

RealFarmer

FOR EVERYTHING FARMING AND FAMILY

OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 2019

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For the love
of family, farm
and country

Forging a career
as a self-published
children's author

Young team keen
on farm's future

Supreme
Supplier pays
award forward

NZ scientists
help Italians
deal with
destructive
bug

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From the Group CEO

Welcome to this edition of Real Farmer.

In this issue we visit a young farming couple who are optimistically carving out their own future after returning to the family farm in Methven. Brett Harmer and Louisa McClintock share a love of farming, hard work and the energy to build a farm enterprise together. They are hoping with some careful saving and good decisions in the coming years they can gradually buy into the family's earthmoving business and eventually own a share of the farm. While setting up a partnership has been daunting, they urge anyone keen on farming to take the leap and enjoy the opportunities that can arise.

Another passionate farmer featured in Real Farmer is politician, the Rt Hon David Carter. With four children, three farms and a political career spanning 25 years, he and his wife Heather have forged a life together, blending a love of family, farm and country. They open the doors to their Banks Peninsula farm and give us an insight into what makes this farming family tick.

We all know how vulnerable our agriculture industry is to parasites and pests. One New Zealand scientist, Professor Max Suckling, is doing his bit to try and slow and halt the spread of the highly destructive stink bug. As one of our foremost authorities on pests and pest control, Professor Suckling has spent his Kiwi winter seconded in Italy to work alongside Italian scientists to further research into this pest and he shares some of his insights with us.

Coming back home again, we also visit multi-talented Kurow mum, Sam Laugesen. She and her husband Luke Campbell, run Westmere Farm, a 1,300 cow dairy farm in the upper Waitaki Valley. They also operate a busy accommodation business servicing the A20 Cycle Trail, a small lavender farm, and Sam is also a successful author of children's books. Sam shares with us her story about her wonderful life.

Also in this edition of Real Farmer, is the list of winners from our Big Prize Draw—our 25th Anniversary Instore Days promotion which saw \$250,000 worth of prizes up for grabs. The Big Reveal was held in Ashburton with over 250 invited guests attending. Those who had won prizes were invited, but did not know what they had won until the prizes were announced, creating plenty of buzz and excitement. It was a fitting way to end such a wonderful promotion and event.

Once again we have plenty of great reading in this Real Farmer, and we hope you enjoy taking some time out to learn more about your fellow farmers and industry news.

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FOR EVERYTHING FARMING AND FAMILY

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ON THE COVER:
Heather, Sophie and David Carter of Manor Farm at Teddington, Banks Peninsula

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For the love of family, farm and country



IMAGE: Heather & David Carter
of Manor Farm

With four children, three farms and a career in politics spanning 25 years, the Rt-Hon David Carter and wife, Heather, have been able to balance farming and politics through their partnership. They work hard, have an incredible passion for New-Zealand agriculture, and have forged a life blending love of family, farm and country.

Since 1985, Manor Farm at Teddington on Banks Peninsula, has been home to the Carter Family of David and Heather and children, Sophie 25, Laura 23, Isabella 19 and Morgan 15 years old. Coming up the hill and through the creek to the house, green pastures border the long driveway. On arrival Heather's spring bulbs and early roses are blooming. The two-storied stone homestead is built to face back down the valley and even on a rainy day there is a pull to keep looking at the view of Lyttelton Harbour.

Dressed in earth toned work wear and looking as though he just stepped out of the yards, David is quick to check there's no mud on his hands and introduce himself with a handshake. He and Heather are the kind of down to earth people you feel like you've met before. Not far behind David is daughter Laura, who is home from Auckland where she studies Chinese and political science. With David and Heather heading overseas next week Laura is home to support David and pick up the day to day farm work for him.

Stepping into the spacious, open plan kitchen and dining room, there are large windows to capture the light and views, and a collection of vintage and family memorabilia. Under the table is a unique designer woollen rug which was produced by the Banks Peninsula Wool Growers, a company creating New Zealand made high quality, designer floor coverings. Around the table Heather serves strong coffee and delicious date scones with generous helpings of butter. David remarks, "These are really good Heather", she jokes back "are they usually not?"

David's story begins in the city. He was born in Christchurch and recalls, "I never wanted to be a farmer. I boarded at a small rural primary school for a few years and decided early on that I didn't want to leave the city again." From primary school he went on to attend St Bede's College, then at age 12, David went to stay in Auckland for the Christmas holidays with relations who happened to be farmers. Something changed for David, "After that holiday I knew that I wanted to be a farmer. It really was a road to Damascus moment for me" David acknowledges.

From St Bede's David went on to complete a Bachelor of Agricultural Science at Lincoln graduating in 1973. Exposure to farm work came



through the practical work requirements of the degree. David spent his university summers experiencing various agricultural systems and about this says "I asked a lot of questions. It came quite naturally to me as I was eager to learn and it's what I really wanted to do."

After finishing at Lincoln, David says he was lucky to have a loan from his father and vendor finance to get started. Through this he purchased a block at West Melton. David then found a niche in the cattle market and set up the first commercial embryo transplant clinic. Due to a biosecurity risk at the time, none of the exotic European cattle breeds could be imported directly into New Zealand or Australia. However, 'the rule at the time in New Zealand was if the stock had been isolated in the UK for one generation then the progeny could be imported into New Zealand.' Australia's huge cattle industry was the end market for the European cattle. Seeing this opportunity farmers and investors imported the first-generation UK born stock

ABOVE: David looks over his Perendale flock
ABOVE TOP: Since 1985, Manor Farm at Teddington, Banks Peninsula, has been home to the Carter Family

into New Zealand. Under contract to these farmers, David's West Melton facility then surgically transplanted the embryo's from the European breeds to other cows and the subsequent pregnant heifers were live exported to Australia. Through this project David established the well-known Avon Park Simmental stud.

David wanted to farm at Banks Peninsula so took the opportunity to sell West Melton and head over the Pass, buying and selling a couple of blocks before finally settling at Manor Farm at Teddington.

At this time Heather was working as a Christchurch based international flight attendant for Air New Zealand. Alongside her shifts, which were sometimes short trans-Tasman routes, she worked part time as a waitress at a restaurant owned by David's family. "There was a strike and many staff



LEFT: With David and Heather heading overseas next week Laura is home to support David and pick up the day to day farm work for him.

BELOW LEFT: David believes Burnt Hollow is home to the only working Blacksmith in New Zealand

opportunity to buy run down or undeveloped properties as my intent was to develop them and achieve scale. I enjoy the redevelopment process and seeing how hard work can turn a property around. When we bought Burnt Hollow, it had a gorse block you couldn't walk through, now it's been cleared it is fabulous country" said David.

Burnt Hollow has its own special story as David believes it is home to the only working Blacksmith in New Zealand. Established in 1889 the Teddington Forge is maintained by the Governors Bay Heritage Trust. It is open three days per week and operated by Blacksmith Les Schenkel. With working bellows and a furnace heating to over 2,000 degrees, the Forge is a step back in time. Through the medieval process of heating steel then hammering it out, called forging, the metal becomes pliable for working. Once fashioned into shape the metal is carefully cooled and then set. The Forge is located on David's land and when he purchased the block David gave an undertaking to support the Forge by continuing the long-standing lease arrangement.

In the mid-1980s New Zealand was battling under financial reform. Farmers were still struggling with the hangover of Rogernomics and the removal of subsidies. More rural people were shifting to town and David saw a need for farmers to have political advocacy at a government level.

With backing from Heather, David knew his next move was into politics. A first up defeat running as a candidate in the long held left wing Lyttelton seat, David's narrow loss didn't deter him. The following year Ruth Richardson stepped down in the Selwyn electorate and David won the Selwyn by-election. With a changing tide David began his political life in the last, first past the post (FPP) government. What was evident in David's maiden speech to Parliament on 30 August 1994 is his passion for agriculture and commitment to it. With his farming background and day to day experience of the hard graft of farming, from the outset David has advocated for rural people and communities.

"Rural people must not be disadvantaged simply because of the gradual population reductions in their communities. We must not forget we still derive more than 57 percent [1994] of our exports from our rural base. It is the people who work in this rural base that have special needs. I will be an advocate of those needs during my parliamentary career." From 1996, and under the new mixed member proportional (MMP) representation system, to 1999, he represented Banks Peninsula. Since then David has been in the House on the party list, junior whip, chairman of the Finance and Expenditure Committee, Minister outside



hadn't shown up, so I was called in. I don't believe in strikes, so there I was one day when David came in." Heather smiles, "as they say the rest is history."

Alongside Manor Farm, which is 360ha, the Carter's own Cat Hill a 1,400ha hard hill country block at Cheviot, which has its own manager, and Burnt Hollow which is nearby to Manor Farm. The farms work together with finishing done on the Peninsula. Currently at Manor Farm David is running 1,600 Perendale ewes, finishes 2,000–3,000 lambs and fattens around 150 one and two-year-old Angus cattle.

David has three working dogs, Mist, a heading dog, Sam, a huntaway plus young heading pup, Max. The Carter's run a low-cost operation, employing casual labour when needed and doing much of the work themselves. "The week after next we are off overseas again and Laura will run the farm. The country is a wonderful place to bring up children. I enjoy the stock work, especially mustering and the challenge of improving stock performance" David said.

All the farms David has purchased have required capital and development. "I took the

Cabinet for Senior Citizens and held several Associate Minister roles: Revenue; Food, Fibre, Biosecurity and Border Control; and Education.

In Opposition his spokesperson roles have included Finance, Agriculture, Tourism and Housing. His more recent ministerial portfolios have been as Minister of Agriculture (2008-2011), Minister of Biosecurity (2008-2011), Minister of Forestry (2008-2011), Minister for Primary Industries (2011-2013), and Minister for Local Government (2012-2013).

On 31 January 2013, David was elected Speaker of the New Zealand House of Representatives, the highest office elected by the House, and the third most important constitutionally, after the Governor-General and the Prime Minister. The role of the Speaker of the House is to communicate with the Sovereign on the Government's behalf.

"It has been an absolute privilege to serve New Zealand" said David. He served in this role until 2017. He is now a List MP based in Christchurch; and is the current caretaker MP for the Port Hills electorate. David will not be seeking re-election in 2020. "After 26 years in politics I know I've had my time" said David, who believes in letting the next generation like nephew Matt Doocey, current MP for Waimakariri, continue.

"Of my political career I am most proud of our achievements in agriculture, especially around irrigation and the successful Canterbury Plains Irrigation Scheme. In our tenure we [referring to previous National government] improved people's standard of living. Around biosecurity there have always been challenges, but we got government and industry working together. I think it's a brave decision by the government to eradicate M. bovis, ultimately we are all paying for it."

With politics, farming and family, the demands on David and Heather seem relentless. David's definition of work life balance is different to many. "This is the perfect work life balance. Leaving the farm to go to the House and have the adrenaline flow, there is a lot there to excite me. I come back to the farm and I'm on my own walking in hills with the dogs or doing the stock work. Now, we are feeding



out baleage every day, we have a mob calving, and we are drafting lambs every other week. I enjoy what I do and that's what's important." David is also very pragmatic "If you want to be a farmer you just have to get out there and do it. Over the 40 years we've certainly made a few mistakes, but that's farming. Keep costs down and enjoy what you do."

Eldest daughter Sophie was three months old when David was first elected to Parliament. "It was tricky" Heather confesses, "but I just got on and did it. Life got harder with a toddler and a new baby, but I've been able to have help from people around the Peninsula" she said. The children all attended Diamond Harbour School and then went over the hill to Christchurch for secondary school. "This means I'm in the car and often back and forth to follow children's sport and activities, but I wouldn't have it any other way. Nowadays I help on the farm when needed." Heather has off farm interests too, she's a marathon runner. To date she's completed 13 races and next month heads away to Chicago for another one.

To David the future of New Zealand agriculture is positive. "We have a world class, grass fed, outdoor, no subsidies model. New Zealand is super-efficient at agriculture and not many countries can compete. I believe the challenges around coping with climate change, and the

ABOVE: The outlook from Manor Farm

BELOW: Alongside Manor Farm, which is 360ha, the Carter's own Cat Hill a 1,400ha hard hill country block at Cheviot, which has its own manager, and Burnt Hollow which is nearby to Manor Farm

environment will be solved with science. In the next 50 years we'll get the solutions, but we've got to give science time." David believes farmers really want an opportunity to adapt to best practices "these will be found in our science and research programmes. Farmers don't disagree with what needs to be done to protect our environment, they just want the opportunity to do it at a pace that is not only environmentally sustainable, but financially as well" said David.

"To a young person looking to make a career in agriculture I would say the future is bright. Farm ownership may not be as easy as it was but there are many avenues to have a successful career in farming and be a caretaker of the land." Through Cat Hill farm manager Shayne Amyes' contact with Ruralco Group CEO Rob Sharkie, David joined Ruralco just three years ago. This year he attended his first Instore Days and was judge of the supplier stand awards. David was surprised by the scale, atmosphere and community spirit of Instore Days. He sees a bright future for co-operatives. "There is huge potential in the co-operative model. Run properly they deliver the best returns for their shareholders. To do this they must constantly be keeping an eye on the beneficiary - the farmer shareholder. The number one benefit for buyer groups must be around pricing; either through nett cost or via a rebate, this is what will help ensure economic sustainability in agriculture."

As a husband, father, farmer, politician and former Speaker of the House, David appears to still have plenty of energy and there is no doubt he won't be retiring in the traditional sense. For now, the immediate future involves finishing his political career. After this he is keen to put his energy into the continued development of the farms, following his children's sports and interests and travelling with Heather. He would also like to pursue directorships in agribusinesses where his skills in governance and passion for agriculture can be utilised.



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Forging a career as a self-published children's author



IMAGE: Luke Campbell & Sam Laugesen with daughters Daisy (9) and Sylvie (7), and latest addition, Dusty (8 months)

Multi-talented Kurow mum Sam Laugesen splits her time between dairy farming, an accommodation business, growing lavender, and writing children's books.

Nestled in the upper Waitaki Valley, adjacent to the small town of Kurow, Westmere Farm is a hive of activity. It is home to the Campbell-Laugesen household - Sam Laugesen and husband Luke Campbell, daughters Daisy (9) and Sylvie (7), and latest addition, Dusty (8 months). Alongside the 1,300-cow dairy farm, they also run a busy accommodation business servicing the Alps2Ocean (A2O) NZ cycle trail and a small lavender farm.

Between the farm, the children and both businesses, life is "super busy", but somehow Sam has also found the time to turn herself into a self-publishing children's author. "It was part of no great business plan, it just happened. It's a busy life, but it's a wonderful life," says Sam.

Farming runs through Sam's genes. She is a fifth-generation farmer. Although she grew up in New Plymouth, every holiday was spent visiting their family dairy farm. A self-confessed animal lover, for as long as she can remember Sam harboured dreams of becoming a vet but having taken a year out on leaving school, she fell into a career in IT in New Plymouth.

Looking back, Sam wished she had considered farming as a realistic option, straight off the bat. At 25, she made the move south to Ashburton to milk cows for her uncle on a new conversion. "I thought this is the life. I loved being outside and working with the animals," she explains. "I never really knew how much it had to offer. At school, I wasn't told it was an option for women. You need brains, you need business skills and you need to be good with people." It was there that she fell for her partner, Luke Campbell, who at the time was managing the property, forging a life together.

After sharemilking in Dunsandel for seven years, they moved south to Kurow in 2013, working in partnership with Sam's uncle Andrew, who runs the Canterbury farm. At the time, they could have gone anywhere, but they looked outside the square. With land a little bit cheaper, they saw the Waitaki Valley offered "more bang for your buck", and the water supply was more certain than in Canterbury, or the Waikato, where Luke had begun his dairy farming career. Kurow was also blessed with its own microclimate. "We miss the snow and ice further up the valley, but also miss the easterly they get in Oamaru," says Sam.

But with a mean annual rainfall of just 480mm, before irrigation delivered the first water to farmers back in the 1970s the Waitaki Valley was dry and unproductive.



Irrigating 16,000ha, irrigation transformed this drought-prone area into some of the most productive and valuable farmland in the South Island. Recent expansion and modernisation of the Kurow Duntroon Irrigation Company have seen a further 5,500ha irrigated.

Sam and Luke farm 1,100ha, milking 1,300 Jersey Friesian cross cows. Four seasons ago they opted to go down to once-a-day milking,

ABOVE: This season Sam will raise between 500–600 including jersey bulls, calves for the beef market and their replacement stock

TOP: Sam raises all the calves. Most years she has raised more than 1,000, but with the birth of Dusty, she's taken a step back

and they have never looked back. "The Jerseys are better suited to once-a-day. It's better for the cows and the people," says Sam.



ABOVE: Daughters Daisy (9) and Sylvie (7) reading the second book in the Luke The Pook series, *Gumboot Stomp*

While Sam's priority is raising their growing family, she also plays an integral role in the farm, especially during calving time when it becomes a full-time job. Sam raises all the calves. Most years she has raised more than 1,000, but with the birth of Dusty, she's been forced to step back. This season she will raise between 500-600 including jersey bulls, calves for the beef market and their replacement stock.

During the summer months, her attention turns to their lavender patch and busy farm stay accommodation.

When they took over the farm, Sam inherited a huge lavender patch which had been planted back in 1999. The lavender had been neglected, but with its attractive foliage, beautiful purple flowers and delightful scent,

Sam saw huge potential. Situated on a busy tourist route, she was continually being stopped to ask if it was open to the public. "It got me thinking. I thought, I could do this," says Sam.

Although she was an avid gardener, she happily admits that when it came to lavender, she had a lot to learn. Boasting more than 1,200 plants, in all, there are 10 varieties to tend to, but the main plantings are of the rich, pungent Italian Grosso and the French Super, both known for their superior multi-use oil. Pretty hardy, the lavender is quite labour intensive. It requires lots of weeding, and regular pruning, but is also quite productive. Last year, they harvested 30 litres of oil, which is distilled in nearby Waimate.

Having YouTube'd and Googled numerous how-to videos, she started making soaps, balms, fudge, hand cream, scrubs, body butter and essential oil handmade in her

kitchen-come-factory. The only product she does not make onsite is the soap. The girls are on-hand to help with labelling. No two batches are ever the same.

She then purchased an old railway signalman's hut off TradeMe for \$100, which had formerly been used to store hay in and before that, had been used as an aviary, painstakingly sanding, painting, restoring and decorating its rimu and Matai walls, to turn it into a tiny little shop.

For three years Westmere Lavender was open to the public during the summer months with local teenagers on hand to help with running the store for the never-ending of campers, cars and cyclists. Sam ran it alongside a little petting zoo with animals she'd collected complete with Highland cattle, miniature ponies, a Kunekune pig, chickens and peacocks. She was also a regular at the Oamaru Farmer's Market.

But as life has got busier, the lavender has taken a back seat. They've been closed to the public since 2016. "It got to the point where I couldn't spend every day down there and it didn't make enough money to warrant paying someone to be there," explains Sam. "But she hasn't ruled out opening it again in the future."

The opening of the A2O cycle trail, which covers more than 300km from Mt Cook village to Oamaru, also yielded new opportunities for the couple. The move to once-a-day milking had freed up some accommodation on the farm, so Sam and Luke put on a container house and also converted their old woolshed to provide accommodation for up to 12 cyclists, as well as supplying them food for breakfast and lunch.

Initially, Sam was also cooking main meals for guests every night, but now the local pub runs a courtesy van. "It seemed like a great idea at the time, but it's just too much work. It's getting busier and busier, every season," says Sam. Last year they hosted more than 600 guests, and they expect the numbers to keep growing.

And if she is not busy enough, somehow amongst the chaos, Sam has remarkably managed to forge a career as a self-published children's author, drawing inspiration from everyday happenings on the farm and her childhood memories. She has now printed more than 42,000 books. Her first book *Stuck In Poo, What to do?* was the first in a series about the adventures of a cheeky young pukeko named Luke The Pook. It came about when Skellerup introduced their line of Junior Red Bands a few years back. "I was thinking someone should write a book about them, and then I thought, I can write a book about them. I had always enjoyed writing and was pretty good at English at school. The story was simple—farms are covered in dried cow poo and kids love jumping in it with their gumboots on," says Sam.



ABOVE: Split between dairy farming, an accommodation business, and writing children's books, but Sam still makes sure the family comes first

Her first draft just sat in a drawer while the children were young. However, after moving to Westmere, she decided to dust it off again and sent it to a script accessor for some objective feedback. The script accessor was positive but made some great suggestions. Although accepting criticism was hard initially, in time she could see the basis for every suggestion the script accessor made. Finding the right illustrator was also an enormous part of the process. "It's really important, the script has to resonate with them too," says Sam. She was lucky award-winning illustrator Kat Merewether, took on the project, bringing the classic Kiwi tale to life through her vibrant illustrations. "I really just believed in myself and backed myself. I knew I had a good idea - I knew my target audience because I was my target audience."

Without trying her luck with a traditional publisher, Sam published the book herself locally in Oamaru. Her first print run of 1,000 copies sold out in a week, so she ordered a further 1,000 copies and they too, sold out. "It just really struck a chord with the rural community and they went crazy buying it before Christmas. I remember thinking if I could sell 500 that would be great, but it exceeded all expectations."

Since selling those initial copies, Sam has started her own website and a Facebook page. She has also published a second book in the Luke The Pook series, Gumboot Stomp, as well as new offering Trevor The Smelliest Dog Ever about a loveable pooch who hates

to be clean, illustrated by Scott Tulloch, which was released last year. This month (October) she released her fourth book, Porkie Schnoodle, about the hilarious ridiculousness of designer dogs. All are available in the Ruralco stores.

With so much else going on at Westmere, Sam says she has little time to spend writing. "I don't go looking for new ideas, they just come to me. I don't sit there for hours writing, the first drafts come really quickly. I'll just get on a roll, the put it down and come back to it in a month or so. And then I will send it to a script accessor."

From concept to getting the finished printed book takes about six months; with Sam aiming to release one book a year. She has more Luke The Pook adventures waiting

in the wings to be brought to life. While she has been approached by large scale publishers, Sam remains committed to keeping her books printed in New Zealand, allowing her to have better control over the whole process. "I'm really excited about them. It's great to have these little projects when you're a mother," she says.

Sam is grateful for the unwavering support of her husband Luke, who is always on hand to help with the children when needed, or be the guinea pig for new lavender products. And also, for the supportive community in which they live.

Luke the Pook books available at your local Ruralco store or online at www.ruralco.co.nz



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Calves powered by protein

Often dubbed the essence of life, protein is indeed a vital feed component that plays an important role for the growth of calves. It's therefore unsurprising that the quality and quantity of protein within calf meal deserves close scrutiny. After all, not all protein is created equal.

WORDS & IMAGE PROVIDED BY SEALESWINSLOW



The importance of protein in calf meal is widely understood and needs no introduction. But how much do we really know about the various protein sources? And what is the difference in calves that are fed 20% vs 16% calf meal?

Natalie Hughes, SealesWinslow's Nutrition and Quality Manager is well-placed to answer those questions. First and foremost she emphasises that the importance of protein cannot be overstated. "Protein supports lean muscle growth and young calves need 18% to 20% crude protein on a dry matter basis for optimal liveweight gain." And while protein is known for its virtual building blocks, the valuable amino acids, she is quick to caution that not all proteins are created equal.

The quality of the protein is an often overlooked issue. In fact, the most valuable form contains a good balance of different plant-derived amino acids. Muscle growth requires a certain type and amount of amino acids for the growth of muscle tissue. Accordingly, protein from quality plant ingredients such as soya bean, cottonseed, sunflower, canola, peas or faba beans are

highly desirable because they are readily digestible by the animal.

It therefore pays to look beyond the crude protein (CP) % and examine the composition of the meal to ensure that the ingredients deliver protein that can be utilised by the animal. A high CP percentage may, for instance, be the result of added urea which unfortunately is not a true protein. It lacks the vital amino acids for lean tissue growth and therefore cannot support muscle development in a young calf. While urea lifts the overall CP it simply doesn't deliver any benefits to the animal.

With the quality of protein identified, the next issue relates to the ideal percentage of protein in calf meal. Given the goal of weaning a calf from milk, then meal and onto pasture as quickly and economically as possible, the feed protein issue is best explored in terms of its impact. Natalie points out that research¹ has shown that calves fed 20% protein pellets had faster growth rates and were 4.2kg heavier at six weeks of age than those fed 16% protein pellets. Importantly, 78.8% of calves on the high protein diet achieved the research

target weight of 65kg at six weeks whereas only 52.6% of calves on the lower protein diet achieved this goal.

"The 20% protein calf feed was shown to have greater daily liveweight gain which meant that calves could be weaned off milk faster, saving time and costs," says Natalie. These findings support the need to carefully consider the cost of calf feed in context of the desired outcome. The identified cost per calf will then readily confirm the value of the feed. While the percentage of protein may be a matter of preference, the quality of the feed should be non-negotiable. Natalie recommends high-quality ingredients that are properly mixed and pelleted; this ensures the same nutrients in every mouthful as well as enhanced feed utilisation and less wastage. SealesWinslow Calf Pro 20% is an ideal way to deliver high quality protein meal to achieve liveweight targets.

For further information please visit www.sealeswinslow.co.nz or contact your SealesWinslow technical field representative.

¹Research conducted by AgResearch as part of the Calf Rearing Project at Poukawa Research Station.

Young team keen on farm's future



IMAGE: Brett Harmer and Louisa McClintock head back to Brett's family farm at Methven

It has been a circuit through the wide-open spaces and high-country expanses that led Brett Harmer and Louisa McClintock to head back to Brett's family farm at Methven. Between them they share a love of farming, hard work and energy to build a farm enterprise together, but in a way that enables them to each make the most of their own skills and talents.

Until February this year Brett had spent much of his working life as a shepherd, initially in the South Island's high country, enjoying running a big team of dogs in the country's stunning landscapes.

Those stations included Flockhill Station, Glenthorne and his last southern job at Glynn Wye. After finishing up at Glynn Wye he thought it would be interesting to spend some time up on the North Island, taking in some different landscapes, farming methods and people in the process.

That circuit included a year spent at Piquet Hill, one of Waikato's largest sheep and beef units located near the Raglan Harbour on the Waikato's west coast.

"It was very intensive after being in the high country down south with Corriedale and Merino fine wool flocks. Piquet Hill has Suffolk, Romney and Composite studs, two commercial ewe flocks, and 1,800 lease bulls, there was always plenty going on."

After then spending time on iconic Whiterock Station on the Wairarapa Coast, he decided it was time to come home to Methven.

"Whiterock was quite a place, very much dictated by the weather, quite isolated but in an exceptional spot—I am a mad keen free diver, and there was always plenty of Crayfish, Blue Moki and Blue Cod out there to get after work for dinner."

Meantime he had also grown closer to Louisa, until then an acquaintance he knew through mutual friends.

"So it all just seemed to be the right time for us to come back home. We could see the potential here, and the opportunity on the family farm. I never expected to be able to take on the scale we have, but that was really thanks to being with Louisa, it seemed more possible, so we did."

Louisa has spent time working as a sales rep for Pure Oil NZ before having the opportunity to return back to her grandfather Graham Stratholme's Farm at Cheviot to help him out late last year.

"At 1,000ha the property is a big one for an 85 year old to run, but he has kept it up, crutching his own sheep and doing all the usual jobs, but it was good to be able to come back and help him out."



"He has helped us hugely to get back here with the partnership, and he continues to be a great source of advice," says Louisa.

Her relationship with Graham is a special one, captured a couple of years ago in a Country Calendar episode, and Graham's commitment to helping his granddaughter has been as great as his passion for the fine wool half breeds he continues to farm. The Harmer family property comprises 600 effective hectares of un-irrigated country on the north side of state highway 72 south of Methven. It is blessed with good summer wet conditions that contrast quite sharply with the land just across the main road that requires irrigation.

The couple have leased the farm from Brett's parents Jack and Jeanette, incorporating part of the farm with his brother Jon and sister in law Emma.

They have embarked on a mission to re-develop the property, working on fencing, fertiliser and re-grassing in a gradual, measured and self-funded approach to enable them to grow their stock assets over time.

ABOVE: At present they are running 30 head of deer, increasing that to 80 with fencing development soon

ABOVE TOP: Brett and Louisa's contrasting skills have made it possible to take on the scale they have

"At present we are running 30 head of deer, and with some more fencing we can soon increase that to 80. Meantime we also run 80 Angus breeding cows, white face cattle and some straight Angus. We hope to lift the cow numbers to 100 next year also."

They have also sourced some quality Hereford genetics from Matariki Stud at Clarence and an Angus from Woodbank Stud to boost the performance of the whiteface cattle they keep. Next year they are also hoping to stock up on breeding ewes and at present run lambs for fattening.

The couple are happy to work growing the farm at an organic rate as they re-develop it over time.

"The flats are a relatively small percentage of our total area, with the rest being largely foothill and steeper country, so we can't just go and re-grass the whole lot.



"We will spray out a portion each year, put it into turnips to be grazed in summer, then annual grass for balage in autumn and into permanent pasture after that. We will slowly get there."

They enjoy the extensive nature of the property, unencumbered by the need to irrigate it means they have significantly lower overheads to worry about, and are tuning the farm's stocking rate, livestock rate and pace of development to match the demands of its terrain and seasonal growth patterns.

Other improvements scheduled in future budgets include new yards and a shearing shed.

"But until then our neighbour has offered us the use of her yards. The support from the community has been very welcoming, they seem to appreciate seeing us come on as the new generation."

Brett's Dad, Jack, other business also provides a valuable facet to help the couple get ahead on the land. Jack's life-long passion for heavy earthmoving equipment and particularly bulldozers has him heading up Jack Harmer Contracting. Meantime Brett's brother Jon is also into heavy equipment in a big way, as owner of Harmer Earthmoving, employing 50 staff and multiple machines at Methven. Oldest brother Kurt is not such a heavy machinery fan, he and his wife Emily run a 2,000 cow diary farm north of Ashburton.

"Dad started his contracting business in the 1980s, following his passion, he's always been a bit of a bulldozer fan, then he got hold of a digger and a truck. Then Jon started in 2008, bought part of the business off Dad and expanded it from there - he's gone big while Dad has just hung onto the bulldozers."

The families work in well as needed, with

Jack's bulldozers sometimes called in to help Jon in some jobs. Brett shares the family passion for big machinery and is also working with Jack, building on his bulldozing skills every week since he has been back, while also providing some valuable off-farm income.

"It provides a nice balance to the farm work and having access to the equipment is handy for the development work we need to do on the farm."

Jack's machinery includes a couple of daunting D155 40t bulldozers and two 'smaller' 25t D65s. The machines are well employed across the



LEFT: Louisa works part-time with local contractor Nick Cromie on his sheep conveyer
BELOW: Brett & Louisa enjoy the extensive nature of the property, unencumbered by the need to irrigate it means they have significantly lower overheads

family's other business ventures that include three quarries, two selling lime and one clay for building farm races and for sealing pond or water storage areas.

The two lime quarries are at Mount Alford and up the Rakaia Gorge, with the clay quarry up the Ashburton Gorge.

The surge in dairying experienced through Mid Canterbury up until about three years ago gave the quarrying business a valuable boost, and even with the decline in dairy conversions, business continues to be strong through all three.

"We have found that the calcium level in our lime is very high, at 97% it means the amount you have to put on to have that liming effect is lower, making it more economic, while we have also found a basalt seam through the Mt Alford quarry, trading as Mt Hutt Lime."

The basalt has proven to be a valuable addition to roading mixes, once screened and applied it hardens well after crushing.

The heavy clay extracted from the Ashburton Gorge quarry has proven to be relatively unique in its water sealing ability, making it a good seal for ponds where environmental demands require no losses through porous linings.

Between him and Jack, Brett can run that operation and they rotate as needed across the two lime quarries. They also provide a good alternative income source when the earthmoving work drops off, with autumn lime demand keeping the heavy gear fully utilised.

The quarries have good reserves ahead of them, meaning there is plenty of work ahead

for the heavy gear, and for Brett as he and Louisa work to ultimately be able to buy Jack out and into retirement in years to come. Meantime Louisa can bring her own ability to contribute off farm to the partnership. She works part-time with local contractor Nick Cromie on his sheep conveyor, and between the team they work flat out at up to 1,500 ewes an hour drenched and injected, and 300 an hour getting capsules.

"It is a great job, we travel south and all through Mid Canterbury, and I absolutely love meeting farmers along the way, and seeing the different techniques they are using." She will also continue to spend time working grandfather Graham's farm near Cheviot.

"Fortunately too, Louisa is pretty savvy, she's good at saving and letting me know about where I should, or should not, be spending money, it's a great skill to have in a partner who is as capable at looking after the books as she is in getting out and helping me out on the farm," says Brett.

There is a strong sense of optimism between the couple about where they are heading, and the future farming holds for them, with the usual challenges repeated so often in the media regarded as more background issues to navigate than obstacles to get in the way.

They are hoping that with some careful saving and good decisions in the coming years they can gradually buy into Jack's earthmoving business, and in the next 10 possibly own a share of the farm.

Louisa says setting up the partnership was a daunting task, signing up on account applications and commitments, but urges anyone keen to take on farming not to be put off, to take the leap and enjoy the opportunities that will arise.

"We have had a lot of support, and that includes from the likes of Ruralco where staff have been hugely helpful, whether it's been in opening an account, to just getting some good advice when we need it, it's very positive when you are starting out."

Leasing is proving to be a good vehicle



for getting them off the ground. Keeping commitments to land purchase a minimum means they can focus on putting equity into livestock, an asset proving increasingly valuable as commodity prices stay firm.

"It has been a bit hard getting numbers up

ABOVE: Jack & Brett run the quarry operation and rotate as needed to manage both lime quarries
BELOW: Brett has managed to keep 3 of his original 12 dog team for work around the farm

this year, given the price of livestock, but it is also good to also see the returns finally come right for beef, velvet, venison and sheep. The values just mean it will take a bit of time, and you do get those ups and downs that may give us some opportunities into the future," says Brett.

He admits he still has a yearning for the wide open spaces that the high country offers, and he has managed to keep three of his original 12 dog team for work around the farm.

To get a high country recharge he also gets to spend a week every few months up at Esk Head Station near Hawarden, mixing up some hunting with some shepherding work while there.

"It's all a pretty special place, and we have been very fortunate to also have this chance to come back home, the support from everyone, family and community, it's been quite overwhelming really."



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Supreme Supplier pays award forward

Recognising supplier excellence and the mutually beneficial relationship between Ruralco's suppliers and the co-operative's members, the 2019 Ruralco Supplier Awards were held on Friday 13th September 2019 at the Addington Raceway.

This year the awards incorporated the Supreme Award, Members Choice Award and Business Growth Awards.

With significant sales growth over the last year as well as continually acting in the spirit of the Ruralco relationship, FMG was the 2019 Supreme Supplier Award winner.

Scott Kahle, Head of Alliances & Industry Partnerships at FMG said "FMG is thrilled to win the Ruralco Supreme Supplier award. It is wonderful to be associated with a great co-operative. Being a mutually owned insurer, we exist for the same reason as Ruralco—to provide a better deal to rural New Zealand. Being acknowledged by an organisation that really understands what this means makes the award even more special."

Scott acknowledged "The ability to pay via Ruralco makes it so easy, for our clients and for FMG. It's great to be able to provide this additional option that clearly suits many of our clients, and helps streamline things for our business."

The winner of the Supreme Supplier Award received The Icehouse Business Training package, valued at \$1,500 and a Ruralco advertising package valued at \$1,000. In the spirit of helping each other FMG went one step further by paying part of this prize forward. "FMG knows there are many challenges in farming, which is why we are right behind Farmstrong to help people in rural communities be better prepared for the ups and downs of farming. As such, we are proud to donate part of our prize to Farmstrong, to help spread the message to more farmers and growers." Mr Kahle said.

To be voted the Members Choice Award, Ruralco asks its cardholders to choose a supplier who they feel have given exceptional service and value for money. For the third year in a row this award was won by Neumanns Tyres.

Cousins Emma Hintz and Vinnie Neumann, both third generation Neumanns and both working in the family business, accepted the award on behalf of Neumanns Tyres. Emma said "To win the Members Choice award three years in a row is a testament to our staff. They've built great relationships with our customers and we thank



them for that. Ashburton is lucky to have a high level of customer service standards and many businesses who have loyal customer followings."

Established in 1945, the Neumanns Tyre Group have grown from a small family owned business into a large South Island owned tyre company boasting 14 stores throughout the South Island. Whilst the business has grown, the emphasis has always been on maintaining core founding principles of providing quality products and exceptional efficient service.

"We have many long-serving employees, half of them know Ruralco customers by name! By opening stores in smaller towns, like Methven

ABOVE: Emma Hintz and Vinnie Neumann accept the Members Choice Award on behalf of Neumanns Tyre Service from Lester Chambers, National Sales Manager and Glenn Coward, Group CFO

ABOVE TOP: Geoff Hardacre & Guy Taylor accept Supreme Supplier Award on behalf of FMG, with Card Services Manager, Jason McKenzie

Tyre and Hire, Tyre General Rangiora and Tyre General Amberley, we've extended the South Island network to ensure the tradition of good customer service continues," Vinnie said.

The team at Neumanns Tyres received a \$1,000 Travel Voucher sponsored by Maxine Whiting from House of Travel Ashburton.

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NZ scientists help Italians deal with destructive bug

Even a rural Cantabrian used to working in the shadow of the Southern Alps would not fail to be awed by the soaring mountain peaks around the northern Italian town of Trento.

Despite sitting at a relatively low 190m above sea level the town is dominated by glacial peaks rising almost vertically to 1,000m, often with highly productive orchards sitting two thirds of the way up their flanks.

But this idyllic scene also belies a battle being waged between scientists and the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug (BMSB). The voracious pest first established in the Trentino region two years ago and is now dangerously close to wiping out many crops in one of the country's most productive horticultural regions.

The pest's incursion was originally from Switzerland to the north, and was first documented by Italian researcher Professor

Claudio Ioriatti in 2016. This year he has already trapped 10 times the number of bugs than he did last year.

Professor Ioriatti is based at the nearby Fondazione Edmund Mach research centre which has rapidly become a war room and brains trust for dealing with the Asian based bug that has no known predators in Italy.

Professor Ioriatti is backed up by a team of PhD candidates and scientists regarded as the best in the world at understanding pests, and developing new techniques for dealing with them.

This includes Professor Max Suckling, New Zealand's foremost authority on pests and pest control. Much of his working life has been spent at Plant & Food Research at Lincoln, and since 2014 he has been professor at Auckland University School of Biological Sciences. Professor Suckling has spent the Kiwi winter seconded in the Trento sunshine to work alongside the Italian scientists.

Between these two men and their team of smart researchers there is hope the onward

march of the BMSB may yet be slowed, if not stopped, but there is much work to be done.

"The first reports of crop damage came quickly in 2017 and now growers are having to spray heavily to try and slow the bug's advance," says Professor Ioriatti.

Estimates to date are that the bug is inflicting Eu150 million a year of damage to crops, and it has nearly wiped out Italy's Eu300 million pear growing sector.

It is its voracious indiscriminate appetite, and ability to travel long distances on foot, while also being relatively resistant to most sprays that have Italy's horticultural sector on high alert.

"Already after this short period of establishment peaches are badly affected in nearby Emilia Romagna, and high value organic apple crops will suffer—the bug simply laughs at organic pyrethrum controls," says Professor Suckling.

The region provides a wide and varied diet for a bug that overwinters in houses and buildings before emerging over spring time



to hatch several batches of eggs a week over their four month lifespan.

The damage they inflict upon the fruit is similar to codling moth. Injecting an enzyme into the fruit causes damage, causing it to fall early and either making it unmarketable or drastically affecting shelf life.

He is acutely aware of New Zealand's vulnerability should the bug be detected here.

So far only isolated numbers have been found, often in shipping containers and imported vehicles.

Late last year a vehicle carrier ship that had live stink bugs on board was ordered to leave New Zealand waters after their detection by biosecurity.

Port areas including those hosting large cruise ship arrivals are particularly vulnerable, and industry bodies including Biosecurity NZ have done much to raise awareness of the risk the bug poses to almost all of New Zealand's vegetable and fruit crops.

After the fruit fly it is New Zealand's next most unwanted pest.

A collection box holding trapped bugs highlights why this is so. Within the box held in the Trento field lab, assorted vegetables and fruits are crawling with the bug, happily and indifferently devouring whatever is put in front of it.

Max Suckling admits he has a grudging respect for a bug that can establish itself so quickly and dominate such a variety of crops.

He emphasises that here in New Zealand the bug's threat is not only to the \$5.5 billion horticultural export sector.

"It is happy to feed on 'bridging' food like native plants and grass seeds available before some crops ripen and it is drawn to maize as soon as cobs start to tassel."

This highlights how vulnerable areas with mixed cropping, horticulture and pastoral activity, indeed much of New Zealand, are to its incursion.

The fact its habitat spans houses, orchards and even the steep forested hills around Trento has Professor Suckling calling for an area wide control programme, similar to what he

successfully oversaw during the painted apple moth outbreak in NZ in 1999.

Professor Ioriatti also regularly visits New Zealand, and his last trip in June he spoke to New Zealand orchardists around the country, highlighting the impact the bug has had. He had their full attention, with one grower who had been orcharding for 50 years saying it was the most frightening bug he had heard of.

Professor Ioriatti says working with the New Zealanders, including Professor Suckling, has boosted the intellectual horsepower between the two hemispheres, and also provided two summers a year to work on understanding the bug in Italy, and continuing on control/trapping research in New Zealand.

"I do fear though it will be a matter of when, rather than if the bug arrives in New Zealand," he says.

Professor Suckling suspects any arrival is most likely to come via Australia where 10 incursions have already been detected. It has also established near Santiago in Chile.

Professor Ioriatti admires the collective government-industry efforts in New Zealand to deal with incursion risk, and says the best thing this country can do is buy as much time as possible with vigilant controls giving researchers more time to grapple with ways to eliminate the bug.

New Zealand has approved the use of a biological control should the bug ever be found in numbers here. The Samurai Wasp has Environmental Protection Authority approval for release, should it be needed.

However Italian law prevents non-native species being used in biological control, something that is hopefully due to be changed through the Italian parliament this year.

Scientists are trialling a number of trapping methods as options to spray control which has had limited success on its own, and one where over use threatens to impact of low residue premiums on crops.

One method is a sterile male release programme, similar to what Professor Suckling developed for codling moth control in Hawke's Bay.

ABOVE: Brown Marmorated Stink Bug on an orchard near Trento

ABOVE LEFT: Professors Claudio Ioriatti (left) and Max Suckling leading the charge against the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug in northern Italy

BELOW: Professor Max Suckling in a research orchard at Fondazione Edmund Mach, near Trento, northern Italy

Dropping large numbers of sterilised male moths by drones across wide orchard areas resulted in a 10 fold decline in moth numbers. It has also enabled growers to minimise the amount of spray required, keeping low residue premiums on their apples.

Pheromone traps are also being trialled, along with a relatively new and unknown science of biotremology.

This "Pied Piper" technology utilises vibrations that mimic insects' mating calls to draw populations of one sex into a trap, and Trento is at the cutting edge of this rapidly developing technique.

Both Professor Suckling and Ioriatti are optimistic they can at least curb the bug's advance, but caution that the bug is moving quickly and keeping up with it with adequate funding for trial work and research is absolutely critical.

"The bugs are moving faster than we are at this stage," says Professor Ioriatti.



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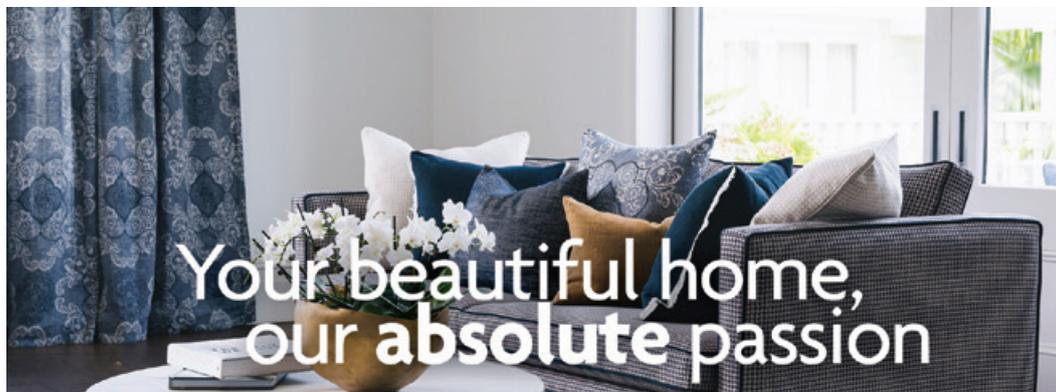


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Jo has owned and operated Colourplus for 13 years. Along with her stylish, professional and down-to-earth team, they bring a fresh eye to every project.

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25th Instore Days Big Draw revealed!



IMAGE: Major prizes lined up outside the Ashburton Trust Events Centre

Over 12 months ago, Rob-Sharkie, Group CEO, had a kernel of an idea that a big prize draw to celebrate the 25th Instore Days would be an exciting prospect. “This is a huge milestone for the co-operative. I knew we needed to make the 25th anniversary of Instore Days big. So, we did.”

Instore Days have become a mainstay in the mid Canterbury farming calendar. Over the two days suppliers offer cardholders pre-advertised specials and the opportunity to reap rewards and savings. The days are also an occasion for members to catch up with each other and enjoy the community feel and benefits of belonging to the co-operative.

This year, the two best days off the farm became, the two best days plus the chance to win a red Ford Mustang Eco Boost sports car, a Fi-Glass Dominator Boat, a Harley Davidson Roadster, a Capitola Spa, a Seadoo Jetski or one of over fifty other prizes—a total prize pool of \$250,000. The prize pool was entirely donated by Ruralco’s partners and suppliers in gifts of cash to buy the big prizes and products to make up the rest of the prize pool. This is a testament to the longstanding relationships between Ruralco members, partners and suppliers.

Celebrating the value and longevity of the Ruralco member and supplier relationships, the number of entries into the Big Draw was based on spend. For every \$250 accumulative spend on their Ruralco card, between South Island Agricultural Field Days and Instore Days, members received an entry into the prize draw.

Rob and the executive team under police supervision and scrutinised by the BNZ, conducted the draw. Maintaining the highest level of integrity was integral to the process, only the executive team and key staff members were aware of who had won which prize. Ruralco staff contacted the list



of winners to let them know they had won something but they were not able to reveal what as it was, the invitation was extended to attend the event to find out what they won and receive their prize. This tension added to the build-up and excitement of the event, with many members asking ‘Is my prize red in colour?!’. Invitations were also extended to every shareholder to attend the Big Reveal event, regardless of whether they had won or not, the celebration was for everyone.

The Big Reveal event was held on Thursday 1 August 2019 at the Ashburton Events Centre. There was excitement and huge smiles all around as over 250 invited guests poured into the foyer. Of those who knew that they had won a prize, there was much banter and conviviality as no one knew what they had won.

As guests were seated in the Events Centre auditorium Ruralco’s new brand video played, a short film telling the story of why Ruralco is “obsessed with agriculture” its values, purpose and mission played in the background. With the stage foreground set with prizes, Rob welcomed everyone to the event and invited Chairman Alister Body to say a few words “We are absolutely delighted to be able to give away these prizes this

ABOVE: Peter & Raelene Holmes, winners of the Mustang

BELOW LEFT: Carol & Dean McConell, winners of the Harley Davidson

evening. There has certainly been a lot of interest in the Big Draw and it has created a real buzz and plenty of excitement. Thank you to our partners, suppliers and members, we have truly special relationships in our co-operative. It takes all of your support to make this so successful. It was a great idea from Rob and his leadership has made this happen together with his entire team, we are very proud of the results.”

“We have been truly humbled by the support shown by our suppliers” said Rob “This has been a fantastic year for Ruralco, and it has certainly added to the strength of our co-operative.” He then went on to announce the prizes in order of value, lowest to highest (for a full list of prizes and prize winners see Page 29).

Andy Molloy, a crop and livestock farmer from Flemington, got what he calls ‘one hell of a shock’ when his name was called out as the winner of a SeaDoo Jetski. “To be honest it took a bit for it to sink in. It wasn’t until I got it home and, in the garage, that it really hit me.” Andy said. “I’ve never won anything



LEFT: Andrew Molloy, winner of the Sea Doo Jetski with Alister Body (Chairman) & Rob Sharkie (CEO)
BELOW: Steve Lawson, Graeme Fulton, David Gill and Nicky Gill

to this value before so was a pretty big shock to be fair!"

Before heading out to the Big Reveal event, Andy had had a chat with son James, aged 6, about the list of prizes that they could win. According to Andy, James woke at 5am the morning after the reveal to find out exactly what they had won, and he was super-excited to find out it was a jetski! "I think James thinks it's Christmas time again! I'd have to say he has big plans for the summer now" said Andy.

With the Molloy's farm being only five minutes from Lake Hood Andy thought "being so close to the lake and having a boy who is super keen to get a biscuit behind it, I foresee it will get a fair bit of use after work and on weekends."

"I would like to thank Ruralco for all their support over the years and would like to see our co-operative continue to grow. Ruralco has a lot to offer farmers and it is greatly appreciated." Andy said.

With only three prizes left Dean and Carol McConnell suddenly realised they were going home with something that probably wasn't going to fit in the boot of the car. A dairy farming family from Hinds, McConnell Ag, is a partnership with son Ben. Carol recalls as they were walking into the Events Centre on the evening of the presentation, they bumped into some neighbours. "There was quite a lot of banter about what the outcome of the

night might be, and Dean jokingly said he had the helmet in the car!" she said.

You can imagine the surprise then when Rob announced the McConnell's had won the Harley Davidson XL 1200CX Roadster which was front and centre on the stage. Together, Dean and Carol made their way to the stage and after a round of handshakes and congratulations with Rob and Alister, they approached the bike. A huge cheer went up around the auditorium as Carol swung her leg over the bike, grabbed the handlebars and motioned for Dean to jump on behind. Dean's face lit up and there was a real sense

of excitement by everyone present to see this hardworking, community and family focused couple win an amazing prize.

"It's amazing. I've never won anything like this before." Dean was beaming as he shook his head "it's too much to take in. I'd better go get a motorcycle license tomorrow!" Carol continued "Thank you so much, we never imagined winning anything like this. Over the years Dean has said that he'd like to get a Harley, now you've made his dream come true" she said.

According to the McConnell's, the initial excitement lasted for a day or two. As the event was so public, word got out quickly, and the congratulations and well wishes kept them buoyant for a few days. The Harley was delivered to the McConnell's and Dean now intends to get his license and upskill himself on how to ride his motorbike safely.

The McConnell families have supported Ruralco for many years, and the annual Instore Days have become a go to event for them. "The 25-year promotion was a wonderful achievement for the co-operative to pull together. The rapport Ruralco has with their suppliers to be able to offer such an array of prizes is simply amazing." Dean said.

Deer farmer and long-time co-operative member Ray Kane of Mt Somers was the winner of the Fi-Glass Dominator boat. A member since the 1970s Ray said "I know I've won it, but it hasn't sunk in. I had jet boat a long time ago, we used to run that around more often than not in the river, so this boat will take a bit of getting used to." Mr Kane thought that his extended family would be pleased and would help him make good use of it.

When your name hasn't been called and all that's left is a set of keys for a red Ford Mustang Eco Boost sports car worth \$65,000 then you're probably getting a little nervous.

For Peter and Raylene Holmes, who have a dairy farm at Lowcliffe and have been





LEFT: Maree Smith, Hannah Bramley and Lance Bramley

members of Ruralco since Peter moved from the Waikato in 1999, it was an amazing moment. "I'm still in a state of shock. I can't believe this is our car!" said Peter. "I came here tonight thinking we'd be lucky if we won a fire extinguisher, then I thought they'd made a mistake. I'm blown away" a beaming Raylene said.

A few weeks after winning the car Peter and Raylene were reflecting on the experience "I don't think either of us could believe it really. We didn't get much sleep after the prize giving. Like many other members there that night we'd kidded with Ruralco staff in the retail shop and at Instore Days 'to not scratch our Mustang' but we were just joking." Peter said.

"To be honest it's still unreal and I have to pinch myself when I'm driving it. It's quick, has plenty of power and thank goodness it has cruise control!" said Raylene. "The first time I picked up my grandchildren from school was enjoyable. I collected nine-year-old grandson Oakley and then we headed to College to get Charlize. I overheard her being asked by a friend 'who's is the car?'. Charlize turned around smiling and said, 'it's my Nana's'. That was a pretty cool moment."

At six-foot three Peter has to move the driver's seat all the way back and have it reclined "I suppose this is what Jeremy Clarkson feels like" Peter joked, "when I'm allowed to drive it!" The couple had taken the car for a long drive to their bach at Otamatata, near the Benmore Dam.

It's been a big 10 months for the Holmes'. They got married last November, moved to a lifestyle property at Greenstreet in May and now they've won a car. "I love this car. So many people recognise it and a few people must have had their eye on it as I've been told I'm driving their car" laughed Raylene. "The car is certainly known and associated with Ruralco. It must be the most well-known vehicle in Ashburton right now."

"I enjoy going into Ruralco, they are a good bunch in there. We go to Instore Days and do some bulk buying - particularly calf meal.

This Big Draw was well run and there was plenty of interest. On the night everyone was on a high, people were genuinely excited for us and for each other. We would like to thank Ruralco for organising the event and for taking to opportunity to celebrate

25 years of Instore Days, and to be given the opportunity to win such an amazing prize" said Peter.

Rob Sharkie, CEO beams with joy when he says "We have been so excited to be able to bring these prizes to our members and to celebrate 25 years of Instore Days. Personally, it was a wonderful experience to be able to hand over these prizes, including a few sets of keys, to such wonderful people. Instore Days are well and truly cemented into the rural landscape and this year will remain a very memorable one for quite a few."

Real people do amazing things. This year Ruralco has bought a highly successful Instore Days to its members and through the support of its partners and suppliers, an amazing \$250,000 Big Draw. Now that the bar has been set so high the Ruralco team are excited to hear feedback from members, and are already planning another successful event for 2020.

The Big Draw Winners

Congratulations to our winners

 MUSTANG ECO BOOST <small>GILSTON FARMS</small>	 FI-GLASS DOMINATOR BOAT <small>R J KANE</small>	 HARLEY DAVIDSON <small>MCCONNELL AG</small>	 CAPITOLA HOT TUB <small>MITCHAM FARMING CO</small>
 SEA DOO JET SKI <small>WHEATSTONE FARMS</small>	 HOME APPLIANCE UPGRADE <small>CLOVERDALE TRUST</small>	 PANASONIC 65" TV <small>KEELEY FARMS</small>	 E-BIKE <small>THREE DAUGHTERS</small>
 MOUNTAIN BIKE <small>RC & PA WATSON</small>			

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Turpie Farms, South Pacific Seeds, M L Marr, Purrfect Cattery, RA & DR Bennett, J M Cavill, D B Stubbs, Lill Farms, Bakker Bulbs, GR & MA Pearce, Greg Low, P N Butterick, Mitch Sim, EK & MJ Chisnall, SJ Bishop, MR & LT Holmes Partnership, Clucas Farming, Midlands Seeds, Acton Fields, Kildrum Farming, J F Ridge & Sons, R J & B J Tait, G R & R C Wilson, N & K Hammond, WI & NO MacLeman, TW & TM Hayman, Laggan Farms, White Peak Dairies, Flat White Dairy, Hall Machinery, Milk Meat & Wool, M Hanham, Margaret Rickard, A Jones, Letham Hunter Partnership, Peel View Farm, T F Corbett, Morag Farm, Gallagher Contracting, LJ & H Bramley, Lochlash Farm, Nicola Read, Eifflerton Contractors, CF & JC Ryan, Gary Henson, Craig Ingold, Mcleod Property Services

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The importance of participating in local government



Friday 16 August was the last day for prospective candidates to enter their nominations to run in the local body elections to be held in October. These elections determine who will be your representatives on district and regional (or unitary, in some areas) councils.

WORDS AND IMAGE SUPPLIED BY IRRIGATION NEW ZEALAND

In Canterbury, this will be the first election of a full regional council held since central government intervened in the region and put appointed Commissioners in place in 2010. In 2016, the Council moved to a mix between elected and appointed councillors.

Regional councils play an important role in developing the plans, policies, and rules that determine land and water use and management. In 2011, the first National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPSFM) was released, which directed regional and unitary authorities to develop limits for freshwater bodies. These limits apply to the use of freshwater in terms of quantity, and the use of the land that can affect water quality.

Since then, the NPSFM has been replaced (in 2014) and further amended (in 2017) and is likely to be amended further when the Government announces its Essential Freshwater package in

the near future. A National Policy Statement on Biodiversity and a national Biodiversity Strategy are also soon to be released. These national policy changes will see a further raft of regulatory changes that will need to be implemented at the regional level. Regional Policy Statements guide what is to be included in regional plans, and ultimately resource consent conditions.

The planning and regulatory functions of district councils will also be affected, as those must also align with some regional-level instruments (such as policy statements).

So, regional and district councils play a critical role in implementing at a local level the policy developments coming out of central government. This directly affects water and land users on the ground.

This is why it is so important that people participate in the democratic process at the local level. As stated by Local Government New Zealand, "local authority election turnout has been declining in many areas of New Zealand since the 1980s. Nationally, voter turnout for local authority elections in 2016 was slightly higher than at the 2013 election, increasing from 41.3 per cent to 42 per cent. Turnout for regional council elections was slightly higher, at 44 per cent. In Canterbury, however, voter turnout for the 2016 election was only 40.4 per cent.

Given how critical regional, district, and unitary authorities are in determining how national level policy will be implemented and regulated locally, these figures are disappointing. With two months to go before the elections, candidates will now be campaigning to get people's votes. It is so important that these candidates engage with

their communities to find out what their priorities, concerns, and issues are. Voters also need to get a good understanding of what the candidates stand for and what their positions are on critical issues.

We often hear about the urban/rural divide in the media, and the rural community often struggles to have its voice heard given that we are now a largely urban country. Participation in local authority democracy is an important vehicle to having that voice heard and influencing outcomes that affect rural communities—particularly water and land users.

Dam Safety Regulations update

Irrigation New Zealand was very concerned about the implications of a new proposed framework for regulating dam safety in New Zealand, particularly how this would affect owners of rural water infrastructure, such as dams and ponds with below-ground storage, and irrigation races. We made a submission to the Ministry for Business, Innovation, and Employment which was developed with input from our members, including irrigation schemes, farmers, and growers. The regulations will affect non-irrigators as well, as many other types of storage are captured by the proposed framework—including effluent ponds.

Submissions have now closed, but further consultation will occur, as the regulations are written, and implementation guidance is developed for regional councils who will be tasked with administering them.

A copy of the Irrigation New Zealand submission can be found on our website and keep an eye out for the next round of consultation if you want to have your say.

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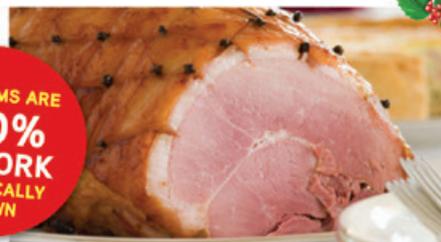


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FARM SUPPLIES



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Implementation of a robust crop protection program is required to achieve the full yield potential of fodder beet. It is important for farmers to give their crops the best possible chance of achieving the highest yield possible as this translates into lower cents / kg of dry matter. This in turn increases profitability per hectare. The starting point for a successful crop protection program starts with well-timed herbicide applications.

Fodder beet crops are relatively slow establishers compared to other crops such as brassicas. Wide row spacings combined with slow early growth make the crop relatively uncompetitive. The early establishment phase allows space for weeds to grow with unrestricted access to light, moisture, and nutrients if not controlled by an effective herbicide programme. The goal with any forage crop is to get enough overlapping leaf area to form canopy cover, this starves weeds of sunlight preventing them competing with the crop for nutrients and water enabling the crop to grow without competition to achieve full yield potential.

Beetrix®, a herbicide from Lonza, is now into its sixth year of use and has established itself as an effective solution to weed control in fodder beet crops. Beetrix® contains a unique combination of three active ingredients for broad-spectrum weed control. The three active ingredients in Beetrix® (ethofumesate, metamitron and phenmedipham) have complimentary modes of action to give an overlapping spectrum of weed activity.

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Timing of application is critical to get the best out of Beetrix®. Use Beetrix® at any time from sowing as weeds germinate. The unique blend of active ingredients in

Beetrix® enables the use of high rates at early crop growth stages while remaining safe on the crop. This gives growers the confidence to be proactive in their weed control and make decisions based on weed size and pressure. There is not the restriction of waiting until the crop reaches a certain growth stage. It is crucial to stay ahead of weed growth and be proactive with herbicide applications. When weeds get too big there are limited methods of control and the ones that are available often have a detrimental impact on the crop.

Apply Beetrix® as weeds germinate. Repeat applications will control larger weeds through to crop closure. Soil moisture before and after application is important for root uptake.

The free-flowing suspension concentrate formulation in Beetrix® is easy to use and provides flexible application timings to help growers give their crops the best chance of successful establishment. Beetrix® is also compatible with a range of crop protection products. This adds another convenience factor for growers and contractors.

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New Zealand sheep farmers have made many gains in their production systems over the past decade.

Ewes are bigger and more productive. Lambs are more numerous. Specialist finishing forages drive faster, heavier liveweight gains after weaning.

But there is still a major choke point, which directly influences the number of lambs weaned, the weight of those lambs and ultimately farm profitability.

"Most of our sheep farms are constrained by too little early spring feed," says AgResearch senior scientist Dr David Stevens, Invermay.

"If we could overcome that, and capture the subsequent benefits, it would be transformational for most sheep farms."

How transformational? "Similar to the introduction of lucerne to dryland farm systems," he says.

Having more grass in early spring, from the time ewes lamb, sets up a cascade of improved outcomes, because grass at this time of the season has the same nutritional value as legumes do later.

Ewes are better nourished, so they produce more milk.

More milk leads to higher lamb survival rates and faster growth during the time when lambs are most efficient at converting feed to liveweight gain, i.e. from birth to weaning.

Dr Stevens, who specialises in farm systems research, says these first weeks and months of the new season lamb crop have a major impact on farmers' bottom line.

"Lactational performance is a key driver of profitability on all sheep farms, just as it is on dairy farms."

Part of the answer lies in managing pasture covers so enough leaf is present to allow photosynthesis and adequate grass re-growth to occur from lambing onwards.

The type of grass used is also important, and it's here that a recent development could change the game for some farmers.

A new ryegrass has been bred specifically to answer the pressing need for more feed in early spring while still maintaining high dry matter (DM) yield throughout the year.

Tyson perennial ryegrass has the earliest heading date of any cultivar currently available (-7 days) and on average grows 35% more (DM) in early spring.

In trial it has out-yielded a range of perennial ryegrass cultivars through this period, including Excess, Trojan, Rely, One50, Abermagic and Request.



Craig Weir, local area manager for Barenbrug Agriseeds, the company behind Tyson, says it was created for farmers who want to lamb onto faster growing pasture, get more grass into ewes with lambs at foot and give themselves more choice around weaning decisions.

Tyson combines the genetics of Barenbrug Agriseeds' previous best early producers Meridian and Arrow.

Even though it has the genetic potential to significantly out-grow older ryegrasses during early spring, Craig says it still has to be managed in line with best practice guidelines as highlighted by David Stevens.

"Grass grows grass! To get the best out of Tyson through lambing, it needs to be set

stocked at the recommended minimum cover of 1200-1300kg DM/ha (3-4cm pasture height) for singles, or 1500-1700kg DM/ha (4-6cm height) for multiples."

Craig says this takes some thinking at a farm systems level, in terms of setting the necessary autumn pasture cover targets to reach spring with Tyson at the correct level.

The payback comes not only in being able to utilise the new grass to its potential, but also drafting more lambs off mum at higher early schedule prices and freeing up feed for other stock.

IMAGE: What 35% more DM growth looks like in early spring – Tyson plots are marked



Winter Feed Rotation

Jayson & Clare Nish own a 300 ha dairy farm where they run 620 cows on Mount Winchmore near Ashburton. They understand the importance of a reliable crop rotation programme to reduce disease and insect pressure, and they aim to balance soil nutrients and help achieve optimum cow performance. WORDS & IMAGE SUPPLIED BY AGRICOM

The Nishs' follow a rotation from grass into kale, followed by oats and sometimes a second year of kale, before going back into grass for three to four years.

The role of kale as a second crop in a winter feed rotation is one of the species' key strengths for farms with limited area and the need to multi-crop intensively. Although not perfect, the disease tolerance and resilience of kale is an important part of its functionality in these situations. The Nishs' rely on kale in their rotation as it provides quality feed through the winter and they also find it to be a reliable option that is easy to feed and transition.

The Nishs' have tried a couple of larger stem kale varieties in the past in their mission to chase outright yield but have been frustrated with large stems being left behind, insect pressure and the plants falling over. Sovereign was a game changer for the Nishs' in providing improved insect tolerance and yield opportunity in a kale. Their success

with Sovereign made it easy for them to transition onto Agricom's new release, SovGold, which has proved itself against Sovereign by maintaining its quality through the winter and being very palatable.

Kale crop yields are heavily influenced by a number of factors including soil type, fertility, and environmental conditions through the growing season. Jayson and Clare aim to sow their kale crop mid-November, however as a result of very wet conditions through mid-Canterbury before Christmas, they were unable to drill until 15th January this year. Traditionally they yield 15–17 tonne but due to the conditions and late sowing their kale was a lower 13 tonne.

Jayson said, "we are really happy with the result we have achieved this year from such a late sowing due to the season. SovGold seems to provide a good balance between quality and quantity."

SovGold combines excellent quality with a high yield potential. In any kale, the leaf

component of the plant is where the quality is at its greatest. In general, SovGold has a higher percentage of leaf than giant types. This difference in composition is consistent, but the actual proportions are influenced by environmental conditions.

The Nishs' utilise SovGold exceptionally well with the motto, "why grow it if you can't eat it?" Once fully transitioned onto the kale the goal diet is 10 kg DM/head/day of kale, 3 kg DM/head/day of oat silage and 3 kg DM/head/day of straw. They are now growing a paddock of kale on the dairy platform to try and lengthen the gap between kale crops to limit the risk diseases such as clubroot. They are utilising oats when finished the kale late in winter as a 'soak up' crop, but it's also a good opportunity to capture some more annual yield before going back into grass.

Jayson and Clare will continue to use SovGold as a reliable option on the farm in their mission to reach maximum edible yield potential through the winter rotation.

For more information on SovGold kale talk to your local Ruralco representative.

IMAGE: Jayson Nish, Melinda Driscoll, Ruralco On-Farm Account Manager, Claire Nish and Fraser Harrison, Agricom



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Customised Farm Solutions company joins Ruralco network



Recently joining the Ruralco supplier network, Dairy Business Centre is a local Mid Canterbury business providing tailor-made feed solutions to local and nationwide dairy farms. Dairy Business Centre is excited to be able to offer our quality range of products and expertise to the Ruralco community.

Dairy Business Centre Managing Director, Neville Prendergast, said "we are excited to be able to further assist our clients by becoming a Ruralco supplier. There are many challenges ahead in the dairy industry, and at DBC we're not just about selling feed. We understand cows and how to feed them and we can share our skills and knowledge to help maximise long-term farm profitability."

The Dairy Business Centre approach starts with the premise that no two farms are the same. Each farm and its farmers have their own style of management, unique pasture, environmental issues and livestock. Dairy Business Centre acknowledges that the NZ Dairy Industry is based on a grass fed system, but we also know that grass quality varies significantly throughout the dairy season. For this reason DBC invested in its own Near Infrared Spectroscopy (NIRS) machine to rapidly analyse fresh pasture, with a turnaround time of only a few hours. Our team of specialists can analyse these results and provide technical, tailor-made advice to help the farmer make informed decisions to ensure the herd's energy requirements are met on a daily basis.

Dairy Business Centre is driven to help farmers succeed and be profitable. Neville explains "As the New Zealand dairy industry continues to face increased economic challenges, it's more important than ever for farmers to use their land, water and livestock resources to their fullest potential to increase

production and profitability levels, while also taking into account the impact on animal health, human resources and the environment."

Over the years, Dairy Business Centre has built up a diverse client base across New Zealand, whose farming systems range from 1 to 6, so we ensure our reps are up to date with the latest evidence-based research. DBC uses farm and science-based research to develop recommendations for our clients, this science-based approach gives us and our clients confidence in our customised farm solutions. It helps us decide which feed products are best used for each farmer at each stage of the herd cycle.

DBC's signature range of products have been developed to encompass Herd Evolution from start to finish. For your calves, we recommend DBC Maximize and DBC Unleash, a two phase approach to provide the best nutrition for your calves to support their skeletal growth and provide all the necessary nutrients, ensuring that when they enter the herd as a milking cow they will be profitable from day one. We recommend DBC Loose Licks for all ages and classes of stock, they are formulated



to have the correct ratio of essential macro and micro minerals for maximum mineral absorption, especially good for supplementation when feeding mineral deficient crops such as fodder beet. For pre-calving we have formulated DBC's Get-Set-Cow to transition cows safely from their winter diets, to minimise metabolic problems at calving and prepare them for the milking herd ration.

For your milking cows we have a full range of DBC Stay Up mineral pellets. DBC also work closely with world leading product partners to bring to your farm other quality products that deliver measurable results in increased production while maintaining optimum herd health.

"We look forward to working with Ruralco cardholders to provide long term tailored feed solutions to optimise animal health and farm profitability" said Neville.

Ruralco cardholders receive 3% discount on DBC Signature calf feed and 5% discount on DBC Signature Loose Licks.



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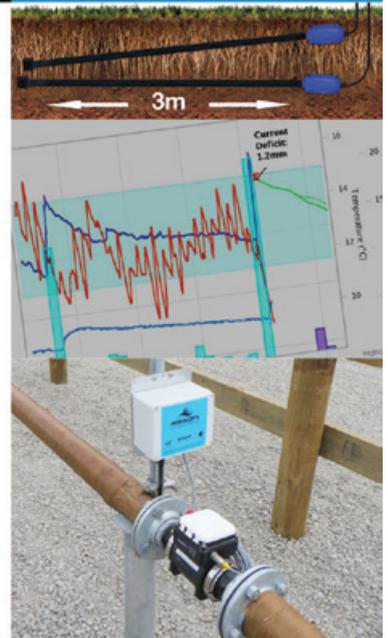
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Herbicide resistance in Canterbury

A FAR survey which identified ryegrass resistant to Group A (clethodim, haloxyfop-P and pinoxaden), Group B (iodosulfuron-methyl and pyroxsulam) and Group G (glyphosate) herbicides on a number of farms in the Selwyn District in Canterbury should be a wake-up call for all Canterbury cropping farmers. WORDS & IMAGE SUPPLIED BY FAR

The survey was carried out last summer as part of an MBIE funded project, Managing Herbicide Resistance, which is led by AgResearch. It involved FAR staff collecting wild oat, brome and ryegrass plants from wheat and clover paddocks on 48 farms between the Rakaia and Waimakariri Rivers

(around 20% of cropping farms in the area). The plants were then forwarded to AgResearch for resistance testing.

FAR's Phil Rolston says (at time of going to press) that resistance was identified in ryegrass on 13 of the Selwyn farms. No resistance was found in any of the bromes

and the results from the wild oat testing are not yet available.

"The results of this survey, particularly around glyphosate resistance, are causing us some concern. We are now working to understand how to manage such resistance on cropping farms. This survey will be



susceptible or resistant to herbicides, making it a cost effective component of integrated weed management. An increasing number of seed rain management tools are available for use pre- and post-harvest, but there is still room for further research and development in this area.

“The results of this survey, particularly around glyphosate resistance, are causing us some concern.”

False and stale seedbeds can be a highly effective and inexpensive means of removing emerging weeds before, or during, crop establishment. When used as part of a whole-system approach to weed management, false and stale seedbeds can achieve very high levels of weed control, allowing subsequent weeding operations, both chemical and non-chemical, to be more effective, easier and often cheaper. Because the vast majority of weeds emerge from seeds within 5 cm of the soil surface, false and stale seed beds can be good options where cultivation is part of the system. False seedbeds are so-called because the first seedbed is not the true seedbed as it is destroyed by re-cultivation. They allow for the removal of weed seedlings by shallow cultivation before the crop is sown, and can also be used after harvest to remove crop volunteers. Stale seedbeds, on the other hand, provide a seedbed that is no longer freshly cultivated at the time of crop planting/sowing, and allow for the removal of weed seedlings before crop emergence. Both false and stale seed beds can be used before sowing to combat the spring weed flush.

The final option to consider is mechanical weeding using either spring tine harrows or inter-row hoes. Spring tine harrows can achieve weed control on a par with herbicides in robust crops such as cereals and beans, providing they are used when the weeds are small and in dry conditions. However, they are more effective against broad-leaf weeds than grasses and don't work so well in coarse or stony soils.

Inter-row hoes are better suited to more delicate crops, sown in wider rows e.g. vegetable seed, and more challenging soils (hard / stony). They kill more weeds in the inter-row, but they need guidance systems to keep them on track.

Both spring tine harrows and inter-row hoes can be substituted for herbicide applications and they can also be used with herbicides, e.g. band spraying the crop row and mechanically weeding the inter-row.

repeated in Mid-Canterbury and South Canterbury in the next two summers, and given the similarity of farm systems and weed management practices across Canterbury, it is likely that we will see similar results. It is very important that farmers start understanding and implementing anti-resistance strategies.”

What to do if you are concerned about herbicide resistance on your farm

- Check paddocks after herbicide application and remove any plants that have ‘escaped’ treatment.
- Do not allow any ‘escaped’ plants to go to seed.
- Seek professional advice (eg agrichemical rep or FAR) if you believe that ‘escapes’

are the result of resistance, rather than application conditions.

Anti-resistance strategies

Integrating cultural weed management strategies into farm systems can help slow the development of herbicide resistance, and manage it if it is already present.

Techniques include managing the weed seed bank, the use of stale and false seed beds, and mechanical weeding.

Managing weed seed rain, and therefore the weed seedbank, through post-harvest seed destruction, and pre-harvest spray and mechanical topping, can be just as, or even more, effective for long term weed management than just spraying in-crop weed plants. This technique is useful for managing all weeds, whether they are

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Our opportunity to help reshape the Biosecurity Act

The review of the Biosecurity Act provides an opportunity for industry groups to have a say in the future framework to protect New Zealand.

WORD SUPPLIED BY HORTICULTURE NEW ZEALAND DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE, LEANNE STEWART

The first of its kind in the world, our Act led a global trend in protecting the economic, environmental, social and cultural values from biosecurity risk. However, like all pieces of legislation, they become outdated and require periodic reviews to ensure they remain fit for purpose. It is at this point where we find ourselves now, with the overhaul of the Act before us and the opportunity to have our say. In its current form the Act provides a basis to protect New Zealand from unwanted pests and diseases across the biosecurity system. However, in a modern world with increasing pressures from trade and tourism, the emergence of new risk pathways and climate change, we need a future focussed Act that will provide regulatory flexibility to be able to respond to biosecurity risk. The Act overhaul has been planned to address a number of key issues to improve the effectiveness of the biosecurity system and enable activities:

- The Act's overarching purpose and set of guiding principles;
- How te ao Māori (the Māori world) is reflected in biosecurity regulation;
- Clear and consistent roles and responsibilities across the biosecurity system;
- How the system is funded, including for biosecurity responses;
- Setting import requirements;

- Getting the right balance between enforcement and incentives;
- Filling gaps in the legislation that past biosecurity responses and other events have revealed.

To understand how participants of the biosecurity system interact with the current framework and where we see the pressure points, the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) is holding stakeholder workshops nationwide to seek feedback on the above workstreams. Of particular interest to the horticulture industry is funding of the system and setting import requirements. The first, system funding, has been fast-tracked for review, with MPI's intention to complete consultation by the end of 2019.

How the biosecurity system is funded is critical for the horticulture industry to have continued confidence in investment. Paying for its share of the Mycoplasma bovis biosecurity response has emptied the government's coffers and there's not much left. The resources that have been diverted to this response have placed a tremendous amount of pressure on MPI, the industries involved in the response with flow on effects to industries such as horticulture. This has resulted in the government considering alternative funding mechanisms to help fund current and responses.

As part of the Act stakeholder workshops, MPI is exploring funding options for the future and has requested industry provide feedback and ideas.

Last year the Finance Minister floated the idea of a universal biosecurity levy. However, this was parked for consideration under the Act, which is where we're at now. How the horticulture industry currently pays for biosecurity responses is usually under the Government Industry Agreement for Biosecurity Readiness and Response (GIA). Plant sector groups were early adopters of GIA, seeing the benefit of shared decision making and cost-sharing with MPI.

Our investment in GIA means we co-fund readiness programmes for priority pests and have a mechanism to pay for responses under operational agreements with set cost shares and decision making. We need to ensure a future system won't add another layer of cost. This is why it's so important for industry to have a say at the Act workshops and come up with a funding system that suits our needs and recognises the commitments we've already made. Potential options before us include different types of pooled funding or insurance products. We know the government isn't satisfied with keeping the status quo.

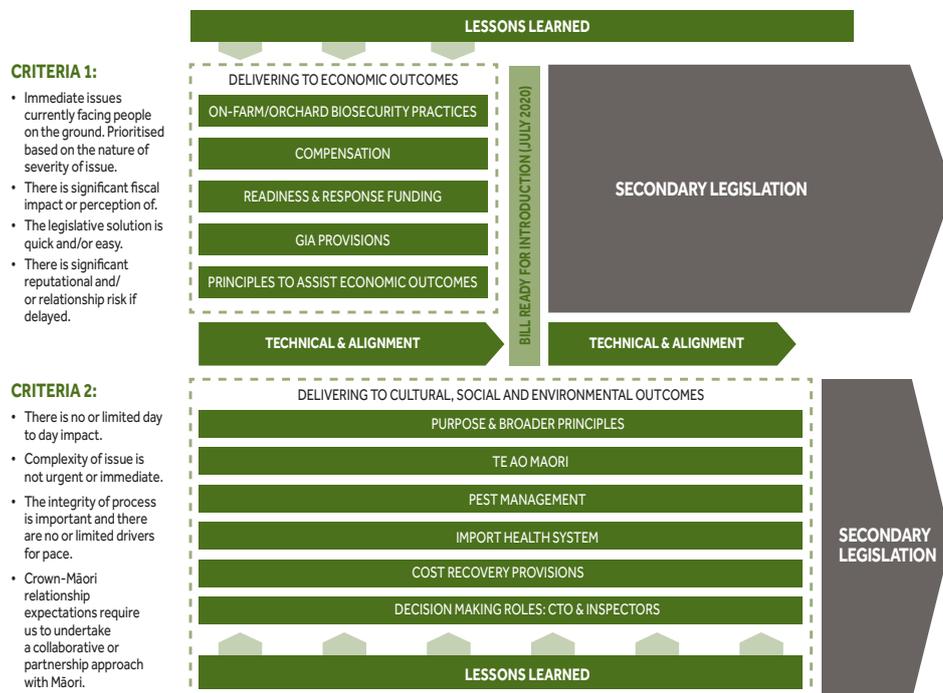
Other funding issues of importance include how growers are compensated after a response, how funds are recovered from industry groups who're not party to GIA, the importance of on-farm biosecurity practices, GIA provisions and principles to assist economic outcomes. All of these could have significant impacts on our industry if not designed properly.

I encourage everyone to get involved and attend a stakeholder workshop to share their experiences with the Act and help shape future legislation. HortNZ will continue to advocate for the interests of our members to ensure the revised Act enables our industry's continued growth and can operate under a resilient biosecurity system that's appropriately funded.

BELOW: Horticulture New Zealand Deputy Chief Executive, Leanne Stewart



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Ruminant bloat

Bloat can affect all ruminants (cattle, sheep, deer, and camelids). The term bloat refers to an abnormal accumulation of gas in the rumen. The rumen is the first of four stomachs in cattle, sheep and deer. WORDS & IMAGE SUPPLIED BY IAN HODGE BVSC, MANZCVS, VETERINARIAN, VETENT RIVERSIDE



There are two types of bloat: frothy (primary) bloat and gaseous (secondary) bloat.

Frothy bloat is the result of the formation of stable foam in the contents of the rumen. The gases that make up the foam are mainly carbon dioxide and methane produced from the fermentation of rumen contents. Frothy bloat commonly occurs when clover, Lucerne and immature ryegrass make up the majority of the diet. These feeds are high in protein and soluble carbohydrate, and low in fibre, which increases the risk of bubble formation, lack of ability for the bubbles to burst, and frothy bloat.

When these bubbles form in the rumen, gas pressure increases and the animal is unable to “burp” the entrapped gases out. Rumen pressure rapidly increases which puts pressure on the diaphragm making it difficult for affected animals to breathe. If left untreated, death from asphyxiation will follow very quickly.

Frothy bloat can exist in multiple animals on high risk crops. Affected animals appear “bloaty” with distended rumens which are visible on the left-hand side. This chronic form of bloat can be managed by adding fibre (hay or straw) to the diet. Fibre has many benefits: It changes the composition of saliva which assists with breaking down

the bubbles in the rumen, it helps with rumen contractions and promotes a healthy balance of microorganisms.

Other successful strategies to control frothy bloat are anti-foaming agents like anti-bloat oil, paraffin oil, detergents, pluronics (low foaming detergents), alcohol ethoxylate products, and agents that change the rate of fermentation in the rumen (products containing monensin).

Monensin-containing products like Rumensin reduce methane production and the overall numbers of protozoa in the rumen that reduce levels of anti-foaming agents in plants. Rumensin will also reduce the total numbers of bacteria in the rumen which reduces the risk of stable foam production.

Bloat oils can be sprayed on to paddocks directly after the dose has been accurately calculated. The spraying should occur shortly before grazing and may need to be re-applied after rain. Strip grazing may help better utilise sprayed on products.

Water trough treatment with bloat oil and Rumensin can be affected by water intake. Cows and sheep may not drink enough treated water under certain conditions.

Many farmers I have spoken to have said that the application of salt to pastures or

the use of salt blocks can help control bloat. Interestingly we see very little bloat in herds that are grazed close to the ocean!

Free gas bloat is different to frothy bloat. The cause of the gas accumulation in free gas bloat is usually a physical obstruction to the passage of burped air. Such obstructions could be turnips, potatoes etc. or tumours that obstruct the oesophagus. Free gas bloat is common in calves around weaning. Treatment may involve indwelling air drainage devices. These need to be placed by a vet.

The treatment of frothy bloat, in animals with severe distension of the rumen, is an emergency. Stabbing on the LEFT hand side with a very sharp double-bladed bloat knife can be life-saving. Make sure you know how to do this. Ask your vet.

Treatment of free gas bloat involves passing a stomach tube to move any obstruction to allow the passage of the free gas. Relief is often instant in uncomplicated cases.

So this spring and summer don't get caught with bloat. Be prepared. A robust prevention strategy using water treatments, Rumensin, fibre and careful grazing management in consultation with your vet is a great place to start.

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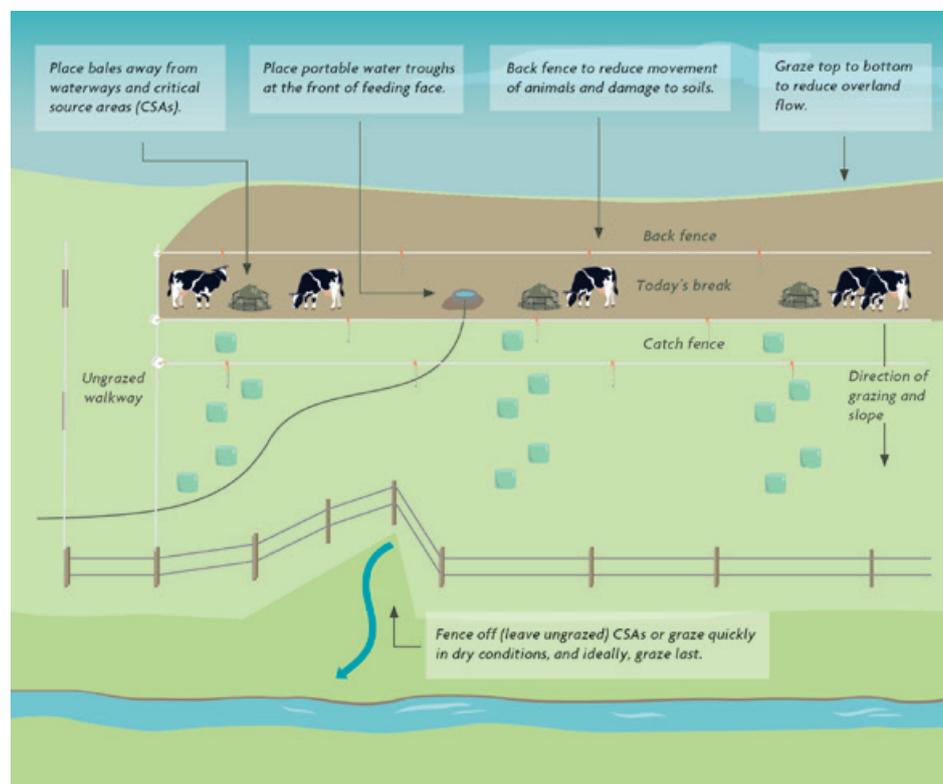
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Planning for successful wintering starts now

Planning ahead is something every farmer does every day. Setting yourself up for a good season next winter is one of those things that takes some forward planning. Here are some tips on how you can prepare now to reduce the stress of feeding stock next winter.

WORDS & SUPPLIED BY NICK TAIT, DAIRYNZ DEVELOPER



LEFT: Key actions for good practice winter crop grazing
BELOW LEFT: Good practice winter grazing on farm

Troughs can get damaged in heavy frosts, so they'll need regular checking.

Moving portable water troughs and back fencing can also reduce soil damage from cows. And if you lay water lines to troughs early and connect these up, you'll be all set for winter.

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT

Many farmers I talk to carry out soil testing just after winter cropping paddocks have been selected. Once you understand your soils, you can talk to your fertiliser rep about nutrient requirements.

Winter crop establishment

PLANNING

I recommend drawing up individual paddock grazing plans for winter crops identifying the risk areas and paddock features. Developing these plans with your team helps everyone understand the direction of cultivation and grazing, and how you will minimise contaminant losses.

CULTIVATION

Cultivating across slopes reduces the risk of overland flows from rain. Grass strips can also be left across the slopes of cultivated paddocks to trap sediment from cultivated areas.

We all know the value of buffer zones for waterway protection. For flat paddocks a 5m buffer works well but a bigger buffer is needed on slopes. Check with your regional council on your local rules.

Direct drilling is a good way to minimise soil loss, maintain soil structure when grazing and prevent overland flows. CSAs are best fenced off before grazing to help filter runoff.

Paddock Access

Some soils get particularly muddy and are hard to walk through, so farmers will fence off a strip to provide access to gateways and break fences.

SELECTING GRAZING DIRECTION

Grazing toward CSAs or water bodies will protect them from overland flows. If this isn't possible, then leave a larger buffer strip and graze it last, in fine weather. Grazing from the top of the slope downwards reduces overland flow by maintaining soil structure and allowing water to soak into undamaged soil.

For more information on wintering visit dairynz.co.nz/wintering.



Paddock selection and set up

Paddock Selection

I've talked to many farmers who are great at planning for wintering. Their first tip is normally, "choose the right paddock." To decide this, they look at what area they need to plant and factor in expected crop yield, cow intake, the number of days on crop and supplementary feed requirements.

Slopes, critical source areas (CSAs) and waterways also need to be considered. Some paddocks are

just better suited to winter grazing, as they have less risk of contaminant loss.

You can also keep your stock happy by selecting a paddock which provides some shelter from winter winds.

WATER TROUGH ACCESS

If you don't have permanent water troughs, many farmers will put portable troughs at the front of the feeding area and move them through the crop to reduce cow movements. Or you can put these under the side fence.

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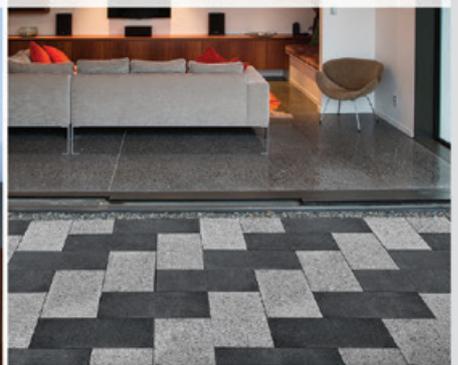
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Staying healthy through the spring and summer

With spring upon us and summer fast approaching there are a number of factors to be aware of in order to stay in the best possible health in the coming months.

WORDS SUPPLIED BY WISES COMMUNITY PHARMACY

Hayfever

Many of you may already be feeling the familiar sensations associated with Hayfever, such as a runny nose, itchy eyes and sneezing. Hayfever is an allergic reaction to allergens, or triggers, breathed in through the nose—which causes an immune response leaving sufferer's nasal passages red, swollen and sensitive.

Hayfever is at best irritating and at worst can be severely limiting, especially for those required to work outdoors. Lesser known

symptoms of Hayfever include disturbed sleep, an inability to concentrate and headaches, all of which can result in lower productivity.

Given that it is important for those in the rural community to continue to function despite external factors, it is critical that those with allergies take appropriate measures to prepare themselves for the Hayfever season. There are several treatments available to help manage your symptoms.

For all around protection use Antihistamine Tablets such as Levrix, Loraclear, or Zyrtec.

It is worth noting that many Antihistamine tablets can cause drowsiness in some users and advice should be sought if you are likely to be operating heavy machinery.

For nasal symptoms i.e. a runny nose and sneezing, use a Corticosteroid Nasal Spray to relieve the symptoms. Products like Flixonase, Beconase, and Dymista are very effective.

For watery or itchy eyes use Antihistamine Eye Drops such as Livostin or Cromolux.



the risks; being sun smart is vital to your enjoyment of summer and to your health. Melanoma is caused by sun exposure which prompts the body to produce melanocyte to protect itself. When melanocyte cells combine in the skin, they form a mole. While most moles are quite safe, sometimes the melanocytes in a mole begin to grow and divide in an uncontrolled way and this can develop into a Melanoma. The most common way of detecting a Melanoma is if your moles start to change in size, height or colour. It is now well known that there is a greater risk of Melanoma with higher doses of sun exposure; sunburn at any age increases the chance of Melanoma, with those most at risk having:

- Family or personal history of skin cancer;
- Fair skin;
- Red, blonde or fair hair;
- Skin type that burns easily;
- Skin damage due to sunburn;
- Sunbed use;
- Many moles or larger moles.

Melanoma can also be a very fast-moving cancer, it is usually treatable if it is found early enough so it is vitally important to get any moles that you are unsure about checked.

When it comes to sunscreen:

- Buy the best you can afford - sunscreens are expensive to make and you usually get what you pay for.
- Buy well recognised and independently tested products, i.e Invisible Zinc, Sun Sense, Neutrogena or Nivea brands.

BELOW: Theo Hudson, Pharmacist Owner, Wises Community Pharmacy



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For sleep disturbance there are many products that can be used such as Magnesium Supplements, Sleep Drops, as well as some Pharmacist only medicines that may be purchased after a consultation with your pharmacist.

Asthma

It's not unusual to find that Asthma sufferers also suffer from Hayfever and during the Hayfever season, people's Asthma can also be harder to control.

People with Asthma who suffer from Hayfever are more likely to require medical support during the Hayfever season for either an increase in their Asthma related symptoms, severe Hayfever reactions or a combination of the two. For some this can mean the need to take time away from work and so for this group of sufferers it is vital that they prepare early on to manage their condition.

It has been found that patients can aggravate their condition by simply breathing through their mouth, which is a natural reaction to a blocked nose. This is

likely to make asthma worse as by breathing through your mouth you compromise the natural filtration of air normally provided the nose and thus patients breath in unfiltered air, full of contaminants which in turn results in an allergic reaction and an increased difficulty in breathing. It is important to support your bodies normal defence mechanisms and keep your nasal passages clear. In addition to the products already outlined, on days with a particularly high pollen count, wearing a mask can also bring some relief.

Sun Smart

The New Zealand sun is now recognised as among the harshest on the planet and its effects can be measured on a spectrum which covers everything from sunburn right though to Melanoma and other skin cancers. New Zealand has the highest incidence level of Melanoma in the world accounting for 80% of all skin cancer deaths and claims over 350 Kiwi lives every year with most of them male. The message is very clear as are

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Are your farmhouses compliant healthy homes?



Recent changes to the Residential Tenancy Act have been passed to ensure that new Healthy Homes standards are met for all rental properties in New Zealand.

These standards introduce specific and minimum standards for heating, insulation, ventilation, moisture ingress and drainage, and draught stopping in rental properties. This includes, those houses tenanted by employees. With the new standards having become law on 1 July 2019, the question arises, are your farmhouses healthy homes? Nearly 600,000 households rent in New Zealand, and research shows that rental properties are poorer quality than owner-occupied homes. The research shows a link between cold, damp and mouldy homes and negative health outcomes, particularly for illnesses such as asthma and cardiovascular conditions.

The Healthy Homes standards have been developed to improve the quality of rental homes, rural and urban, so that New Zealanders who rent will experience improved health, as well as lower medical costs and lower levels of hospitalisations. Warmer and drier homes are also less likely to have issues with mould or mildew damage.

Historically many farmers may have believed that the accommodation they provide for workers is exempt from the Residential Tenancies Act, however this is untrue. All housing—with few exceptions—must be compliant under the Act. An employee living in a home provided by a farmer is deemed to be operating as a service tenancy, regardless of whether the employee pays rent or not.

There are two aspects which make a service tenancy different from a standard tenancy. Firstly, an employee can have rent deducted from their pay, and secondly, there is a shorter notice periods for service tenancies when it comes to vacating a service tenancy property. Often the term of the engagement is linked to that employees' period of employment and thus serviced tenancies may give at least 42 days' notice, rather than the more commonplace 90 days as seen in standard rental agreements.

In a service tenancy arrangement, all specific and minimum standards apply. The Healthy Homes standards incorporate five aspects of a property, which all contribute to a warm and dry home.

1. Heating

All rental properties must have one or more fixed heaters, which can directly heat the main living room to at least 18°C and can maintain this temperature all year round.

2. Insulation Ceiling and underfloor insulation

These are now compulsory in all rental homes—where it is reasonably practicable to install. Depending on location, ceiling insulation and underfloor insulation needs a minimum standard rated on how well insulation resists heat flow.

3. Ventilation

Rental properties must have at least one door or window (including skylights) that opens to the outside in all bedrooms, dining rooms, living rooms, lounges and kitchens. The windows or doors must be able to be fixed in the open position. All kitchens and bathrooms must have an extractor fan that ventilates externally.

4. Moisture and drainage

Rental properties must have efficient drainage for the removal of storm water, surface water and ground water, including an appropriate outfall. The drainage system must include gutters, downpipes and drains for the removal of water from the roof.

5. Draught stopping

Landlords must block any unreasonable gaps and holes in walls, ceilings, windows, floors and doors that cause noticeable draughts. Open fireplaces must be blocked unless the tenant and landlord agree otherwise.

Alongside these Healthy Home standards, now is a good time to check your farmhouses are compliant with providing of carpeting and drapes, replacement of old smoke alarms with a 10-year photoelectric system and that no kitchen facilities are in an area where a tenant sleep.

Farmers need to be able to show to the Tenancy Tribunal they are good landlords. If your farmhouses don't currently comply with the legislation set out in the Residential Tenancies Act, then through an inspection or by a complaint being raised, you could face a fine of \$4,000, plus the cost to bring the house up to standard.

If you are a sharemilker who has a signed a contract with a farmer which includes staff housing, then it will also pay to check your obligations, as in some instances the sharemilker may have become the landlord.

If you are unsure about your obligations, the Healthy Homes standards, or your responsibilities as a landlord then visit www.tenancy.govt.nz, or seek independent legal advice.

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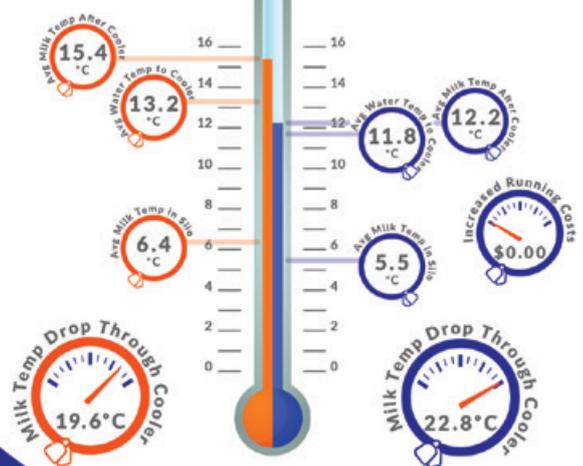
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Local research boosts fodder beet



yield response to N fertiliser varied across sites, with responses from 100 to 200 kg/ha of added N. Three sites had no response to added N. Similar results were observed in year 2, with peak N response up to 100kg/ha of added N.

Typically adding up to 100 kg N/ha optimises yield. Applying N at sowing and again at canopy closure assists to optimise yields, but no notable increase in yield from a third application was apparent. Response to N fertiliser depended on the level of available N in the soil, demonstrating the benefit of soil testing to avoid unnecessary N applications and expenditure.

Fodder beet took up large amounts of K, depending on how much was applied, but as with N, this did not always affect yield. Across the trial sites K application rate and timing did not affect yields, suggesting that soil levels were sufficient to meet K requirements. Soil testing is also important for K, and at low K soil test levels (QTK less than 5), adding up to 100 kg K/ha is sufficient. For QTK greater than 5, K can be withheld as its addition will not affect yield.

The essential micronutrient B did not affect yield in the trial, but should still be added as it is important for crop health. Deficiencies can result in brown heart and abnormal bulb development.

What it means on the ground

The trial highlighted the value of soil tests such as Ballance's fodder beet profile test. Taken before sowing to a depth of 150 mm, the test identifies available N, K and B, as well as phosphorus, pH, sulphur, sodium and magnesium levels.

In terms of N, available N levels are typically around 100 kg N/ha in previously cropped land (with around 100 kg N/ha fertiliser N required) and around 200 kg N/ha in land just out of pasture (requiring less fertiliser N at around 50 kg N/ha). If nutrient deficiencies are suspected, a herbage test at canopy closure will confirm if further nutrient addition is required. When N is required, a split application helps to optimise yields, with about half applied before or at sowing with the base or starter fertiliser, and the remainder at canopy closure as post-emergence N.

Some or all of the base or starter N can be applied as DAP or Cropzeal Boron Boost at drilling, but in a separate box to the seed to avoid contact in the soil. SustainN is the best choice for post-emergence N. If K is required, potassium chloride (potash) can be applied with the base dressing before sowing.

Homegrown research is helping fodder beet live up to its promise.

WORDS & IMAGE SUPPLIED BY
BALLANCE AGRI-NUTRIENTS

Greater interest in high energy and potentially high yielding fodder beet has seen more of the crop planted for winter feed. But as the crop is relatively new in New Zealand, farmers have mainly had to rely on overseas or historical advice on using nutrients to maximise fodder beet's yield and return.

Now farmers can benefit from local research. A Sustainable Farming Fund project involving Ballance Agri-Nutrients has shed

light on the role of fertiliser management and crop establishment in optimising fodder beet yields. The impacts of different rates and timings of nitrogen (N), potassium (K) and boron (B) applications were trialled at sites (including dairying, arable cropping and sheep and beef, in both irrigated and rain-fed conditions) across five key fodder beet production regions.

Luxury feeder of N and K

According to trial results, as fodder beet is a luxury feeder of N, N should be applied prudently. While crop N uptake and N concentration increased as result of increased N application rates, yield did not consistently increase. In year 1 of the study,



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Transmission pricing review aims for efficiencies



The Transmission Pricing Methodology (TPM) review has been a long running process over the past 10 years, conducted by the Electricity Authority and is finally edging towards some reforms in how the country's electricity pricing is determined.

The TPR aims to take a new approach for the pricing of electricity transmission from generation and through Transpower's transmission lines, to the local lines company. It reflects the Electricity Authority's aims to support the transition to a low emissions economy with least cost to consumers. This is prompted by the government's Zero Carbon goals for 2050, and the original intent to drive electricity generation to the point of being 100% renewable.

However, the electricity sector has already pointed out to government the challenge of getting to 100%, instead seeking a figure somewhere closer to 90-95% that can be achieved from today's 87% at a far cheaper cost. The issue the Electricity Authority is trying to resolve is the current TPM model, which enables Transpower to recover its maximum allowable revenue.

This is sending signals to customers that increased demand from them drives increased investment in transmission infrastructure. The EA maintains this leads to inefficient use of the transmission grid, and investments made in the grid that are not necessarily the

most efficient, or most reflective of consumer behaviour and demand.

Inefficient consumer behaviour prompted by the present model has customers trying to avoid the "peak" charging by investing unnecessarily in expensive technology like batteries and distributed generation. The net effect of this is to shift the grid costs onto others remaining on the grid.

But even closer to home, South Island generators are paying for all of the costs incurred on the high voltage line between the two islands.

This has typically been about 10% of electricity's wholesale price, acting like a South Island electricity 'tax', pushing investment into the North Island, and leaving the South Island bereft of any recent electricity generation investment.

Another example of the inequity arises in Auckland where consumers in some suburbs have petitioned for undergrounding of transmission lines, at a cost 5-10 times greater than overhead lines.

Under current pricing they would pay only a fraction of the cost, with the rest of New Zealand shouldering the difference. A change to local body planning rules requiring lines to be underground would result in no choice for Transpower than to do so, to the cost of consumers outside of the city.

The core of the TPM review is to ensure consumers pay for costs where they fall, rather than some in one area subsidising those in another for transmission infrastructure.

Two charges would come under a new pricing regime.

One is a "benefit based" charge, recovering costs of new grid upgrades based on their benefits to customers.

The second, a "residual charge" aims to recover any remaining transmission costs in a way that avoids distorting grid investment signals.

Cost-benefit analysis by the authority on the revamped pricing model reveals consumers will gain significant benefits from now through to 2050.

The benefits would come from reduced electricity costs, with greater use at peak times when it is valued the most.

Savings here are estimated to be \$2.36 billion over the time, or \$78 million a year.

Investment in smart grid technology like batteries is expected to deliver \$200 million worth of greater efficiencies, and another \$145 million from smarter decisions on connection and electrification.

Some businesses and consumer may face higher charges initially while others pay less, as a result of "paying where the cost falls".

There would however be a price cap put in to reassure both that there will be no major price impact.

Charges are expected to increase initially in Auckland and Northland where major investment is required.

But 12 networks including Alpine Energy and Electricity Ashburton, Electricity Invercargill and Marlborough Lines will all experience a drop in charges by an average of \$20 a household a year.

Submissions on the TPM close on October 30.



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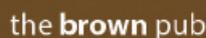
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Canterbury rural property market continues to consolidate



The year to 30 June 2019 makes sobering reading, our Property Brokers Ashburton office alone in times past would have gone close to where the entire Canterbury market is today.

WORDS SUPPLIED BY PROPERTY BROKERS

REINZ DATA TO 30 JUNE (ALL COMPANIES)	FARMS	\$ VALUE OF SALES
CANTERBURY	121	279,510,406
HORTICULTURAL	2	2,100,000
DAIRY	8	73,322,500
ARABLE	15	26,072,000
FORESTRY	3	865,000
LIVESTOCK, FORESTRY & GRAZING	93	177,150,906

As the supply of farms to the market builds we may see more pressure on the Canterbury median sale price (all land classes). As yet there has not been sufficient sales evidence to substantiate a variance, particularly of dairy. The price paid per hectare, relative to the water scheme the farm is tied too, or not tied to as the case may be, has historically been in dairy's favour given the sectors relative profitability. It is inevitable this season that more farms will be sold on yield, the assessment of water and the farm system developed to maximise profits. The day of relying on a district average has never served high performers well and far less so in a market like now, it will come down the really understanding the options and the profits that can be expected. Taking advice specialists outside of the traditional banking relationship is likely to be much more of a requirement going forward as banks manage independence and conflicts of interest.

So, while the outlook currently looks a little flat, often only modest value adjustments in certain classes of land, water, or both can get a market moving again. But anybody wanting to sell and wait for the pre-GFC era to kick in may want to reconsider as the market has truly moved on.

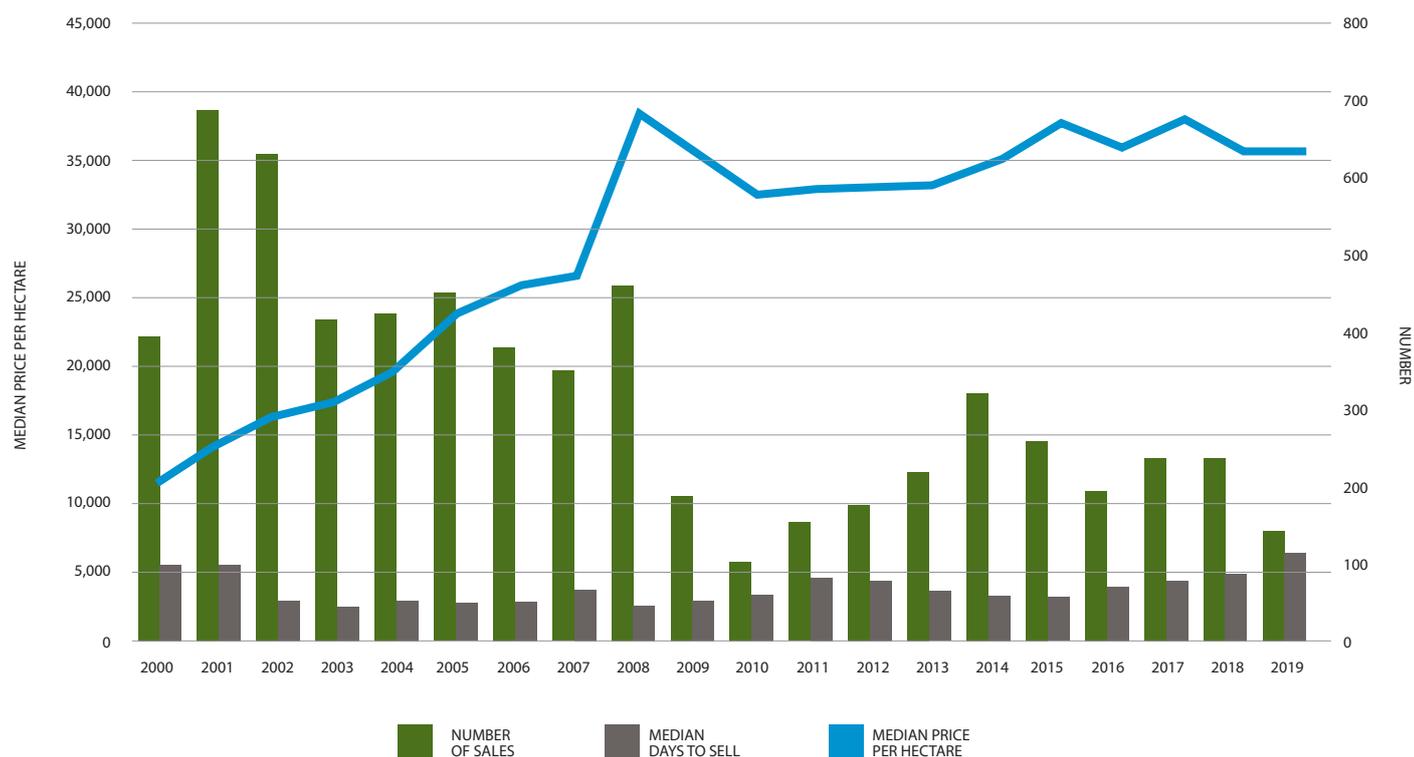
DairyBase indicates there are approximately 814 owner/operators in the Marlborough/Canterbury region, so eight dairy sales seems very light even with all the confidence issues. These low sales results are however very much in line with the national trend with only 146 dairy farms sold last season from close to 7000 owner/operator dairy businesses.

The reality is median dairy farm prices (red line) has not dropped materially in the post GFC era. This is fundamentally at odds with the increased supply of farms to the market as farmers tackle farm succession,

retirement, or simply a lifestyle shift, away from compliance and labour challenges that beset New Zealand businesses these days. Or in some cases too much debt.

Too much debt is presenting as a factor however, there are mixed messages being communicated about the level of Agri-credit available to the market at the moment. Potential buyers equally may convey a 'bank' messages rather than simply state your farm is too expensive and I need a better yield to cover my forward risks 5-10 years out from today. So, confidence to do a deal remains a factor.

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Separate purchase options, multiple land uses, dairy support/livestock and arable history and nutrient budget have this property primed to develop further. Perfect for amalgamation with neighbouring or nearby farms to complement or integrate with existing operations. Alternatively it is large enough to develop as a standalone farm unit. Genuine Vendors offer this land for sale so early inspection is recommended to consider this attractive land offer. Full information memorandum and LIM available on request.

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28th March 2019

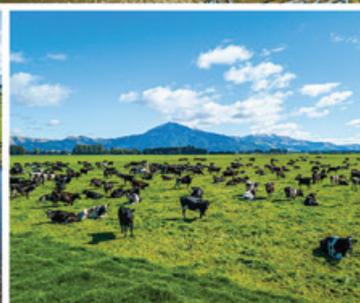
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Annual General Meeting

19 November

7pm, The Bradford Room, The Ashburton Trust Event Centre.

Ruralco Longbeach Coastal Challenge

24 November

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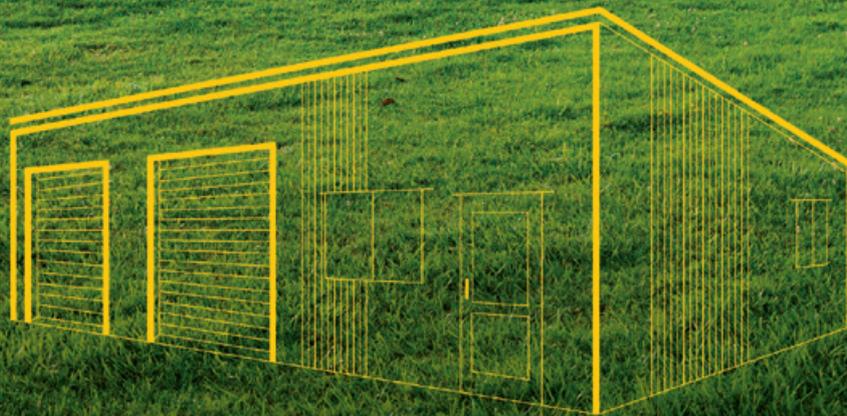
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