MEASURES, LIKE FOOT BATHS.

2.

COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR CONTRACTORS.

3.

PROTECT YOUR ANIMALS BY USING HOTWIRES ON BOUNDARY FENCES TO PREVENT CONTACT.

## TWO SIMPLE TOOLS TO MANAGE BIOSECURITY ON-FARM

On-farm biosecurity doesn't have to be expensive or take up much time – but it will make a difference. These DairyNZ tools below are a great way to get started.

### PRE-PURCHASE CHECKLIST

Bringing new stock onto your property presents the risk of *M. bovis* and other diseases infecting the stock you already own. You can identify and manage many risks using DairyNZ's *Pre-Purchase Checklist*. This checklist provides some simple questions you can ask to determine the health status and history of stock (any age or class) before you buy them.

### BIOSECURITY WOF

DairyNZ's *Biosecurity WOF* helps you identify and manage a range of biosecurity risks on-farm in simple and practical ways. Here are some examples from the *WOF* of how to manage biosecurity on your farm:



Manage the risk of visitors by providing a boot wash, or supplying your visitors with boots and personal protective equipment to wear.



Secure your farm boundary by ensuring fences are well-maintained and able to prevent nose-to-nose contact between your stock and neighbouring herds.



Identify and think about different areas of your farm and manage their risks by, for example, restricting access to the calving pen and dedicating an area of your farm to sick animals.



Use signs around your farm to promote awareness, and make sure your farm team knows and understands the biosecurity precautions.

We've provided you with a copy of the *Biosecurity WOF* with this issue of *Inside Dairy*. You can also download the *WOF* and *Pre-Purchase Checklist* from [dairynz.co.nz/biosecurity](http://dairynz.co.nz/biosecurity)



# Grassroots response to *M. bovis*

Stopping the *Mycoplasma bovis* ‘blame game’ and giving farmers information about the disease have been the aims of a farmer-led group in South Canterbury.

When *Mycoplasma bovis* (*M. bovis*) was first detected in New Zealand back in July 2017, information about the disease was hard to come by. In response, a group of farmers and veterinarians in South Canterbury joined forces to give farmers information on how to best manage risk to their properties.

Hugh Le Fleming, a Morven dairy farmer and long-time biosecurity advocate, was instrumental in setting up the Morven Action Group. He says the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) was being attacked and it wasn't constructive.

“The main reason we formed the group was to stop the ‘blame game’. We have successfully eradicated diseases before – hydatids and brucellosis for example – and so I thought we should settle down and work together. The great thing is that dairy farmers in New Zealand cooperate and share information, and biosecurity is a cooperative way of behaving.

“To be quite blunt, I felt the organisations that should have been supporting us were floundering, so 10 to 15 local farmers sat down with two of our local Oamaru vets, Merlyn Hay (who initially signalled the possibility of an outbreak of *M. bovis*) from Vetlife and Mat O’Sullivan from the Veterinary Centre, to nut out a plan.

“The group was chaired by Robin Murphy and I was the facilitator. Sarah Barr from the South Canterbury Rural Support Trust and DairyNZ’s Chris Morley were involved and, in the early stages, we met with Damien O’Connor, Minister of Agriculture.”

In early November 2017, the Morven Action Group ran a community workshop where they provided farmers with an information pack developed by Mat and Hugh. It included a Farm Biosecurity Action Plan and a Biosecurity Check List.

“We worked hard to create the information pack, and it was very well received,” says Hugh. “Everyone’s a commentator now, but back then it was a different story. I felt that everything needed to be based on the facts and that’s the approach we took when we wrote the Action Plan.”

The original group members spread their message to about 1000 farmers through meetings and workshops.

“My main message is that biosecurity should be a way of life,” says Hugh. “Whether it’s eradicated or not, *M. bovis* is always going to be about biosecurity as a behaviour. Biosecurity shouldn’t just focus on exotic diseases, but also diseases like bovine viral diarrhoea (BVD) which are ever-present threats to our farms, animal welfare, productivity and profitability.”



“My main message is that biosecurity should be a way of life.”

Morven farmer Hugh Le Fleming has been instrumental in gathering his community to talk about biosecurity. Photo: NZ Dairy Exporter

# Setting a new course for NZ

A plan is being formed to make our country's biosecurity system stronger than ever. At its heart is a campaign to show every New Zealander, including dairy farmers, that we all have a role to play.



Right now it's hard to ignore biosecurity. Where once it may have seemed irrelevant or something to think about later, the arrival of *Mycoplasma bovis* has dramatically highlighted the need for farmers to protect themselves and actively pursue good biosecurity.

Nick Maling, interim chair of the Biosecurity 2025 Steering Group, says it can be easy to think biosecurity is just something the government does.

"In fact, the importance and the enormity of the biosecurity task means it's vital for every New Zealander to pitch in. After all, everyone benefits from a strong, resilient biosecurity system, especially those who make their living on the land."

## Strengthening the system

The government and a range of partners across primary industries, businesses, communities, iwi and hapū are currently working on a plan to make our biosecurity system stronger and more future-focused. It's the realisation of what was set out in the *Biosecurity 2025 Direction Statement* released at the end of 2016, which guides the biosecurity system through to 2025 and beyond.

With so much riding on dairying, both in terms of the national economy and the health and wealth of individual businesses and communities, it's vital that dairy interests are represented in the forward planning.

Biosecurity 2025 has had broad buy-in to date, with around 80 biosecurity system leaders and 60 organisations, including DairyNZ, taking part in working groups to drive the design. A steering group, which includes Kimberly Crewther from Dairy

Companies Association of New Zealand (DCANZ), is helping keep the work on track. The plan outlining how this will happen is set to be launched at the Biosecurity New Zealand Forum in November.

The programme will build strength in the system by harnessing science and technology; tapping into data and intelligence; building effective leadership in biosecurity; developing our future workforce and infrastructure; and, what will be most visible in the coming months, 'Building a team of 4.7 million' – engaging all New Zealanders in biosecurity.

## New brand – 'Ko Tātou This Is Us'

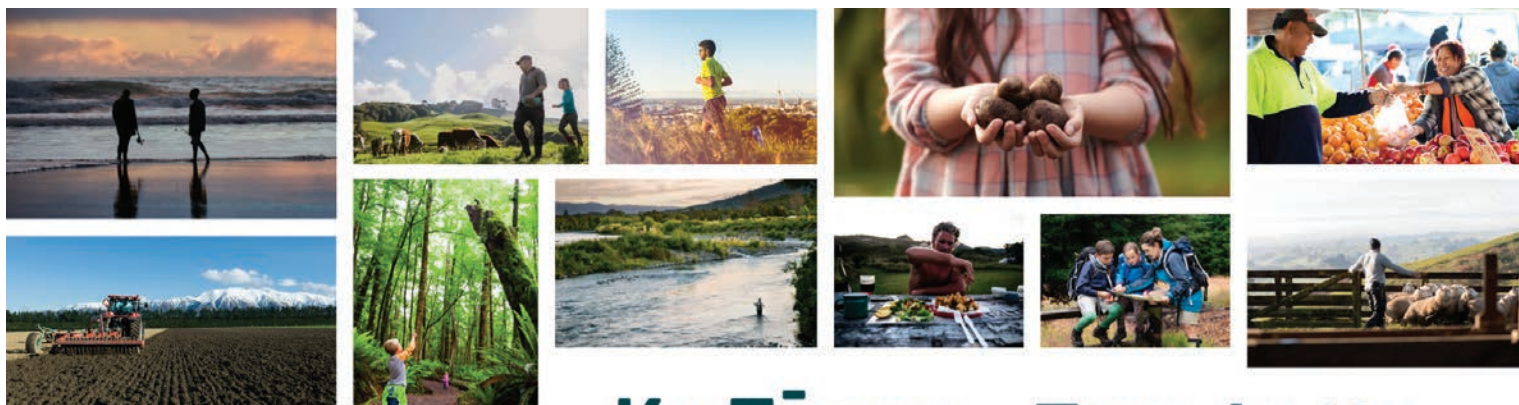
Research found that although 96 percent of New Zealanders think biosecurity is important, only two percent believe there's a personal consequence to them if a biosecurity breach occurs.

"This suggests New Zealanders think biosecurity is someone else's problem. Therefore, we need to make biosecurity more personally relevant," says Nick Maling.

A new independent biosecurity brand, 'Ko Tātou This Is Us', has been launched to highlight that biosecurity affects every New Zealander, that it protects everything we hold dear – our outdoor environment, our farm businesses, even the food we enjoy.

A public campaign is now underway, with television, cinema and print advertising, and a new website – [thisisus.nz](http://thisisus.nz)

"We want to show all New Zealanders, including those in the dairy industry, that they are an essential part of strengthening our biosecurity system and every small action towards better biosecurity practices is important," says Nick.



[ThisIsUs.nz](http://ThisIsUs.nz)

# KO TĀTOU THIS IS US

BIOSECURITY 2025



Robbie Ellison: crisis and change can lead to opportunities too.

# Biosecurity experience bears fruit

When kiwifruit bacteria *Psa-V* appeared in New Zealand in 2010, it reshaped the industry's biosecurity practices. *Inside Dairy* spoke to one grower about how dairy farmers facing *Mycoplasma bovis* can learn from his experience.

Kiwifruit growers Robbie Ellison and his wife Karen run Makaira Orchards in Te Puke, south east of Tauranga. When the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) announced in November 2010 that *Psa-V* had been discovered in a neighbouring orchard, the airborne disease was found on the Ellisons' crops.

"We were right in the thick of it," says Robbie. "I never want to go through another summer like that again. DairyNZ and dairy farmers were very supportive of kiwifruit growers during our crisis, so I'd like to return the favour now they're dealing with *Mycoplasma bovis* (*M. bovis*)."

## Everyone pulling together

Robbie says when *Psa-V* first broke out, MPI did its best to support kiwifruit farmers. "It was 'all hands on deck', with fewer resources then."

After initially trying to contain and eradicate the bacteria, ongoing management of the airborne disease became the only realistic option. Kiwifruit-grower advocacy organisation, Kiwifruit Vine Health (KVH), also formed. "KVH helped kiwifruit growers link in better with MPI and each other."

As kiwifruit growers did back then, all dairy farmers need to support each other through biosecurity challenges – even though only a small percentage of dairy farms is currently infected with *M. bovis*, says Robbie.

"It's important those on infected farms don't feel isolated. If the whole has strength, the individual has strength."

## Simple efforts make a difference

"We've had some great results from things like focusing on tool hygiene, copper-spraying and providing more shelter to protect the vines from wind damage." (Damaged vines are more vulnerable to the bacteria getting in.)

Robbie says he also carefully sources and tracks new plant material – for example, vine seedlings and grafts – which he equates to the dairy sector's need for accurate record-keeping on tracking and tracing cows.

## From change to gain

Sometimes crisis and change can lead to opportunities. For example, adjusting how they managed the 'male' kiwifruit vines and switching to Sungold yellow kiwifruit instead of Hort16A, led to significant increases in crop yields.

Robbie's aware that biosecurity compliance and administration can be a barrier to action for many.

"However, there's so much help out there from industry and sector organisations to help us get our heads around that. The bottom line is, if we don't do the simple stuff and the paperwork, none of us will have an industry."

Find out more about biosecurity at [dairynz.co.nz/biosecurity](http://dairynz.co.nz/biosecurity) and *M. bovis* at [dairynz.co.nz/mbovis](http://dairynz.co.nz/mbovis)

### Robbie's top tips for dairy farmers



**Movement is key – track and trace, whether it's plants or cows.**



**Keep it clean with good hygiene – tools, machinery, boots and all.**



**Share knowledge and support – with each other and your sector.**

# TAG-team wrestles with *M. bovis*

A high-level technical advisory group (TAG) is using local and international *Mycoplasma bovis* experts to underpin decisions made on eradication, as group chair Scott McDougall explains.

## Who set up the group and why?

The *Mycoplasma bovis* (*M. bovis*) TAG was set up by the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) in late 2017. Our purpose is to provide independent technical advice to the *M. bovis* Governance Group. The TAG's ultimate aim is to produce an independent assessment of the feasibility of eradication.

## Who's in the group?

The TAG is made up of 10 people from various countries. Our members have worked directly with organisations and farmers in diagnosing and managing *M. bovis* in other countries, including Australia, Canada, the United States of America and the United Kingdom. Members have expertise in molecular epidemiology, disease management and eradication.

As required, the TAG will consult with other people with technical expertise, for example looking for improvements in tests, and talking to those who've had extensive firsthand experience with dealing with *M. bovis* in dairy herds.

## How is the group currently helping with the *M. bovis* response?

The TAG has met periodically to:

- review technical information provided by MPI and others
- review the appropriateness and robustness of laboratory and surveillance approaches
- assess the economic modelling that has been undertaken.

The eradication is a complex process. While the bulk of the work is expected to occur within the first two years, the eradication programme is likely to run for eight to 10 years.

## How is this relevant for farmers?

The group's efforts should give farmers confidence in the decisions being made by MPI. Also, while not a technical matter, the TAG has provided commentary on the potential social impacts of eradication, sharing their experiences of the impacts of disease eradication on farmers, staff and rural communities.

## What's the value of the TAG group?

New Zealand has no previous experience managing *M. bovis*, so the TAG adds value to the eradication programme. This is due to the depth of international experience around *M. bovis* in terms of its impact on-farm, economic effects and the challenges



*Scott McDougall: TAG members bring a depth of international experience to managing *M. bovis* in New Zealand.*

associated with diagnosing this disease.

The TAG is not directly involved in the day-to-day management or logistics of the eradication campaign, so it's well-placed to bring an independent perspective to MPI's activities.

## DairyNZ and *M. bovis*

DairyNZ doesn't have representatives on the TAG but is involved in the stakeholder group and is actively involved in the operations of the response. DairyNZ is also providing technical support to farmers – for example, through roadshows, online information – and contributing to governance and planning at *M. bovis* headquarters in Wellington.

Check out DairyNZ's *M. bovis* information for farmers at [dairynz.co.nz/mbovis](http://dairynz.co.nz/mbovis)



Morrinsville farmer Nick Vollebregt reviews his non-cyclers in Protrack.

# Mating: early decisions crucial

Reviewing performance *during* mating is just as important as it is afterwards. So is recording as much data as possible, regularly reviewing it and making timely decisions.

## Record, record, record

Put that data in. The more information you enter in your recording system, the better decisions you and your advisers can make. Not everyone is a data-junkie, for sure, but if data is entered as the season progresses, you can track progress and spot when things are starting to go wrong.

## Monitor submission rate and non-return rate

These will help you decide if you're going to need more bull-power. Bull ratio is recommended at one bull to 30 non-pregnant cows. Your data can help you decide how many bulls you're going to require; if you don't have enough, you've still got time to make decisions. For example, should you get more bulls or continue with artificial breeding (AB) for a little longer? It's too late to look back during pregnancy-testing time, only to find out the bull-mating period has let you down.

## Heat detection

Reviewing regularly is also relevant for heat detection. If you are monitoring returns, then you can decide if anything needs to change. Don't wait until it's too late. You've got time to change heat detection practices, to help staff if they're struggling, or even pull the pin early on AB and get the bulls on the job instead.

Talk to your advisers before making these big decisions. Get help and prevent or reduce any problems you can when you've got the chance.

## Want to know more?

DairyNZ's *InCalf Book* has all the information you need to support you in achieving good reproductive performance. Recently updated, it's available to download now from [dairynz.co.nz/incalf](http://dairynz.co.nz/incalf) or order your hard copy online – it's free for levy payers!

**Tip: Book your first round of pregnancy testing (test 11 to 14 weeks after mating start date and five weeks after mating end).**

## National Reproductive Strategy Group

This group of sector representatives formed recently with a vision to support dairy farmers and their advisers to lift the national average six-week in-calf rate above 70 percent by 2028.

This could be worth \$6624 for an average-sized herd of 414 cows, simply through lifting the in-calf rate from an average of 66 to 70 percent.

What could this mean for you? What other gains could you make if your six-week in-calf rate was higher?

Talk to your local vet or InCalf adviser ([dairynz.co.nz/incalf](http://dairynz.co.nz/incalf)) to find out more about the group and how you can get involved.

# Breeding Worth changes explained

Global demand for high-fat dairy products has prompted a shift in the 2019 Breeding Worth rankings. What's behind the changes and what do they mean for farmers?

The economic values used to calculate Breeding Worth (BW) from February 2019 were finalised in September by New Zealand Animal Evaluation Ltd (NZAE), a wholly-owned subsidiary of DairyNZ. The update is in response to global demand for high-fat dairy products, which means farmers will earn more from milk fat than protein this season.

Milk price and the relative value of fat and protein are the biggest factors in the BW of dairy cattle.

NZAE manager Dr Jeremy Bryant says there will be an increase in the BW of dairy cattle with genetics that lead to a higher ratio of fat to protein. Conversely, the BW of dairy cattle with a higher ratio of protein to fat will decrease. This has resulted in an increase in the BW of Jerseys and a decrease in the BW of Friesians due to their fat to protein ratios.

"This reflects the change in milk component prices that impact on the size of farmer milk cheques," says Jeremy.

## Is BW still relevant for all breeds?

Yes. BW can help you identify sires and cows whose progeny have the strongest ratio of fat to protein, regardless of breed choice.

## Will Fonterra's Fat Evaluation Index (FEI) penalise high-fat herds?

No. The FEI is a score given to individual herds based on the composition of milk fat produced, rather than the amount. It's designed to make sure New Zealand's milk fat is suitable for manufacturing products that meet customer specifications. High-fat herds and low-fat herds can have the same FEI, providing



the composition of the fat is the same. FEI is altered by diet. For example, a herd that's fed a large quantity of palm kernel extract (PKE) will have a higher FEI index than a herd that's predominantly grass-fed.

## What can I do?

- Check with your breeding company to learn how it is responding to this change.
- If you know the bulls in your team, use DairyNZ's online bull team builder tool ([dairynz.co.nz/bullteam](http://dairynz.co.nz/bullteam)) to see the BW 2019 figure for any AE-enrolled sire.
- To see how the economic values for fat and protein are calculated, and the emphasis on individual breeding traits, visit [dairynz.co.nz/ev](http://dairynz.co.nz/ev)

## How has the value of fat and protein changed?



VCR (Valued Component Ratio) is the value of fat as a ratio to the value of protein. It is used alongside the MilkSolids price, the volume charge, and a herd's proportion of milk fat to milk protein, to determine the value of milk for an individual herd.





The McFetridge family, dairy farmers from Bay of Plenty.

# Our clear vision for waterways

DairyNZ is excited to be launching a movement that will showcase the work by dairy farmers to improve New Zealand’s waterways, and encourage every New Zealander to do their bit for our rivers, lakes and beaches. Because, as water quality experts will attest, we can’t do it alone. Tim Mackle explains what’s driving the movement and what you’ll see over the coming months.



For a long time now we’ve been hearing from farmers that DairyNZ needs to do a better job of showing the public the work you do to look after your land and waterways. We also know water quality is the number one issue of concern for Kiwis when it comes to dairy farming, and the public wants to know more from us.

We think much of our work to share your stories with media has helped. In the last financial year, we ran more than 850 media articles about dairy and farming activity, and we’ve seen New Zealanders become more positive about dairy farming over the last 18 months.

Our dairy sector has a powerful story to share about what we’re doing to improve water quality in many catchments, and this is something we know you are committed to. We also know that we can’t do it alone – every New Zealander needs to play their part.

Through this movement we will be sharing more stories that show your passion for your waterways. We will also be leading the charge to encourage and inspire every New Zealander to think about their personal impact on our country’s water quality.

We want each person – rural and urban – to ask: ‘How do my

actions affect water quality and how can I play a role in caring for my local waterway?’

We’re excited, and we’re ready for the conversation this movement will start.

‘The Vision is Clear: Let’s improve our waterways’ launches in November. Over the coming weeks, you’ll see a stunning range of stories, science and research, and visuals of how people engage with their waterways. Most of all, this campaign will showcase the inspiring activity being carried out by you, and other New Zealanders, to improve our country’s waterways.

Check out the ‘story of a river’ video at [thevisionisclear.co.nz](http://thevisionisclear.co.nz) and keep an eye out for other videos, tips for protecting our waterways, social media activity and advertisements (online and print). We hope the end result will be a powerful national movement where we’re all working to improve our waterways. More information will be turning up in your letterbox soon.

We’d love you to get involved and support this movement. Please share the content any way you can – whether it’s through social media or just telling your family and friends about it while you’re having a BBQ. Because if everyone plays their part, it all adds up to healthier waterways – which benefits us all.

# DairyNZ training: heading in the FeedRight direction

A Taranaki vet and two of his farmer clients talk about DairyNZ’s recently-launched FeedRight programme. Training in FeedRight and other DairyNZ programmes can help rural professionals add real value to their farmers.

Okato-based vet Stacey Bateman has been working with local farmers to improve their herd performance, using information and resources on feed management and nutrition from DairyNZ’s FeedRight programme. He’d been on other DairyNZ levy-funded training courses and decided he needed a good grounding in nutrition to provide a proper advisory service to his farmers. “FeedRight training seemed a very good fit to complete the suite of services. I’ve applied the tools on a couple of farms so far. You can use it as part of a whole advisory package, or in a trouble-shooting capacity.”

One of the farmers Stacey’s been assisting is Warea contract milker Scott Gawler. “We were finding our first season here pretty daunting and this has really helped,” says Scott. “We had a bit of an issue with overweight cows at calving. Using the FeedChecker tool with Stacey has helped us identify how much feed and minerals to use. We’ll definitely use other FeedRight tools to help us make decisions later this season around feed budgets and dry off.”

Okato farmer Jimmy Quay says he also heard about FeedRight

## Key points



1. DairyNZ training for rural professionals adds value to them and their farmers. Search keyword 'training' at [dairynz.co.nz](http://dairynz.co.nz)
2. Improve nutrition and feed management using FeedRight information and resources.
3. Check out the FeedRight training programme and resources online (including a list of FeedRight-trained RPs) at [dairynz.co.nz/FeedRight](http://dairynz.co.nz/FeedRight) or talk to your RP.

from Stacey. “We had a small amount of milk fever on the platform and we able to use FeedChecker and the FeedRight information to identify what was needed. Stacey showed us how easy FeedChecker was to use and understand. It gives you plenty of information to think about and help you make decisions. It also helped us to catch things early.”

Stacey says he’s also used FeedRight with a herd fertility focus group he runs, receiving great feedback. “FeedRight’s package of tools and information covering the fundamentals of nutrition help to answer the common questions that come up through the season.

“I believe rural professionals will find they can easily integrate FeedRight into the services they already provide. It’s not a ‘one size fits all’ programme. Being a vet, I obviously approach nutrition from an animal health point of view, but other rural professionals will be able to use the information and tools for their own line of work.

“I think being ‘FeedRight-trained’ is an advantage for our business and will be for other rural professionals, as well as farmers.”



Vet Stacey Bateman says being 'FeedRight-trained' is an advantage for rural professionals.

# Meet DairyNZ's Biosecurity Team

Diversity and reach come to mind when talking about DairyNZ's biosecurity team, as each member comes from a different background and works with many others from DairyNZ and beyond. We put our biosecurity senior adviser Dave Hodges under the spotlight.



Biosecurity Team members Dave Hodges and Katherine DeWitt.

## What does your team do and why?

There are four people in our team: Liz Shackleton started as biosecurity manager last month, based in Wellington, while Nita Harding and I are in Hamilton, and Katherine DeWitt is in Invercargill.

We work across science, policy and farmer engagement, focusing on insect pests, weeds and diseases and preventing new organisms getting into New Zealand. We talk directly with farmers and work with (and are supported by) DairyNZ staff across the business, plus others in the sector and elsewhere.

Some of our other activities include developing an on-farm biosecurity programme for dairy farmers, contributing to education initiatives and updating biosecurity information on DairyNZ's website. We also work with OSPRI on its National Animal Identification & Tracing (NAIT) and bovine tuberculosis (TB) programmes, and we work with other researchers and agencies.

## What key things does your team talk about with farmers?

We see ourselves as the link between farmers and the government and researchers. We help to feed 'the farmer's voice' up to the people who make decisions, ensuring what's proposed at a science and policy level will work for farmers.

We talk to farmers about pests, weeds and diseases, advising them and putting them in touch with the right information and people. Farmers also talk to us about biosecurity issues featured in the media, or if they've seen something unusual or unfamiliar on their farm that might have biosecurity implications.

## What's something your team is proud of achieving in the past 12 months?

I'm really proud of how our team, and many other DairyNZ staff, have contributed to the *M. bovis* response. We've worked hard to get in there 'boots and all' to directly support affected farmers.

DairyNZ's people have been part of the national *M. bovis* response teams from the start, helping with governance, planning and communications. We're passionate about making sure the response teams and the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) understand dairy farmers and their needs.

## Tell us something quirky about your team?

We come from diverse backgrounds. Liz is a vet and comes from a clinical practice and regulatory (vet medicines) background. I came through a regional council pathway and a general science background. Nita is also a vet and Katherine is an agricultural management graduate, extending her animal care passions into biosecurity (both also work in DairyNZ's animal care team).

## What's the main message you try to get across about biosecurity?

Ultimately, each farmer is best placed to manage their own biosecurity, and they shouldn't forget that. Another key message is that biosecurity is not as hard to do as many people think. The *M. bovis* situation has really reminded all of us why biosecurity is important and why everyone should care about it.

## Get in touch

Phone our Biosecurity Team on 0800 4 324 7969, email us at [info@dairynz.co.nz](mailto:info@dairynz.co.nz) or talk to your local consulting officer – see [dairynz.co.nz/co](http://dairynz.co.nz/co)

Find out more about biosecurity at [dairynz.co.nz/biosecurity](http://dairynz.co.nz/biosecurity) and *M. bovis* at [dairynz.co.nz/mbovis](http://dairynz.co.nz/mbovis)



# Clipping black beetle's wings

The combined efforts of farmers and researchers have paid off, yielding practical solutions for managing black beetle's impact on pasture. Together they've just wrapped up a three-year project part-funded by DairyNZ's levy, partnering with other researchers and sector organisations.

After black beetle ravaged pasture on Waikato and Bay of Plenty farms 10 years ago, the Waikato Black Beetle Action Group was formed. In 2015, the group became involved with a Ministry for Primary Industries Sustainable Farming Fund (SFF) project, *New tools to combat black beetle*, funded by SFF, DairyNZ, Ballance Agri Nutrients and Graymont Lime.

Earlier research had shown that ryegrasses with black beetle active endophytes are essential on northern North Island dairy farms to keep the insects' numbers down. However, many Waikato farmers on light or peat soils still had serious ongoing black beetle problems and needed additional tools. Project partners put their heads together, sharing their knowledge, ideas and resources, which led to positive outcomes and practical solutions.



AgResearch's Pip Gerard: successful multi-partner black beetle research is close to her heart.

While some leads investigated in the new project had mixed outcomes (autumn undersowing with treated seed filled gaps caused by larval damage but had no effect on subsequent populations; biopesticide baits reduced populations but are not commercially available yet), it was lime that stood out.

The project's major finding was that applying lime to manage soil acidity levels helps to reduce black beetle larvae populations.

A single application of five tonnes (t) of ag-lime per hectare (ha) reduced larval populations by around 30 percent compared to untreated pasture – and there was no decline in efficacy over three years. This suggests that this level of suppression can help dampen larval populations when the risk of an outbreak is high.

The existing industry recommendation regarding lime application on dairy farms is to target soil pH levels in the range of 5.8 to 6.0. Based on field and laboratory results, a target of pH 6.0-6.2 is recommended on farms prone to black beetle outbreaks. Achieving the target pH is a win-win – it optimises clover content in pasture and black beetle suppression.

The lime work research approach demonstrated the strength of the alliance in action. There was the Waikato Action Group farmers (Martin Henton from Taupiri, Stuart King from Te Aroha and David MacDonald from Gordonton) who opened their farms to the researchers. Ballance Agri-Nutrients forage specialist Murray Lane and the DairyNZ Extension team made sure the focus was on a practical solution that could be readily implemented on-farm. Graymont provided the lime applications and AgResearch's entomologists (insect specialists) carried out the research, ensuring experiments were scientifically robust and peer-reviewed when published.

The project's success shows how farmers with a common interest can access and leverage support to create practical solutions through working with others in the dairy sector and beyond.

Find out more at [dairynz.co.nz/blackbeetle](http://dairynz.co.nz/blackbeetle)

## Key points



1. Lime on pasture helps reduce black beetle larvae numbers.
2. A soil pH level of 6.0-6.2 optimises black beetle suppression and clover in pasture.
3. Farmer-research partnerships yield practical on-farm solutions.

## Churn and learn with *Is it Cheese?*

DairyNZ's latest classroom learning kit is giving kids a real taste of science in the classroom.

More than 5500 children around the country have been sinking their teeth into DairyNZ's *Is it Cheese?* kit. This in-class learning resource for students aged eight to 12 has been a big hit, with all 200 kits snapped up by teachers just nine minutes after being launched on School Kit's website.

*Is it Cheese?* teaches students about an element's change in state (in this case, from liquid to solid), a mandatory part of the New Zealand school science curriculum. The lesson enables children to compare chemical and physical changes through the cheese-making process.

### Gaining a 'feta' understanding

As part of the lesson, students learn what elements make up milk, how milk curds form and the crucial role of milk curds when making cheese. Children then make three mixtures of milk curds and investigate the chemical and physical changes that happen when a different acidity level is added to each mixture.

**"The children learned a lot from *Is it Cheese?*... they just loved it."**

Teacher Gemma Wilson from St Canice's School in Westport used DairyNZ's *Is it Cheese?* lesson and science kit to experiment with a range

of creations. Students successfully made a range of cheeses. These included paneer (soft curds) and mozzarella (soft-medium moulded curds). Kids even discovered that by adding a strong acid like vinegar, the curds harden to a substance resembling plastic.

### Everyone gets a slice of the action

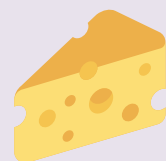
"The kids loved that there was enough of the resource for everyone to be involved in the process," says Gemma. "There were lots of questions about the different acids put into the cheese mixtures and lots of interest in the milk curds. The children looked at the milk left sitting on the window sill every morning to see if it had separated. All of our students had a go at tasting all the cheeses, which was huge! They were keen to try new flavours.

"The children learned a lot from *Is it Cheese?* including understanding the simple science behind what makes a cheese, what goes into making it and the key ingredient of milk. They were really engaged from start to finish, even going home to discuss it with their parents. They just loved it."



Hands up who loves cheese? St Canice's students get ready to taste-test their mozzarella on pizza.

Want to make your own cheese at home? Use DairyNZ's *Is it Cheese?* teacher guide at [rosieseducation.co.nz](http://rosieseducation.co.nz)



# How to save an hour a day

We'd all like to have an extra hour or two in our day. Using time efficiently is also good for on-farm productivity, as well as your team's health and safety. DairyNZ people management specialist John Greer explains how our online tools can help farmers achieve this.



What would you do with that extra hour? Go for a horse ride, bake a cake, get on with that project in the shed or spend time playing with the kids? Reducing everyone's work hours will make your farm and the dairy sector a better, more productive and safer place to work. Reducing hours of work can also make you more competitive with other sectors when it comes to recruiting staff.

## DairyNZ's time-saving tools

At a discussion group in South Waikato, we did a simple Waste Hunt exercise. The four common wastes are *Search, Wait, Redo* and *Defect*. Do you wait for anything, search for something, redo a job or throw away defective items? Identify these on-farm and you can save time and get a better result.

MilkSmart has been another big time-saver for farmers. Last year, our group of 11 demonstration farms (average herd size 729 cows) saved 2.9 hours per day on average – a massive 21 hours per week. And the magic was that staff talked about the certainty of finish time and how it meant they could plan for family activities. Why not start with Milksmart's MaxT – a simple way of looking at row or rotation time and identifying slow milkers. It's much better to collect their 'leftovers' more efficiently at the next milking.

## Happy, safe, productive people and cows

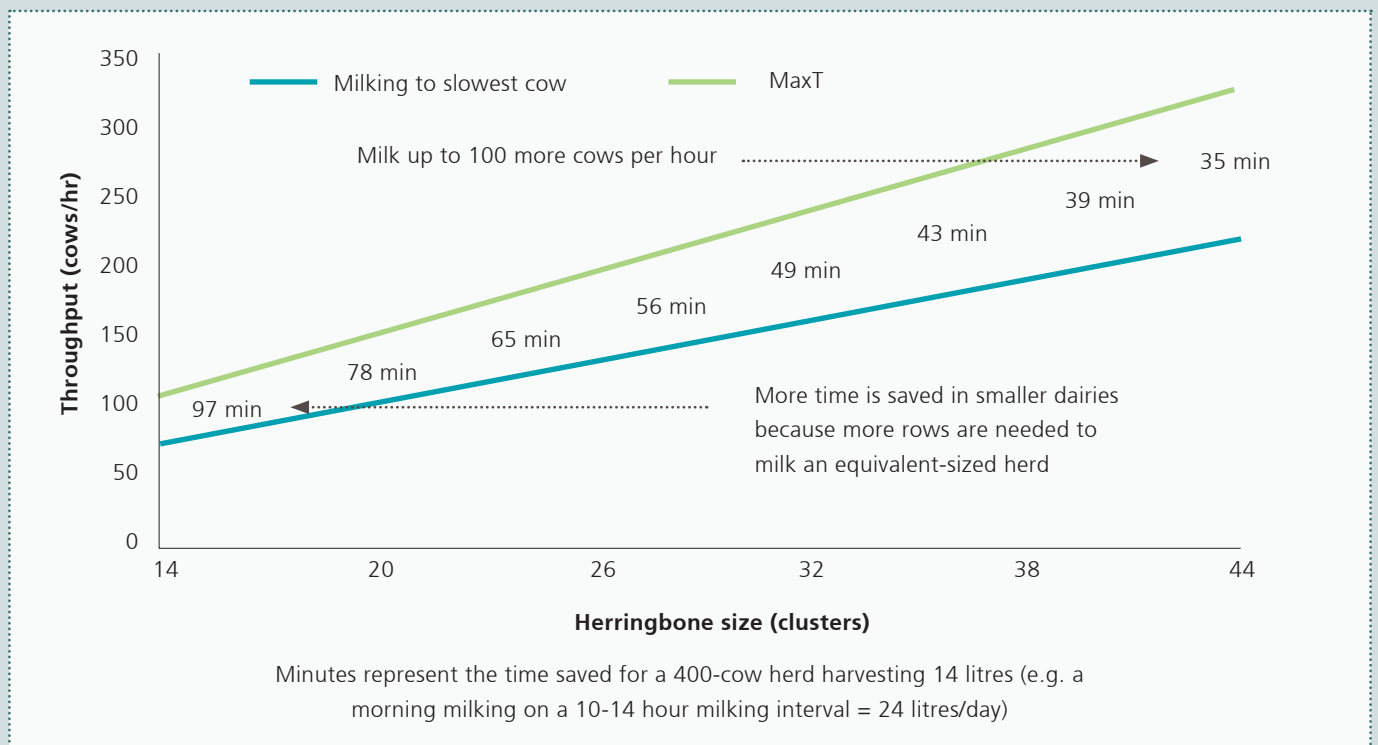
International research shows that people are at their most productive when they work fewer than 50 hours per week, get a two-day break and don't work for more than six days in a row: that's backed up by farmer experience. Mistakes also reduce with fewer hours, while cow health improves (with less lameness, lower somatic cell counts and fewer downer cows dying).

Saving time needn't cost you more. Spend an hour saving time and you'll get it back ten-fold.

Check out these great DairyNZ tools online – aimed at saving you time on the dairy farm:

- Waste Hunt – [dairynz.co.nz/wastehunt](http://dairynz.co.nz/wastehunt)
- Milksmart and MaxT – [dairynz.co.nz/milking](http://dairynz.co.nz/milking)
- Rosterbuilder – [dairynz.co.nz/rosterbuilder](http://dairynz.co.nz/rosterbuilder)

Find out more about time management and health and safety on-farm too at [dairynz.co.nz/people](http://dairynz.co.nz/people)



# A hand on the tiller gains early summer pasture silage success

Achieving silage success means carefully managing pasture growth, residuals, storage and feeding out. DairyNZ research suggests a focus on pasture quality, not quantity, is the key. DairyNZ farm performance developer Maitland Manning explains.



Managing surplus pasture growth in early summer is important in achieving ongoing pasture performance. In November/December, reproductive tillers appear, elongating into less easily-digested stems and seed heads, dropping pasture quality.

Leaving high residuals in early summer won't help fill a feed deficit later, as there is reduced pasture growth and quality in those later months. Silage is one way to use up a true surplus and ensure you continue to hit residuals in preparation for summer.

### Silage quality

Lighter crops, harvested earlier, produce better silage. Our research shows closing a silage area two to four weeks after balance date significantly drops its pasture quality, as seed heads emerge within three weeks. So harvest with an eye on quality pasture not quantity.

A post-grazing residual close to 1500 kilograms of dry matter per hectare (kg DM/ha) helps to maximise silage quality. Our trials showed that for every 100kg DM/ha above that, DM/ha pastures should be closed for 1.4 days less.

### Preparing silage and feeding out

Minimise exposure to air when harvesting pasture and stacking or baling it up for silage. Even in good harvesting conditions, you can lose between five to 10 percent of pasture: in the worst, up

to 25 percent. Select paddocks that minimise machinery turns (corners, obstacles).

If you're using a stack or pit, make sure it's well-packed and covered promptly. All silage should be given time to ferment before feeding out. Depending on the inoculants used, any silage stack or bale should not be opened for three to four weeks after closing.

Shape stacks and pits to suit herd size and clean the stack face daily, so it's not exposed to air for longer than 24 hours. Movement of the silage within a stack should be minimised (use a block cutter/shear grab).

Wastage at feeding out is best reduced by using a feed pad so cows cannot trample the silage into the ground.

### Silage alternatives

If silage is not an option, consider leaving a paddock as standing feed for grazing instead; top paddocks or speed up grazing rotations if your surplus is small; or take paddocks out of rotation and grow summer crops on them. (See [dairynz.co.nz/farmfacts](http://dairynz.co.nz/farmfacts) 1-38 Surplus Management and 1-40 Deferred Grazing under 'Farm Management'.)

Check out [dairynz.co.nz/pasture](http://dairynz.co.nz/pasture) and read about the levy-funded research behind this article in our September 2016 edition of *Technical Series* at [dairynz.co.nz/techseries](http://dairynz.co.nz/techseries)

### Key points



Focus on pasture quality, not quantity and use these feeding tips:

1. Give silage bales time to ferment properly – three to four weeks.
2. Shape stacks/pits to suit herd size; clean exposed face daily.
3. Avoid cows trampling silage in paddocks – use a feed pad.

## 'Wrapped' to recycle

Like you, we're concerned about the effects of too much plastic in our environment.



We're looking for the most sustainable way to post *Inside Dairy* to you. For now, we're using a fully-degradable (not biodegradable) wrap material. It's suitable for soft plastic recycling (see collection centres at [recycling.kiwi.nz/solutions/soft-plastics](http://recycling.kiwi.nz/solutions/soft-plastics)) and household recycling (if your local council says so – see [recycle.co.nz](http://recycle.co.nz)).

## Giving media great dairying stories

DairyNZ has launched a new website to give journalists access to fresh stories, facts, photos and videos about the dairy sector.

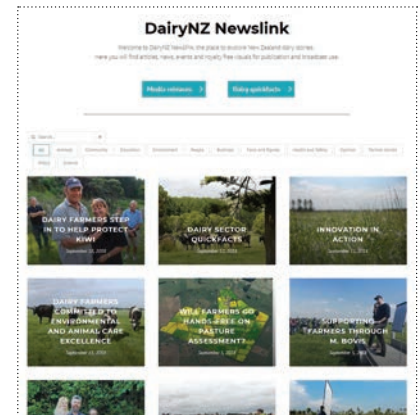
The website, called DairyNZ Newslink ([dairynznewslink.co.nz](http://dairynznewslink.co.nz)), is part of our work to get greater balance about dairying into the media.

Reporters are already using the content for publication, broadcast and news websites.

We will continually add stories and imagery to the site, and would love to hear any ideas from you – please email us at [info@dairynz.co.nz](mailto:info@dairynz.co.nz)

Also, if you know or meet any journalists, please recommend it to them.

Check out the site at [dairynznewslink.co.nz](http://dairynznewslink.co.nz)



## Results of pre-graze mowing trial

DairyNZ's pre-graze and mowing trial was one of the most hotly followed last year – and the results have now been published.

Conducted at Lincoln University Research Dairy Farm during spring and summer (October 2016 to February 2017), the 120-day trial examined the effects of different pre-graze pasture covers, and the use of mowing before grazing as a management tool.

Here are some of the key results:

- There was no benefit of pre-graze mowing on cow performance (body condition score or milksolids production).
- Pre-graze mowing reduced pasture performance and increased the requirement for imported feed.
- Cows offered the lower pasture cover (2900 versus 3500kg DM/ha) produced six percent more milksolids over the experiment.

Read the full results at [dairynz.co.nz/mowingtrial](http://dairynz.co.nz/mowingtrial) and don't miss our article in next month's *Technical Series* magazine.



Mown versus standing pastures.

## Have you switched to trimming?



DairyNZ knows that most of you stopped shortening tails a long time ago. With the new regulations now in effect, tail shortening should well and truly be a thing of the past.

A cow's tail provides many benefits, including allowing her to swat away flies and communicate her intentions and moods to herd mates and handlers.

Switches can be trimmed using hand shears, scissors or electric trimmers.

For more information visit [dairynz.co.nz/tails](http://dairynz.co.nz/tails), and go to [mpi.govt.nz](http://mpi.govt.nz) for more on the new regulations.



# New leader ready for change

Northland dairy farmers will notice a new face at DairyNZ discussion groups and events over the coming months with the arrival of new regional leader Tareen Ellis.

Tareen is looking forward to being part of the vibrant local farming community.

"I'm excited about getting out to meet farmers, including those involved in and leading a number of great projects in the region."

Tareen comes from a strong commercial and strategic planning background, having worked for Ballance Agri-Nutrients in Southland since 2014. While there, Tareen became regional sales manager for the Lower South Island, and growing a strong team in that role was one of her highlights.

"I enjoy helping businesses respond to change, which is why I'm excited about my new role at DairyNZ. Dairy farming is a sector that faces a great amount of change, ranging from new legislation to biosecurity threats and shifts in markets.

"I'm looking forward to working with our consulting officers to help farmers respond to these challenges and meet their goals."

DairyNZ has three consulting officers in Northland, with a fourth currently being recruited for.

Tareen is no stranger to change herself. Originally from South Africa, she came to New Zealand in 2011 with her husband Jarred. They settled in Invercargill, where she worked for Venture Southland as a marketing manager before joining Ballance. The couple now live in Whangarei with their three-year-old son Arthur.

"What appealed to us about New Zealand was the outdoors, the beauty of the country and the sporting spirit," says Tareen.

"Northland has plenty of that, plus a climate that is closer to what we came from in South Africa."



Northland Regional Team (from left): Myra Connell (admin and events coordinator), Tareen Ellis (team leader) and Denise Knop (consulting officer).

## Northland activity

DairyNZ is involved in a variety of initiatives in Northland. Here are some examples.

### Extension 350

Extension 350 was launched in 2016 to help local farmers share knowledge and gain access to specialist advice. The project's aim is to improve the profitability, wellbeing and environmental outcomes of Northland farmers. It is supported by the Ministry for Primary Industries, Northland Regional Council, DairyNZ, Beef + Lamb NZ and Northland Inc (Northland's regional economic development agency.) Learn more at [dairynz.co.nz/northland](http://dairynz.co.nz/northland)

### Research

The Northland Dairy Development Trust (NDDT) was formed in 2006 to help farmers secure quality dairy research relevant to Northland. The Trust is a joint initiative between Northland Agricultural Research Farm (NARF) and Fonterra, with support from DairyNZ. NDDT's research is largely carried out at Northland Agricultural Research Farm. Research is farmer-driven, with results and progress reports available at [nddt.nz](http://nddt.nz)

### Regional support

Like in other regions, DairyNZ's Northland consulting officers (COs) provide farmers with the latest knowledge from our research and development teams. The COs ensure farmers are armed with information relevant to local needs. They also help farmers share their knowledge and experience through peer-to-peer learning; offer support when farmers are facing challenges; and ensure DairyNZ's work meets farmers' needs. For information, visit [dairynz.co.nz/co](http://dairynz.co.nz/co)

For the full list of what's on near you, visit [dairynz.co.nz/events](http://dairynz.co.nz/events).

## November events

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
			1	2	3	4 <b>CANTERBURY/NORTH OTAGO</b> Banks Peninsula Discussion Group: open forum looking at farm system and seasonal topics.
5	6	7 <b>SOUTH WAIKATO</b> Tirau Discussion Group: explaining the options of once-a-day (OAD) milking for the full season and how to transition successfully.			10	
12	13 <b>BAY OF PLENTY</b> Mihi/Reporoa Discussion Group: investigating Brent Hughson's farm system, and a chat about upcoming seasonal topics.			16	17	
19	20	21	22 <b>TARANAKI</b> Fraser Road Discussion Group: end of year social catch-up at Gareth Ogle's Kaupokonui farm.		24	25
26	27	28 <b>SOUTHLAND/SOUTH OTAGO</b> Northern Southland Pasture Plus Discussion Group: for those wanting to improve their pasture, supplement and winter feed knowledge.				

FOR A FULL LIST OF WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS MONTH, VISIT [DAIRYNZ.CO.NZ/EVENTS](http://DAIRYNZ.CO.NZ/EVENTS)

### WAIKATO

The Pasture Summit is coming to Hamilton on November 26 and 27.

It's not too late to book your spot for this exciting conference, designed for farmers who are driven to create a prosperous future from pasture-based farming.

You'll hear from leading international dairy researchers and farmers about why New Zealand is a world leader in producing pasture-based food. You'll also learn how you can be part of ensuring that this continues for generations to come.

Find out more and register now at [pasturesummit.co.nz](http://pasturesummit.co.nz)

### BAY OF PLENTY

As the new farm business specialist for the Upper North Island, based in the Bay of Plenty (BOP), Wilma Foster links farmers and their supporting rural professionals with DairyNZ's farm business resources such as DairyBase and Farm Gauge.

Wilma brings a raft of practical experience to the role. She also has a strong background in working with BOP farmers in her previous role as a local consulting officer. If you have a query about your farm business or DairyBase, you can find Wilma's contact details at [dairynz.co.nz/co](http://dairynz.co.nz/co)

### TARANAKI

Taranaki's research and demonstration farms in Stratford, Hawera and Waimate West continue to play an important role in dairy science, with DairyNZ working alongside Dairy Trust Taranaki (DTT) to manage the research process on these farms.

You can view the farm's data, including pasture growth rates, rainfall, soil temperature, milk production and body condition scores, at [dairynz.co.nz/farmwatch](http://dairynz.co.nz/farmwatch), or read about the latest research projects at [dairynz.co.nz/taranaki](http://dairynz.co.nz/taranaki)

### LOWER NORTH ISLAND

Looking for regionally-specific tools and information to help you make better business management decisions?

DairyNZ now has a farm business specialist – Phillip Connors – based in Palmerston North and covering the Lower North Island region.

Phillip is keen to hear from you. Get his contact details at [dairynz.co.nz/co](http://dairynz.co.nz/co)

# DairyNZ Consulting Officers

## Upper North Island – Head: Sharon Morrell 027 492 2907

### Northland

Regional Leader	Tareen Ellis	027 499 9021
Far North	Denise Knop	027 807 9686
Lower Northland	Tareen Ellis	027 499 9021
Whangarei West	Tareen Ellis	027 499 9021

### Waikato

Regional Leader	Wade Bell	027 285 9273
Senior Consulting Officer Lead	Phil Irvine	027 483 9820
South Auckland	Mike Bramley	027 486 4344
Hamilton North	Wade Bell	027 285 9273
Matamata/Kereone	Frank Portegys	027 807 9685
Morrinsville/Paeroa	Euan Lock	027 293 4401
Hauraki Plains/Coromandel	Wade Bell	027 285 9273
Te Awamutu	Stephen Canton	027 475 0918
Otorohanga	Michael Booth	027 513 7201
South Waikato	Kirsty Dickens	027 483 2205

### Bay of Plenty

Regional Leader	Andrew Reid	027 292 3682
Central BOP (Te Puke, Rotorua)	Kevin McKinley	027 288 8238
Eastern BOP (Whakatane, Opotiki)	Ross Bishop	027 563 1785
Central Plateau (Reporoa, Taupo)	Colin Grainger-Allen	021 225 8345
Katikati, Galatea, Waikite/Ngakuru	Jordyn Crouch	021 619 071

## Lower North Island – Head: Rob Brazendale 021 683 139

### Taranaki

Regional Leader	Sarah Dirks	027 513 7202
South Taranaki	Sarah Dirks	027 513 7202
Central Taranaki	Sarah Payne	027 704 5562
Coastal Taranaki	Anna Arends	021 276 5832
North Taranaki	Lauren McEldowney	027 593 4122

### Lower North Island

Horowhenua/Wanganui/South Taranaki/Southern and Coastal Manawatu	Kate Stewart	027 702 3760
Wairarapa/Tararua	Abby Scott	021 244 3428
Hawke's Bay	Gray Beagley	021 286 4346
Central/Northern Manawatu/Rangitikei	Jo Back	021 222 9023

## South Island – Head: Tony Finch 027 706 6183

### Top of South Island/West Coast

Nelson/Marlborough	Mark Shadwick	021 287 7057
West Coast	Angela Leslie	021 277 2894

### Canterbury/North Otago

Regional Leader	Erin Christian	021 243 7337
North Canterbury	Amy Chamberlain	027 243 0943
Central Canterbury	Natalia Benquet	021 287 7059
Mid Canterbury	Stuart Moorhouse	027 513 7200
South Canterbury	Heather Donaldson	027 593 4124
North Otago	Trevor Gee	021 227 6476

### Southland/South Otago

Regional Leader	Richard Kyte	021 246 3166
South/West Otago	Mark Olsen-Vetland	021 615 051
Central and Northern Southland	Nicole E Hammond	021 240 8529
West Otago/North Eastern Southland	Liam Carey	027 474 3258
Eastern Southland	Nathan Nelson	021 225 6931
Western Southland	Leo Pekar	027 211 1389

## TOP OF SOUTH ISLAND/WEST COAST



Robb Macbeth is DairyNZ's farm business specialist for the South Island. He links farmers and their supporting rural professionals with our farm business resources, for example, DairyBase and Farm Gauge.

If you have a query about your farm business or DairyBase please get in touch with Robb. You can find his contact details at [dairynz.co.nz/co](http://dairynz.co.nz/co)

## CANTERBURY/NORTH OTAGO

Book your spot now for the Pasture Summit, coming to Ashburton on November 29 and 30.

If you're a farmer keen to create a prosperous future from pasture-based farming, this event has been especially designed for you.

It's a chance to hear from leading international dairy researchers and farmers on why New Zealand is a world leader in producing pasture-based food. Find out how you can be a part of this and ensure that it continues for future generations.

Find out more and register now at [pasturesummit.co.nz](http://pasturesummit.co.nz)

## SOUTHLAND/SOUTH OTAGO

Southland dairy farmers Blake Korteweg and Wilco Hamers are part of DairyNZ's Tiller Talk programme.

This programme follows the progress of 19 farmers from around the country, as they work to increase their profit through better pasture management.

Monthly updates from Blake, Wilco and all of the Tiller Talk key farmers can give you timely tips and help inform your own pasture management decisions.

Read more about Tiller Talk at [dairynz.co.nz/tillertalk](http://dairynz.co.nz/tillertalk)



Tiller Talk farmer Blake Korteweg is providing monthly updates.



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# COMMIT TO YOUR FUTURE NOW!

The New Zealand Dairy Industry Awards provide and promote a learning opportunity for dairy farmers progressing in their careers across three categories: Share Farmer, Dairy Manager and Dairy Trainee of the Year.

Past finalists and winners are today's new dairy leaders. So if you'd like to follow in their footsteps, why not throw your hat in the ring?

## GREAT REASONS TO ENTER

- Learn from the judging process
- Get a head start in the employment market
- Gain self-confidence
- Gain a deeper understanding of your own farming business
- Raise your profile within the industry
- Develop a wider farming network
- Win great prizes
- Have fun

## WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Visit our website to learn more about our awards programmes, including details of each of the categories, most recent results, photo gallery and more.

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