

Inside Dairy

May 2019

Your levy in action

FARMER
FEEDBACK
issue

YOUR *stories*,
YOUR *photos*

FARMER TO
FARMER Q&A

SYSTEM
CHANGE
SAVES
BUSINESS

CREATIVE PATH TO
FARM OWNERSHIP

DairyNZ



over the fence...

I'm pretty excited about this month's issue of *Inside Dairy* because we've devoted it to answering your questions.

We recently asked what you want to hear about. The response was overwhelming, with more than a hundred excellent ideas (the free bike prize donated by Honda may have helped). These ideas will help us shape future *Inside Dairy* magazines as well, so thank you to those who took the time to ask us a question.

We care about what's on your mind. It's no exaggeration that our entire aim at DairyNZ is to help you farm profitably in the best way you can, on your land, with your animals and getting the most out of your people. We've listened to your questions, and responded in this edition.

In other news, there's been an increasing focus on climate change over recent months, with the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, Simon Upton, issuing his latest recommendations on climate change. Importantly, he reinforced that methane doesn't have the same global warming impact as carbon dioxide.

Also released in the past month were the first results of an 18-month project to understand how on-farm changes to reduce greenhouse gas emissions could impact a farm's profitability and productivity. Owl Farm in Cambridge was the first of 12 farms to have its results released, showing the complexity of this challenge. It's already clear that every farm is different and there isn't a 'one-size-fits-all' package of changes. However, what we do know is that the first step to knowing how to manage biological greenhouse gas emissions on your farm is to measure, or estimate, your emissions. You can read more on page 11.

Finally, our thoughts are with West Coast farmers, who are still getting their farms back on track after a significant storm and flooding event at the end of March.

Please drop me an email if you have any feedback or questions –
tim.mackle@ceo.dairynz.co.nz

Tim Mackle
Chief executive
DairyNZ



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It's been a long journey but Susie and Michael Woodward have finally achieved their dream of ownership. Find out how they got there.

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Shifting the family farm down by two systems has been a business-saver for Waikato dairy farmer Alan Syme.

Inside Dairy is the official magazine of DairyNZ Ltd. It is sent to all New Zealand dairy farmers, and selected government agencies, dairy sector organisations and rural professionals.

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On the cover: A big thanks to Manawatu contract milkers Sarah and Luke Ackerman for this month's stunning cover shot of Millie, a purebred Border Collie who was eight weeks old at the time of being photographed. Sarah says Millie loves being out on the farm rain, hail or sunshine. "She gets the cows in with us everyday. If we aren't up and outside in the morning on time, she starts barking to make sure we haven't slept in."

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TAKE 5... TIPS FOR FARMERS

1. Farmers' Forums – this month

Head along to your regional Farmers' Forum this month for future perspectives on dairying. Hear great speakers, take part in practical workshops, and catch up with mates, while being part of what the future holds for our dairy sector. Register at dairynz.co.nz/farmersforum



2. Transition cow tips

Do you have a management plan for the transition period? Or are you looking for tips on how to prevent metabolic disorders, such as milk fever or ketosis, this calving? Check out the new transition cow management section on the DairyNZ website – dairynz.co.nz/transition

3. Easing the payroll burden

Running the payroll and admin side of a dairy farming business can be pretty full-on. Payroll software (e.g. PaySauce) can help reduce the burden by saving you time and getting you much more compliant in the process. Once you've tried it you won't look back!



4. Maximising people power

Now's the time to talk to your existing and incoming farm team members about their training and personal development needs for the year ahead. Progressing their career is not only good for them, it's also good for your farm's success. You'll find great advice, checklists and tools for employers and employees at dairynz.co.nz/people



5. Shifting stock?

If you're moving stock off-farm for grazing or to a new property for next season, make sure you take precautions to protect them from diseases. Focus on preventing contact between your animals and other herds. Find out more at dairynz.co.nz/biosecurity



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.



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FARMER to FARMER

INSIDE DAIRY ASKED ITS READERS WHAT THEY'D LIKE TO HEAR ABOUT FROM OTHER FARMERS. HERE, FARMERS FROM FOUR LOCATIONS AND A RANGE OF ROLES AND FARM SIZES TALK ABOUT FARMING AS THEY SEE IT.



EMMELINE (EM) MITCHELL,
FARM MANAGER,
WAIRARAPA

Em is a farm manager assisting Mark and Brigitt Le Fleming on their 135ha farm at Eketahuna, peak-milking 300 cows this season (the farm's second full season on OAD). Em lives on-farm with her daughter Aurora (9). They've been here three seasons and this season is Em's first as farm manager.



MARCUS AND KATHRYN TUCK,
FAMILY FARM OWNERS,
WEST COAST

The Tucks are in their fourth season on their 200-hectare (ha) (effective) family-owned farm at Rotomanu, southeast of Greymouth. They milk 420 cows once a day (OAD) and employ one manager. Marcus previously farmed for more than 30 years in the North Island.



CASEY MEIKLEJOHN,
FARM WORKER/2IC,
SOUTH AUCKLAND

Casey's had five seasons farming, with this season seeing her as second-in-command (2IC) on Jamie Lyons' 270ha family farm at Mangatawhiri. It's a mixed farm, featuring dairying, beef, ewes/lambs and raising young stock. Dairying accounts for 90ha and milking 220 cows.



SHANNON AND ANITA KEOGHAN,
CONTRACT MILKERS,
CANTERBURY

Shannon (*right*) and her wife Anita are in their second season running 1200 cows on a 400ha corporate farm in Oxford, Canterbury, one of 32 owned by Craigmore Farms in the South Island. Both see farming as a great lifestyle where hard work can translate into financial success.

QUESTION TIME

1 WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO MAKE A SUCCESSFUL START AT SHAREMILKING OR CONTRACT MILKING?

As farm worker/2IC Casey Meiklejohn puts it: "Find a farm owner you get along with!" Contract milkers Shannon and Anita Keogh also say it's important to do your homework on employers and check out the infrastructure versus labour required. "Get a rural accountant to check your numbers; get your lawyer to check over your contract."

Farm manager Em says: "From the get-go, you need to set goals – smart goals. Work towards truly achieving those things. Show you're committed to benefitting someone's business." Farm owner Marcus Tuck is also aware of the importance of goal-setting. "That, plus the standard 'work hard/save hard'. Don't buy too many coffees down at the coffee shop!"

2 WHAT TIPS DO YOU HAVE FOR PROGRESSING THROUGH THE SECTOR?

Marcus says that when it comes to goal-setting, "don't set them too high or too low", revisit those targets regularly and don't over-extend. "Set your 'normals' on the average over the last 10 years – not the 'new normal' in a one-off year. Use that as your benchmark."

Em has joined discussion and progression groups, bounced ideas off other farmers and she's involved with Dairy Women's Network – each effort is "a free learning tool!". She also entered this season's Dairy Industry Awards to get an idea of how she's doing alongside others in dairying.

For Shannon and Anita, it's about "understanding your net worth and how you can improve it. For example, by reducing personal debt, consolidating, earning extra income". They've also

Em Mitchell (with her dog, Biscuit):
"Set goals - smart goals."





“WE GIVE REGULAR AND CONSISTENT TIME OFF – WE DON’T CHANGE THE ROSTER FOR CALVING OR MATING.”

Shannon (left) and Anita value work/life balance for their staff.



attended DairyNZ's Biz start and Biz grow workshops, and will soon be doing DairyNZ's Mark and Measure.

3 ANY INNOVATIVE IDEAS FOR IMPROVING STAFF RETENTION AND ATTRACTING STAFF TO OUR SECTOR?

“Education and training are important,” says Marcus. “We offer ITO training to Level 5 for employees and we

encourage them to do that. We pay for them to do it but if they fail one year they pay for their next year.”

Shannon says she and Anita also encourage staff education: “When they are ready, we get them into ITO and help them with exposure on developing their skill set to climb the ladder. It’s more genuine on their behalf than pushing it down their throats.”

Communication-wise, Marcus also recommends using written reports on a weekly basis, rather than

Casey Meiklejohn has her eye on her dairying future.



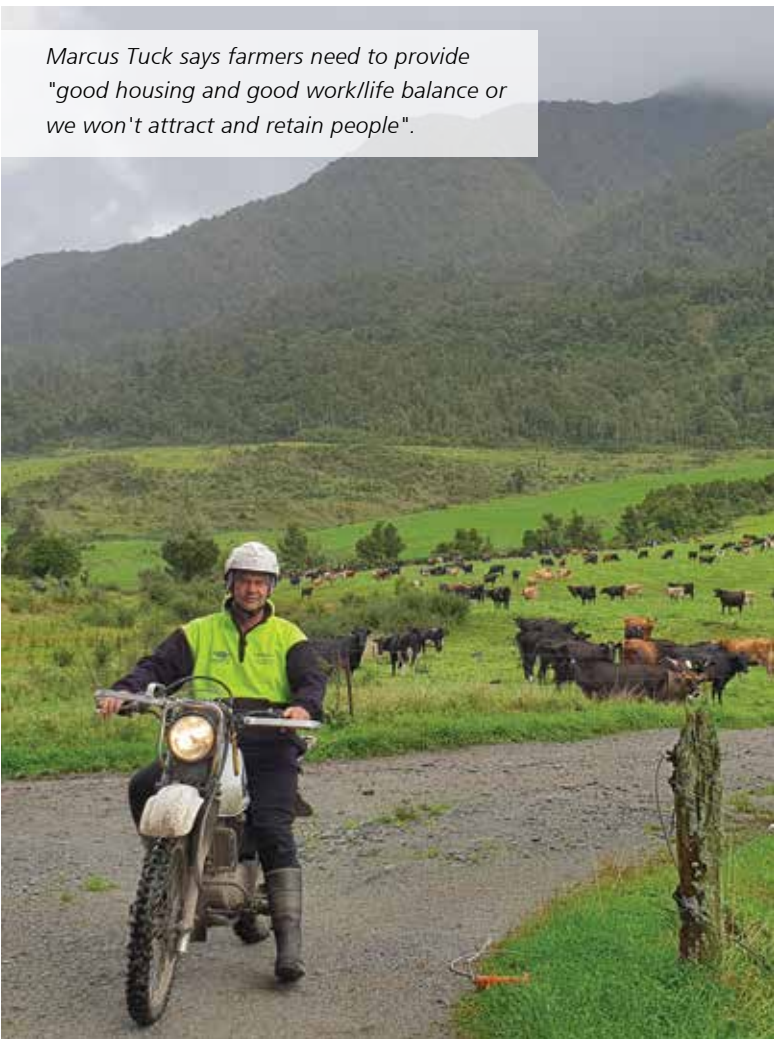
just conversations, to improve communication between everyone on-farm, while Casey and her boss Jamie get together for breakfast after milking, most days.

Marcus wasn't the only one who commented on the pressure to "fulfil our needs for good housing and good work/life balance or we won't attract and retain people". The Keoghans agree: "Housing can be a killer and shared accommodation is the biggest cause of staff leaving."

Work/life balance is a big issue; it's "huge to millenials", say Shannon and Anita. "We give regular and consistent time off – we don't change the roster for calving or mating. Over calving, I would rather take the hit of having one staff member less for four days of the month than have a disgruntled employee who missed a social event on that weekend. Too much shed time can also kill staff motivation."

Flexibility's made a big difference to Em Mitchell's ability to stay in dairying, as has OAD milking. "To be able to be a dairy farmer and a mum at the same time has been exceptional." She's also a fan of job rotation, which helps prevent boredom and grows capability across the team. Being given a passion-based project is also a winner in her eyes, and so is being told the 'why' behind decisions.

Marcus Tuck says farmers need to provide "good housing and good work/life balance or we won't attract and retain people".



“ TO BE ABLE TO BE A DAIRY FARMER AND A MUM AT THE SAME TIME HAS BEEN EXCEPTIONAL. ”

4 WHAT ARE THE BEST WAYS TO START A NEW SEASON OR LEAVE THE OLD ONE?

Marcus advocates having regular team meetings, as well as sitting down annually to review things. Em suggests celebrating at season's end – perhaps a barbecue for the team. "I also like to give the boss a gift to show how I've really appreciated what I've had from them over that time."

For starting a new season, our farmers say you should aim to provide a written handbook, and explain its goals and your expectations. Involve the team in building plans, policies and budgets so they take ownership of shared decisions and stay accountable. With health and safety inductions, try the Keoghans' approach: a two-week process which 'buddies up' new staff with an existing employee.



"Low payout versus high cost – that's what I see is the issue when it comes to limited budgets," says Marcus.

KEEPING OUR
CONTENT FOCUSED
ON *you*

Many thanks to our farmers in this article who provided us with a snapshot of their views across a few aspects of farming. Over the coming months, suggestions given to us by *Inside Dairy* readers will continue to shape this magazine. Find *Inside Dairy* online at dairynz.co.nz/inside-dairy



5 HOW DO YOU THINK THE DAIRY SECTOR IS EVOLVING?

All our farmers agree science is making a big difference to on-farm decision-making, but there are positive and negative things about the way the sector is changing. "I think it's moving towards a more corporate way, which I think is disappointing," says Marcus. "We've got to be very careful that we don't lose the family farm."

Casey agrees: "On the whole, it's getting bigger and more corporate. I don't know if that's a good thing or not. Once you have bigger farms, the staffing issues grow. It's harder to get, say, four or five staff whose personalities match. It creates more of a 'factory farm' approach. You get cowsheds running six, seven, eight times a day and that's all people are doing."

On a more positive note, Casey thinks "technology is speeding up processes a lot and animal care is going in the right direction too, plus there's all the environmental work that's going in. Having farms that people are proud of and

that kids in the next generation can enjoy is pretty cool."

"I think [the sector is] going backwards in the labour side of things," Shannon says. "It's almost impossible to employ people."

Meanwhile, Em says: "I think it's great to see the new restrictions coming in which help encourage farmers to ensure their staff are getting better time off, better work/life balance and flexibility in their work. Although, dairying is not 'just a job', it's a lifestyle."

6 HOW DO YOU APPROACH USING A LIMITED BUDGET?

"Low payout versus high cost – that's what I see is the issue when it comes to limited budgets," says Marcus.

"Our focus now is on costs rather than income and now we're making a profit."

The Keoghans say stick to the basics and do things well. "Protect your milk – you need to hit production to dilute costs. Always know your feed situation. Keep up shed,



plant and equipment maintenance – it’s the unexpected costs that blow budgets.”

While not involved directly in budgeting, Em has some practical suggestions. “Maximise your grass and avoid buying in feed. Do farm walks to monitor things – they’re so worth it. Keep on top of good pasture management.”

Casey has one tip that immediately springs to mind: “Fertiliser – just put on enough to keep things ticking along.”

7 WHAT NEW IDEAS, INNOVATIONS, PRACTICES AND APPS ARE YOU USING?

“Getting our children involved in the farm has been an innovation for me – I don’t control everything,” says Marcus. “Also, doing OAD for the last four seasons has made a big impact on our farming system.”

For Em, putting their first-calving heifers on OAD four weeks prior to and during artificial insemination has been great for their overall health, without affecting production.

Em also uses Minda Live and has used the SmartSAMM

“GETTING OUR CHILDREN INVOLVED IN THE FARM HAS BEEN AN INNOVATION FOR ME – I DON’T CONTROL EVERYTHING.”

calculator. “I’ve also started using the (DairyNZ) Body Condition Score app just to get an idea of where the girls are sitting.” Casey cites Minda, and DairyNZ’s Healthy Hoof and Envirowalk apps as useful.

As well as using Minda Lookup and Protrack, Shannon and Anita use Farmax for their farm’s physical budget. Another innovation has been their using sexed semen to lock in required heifer replacements in the first three weeks of mating. “This allows us to have beef breed live calf sales for the following four weeks. The aim is to move away from fully relying on ‘bobby calf’ services,” says Shannon. Their staff must also have their own smartphones. They’re provided with a phone allowance, as well as free wifi at the shed. Each phone runs Craigmores health and safety app Auditz, customised to each staff member’s login with their responsibilities and instant notification of near-misses. The Keoghans use a Fields area measurement app to improve accuracy and time efficiency in relation to their break fences, and their staff use Fonterra’s On Farm app for farm collections.

While PaySauce is a more widely used pay software app across the dairying sector, the Keoghans use another app, Payroll. They’re pretty happy with how it’s improved on-farm efficiency and saved time for themselves and their staff.

8 HOW DO YOU GET THE BEST FROM YOUR SOIL?

Regularly soil-testing seems to be the key. Both Marcus and Casey are careful not to over-fertilise on their respective properties. “Targeting our fertiliser to those paddocks that need it is good for the environment and saves dollars – and test costs are offset by the drop in fertiliser spend,” says Casey.

The Keoghans are part of the Waimakariri Irrigation Scheme, using the ReGen app. “It has info regarding soil moisture, temperature, and our water flow from each pivot, so it gives us a more accurate reading on what we’ve put on, and what our moisture levels are,” says Shannon. “It gives us a five-day forecast on when to irrigate. So that helps us not waste our water.” Over the last two years, Shannon and Anita have soil-sampled each paddock to build up fertility, and they follow best practice with nitrogen.



Shannon (pictured) and Anita use a Fields area measurement app to improve accuracy and time efficiency in relation to their break fences.



“Having farms that people are proud of and that kids in the next generation can enjoy is pretty cool.”

Hosting a school farm visit is one way to help non-farmers understand what truly happens on dairy farms.



You asked, we answered

Why aren't more farmers going to once-a-day milking and what are some strategies for reducing nitrogen losses? We put those questions and more to experts here at DairyNZ.

Q > How can dairy farmers combat misinformation about what happens on dairy farms, especially when incorrect information is spread quickly via social media?



Answered by Lee Cowan, senior engagement and communications manager

The best way to combat misinformation is to tell the real, accurate story about what happens on New Zealand dairy farms. You can do that by posting stories and photos on social media, or by inviting friends, family and other people to your farm. This is about showing non-farmers what it's really like. You can also share your stories with local media outlets, or simply by talking to members

of the community when you're at a BBQ or watching a local sports match. At DairyNZ, we're always looking for farmer stories as well, so please contact me at Lee.Cowan@dairynz.co.nz

When something inaccurate is posted online (Facebook, for example), there are many ways to deal with it. Ultimately though, it'll make a big difference if people – farmers and non-farmers – jump online to point out the inaccuracy and bring some truth to the situation.

There's a range of practical things dairy farmers can do to combat misinformation. DairyNZ has created two guides full of tips to help farmers tell their stories. You can download *Social Media 101* at dairynz.co.nz/social-media and order a copy of *Sharing your stories* from info@dairynz.co.nz

Q > How do we deal with the challenges of synthetic milk and meat?



Answered by Andrew Fletcher, Dairy Tomorrow strategy implementation manager

Although there's an increasing number of milk and meat substitutes hitting the market, there's also a lack of scientific knowledge about their costs and benefits. How nutritious are they? What's their overall environmental footprint? Without a decent body of science, it's difficult for our sector to know exactly if and how we should adapt.

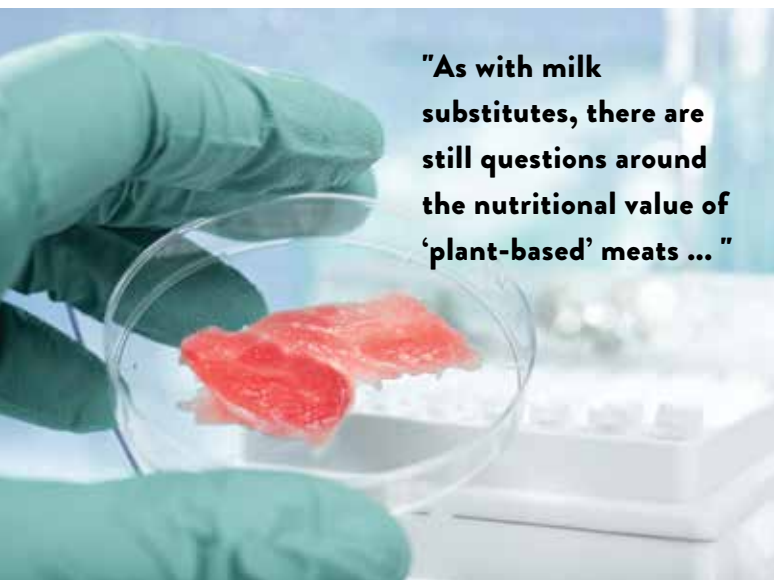
We're keen to see greater public visibility of the full costs (including environmental) of these production systems so there can be a proper dialogue about their future role in nourishing the global population. *Inside Dairy* will revisit this topic in the future.

What we do know is that our dairy cows are incredibly efficient. They occupy land that's not suitable for growing crops, and they turn something we can't eat, grass, into nutritious milk. Their waste (effluent) can be returned to the land as a natural form of fertiliser. Synthetic milk and meat require a more complex process: growing a crop, harvesting it, processing it and disposing of the waste products.

Synthetic meat is produced in two ways: turning plant-based material into something 'meat-like'; or growing animal muscle cells in the lab from material harvested from young animals. As with milk substitutes, there are still questions around the nutritional value of 'plant-based' meats, and the full costs of cell-cultured meat.

None of the synthetic options are likely to reduce the cost of food. Many of them are being funded by venture capitalists in America, and they're doing it to make money.

Let's keep our eyes and ears open to the facts about synthetic products, as they emerge, and be prepared to have robust conversations. For now, the best thing we can do is farm with excellence. We should strive to be as sustainable as possible, make use of our world-class pasture and produce high-quality milk.



"As with milk substitutes, there are still questions around the nutritional value of 'plant-based' meats ..."

Q > Why aren't more farmers choosing to go once-a-day (OAD) milking for the entire season to combat the many issues facing our sector?



Answered by Paul Edwards, senior scientist

The most common reason for not trying OAD is fear of the unknown. It does require a leap of faith, but most farmers who shift to full-season OAD say they wouldn't go back.

To do OAD well, it's not just a case of changing the number of milkings. You need to evaluate your whole system, and this requires effort and is not without risk.

Historically, the number of OAD herds in New Zealand has tracked at about five percent of herds. Our most recent statistics show that this jumped to nine percent in the 2015/16 season and stayed there in 2016/17. We're also seeing significant regional variations: Northland has the most OAD herds (24 percent), while Canterbury has only four percent.

There's also extensive use of OAD and three-in-two milking for part of the season, or for part of the herd. That means the number of twice-a-day (TAD) herds is at just over 50 percent, down from 70 percent in 2008/09. As understanding of these alternative systems increases, the trend away from TAD is likely to continue.

Note: starting in July, a DairyNZ-led research project will focus on the strategic use of milking three times in two days. The three-year project is funded by DairyNZ and the Sustainable Farming Fund. Find out more at dairynz.co.nz/3in2

USE OF MILKING STRATEGIES

Milking regime	% of herds in 2015/16
Full-season TAD	52%
Full-season OAD	9%
Switch TAD/OAD	19%
Other (e.g. part herd)	20%

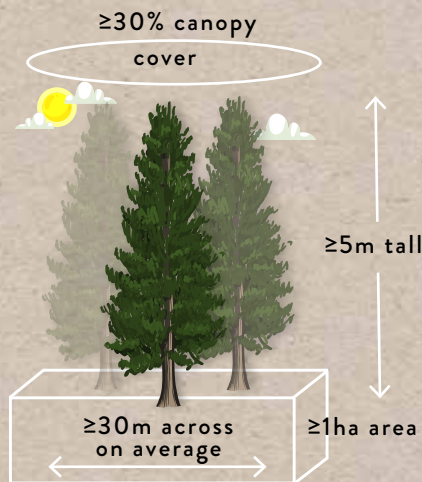


Recent statistics suggest that once-a-day milking's uptake may be on the rise.

WHAT IS A FOREST IN THE ETS?

A FOREST IN THE ETS:

- is made up of **one hectare or more of forest species** – a forest species is one that can grow to **at least five metres high at maturity** where it is located
- can achieve a **tree canopy cover of at least 30 percent** in each hectare at maturity
- can achieve an **average tree canopy width of at least 30 metres** at maturity.



Note: gap between trees <15m (mapping standard).

Q > How can employers and employees start a new season (and possibly leave the old one) well?



Answered by Sarah Tait, people team developer

The start of a new season is your best time to set out workplace and team culture expectations with new staff, while also 'resetting' expectations with existing staff.

Inducting new staff can be a big job and we can't expect people to remember everything we tell them about complex operations. Having visual cues in the office and farm dairy will help with this. For example, photos and diagrams of procedures, and graphs measuring progress towards team goals.

Q > How can on-farm tree planting be registered as a carbon offset?



Answered by Tanya Cornwell, senior policy adviser

Carbon offset opportunities for dairying are not as great as other sectors because most of our land is under production. Therefore, dairy farmers may need to think of creative ways to make the system work for them, such as grouping together as a community or purchasing marginal land for tree planting. DairyNZ is also working with the government on ways to recognise and promote tree planting that might be below the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) threshold, but still have beneficial outcomes for biodiversity, water quality, animal care, biosecurity or emissions offsets (e.g. riparian plantings).

Currently, the only way to register for carbon sequestration (the natural or artificial process by which carbon dioxide is removed from the atmosphere and held/stored in solid or liquid form) credits is with the ETS. To be eligible for registration, trees and forests must meet the criteria (see illustration above). The criteria exist around size, width of planting, density, height at maturity and when the trees were planted.

If these criteria are met, farmers can choose to register their eligible forest(s) in the ETS. They must then account for the change in carbon stock (how much carbon is stored) per forest by filing an Emissions Return at least once every five years. This is what determines sequestration credits are earned.

The ETS criteria and operations are complex. Farmers are encouraged to visit dairynz.co.nz/forestry-emissions for further information, and contact Te Uru Rākau at climatechange@mpi.govt.nz or phone **0800 254 628** for specific queries and/or advice.

Setting up a team group 'chat' (using an app like Messenger or WhatsApp) is also a great way to keep communication channels open for everyone from the get-go.

It's important to remember that team members operate differently; what motivates one person might not work for another. We tend to assume other people think, act and value the same things as we do, and we can become frustrated when others fall short of our expectations. As an exercise for your team, try out a free online personality test. It'll help you understand the differences in how each of you operates. It's a good idea to do it now, before the pressure and fatigue of spring sets in.

Get more tips on how to start a new season by going to dairynz.co.nz/people



Preparing for climate policy

DairyNZ strategy and investment leader David Burger answers a few of your most common questions about the Zero Carbon Bill.



The Zero Carbon Bill is progressing through Parliament this year, requiring all sectors to think about how they'll reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. Over the past two years, DairyNZ has been researching options to reduce biological emissions on different farm systems. We've also been looking at each option's impacts on farm productivity and profitability.

What we've learned already is that it's possible to achieve incremental emissions reductions by making changes to our farm management. Our dairy sector is already one of the lowest-emissions milk producers in the world, but small changes can help us to improve.



Where is climate change policy headed?

The Zero Carbon Bill's objective is to prevent any further atmospheric warming. This year we'll see a 2050 target chosen, requiring all sectors to reduce their emissions. We'll also see the establishment of an independent Climate Change Commission to advise short-term reduction budgets for each sector towards 2050.

It's likely the Government will set a target for longer-lived gases carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide to be reduced to net zero by 2050, to limit their warming impact. However, DairyNZ and industry bodies have emphasised that the scientific evidence shows methane can be reduced and stabilised because of its shorter life cycle, which is the equivalent outcome to net zero. This difference could be recognised in the Bill through the provision of a separate target for methane. Every percentage point has a direct impact on farming, so it's important the Government gets it right.

What are the potential impacts of climate change policy for dairy farmers?

Each farm will need to estimate its current emissions and, over time, develop a farm-specific plan to manage and reduce these emissions through farm management improvements. Although any level of emissions reduction represents a challenge for our sector, we think it needs to be managed alongside the broader environmental issues, like water quality, biodiversity and erosion control.

Where to from here?

Changes won't come into effect imminently, but there are steps farmers can start taking now to prepare.

1. Know your numbers – calculate your on-farm emissions; Overseer can do this.
2. Think about what farm management changes you could make to reduce your emissions. Here are two to consider:
 - Improve feed efficiency – this is the best way to reduce methane emissions. Research shows there's a direct correlation between feed intake and methane produced.
 - Reduce and improve your use of nitrogen fertiliser – this is the best way to reduce nitrous oxide emissions.
3. Also, keep an eye out for future technologies being developed. For example, a slow-release methane inhibitor, achieving a 30 to 50 percent reduction in methane, is likely to be available to farmers by 2050.

To learn more about how to reduce emissions on your farm, go to dairynz.co.nz/mitigation

▶ YOUR WELLBEING: let's talk about it

NEW ZEALANDERS' UNDERSTANDING OF AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS WELLBEING ARE CHANGING – BUT WE STILL HAVE A WAY TO GO, SAYS DAIRYNZ STRATEGY AND INVESTMENT LEADER JENNY JAGO.



When DairyNZ started work on the topic of wellbeing in 2011, we didn't know much about it. We didn't have figures to show how well we (the dairy workforce) were, we lacked understanding of how to stay well, and we were short on tools and support. Furthermore, we weren't sure how to talk about wellbeing.

Thankfully, that's changed. We now have some data, which can be confronting, but it helps us to know where we are so we can do something about it. It's hard to hide from the facts. Dairy farming can be a challenging job but, on the whole, it's a hugely rewarding career. Most farmers are doing okay but many report feeling stressed, anxious, fatigued and even depressed from time to time.

It's important to realise these concerns are not restricted to the farming community. Mental disorders as a group are the third-leading cause of health loss for New Zealanders². About 47 percent of New Zealanders will experience a mental illness and/or addiction at some time in their lives³.

One of the most encouraging statistics is that almost one in five farmers have contacted someone for help with mental health or addiction problems, for themselves, in the past year⁴. That's a high number but the most important part is that people have recognised their need for support and taken action to get it.

It's been extremely encouraging to see so many organisations providing awareness and support to the farming community, helping us to stay well. We've seen completely new initiatives, such as Farmstrong and GoodYarn, developed and made available through many organisations. Other organisations already existed but have become more prominent. Some of these support organisations are listed on the next page.

At DairyNZ, we've changed too. We now have a very active wellness committee that helps our staff to stay well and, in turn, to support farmers to run high-performing businesses.

We've come a long way but it's vital that we continue working hard to keep everyone in our dairy sector well. Let's keep discussing the topic and supporting each other.



of dairy farmers are suffering from burnout¹.



1/3 OF DAIRY FARMERS ARE HAVING SLEEP PROBLEMS¹.



1 IN 4

dairy farmers are feeling exhausted¹.

Mental disorders as a group are the **THIRD-LEADING** cause of health loss for New Zealanders².



HOW TO HELP YOURSELF AND OTHERS



TIPS TO MAINTAIN WELLNESS

Improving in just one of these areas can make a big difference. If you were to improve in all these areas, it could transform your and your staff's ability to work efficiently.

- 1 Maintain your social connections with friends and family.
- 2 Try not to work more than 10 hours a day.
- 3 Try not to go more than seven days without a day off.
- 4 Try to have two consecutive days off when you can.
- 5 Take annual leave – don't just take the payout.
- 6 Limit the amount of highly processed foods you consume to four portions or fewer per day.
- 7 Eat as many fruits and veggies as you can.
- 8 Find someone you can talk to freely about work frustrations.
- 9 Make time for an interest outside of work.

Get more great tips and advice for staying well at dairynz.co.nz/wellbeing



HOW CAN I HELP SOMEONE WHO'S BURNED OUT OR DEPRESSED?

- Be on their side – listen, let them talk.
- Show understanding and sympathy.
- Don't judge them.
- Avoid offering advice.
- Avoid making comparisons.
- Don't try to minimise their pain or act like it's not a big deal.

WORRIED SOMEONE MAY ALREADY BE DEPRESSED?

- Encourage them to speak to their health practitioner.
- Encourage them to talk to someone about it – these numbers are good:
 - **Rural Support Trust 0800 787 254**
 - **Depression helpline 0800 111 757**

WORRIED SOMEONE IS SUICIDAL?

- Do everything you can to get a suicidal person the professional help he or she needs. Call a crisis line for advice and referrals. Encourage the person to see a mental health professional, help them locate a treatment facility, or take them to a doctor's appointment.
- These are the numbers to call:
 - **Samaritans - 0800 726 666**
 - **Lifeline - 0800 543 354**

¹ DairyNZ Health Pitstops

² Community and Public Health: cph.co.nz

³ Ministry of Health: health.govt.nz

⁴ Rural Health Needs Survey Report: Mystery Creek Fieldays 2018.

Hard graft and sacrifices on path to farm ownership

Without family help to fall back on, the path to farm ownership has been a long and challenging one for Michael and Susie Woodward – but they’ve finally got there.

Susie and Michael Woodward will move to their new farm in June.



At the start of the upcoming season, Canterbury sharemilkers Michael and Susie Woodward will be packing up hearth, home and 350 cross-bred cows and moving north with their four children to their newly bought farm near Otorohanga. It's a milestone in their dairying careers.

Michael and Susie, in their late 30s, are both from farming backgrounds, albeit on different sides of the world. Michael was brought up on an Angora goat farm near Pukekohe, while Susie's family runs an intensive 400-cow dairying operation

in upstate New York. They met in 2005 at Synlait Farms (now Purata Farms) where Michael started as a farm assistant and Susie as a calf rearer. They married in 2009.

Finding their way

The thought of farm ownership didn't enter their minds until a bit later. "At the beginning, we weren't sure of the way forward because we were young and finding our way," says Michael.

They grabbed the opportunity offered by large-scale farming



Michael and Susie's top tips

- Get a team of good advisers – “you don't know what you don't know”.
- Understand finances and budgeting.
- Get feedback on ways to improve.
- Learn from your mistakes.
- Relationships are key – make sure the people you surround yourself with are aligned with your values. This makes the journey easier and more enjoyable.

to rise through the ranks at Synlait. The couple progressed from farm assistants to farm managers, then contract milkers, before becoming 50:50 sharemilkers at the start of the 2014/15 season. Their gradual steps up the career ladder helped them to learn about staff management and how to make a farm run smoothly.

Creating opportunities

Michael and Susie didn't wait for jobs to be advertised. Instead, they approached people with proposals and negotiated arrangements outside the standard contracts.

“We never waited to be asked; we always pushed to get ahead,” says Michael. “That's how we became farm managers and subsequently sharemilkers.”

Becoming farm managers and attending a DairyNZ Biz Grow course helped to crystallise the Woodward's' goals, which included farm ownership. Biz Grow sessions focus on teaching business and performance management skills to help participants plan for greater equity or owning their own farm business.

“The course helped us to develop some essential skills,” says Michael. “Through it, we met people who'd gone through the industry and were probably five years or so ahead of us. They were able to tell us how they'd progressed and what they'd done to achieve their goals.”

Biz Grow also helped Michael and Susie “put themselves out there” by entering the New Zealand Dairy Industry Awards. They entered in the Canterbury/North Otago region for the first time in 2009 – and got a wake-up call.

“The judges told us we had good on-farm management skills, but that our financial management was very poor,” says Michael. “That was the catalyst for us to get an accountant and a bank manager on board and to get some advice.”

That advice has paid off.

“We entered the farm manager section of the awards two more times, initially only placing second with no merits. But then, on the third time, we managed to win the financial planning and management award. And when we went to nationals, we placed

third and received the same financial merit award. For us, that was a huge achievement. It showed that we'd taken advice and used it to push our business forward.”

Making sacrifices and working hard

Michael and Susie's road to farm ownership hasn't been without sacrifices. They describe themselves as ‘farm orphans’ because they didn't have family farms to fall back on.

“Over the last 16 years, we've saved hard and sacrificed being away from family. We could have worked closer to family, but it would've been on smaller farms,” says Michael.

“To get ahead, we've used the scale that's around in the industry and some of that comes with its own challenges, like managing a big team. It's difficult to keep everyone happy all the time, but it's been a good learning curve.”

Finding a farm

The Woodward's began their hunt for a farm late last year. They looked at two farms in the Waikato and missed out on one, before buying the other in February this year.

“We wanted a farm that had character and was self-contained, because if there are wall-to-wall cows, you're paying wall-to-wall prices,” says Michael. “We also wanted to pay it off relatively quickly, certainly by the time we're 60. It also needed to be big enough that if we decided to retire, the option was there for one of our children to take it over. So, it had to be bigger than 300 cows because, if you're below that, it's really hard to justify someone else coming in to help.”

Their new farm at Otorohanga meets all these criteria: it's a 350-cow farm, all stock will be wintered on, and the young stock grazed on-farm for the whole season. This means less costs and the potential to have a part-time worker.

“Susie and I are keen to get back hands-on because we've been using our heads more than our hands in the last few years,” says Michael. “We're looking forward to the next stage in our farming careers.”

DairyNZ tools

- Get the information and tools to keep on track and make your money work harder – dairynz.co.nz/business
- Get connected with a farmer mentor, or be a mentor to someone else – dairynz.co.nz/dairyconnect
- Join DairyBase and access all the information you need to make confident and effective farm management decisions – dairynz.co.nz/dairybase

Making money from milk

Shifting the family farm down by two systems has been a business-saver for Waikato dairy farmer Alan Syme.

Changing from an unprofitable System 5 to a sustainable System 2 to 3 is still a work in progress for Alan Syme.

After a stint teaching in the Cook Islands, Alan returned to his family's Tirau farm ('Mataora Dairy') during a drought in 2013. From the outside, everything looked rosy, he says.

"The cows and the pasture looked great and my parents had low debt, but we were very unprofitable. The farm was highly stocked and we were importing a lot of feed. To use a phrase coined by John Roche (former DairyNZ senior scientist), we were making milk from money, not money from milk," says Alan.

"Once I'd studied the financials, it became apparent that what we were doing wasn't sustainable and the low payout years made that crystal clear. If we hadn't made changes, we wouldn't have survived."

Getting advice

Keen to create a simpler system, Alan set out on a mission to learn as much as possible in the 2013/14 season. To start with, he did a DairyNZ cashflow budgeting course, and joined DairyBase to help him benchmark his farm against others.

"We all pay our levy, whether we use DairyNZ or not. There are heaps of resources: consulting officers, scientists and specialists, and there's lots of information and advice available. It's been really useful for me being able to tap into that expertise."

Alan went on to complete a Primary ITO Level 5 Diploma in Agribusiness Management. He also talked to many farmers and tried to operate a more efficient System 5. Expensive compound feeds were exchanged for bulk feeds (e.g. palm kernel extract

"If we hadn't made changes, we wouldn't have survived."

and maize silage) on the basis that instead of paying \$600/tonne, he'd pay \$300/tonne and get twice as much.

Alan says this worked – and it didn't.

"We made more milk but the substitution had a massive knock-on effect because we weren't utilising our grass as well as we could have.



ALAN'S TOP TIPS



Get advice from someone independent, with no vested interest in how your farm performs.



Be willing to listen to advice.



Learn from your mistakes.



Alan says every farmer has different goals and different values. You need to work out what's best for your farm, and that can depend on multiple factors, including debt levels, contour and climate.

CHANGING YOUR SYSTEM?



DairyNZ has interviewed farmers nationwide and developed a five-step process for successful system change. Visit dairynz.co.nz/systems

“In 2015, I added debt by buying part of the farm from my parents and leasing the rest. Then the payout crashed and I realised that, for us, this system wasn’t working – to some extent that was because of the debt levels. But let’s face it, at a payout in the three-dollar range, no system works, but especially the system that we were trying to run at that time.”

Making the change

Alan decided it was time to drop his system down. In the spring of 2015 he started to move from Friesian to the smaller and easier-care KiwiCross, to trying to breed a black Jersey-type cow that’s hardy, fertile, easy-care and profitable.

In the 2015/16 season, he also started destocking from a peak of 820 cows, getting down to 680 at the start of the 2018/19 season. As a result, the farm’s production has dropped from 1700 to 1200 kilograms of milksolids per hectare per year (see graph to the right).

“So there’s a lot less milk, but we’re making more money and have better margins.”

He and his family have also adopted a pasture-first approach, followed by the next cheapest ‘other’. Maize and grass silage are made on-farm and they contract palm kernel extract.

“We don’t always get that right either,” says Alan. “We go pasture-only as long as we can before considering the cheapest other.”

MAKE BETTER DECISIONS WITH DAIRYBASE

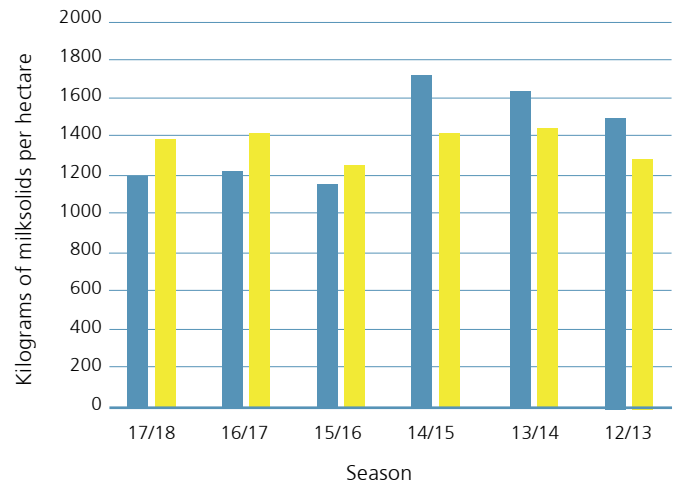
Use DairyBase to access the information you need to make confident and effective farm management decisions. DairyNZ’s DairyBase helps you to better understand your farm system and its performance. It compares key performance indicators and determines what’s working well, then identifies your opportunities for improvement.

Join today at dairynz.co.nz/dairybase

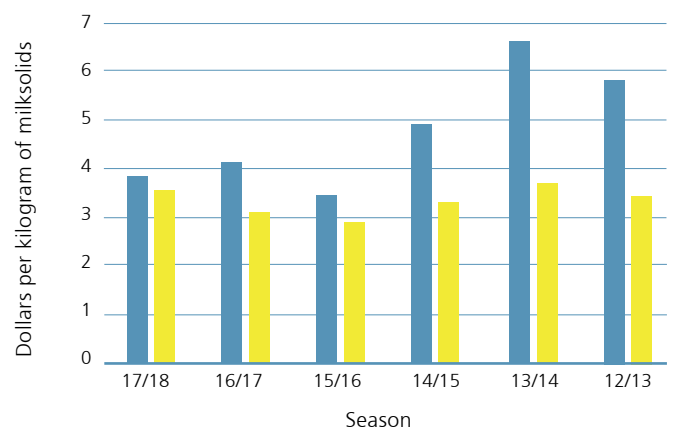
MATAORA DAIRY STATS

■ Mataora ■ Top 20% North Island

MILKSOLIDS PRODUCTION



OPERATING EXPENSES



Alan says he’s constantly tweaking the system, keeping on top of weeds, improving the pasture by regrassing, and upgrading the fencing.

In the next five years, Alan will be focusing on debt reduction, further improvements and more leisure time.

“Although the farm is now a System 2 to 3 and there’s been a massive improvement, it will always be a work in progress.”

FARM TECHNOLOGY:

PROS AND CONS

MANY FARMERS HAVE TOLD US THEY'D LIKE TO KNOW ABOUT NEW INNOVATIONS THAT COULD HELP ON-FARM. IN OUR INFOGRAPHIC BELOW, WE OUTLINE THE PROS AND CONS OF SEVERAL TECHNOLOGIES THAT ARE CURRENTLY AVAILABLE, OR ON THE HORIZON.

DairyNZ has a history of investigating technologies on behalf of farmers.

This includes the Greenfields automatic milking systems project; evaluating milking efficiency in conventional dairies; investigating individualised feeding; and the Precision Dairy project. These projects have been funded by DairyNZ in partnership with the Ministry for Primary Industries' Primary Growth Partnership or Sustainable Farming Fund.



>>> NOW AND INTO THE FUTURE

WEARABLE SENSORS

Pros

- Potentially detect heats and illness early, or without doing a visual assessment.
- Can help reduce workloads for key people.
- Can help staff who are less experienced in animal husbandry.

Cons

- Sometimes provide false alerts, e.g. identifies a cow as needing attention when she doesn't.
- In financial terms, payback of some devices can be marginal or non-existent depending on the farm system situation.



PHONE APPS

Pros

- Good for specific tasks, e.g. communication, information updates, feed calculations.
- Usually free or cheap; regularly updated and improved.
- Can be used while you're on the go, e.g. entering data while you're in the paddock.

Cons

- Some apps only work when you have internet connectivity.
- Data is sometimes stored on the app – lose your phone, lose your data.
- Not all team members may have smartphones.





SATELLITE MEASUREMENTS

Pros

- Accurately and frequently measures pasture mass by satellite (but see first bullet point in the 'cons' list below).
- Saves you the time spent walking paddocks, and automatically updates the feed wedge.
- In future, may be able to measure soil moisture and pasture composition.

Cons

- Measurement accuracy and frequency issues (due to terrain and cloud cover) experienced on some NZ farms.
- Doesn't do everything for you – you'll still need to assess the next few paddocks to make good allocation decisions.



VIRTUAL FENCING

Pros

- Lowers fencing costs, especially around riparian areas.
- Allows you to move stock with a few swipes on your computer/smartphone.
- You can potentially collect animal wellbeing and oestrus data from the same collar.

Cons

- Only just being released commercially – needs time to be proven.
- Benefits may be limited to keeping animals out of riparian areas.
- The social acceptability of controlling animals via a collar is still to be determined.

ROBOTIC MILKING



Pros

- The 'traditional' box-style automatic milking systems (AMS) have been proven to work in pasture-based systems – there are around 20 AMS farms in NZ.
- Automatic milking rotaries (AMR) for batch milking are commercially available now, with a milking efficiency (cows milked per hour) similar to conventional rotaries.

Cons

- Compared with conventional dairies, box-style AMS have lower milking efficiency. They require cows to 'voluntarily' milk over 24 hours, and bring higher capital cost, so have implications for farm system management and farm size.
- High throughput AMR are currently prohibitively expensive for most NZ farmers.

VIRTUAL FARM MANAGER (FUTURE)



Pros

- Artificial intelligence systems will use different data sources and smart computing to suggest actions to take on-farm.
- Will automate some jobs and/or help staff with limited prior farm experience.
- Would make farming more innovative, helping to attract different employees.
- Ideally, will lead to better, proactive decisions for smarter decisions.

Cons

- Don't expect to see these available soon – they're still on the horizon.
- How willing are you to rely on a virtual manager?

If you have any questions about this article, please email DairyNZ senior scientist Callum Eastwood at callum.eastwood@dairynz.co.nz



Pads and pasture growth gains

Farmers have asked us about the potential pasture growth rate improvements from standing off cows using a feed pad versus no feed pad. DairyNZ farm systems specialist Chris Glassey responds.



How does pugging affect pasture?

Pasture growth rate can drop by up to 60 percent in paddock areas affected by pugging in wet soil conditions. Understandably, farmers get concerned when pugging happens – visually, it looks awful.

But usually, good management can confine pugging to a relatively small area of the farm, so its impact on annual pasture growth is minimal.

Is it worth moving stock off-paddock?

Research shows that on a whole-farm basis, stand-off practices can increase annual pasture growth by two percent on average. Some years there is no gain. In extremely wet years, and on extremely wet soils, the reduction may be as high as 10 percent of annual pasture yield.

However, stand-off practices can also decrease pasture growth by 10 percent due to the delayed return of nutrients from dung and urine to the paddocks from the stand-off area.

Research trials also show that locking large amounts of capital into off-paddock feeding and loafing facilities can't be justified from the aspect of annual pasture growth and milksolids production.

What's the difference?

- A three percent increase in milksolids per hectare per year (MS/ha/year) was obtained on average over eight years, by using a loafing barn and feeding platform over winter for on-off grazing, compared with paddock wintering on a heavy soil type (Massey University, 1960s).

- Many years later (2012 to 2015), Massey University measured annual pasture growth over three years on the same soil type (Tokomaru silt loam), comparing a herd with access to a wintering barn with a herd wintered on paddocks. There was very little difference in annual pasture yield. The expected benefits to pasture growth from having cows off pasture were not delivered.
- DairyNZ's Scott Farm near Hamilton, a farmlet comparison (Resource Efficient Dairying trial, 2001 to 2006) compared two herds, both wintered on pasture and pasture silage. One herd was removed from pasture every night to a stand-off area; the other herd remained on pasture 24/7. The annual MS yield/ha was similar for both herds, suggesting no difference in pasture growth.

Find out more online at dairynz.co.nz/off-paddock

Key points



1. Some pasture growth damage due to pugging is inevitable in our grazing systems.
2. Good management helps reduce the number and size of pugging areas on-farm so it impacts very little on annual pasture growth.
3. Research shows investing in stand-off pads and feed pads won't lead to significant increases in pasture growth, pasture yield or milksolids.

First-season success tips

New farm, new district, new season. Here are some tips from DairyNZ feed specialist Elodie Ganche to help you set up your farm for a successful season.



1 Establish how much feed is available

Don't just rely on what you've been told by the outgoing manager. Establish the current feed situation by estimating pasture covers, and produce a feed wedge for the farm as soon as possible.

Knowing each paddock's size will help with your day-to-day grazing management decisions (ensure you have an accurate farm map).

Set pasture cover targets for critical times (e.g. start of calving, balance date). Next, create some realistic forecasts from your current situation towards your pasture cover targets.

Your best opportunity to reset the farm's feed demand and supply situation is before calving starts. To help with forecasts, use historical growth data or see DairyNZ's *Facts & Figures* guide (dairynz.co.nz/factsandfigures).

Use tools like the Spring Rotation Planner (dairynz.co.nz/SRP), feed wedges and feed budget to aid grazing management decisions throughout the season.

2 Set clear goals for grazing management and supplement use

Establish a set of decision rules aimed at your goals. For example, 'I will only feed supplement if post-grazing residuals drop below 1400 kilograms of dry matter per hectare' or 'I will be on a 25-day grazing rotation at balance date'.

3 Monitor progress over time

Keep good records, so you can make better decisions about stocking rate, calving date and which paddocks need improvement. Sign up to DairyBase (dairynz.co.nz/DairyBase) so you can benchmark your farm's pasture eaten and profit against local farms.

4 Find out how much grass your farm can grow

Regular paddock assessments will help you establish this over time. In the meantime, back-calculate your pasture and crop eaten figure using historical milk production figures. To check the average (and top 10 percent) pasture and crop eaten per hectare in your area, use DairyNZ's Pasture Potential Tool (dairynz.co.nz/pasture-crop-eaten).



5 Identify areas for improvements and close the gap

Monitor pasture growth and density to identify lower-performing paddocks.

- Are soil pH and soil nutrients in the optimum range?
- Weeds and insect pests: what are they? What's the extent of the problem?
- What about past pugging damage, soil compaction or other limitations?

Review performance at season's end. Compare with your benchmark to identify areas to focus on next season. Tap into local knowledge: join a discussion group or get in touch with a farmer or technical expert who can share tips with you.

Key points



1. Get sorted before calving starts: assess feed available and forecast.
2. Set some decision rules and monitor progress on targets along the way.
3. Regularly assess pasture covers and identify your pasture potential.

Honda prize comes at the perfect time

Congratulations to Pahiatua sharemilker Hazel Bourke for winning our *Inside Dairy* competition. We asked farmers to send us their suggestions for *Inside Dairy* articles and Hazel's name was drawn. She's won a new Honda XR150L which she collected from Bevan Bisset at Bisset Honda in Pahiatua (see photo below).

Hazel was thrilled to receive our phone call and says the bike couldn't have come at a better time.

"This has really made my week. We did have two bikes but we retired one of them earlier this year because it was 15 years old, so this is fantastic timing. Thank you so much."

A big thanks to Honda for sponsoring this competition.



Level up your calf care

Where are you excelling at calf care? Where could you do even better?

Giving calves the best start sets them up for a healthy, productive life. That's why DairyNZ has just launched a new Calf Care Toolkit, funded by your levy, to help you check your calf care systems. Answer 12 simple questions and get instant, tailored feedback.

New knowledge gives everyone the opportunity to improve, whether you're starting out in farming or have 20 years' experience.

Now is a great time to review your systems before calving, so check out the Calf Care Toolkit at dairynz.co.nz/calf-care-toolkit



Southland farm manager Andrew Harrex trials the new Calf Care Toolkit.

Hundreds churn out for Farm Day

Displays of milking, butter churning and dairy machinery helped more than 600 visitors learn more about dairying at a recent Farm Day.

DairyNZ is one of the sponsors of the annual Federated Farmers Bay of Plenty Farm Day, which was held on Andrew and Robyn McLeod's dairy farm at Welcome Bay.

Most of the 616 visitors came from Tauranga, but also from Te Puke and as far as Gisborne, and included tourists from Korea, Germany, China and the USA.

DairyNZ's Bay of Plenty team organised an educational game of 'Rosie the Cow Bingo' to help kids (and adults) learn some interesting dairy facts. Children also loved meeting Rosie the Cow.



< DairyNZ Bay of Plenty consulting officers Jordyn Crouch and Ross Bishop teach youngsters about dairying in a game of 'Rosie the Cow Bingo'.

Be inspired at SIDE 2019

One of the many amazing guest speakers at next month's SIDE 2019 (South Island Dairy Event) is Golden Bay dairy farmer Wayne Langford, otherwise known as 'YOLOFarmerNZ'. When life got him down, Wayne grabbed his wife and kids, jumped in the car and changed his life forever.

"One Saturday I decided enough was enough! I had to do something to change my life because I couldn't go on living this way."

Wayne's story will challenge the way you view farming and force you to ask, 'Am I truly living life?' Register today at side.org.nz



Sharing their pasture knowledge

Kathy Crow and Logan Bowler's final Tiller Talk field day will offer choice pickings for those keen to upskill in pasture management.

As they near the end of their two-year involvement with DairyNZ's Tiller Talk programme, Marton farmers Kathy and Logan will be hosting their final field day on May 2. They'll be discussing the steps they've taken to improve pasture management, and what they've learned along the way.

Dr Doug Edmeades, soil scientist and agKnowledge managing director, will also cover soil fertility and how farmers can recognise nutrient deficiency in their paddocks.

Kathy and Logan took over the 88-hectare (ha) farm in 2012 and, since then, have renewed much of it (51ha) in Italian, hybrid and perennial ryegrass pastures. Their focus on pasture management led to them joining Tiller Talk, a programme for farmers to share information and access advice on pasture and feed management, appealed to them.

"Our goal is to grow and feed as much pasture as we can, and import as little supplement as we can. We want to utilise pasture rather than brought-in feed. We're focused on profit – that's what drives our feed management decisions," says Kathy.

Since taking part in Tiller Talk and its predecessor programme Grass into Gold, the couple have picked up valuable knowledge.

"We've valued the expert advice offered to support our pasture renewal strategy over the last few years," says Kathy. "We've put in new cultivars and now have a better understanding and awareness of what to do with our lower-performing paddocks. It's been a big learning curve."

"We're focused on profit – that's what drives our feed management decisions."

Boost your clover-based pastures

As part of Tiller Talk, agKnowledge and DairyNZ are running a demonstration project. At 12 sites nationwide (including Kathy and Logan's farm), five plots have been established to highlight what pasture will look like when the soil is deficient in different types of nutrients.

"If your pastures look poor, it's highly likely that one or more of the 16 essential plant nutrients are missing," says Doug Edmeades. "The most frequent limitations are potassium and sulphur, but trace element problems like molybdenum deficiency also occur. The consequential losses in pasture production can be large (10 to 20 percent) because the pasture can only grow as fast as the most limiting nutrient."



Kathy and Logan are hosting their final Tiller Talk field day on May 2.



Demonstration plots on Kathy and Logan's farm show what to look for if the soil fertility is not right.

Key points for pasture management



- Clover-based pasture is the cheapest source of feed, yielding an extra \$300 of profit per extra tonne of dry matter of pasture and crop eaten.
- Getting your soil right is the first step towards boosting pasture performance.
- White clover requires higher levels of soil nutrients than ryegrass.
- Clover is the 'canary in the mine' – if your pasture clover content is poor, there's probably a nutrient limitation.
- Your fertiliser policy should be directed to growing clover – try clover-only samples.

May events

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
		1 SOUTHLAND/SOUTH OTAGO Northern Southland Pasture Plus discussion group: new season group for those wanting to improve pasture, supplement, winter feed knowledge, and management skills.			4	6 NORTH WAIKATO Taupiri Orini Ladies Group annual trip, this time to Hawke's Bay. Contact Lizzy Moore or Gaylene Bunn for more information.
7	8	9 NORTHLAND People Management Workshop: how to form productive teams, understand different personality types, develop team rules and motivate staff.			12	
14 SOUTHLAND/SOUTH OTAGO The Hill Country Discussion Group meets at Hamish and Sam Robinson's Wyndham farm to discuss farm systems, farm-related issues and current and upcoming seasonal topics.			17	18	19	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	29 TARANAKI Midhirst Discussion Group: focusing on mental health awareness and management, this meeting is also supported by the Rural Support Trust.				

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

NORTHLAND

Get local and global perspectives from a range of speakers and presenters, including Hon. Shane Jones, on what agriculture and dairy means to the local region. Register for Northland's DairyNZ Farmers' Forum in Whangarei on May 22.

Take part in regionally focused practical workshops on Kikuyu, once-a-day milking, reproductive performance and business.

Register now at dairynz.co.nz/farmersforum

WAIKATO

There has been a change in regional leaders for the Waikato with Wade Bell moving on after nearly nine years with DairyNZ (although he'll still be around the region, involved elsewhere in the sector).

Taking over is Wilma Foster, who has been with DairyNZ for 10 years. She has held several roles, most recently as the farm business specialist for the Upper North Island. Wilma brings a wealth of experience to the role and is looking forward to meeting more farmers in the region.

View the full Waikato regional team at dairynz.co.nz/co

BAY OF PLENTY

The DairyNZ Farmers' Forum is coming to Rotorua on May 24.

This is your chance to take advantage of regionally focused practical workshops on future farm systems, feeding for profit, regional council and operational performance.

You'll also hear from guest speakers Dr Matt Glenn (chief executive officer of Robotics Plus Limited), Mike Petersen (NZ Special Agricultural Trade Envoy) and Graeme Doole (DairyNZ principal economist).

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

TARANAKI

Stratford (May 14) and Rongotea (May 16) will host two of this year's regional DairyNZ Farmers' Forums.

Get local and global perspectives from a range of speakers and presenters. In Stratford, Jamie Fitzgerald (member of Institute of Directors and host of television documentaries First Crossings and Intrepid NZ) will talk about getting the best out of teams. In Rongotea, former Black Ferns' rugby captain Farah Palmer will share her thoughts on opportunities to get others on board and looking after yourself.

Book your seat now at dairynz.co.nz/farmersforum

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	Lori Grinter	021 242 5719
Whangarei West	Ryan Baxter	021 809 569

Waikato

Regional Leader	Wilma Foster	021 246 2147
South Auckland	Mike Bramley	027 486 4344
Hamilton North	Lizzy Moore	021 242 2127
Matamata/Kereone	Frank Portegys	027 807 9685
Morrinsville/Te Aroha/Waihi	Euan Lock	027 293 4401
Hauraki Plains/Coromandel/Paeroa	Jaimee Morgan	021 245 8055
Te Awamutu	Stephen Canton	027 475 0918
Otorohanga	Wilma Foster	021 246 2147
South Waikato	Angela Clarke	027 276 2675

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	Andrew Reid	027 292 3682

Lower North Island – Head: Rob Brazendale 021 683 139

Taranaki

Regional Leader	Sarah Dirks	027 513 7202
South Taranaki	Nathan Clough	021 246 5663
Central Taranaki	Sarah Dirks	027 513 7202
Coastal Taranaki	Anna Arends	021 276 5832
North Taranaki	Lauren McEldowney	027 593 4122

Lower North Island

Horowhenua/Coastal and Southern Manawatu	Kate Stewart	027 702 3760
Wairarapa/Tararua	Abby Scott	021 244 3428
Hawke's Bay	Gray Beagley	021 286 4346
Northern Manawatu/Wanganui/Woodville	Jo Back	021 222 9023
Central Manawatu/Rangitikei	Richard Greaves	027 244 8016

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	Rachael Russell	027 261 3250
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	Anna Hall	021 712 513

Southland/South Otago

Regional Leader	Tony Finch	027 706 6183
South/West Otago	Lucy Hall	027 524 5890
Central and Northern Southland	Nicole E Hammond	021 240 8529
Eastern Southland	Nathan Nelson	021 225 6931
Western Southland	Leo Pekar	027 211 1389

TOP OF SOUTH ISLAND/WEST COAST

Don't miss out on one of the biggest regional dairy events of the year – the 2019 DairyNZ Farmers' Forum in Westport on May 7.

Minister Damien O'Connor will talk on what agriculture and dairying means to the region. Former Young New Zealander of the Year Guy Ryan also will inspire you to focus on what you can control in the dairy sector and celebrate the power of young people.

A free event bus will be available from Greymouth to Westport. Register now at dairynz.co.nz/farmersforum



CANTERBURY/NORTH OTAGO

Rachael Russell has recently come on board with DairyNZ as the new Canterbury/North Otago regional leader.

Rachael joins us after previous roles as a field consultant with CRV Ambreed and in product development at PGG Wrightson Seeds. She's also worked as a consulting officer in Rotorua in the early 2000s for DairyNZ's predecessor, Dexcel. Passionate about the New Zealand dairy sector, Rachael is looking forward to meeting farmers in the region.

Get in touch with her or others in the Canterbury regional team at dairynz.co.nz/co

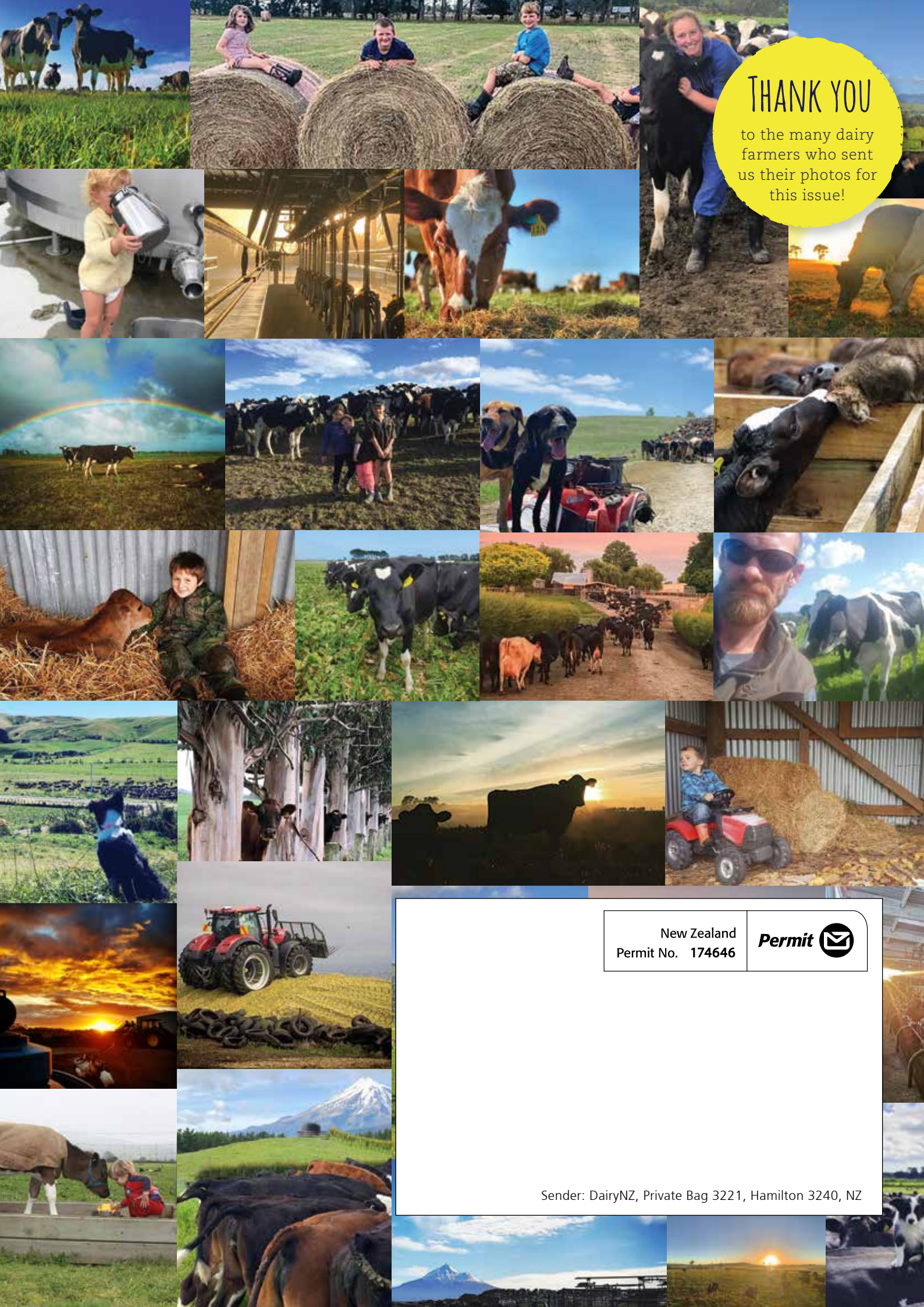
SOUTHLAND/SOUTH OTAGO

Setting up the winter paddocks early will save you valuable time over winter, especially if you're farming in the lower South Island where drops in temperature can be particularly harsh. This includes placing baleage in the paddock early before it gets too wet to move the bales without creating a mess.

Get together with the team before winter and use your paddock plan to set the winter paddock up. It's also a good idea to talk about winter's risks and make sure everyone has been trained for its conditions.

If you're sending cows to grazing, ensure they are fit and healthy to transport. Check biosecurity requirements with the grazer, such as having your animals in a separate mob to any others.

For more go to dairynz.co.nz/wintering



THANK YOU
to the many dairy farmers who sent us their photos for this issue!

New Zealand
Permit No. 174646



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