

AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2014

Real Farmer

FOR EVERYTHING FARMING AND FAMILY



Benchmarks
help push
profit into
family farm

Genetics' role pushes
dairy potential further

High country a lure
back down under

Join the Scam
Savvy crusade

Rural^{CO}
-111

From the CEO

Spring is almost here, and for many in our farming communities it heralds one of the busiest times of the year with calving and lambing likely to be well underway already.



Reading may not be high on the agenda for some, but it's worth taking a look at this issue of Real Farmer as it's crammed full of great information covering a wide variety of topics.

Our cover story features Duncan and Tina Mackintosh's North Canterbury sheep and beef operation, at White Rock Mains. The couple give

an overview of their operation which they run in partnership with Neil and Katherine Mackintosh. They also talk about their rodeo bull breeding programme and their rodeo event management company "8 Seconds Bull Riding" and how it fits with their farming life.

Other farming families featured in this issue include North Otago farmers Ben Douglas and his partner Sarah Connell. Ben has returned to Dome Hills Station, the family farm, after working in the corporate world both here and overseas and is learning the ropes from the bottom up, while Sarah is a city girl born and bred who has made the move to the sheep and beef Otago high country station.

Takaka dairy farmers Tony and Kathy Reilly have a wealth of political and governance experience between them, as well as four dairy farms and a delicatessen in Takaka. They talk about the importance of the equity partnerships they are involved in and how success happens if partners share the same objectives.

Other topics covered in this issue include a feature on rural fire fighters and a welfare fund set up to assist fire fighters and their families in times of need, and the inspirational story of wheelchair-bound rural banker, Dave Clouston who was left paralysed in a farm accident at the age of 34.

Dairy genetics also comes under the spotlight and we take a look at this powerful tool, capable of improving on-farm productivity and profitability. Still on dairying and animal health and nutrition articles feature information on body score condition pre and post calving, and caring for calves and cows at calving. We also find out more about scams which can leave you out of pocket and how to avoid them with advice from BNZ Security and Fraud Co-ordinator Bronwyn Goot, and opinion editorials tackle issues around voting in the up-coming election and employers' obligations to their staff.

I hope the spring weather is kind and you can take a break to enjoy a good read in this issue of Real Farmer.

Neal Shaw, Group Chief Executive

Upcoming Events

22 August

B+LNZ South Canterbury farming for profit field day

Focusing on fodder beet wintering, this day will include a visit to the local B+LNZ demonstration farm. For more information visit www.beeflambnz.com

7 September

Father's Day

22 September

South Canterbury Anniversary

18 October

Ellesmere A&P Show

Showgrounds, Leeston

28 September

Daylight Saving begins

24-25 October

Northern A&P Show

Showgrounds, Rangiora

27 October

Labour Day

31 October-1 November

Ashburton A&P Show

A&P Showgrounds, Ashburton. Ruralco is attending, we look forward to seeing you there

1 November

Amberley Show

12-14 November

Canterbury A&P Show

Canterbury Agricultural Park, Christchurch. Ruralco is attending, we look forward to seeing you there



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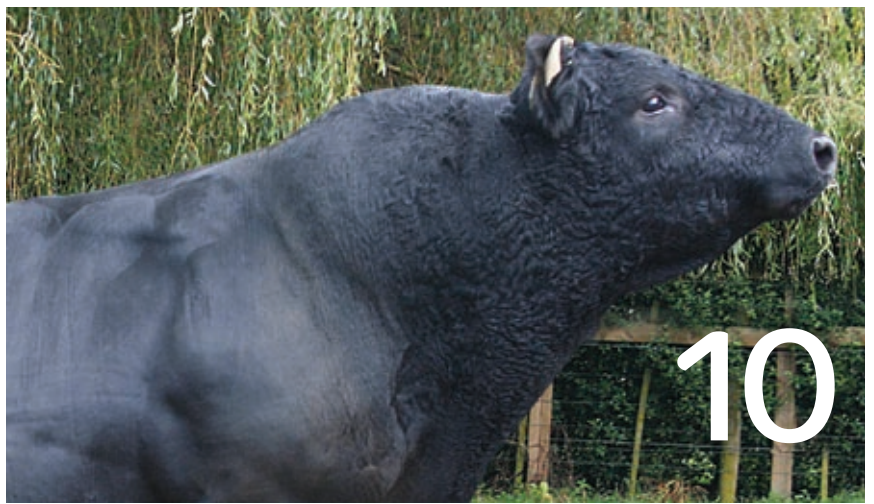
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FRONT PAGE PHOTO:

Duncan and Tina Mackintosh with their girls



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Benchmarks help push profit into family farm



As sheep get chased further into the foothills and high country of Canterbury by dairy and dairy support, a Rangiora farming family are taking a progressive, positive approach to ensuring their sheep operation remains a viable, profitable business option.

BY RICHARD RENNIE

Duncan and Tina Mackintosh farm White Rock Mains in a partnership with Duncan's brother Neil and his wife Katherine. Duncan, Tina and Neil are all involved in the day to day operations, with Neil overseeing machinery and maintenance work while Tina and Duncan run the stock side of the operation.

The farm has experienced some significant shifts under Tina and Duncan's stock management in recent years.

This has included farewell to their commercial beef herd, injecting some fresh sheep genetics, and boosting seasonal cash flow by taking in dairy grazers and wintering cows for eight to ten weeks over winter.

Two years ago they did some serious analysis of their beef cattle returns through Farmax, and found them wanting.

"They were not really performing profitably enough, and we increased the number of dairy replacements as grazers," Duncan says.

They now run 200 yearling heifers and 60 rising two year olds, and over winter carry 400 dairy cows wintered on kale. Next year they intend to lift the numbers of rising two year olds to 200.

The move has cemented some known cash flow over the year and fills a valuable gap in the winter particularly. Typically winters are wet and cold, and stock numbers have been kept at a minimum.

"It was sad to see the beefies go, but as far as trying to budget, it is good to have that cashflow to do that with."



White Rock Mains became a FarmIQ property in 2010, a decision prompted by a desire to better understand where profitable opportunities lay that only good base data and on-going monitoring would reveal. The Electronic ID requirement for livestock under FarmIQ meant the programme was ideally suited to the Mackintoshes' aims.

"We collected a lot of scanning data on our two flock system, and it was not long before we realised a breed change was necessary". They had been running Corriedales initially and using the Landcorp Lamb Supreme genetics over them and their ewe progeny, and breeding from them over a number of years with replacement hoggets.

The introduction of Landcorp's maternal "Landmark" line resulted in a solid increase in lambing percentages, with the genetics pushing that to 130–140%, compared to earlier rates of 100–120%.

"We have not completely nailed the fertility yet, there is still potential there to come up further. We are making good progress however increasing weaning and post weaning growth rates in the lambs."

Monitoring using the EID tags and FarmIQ techniques has established some key progress indicators to know if the Mackintoshes' were on track with lamb weights. They determined they needed a 46kg ewe hogget pre-mating to achieve their 120% scanning target they set.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Duncan and Tina Mackintosh with their children Casey (6) and Peyton (4)

ABOVE: The introduction of Landcorp's maternal "Landmark" line injected some fresh sheep genetics and resulted in a solid increase in lambing percentages

BELOW: The Mackintoshes' now run 200 yearling heifers and 60 rising two year olds

With regular weighing at key periods they also now have data on daily growth rates. This year they achieved 45.8kg against the 46kg target, against previous years' averages of 39–42kg, and are now eagerly awaiting scanning data to see their fertility targets confirmed.

Duncan and Tina are highly satisfied with the Landcorp genetics and the ability to meet their targets of 150% lambing for the ewes, and 100% for the hoggets.

"We feel as long as we are buying the best rams we will hit these targets, and Landcorp stock are proven against that company's huge stock population base." Duncan says having the "nature" side of the stock equation better tuned has them also focusing on the "nurture" or feed aspects to maximise the genetics' full potential. EID and drafting by weight enables a close analysis and selection of ewes by weight and body condition.

"Sheep are prioritised based on their body condition score (BCS) at critical periods, which are post weaning, six weeks pre-mating and at scanning. The first two periods are essentially for getting those ewes back in lamb, and the third is to ensure she is capable of producing a good lamb at a good birth weight."

Lighter ewes will be pulled out for preferential feeding to put the weight on. "It is not so much about giving or growing more feed, but about giving it to those that need it most at certain periods." Mating hoggets is not always typical through the region, and comes with its own risks.

"It can be done well, or horribly. We have developed some clear indicators for them, and now know where they sit on their growth curve, with that 46kg target at mating being critical, but you still have to keep up with that curve after that too."



While the Mackintoshs' are relishing the mild winter experienced to date in mid-July, it has come after a particularly unusual and challenging autumn that made hitting growth targets an extra challenge.

"We had relentless rain, up to 180mm in one hit, and it just made things that much tougher when you were trying to get weight on sheep for mating."

However the discipline of the FarmIQ programme, and the information the EID tags provide means there are fewer surprises about where stock are heading weight wise.

"There is nowhere to hide, you have the numbers and the data, and you are forced to review and really look hard at your performance."

The Mackintoshs' see their monitoring and analysis as part of a shift that is happening across the sheep sector as farmers learn to be sharper, and more analytical about their business.

Their experience in dealing with dairy farmers through their grazing operation means they have also been exposed to a sector they see as being very aware of benchmarks and performance indicators.

Tina observes that as a group, dairy farmers notice where they can sharpen up on certain aspects of their business, benefitting by having a rapid feedback loop in their milk docket.

"For sheep operators it is a long time between drinks, which is probably a reason why it pays to take a leaf out of dairy farmers' book and have some key performance benchmarks to see how you are going."

Located only 20 minutes from Rangiora, the family are used to being asked if they would consider dairy conversion.

"We are pretty happy though with what we are doing. There are operators who are doing well with sheep, and only a small lift in lamb prices would see them match dairy returns. To go dairying would also require a significant change in lifestyle and investment."



ABOVE: Sailor the bull
BELOW: The business boosts seasonal cash flow by taking in dairy grazers and wintering cows on kale

Farm Details: White Rock Mains

Location:

20 minutes north west of Rangiora.

Size:

1050ha flats and down country
200-400m above sea level.

Rainfall:

750mm a year, cold winters, summer safe.

Stock numbers:

3400 mixed age breeding ewes comprising Focus Genetics Lamb Supreme and Landmark ewes.
900 ewe hoggets.
400 dairy cows wintered,
60 rising one year dairy heifers grazed
60 rising two year dairy heifers grazed.
200 mixed age rodeo bulls and fattening cattle.

Different beef for rodeo circuit

The Mackintosh family may have sold their beef herd, but their commitment to beef remains, albeit a very different type of beef.

It was a love of rodeo riding that had Duncan and Tina set out with a rodeo event organising business in 2009 that incorporated sourcing and supplying bulls for events around the South Island through their company 8 Seconds Bull Riding.

However there were a few risks in sourcing bulls of unknown parentage, including the "mad and bad" factor some came with. That usually meant plenty of damage inflicted to rails, yards and gates.

This was sometimes the attitude they got in bulls of unknown pedigree, supplied from around the South Island.

"And just because they were mad and bad, it did not mean they were necessarily very good at bucking, and they would take a long time to settle in."

Almost like a rogue professional league player, there were bulls that lacked the aptitude, heart and character true bucking rodeo bulls bring with them.

The couple had successfully run the Rangiora and Hanmer Springs rodeos, until the 2010 earthquake wrecked the Rangiora venue.

The need to source good reliable bulls for their events saw Duncan and Tina decide to purchase some suitable cows and start sourcing semen from the United States where rodeo riding is a huge arena sport.

It is also the source for fully certified "American bucking bull" breed, essentially a hybrid of Brahmin, beef breeds and other mixed types.

"The genetic pool in New Zealand is small for the right sort of bulls, and we decided it was up to us to build up our own stock of good quality, well suited bulls," says Tina.





ABOVE: The Mackintosh family on farm
BELOW: Action at the Rangiora Rodeo

They now have calves on the ground with the US genetics in them, and have more coming this spring. However acquiring the genetics has not proven a simple shopping exercise.

The couple have had to win the confidence of US breeders who are happy to take their prized bulls off the rodeo circuit for three months and put them into quarantine.

"Of course not everyone can or would do that, and we have had to earn their trust in the process." They are looking forward to travelling to Las Vegas in October for the PBR World Finals where bull

riders and breeders will gather and are hoping to expand their breeder network.

The Mackintoshs have a breeding programme any beef breeder can relate to, firstly by identifying quality female stock early on to breed from.

"It's just the same as for any stud, you have to have good maternal stock to ultimately deliver good bulls."

Determining the best female stock involves bucking them out, given the traits are relatively strongly inherited.

The heifers are fitted with a bucking dummy apparatus attached when they are released into an arena.

"We video them and then analyse their action for spin, buck, intensity and kick over a six second period.

"We might find we get a line of heifers for instance that show a good tendency to spin. That increases the degree of difficulty for riders, which they like."

The heifers may be bucked up to three times to select breeders, while the bulls will get a run as yearlings and two year olds and are not placed in a rodeo until they are three years old.

Tina says with Rangiora out of action, the Hanmer event is becoming more and more popular every year and she enjoys seeing the responses from people who may not have witnessed a rodeo event before.

"They come away realising the bulls are just as much the heroes of the event."

For Tina and Duncan the pleasure is also as much in helping build the NZ rodeo scene up with quality stock.

"We have always said we wanted to create bucking bulls that lift NZ cowboys' ability to ride, so many have to go overseas first through Australia and then the States."

They are looking forward to the prospect of the exciting Professional Bull Riders NZ Cup event arriving in Christchurch come November, providing them the chance to showcase their bulls to a worldwide audience via ESPN sports channel.

"It's the Gran Prix event for bull riding, with the best riders from around the world here for the first time, and we'll be looking forward to seeing how our bulls stack up."



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Keeping a clock on the hours

For anyone considering a job in the farming sector it would seem the stars have aligned.

NEAL SHAW, GROUP CEO

Highly positive growth prospects in most provinces, improved working conditions and an increasingly progressive approach to employment have made the dairy sector in particular a good place to look.

Anyone with the prerequisite ability to work hard, save, and learn a lot could not go wrong over the coming years. This year's Mystery Creek Fielddays placed a big emphasis upon staff, skills and opportunity and even the Prime Minister was putting his stamp of approval on a sector he said was far more "high" tech than low these days. For anyone employing staff in the dairy sector in particular there are a couple of key obligations and requirements that have become more critical in the past year, and are likely to remain so for the new season.

The highest profile obligation in the news has been around paying the minimum wage to staff at all times through the ups and downs of the dairy season. The tendency for employers to "seasonally average" wages based on the quieter times balancing the longer busy days simply won't stand up to Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment (MBIE) inspector scrutiny. Starting in Southland last season MBIE labour inspectors began a concerted crack down on dairy sector employers and farm worker hours, looking for periods when farm workers have been paid below the minimum wage of \$14.25 an hour, at any time.

Almost a year after the inspections started, South Island dairy farm employers can give themselves a pat on the back – their Northern counterparts in Waikato, Taranaki and Bay of Plenty recorded the highest number of breaches in the Employment Relations Act and the Holidays Act.

Forty four farms were visited nationally over the past season from December to April this year and 31 breached the rules around holidays and minimum pay, with over half being in the North Island. One farm employer has to pay a \$6,000 fine for breaching the act, and several other cases remain open.

As an employer it is critical to keep accurate time and wage records. This may require an update of employment contracts and farm manual to record and employee's obligation to comply with this request.

Paying the minimum wage may sound simple, but it gets more complex when employees are on a salary. An accurate weekly record of hours worked is essential to ensure that in those busy periods of 12 hour days that minimum of \$14.25 an hour is still being met—it is not acceptable to say it is being balanced by the quiet days in June or July.

Keeping accurate time and wage records will

also help protect employers from breaching the Holidays Act—with holidays being based off time worked, an accurate record will ensure they are duly taken in a timely manner.

MBIE has made it clear that after the breaches detected over the past year there are still plenty of farmers that can expect a visit from inspectors in the new season. However there is also another phase to upcoming inspections which will include a focus on employing migrant workers. Canterbury is doubly under the spotlight here, thanks to breaches of employment in Christchurch over migrant workers' conditions and pay—migrant workers also play a big part in the hinterland working on many dairy farms. Breaching conditions around immigration and employment can pull in fines ranging from \$10,000 for individuals to \$20,000 for companies.

In May the blurry issue of including workers' accommodation into salaries was cleared up by MBIE, with minimum wage calculations continuing to include accommodation allowances in weekly or fortnightly pays.

A quick way to calculate if workers are still being paid the minimum then is to add the annual salary to the accommodation allowance, and divide by 26 if paid fortnightly, then divide again by the minimum wage of \$14.25, to deliver the maximum hours a worker can work in a fortnight, without falling below the minimum wage figure. It's easily calculated, but makes good record keeping and agreement with your employee more critical than ever, or that extra pay that may be required may seem small against a hefty MBIE fine.

BELOW: Neal Shaw, Group CEO





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Take care of your calves and cows

The calving season is a busy time of year for dairy farmers. The seasonal calving pattern of the majority of dairy farms dictates that many cows will calve within six weeks of the start of calving. BY IAN HODGE, VETERINARIAN, VETENT RIVERSIDE, ASHBURTON

In fact most herds will now have over 70% of the herd pregnant within the first six weeks of the mating period. Although some cows that get in calf within this period do not calve for various reasons, when we add first calving heifers and carry over cows in to the mix it is easy to see that this makes for a busy time.

Calving represents the start of the next wave of improved genetic merit in to the herd and our heifer replacement calves need to be well looked after. The cows also need to be well looked after if they are to repeat the cycle and get back in calf within the first six weeks of the next mating period starting in October.

Calves should ideally be collected twice daily. Even though this represents more work, research has shown that by collecting calves twice daily and milking the cow within 12 hours of the birth of the calf the risk of calf diseases and mastitis can be reduced. Collected calves should be taken to warm, dry housing and fed fresh colostrum from normal healthy cows. Calves require 2–4 litres of colostrum within 10 hours of birth. Remember the three Q's of colostrum which are quantity, quality, quickly. You should test the immunoglobulin level of the calves that have had colostrum to check the transfer of immunoglobulins is successful. This is the key

to preventing major calf diseases within the first month or so of life.

The calf pens should not be overstocked, no more than 20 calves per pen, and they must be warm, dry and draught free at floor level. Calves should have access to fresh water, meal and hay from day one.

Hygiene with calf rearing is important. Some infectious diseases of calves can be transferred from the cows and the cow shed to the calf pens. Bikes, boots and leggings must always be cleaned before entering the calf pens. A disinfectant foot bath available for all to use (including the bobby calf truck driver) is important. Utensils used to feed calves must always be washed in very hot water and disinfected before use.

After calving, cows can become victims of many nasty problems. Almost all cows will lose condition as they approach calving and their appetites will be at a low point. In fact many cow's immune systems are severely compromised at the point of calving. This can make them more susceptible to diseases. The sudden onset of milk production combined with disrupted appetites can lead to metabolic diseases. For these reasons correct management of the cows before they calve is important. Ensuring the risk of milk fever is reduced by

good metabolic disease management and ensuring the diet remains as energy dense as possible will help reduce the impact of diseases around calving.

As cows calve they should be carefully monitored for retained placenta, mastitis, digestion problems and generalised sickness. These problems can quickly become life threatening in these vulnerable cows. It is an extremely good idea to have weekly visits from your dairy veterinarian. Preventive visits designed to detect and treat any diseases sooner rather than later will pay dividends in terms of getting these cows back in calf sooner. By having your herd's health optimised in this way you will maximise the chances of having a high three week submission rate and six week in-calf rate.

Minimising the incidence and the impact of diseases in cows and calves through well planned strategic veterinary interventions and using good veterinary advice will have a very favourable effect on your farm profitability.

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Genetics' role pushes dairy potential further

The advantage of dairying that appeals to many recent converts from dry stock farms is the almost instant feedback loop daily milk collection brings. A glance at the docket gives a dashboard look at herd performance, and over a week will soon give an insight to its production trend. BY RICHARD RENNIE

While this "instant" indicator is handy and highlights just how good the paddock/weather/feed was the day before, genetics are the less immediate, but equally important driver sitting behind the economic success of any dairy herd. This "nature" part of the nature-nurture equation has been cultivated over the past 70 years in the NZ dairy industry.

Expansive record keeping of ancestry coupled with individual cow herd testing has become one pillar of the industry's on-going productivity gains, matched with the second pillar of improvements in forage types over the same period.

Dr Jeremy Bryant, head of NZ Animal Evaluation Limited (NZAEL) at DairyNZ acknowledges genetic improvement can sometimes slip into the background and go unnoticed.

However the numbers to support genetics' "worth" are convincing.

Work by Dr Bryant and NZAEL indicates that over a 10 year period, genetic improvement in an average Jersey herd has contributed to an extra 23kg milk solids a cow (2.3kgMS a year increase).

Over the 10 year period, the 23kg of extra milk solids has been fuelled by an increase in demand for another 160kg dry matter.

Cumulatively the gains represent an additional \$257,730 of profit for an average herd over the 10 years.

Of course potential gain is one thing, achieving it is another.

Dr Bryant says the most powerful and rapid means of assuming quality genetics within a herd is to target the highest Breeding Worth (BW) bulls available that have been proven in NZ.

Research work has shown that home turf performance by daughters of sires is a critical element when seeking quality genetics for NZ's largely pasture based systems. While overseas sires may look good on overseas proofs, they are not necessarily good indicators of how profitable daughters of those sires will perform in NZ's relatively unique pastoral dairying system.

"Those overseas genetics are still valuable however. They enhance genetic diversity and contribute to individual trait improvement."

Good genetics and good fertility go hand in hand, and without acceptable levels of fertility it is more difficult to generate a team of high BW heifer replacements.

Dr Bryant points to DairyNZ tools available through the InCalf programme to assess a herd's reproductive performance. The Fertility Focus report provides an excellent snapshot of overall herd reproductive performance, including key indicators of empty rates, six week in calf rates and three week submission rates.

Factors affecting these issues may be directly related to management, for example cows needing to be at Body Condition Score (BCS) 5 prior to calving.

NZAEL is assessing the incorporation of BCS into the national BW index, helping develop a cow that is not "fat" but capable of holding her BCS better over the spring period right through to late lactation to enable more days in milk, and achieving BCS 5 by calving.

Using bulls with a high positive breeding value for fertility over the long run may also play a role in improving those benchmark performance indicators.

Economic values estimated by DairyNZ funded NZAEL show every 1% increase in cows in a herd calving within 42 days from the start of calving is worth \$7.18 per cow/year. For an average Canterbury herd of 800 cows that is about \$5,700.

Geneticist and breeding consultant Dr Dave Hayman of Liberty Genetics cautions farmers against looking to breeding alone to lift their herd's reproductive performance.

"Genetic selection for fertility is still a very slow process. Farmers do not need the false hope they can lift poorly performing fertility history in their herd through genetics – it is not going to happen quickly, and fertility within a herd is still largely determined by management."

Typically Dr Hayman maintains selecting for high Breeding Worth (BW) will produce steady fertility gains in most herds.

"However you can still fine tune your herd to most production systems with some genetic focus."

Cow "capacity" is one area higher producing farmers may choose to look when wanting to lift per head production, and not covered in BW calculations.

Ultimately a cow's potential will be enhanced by her capacity between her front legs, impacting on

her capacity between her rear legs.

As cows are challenged to produce more, greater pressure goes on them through their frame and vital organs like lungs and heart.

Choosing bulls with favourable capacity traits will push towards a cow capable of greater dry matter intake, blood flow and ultimately milk production potential.

Other areas will include udder conformation, as increased milk volumes demand stronger ligaments and muscle formation to hold the udder together.

In high producing herds often found in Canterbury, and as more farmers have to focus on lifting per cow production under nutrient caps, such "traits other than production" may become more topical.

However Dr Hayman acknowledges that for many farmers' genetics remains a complex issue easy to overlook in a busy farming calendar.

"I advise farmers to sit down with a representative they have confidence in, who can explain things clearly, and who has sufficient experience to assess the credibility and reliability of various samples of data that are used in AB sire marketing."

Craig Trotter of Vetlife Centre for Dairy Excellence in Geraldine believes the forthcoming nutrient restrictions may, in a round-about fashion, unlock more of the genetic potential many herds harbour.

The possibility of lowered stocking rates and changes in feed type could result in a lower incidence of animal health problems including lameness and mastitis, and cows that become more capable of achieving their full genetic potential.

"It could be that the nutrient restrictions may not see such a significant drop in total herd production if the lower stocking rates enable that genetic potential contained within individual cows to come through, with those cows performing better on a per head basis."

Craig welcomes research underway at present through Lincoln University and AgResearch to determine cow nitrogen use efficiency that could ultimately help breed cows with a lower environmental footprint.

Meantime farmers' efforts to improve body condition score through better feed levels will continue to play the biggest part to ensure not only do those cows stay fertile to pass their performance genetics on, but they recognise their production potential within their own lifetime.

LEFT ABOVE: Liberty Genetics Friesian Bagworth FG Esteem Fluke

LEFT BELOW: Liberty Genetics Friesian Marchel Fire Macca



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Keeping you powered

Gale force winds of 150km/h whipped through Canterbury last September, causing widespread damage and cutting power to thousands of farming people. BY LINDA CLARKE

Snow too can cause electricity outages, and big problems for dairy farmers who need power to run milking sheds, chillers and effluent ponds.

Those freak weatherstorms have turned Paul Dixon, of Dixon Machinery and Dieseltech in Methven, into a generator guru.

He imports powerful generators suited to New Zealand conditions and sells them to farmers, while also offering a repair and maintenance package.

The math is simple in his book. Why invest millions in a dairy farm but not spend \$20,000 on a generator that will keep the business going in the event of a power cut? It's not just about money, in last year's windstorms, some dairy farmers could not milk their cows for several days, creating animal welfare issues and potential health problems like mastitis.

Paul says the cost of a generator is about the value of 1–2 days milk.

"It's a no-brainer," he says. Farmers are listening too—the 40 generators he imported from China after the September windstorms have all gone, and more are on the way.

Paul, a trained diesel mechanic, has spent 35 years servicing the farming needs of the Methven and wider Mid Canterbury district. He spotted the supersized generators at a trade fair in China several years ago.

He says a 100Kw generator is sufficient to power most dairy farms—including milking shed, chiller and effluent pond—during a power outage.

Dixon Machinery has bought in about 150 generators over the past seven years and Paul says they are good quality. His generators come with a warranty and, in the unlikely event of a problem, he can dispatch a technician to fix it almost immediately.

"It might only be an outage for an hour, but the fact you have a generator means it can be switched on and the milking still gets done, the staff get home on time and everyone is happy."

Paul said he and his staff had built up a lot of expertise around the bigger generators over the years and advised farmers how to keep them maintained and ready for action.

Dixon generators are in dairy sheds all around Mid Canterbury, and on the West Coast.

While smaller generators are available, he recommends the larger units capable of keeping all operations running in the event of an outage.

"The big units have seen a huge leap in quality. The first ones were functional, and maybe not painted that well, but now it's a high-quality product that we are more than confident about selling and servicing."

The 100Kw generators are nearly 3m long, 1.1m wide and 1.6m tall, and can sit outside a dairy shed, inside or be transported by trailer to another site. They can be hard-wired into sheds by an electrician or connected via changeover switches.

Paul said it was good to see farmers being proactive about their dairy operations and thinking about generators as part of their initial set-up.

"You might think you'll never need one, but the day you use it, it will pay for itself."

Dixon Machinery and Dieseltech operates a retail and workshop space from Line Road, in Methven,



ABOVE: Paul Dixon, the workshop and retail space
MAIN IMAGE: One of the generators Dixon Machinery has on offer

where they deal with all manner of machinery. A mobile hydraulic repair truck was added last year to boost its range of services to the local agricultural community.

Convenience is a key aspect for Dixons. Paul knows farmers need a quick response and his team can also service and repair cars, trucks and tractors, especially diesel-powered vehicles, and complete WoFs in the workshop while customers wait.

Check their website www.dixonmachinery.co.nz for the latest products and services.

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Thoughts from across the rivers

While people in some countries are dying for the right to vote, many people here don't bother voting. BY ELE LUDEMANN

That isn't a reason to make voting compulsory. If we're free to vote we must be free to not vote.

However, disengagement from the democratic process shown by the gradual but steady lowering in the numbers of voters and a much steeper decline in the number of people who belong to political parties is cause for concern.

While voter participation is dropping throughout the country, the decline is slower in rural and provincial electorates.

There is some comfort in that because as the rural population declines as a proportion of the country's, it is vitally important we take every opportunity to use what influence we have.

Voting is important, however, there is much more to participation in the democratic process than popping in to a polling booth once every three years.

I have suggested, mostly in jest, that we should have to have a comprehension test before we can vote. But I accept if we're free to vote we're also free to vote in ignorance. That doesn't mean we should and I'm sure

one of the reasons for disengagement from the political process is that people don't understand it and the issues.

When we have so many calls on our time, it is harder to keep informed and we rural people should be very grateful that organisations like Federated Farmers and Rural Women do keep abreast of the issues and lobby on our behalf.

Unlike unions, some of which are affiliated to political parties, and all of which appear to be biased to the left, Federated Farmers and Rural Women aren't politically aligned and they're stronger for that.

We need representation that can work with the government, whatever its colour, to get the best outcome for farmers and the wider rural community. That's a two-way street. We need them to work for us and they need our support to do it.

That goes for political parties too.

A few decades ago most farmers would have been members of a political party, and the majority of them would have belonged to National.

As the party's southern regional chair I wear my colours on my sleeve and I mean that

literally—my wardrobe is full of blue clothes. That means people often talk to me about politics and ask why bother belonging to a party.

My answer is it's a community service. The party is a voluntary organisation made up of volunteers who want to make a positive difference to their communities and the country.

In the build-up to next month's election the media will focus on what makes good headlines even though what influences most voters are the major issues—the economy, education, health, law and order and welfare.

Of those the economy is most important because if it's not growing none of the other first world services we expect are sustainable.

That's why it's important to vote, and vote wisely next month.

Ele Ludemann
homepaddock.wordpress.com



High country a lure back down under

Ben Douglas and Sarah Connell have made the move from northern hemisphere high rise to southern high country in the past year, returning to Ben's family's Dome Hills Station in North Otago.

BY RICHARD RENNIE



Together they represent a shift that is occurring in the region's demographics, with the arrival of a young enthusiastic, innovative generation keen to make the most of the opportunities offered on the land.

Ben says the couple never experienced any great epiphany that saw him suddenly drop his corporate banking job in London, and Sarah her graphic design job, to suddenly flee homewards last October.

“I realised just how far away from here we were when I took Mum and Dad up to the 30th floor of the building on Canary Wharf and we looked over London, while we discussed moving back home.”

“Coming back here was something we had both talked about greatly and had been in our plans for a while. We had been away two and a half years in total and that was long enough—like so many people, we really began to realise what we had in New Zealand, and were missing that,” he says.

The move back to the 7,000ha high country run saw Ben leave his role in Barclays global corporate team, working with large multi-nationals headquartered in London and based in the city's heart on Canary Wharf.

Sarah had been working in a publishing business and studying interior design at the Inchbald School of Design.

“I realised just how far away from here we were when I took Mum and Dad up to the 30th floor of the building on Canary Wharf and we looked over London, while we discussed moving back home.”

Nowadays elevation is measured more above sea level than by floor height, while Ben's suits and ties have been traded for work boots and a woollen vest to learn what it means to run a high country station.

Located 50km north west of Oamaru, Dome Hills sits facing largely north east, with its elevation starting at 600m above sea level, entrenching it firmly in the “high country” category.



ABOVE: The Dome hills landscape

BELOW: Sarah with the stations horses

BELOW LEFT: The family farm

OPPOSITE: Ben and Sarah with their dogs amongst the melting snow

For Ben, coming home bought more than simply the pleasure of re-establishing relationships with family and friends. Like many kids bought up in the high country he had left relatively young to go to boarding school, followed by university then the big OE.



“So it has been great to be able to come back home for a length of time as an adult, and have the opportunity to be involved in the business with family and enjoy a place we have been away from for quite a while.”

But he's the first to admit he's not there for the view, as remarkable as it is.

“I am very aware that I'm pretty green at the farming game, and decided before coming back if I was then it would be a case of starting off as a shepherd and really understanding from the ground up how things work.”

He attributes much to fellow employee Jack Brennan, a very experienced high country manager who is helping Ben learn how to manage a dog team, so essential in the high country landscape.

“Dad is still very hands on, and we still do the big musters in the back country so it's pretty essential I get up to speed.”





Dome Hills retains some traditional high country systems, with altitude and contour limiting the station's ability to depart too far from a model relying primarily upon sheep and cattle.

However the type of sheep carried today is perhaps the most significant shift seen on the station in recent times.

“It’s proven to be very successful, the genetics have lifted our lambing percentages well up from 80–90% to 140–150%, with a focus on meat over wool, and they are well suited to this environment.”

“Eight years ago Dad made the move right away from our traditional Merino wether flock that had been our bread and butter really. He moved to a four way cross bred, “Headwaters” consisting of Texel, Finn, Perendale and Romney, developed by Andy Ramsden.”

Andy Ramsden was nominated as a finalist in the 2014 Beef + Lamb New Zealand Sheep Industry Awards, in the Industry Innovation section for his breeding efforts.

The genetics have the foundations of high country potential, being sourced off Minaret Station down in Wanaka, and the innovative breeding scheme sees buyers of the genetics syndicated into ownership.

“It’s proven to be very successful, the genetics have lifted our lambing percentages well up from 80–90% to 140–150%, with a focus on meat over wool, and they are well suited to this environment.”

The station also continues to run a mixed Angus and Hereford breeding mob of 500 head.

“They still play a vital role in helping clean up and keep up with pasture, and are put out on the hard back country over winter when the sheep come closer to home—we’ve stuck with the traditional breeds, and they continue to do a good job.”

The biggest developments in the station business

have been at some physical distance from it, with the development of Whitestone Pastures. Located in the Waitaki Valley near Duntroon, Ben’s father David holds an interest in two dairy properties there, milking 2,300 cows.

“It’s unlikely we would ever be milking on Dome Hills, but Mum and Dad have managed to invest into the dairy sector down country, and it’s offered some real options for the entire family business.”

The operation fits well with the family’s 240ha runoff also down country which winters the Whitestone cows on kale, grass and fodder crops.

The dairy side of the business is even newer to Ben than the high country operations, but it is one he enjoys learning more about, and he welcomes the economic injection the industry has bought to the region.

“Before we went away to live in Auckland and then overseas, Oamaru was a quieter town. Today it has a buzz about it, a sense of productivity and purpose that has really been good for it, thanks to the number of dairy farm conversions that have occurred.”

He is hoping his corporate experience will contribute to managing the different aspects of the family operation, particularly given the growing role the dairy operation may play over time.

With its higher input requirements, cost parameters, volatility, and cash flow demands Ben sees the dairy operations bringing its own interesting challenges and opportunities. Meantime growing compliance requirements around nutrient losses which are less likely to affect Dome Hills will be another area requiring attention and addressing in the dairy operations.

“There are some interesting opportunities for the three separate entities of Dome Hills, the run off and Whitestone to really develop some synergies, and being comfortable looking through a balance sheet helps for that.” He also welcomes the advice of his younger sister Lucy who is 2IC on a nearby dairy operation.

As Sarah grows her business and Ben gets a grip on the intricacies of high country and dairy



ABOVE: Ben enjoys learning the finer details of the Dome Hills operation

TOP: Ben and Sarah are excited to be back home

operations, the couple are enthused about what being back home means, personally and for the region as a whole.

“We have a number of friends who have come back from overseas, or are due to in the coming year to return back to farming after travelling—often it is to go dairying here, they see the opportunities and it has really regenerated the region.”

Light and sky a design inspiration

Changing light patterns and a bounty of varied textures are not only elements of everyday life at Dome Hills station. For Ben Douglas' partner Sarah Connell those elements also help her draw inspiration for her fledgling interior design business.

Sarah aims to capture elements of her client's individuality and environment, combining them with latest designs and inspirations drawn from her international experience.

“Design sense has moved a long way within the past decade; into an environment where people are more prepared to mix and match styles and textures, and be less constrained by whatever “the” design of the time may be.”

Born an Auckland girl she never suspected she may be one day traipsing across southern landscapes shifting cattle and mustering sheep.

But that was before meeting her partner and appreciating the pull Dome Hills had upon him, made all the stronger by spending some years overseas. Ten months into moving to Dome Hills with Ben, Sarah is working hard to build an ideal



life balance from the ground up, combining her design business with an eager desire to understand how modern farming systems work.

Before heading overseas with Ben, Sarah had worked as a graphic designer and stylist for NZ House and Garden magazine, and carried on her love of interior design by attending the Inchbald School of Design in the United Kingdom.

Much to her own surprise she found her first client the same day she stepped off the plane home. Working on a Queenstown house project was a fortunate first that helped set her confidence and belief she was on the right track early on.

London proved to live up to its reputation as a cross roads for design influences. That is something that has suited Sarah as she develops

ABOVE: Ben believes his corporate experience will assist in managing the farm

BELOW: Sarah's business allows her time on farm and time to grow her interior design portfolio

a style that incorporates aspects of modern monochromatic colours with quirky, colourful and sometimes antique features for contrast, creating highly individualised spaces for her clients.

Her choices are helped by where design fashion is now at. “Design sense has moved a long way within the past decade; into an environment where people are more prepared to mix and match styles and textures, and be less constrained by whatever “the” design of the time may be.”

Coming home, NZ has not proven to be bereft of good materials, manufacturers and suppliers when it comes to getting those unique features clients require.

“Of course the internet has made a lot of what I do possible too, it may not always be as fast as you may like, but it has helped build a great network of suppliers. The beauty too is their ‘can do’ attitude—if they don't have the item you may want, they are only too happy to go and get hold of it for you.”

Sarah admits coming back to the seat of the Douglas family at Dome Hills was initially both an exciting and nervous time. However she has found the family warmly welcoming and keen to see her develop her own identity there with her own business.

“I am hoping I can get a balance here. I am not so busy with my business that I cannot be involved in what is going on at the station, and that is important to me. There is the chance to build our own path here, that's something you don't get in a corporate environment.”

Visit Sarah's site: www.sarahconnelldesign.co.nz

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The company develops the Outlook annually to assess future trends in energy supply, demand and technology to help guide its long-term investments.

The latest version, Outlook for Energy: A View to 2040, was released on 12 December 2013.

"This Outlook underpins our business strategy," said Andrew McNaught, Country Manager of Mobil Oil New Zealand, a subsidiary of ExxonMobil. "It provides a window to the future and we use this to help guide where we make our investments.

"Over the next five years, ExxonMobil expects to invest almost \$200 billion (US\$185b) in energy projects around the world. Much of this investment is in the form of adding new sources of supply to the market, which will be necessary to ensure the world has sufficient supplies for the next generation and the generation after that.

"So it's critical that we take an objective and data-driven approach to ensure that we have the most accurate picture of energy trends."

According to the latest Outlook, global transportation energy demand increases by more than 40% between 2010 and 2040, with growth coming almost entirely from commercial transportation.

The world's personal vehicle fleet—cars, SUVs and small pickup trucks—will double between 2010 and 2040, from more than 800 million to more than 1.6 billion vehicles, but the energy consumed actually plateaus fairly soon and begins a gradual decline.

This is because car buyers will turn to smaller, lighter vehicles and technologies will improve fuel efficiency.

The growth in commercial transportation demand is driven by projected increases in economic activity – and the associated increased movement of goods and freight.

As a result we will see dramatic growth for commercial road, rail, air and marine transport. However, it's heavy duty vehicle demand – freight trucks of all sizes, buses, emergency vehicles and work trucks – that sees the largest growth. Rising by 65%, it will account for 40% of all transportation fuel demand by 2040.

Transportation demand varies across different regions of the world, with the strongest growth in Asia Pacific. By about 2015, transportation demand in Asia Pacific will exceed that of North America.

"The fuel efficiencies that will be curtailing growth in light-duty fuel consumption will also have a profound effect on energy demand for heavy vehicles over the next 30 years," said Andrew.

"These efficiency changes have technological and non-technological components, such as logistics, road congestion and truck sizes.

"We believe that technological improvements will appear first in the developed OECD countries and then migrate to the developing countries.

"Over the next 15 years many technologies available today will see greater penetration into the transport fleets with the introduction of fuel economy and emission-reduction standards

in different regions. These include engine improvements like turbo-compounding, higher pressure cylinders/fuel injection, improved aerodynamic deflectors and other resistance enhancements such as low rolling resistance tyres. "In the second 15 years we expect to see more advanced engines, hybridisation and intelligent vehicle technologies as well as continued penetration of body improvements bringing the total efficiency over the outlook up by nearly 50% [47%]."

Andrew said that the Outlook also highlighted how operating inefficiencies would drive up fuel use in the heavy-duty vehicle sector over the next 30 years.

"These inefficiencies include increased road congestion, lower-density cargo, and the increasing share of deliveries made directly to the consumer, mostly as a result of goods bought via the internet," he said.

"However, the global heavy duty fuel demand growth rate between 2010 and 2040 would have been double if it were not for the significant energy efficiency improvements."

The projected transportation growth will drive an expected 25% increase in demand for oil. This will be met through technology advances that enable deep-water oil production and development of oil sands and tight oil.

"The commercial transport growth will result in diesel demand growing faster than any other transportation fuel and most of that growth is here in Asia Pacific," said Andrew.

"As a result, over the past five years ExxonMobil has invested almost \$2 billion to increase its ultra-low-sulfur diesel (ULS) refining capacity.

"That's adding over 120 thousand barrels per day (kbd) of ULS diesel capacity here in the Asia Pacific region with projects at our refineries in Thailand (60kbd) and Singapore (62kbd).

"Here in New Zealand we have invested more than \$70 million over the past six years improving the safety, reliability and viability of our fuel supply facilities."

He said ExxonMobil's refineries and import terminals across the Asia Pacific operated as one regional supply network.

"Our unique array of logistical options evolve according to the trends identified in our long-term Outlook," he said. "This helps to cement our position as a proven reliable fuel supplier to the market."



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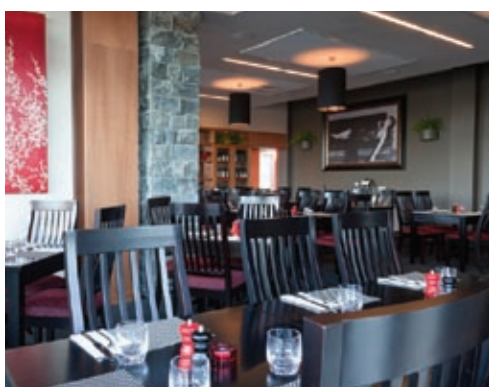
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You can trust in the Trust

The Invercargill Licensing Trust was founded some 70 years ago and has progressively grown to where it now operates 25 businesses in the hospitality industry including hotels, motels, restaurants, bars and retail liquor outlets primarily in Invercargill, along with a motel property in both Dunedin and Christchurch.

Through its success and profitability, the Trust provides ongoing benefits for the people of Invercargill by returning a share of its profits to the community. The Invercargill Licensing Trust, along with the ILT Foundation, are major funders of community projects in Invercargill. Collectively they provide donations and grants totalling around \$10 million a year to over 300 organisations. These range from developments such as the ILT Stadium Southland and the Velodrome, to helping grass-roots projects such as supplying interactive electronic whiteboards for local schools along with swimming lessons for primary school children at the Learner's swimming pool at Splash Palace which was also funded by the Trust.

The Trust's mandate is to provide quality accommodation, food, beverage and



entertainment facilities for the people of Invercargill and to the visiting public. Invercargill accommodation facilities include the inner city Kelvin Hotel, the Ascot Park Hotel, the Balmoral Lodge Motel and the Homestead Villa Motel. The Trust also offers accommodation in Dunedin with the Cable Court Motel and in Christchurch with the Ashford Motor Lodge. There is always something happening in the friendly south with events such as the Burt Munro Weekend, the Bluff Oyster Festival, the Tour of Southland and the bi-annual Waimumu Southern Field Days which will next be held in February 2016.

No stay in Invercargill would be complete without a great dining out experience. Again the Trust is able to offer a variety of options ranging from the well known brands such as the Lonestar and Cobb & Co restaurants to a wonderful Irish Pub called Waxy O'Shea's. Other restaurants include

ABOVE TOP: Barluca Pizza Kitchen & Club Invercargill
 ABOVE: Cable Court Motel Dunedin
 LEFT TOP: A Conference Room at the Ascot Park Hotel Invercargill
 LEFT BOTTOM: The Saucy Chef Invercargill

The Saucy Chef in the north of city and the Thar & Feather in the south along with inner city eateries including the Speights Ale House and The Kiln.

If you prefer to have a drink at home, supplies can be purchased from a variety of the Trust's liquor outlets which include; Centre Point and South City Liquorland or Collingwood and Southland Super Liquor outlets which are scattered around the city or from its more boutique styled bottle stores including Windsor Wines and East End Liquor.

The Invercargill Licensing Trust looks forward to hosting you on your next visit south. For more details please visit www.ilt.co.nz.



Invercargill Licensing Trust
 Tel 03 211 3640

ilt@ilt.co.nz
www.ilt.co.nz

Feeding to the MAX



Cows across the district have wintered fairly well this dry period, with many cows reaching target Body Condition Score (BCS) of 5 to 5.5.

PROVIDED BY CRAIG TROTTER, CENTRE FOR DAIRY EXCELLENCE

Though wet in areas typically around the hills, there may be issues with feed quantities for any late calving cows. We have not had any significant extreme weather event such as extended periods of snowfall etc.; fingers crossed, this will continue as we quickly move into peak calving. As a result, pasture covers on the platform are in very good order which will play an important part in transition feeding this calving.

As we all witness on farm, immediately pre and post calving cows go through an incredible metabolic change in a very short period of time, their demand for feed energy and protein increases dramatically. A 450kg cow producing 2kg MS/day requires at least 200 MJME/day and a diet crude protein of at least 16% to satisfy her requirements. Typically, in the first few of weeks post calving, a cow's feed intake is short of her overall demand hence a further requirement to have cows in good condition so that they utilise a proportion of this body tissue for production. This is a standard attribute of the modern dairy cow of the 2000's, they are programmed to utilise BCS 'off their back' during the spring to fulfil production requirements.

Our goals as producers is to minimise the length of time they are in a state of BCS loss and its magnitude, i.e. no more than six weeks post calving and less than one unit of BCS between calving and mating. The importance of ensuring that cows are at a BCS of 5 cannot be overstated.

We know that cows with a BCS of 5 at calving will cycle by 8–10 days earlier than cows at a BCS of 4 therefore having the opportunity to get in calf earlier as well as potentially reduce costs such as lower Controlled Internal Drug Release (CIDR) usage, AI and reduced endometritis in the herd. Furthermore, cows at BCS of 3 or 4 at calving produce around 30 and

12.5 less kg MS respectively through the season than cows calving at BCS 5; more hassle, more cost, less production, less personal fulfilment and satisfaction.

Secondary to ensuring cows are at a BCS of 5 is doing our best of keeping them there after calving. We need to ensure cows are fed as well as possible through the spring to minimise BCS loss, maximise milk production and minimise losses in potential reproductive performance (**Table 1**).

The supplementation of Magnesium (Mg) is also vital in the late winter/spring period. There is considerable research evidence that clinical milk fever can reduce milk production by around 14% and sub-clinical hypocalcaemia around 7% with around 5% of cows on many properties getting clinical milk fever and a third of cows potentially suffering sub-clinically; all in all, a costly exercise.

The greatest tool to prevent milk fever issues is the supplementation of magnesium (Mg) pre and post calving, as the availability of Mg is essential for the availability of calcium post-calving. The general aim of the game is to provide around 20g (variation due to performance targets) of actual Mg per cow per day.

Mg on farm usually comes in three forms:

- Magnesium oxide (MgO) which contains around 50% actual Mg.
- Magnesium chloride (MgCl₂) which contains around 12% actual Mg.
- Magnesium sulphate (MgSO₄²⁻) which contains around 10% actual Mg.

Using a combination of MgO (pasture spreading or mixed into meal) and either MgCl₂ or MgSO₄²⁻ (Dosatron) is recommended to reduce palatability issues and ensure adequate intake through the spring. Typical application rates of MgO onto pasture are around 80g which supplies 20g Mg (assuming at least 50% blown away and not consumed by the cows of which 50% is Mg). Because MgCl₂ or MgSO₄²⁻ are relatively low in available Mg, application rates need to be at around 50g (MgCl₂) or 60g (MgSO₄²⁻) per cow per day through the dosatron to supply 5g of actual Mg to the cows. It is recommended not to exceed around 80g of

either chloride or sulphate per cow per day to prevent taint of the water potentially reducing voluntary intake.

Post calving, a cow loses somewhere in the vicinity of 30–40g of calcium per day through milk production. The majority of this calcium is provided through mobilisation of bone storage but supplementation of lime flour is important to ensure calcium intakes are maintained to assist in the availability of calcium and replenishment of those stores over time. Typical rates of supplementation are dusting at a rate of 100-150g limeflour per day to colostrums and then decreasing this to milkers as the spring progresses. Of course it is important that lime flour is not offered to pre-calving cows.

Another very important point to consider when we discuss nutrition requirements and issues around calving time is cow wastage and disease incidence on farm. The spring of course is a busy time of the year and on many farms, recording of data or incidence goes out the window. Take the time to put a plan in place to make records of the incidence of milk fever, cow losses, retained foetal membranes, and calving difficulties. In days gone by, excuses for not recording data such as these may have been acceptable but with cows costing at a minimum of \$2,200 each, losing 4–5% on a 1,000 cow farm equates to \$88,000 to \$110,000 and that's just the capital cost of course. Not to mention losses in MS production through the season (say 325kg MS average if they die in the spring @\$7/kg MS = \$91,000-\$113,750 plus additional rearing costs for replacement heifers etc.) Some losses are to be expected (1–2%) but many do not record these losses nor is incidence of diseases through the spring, perhaps there an underlying issue on farm causing these losses, if it is not measured, it of course cannot be managed. Cow wastage exceeding 3% should not be tolerated. In addition, retained foetal membranes, and metabolic disease incidence exceeding 5% should start ringing the alarm bells on farm and it will be time to speak to a vet or advisor around such matters.

Through taking the time to plan ahead of methods and information recording prior to the start of calving will ensure that year on year gains can be made in minimising potential and ongoing issues through the spring. This will of course benefit man and beast alike in ensuring that a negligible number of issues develop on farm and there is a structure in place to deal with any issues as they arise. This will in turn minimise stress and ill health and maximise efficiency, in both animal and dairy team performance.

Table 1. The impact of body condition score loss in early lactation on potential reproductive performance (From Incalf, DairyNZ)

MEAN HERD BCS LOSS	PROBABLE DECREASE IN 6 WEEK IN-CALF RATE (%)	PROBABLE INCREASE IN EMPTY RATE (%)
LESS THAN 0.5	–	–
0.5 - 0.75	-2	1
0.75-1	-3	2
1-1.25	-4	3
1.25-1.5	-5	4
MORE THAN 1.5	-6	5



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Join the Scam Savvy crusade

Contrary to belief, scammers target people of all backgrounds, ages and income levels. Senior citizens are particularly vulnerable, but those who think they're too clever to fall for a scam often take risks that scammers quickly take advantage of.

BY BRONWYN GOOT, BNZ SECURITY & FRAUD CO-ORDINATOR

However, scams are very difficult to detect. What they offer looks genuine and appears to meet your needs or desires. But they're artfully designed to trick you into giving away your money or personal information.

They often promise great prizes, true love or easy money. However, before they deliver on any of these promises, they'll often provide you with plausible reasons to send money, provide your credit card number, or supply your bank account details. Many scammers also entice their victims by posing as legitimate companies or organisations and approach out of the blue with seemingly ordinary requests. And then they'll take your money.

A request or offer might be a scam if:

- You don't know the sender;
- You receive an email or letter addressed to 'My Dear' or a similar generic greeting;
- The message contains grammatical or spelling errors;
- You're contacted by a bank you don't have an account with;
- You're urged to visit a website to update your bank details or fill in a form with personal information;
- You're advised to act fast to claim money or another prize in a lottery or competition that you didn't enter;
- You inherit money or possessions from someone you've never heard of;
- You receive a request from a stranger who needs your help (usually to send money);
- You've befriended someone on a dating website and they ask you to send them money so they can pay debts or come and visit you.

Tips for protecting your money

Keep bank cards and money in sight (and preferably in your possession at all times). Cover your PIN when using ATMs and EFTPOS. Be wary of anyone trying to look over your shoulder when withdrawing cash or making purchases.

If you receive a phone call and are unsure about the validity of the caller, ask for their name and let them know you'll call them back. Then dial the organisation's listed number (e.g. BNZ's listed number is 0800 ASK BNZ [0800 275 269]) and ask to be transferred to the person you spoke with.

That way you can be sure you're speaking with a genuine staff member from a legitimate organisation.

Always make time to review your bank and credit card statements. If you spot anything out of the ordinary, contact your bank immediately.

If you're planning a business trip or holiday, advise your bank of your travel itinerary and provide an emergency contact number.

Keeping your personal information safe

PINs and passwords are highly confidential and belong to you and you alone. It's important you do not write them down.

Your bank will never ask you to disclose your PIN number.

Avoid putting mail containing bank or personal information in the rubbish. Shred or burn it if possible.

Try not to use repetitive or sequential numbers when selecting a PIN number (e.g. 1234 or 4444) and never use your date of birth—it's one of the first numbers a scammer will try.

Stay safe online

Select strong passwords (use alpha-numeric and special characters and a mix of upper and lower case letters).

Only use trusted and secure websites by looking for https:// at the beginning of the web address bar and the padlock icon in your browser window.

Avoid clicking on links embedded within emails that appear to be from your bank or a government department. Contact the organisation via their listed number to confirm the email is legitimate. Links and attachments in scam emails often contain harmful viruses and malware that give scammers access to your computer, where they can access your personal information and attempt to steal your money. Take care when sending money to companies or individuals you've met (or have been communicating with) online - particularly if you've never transacted with them before.

What's hot right now?

Postal mail scams. They arrive in brightly coloured envelopes and can look very official and intimidating. A recipient only has to reply to one with a cheque or credit card details to claim a



prize, as well as their full contact information, and they then become inundated. In one case, a gentleman received 169 envelopes on one day. It overwhelms people's lives, and they become too scared to stop responding or sending payments. However, positive news is that victims are increasingly finding the courage to share their stories, even though it is hard to do so. Many feel isolated, embarrassed and ashamed, while others are fearful that speaking out about their perpetrator could make their situation worse. Scams have reached epidemic proportions, but the hope is that with more public awareness we will see an improvement in reported figures and, consequently, a reduction.

If you think you've been scammed, talk to your bank and contact your local Police for advice.

For more information on scams visit:

Department of Internal Affairs www.dia.govt.nz
Consumer Affairs
www.consumeraffairs.govt.nz/scams
Report mobile phone (txt) scams to 7726



Educating the public and making them aware of scams is a strong focus for BNZ. Bronwyn Goot, BNZ's security and fraud coordinator, spends much of her time on the road teaching about scams and supporting people who fall victim to them. Her seminars, appropriately named 'Scam Savvy', are aimed at raising awareness in a bid to head off devious criminals.



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International brand with a local flavour

Milligans has long been a familiar name within the farming sector, especially when it comes to the supplying of high quality milk replacements. **BY ANITA BODY**



It is little wonder they are leaders in their field given the business has almost 120 years of production experience.

The business originally started in 1896 operating a flour mill and has now grown into one of New Zealand's leading suppliers and manufacturers of animal nutrition products, food ingredients and consumer food products.

Milligans Food Group's subsidiary Milligans Feeds has been manufacturing and supplying high quality, top performing animal protein milk replacers for infant animals for the past 25 years. Their milk replacers are one of the leading product brands stocked by major agriculture retailers throughout New Zealand, including ATS, with their range of Calf Milk Replacers (CMR) recognised as a premium quality milk replacer. These are specially formulated for calves aged from as early as day four, and are made from a nutritionally balanced blend of milk powders and selected vitamins and minerals. The milk replacer range is not limited to calves—there's also a range of Multi Milk Replacers which are suitable for lambs, fawns, cria, foals, kids, piglets, kittens and pups.



Quality product is highly valued by Milligans and to ensure this, all products are regularly tested both internally and externally through recognised industry laboratories.

As well as providing calves, and other livestock, with a milk replacement which they thrive on, farmers also like the product because it is easy to mix and stock take to it straight away.

The company has a wide range of animal nutrition products including milk and whey proteins and grain based feeds. Milligans can customise mixes in conjunction with their nutritionists and customers' specific requirements utilising grain, proteins and dairy products. Milligans' head office, storage warehouses and manufacturing plants are situated in Oamaru and service the South Island and international markets. The company has a distribution centre and sales team in Auckland which services the North Island and Pacific Islands. These manufacturing plants are MPI Dairy registered to ensure all products are made to the highest standards of quality and food safety.

A wide variety of specialised food products are manufactured, blended and packed on-site then marketed across New Zealand, Australia, USA and Asia using the company's product brands. These include Specialty Cheeses,

KiwiMass, Milligans Performance Proteins, Granny Faye's, Frosty Boy, Eclipse, Milligans Eclipse, and Eclipse Dairy Products. Milligans' own products include Milk Powders, Cheese, Cheese Sauce, Butter, Milk Fat, Milk Protein, Whey Protein, Casein, Ice Cream, Syrups, Flour, Bakery Products and Mayonnaise.

Demand for many of these products has grown, especially in Asian markets which are still recognised as the greatest growing milk markets in the world. Milligans has responded to this and supplies raw ingredients to manufacturers, and also the finished product thanks to their brand new blending facility.

Many of the Milligans high protein concentrate feeds are marketed in the USA under the brand Milipro, with other brands being marketed in Asia and North America.



ABOVE: Milligans Food Group Ltd Head Office
MAIN IMAGE: Milligans Café & Store in Oamaru
BELOW LEFT: Milligans Milk Replacer

Closer to home, the company's latest development is the Milligans Café and Store situated in a heritage building close to their headquarters in Oamaru. Milligans Café and Store has a dedicated team who bring great service combined with tasty food and drinks. The kitchen uses ingredients from local suppliers and producers and drinks are largely sourced from quality New Zealand manufacturers, brewers and wineries. Wherever possible organic produce is used and the store is stocked with many Milligans' products.

While the business has clearly grown and expanded to meet a wide variety of needs, quality still remains the main priority for Milligans, whether its dairy food products intended for national and international markets or animal nutrition destined for your farm gate.



Milligans Food Group Ltd
1 Chelmer Street, Oamaru
Tel 03 434 1113
inquiries@milligans.co.nz
www.milligans.co.nz



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Designing your landscape

If you're planning to build a new home, choosing a builder is only half the exercise. You also will need a landscape designer like Leen Braam owner of Braam Landscapes Unlimited!

BY LINDA CLARKE

Leen has 35 years in the business and experience has taught him how best to position a house to capture the sun, where to put the entertaining area, what to plant if you want a shelter belt or low maintenance garden, where driveways should go so visitors don't end up at your back door, and more.

The new home he shares with wife Lianne on 119 Maronan Road and his work space nearby showcase how a landscape can be beautifully tailored to feed the mind and soul, as well as be a practical work space. The home has two acres of lawn and garden and 100m away sits Leen's office, workshops and nursery.

Tourists stop to photograph the vista, especially when their seven rehomed alpaca are cruising the paddocks next to the road.

Leen and Lianne are proud 'Dutch Kiwis'. They came to New Zealand in 1982 at the encouragement of Leen's cousin, Victor Schikker, who lives in Mid Canterbury.

Leen had been to university and graduated with a landscape design degree. He worked for the Millichamp family Garden centre in Tinwald for a year before teaming up with Roger Martin.

That partnership lasted until 2000, when Leen set up Braam Landscapes Unlimited!

Being a landscape designer or landscape architect is about creating an indoor/outdoor environment best suited to a client's needs and wants. Leen's motto is 'your dream/our vision'

He says the most important part of the process is meeting clients and getting a feel for what they want, whether it is work for a new home, farm or dairy shed, or renovations on an existing property.

Advice early in the planning stage can avoid any regrets once the property is developed, and that can be as simple as placing the septic tank and greywater lines in the right place.

He can prepare landscape designs from scratch, tweak other designs, suggest paths, paving and parking areas, what trees and shrubs to grow. His team is fantastic at bringing his landscape designs to life for clients.

From paving through to fences, water features, home irrigation systems, lawns, planting and maintenance, they do it all. Except building the actual house of course.

While the majority of Leen's clients are home-owners, he also works on subdivision



ABOVE: Some of the gardens Braam Landscapes Unlimited! has designed
 MAIN IMAGE: Leen Braam and a plan he is designing for a client's garden

developments, commercial buildings, and on council amenities. He has travelled to clients as far afield as Wanaka, into the Rangitata Gorge and the Marlborough Sounds.

The on-site nursery is open to the public on a Friday, between 8am and 3pm. It contains bigger trees and shrubs, with a huge range of choices from conifers and oaks, to rhododendrons and farm shelters. They can also source those "special" plants for clients from all the leading nurseries in New Zealand. Come and have a look at all the plants on offer, and catch up with Leen and the team.

You can find Braam Landscapes Unlimited! on Facebook at www.facebook.com/braamlandscapes and their website at www.braam.co.nz



Braam Landscapes Unlimited!
 119 Maronan Road
 RD 8, Ashburton

Tel 03 307 2330
enquiries@braam.co.nz
www.braam.co.nz

Governing their future



Life's too short not to have a little bit of magic every day—one of the themes in business and life of Takaka dairy farmers Tony and Kathy Reilly. BY KATE TAYLOR



ABOVE: The home farm near Takaka in Golden Bay is 87ha (effective) milking 290 cows

BELOW RIGHT: Right: Cows from one of the four dairy farms Tony and Kathy are a part of

OPPOSITE: Clockwise from Left Tony Reilly, Deanna Pomeroy-Bryne, John Bryne, Stewart Watson, Alice Reilly and Kathy Reilly

With a wealth of political and governance experience between them, as well as four dairy farms (three in equity partnerships), Tony and Kathy have also recently opened a delicatessen in Takaka. “The success of equity partnerships is having partners that are aligned with the same objectives,” Tony says, “the two other partners in the delicatessen have similar goals and aspirations, even though the business is different to dairy farming. Being in retail locally in our own community is a new opportunity for us—it’s like creating a little bit of magic in there every day. In one respect, we’re right at the beginning of the food chain in terms of primary production and here, we’re producing fine foods for daily consumption from local products, and that’s satisfying.”

Tony and Kathy are proud of their long farming histories. They are currently the fourth generation of Tony’s family on their property near Takaka while Kathy’s family were farming pioneers in Golden Bay too. “We have owned land in this area since the 1850s. This is one of the original farms—in the early days it was sheep and pigs as well as dairy but it’s more dairy in later years. We’re not corporate—it’s owned by the same family that negotiated with the Maori and we still have the documentation to show we paid a fair price. It’s the same family that cut the land out of the bush and is still doing that job as highly efficiently and productively as it can. There are largely still family farms in the district.”

Tony says the length of time the family has been farming the same land shows real sustainability and includes newer initiatives such as being part of the Clean Streams Accord. “We have planted

more than 2,000 locally-sourced native plants on the banks of the Motupipi River that runs through the property, hand in hand with the local branch of Forest and Bird. It’s a true collaboration and again, something we’re very proud of.”

The home farm near Takaka in Golden Bay is 87ha (effective) with contract milkers Joe and Maria McBride milking 290 cows for a target 123,000kg/MS this season. The farm is k-line irrigated and PKE is fed in troughs at the cowshed, with fodder beet fed through the winter months on the run-off blocks. Calving has started on the 30th of July with no inductions or Controlled Internal Drug Release (CIDR) used since 1999. “We have had a bull, Reilly’s Might, in the LIC Premier Sire national team for two years with more than 300,000 inseminations.”

The couple has interest in three other equity partnerships in Takaka and Southland. The two other Takaka farms are in partnership with three other families milking 600 cows in total. The Southland venture is a 700 cow self-contained equity partnership with contract milkers.

It has been 32 years since Tony and Kathy started their partnership on the home farm. It has been a time of huge growth for both of them—especially in terms of agri-politics and governance.

“We have planted more than 2,000 locally-sourced native plants on the banks of the Motupipi River that runs through the property, hand in hand with the local branch of Forest and Bird. It’s a true collaboration and again, something we’re very proud of.”

Tony has a Bachelor of Agricultural Commerce from Lincoln University. After working as a computer programmer he worked as a farm advisor for MAF in Masterton and then Gisborne, where he was dealing mostly with hill country stations when support structures (subsidies) were being removed from agriculture. There was substantial financial pressure on every owner; Kathy says it was an early grounding in the realities of agribusiness. “They were tough times, the difficulties farming couples were having with the realities of the changes. It was a good background for us to start a business, a sobering background. However it has paid a significant part in how we have structured ourselves financially so we can have a robust balance sheet,” Kathy says.

In 1995, Tony was awarded a Nuffield Scholarship. He went to the UK for eight months and took Kathy and the family to Europe for part of that. His study topic looked at some of the social and environmental outcomes from GATT agreement (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade). That experience opened a whole raft of new opportunities for the Reillys, especially politically. Tony stood for the board of Tasman Milk and later became Chairman. As well as being a director of the NZ Dairy Board, he was involved with

the merger with Kiwi Dairy and remained on its board leading up to and during the formation of Fonterra. “I’m proud of where Fonterra now stands on the international stage. While it has had its issues, I am still, both as a dairy farmer and as a New Zealander, very proud of it. When I see how well respected Fonterra is in the market place, it has been a wonderful achievement.”

Once Fonterra had been formed, Tony stood back from its governance and turned his attention to a successful bid to get on the board of Ravensdown Fertiliser in 2004. “It has been great to watch the company grow and evolve particularly in the environmental space in the past couple of years.”

Tony is also a director of Landcorp, local lines distribution company Network Tasman, Co-operative Business NZ and a number of other companies. He has been on school Boards of Trustees and regional Council committees including the Outstanding Natural Landscapes Committee and the Freshwater and Land Advisory Group for the Takaka Catchment.



Before Tony went overseas with his Nuffield Scholarship, Kathy worked in the sales team for Livestock Improvement. She was director of the local vet club and farmer co-operative, the Rural Service Centre, of which her grandfather was one of the founding directors. “We’ve had nice continuity in terms of continuing governance tradition,” she says. “Tony has been involved in the community in roles to the very large extent that his father used to do as well. That’s a consequence of rural life; you step up and follow the example set for you by your parents. I spent 15 years with the co-op and was chairman for the last seven of those.”

The couple stepped out of the cowshed and out of practical day-to-day farming when they travelled with Tony’s Nuffield Scholarship. “Tony had been an enthusiastic, committed dairy farmer for years. I wasn’t as ready to give up as Tony was, but I was lucky to have my art career to fall back on. If I hadn’t had that to divert my enthusiasm into then I would have driven the Farm Manager nuts.” Seriously though, the couple say stepping away completely was a big part success of employing farm managers. “There are so many different ways of doing the same job. You have to be prepared

for people to do things differently," Tony says. "We're not in the market for new staff very often, which is something else we're proud of. We're also keen to support young staff. We've had two managers go on to buy their own dairy properties. It's really encouraging seeing young people progress through the industry."

Succession is a huge issue in all aspects of New Zealand farming and it's no different for the Reillys. They have two sons—Ben is an Air New Zealand captain and Dan works for the Fire Service as an emergency call dispatcher in Christchurch. Daughter Alice attended Lincoln University, worked for Ravensdown and is now Farm Manager for one of the family's equity partnerships in Takaka.

The family is into its fourth year of holding a formal annual succession planning meeting involving the three children and their partners. Minutes are taken and reports delivered on all aspects of the business. "Part of that communication is making sure the children understand what the intergenerational assets are that can't be sold off. And they've surprised us by wanting to add other assets they consider to be intergenerational. They may not farm here but they have emotional ties to the place. We have obviously passed on our enthusiasm for the dairy industry, even though our two sons aren't involved in it. They were quite young when we stepped out of the cow shed but still have a really good understanding of how it works. They have good business sense and a pride in what we do."

While succession is one issue for the future, the widening gulf of understanding between rural and urban people is of concern to the Reillys. "There have been large changes on dairy farms in the past generation and that hasn't been well communicated to urban people. Yes, there are one or two dairy farmers not up to scratch and they are letting the team down."

"The industry has spent huge money on new technologies that are improving environmental management practices, and on direct activities like stream planting. But urban people have no



ABOVE: Tony and Kathy amongst their stream planting
BELOW: Kathy shows off some of her beautiful artwork



idea of what we do. The media is not our ally," Tony says. "Farmers by nature are people who generally get on with it and don't find a pedestal to get on to tell everyone about the good work they are doing. Rural publications are good at telling some of those stories but they don't make it to urban communities."

Living in Golden Bay means being part of an interesting community with a "very rich tapestry," says Kathy. "Golden Bay has a high density of recent immigration and we were apparently one of the polling booths at the last election with the highest turnout of green votes. We have an intellectual and stimulated population in Golden Bay. I often feel if we can farm under their critical gaze here in Golden Bay, and farm to their satisfaction, then we should be able to do it anywhere in the country. I feel confident we are meeting that scrutiny."

Kathy says there is also a high density of artists in the area and she often finds herself in the middle of debate which sets care for the environment versus farming, but taking the time to communicate can prove that we share more opinions than we disagree on. "I am fortunate to have the opportunity to make statements in my artwork—I can show my pride in the dairy industry and how I feel we are contributing to the economy." They had started stating food producer rather than dairy farmer as their occupation, she says. The industry needs to work collectively to turn that around.

"We can change the perception of dairy farmers—we're at the life stage where this is our industry. We might not be milking the cows every day but there is political work to be done."

Kathy Reilly had always promised herself she would go back to her art so when her youngest child left home, that's exactly what she did. With a background in graphic design and commercial art (magazine layouts and newspaper ads) she wanted to work for herself doing her own art. The painter/printmaker believes she has stayed largely true to that.

She began with pen and ink drawings of colonial and historic architecture and has a collection of about 50 drawings from throughout New Zealand.

"Then I moved onto painting. I want my art to say something rather than just be decorative. I did stray into decorative art—tea cup paintings (portraits of antique china teacups) and was waylaid with that for a few years. I woke up one day and realised people were calling me the tea cup lady. I'm not sure what they call me now," she laughs.

As a painter and printmaker, Kathy creates portraits, surreal paintings and etchings.

"My passion is etching on zinc plate—a very traditional method that Rembrandt and other early masters used. The process is fascinating—a highly technical as well as creative process. When you etch the plate with the nitric acid it's like doing chemistry," Kathy has her own press for her printing work, which is a beautifully-engineered piece of machinery made especially for her.

Her latest body of work has recently been on display at Art Expo Nelson and she is also part of an exhibition currently at Bowen House at Parliament—work from an artists' residency at the Lighthouse Keeper's House at the end of Farewell Spit. She is a member of the Central Print Council of Aotearoa NZ and the local Arts Council. "I am also a member Eco Artists NZ—that means donating a percentage of sales to an environmental cause of your choice every year. I did an artists' residency at Lochmara Lodge in the Marlborough Sounds and donated to their breeding programme for the native parrot, Kakariki. I have made an etching of those... I have quite a few New Zealand bird etchings."

Kathy aims for three or four joint exhibitions around the country each year and her work can be found in galleries throughout New Zealand and Australia. "I really enjoy collaborating with other Golden Bay artists, and have been involved in many group shows. It's good to be operating as a community rather than an individual. I love the synergy and strength you get from doing things cooperatively. I get a real buzz out of that.

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Prize winning meats

Mike Hanson of Netherby Meats is following in the footsteps of three generations of butchers. His father did his apprenticeship in Waimate at his father's butchery, just as his father had done before him. PROVIDED BY NETHERBY MEATS



Mike said the butchery trade has changed a lot since his grandfather and great grandfather's day when they operated solo butcheries, slaughtering and processing on site. Today's regulations have put an end to some of these practices.

But some of the old ways live on, especially in Netherby Meats' prize winning sausages and saveloy's winning Bronze, Silver and gold in the annual New Zealand Sausage competitions, Shoulder Dry Cured Bacon winning gold and bronze in the annual New Zealand Bacon and Ham competitions. Recipes and preparation methods have been modified over the years, the sausages, saveloy's and Netherby Meats' Dry cured bacon, are all still basically made to the old recipes.

With 14 staff and a combined 211 years of experience between them, Netherby Meats is well placed to meet its customer's needs. The business prides itself on its service, quality and variety of meats on offer. Mike believes this is behind the increasing popularity of the local butcher and a trend back to the old ways. Customers have the option of choosing their meats to suit their needs, whether it is a particular cut of meat or a bulk purchase, safe in the

knowledge it has been freshly processed. They also get one-on-one customer service.

Rural customers also are well catered for, especially with the paddock to plate options of home killed meat. Netherby Meats operates a mobile abattoir and is licensed to process farm killed meat brought into the butchery for processing by the farmer. The mobile abattoir will travel anywhere in Mid Canterbury with its specially outfitted truck, which has a small crane and rails to hang carcasses. The truck was purpose built for on-farm killing and has been in operation for over 6 years. This is a perfect way ensure you know where your meat comes from and also takes the hassle out of organising your animal to be sent to the abattoirs. It's very simple, all you need to do is ring Mike at Netherby Meats or book in via their website and he will arrange the rest.

Traditionally customers looked to their local butcher to supply large cuts of meat for such

ABOVE: Rachel Lyon putting chicken into the display chiller
TOP LEFT: Mike Hanson and their award winning sausages
BOTTOM LEFT: Joanne Barwell stocking up the milk

institutions as the Sunday roast. These days the trends are very different, according to Mike. Customers are now looking for smaller cuts of meat that are quick and easy to cook, and it is becoming more common for people to buy their meat on a daily basis, although customers still like to get their own size.

Many locals may have already sampled some of Netherby Meats foods without realizing it, as the business acts as a wholesale supplier of quality meats to a number of food outlets locally in Ashburton, Hinds, Rakaia and Methven and as far away as Christchurch, Prebbleton, Twizel and Wanaka with number of local restaurants, cafes and takeaway shops buying directly from Netherby Meats.

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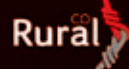


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Getting on with life

People often tell wheelchair-bound rural banker Dave Clouston they don't know how he does it. BY KATE TAYLOR

He says fewer options make his decisions easier.

"You either keep going or you don't. I don't see myself as doing anything special. I just keep going."

The Cantabrian was 34 when he broke his back in a farm accident. A hay bale weighing 250-300kg fell on him, literally squashing him in half and leaving him permanently paralysed from the hips down.

"Even back when I was lying under the hay bale thinking damn this isn't going to be flash", his first thought was survival. Then he started thinking about how he would be able to do things on the farm and spent three months at the Burwood Spinal Unit "figuring it all out". He had the nurses laughing at suggestions of specially-made leather pants so he could "bum shuffle" on the ground to dig post holes.

"It never entered my head to leave farming. Through it all there were heaps of changes but I always knew I would either be still farming or working in the agribusiness sector. I had an accident but I still had a farm to run and a family to look after. That's a great driver—there's stuff that needs to be done and that's what you focus on. I've never dwelled on it. I've never had nightmares. When a door closes, don't sit there waiting for it, go and knock on a few more doors."

Surprisingly, it wasn't the injury that stopped him farming, but a change of circumstances with the breakup of his marriage. He'd always liked the idea of being a farm consultant so he decided to go to Lincoln University to make it happen. But it was banking and not consultancy that proved to be his calling.

Now 48, he lives with his partner Toni in Rolleston. He is an agribusiness partner for the BNZ and loving the opportunity to spend more time visiting farms. Having grown up on a farm, run a monitor farm and been a member of the Upper South Island Sheep Council, he says his experience puts him in a good place to help other people with their financial decisions.

Dave's family has a 600ha sheep and beef farm at Albury near Fairlie in South Canterbury. He was keen on "farming and fishing and shooting and blatting around on motorbikes like most farm kids". He worked for his father for two years after finishing at Fairlie High School. His first job off the family farm was the 23,500ha high country Godley Peaks station at the head of Lake Tekapo. "I was there for two years although I did go back and do autumn musters for about 12 years. It's reputed to be one of the hardest high country stations to muster."

Dave moved to Mt Algidus Station at the head of the Rakaia Gorge then Glenthorne Station with better mustering and a merino stud. The next move was to Locaber Downs, his former wife Heather's 834ha family farm at White Cliffs near Darfield. The couple became the Central Canterbury Monitor Farmers and relished the opportunities it gave them to network with some

of the region's best farmers and agribusiness specialists. It was during the second year of the programme Dave had his accident – near the end of 1998. He recalls it clearly.

"I was stacking some hay that we'd bought in. It was five high at the back and I was building the stack forward. But some of the bales weren't sitting very well so I hopped off the tractor to level off some hay on the floor so they would sit better. I never dreamt they'd move but they came down on top from five high. I was on my own and under the bale for about an hour and 45 minutes... conscious for most of that time. I was with it but I also sort-of wasn't. It's amazing how the body shuts down and focuses on what's important."

He speaks matter-of-factly about the time spent under the bale contemplating what had happened and also what was going to happen.

"One of my feet was under my chest. My knees were by my face. I couldn't feel my legs but it took me a while to figure where everything was. I thought "I need to stay locked as still as I can and remain conscious so I could talk to whoever found me."

In one of those "had a funny inkling" moments, Dave's father in law came down to check how he was getting on, discovered his dire predicament and called for emergency services.

"They were amazed I had stayed conscious given the way I was folded in half and had stayed folded once the bale had gone."

Dave spent New Year's Eve 1998 in Christchurch Public Hospital intensive care before being transferred to Burwood Spinal Unit after about a week with rods fixed in his straightened back.

"I don't feel anything below the level of the break which was just below my rib cage. From my hips down I have no feeling or movement."

He had to learn how to balance from the hips up and sit in the chair without falling out. Being a farmer helped as he had strong core fitness from daily physical work.

"We also had to learn to pull wheelies – they're not just for fun but for getting up over curbs. You didn't get a cool titanium wheelchair until you could pull a wheelie in an old hospital bus."

It was back to the farm as soon as he was released from Burwood. The partnership still had day-to-day running of the farm and rather than say he could no longer do certain tasks, Dave figured out different ways of doing them. He had an eight-wheel farm vehicle called an Argo (steers like a bulldozer) that gave him mobility on the farm and he did many routine sheep tasks, such as buttonhole crutching and drenching, with the help of their Racewell sheep handler. However Dave's marriage ended two years after the accident, and he left the farm.

"Grace was four at the time of the accident and Sam was six. They were my right hand men for those few years on the farm afterwards. They stayed on the farm until they finished school—Grace is now 20 and is at Lincoln University doing a Bachelor of Ag Science and Sam is 22 and mustering on Waitangi Station on the shores of Lake Aviemore."

Dave didn't go to university when he was younger because he was "too flat out mustering" so he took the chance when he left the farm in 2001 to go to Lincoln University, where he was an early recipient of Ravensdown's Hugh Williams Memorial Scholarship. Three years later, with a Bachelor in Commerce (Agriculture and Farm Management), farm consultancy seemed a logical step. He did nine months with AgFirst but was then offered a bank job with Westpac.

"I started my new role with the BNZ in May of this year working with sheep and beef farmers and contract or sharemilkers. The main reason I changed bank brands was this role allows me to get out on farm more and to grow and support that side of the BNZ's business."

Dave explains to new customers he'll be coming on wheels so there are no surprises.

"Naturally, it makes it awkward if I can't even get to the doorbell. I just let them know I'm in a wheelchair and if their house isn't accessible for me, we can sit in the vehicle or the woolshed... Many know of a farmer who has been injured in some sort of farm accident. It's a topical thing that most farmers understand."

Dave says although he doesn't have the physical opportunity to farm anymore, his role ensures he is still part of farm teams and he can use his own knowledge and experience to help other people's farming businesses."

When time allows, Dave is a keen hunter with his children via spotlighting or shooting wallabies and fallow deer out the windows of his vehicle on farms he knows. He also loves fly fishing for trout.

"Probably not the most logical sport for someone in my position but because I wanted to do it, I just had to figure out how. I don't get as many as I otherwise could but it's better to catch a few fish than not go at all."



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ABOVE AND OPPOSITE:
Dave Clouston

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When a fire starts in the rural areas of the Ashburton District, the call goes out to one of the nine rural fire forces in the district. Altogether the forces have nearly 200 members, including eight women, and all are volunteers. When a fire call comes in, members of the nearest force are alerted by pagers and/or a siren. **BY BERNARD CARPINTER**

"Once the pagers go, the guys just drop what they're doing, rush to the station, chuck their gear on and away," says Don Geddes, Principal Rural Fire Officer and also Emergency Management Officer with the Ashburton District Council. "They are usually out of the station within 5-8 minutes of receiving the call." Most of the volunteers have jobs or run their own businesses, including many farmers.

Now the brave efforts of the rural volunteers who undertake this hazardous work for the community are being supported by a new welfare fund, managed by Advance Ashburton Community Trust. The fund will help rural volunteers and their families in the case of injuries or financial hardship. "It's just a way of giving something back

to them, for their contribution to the community," Mr Geddes says.

The dangers of firefighting are obvious and safety is paramount. It's a vital part of the training the volunteers undertake, achieving unit standards recognised by the NZQA. Injuries are rare in the district, Mr Geddes says, but tragically there was one fatality in 2009 when a branch from a burning tree fell on a firefighter.

Most vegetation fires the Ashburton District volunteers encounter are small but they can be large, such as the Mount Somers fire in 2004. "It burnt down a length of 6.5 kilometres along the Ashburton River bed," Mr Geddes recalls. "There was a huge response to that. The fuel involved was grass, scrub and a small plantation, and some

farm fences but fortunately there weren't any structures damaged or destroyed and no one was hurt—it was remarkable."

There are three fire authorities in the Ashburton District; the New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS), the Department of Conservation (DOC) and the Ashburton District Council.

The NZFS has jurisdictional responsibility for fires within the urban areas of Ashburton, Methven and Rakaia. DOC has jurisdictional responsibility for all public conservation land and in some cases a 1km margin surrounding that land, and the Ashburton District Council has jurisdictional responsibility for the remaining land area of the district (3650 sq km).

"Our main focus is vegetation firefighting so our

equipment is tailored around that, but the fire forces do respond to other incident types too such as structure fires, medical assists and motor vehicle accidents" Mr Geddes says. "Our personal protective equipment (PPE) differs from the fire service PPE because of the different firefighting focus."

Obviously there are many hazards on the fireground, and while they are too numerous to list here, the firefighters are trained to at all times maintain a situational awareness of what is happening around them with regard to the weather, fuels and topography. A brief summary of the hazards, attack strategies and safe firefighting procedures is summarised into a plasticised card that all firefighters are issued with and are expected to be familiar with.

The rural fire forces can also be called to other incidents such as road crashes, where they will stabilise the scene, manage traffic control and administer first aid until the other emergency services arrive.

What if the rural fire forces did not exist? "Because the Fire Service Brigades are based only in the main centres, it can take them up to half an hour or more to get to some of the more remote corners of the district. The rural fire forces can respond to these areas much faster because of their locations within the district, Mr Geddes says. "A fire can do a lot of damage in a short time and fast response can be critical."

The Advance Ashburton Community Foundation was quick to support the idea of a special welfare fund for the district's rural firefighters. "People in the community benefit from the work of the volunteer firefighters, which is dangerous at times, so this is a way the community can support them and acknowledge the great work they do," Deputy Chair Elizabeth Ashford says.

The district council got the welfare fund started with a gift of \$10,000, and already other donations have the fund approaching \$30,000.

"The goal is to get the fund to at least \$100,000 and allocate grants from the interest earned, but we would still make grants from the capital when that was appropriate," Mrs Ashford says. "The fund will help volunteer firefighters who suffer injuries or run into financial hardship, and their families too."

A committee will receive applications for grants from the welfare fund and decide on allocations. The fund will operate as a special trust within the Advance Ashburton Community Foundation,



OPPOSITE PAGE: Rural volunteer fire fighters in action
ABOVE: Advance Ashburton Community Foundation Chairman Trevor Croy and Executive Secretary Margaret Rickard with representatives of the rural volunteer fire forces
BELOW: From left, Mayor Angus McKay, Rangitata MP Jo Goodhew, Foundation Chairman Trevor Croy and Bryan Pitt of the Hinds fire force

which was established in 2003 as a perpetual charitable trust dedicated to benefiting the Ashburton region. It is registered as a charity under the Charities Act.

"The Foundation was set up to provide a mechanism for people to be able to give back to the community," Mrs Ashford says. She sees its success as a reflection of the growing trend towards private philanthropy; there are similar institutions in New Zealand and many around the world. Advance Ashburton now has a general fund of more than \$5 million, and promised bequests add up to more than \$17 million.

"There are many people who enjoy living in Ashburton and wish to give back to the community. We are building links with other charitable and community organisations in the community so that we'll know the needs of the community." Working through the foundation is a lot easier for donors than setting up one's own trust, and because the foundation is set up in perpetuity it will always keep on going.

"We have an office in town; the Ashburton Licensing Trust has kindly given us the use of a room," Mrs Ashford says. "We are a very low-cost operation, a 'lean mean machine'. A levy of just 1% of the fund's capital is used to meet operational costs.

"Some of our work is done pro bono, by our legal firm for example, and the trustees work without pay; I do the promotion for no charge. That means

that money donated to the foundation goes to charitable work and is not eroded by costly fees and administrative expenses—and it all goes to the Ashburton district."

As the Foundation is a registered charity all donations to the welfare fund qualify for a tax rebate. Donors will get a tax credit one third of the value of the donation (up to the limit of their taxable income). "Not a bad way of encouraging the tax man to support our rural firefighting volunteers!" Mrs Ashford says.

One of the most common causes of fire call-outs to vegetation fires in the Ashburton district is fires that have been lit in rubbish heaps, piles of branches or rubbish pits and then left unattended, Mr Geddes says.

"Fires can reignite weeks or even months later with strong wind changes which can fan embers and blow them into adjacent tree lines. In some cases it's just absolute carelessness and lack of comprehension and consideration of the risk. Anyone lighting a fire should consider the potential risks with wind changes. They should have suppression resources on site and always maintain supervision."

The Council and the Rural Fire Forces put a lot of effort into educating farmers about such dangers.



For more information about Advance Ashburton, please contact:

Margaret Richard, Executive Officer on 308 2231, info@advanceashburton.co.nz

Alison Murkle, Secretary/Treasurer on 027 604 8013 / 303 0873

Call one of the Fire-fighters Co-ordinators Group today:

Don Geddes 027 4989 968 / 308 6489;
Bryan Pitt 027 241 2022 / 303 7505;
Ian Fielder 021 109 8367 / 303 6049;
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But there is more to painting and decorating than creating an appealing home environment. For most people, property or 'bricks and mortar', is where the bulk of their wealth is held and maintenance of interior and exterior surfaces to protect that investment involves more than a quick cosmetic lick of paint. Such factors as the current surface and previous treatments, climatic and weather conditions specific to each locality, and the history of the building, are all key considerations which need to be taken into account when appraising a project.

Bradford Painting Ltd has been helping Mid Canterbury families to protect and enhance the value of their property investments over six decades—and not just residential property.

The company services some large customers on a contract basis, including the maintenance of many of Ashburton's iconic branded commercial buildings as well as hotels, motels, factories and warehouses and undertakes domestic interior and exterior decorating throughout Mid Canterbury.

Another strength of the company is the restoration and painting work on such historic structures as the homesteads at Peel Forest Estate, Lake Heron Station and the

homestead and cook shop at Longbeach.

Following an enquiry, the Painting Contracts Manager Richard Donnelly begins the process with a site visit. This visit is not just to measure the works he will:

- Inspect and appraise type and condition of the existing painted surfaces;
- Identify, record, photograph and measure pre-paint repairs that will be required;
- Work out the methodology to be used, including access and OSH requirements for safety;
- Pass information to office for pricing.

Rhys Crampton, Painting Administrator, prepares the quote for Richard to check before it is sent to the client. Both are committed to accuracy and a job that will be undertaken safely to a high standard of finish.

On acceptance of the quote, Richard will liaise with the client to confirm timing, plan his painting team, purchase materials,

ABOVE: Before and after images showing a painting project in Canterbury north of the Rakaia river

organise access and arrange any repair work ready for the start date.

Quality work is not cheap, but will last. A second rate or cheap job might look good on day one, but when you have serious remedial work and a need to repaint within a few short years, the earlier saving is suddenly quite expensive.

Bradford Painting's "do it once and do it right" policy is economically and visually the way to go.

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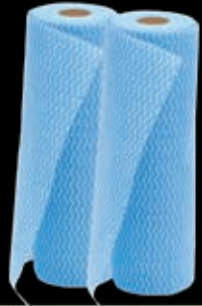
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ATS Instore Days

Nearly 50 Ruralco Suppliers attended the ATS Instore Days on 10–11 July. It was a successful event with Rural Cardholders making the most of the deals suppliers had on offer. If you would like to see pictures from the event, visit www.facebook.com/ruralco or check out page 59.

Spark paper bill fee

Spark (formally Telecom) now charges \$1.50 per paper bill, if you don't wish to pay this you can change to an online bill sent direct to your email. For instructions on how to do this, check the back of your latest bill or visit www.spark.co.nz

Upcoming A&P Shows

Ruralco is going to be at both the Ashburton A&P Show from 31 October–1 November, and the Canterbury A&P Show from 12–14 November. Mark these dates in your diary as we would love to see you there.

Have you visited us on Facebook yet?



If you'd like access to the latest news from Ruralco, images from events, exclusive Facebook competitions and more, then visit us at www.facebook.com/ruralco and like us today.

Ruralink Email

Every month we send out our Ruralink email which is full of fantastic deals from our suppliers and other useful information. If you aren't receiving it, you may have previously opted out of Ruralco emails. Contact us today on 0800 RURALNZ (787 256) or ruralco@ruralco.co.nz to sign up.

Supplier Awards Winners

The Ruralco Supplier Awards were held on 31 July with many suppliers recognised for their achievements throughout the last year. Keep an eye out when you're in town for the Supplier Award logo which all award winners can use for the next year. To view a list of the 2014 winners, visit www.ruralco.co.nz/supplierawards2014winners



Keep your Ruralco login

Thank you to all of you with website logins who responded to our email about keeping your login.

We have been having a big clean-up of our website database and it is fantastic to see that so many of you value and use your Ruralco login.

If you would like access to supplier discounts online and other exclusive specials, but don't have a login, visit www.ruralco.co.nz/new_account to create one today.



Rural Women Awards

Entries for the Rural Women Awards 2014 are now open. These awards offer women running small rural businesses the opportunity to boost their profiles and gain recognition for their achievements.

Entries close 5 September so visit www.ruralwomen.org.nz for more information on how to enter and the awards available.



AgFest West Coast

On 4-5 July we attended AgFest on the West Coast along with Ravensdown. It was a great chance to catch up with our cardholders and answer any questions they had about the card.

To see images from the event, check out www.facebook.com/ruralco

Happy Birthday Ruralco



Ruralco celebrates its first birthday

We celebrated our first birthday on 1 July with our ATS and Ravensdown staff getting involved and dressing up in red to mark the special day. In the past year we have launched the Ruralco Card to the Central South Island, Otago/Southland and Nelson/Marlborough regions, and now have over 700 suppliers, and even more branches throughout the South Island. With thousands of new cardholders as well, business is set to continue growing throughout the years to come.

If you haven't already, check out the images of our staff celebrating on www.facebook.com/ruralco



On farm fuel requirements for the new season

As we head into the new season for contracting, or on farm use, fuel will again play a major part in both supply and cost. We are keen to support Ruralco Cardholders in obtaining the best deals for fuel on either bulk or through the card.

If you would like to hear about what we can do for you, or for advice on fuel storage and other requirements contact Don Joseph, Fuel Account Manager, on 0800 RURALNZ (787 256) or don.joseph@ruralco.co.nz.

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Out and about

ATS Instore Days and AgFest West Coast

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