

Inside Dairy

March 2020

Your levy in action

MAKING THE MONEY WORK

How top farmers crunch the numbers

NEW SEASON CHECKLIST

Autumn actions to get you set



Bank capital changes
What farmers need to know

DairyNZ



over the fence...

It's hard to believe a new season is almost upon us.

I've said it before, and I'll say it again: the key to a successful dairy season is in the planning. That's why this edition of *Inside Dairy* offers advice for getting your people, animals, feed and farm ready for the June 1 changeover. Check out our handy new season checklist, tips for developing a crop grazing management plan, and our firsthand look at transporting stock.

Of course, a core part of new season planning is financial planning. Our lead story dives into how two successful businesses crunch the numbers and control their spending. We also ask the main rural banks to explain what capital changes will mean for farmers. Both articles are great reads.

As you receive this edition, we'll be halfway through our Farmers' Forums. If you attended one of our February events, thanks for coming along and I hope you enjoyed the range of speakers and conversations. There's still time to sign up for the Southland, Taranaki and Canterbury Farmers' Forums.

The vote for the DairyNZ commodity levy will be opening in a few weeks (mid-April). Check out the levy guide included with this edition for details of where your levy is invested, voting dates and what you're voting on.

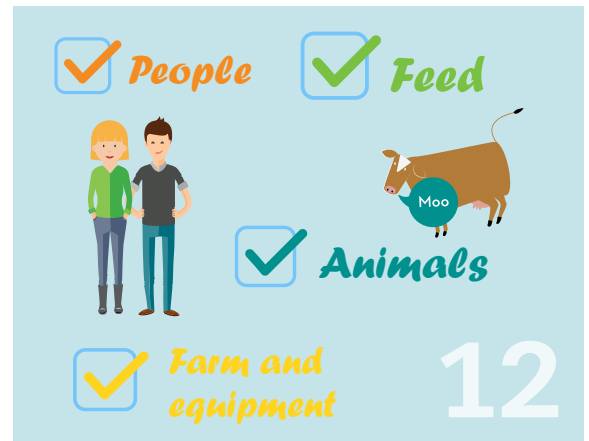
We're continuing to work with the Government to understand the next steps for any new water policies, following on from the Essential Freshwater consultation last year. We'll let you know as soon as we hear about dates for the release of these policies.

You may have heard about a recent bovine tuberculosis outbreak in Hawke's Bay. Our understanding from OSPRI is that only two dairy farms are affected, and one has now been cleared, but we're monitoring the situation closely. We encourage anyone with questions to reach out to us, or to OSPRI, for further information.

Lastly, for those farmers across the country who are dealing with severe weather – floods, fires and drought – we are on the ground and providing support. Read more on page 10.

I welcome your feedback, so please feel free to email me at tim.mackle@ceo.dairynz.co.nz

Tim Mackle
Chief executive
DairyNZ



Contents

FEATURES...

2 Open books

Farmers from two top-performing businesses (one large, one small) talk openly about their approach to budgeting as a way to achieve their goals.

8 Banks explain capital changes

What will capital requirement changes mean for dairy farmers? Find out from the country's five largest rural lenders.

12 New season checklist

Now's the ideal time to tick off those dry-off tasks and prepare for the June 1 changeover. Use our checklist to stay on track.

Inside Dairy is the official magazine of DairyNZ Ltd. It is circulated among all New Zealand dairy farmers and sector organisations and professionals.

ISSN 1179-4909

DNZ03-212



On the cover: Lead story couple Rhys and Kiri Roberts, who work for Align Farms in Canterbury, are among a number of top-performing farmers who've opened their books through DairyNZ's Budget Case Study project – read more on page 2.

TAKE 5... TIPS FOR FARMERS

1. Renovating your pasture?



The 2020 Forage Value Index (FVI) includes lists for perennial, 12-month and winter feed ryegrass cultivars, factoring in the latest results from the National Forage Variety Trial. Check how ryegrass cultivars are performing in your region – see dairynz.co.nz/fvi

2. Evolve at SIDE

Thought-provoking speakers and workshops, great conversations and networking opportunities, and plenty of laughs – South Island Dairy Event (SIDE) is back! Join fellow farmers at SIDE 2020 in Canterbury to connect, discover, grow and, ultimately, evolve (this year's theme) – side.org.nz

3. Hidden gem competition



Know a special farmer? Nominate them to win a diamond ring worth \$12,000. Auckland jeweller Mark Beckett and his wife Pamela have donated the rare green two-carat diamond ring to show their support for dairy farmers.

Go to dairynz.co.nz/diamonds

4. Trough angles

When installing water troughs, angle them slightly with the lowest side towards the race. That way, if there's an issue with the ballcock, you'll easily spot any overflow if you're passing by. View this and other smart ways to conserve water on-farm at dairynz.co.nz/wateruse

5. On track with tax

Provisional tax – don't pay too much or too little. Keep in touch with your accountant to ensure provisional tax payments are revised. Many factors can affect your taxable income: increased debt reduction, higher milk price, and dry weather resulting in lower production and higher feed costs.



IN THIS ISSUE...

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Take 5 | 18 Mark and Measure extras add up |
| 10 DairyNZ supports farmers through drought and flooding | 19 Working through the challenges |
| 11 A truckie's view of cow transport | 20 Mythbuster: BCS some cows, or all cows? |
| 14 Tapping into tomorrow's talent | 21 Animal matters |
| 16 Winter is coming – start planning now | 22 Just quickly |
| 17 Clearing the way for change | 23 Regional update |

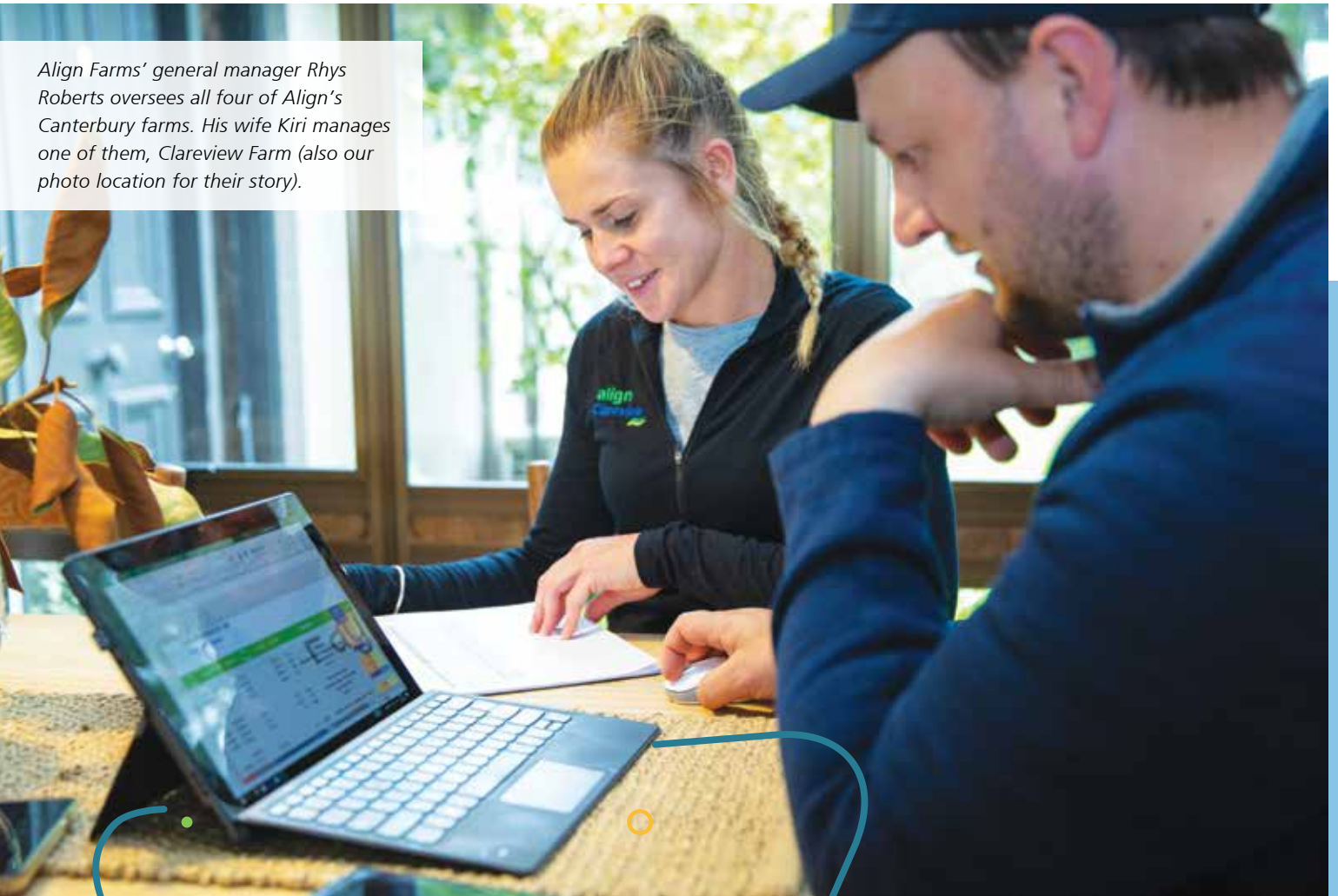


We appreciate your feedback

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



Align Farms' general manager Rhys Roberts oversees all four of Align's Canterbury farms. His wife Kiri manages one of them, Clareview Farm (also our photo location for their story).



OPEN BOOKS



Successful businesses have one thing in common – they budget. *Inside Dairy* asked two top-performing farm businesses, one large and one small, how they take control of their spending to achieve their goals.

TEAMWORK MAKES THE BUDGET WORK

When it comes to budgeting, Rhys Roberts is the kind of person who's constantly mulling over different ways to make the numbers work.

"I've got the sort of mind that dreams up stupid things while I'm driving, so I often go home and jump on the laptop, pull up the budgets, and change them all around to see what works," says Rhys.

"To be perfectly honest, I probably do that weekly. I change scenarios to see what effect they might have on production or Farm Working Expenses (FWE). We're always looking at ways to drive efficiencies."

Rhys is general manager for Align Farms in Canterbury, a corporate farming operation with four dairy and two dairy support farms. The farms' owners are based overseas, so budgets are an important way to provide accountability, as well as being a forecasting tool, says Rhys.

"The other reason budgets are important is that we're educating our managers, who are the future owners of the industry. We want to make sure our managers are learning and looking holistically at the business, rather than focusing exclusively on milk production."

Getting down to business

For Align Farms, the budget-planning process starts each year in March with the first of three planning meetings. In the first meeting, the four farm managers (including Rhys's wife, Kiri, who manages Clareview) are given information to help them make decisions. This includes last year's budgets, so they can review past performance, plus general ledgers and the proposed new season's budgets. The managers have a month to make changes before submitting their proposals to Rhys and chief financial officer Michael Mansour.

"In April, Michael and I go through the budgets to streamline any group expenditure. Budgets are approved on May 1 and given to the Board for approval before they get locked in," says Rhys.

Separate budgets are prepared for supplementary feed, capital expenditure

(capex), stock requirements, grazing, and the number of calves to be reared. Each year, depreciation is spent on capex and Rhys is looking at ways to substantially reduce FWE through capex. Solar power is under consideration.

Banking the wins

Once the budgets have been approved, Rhys and Michael hold a monthly finance meeting to give the management team a chance to monitor actual performance against budgets.

"We go through group averages and discuss good and poor performance. We compare data against the previous season and forecast out to the end of the season as well. The budget never changes but the forecast does," says Rhys.

Rhys favours focusing on the positives, rather than dwelling on what went wrong.

"We're learning a lot more from reviewing what's gone well and reminding people why we've been successful. In the past, we've been strict on managers sticking to their budgets and



Clareview's relief milker Ivy Mendez and herd manager Ely Rodriguez.



FARM FACTS

RHYS ROBERTS

POSITION:
General manager of
Align Farms

LOCATION:
Ashburton, Canterbury

ALIGN FARM NAMES:
Clareview, Emilius, Jacawanda,
Longfield, Hinterlands

FARMS' COMBINED SIZE:
987ha (effective) + 597ha dairy
support

COMBINED HERD SIZE:
4000 Kiwi-Cross

FARM SYSTEM:
Three System 4, one System 3

PRODUCTION:
1.73m kg MS/year

“We’re experimenting with diverse pasture mixes, with the intention of growing more feed in the shoulders of the season to reduce buying supplementary feed.”

sometimes this can have a negative effect.”

Align Farms once had a break-even payout of around \$6.00 per kg/MS but focused on bringing it down and have now achieved their \$5.00 target.

“We haven’t set up our system at the lowest end of the cost structure because we want to be able to take advantage of higher milk price seasons, but that’s just my philosophy,” says Rhys.

Adapting and innovating

When it comes to planning for environmental obligations, “it’s not the cow, it’s the how, and farmers need to learn to adapt”, says Rhys.

“I’d be lying if I said I spend every day worrying about greenhouse gases. However, I feel this will be front of mind in future, but I do spend more time currently thinking about how we can mitigate our synthetic nitrogen use. I believe adaptation



The Southern Alps near Ashburton frame Clareview's dairy.



Herd manager Teddie Mallari brings the Clareview herd in for milking.

RHYS'S TOP BUDGETING TIPS

Get buy-in from those who implement your budget by involving them in the planning process.



Monitor actuals versus budgets, so you know how you're tracking.



Make the best financial decision on the day; just because your budget says 'x' doesn't mean it's the right decision on the day.



Leave balance sheet farming where it belongs – in the dark ages. Profit and loss should be the flavour of the 21st Century.



Be realistic – there's no perfect season.

and innovation will provide the answers.

"We're experimenting with diverse pasture mixes, with the intention of growing more feed in the shoulders of the season to reduce buying supplementary feed."

Rhys says Align has halved its nitrogen usage from 280 to 140 units per hectare by moving to a fluidising fertiliser application system, and they're using 2500 tonnes of compost as an alternative to expensive synthetic fertilisers.

"We don't want to reduce soil fertility levels, so we're still using DAP (di-ammonium phosphate) and potassium-based fertiliser as buffers, but we're using less as we're buffering with compost. Stocking rate optimisation is another area – in some cases that means decreasing, in others increasing."

Drawing interest

Rhys has been involved in DairyNZ's Budget Case Studies project since June 2017.

"The reason we joined was, in the past and still today, I get a lot from viewing and analysing the different case study budgets. The value it has given me and our business has been excellent."

He says he's been surprised at quite how interested farmers are in the project.

"I've done a lot of work with DairyNZ during my career, but I've never had so many calls about what we're doing since I started the project. People either call up or stop you at an event

to chat about budgets, whereas with a lot of other stuff I've done, you never hear from anyone.

"I think most people are good at three or four areas of farming, so being able to identify weaknesses and find people who are good at those and picking their brains is what it's all about. Talking to others also gives you an understanding of New Zealand farming. Everyone has different challenges and we can all learn from each other."



Most of Clareview's staff, including Teddie and Kiri, have been with the farm since it was purchased in 2013.



“ We choose to keep our costs low and carefully manage our finances so that we can achieve our goal of farm ownership.”

EYES ON THE PRIZE

Sarah and Ethan Koch know they won't achieve their goal of farm ownership by chance. From the get-go, they've managed their finances carefully – first to become sharemilkers, and now to build equity in their pursuit of becoming farm owners.

When Ethan left his building career in 2012 to go farming on the Hauraki Plains, Sarah continued working as a teacher and they saved her entire salary for three and a half years. That enabled them to buy a herd and go 50:50 sharemilking in June 2016.

“We're passionate about dairy farming and want to manage an efficient and profitable operation with emphasis on being good stewards of the land. We also want to have financial freedom, particularly as we get older and provide opportunities for our children,” says Sarah.

“We choose to keep our costs low and carefully manage our finances so that we can achieve our goal of farm ownership. This does mean some sacrifices for us in the meantime, but we are prepared to make those sacrifices with the end goal in mind.”

Ready, set, goals

The Kochs set their new season's goals in March and April. To help them make decisions, they use their previous year's

accounts, Fonterra's forecast milk price, Federated Farmers' salary information and DairyNZ's *Facts and Figures* data.

“At first, Ethan and I discuss the budgets informally and use DairyNZ's budget templates to formulate our plans,” says Sarah. “Ethan casts his eyes over them before they're formalised, then I send them to the bank manager and upload them to Xero,” says Sarah.

“With bank lending being tighter, it's important to be able to stick to your budgets so you can achieve what you want to do. Being able to demonstrate that you know what you're doing and have sound budgeting skills gives you good credentials with your advisers.”

Keeping tabs on cashflow

The couple monitor their cashflow every two months, in line with their GST returns, and then do an in-depth six-monthly review in December.

“By December, we have a good feel for where we're at, so we can review our budget to see if we need to tweak anything,” says Sarah. “As much as possible, we budget not to go into overdraft, so we plan what to do between the beginning of the year and the dry period and know what we need to put away.”

Each year, the couple repay additional lump sums of debt from surplus, so by monitoring, they know if they're on track to meet that target.



Ethan and Sarah (both aged 29) were named 2019 Auckland/Hauraki Share Farmers of the Year, and were runners-up in the same category in 2018.

FARM FACTS

ETHAN & SARAH KOCH

POSITION:
50:50 sharemilkers

LOCATION:
Onewhero, Waikato

FARM SIZE:
82ha (effective)

HERD SIZE:
200 Holstein-Friesian

FARM SYSTEM: 3

PRODUCTION:
80,000kg MS/year

Accounting for all scenarios

Alongside the formal budget are feed budgets, and the Kochs calculate what supplement they need to buy so they know what it's costing them. They monitor throughout the year and sometimes make adjustments, depending on weather conditions.

"It dries out quickly here, so we allow for that, which is one of the reasons we start three-in-two milking around Christmas time. It makes it easier for me and works well for us with two pre-schoolers," says Ethan.

The couple budget for dry-off and save for holidays. They also plan for capex, like buying or upgrading plant or machinery, which is funded when they have a surplus.

Sarah says they use the DairyNZ sensitivity analyses to look at the variability of cash surplus/deficit, particularly from a FWE point of view.

"It gives us a 'what if' picture and reduces the chance of unwelcome surprises."

A wealth of data

The couple say becoming part of the DairyNZ Budget Case Studies project in 2017 has been a good way to benchmark their business.

"I think it's really useful, particularly for sharemilkers like us, especially if you're considering another job and you don't have much data available. Case studies give you an idea of what others are doing and the merits of different systems," says Sarah.

"We'd encourage other farmers to check out the Budget Case Studies and resources available on the DairyNZ website and utilise them in their own businesses."

■ **Words:** Christine Hartley ■ **Photos:** Tony Benny (Rhys and Kiri Roberts story); Supplied (Ethan and Sarah Koch story)

ETHAN & SARAH'S TOP BUDGETING TIPS

Have constructive discussions to make sure everyone's on the same page.

Be conservative – leave yourself some 'wiggle' room.

Get your budget reviewed by professional advisers, their input can be invaluable.

Make allowances for compliance costs, e.g. the *M. bovis* levy.

LEARN FROM THE BEST



Back in 2015 when milk prices were low, DairyNZ recognised that some farmers remained profitable no matter what. So, we started collecting budgets from several top performers who were happy to share their numbers. Four years later, we have 15 case study farmers on board. If you want to see how these farmers are spending their money and get some ideas for making savings in your own business, head to dairynz.co.nz/budget-case-studies

For comprehensive information on all things budget-related, visit dairynz.co.nz/budgets

To learn about clarifying goals and strategies for you, your family and business, go to dairynz.co.nz/planning

Banks explain what capital changes mean for farmers

How will the recent changes to bank capital requirements affect dairy farmers? We put some questions to the country's five largest rural lenders.

Under its mandate to maintain our economy's financial stability, the Reserve Bank of New Zealand (RBNZ) has repeatedly highlighted agri-business lending. It's expressed concern over the growth of agri-business debt and the effect of volatile commodity prices on how this borrowing is managed.

The RBNZ's recent changes to bank capital requirements mean banks will need to hold additional capital against lending. The higher the risk profile of the business, the more capital banks must hold against each loan. Over the next seven years, it is likely to increase the cost of lending, but it's too early to say by exactly how much.

Here's what the five largest rural lenders had to say.

What will this mean for dairy farmers?

Mark Hiddleston, ANZ Bank, managing director commercial & agri



Dairy farmers can expect continued support from the banking sector, and we believe, in the long term, the whole country will benefit through a more stable and robust economy.

In the shorter term, farmers will need to provide their banks with good-quality information, and demonstrate that their farms are worth investing in.

This means they must be more innovative and efficient, looking for improvements in areas such as pasture management, and the use of precision farming techniques, while also seeking advances in genetics, pastures, forages and new technology.

While asset values remain important, farmers will also be expected to show their businesses are both financially and environmentally sustainable over the long term.

Banks will also need farmers to be making long-term plans around the environment, succession and governance. Doing this will ensure they're better prepared for the ups and downs of the commodity cycle and are more resilient to factors such as severe weather events and shifting consumer preferences.

Banks, farmers and shareholders can expect to carry some of the cost of these changes in the short term.

What will you be looking for when considering funding proposals?

Mark Steed, Westpac NZ, head of commercial & agribusiness



When considering all funding, we're assessing the business's long-term sustainability and its ability to generate sufficient cash surpluses over the life of the lending that:

- covers all interest payments due and,
- repays the principal in the agreed term.

An emphasis is placed on environmental considerations, adherence to regulations and/or any consents required to operate the farming business.

We calculate the minimum principal repayments using a maximum tenure of 25 years.

We also consider:

- the business's history and principles
- its performance, both productively and financially, and its all-round business acumen
- the nature of the farm and farming system, including physical or environmental challenges
- the quality and performance of the livestock.

We work to understand our customers' future strategies and aspirations to ensure we continue to provide fit-for-purpose services.

"... farmers will need to provide their banks with good-quality information, and demonstrate that their farms are worth investing in."

Mark Hiddleston, ANZ Bank

What information should a farmer provide when putting forward a funding proposition, and has this changed?

Tim Deane, ASB Bank, executive general manager business banking



We haven't changed our credit assessment process, which requires:

- a business plan, including goals and aspirations
- financial statements – demonstrating historical and present performance
- an asset and liability statement – current and projected
- detailed budgets and cashflows demonstrating an ability to withstand adverse movement in key financial drivers e.g. milk price, interest rate and changes to costs
- physical farm data, including production, stocking and farm system information
- risk management and governance policies.

Do you have additional requirements around environmental impacts?

Dave Handley, BNZ, general manager agribusiness



Farming businesses with strong balance sheets and robust environmental strategies will be well positioned for future success.

We expect our clients to be taking the necessary steps to ensure they're environmentally compliant. We'll be working with our customers as they prepare and deliver on their environmental plans.

We strongly suggest you develop a thorough business plan as your roadmap for the future, and consider how your farming operation will make the most of the current good payout to build a more sustainable business (e.g. by reducing debt, making necessary compliance related investments, or whatever else is critical for your future success).

What's your advice to farmers as they prepare for the 2020 season?

Bruce Weir, Rabobank, general manager country banking



We recommend that farmers build evidence of a clear business strategy showing the intended direction of their business, and how this will be achieved.

Their evidence should include:

- cashflow budgets including any capital development projects
- information relating to how incoming regulation is likely to impact their business, and how any impacts can be mitigated
- completed Farm Environment Plans where applicable.

These are the questions they should be asking their bank:

- What is a sustainable level of debt for my business?
- If I want to grow my business, what do I need to do?
- Where can I access relevant information?
- Are there additional sources of advice/training/support I should tap into?
- How can I upskill myself and my staff to tackle future challenges?

“We expect our clients to be taking the necessary steps to ensure they're environmentally compliant.”

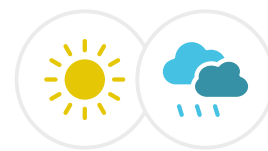
Dave Handley, BNZ



Want to see your bank's full answers to each of these questions? Go to dairynz.co.nz/banks-explain

Looking for tools and resources to help you demonstrate anything mentioned above? DairyNZ has a range of business planning and budgeting tools free to use – visit dairynz.co.nz/business

DairyNZ supports farmers through drought and flooding



It's been a challenging start to the year for many farmers around the country, and DairyNZ has been working hard to help those affected.

Farmers in the north and south experienced two extremes in February – flooding in Southland, and drought in Northland.

In Southland, a state of emergency was declared on February 4, with homes evacuated and many farms flooded.

A number of areas also faced power outages and road closures, leaving milk tankers unable to make collections.

"Farmers have been working together to care for stock," says Ollie Knowles, DairyNZ's regional leader for Southland. "We have seen many cases of farmers supporting their neighbours by sheltering cows on higher land and sharing their milking sheds."

Farmers, and some of DairyNZ's Southland team, also joined

farmers to question a range of experts, including vets, pasture specialists, farm advisers, and staff from the Rural Support Trust and Environment Southland. The events offered a much-needed break from the farm, giving farmers a chance to chat with and support each other over a barbeque.

"We know there are going to be some real challenges for farmers with managing feed and grazing over the winter," says Ollie. "We've been working closely with Federated Farmers, Environment Southland and the Ministry for Primary Industries throughout this event and we'll be continuing to work together, and with farmers, to provide ongoing support."

"As each challenge comes along, we're committed to learning and sharing lessons so we're in a better position for the next event."

Meanwhile, after weeks of increasingly dry conditions, the Government officially declared a drought across Northland and parts of Auckland on February 11.

DairyNZ and other primary sector organisations worked with Government officials to encourage the declaration, to provide the region with additional drought support funding.

"We're carefully monitoring the drought situation and working with other organisations to coordinate a response," says Sharon Morrell, DairyNZ's head of the Upper North Island.

Consulting officers have been giving farmers advice on planning

ahead and managing through drought conditions. A weekly email with the latest advice and support resources is being distributed to Northland farmers.

DairyNZ is also planning regular events for farmers to get off-farm, compare their situations and share advice.

Find out how to prepare for and overcome adverse events by visiting dairynz.co.nz/adverse-events



Southland farmer Sam Bennett (centre) gets a helping hand during the flood recovery from Farmy Army volunteers Hugh Jackson (DairyNZ trainee consulting officer – far left) and Robert Griffith (Otago University student).

the clean-up and recovery work of the Farmy Army.

"Our DairyNZ team has been working with affected farmers since day one of the flooding. Initially, we helped farms with animal care when flooding and evacuations were occurring," says Ollie.

Ollie says each farm is in a different situation, so the team has been working with farmers individually to understand their needs, provide advice and/or connect them with support.

DairyNZ also held two recovery events in February, allowing

A TRUCKIE'S VIEW OF COW TRANSPORT



DairyNZ's Jac McGowan joins a truck driver for the day, to see for herself why carefully preparing and managing cows before and during transport is so important.

With so much on their minds, it's easy for farmers to think that once cows are loaded and heading to their destination, that's the job done. However, we have a responsibility to protect our cows' welfare past the farm gate.

Taupo to Te Aroha

I join Mike Shaw, driving for Midlands Rural Transport, in Taupo at 8.00 a.m. It's usually a two-hour trip in a car, but we're picking up cattle from 10 locations, so today's journey will take 10 hours.

When planning his route, Mike considers animal size and breed, which farms are 'truck only' (where the trailer is dropped off outside the farm, then collected) and which farms' cattle have vet certificates.

Dealing with delays

Drivers carting livestock take a serious approach to truck breakdowns and traffic delays, although Mike says drivers and farmers are understanding if there's a good reason.

We're delayed by 30 minutes at the first farm because

someone slept in. In these cases, "offering a cup of tea makes waiting easier", remarks Mike.

Further on, we're slowed down and redirected by roadworks in several places.

"Freight guys can sit for hours, but we want to keep stock transport as short as possible," says Mike. "So, when I see a blocked road, my first thought is, 'can I turn around?'"

If a plant breaks down, the animals are cooled in the trucks with water until the plant starts up again. But if the breakdown is serious, the truck might be diverted to a different plant, or asked to unload at sale yards overnight. For this reason, Mike recommends preparing cows for a much longer journey than you'd expect.

Prep from the inside

Getting cows off green feed at least four hours before the truck arrives gives them a chance to empty out, prevents effluent spills and is better for animal comfort.

"They don't travel well if they aren't stood off grass. It takes them far longer to settle and, with a belly full of grass, they're top heavy, less stable. And more effluent makes it slippery for them to stand."

Before transport, most farmers give cows extra magnesium and dry feed such as hay. Mike says it can be noticeable when cows are short of magnesium.

"They're less settled; there's more bumping and banging."

Giving lactating cows calcium as well stops them becoming unstable on their feet after so long off feed.

I left Mike as he was loading up the last cows at 5 p.m.

Te Aroha was still half an hour away and the first cows had been on the truck since 8:30 a.m., which reinforced the importance of selecting and preparing our cull cows well.



To learn more about how to prepare stock for transport, visit dairynz.co.nz/transportingstock

New season checklist

Autumn dry-off is imminent and the yearly June 1 changeover isn't that far away. This checklist will help you stay on track and set yourself up for the coming season and a great year ahead.

People

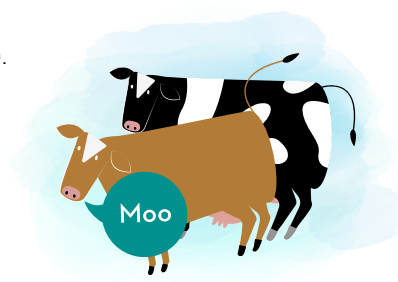


- Set a date for performance reviews before this season ends.
- Ask for team feedback on rosters and consider making changes.
- Consider using online payroll tools like PaySauce.
- Ensure farm accommodation is insulated, dry and safe, and has functioning appliances.
- Review on-farm risks and regularly discuss with the team.
- Hold team functions to celebrate dry-off.
- Review staff goals and create training and development plans. See dairynz.co.nz/roles for ideas.
- Closer to June 1:
 - Sort final pay for people leaving the team.
 - Update new and existing team members' payroll details and employment agreements.
 - Update team orientation processes.
 - Organise a function to welcome new team members.

Find out more about being a good boss at dairynz.co.nz/goodboss

Animals

- Update all animal records before dry-off:
 - Record outcomes (e.g. pregnant, empty, sold, died, culled).
 - Update NAIT tags and records (and when buying/selling cows).
- Ensure culled animals are gone.
- Complete last herd test for the season.
- Prepare for dry-off:
 - Book vet meeting for dry-off approach.
 - Order all dry-off products.
 - Earmark dry-off dates.
 - Get a dry-off plan in place.
- Review processes, documentation and signage for dry-off and calving.
- Set up management mobs for the winter:
 - Record all cows' body condition scores (BCS).
 - Identify early dry-off cows.
 - Sort cows into mobs based on expected calving date and BCS.
- After dry-off, review last season's reproductive performance:
 - Confirm spring mating plans.
 - Order calf tags and calf supplies.
- Book herd testing for next lactation and bulk milk BVD testing.



Feed

- Identify poor-performing paddocks for autumn pasture renewal.
- Set up your grazing plan to:
 - achieve average pasture cover targets at dry-off
 - achieve cow condition targets for calving
 - extend round length in response to pasture growth rates.
- Check current levels of dry matter on-farm.
- Identify, source and supply feed and mineral requirements (e.g. selenium and magnesium).
- Plan winter feed transition:
 - Complete your autumn and winter feed budgets to achieve average pasture cover targets and cow BCS.
 - Check you'll have enough feed to get through to balance date.
 - Complete a feed transition plan for moving stock from pasture to winter crops.
 - Set up a winter crop paddock grazing plan that will:
 - minimise mud and reduce run-off
 - cope with extended wet weather periods.



Farm and equipment

- Assess maintenance needs for milking machine and shed:
 - Order replacement rubberware for the milking machine.
 - Book routine maintenance for vacuum pumps, pulsators, plant wash, cooling systems and teat-sprayer.
 - After completing maintenance, book a machine test to ensure equipment is fully operational.
- Set up calf shed, get clean bedding down and set up gates – before calving.
- Walk over the farm to check infrastructure, equipment and environmental issues:
 - Fix any on-farm hazards where possible and ensure safety signage is in place.
 - Identify where maintenance is required (e.g. vehicles, tools, gates, fencing reels and standards, effluent, tracks and races).
 - Identify and maintain riparian planting areas, and identify other on-farm planting needs.



More info and tools

- Assess up to eight areas of your farm's system using Farm Gauge – see dairynz.co.nz/farm-gauge
- Check out our website's people, business, animals, milking, feed and environment sections at dairynz.co.nz

TAPPING INTO TOMORROW'S TALENT

Since 2001, DairyNZ has supported hundreds of scholarship recipients into a career in dairying. These levy-funded scholarships are part of our commitment to growing dairying's future.

FACES OF THE FUTURE

YEAR 1



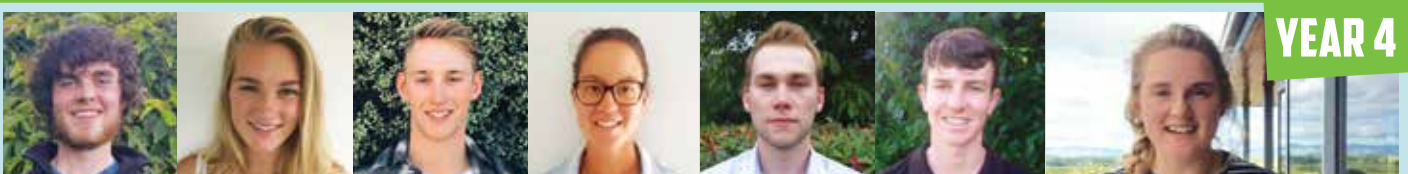
YEAR 2



YEAR 3



YEAR 4

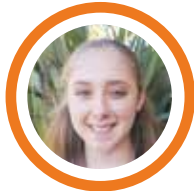


SCHOLAR SNAPSHOT

Our scholarship recipients come from a mix of urban and rural backgrounds, with most studying agri-science or agri-commerce qualifications at Lincoln, Massey and Waikato universities. Here are three of our current scholars.

MICHELLE CRAWFORD

18, from Whangarei, Northland



Year 1/2020: studying for a Bachelor of Agri-science at Massey University

I was born on a dairy farm in Whangarei, lived on a lifestyle block from age 2, and went to a rural primary school. Since 14, I've milked on a neighbour's small dairy farm during weekends and school holidays.

I enjoy the practical side of dairying. I love calving time and getting to know the animals. I'm keen on the environmental and sustainability side of things as well. Every day is a different day full of challenges.

This year I'm going to be away from home for the first time, so it'll be really important to have the support and guidance of the scholarship programme.

BEN CRANE

19, from New Plymouth, Taranaki



Year 2/2020: studying for a Bachelor of Agri-commerce at Massey University

I come from an urban background. One of the things I didn't understand was that farms are businesses.

Now I'm milking on a farm in Palmerston North, I realise the opportunity and diversity of jobs in the dairy sector. It's a great community and there's a feeling of belonging.

That, plus the mentoring and financial support I'm getting is helping me to drive both my education and career path.

I am interested in a career involving innovation and science within the dairy sector.

LEILANI LOBB

20, from Westerfield, Ashburton, Mid Canterbury



Year 3/2020: studying for a Bachelor of Agriculture at Lincoln University

Born on a Canterbury dairy farm, I've had a passion for the dairy sector from a young age. Currently, I work part-time throughout the study year (full time in the holidays) on a large-scale dairy farm (2000 cows/two cowsheds).

Dairying's wide range of opportunities both off- and on-farm, working with farmers and workday variety appeal to me. It's also a good pathway for progression.

Following my degree, I hope to get a full-time dairy farm position, progressing to a farm manager position within three years.

Long term, I aim to be in a secure 50:50 sharemilking position and working my way towards farm ownership.

\$250,000 worth of scholarships are provided annually (undergraduate and post-graduate/Masters).

Over 320 recipients have graduated since the scholarship programme began.

Of these, **85 percent** are working directly or indirectly in the dairy sector (either on-farm, in science, governance, business or leadership roles).



FAST FACTS



- Anyone can apply for a DairyNZ scholarship, from school-leavers to career-changers.
- As well as financial assistance (Years 2 and 3), DairyNZ scholarships provide invaluable mentoring, networking and other assistance (Years 1, 2 and 3).
- Scholarships can cover the full course of study or just the years needed to complete it.

Applications for the next intake open in September this year. For more information on undergraduate (and Masters) scholarships, see dairynz.co.nz/scholarships



Winter is coming – start planning now

The key to successful grazing of a winter crop is to start your planning early, as DairyNZ animal and feed developer Maitland Manning explains.

By March, you've put a lot of effort into getting good crop yields, selecting the right paddocks, planting crops, applying fertiliser – and hoping the weather plays ball.

However, a successful winter crop plan should also take into account feeding cows safely, environmental impacts and cow welfare requirements. Experienced farmers tell us they start working with their teams early (as in, now) to develop and implement a successful crop grazing management plan.

Feed cows effectively and safely

Check your animals' body condition score (BCS) now to see if they're on track to reach target (5.0 for mixed-age cows and 5.5 for heifers) at calving. Cows with good condition can withstand the cold better, as the fat layer beneath their skin provides insulation. For lighter cows, consider once-a-day milking in autumn or drying off lighter cows early to minimise BCS gain needed in winter.

Armed with BCS information, create winter feed budgets for different mobs to reach BCS targets at calving.

It's not too late to finish your set-up of the crop paddock for grazing. Remember to:

- use a long crop face, allowing all cows to access feed at the same time
- place supplement now to minimise tractor movements during winter
- provide access to water throughout winter, including portable water troughs

- fence off critical source areas (CSAs) on sloping paddocks. CSAs are low-lying areas where run-off accumulates. Leave CSAs ungrazed, or graze them only when dry.

Reduce mud and run-off

To reduce pugging and surface run-off, consider:

- shifting break fencing once or twice daily, rather than every few days, to reduce trampling and feed wastage
- back-fencing and using a portable water trough to minimise animal movements and pugging
- having an area of dry ground for cows during very wet weather
- strategically grazing downhill on sloping paddocks, to minimise surface run-off into CSAs.

Consider cow welfare

It's important to take care when transitioning cows on and off crops. Cows require a gradual increase in crop intake so the microbes in their rumen can adapt. Plan regular checks with your team to identify signs of illness, loss of BCS, lameness or down or lethargic cows, especially during the cows' transition onto crop.

Lastly, cows need at least eight hours of lying time per day. This reduces their risk of lameness and stress, which leads to better overall welfare and BCS gain. Manage crop feeding to minimise pugging and use dry ground for cows to lie down on in adverse weather.

Learn more about successful wintering at dairynz.co.nz/wintering

Clearing the way for change

DairyNZ's The Vision is Clear encourages everyone – urban, rural or in between – to take a collective approach to looking after our waterways. The message is getting through.

The Vision is Clear campaign has been underway for more than a year now and the response has been even better than we'd hoped for.

We continue to receive great feedback from the public and farmers, and hundreds of thousands of New Zealanders have read our articles, viewed our videos, seen our ads and commented on social media.

Positive perceptions

Latest research results show The Vision is Clear has had a very positive impact on people's perceptions of and attitudes towards dairy farming.

More people now believe dairy farmers are looking after waterways¹ and more people also recognise the shared responsibility of all New Zealanders to do so².

In 2019, we focused on celebrating successes with a series of in-depth stories that focus on what various groups, individuals and farmers around the country are doing to protect and improve our waterways.

Alongside this, we've been encouraging New Zealanders to join the movement and get actively involved.

Do Something Tree-warding

Launched at the end of October last year, Do Something Tree-warding is an easy way for anyone to make a difference – simply by donating a native tree (see thevisionisclear.co.nz).

One hundred percent of the donations made are passed on to conservation charity, Trees That Count, and each will result in a real native tree in the ground.

Trees donated through this initiative are being planted in community projects that benefit New Zealand's waterways this coming planting season. So far, Kiwis have donated more than 1300 trees and these have been matched to eight planting projects across New Zealand.

World Water Day

To celebrate World Water Day on March 22, The Vision is Clear has launched #ZMworldwaterday in partnership with ZM radio. This competition asks Kiwis to upload their favourite summer water photos from New Zealand rivers, lakes or beaches using the hashtag #ZMworldwaterday to be in to win. Farmers can enter too, so we encourage you to get creative and share a snap of what you're doing on-farm to celebrate World Water Day.

Find out more at

zmonline.com/win/win-with-the-vision-is-clear

BY THE NUMBERS

<p style="text-align: center;">Visitors to thevisionisclear.co.nz</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">313,457</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Social media engagement*</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">161,379</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Print ads</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">555</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Video views (including social)</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">5.38 MILLION</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Articles published</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">70</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Radio ads</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">1.57 MILLION</p>
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*shares, likes, and comments of
The Vision is Clear's Facebook posts



1. 41% of respondents agree that dairy farmers are looking after waterways, compared with 28% before the campaign.
2. 51% of respondents agree that all New Zealanders should be responsible for improving New Zealand's waterways, compared with 43% before the campaign

Source: NZME Online Panel. The Vision is Clear Survey November 2019.

Mark and Measure extras add up

Mark and Measure is offering even more to farm owners, contract milkers, and herd-owning or variable-order sharemilkers, as DairyNZ's Paul Bird explains.

It's incredibly rewarding for our team to see couples' and individuals' plans come together during a DairyNZ Mark and Measure course.

These courses give farmers a better sense of direction; they know what they need to do to achieve their personal vision of success – be that more family time, succession planning, buying a herd of cows or a farm, paying down debt, and more.

Recently, we've also added pre- and post-course support.

Pre-course analysis

Before starting a Mark and Measure course, farmers complete a pre-course DairyBase financial and physical analysis. This includes an interpretation report written by an experienced analyst, and a phone call to discuss key strengths and opportunities.

This analysis provides a comprehensive look at equity position, debt levels, operating profit, cash surpluses available to grow the business, and physical aspects of the farm, such as pasture eaten/hectare and 6-week in-calf rates.

Course attendees also complete a pre-course for Farm Gauge (DairyNZ's online farm self-assessment tool), which highlights where time and resources are best invested.

Post-course support

After going through the course, it's only natural for some farmers to lose a bit of their enthusiasm as time goes on. That's why we've introduced post-course coaching sessions through Coach Approach Rural.

This ongoing support helps farmers stay focused on their business goals and actions.

2020 courses

These courses fill up quickly, and we're also seeing farmers who took one five or more years ago returning for a refresh. Don't miss out!

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



DairyNZ project manager Paul Bird.

MARK AND MEASURE COURSES

TAUPO ➔ 19-21 MAY

Wairakei Resort

HANMER ➔ 16-18 JUNE

Heritage Hanmer Springs

WEST COAST* ➔ 30 JUNE-2 JULY

Ashley Hotel, Greymouth

* For Westland suppliers only

2020

Register
by April 5,
2020

"The one-on-one coaching session was fantastic. Having coaching – after stepping away from the course and having had time to process everything – helped us get more out of the course."

Anita and Shannon Keoghan, contract milkers, Mark and Measure 2019

Working through the challenges

DairyNZ's recent Dairy Environment Leaders' Forum was an opportunity to show others that dairy farmers are responding to sector issues and policy direction, says chair Tracy Brown.



Late last year, our Dairy Environment Leaders traded their overalls and gumboots for suits and dress shoes, taking their positive dairying message to Wellington for the seventh farmer-led forum.

The forum's theme, 'Supporting communities and embracing change', recognised the degree of change our sector is facing. Issues such as reducing emissions and improving water quality are front of mind for both farmers and the general public.

The forum was an opportunity for our farmers to demonstrate to urban New Zealanders, politicians, policy-makers, media and our harshest critics that dairy farmers have a genuine willingness to embrace change. We also emphasised that farmers want to do what is right and fair, and there is plenty of good work being done on-farm already.

Unpicking the challenges

Day one of the forum identified the challenges we all face as a sector; day two broke down those challenges to manageable pieces; and day three was about individual farmers picking up the challenges and figuring out how to work through them. This clarified that the way forward for our sector will be through enabling farmers to co-develop regional solutions for regional issues.

Throughout the forum, farmers had the opportunity to network with like-minded people, learn from each other's successes and failures, and engage with politicians and decision-

makers. They also had the chance to develop new skills, such as engaging confidently with media, making effective written submissions to Government and exploring how we can all get better at sharing each other's personal stories.

Grasping the opportunities

As a sector, we must continue to look for opportunities to create transformational partnerships with people and organisations – including the Government – who want to work with us to improve environmental outcomes.

Last year we saw the agricultural sector and Government come together in a world-first partnership to build an enduring farm-level emission reduction framework – He waka eke noa. We're hopeful that something similar might also be possible when it comes to other environmental challenges.

As one of our delegates, Edwin Mabonga, told the Prime Minister at the forum: "If you want to go fast, you go alone. If you want to go far, you take people with you."

Yes, there will be an economic impact, but this isn't just a cost – it's an investment in the future of our sector and our rural communities. This investment will enable our children and grandchildren to farm sustainably with pride and responsibility.

Learn more about the Dairy Environment Leaders and their annual forum by going to dairynz.co.nz/delf

BCS some cows, or all cows?

Is it necessary to body condition score more than just a selection of cows when making dry-off decisions? DairyNZ developer Katie Saunders targets the truth.



Many farmers believe they need to body condition score (BCS) only a portion of a mob, commonly 70 cows, to form a clear picture of what is going on. While this is acceptable for general monitoring, we need more detail to make informed decisions when determining dry-off management.

If you BCS only a selection of your cows, you may miss the opportunity to lift condition in some animals and revert to maintenance for others. As a result, a significant proportion of your cows may end up too thin or too fat. This has negative implications for their future production and reproductive performance.

It is important to BCS *all* cows in late lactation so you can cater to your cows' different needs by drying them off in mobs and managing them accordingly. This will ensure they're able to gain the required condition to reach calving targets (BCS 5.0 for mixed-aged cows and 5.5 for first- and second-calvers).

Reaching a compromise

Reaching BCS calving targets will help set your cows up for a successful lactation. The targets are based on New Zealand and international research from the past 40 years. They're a trade-off between achieving the greatest energy efficiency for milk production and maximising reproductive efficiency, while reducing the risk of metabolic disease, uterine infections and mastitis.

Achieving the targets requires careful planning at dry-off. To learn more about how to do this, read our article titled 'Picking her dry-off date on BCS' from *Inside Dairy* February 2020 – go to dairynz.co.nz/insidedairy

Know the score

Want to take your herd's BCS assessment a step further? We recommend you use a certified BCS assessor.

DairyNZ's BCS Assessor Certification programme provides assessors with regular training and calibration to help ensure condition scoring is standardised across New Zealand. By using a certified BCS assessor, you can be confident the information you receive is independent, accurate and consistent.

For more information on the programme and for a list of certified assessors, go to dairynz.co.nz/bcsprogramme

Also, visit dairynz.co.nz/BCS to learn more about BCS strategies.

Myth When making dry-off decisions, I need to BCS only a selection of my cows.



BUSTED



It is important to BCS *all* cows in late lactation.

Using milk to pregnancy test

DairyNZ's InCalf project manager Samantha Tennent explores the value of a recent technological development: using a cow's milk to test her for pregnancy.



Here's how this new technique works: when a cow is pregnant, she produces pregnancy-associated glycoproteins (PAGs). These can be detected in the milk from 28 days after conception. This means farmers can ask for pregnancy testing to be included alongside their routine herd test.

Advantages

Milk pregnancy testing can provide a non-invasive, cost-effective option for farmers who aren't early-aged scanning. But there are also some options all farmers can consider.

The technique can be used early in the mating period to identify pregnant cows. If identified, those cows could be managed separately, reducing the mob that still needs heat detection. But there needs to be caution with this method in case a cow loses her pregnancy while in the separate mob. Milk pregnancy testing could also be used to check for phantom cows during mating.

To prevent the unnecessary cost of carrying an empty cow over the winter period, milk pregnancy testing can be used to recheck any cows you're in doubt about, and identify any abortions, to remove those cows before wintering.

If there is a specific case requiring early testing for management decisions, for example culling in a drought, milk pregnancy testing could be a quick way to help make those decisions.

Limitations

PAGs cannot give any indication of the stage of gestation. Therefore, recording programmes will default to the last recorded mating. It's helpful to know which cows are pregnant and when they conceived, as this determines when they will calve. The only way to find that out is by early-aged pregnancy testing.

Early-aged pregnancy testing helps ensure individual cows are dried off at the right time, based on age, body condition score and accurate due-to-calve dates, and dried-off cows can be better allocated to dry cow mobs for wintering. In turn, this allows accurate feed allocation, especially on crop, and easier management and observation of springing cows through the calving transition.

If using this tool in conjunction with early-aged pregnancy

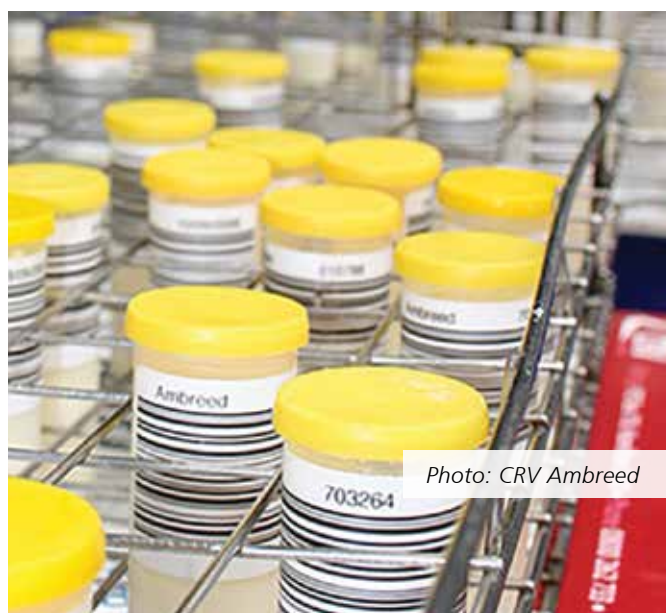


Photo: CRV Ambreed

testing, it's important not to record the results in your herd management programme: it could override the scanning results. But if this is the only method of testing used on-farm (or traditionally, the farmer only records empty cows), the results can be automatically updated in their recording programme.

If an animal has recently aborted, it will take two weeks for their PAGs to drop. This can lead to the milk pregnancy test returning a false positive.

Find out more at dairynz.co.nz/reproduction

Key points

1. Milk pregnancy testing is a tool to aid management decisions.
2. It can be combined with a routine herd test.
3. It doesn't indicate the stage of gestation, so it can't replace early-aged pregnancy testing.

Biodiversity consultation may affect you

The Government is currently consulting on a proposed National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity, which will affect some dairy farmers.

Under the new rules, councils would be required to map and protect significant natural areas of indigenous biodiversity.

If you have wetlands, indigenous vegetation or indigenous fauna habitat (like native birds or insects) on your farm, you could be affected by the proposals. Other farmers could also be affected, e.g. if your farm borders an area of indigenous vegetation.

The changes may have an impact on the type of activities that can be carried out on your farm. Submissions close March 14, 2020. Read more at dairynz.co.nz/biodiversity



M. bovis update

DairyNZ has recently deployed a small team of research technicians to help speed up the testing process for *Mycoplasma bovis* (*M. bovis*) around New Zealand. Working within the *M. bovis* Programme, our experienced staff are taking blood samples on farms that are being tested for the disease. The team will spend most of their time on dairy farms.

Rosie's year on the farm

DairyNZ's education ambassador, Rosie the cow, is now helping kids (and their parents) learn about a year on the dairy farm through the different seasons: 'healthy spring', 'safe summer', 'action autumn' and 'workflow winter'.

With the help of her friends, such as Beetrice the Bee, Toby the cat and farmhand Matt, Rosie shares the importance of the seasons on-farm. She's also teaching children about what farmers do to care for their cows and the environment, and what they do to make sure everyone stays safe all year round.

Find out all about it at rosiesworld.co.nz



Spring



Tell us what a 'good boss' means to you – and win!



We want to find out what people in farming value in a good boss, and then share this with our farmers.

Send us a 15- to 20-second video explaining what a 'good boss' means to you, and you could win yourself a BBQ (or a \$1000 Farm Source voucher for your club if you're a NZ Young Farmers member!). Thanks to Farm Source for both prizes.

For details of how to enter, visit dairynz.co.nz/goodbossvideo

Your entry must be in by March 31, 2020



Research: changing to autumn calving

Head along to DairyNZ's Taranaki Farmers' Forum on March 11 to learn about the effects of transitioning an entire herd from spring calving to autumn calving.

Transitioning to autumn calving is a topic that's particularly relevant to coastal Taranaki farmers, who face extended dry periods in summer but more consistent growth rates over winter. As a result, a Dairy Trust Taranaki project (DTT), supported and funded by DairyNZ, has been looking at how farmers could move their calving to one season later, to better suit the local climatic conditions.

Masters student Jake Jarman is analysing the data from the project. Alongside DTT science technician Linda Cruickshank and DTT operations manager Debbie McCallum, Jake will present provisional results of the Kavanagh farm trial at the Hawera Farmers' Forum event. The trial compares a steady-state spring-calving herd with a herd that's transitioned from spring calving to autumn calving.

Differences in milk production, days-in-milk, 6-week in-calf rate, liveweight, body condition score, pasture growth and supplementary feed use will be presented.

"Local farmers have selected this as a topic that's important to them, so it's exciting to be able to aid their decision-making in this area by providing good quality data and analysis," says Jake.

"The opportunity to return to Taranaki and work on a local project was too good to pass up, especially one that looks at the impacts of a decision on a whole farm system, not just one aspect."

Return home

Being a part of the autumn-calving project has allowed Jake to return to his home region. He grew up in Inglewood, where his parents are still dairy farming, and he found his calling at Inglewood High School.

"I had a great high school teacher who planted the seed and helped inspire me to pursue a career in agriculture," he says.

Jake is also a DairyNZ scholarship recipient and recipient of the Colin Holmes Dairy Scholarship (co-funded by the DTT and DairyNZ). He completed a Bachelor of Commerce (Agriculture) at Lincoln University and is now a Massey University Postgraduate Research Student working at DairyNZ.



Dairy Trust Taranaki operations manager Debbie McCallum with DairyNZ Massey post-grad student Jake Jarman.

Supporting research

To ensure Taranaki has access to targeted and regionally relevant research, DairyNZ funds and supports work led by DTT. The trust, which was formed in 2016 to oversee dairy industry research in the region, consists of local dairy farmers, rural professionals, and representatives from DairyNZ, Fonterra and local and regional councils.

DTT's four farms are Stratford Farm in Stratford, Waimate West Farm near Manaia, and Gibson Farm and Kavanagh Farm near Hawera.

➡ To register for the Taranaki Farmers' Forum, visit dairynz.co.nz/farmersforum

➡ Find out about DTT at dairynz.co.nz/taranaki



March events

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
						1
2	3	4	05 WEST COAST Find out how Reefton farmers Aaron Silcock and Sarah Gibson are diversifying their business into hemp production. For field day details and registrations, contact Angela Leslie on 021 277 2984.			8
9	10	11 TARANAKI This region's Farmers' Forum 2020 event will be held at the Dairy Trust Taranaki Gibson Farm in Hawera. Details from Phoebe Hall on 027 549 0460 or visit dairynz.co.nz/farmersforum to register.				15
16	17 WAIKATO Richmond Downs/Walton Discussion Group meets between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. to discuss seasonal issues affecting farmers in the region. For details, contact Frank Portegys on 027 807 9685.		19	20	21	22
23			26 CANTERBURY/NORTH OTAGO Ikawai/Morven/Glenavy Discussion Group has its next meeting on a host farm, to be held between 10.45 a.m. and 1 p.m. Contact Alan Hall for details on 027 290 5988.			29
30	31					

FOR A FULL LIST OF WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS MONTH, VISIT DAIRYNZ.CO.NZ/EVENTS

NORTHLAND

Interested in seeing the 2019/20 budget update from a Northland owner-operated, System 2, once-a-day milking (OAD) business? Animal reproduction and herd improvement are important for this farm, which is part of DairyNZ's Budget Case Studies project. That's why this business prioritises time and money to ensure it meets, or exceeds, industry targets.



The business faces many of the challenges typical of a Northland farm, with 30 percent of the farm being of rolling contour, flats prone to wet and flooding, and 40 percent in kikuyu. Its budgeting approach deflates revenue and inflates costs, which ensures there's enough leeway in the budget to cope with Northland's typically extreme climate variations.

View the farm's 2019/20 update, including a summary of its calving and mating performance, at dairynz.co.nz/budgetcasestudies

WAIKATO

Euan and Mikki McLeod are currently in their second season of leasing and their first full season of OAD milking. They'll host a DairyNZ OAD discussion group in Te Awamutu on March 5. Come along to see how the change is going and what the couple would do differently if they were to go OAD again.

If you've been full-season OAD for some time, Euan and Mikki would love your feedback on things they could be doing better. For those of you thinking of making the change to OAD, it's a chance to hear how it's been going for them. For event details go to dairynz.co.nz/events

BAY OF PLENTY

As part of our ongoing Budget Case Studies project, find out how a low-input, owner-operated, System 2 farm near Edgecumbe is performing three years on from the devastating 2017 Whakatane floods.

Milking 570 to 580 Friesian cows, on two similarly sized milking platforms, the dairy operation is supported by 52ha.

Check out the farm's 2019/20 numbers and management decisions at dairynz.co.nz/budgetcasestudies

Upper North Island – Head: Sharon Morrell 027 492 2907

Northland

Regional Leader	Tareen Ellis	027 499 9021
Far North	Amy Weston	027 807 9686
Lower Northland	Hamish Matthews	021 242 5719
Whangarei West	Ryan Baxter	021 809 569

Waikato

Regional Leader	Wilma Foster	027 246 2147
South Auckland	Mike Bramley	027 486 4344
Hauraki Plains/Coromandel	Jaimee Morgan	021 245 8055
Te Aroha/Waihi	Euan Lock	027 293 4401
Cambridge/Hamilton	Lizzy Moore	021 242 2127
Hamilton	Ashley Smith	027 364 9296
Huntly/Tatuanui	Brigitte Ravera	027 288 1244
Matamata/Kereone	Frank Portegys	027 807 9685
Pirongia	Steve Canton	027 475 0918
Otorohanga/King Country	Denise Knop	027 513 7201
Arapuni	Kirsty Dickens	027 483 2205

Bay of Plenty

Regional Leader	Andrew Reid	027 292 3682
Central Plateau	Colin Grainger-Allen	021 225 8345
South Waikato/Rotorua South	Angela Clarke	027 276 2675
Eastern Bay of Plenty	Andrew Reid	027 292 3682
Central Bay of Plenty	Kevin McKinley	027 288 8238

Lower North Island – Head: Rob Brazendale 021 683 139

Taranaki

Regional Leader	Mark Laurence	027 704 5562
South Taranaki	Nathan Clough	021 246 5663
Central Taranaki	Emma Hawley	021 276 5832
Coastal Taranaki	Caroline Benson	027 210 2137
North Taranaki	Ian Burmeister	027 593 4122

Lower North Island

Horowhenua/Coastal and Southern Manawatu	Kate Stewart	027 702 3760
Wairarapa/Tararua	Rob Brazendale	021 683 139
Eketahuna	Andrew Hull	027 298 7260
Hawke's Bay	Gray Beagley	021 286 4346
Northern Manawatu/Wanganui/Woodville	Rob Brazendale	021 683 139
Central Manawatu/Rangitikei	Charlotte Grayling	027 355 3764

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	Ross Bishop	027 563 1785
North Canterbury	Amy Chamberlain	027 243 0943
Central Canterbury	Ross Bishop	027 563 1785
Mid Canterbury	Stuart Moorhouse	027 513 7200
South Canterbury	Heather Donaldson	027 593 4124
North Otago	Alana Hall	027 290 5988

Southland/South Otago

Regional Leader	Ollie Knowles	027 226 4420
West Otago/Gore	Ollie Knowles	027 226 4420
South Otago	Guy Michaels	021 302 034
Central/Northern Southland	Nicole E Hammond	021 240 8529
Eastern Southland	Nathan Nelson	021 225 6931
Western/Central Southland	Leo Pekar	027 211 1389

DairyNZ directors

Jim van der Poel	021 848484
Elaine Cook	027 223 2049
Colin Glass	027 486 4064
Jacqueline Rowarth	027 694 4334
Peter Schuyt	027 557 4242
Jo Coughlan	021 522 142
Tracy Brown	027 291 1716

Or send an email to: chair@dairynz.co.nz or director@dairynz.co.nz

LOWER NORTH ISLAND

Discuss growing financial resilience in your agri-business at a Building a Bankable Agri-business event in Rongotea on March 31.

With every bank in the region represented, this is a great opportunity to ask rural bankers direct questions, find out how the banking environment has changed, and understand how to manage your interest rate. DairyNZ is one of a number of partners involved in running the event.

For more details and to register go to dairynz.co.nz/events

TOP OF SOUTH ISLAND/WEST COAST

DairyNZ and Beef + Lamb NZ have collaborated to bring you two cross-sector events where you'll be able to discuss opportunities and challenges around farming this season.

These informative workshops (at Whataroa Hall on March 3 and Ikamatua Hall on March 4) will focus on feed budgeting and winter management. There's been a lot of commentary regarding winter management practices, so take the time to have a look at some strategies to set up and plan, so you can implement good management practices. Each event will also include a farm visit to have a look at some cropping, so bring your (clean!) gumboots.

Registration is required – go to dairynz.co.nz/events for more details.

CANTERBURY/NORTH OTAGO

Don't miss out on registering for the DairyNZ Farmers' Forum, to be held at the Ashley Dene Research and Development Station in Springston on March 12.

Want to spend less time in the shed but OAD doesn't suit your system? Get up to date with the initial trial results on the use of variable milking intervals across different times of the year: find out how it might suit your farm system. You'll also hear from guest speakers, economist Cameron Bagrie and celebrity chef Nadia Lim. Find out more and register at dairynz.co.nz/farmersforum

SOUTHLAND/SOUTH OTAGO

Future, food and science solutions are the themes of the upcoming DairyNZ Farmers' Forum at the Southern Dairy Hub on March 3.

The regional focus for the event will be: 'What are the Winter Grazing Taskforce recommendations and how are farmers able to adapt to the proposed changes?'

This session will showcase the trial work behind fodder beet and kale crops, as well as infrastructure options for wintering cows in Southland. Guest speakers at the event include economist Cameron Bagrie and celebrity chef Nadia Lim. Find out more and register at dairynz.co.nz/farmersforum

IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE:

Inside Dairy

Your levy in action

- **Two top farms open their books**
Real-world tips on financial planning



- **Bank capital changes**
Find out how they'll affect farmers

- **Preparing for a new season**
Stay on track with our easy checklist

- **Mythbuster: BCS at dry-off**
Make the right decisions



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