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JANUARY 2025

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2025: Will we be thriving or surviving?

Well, 2024, don't let the door hit you on the way out. It's been a tough one, that's for sure.

A perfect storm of low commodity prices and high input costs has made farming tough, especially for sheep and beef farmers.

Comparisons to the 1980s were a recurring theme, with many farmers questioning the viability of staying in the industry and looking to forestry as a more profitable option.

Land use change remains a hot topic.

We have lost some good people too – there is far too long a list of rock solid, backbone of our industry legends who passed away last year, most before their time and who will be forever missed.

Alliance announced the closure of its Smithfield plant, and most of the sector's larger cooperatives posted significant losses.

And then there was the weather.

North Canterbury has been in a drought pretty much all year, and at the time of writing this, remains desperate for rain.

Southland, by contrast, has had far too much.

There was much talk of "Survive until 2025", the catchphrase we borrowed from the US that implies that if we all just get through this year, things will improve.

But will they? Of course, there is no crystal ball, but there are what is being called "green shoots" (another well-worn catchphrase from 2024).

According to the latest Situation and Outlook for Primary Industries (SOPI) report released by the Economic Intelligence Unit last month, the sector looks poised for a strong recovery.

The outlook for 2025 looks good, with export

earnings expected to rise by 7%, reaching \$56.9 billion.

The recovery comes after a period of price drops in important exports like dairy, meat, and wool, as well as slower global growth, especially in China, New Zealand's biggest trade partner.

However, with global supplies of key agricultural products like dairy, beef, mutton, and seafood becoming tighter, export prices and the amount of goods sold are expected to improve in 2025.

Dairy remains the golden child, with export revenue forecast to grow by 10% to \$25.5 billion in the year to June 30, 2025.

Horticulture, still recovering from the impact of Cyclone Gabrielle, looks to be making a strong recovery. Export revenue is expected to grow by 12% to reach \$8 billion, thanks mainly to kiwifruit.

Wine exports, which have struggled over the past year, are projected to recover, driven by demand from markets such as the US and UK.

Arable has a forecasted growth of 4% to \$360 million.

Meat and wool export revenue is forecast to increase slightly to \$11.4 billion in the year to 30 June 2025, with rising prices offsetting declines in export volumes.

So, things look promising (mostly).

As Will Rogers said, "The farmer has to be an optimist, or he wouldn't be a farmer."

Wishing all of our readers and advertisers a prosperous and Happy New Year. Here's to a better 2025.



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ACL's Green Cone Pushes for Sustainability

Aaron Gairns, the EnviroTech Manager at ACL, is leading the company's efforts to reduce its carbon footprint by 30% by 2030.

The environmental initiatives have become a major focus, with the green cone symbolizing the company's commitment to sustainability.

The green cone, which stands out from the usual orange traffic cones, is not just a quirky symbol. It's a reminder of ACL's environmental goals and serves as a tool to keep everyone on track, much like how

traffic cones direct drivers safely.

"We're starting to shift the culture here at ACL," Aaron said. "It's not just about the managers; everyone is getting on board with it. The green cone project has sparked curiosity and interest throughout the company."

Aaron believes that reducing the carbon footprint is more than just meeting targets—it's about setting an example. "New Zealand is a leader in sustainability, and we have the chance to make a real impact. It's about doing things smarter and better, for future generations."

The company's focus on sustainability is not just a short-term goal. It's part of a wider cultural shift, one that Aaron believes will become as ingrained in the business world as health and safety is today.

As ACL moves towards a greener future, Aaron is confident that the next generation of workers will drive this change forward. "Young people today are naturally on board with sustainability, and that's important for the future of the company."

With the right leadership from CEO Gary Casey and a strong team behind

him, Aaron is optimistic about the future. "Culture eats strategy for breakfast," he says, emphasizing the importance of teamwork in achieving their goals.

As the year winds down, Aaron and the ACL team wish everyone a Merry Christmas, hoping to continue their success in the coming year.



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A titan of advocacy farewelled



Jonathan Leask
REPORTER

Tributes flowed for prominent Mid Canterbury farming figure Chris Allen.

The 62-year-old died in a tragic accident on his Ashburton Forks farm on December 9.

Chris has been described as a titan of rural advocacy, a highly respected farmer, and “one of life’s good buggers”.

David Clark lives on the neighbouring farm and considers it an absolute privilege to have Chris as one of his closest friends.

The community has “lost a mighty Totara” he said.

“His contribution to our community and agriculture across New Zealand has been immense, with his tireless advocacy in biodiversity, environment, water management and emergency response on behalf of New Zealand farmers.

“He just had the ability to relate to all people which made him effective in talking about issues and he was always enthusiastic.”

Federated Farmers chief executive Terry Copeland said farmers had “lost a real Titan in terms of rural advocacy”.

“Not only was Chris hugely knowledgeable on agriculture and environment issues, he was



Chris Allen, who died in a tragic accident, on his Ashburton Forks farm back in 2016.

respected for his fairness, collegiality, and open-mindedness.”

With Feds, Chris served on the meat and fibre section and then as Mid Canterbury provincial president before joining the national board in 2014.

Another mark of Chris’s concern for fellow farmers was his decision to fly to Napier in the wake of Cyclone Gabrielle.

“As someone who had experienced serious flooding on his own farm, he wanted to offer fellow

farmers support and his personal experience that times would be tough, but there was light at the end of the tunnel,” Copeland said.

Feds president Wayne Langford said Chris farmed to a high standard, was respected and a friend to many.

“Chris always had a line, ‘it needs to be sensible, practical and affordable.’ That’s a line that still resonates with many boards or collaborative groups he has been a part of.

“I’ll remember Chris for being a guy who took his advocacy for farmers seriously but could always share a good laugh and a joke too.”

Mid Canterbury Federated Farmers president David Acland said Chris had “incredible mana” in the community.

Chris was an unsung hero with the amount of commitment and work that he put in over the years he said.

“His contribution was massive outside and beyond the farm gate,”

he said.

Chris served on the Ashburton Water Zone Committee since 2014 and committee chairperson Bill Thomas praised him for his heavy involvement in “farmer politics”.

“Chris will be greatly missed, but not forgotten, he was one of life’s good buggers.”

Fellow committee member Angela Cushnie said Chris had achieved so much “and still it felt like he was only getting started”.

Chris grew up on a sheep and beef farm in Tirau in the Waikato and was an aviation engineer at Air New Zealand for 15 years.

Chris and his wife Anne-Marie bought Annandale Farm in 1994, a 360-hectare sheep, beef and cropping property at the Ashburton Forks – 20 minutes west of Ashburton.

The farm, bordered by the two branches of the Ashburton/Hakaterere River, flooded on settlement day.

It was severely damaged 27 years later in the devastating Canterbury floods in 2021 and the Allens hosted then-Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern when she toured the flood-damaged region.

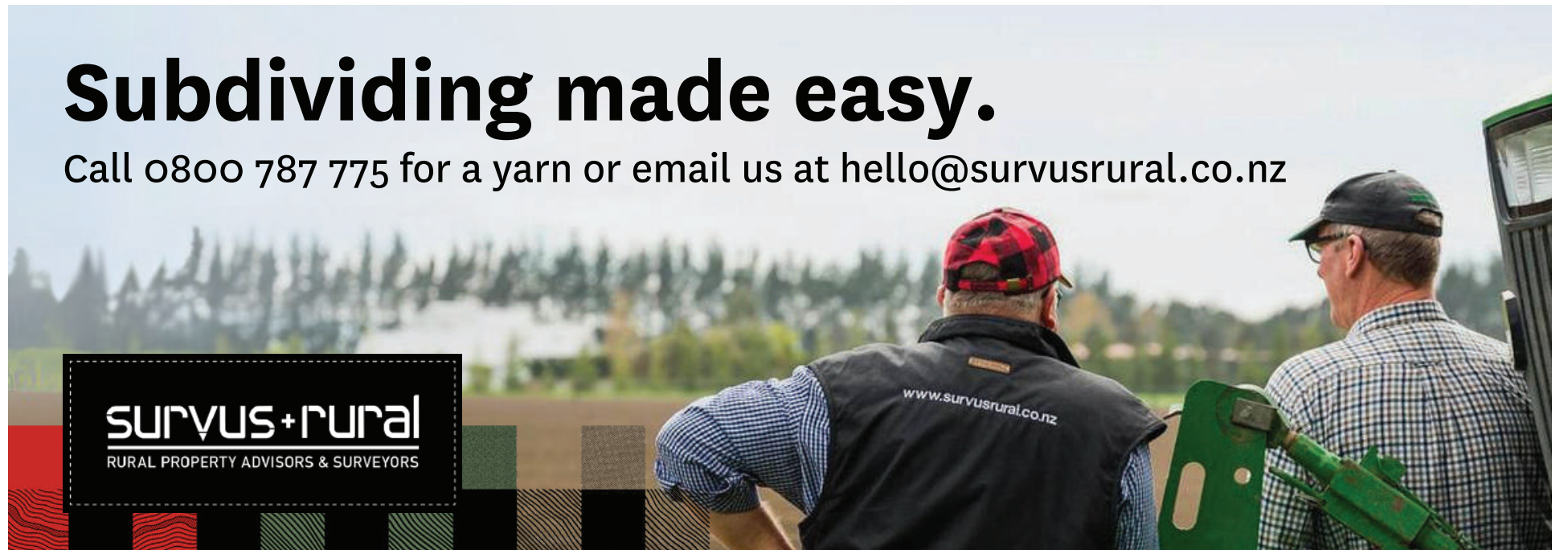
Over 1000 people celebrated his life in Ashburton on December 14.



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A-maizing fun for the whole family

CLAIRE INKSON

A-maizing family fun

Tamar Farm is again opening its gates for the greater good when its annual Maize Maze opens in late January.

"We live in a great community, and that community is only good if everyone contributes, so this is our contribution, and we wanted to raise money as a team," says Tamar Farm owner Richard Wright.

The Wrights have farmed at the Mt Somers property for 25 years, during which time the farm has grown to a 2000-hectare beef, cropping, and lamb finishing operation with three dairy units and dairy support.

The Maize Maze has been created on three hectares of crop, and Wright said it should take most people 40 minutes to complete.

That's not the only challenge, though.

"We have done a design, and people will have to guess what is as they walk around.

"People had to find certain coordinates last year, and we will do that again this year."

Those who are successful could be sorted for the weekend barbe-



cue with a Tamar Beef meat pack up for grabs for those who solve the puzzle.

The maze isn't just for puzzle lovers – there's a spine-chilling twist.

Horror maze evenings will return this year, where members of the Tamar Farm team, along with a group of actors, don their full fright-night gear to terrify brave maze walkers.

"They were a big drawcard last year; we had 600 people through in two hours."

The maze will be open on Saturdays and Sundays from the end of January from 12pm.

Last year's Tamar Farm maze raised \$20,000 for Hate Hone St John.
PHOTO SUPPLIED

Afternoon entry fees are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children, and \$10 for the night-time horror maze.

"We are trying to promote a cheap, fun day out for families." Proceeds from the event will go to Hato Hone St John.

Last year's maze raised \$20,000 for the organisation.

Wright said the event is geared toward families, with the paths through the maze suitable for pushing a pram.

"Last year, it was great to have the whole family come out on a Sunday afternoon, especially the little kids.

"It's affordable, simple, fun."

Start dates, location and event information can be found on the Tamar Farm Facebook page

The event follows on from the Tamar Party in the Paddock, a mini-Glastonbury-style music festival that aimed to raise money for the Opuke Innovation Hub at Mount Hutt College held on the farm in November.

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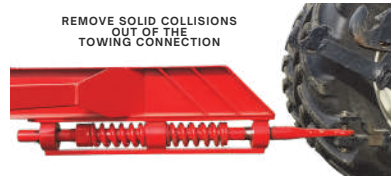
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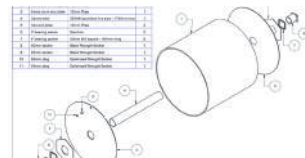


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Tavendale: A lifetime of leadership

CLAIRE INKSON

New Zealand's agricultural history is scattered with legendary personalities who have shaped the sector and left an indelible mark on the industry.

Mid Canterbury local John Tavendale is one such character.

At a sprightly 80 years old, he is sharp as a tack.

After a remarkable career, he is only now hanging up his boots and stepping down as the NZ Blackcurrant Cooperative chairperson in February.

It is just one of the many governance positions he has held over a lifetime of serving New Zealand agriculture.

"I've always regarded retirement as a change of occupation," he said.

Tavendale grew up in a rural North Otago town, the son of a flour miller.

With a keen interest in farming but realising that the pathway to farm ownership was, at that point, out of reach, he enrolled at Lincoln University and graduated with a Bachelor of Agriscience in 1966.

After graduating, he joined the Lincoln Farm Improvement Club and the Lauriston Farm Improvement Club before entering private practice as a farm adviser in 1970.

That began a career spanning five decades.

"Some would say I'm still a farm advisor, but I was pretty active in that role until 2017."

Tavendale specialised in tussock grassland management, working mainly with high country stations.

His wisdom and expertise made

him sought after.

His advisory roles took him as far afield as Eastern Europe, South America, and the Middle East.

He worked for animal enterprises that exported live breeding stock, a process the previous labour government has since banned due to animal welfare concerns.

"The welfare standards for any livestock exports I was involved in were very high," Tavendale said.

In 1972, he became part of a syndicate that purchased a large blackcurrant farm in Winchmore.

In 1987, when the country was in the grip of Rogernomics, Tavendale made the brave move to buy out the farm's other owners.

"They all got cold feet, and I said you never sell on a downturn.

"But I took up the challenge in 1987 in the middle of an agricultural downturn."

He became a director of the NZ Blackcurrant Cooperative board in 2004 and, in 2011, became the organisation's chairperson, a position he has held ever since.

He navigated the cooperative through one of its biggest hurdles in 2016, when Ribena, who had been purchasing 50% of New Zealand's blackcurrant crop, pulled out of our market. "Suddenly, there was a whole lot of surplus fruit about, and that created some real challenges for the cooperative."



In November, Tavendale received a lifetime achievement award at the Cooperative Business NZ Annual Awards, which recognise outstanding leadership and success.

PHOTO SUPPLIED

Tavendale was instrumental in repositioning the blackcurrant market from a commodity to a high-value ingredient renowned for its health benefits.

"We expanded our existing markets and renewed efforts into Japan, our principal export market."

In 2003, he took his business acumen outside the agriculture sector, becoming director of EA Networks, Ashburton's cooperatively owned electricity network, and spending seven years as chairperson.

During his tenure, EA Networks

expanded, particularly into the irrigation sector.

Under his guidance, the network tripled its capacity to meet the community's water and energy demands, cementing EA Networks as an essential driver of regional growth.

Tavendale's influence didn't stop at energy distribution; he championed initiatives that diversified EA Networks' offerings to directly benefit Mid Canterbury.

He played a key role in bringing ultra-fast fibre to the region and enabled projects like the Barrhill Chertsey Irrigation Scheme.

"I had a very commercial approach to life, which is why regulatory bodies didn't interest me as much as commercial ones, like Electricity Ashburton."

In 2013, his services to agribusiness were formally recognised when he was appointed as an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit, and again in 2019 with an honorary Doctor of Commerce from Lincoln University.

In November, he received a lifetime achievement award at the Cooperative Business NZ Annual Awards, which recognise outstanding leadership and success.

While cooperatives like Alliance, Farmlands, and Ravensdown have recently reported heavy losses, Tavendale still believes the cooperative model is a good one that can serve farmers well.

"In my view, they provide farmers with an opportunity to control their destiny."

Tavendale said that some cooperatives regard themselves as businesses, though, not an entity that should directly reward its suppliers.

"Cooperative leaders must ensure members have positive benefits from being suppliers or users of the cooperative, and they don't become just another commodity trader."

"They should control supply costs and achieve good market prices to maintain farmer support."

"A cooperatives success is directly related to the prices achieved for the farmer's products."

Tavendale said that of all his achievements, passing on the farm to his son is the one he considers a highlight.

"The thing I'm most proud of is establishing my own family in farming from a low capital base, and having the support of my clients over a long number of years."

He also credits his late wife Lynley, who passed a four and a half years ago, for her part in his success.

"I enjoyed very strong support from my wife, I couldn't have achieved any of these things without strong support from her."

Tavendale still lives on the farm at Winchmore, and while he doesn't intend to spend retirement on the couch, he is looking forward to more family time.

"I'm going to relax with my family and enjoy seeing the progress they make in their own lives."

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Rural Women future focused

CLAIRE INKSON

Rural Women New Zealand (RWNZ) celebrates its centennial this year, but the declining number of members could put the future of the organisation in jeopardy.

In its heyday, RWNZ boasted 30,000 members.

Currently, that membership sits at less than 1650.

While things seem dire, newly elected RWNZ national president Sandra Matthews is optimistic about the organisation's longevity, provided changes are made to make membership more attractive to younger generations while still meeting the needs of existing members.

"Time is precious to many people, especially those with young children, so we have to adjust what we do.

"It's about not taking anything away from current members, but also creating opportunities for current or future members who want something different."

Matthews was elected in November, taking over from outgoing president Gill Naylor.

Along with her husband, Matthews runs Te Kopae Station, a 536-hectare sheep and beef farm at Rere, near Gisborne.

She has a financial and coaching background and, alongside farming, has her own consultancy, helping farmers grow efficient and viable agribusinesses.

Matthews comes into the role after the results of a regional re-



Newly elected Rural Women New Zealand national president Sandra Matthews said changes are made to make membership more attractive to younger generations while still meeting the needs of existing members.

PHOTO SUPPLIED

view, which sought feedback from 260 members on the organisation's operations and direction.

A working group formed to work through the review found that for RWNZ to remain relevant, it needs to better reflect the changes that have taken place in society, cater for broader members' interests, and offer support, social connection and personal development opportunities.

As a result of the review, a new working programme has been developed, 'Evolve - honouring our heritage, embracing our future.'

The working group has transitioned to an advisory group, and regional champions will support the changing face of the organisation while a dedicated manager will oversee the Evolve programme.

"We want to be able to support

members on the ground to create new opportunities to grow membership."

The NZI Rural Women's Business Awards and the creation of the Women's Country Collective have been successful in raising the organisation's profile and supporting and promoting female-led rural businesses.

A podcast, "Black Heels and Tractor Wheels," and a new website

are intended to appeal to younger potential members.

"We have to try things, and if they work well, we'll keep doing it.

"If they don't, we'll try something else.

"We have to be flexible as an organisation."

Matthews said RWNZ is needed to fill a gap that other organisations don't fit. She considers it RWNZ's purpose to advocate for rural communities, where she says the organisation "can really make a difference."

"We are told that the primary sector and rural communities are crucial for the growth of this country, but at the same time, our post services are being reduced, or in some instances, cut.

"Banks are closing in small communities, and school bus routes are being cut.

"All these things affect farming communities.

"We are the backbone and heartbeat of the country, and we need policymakers and the government to understand that if we don't do well, the country doesn't do well."

Matthews said that in addition to advocacy, she sees the organisation as a support network akin to a sisterhood.

"It's about others knowing that if something happens, someone will be there; Rural Women's has done that well for generations.

"There is a sisterhood growing right around the country, and I want that sisterhood to be under the Rural Women New Zealand umbrella."

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National Youth Brass Band heads to Ashburton



The 2025 NZ National Youth Brass Band, led by Tyme Marsters from Christchurch, will perform at the Ashburton Event Centre on Friday 24 January 2025.

Tyme Marsters is looking forward to coming to Ashburton to showcase the 2025 National Youth Brass Band following its five-day training course, which includes section work with some of New Zealand's finest musicians, followed by concerts in Ashburton and Christchurch.

The band is a nationwide representative band comprising of 35 of New Zealand's most talented young brass and percussion musicians under twenty-three years of age and is selected from nationwide auditions of members from community-based brass bands throughout New Zealand. Many past members have gone on to professional careers as musicians in Armed Forces bands, the NZ Symphony Orchestra, professional conducting, and have been selected as members of the internationally famous National Band of New Zealand.

The band is proud to present what they're sure will be a cracking live concert

for the whole family to enjoy. The first half features solos from band members alongside an entertaining programme of classic and contemporary music, which includes pieces everyone is sure to know and love as well as some new music which showcases the versatility of brass bands.

For the second half, the band is delighted to present the New Zealand premiere of Wallace and Gromit: The Wrong Trousers. The much-loved movie will be shown while the band plays the soundtrack live, and the band is looking forward to performing this for the first time in New Zealand.

The Ashburton concert of the NZ National Youth Brass Band will be held at the Ashburton Event Centre at 7.00pm on Friday 24 January, and the band hopes you can join them for what is sure to be an enjoyable and entertaining evening of music.

Tickets are on sale now at <https://asheventcentre.co.nz/event/wallace-and-gromit-the-national-youth-brass-band/>



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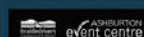
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8 YOUNGCOUNTRY

Putting the spotlight on Young Farmers

Young Farmers are the future of New Zealand agriculture, so each issue we shine a spotlight on a Young Farmer. Today we talk to Muz Lynch from Tararua Young Farmers Club.



Muz Lynch's career started with a Bachelor of Agricultural Science from Massey University, where she also worked alongside Pete Apthorp on his sheep and beef farm, gaining practical, hands-on experience to complement her studies. PHOTO SUPPLIED

What is the name of your club, and how long have you been a member?

I'm a proud member of the Tararua Young Farmers Club, which I've been part of since its re-establishment in November 2024.

What has been the highlight for you of joining Young Farmers? What are the benefits and experiences that you feel have helped you most?

The standout highlight for me has definitely been the people.

It's been fantastic to meet and connect with others who share a similar passion for agriculture.

The experience that stands out most was being involved in the re-establishment of the club after it had been inactive for several years.

It was a great opportunity to hone my leadership skills and to play a key role in engaging the younger community in our area.

How did you become involved in agriculture?

Agriculture has been a huge part of my life from a young age, thanks to my parents who farm dairy, sheep, and beef.

Growing up on the farm, working with animals became second nature to me.

After finishing high school, I knew agriculture was the right path, and I decided to further my studies and career in the industry.

What is your job now? Tell us about your role, and what your journey has been like so far

I'm currently working as the Block

Manager for Springview Agriculture Ltd in Pahiatua, managing a 350-hectare block that includes sheep and beef finishing, sheep breeding, cropping, and grazing support for the business's dairy farm.

My career started with a Bachelor of Agricultural Science from Massey University, where I also worked alongside Pete Apthorp on his sheep and beef farm, gaining practical, hands-on experience to complement my studies.

After graduating, I worked as a shepherd in Masterton, before being offered the role of Block Manager in Pahiatua.

I've been in this role for just over seven months now and am continually learning and growing in my skills.

What do you think the future of farming will look like, and what would you like to see happening in New Zealand agriculture going forward?

The future of farming in New Zealand will likely be driven by increased innovation and a focus on sustainability, with farmers leveraging technology to improve efficiency and reduce their environmental impact.

We can expect to see more precise farming practices, with the use of data and smart technologies to manage resources like water, feed, and fertilizer more effectively.

Going forward, I'd like to see a greater emphasis on practical solutions that allow farmers to meet environmental goals while maintain-

ing productivity and profitability.

This might include advancements in breeding, better pasture management, and technologies that reduce emissions without compromising farm performance.

It's important that we support farmers through the challenges ahead, ensuring that the industry remains both competitive and resilient in the face of changing environmental regulations and market demands.

What are your future plans?

In the short to medium term, I plan to continue building my skills and knowledge as a farm manager, with a particular focus on improving farm systems and sustainability practices. In the long term, I hope to take on more leadership roles within agriculture, perhaps even exploring opportunities to mentor and support others who are new to the industry.

Who has been your biggest inspiration in agriculture, and why?

My parents have been my greatest inspiration in agriculture.

Growing up on their dairy, sheep, and beef farm, I witnessed their hard work, resilience, and deep respect for the land and animals.

They've taught me the value of adaptability and the importance of sustainable farming practices. Their commitment to both the industry and the environment has shaped my values and continues to motivate me to strive for excellence and contribute positively to the future of farming.

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Kits off for a great rural cause

CLAIRE INKSON

Hold on to your hats – third-year vet students at Massey University are once again baring all – well, almost – for their annual cheeky fundraising calendar, Barely There.

Despite the daunting task of going the full monty, there was no shortage of willing participants, with around 90 students taking part in the project.

“We were impressed with all the class members who were keen to do it,” says calendar co-producer and student Emma Grigg, who has created the calendar with fellow student Summer Didsbury.

It wasn’t without its challenges, though.

“There were a couple of group photos involving everyone, and it was like herding cats.”

The calendar raises funds for “halfway day”, a vet school tradition in which third-year students celebrate being halfway through their studies with a trip to Taupo.

The calendar also supports a charity each year, and this year, that charity is Rural Support Trust.

Twenty-five per cent of proceeds from calendar sales will go to the organisation.

“The calendar traditionally supports a charity that focuses on mental health in the rural space and it applies to us because the vet course isn’t easy, but it’s an even harder career, so it’s nice to be able to give back in that way,” Grigg said.

Massey University has supported



Left – Around 90 third year vet students took part in the calendar, with 25% of proceeds going to the Rural Support Trust.

Below – Massey vet school students Emma Grigg (left) and Summer Didsbury are the driving force behind this year's Barely There fundraising calendar.



Scan me to order!

the initiative, but Grigg said her parents were a different story.

“We both got the calendar last year, and my Dad saw it, and when I told him we were running it this year, I think he was a bit shocked.”

Grigg said getting the photos right was trial and error, with models standing in different positions, often in the cold and rain and sometimes sitting on a farm fence – which occasionally ended badly.

“We broke a few fences,” she laughs.

That added to the fun, and Didsbury described the project as a “good bonding experience”

that saw students get out of their comfort zones.

“It was a cool way to get to know each other better.”

She also said the calendar helped promote body positivity, and any nervousness during photoshoots quickly disappeared due to the support from other students.

“It was quite empowering and there was no judgement.”

“You just got your rack out,” Didsbury laughs.

Calendars are \$25 and are available to purchase online at <https://www.vet-naked-calendar-2025.com>



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Shear fun at Banks Peninsula show

CLAIRE INKSON

Banks Peninsula A&P Show president Ben Butterick reckons the show, at Awa-iti Domain in Little River on January 18, is a good chance for people to get off the farm and catch up with their mates.

“Shows are always nice to go to, but you get the most satisfaction catching up with all the people you haven’t seen in a while.”

It’s one of the first in the South Island for 2025.

The programme includes blade shearing, a Fashion in the Field equestrian competition, and a dog high jump event, which Butterick says will be “a bit of a laugh”.

The Tux yard dog trials will be a highlight, with Butterick himself a keen dog trialer.

“Farmers get a hard time, and it’s not always financially easy farming, so I think it’s important for people to be involved in something, whether it is shows, sports or whatever. “So shows and dog trialing are my two things.”

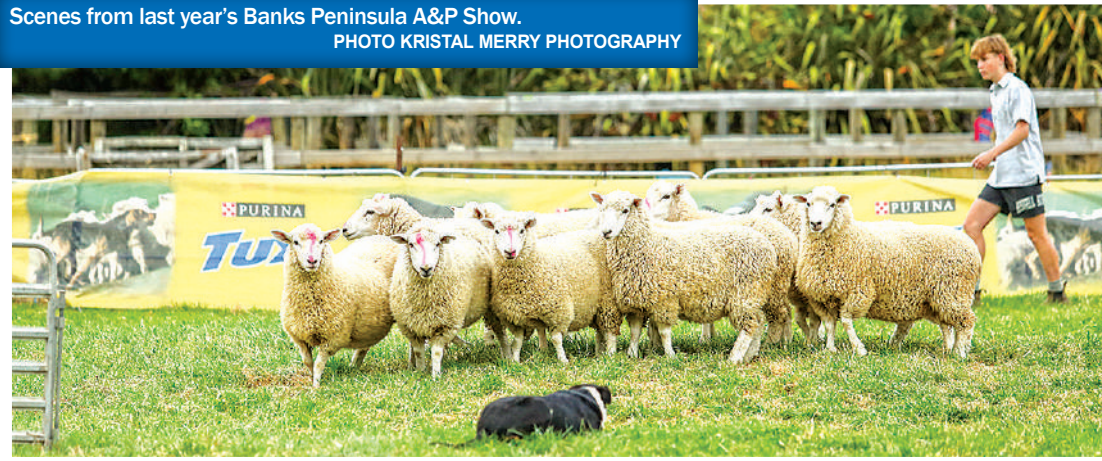
Butterick said sheepdog trials are always a good spectacle for people who haven’t seen them before.

“There are some pretty well-respected dog trial men that will run there.”

Butterick has a long history with the event. He began showing his poll dorset sheep at the A&P show at the age of 13 and has put the breed in the spotlight this year.

Then there is the team shearing event – a quintessentially Kiwi competition that is sure to be a crowd favourite.

Scenes from last year’s Banks Peninsula A&P Show. PHOTO KRISTAL MERRY PHOTOGRAPHY



“One person eats a Weet-Bix, another has to drink a beer while a third person has to wind the old-fashioned winder while someone shears a sheep.”

Country music lovers will be in for a treat, with Zayde Blair

performing, and the Ellesmere Pipe Band will lead the grand parade.

Butterick said the show, with its close proximity to Christchurch, was a good way to bring people from the town to the country.

“We are only 40 minutes from

Christchurch, and we are pretty unique here in that not all people involved with the show are farming people.

“It’s a good chance for the community to get together, and it’s a beautiful setting.”

LITTLE RIVER SHOW

Banks Peninsula A&P Association – Little River Show 2025:

- **Where:** Awa-iti Domain in Little River
- **Date:** 113th show, January 18
- **President:** Ben Butterick
- **Vice president:** Tom Power
- **Junior vice president:** Dave Butterick
- **Gates open:** 8am
- **Admission:** \$20 per adult. Children 16 and under free
- **Car parking:** Free
- **Website:** www.littlerivershow.org.nz
- **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/littlerivershow
- **Highlights:** Blade shearing and shearing demonstrations, duck yarding, Fashion in the Field equestrian event, Tux yard dog event, dog high jump, Josh Grimaldi magic shows, musician Zayde Blair, show jumping and trade stalls.
- **Grand parade:** 1.30pm.



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Build good relationships, work hard

The Farming Fast Five: Where we ask a farmer five quick questions about farming, and what agriculture means to them. Today we talk to Tai Tapu farmer and Banks Peninsula show president Ben Butterick.

1 What did your journey into farming look like?

I was lucky that my family owns a farm at Kaituna, on Banks Peninsula.

I lived in town during the week with mum but I spent every minute I could at the farm during weekends and school holidays.

I loved helping my father and grandparents, it's all I ever wanted to do was work with animals.

I was allowed a dog at 10 and some sheep at 12 so I guess I've been invested in it my whole life.

I went to Telford and then worked at various places around the South Island before moving back home for a while.

2 Tell us a little bit about your farming operation.

I am now managing a farm, Ahuriri, just out of Tai Tapu, running 3500 ewes plus replacements and 200 cows plus replacements.

All lambs except the replacement ewe lambs are sold at the end of November at our lamb sale which is a great system as we are prone to dry summers.

All the calves, apart from replacement heifers, are sold in the autumn at the weaner fair at Canterbury Park.

Alongside the commercial stock I'm running 240 stud ewes made



Ben Butterick farms in Tai Tapu and is Banks Peninsula A&P Show president. PHOTO SUPPLIED

up of hampshire and poll dorsets.

We sell around 70 rams a year at our on-farm ram sale.

3 What challenges have you faced in your farming business, and how have you tackled those challenges?

Prolonged dry spells I find can be a big challenge, not only financially but they can be quite hard on the mind at times.

Now I've been through a couple you just have to accept you can't control weather but you can make

early decisions that help the outcome.

I make sure I always talk to older, more experienced farmers that have been through a lot. Also, getting off farm for a day's dog trialling in the weekend or a beer with some

mates, makes you realise you're not in it alone there's always other farmers struggling as well.

4 What has been a major highlight for you in your farming journey?

Starting our on-farm ram sale and also the Ahuriri lamb sale is a real highlight.

Putting your year's work and breeding direction in front of the public, the people we have met and the relationships we have built as a result of these two sales is really rewarding.

5 What advice would you have for the next generation of farmers?

Build good relationships.

Get a couple of older people that you respect for what they have or are achieving, whether it be how they train dogs or run their farm, and soak up what they have to say they have been through it all before.

Work for the best people you can and be open to learning new ways of doing things and, lastly, work hard.



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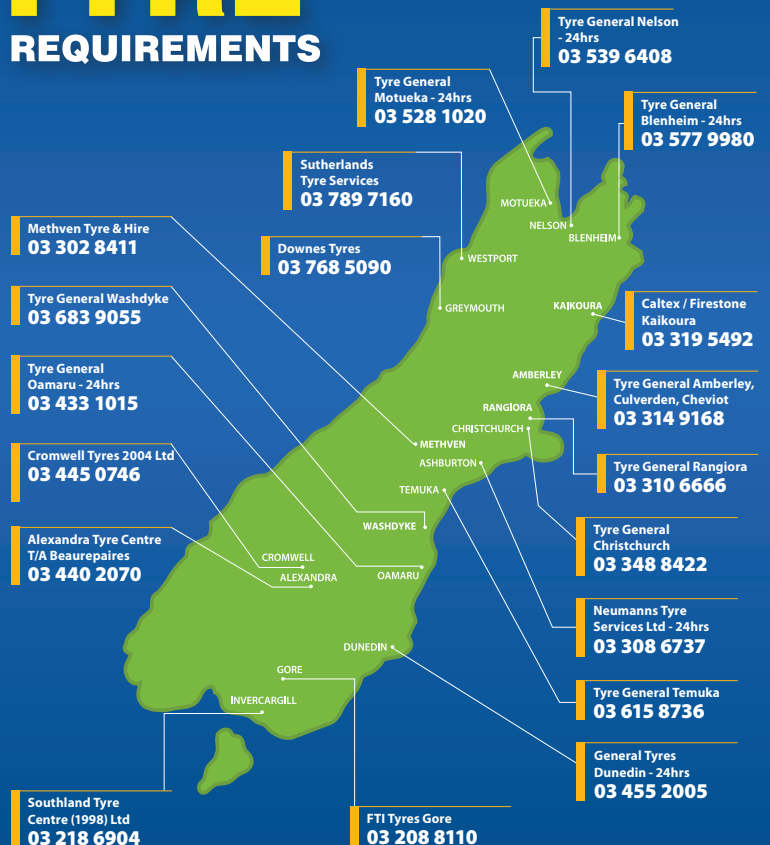
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Biodiversity adds value to farms

NICOLE LANG

The Hekeao Hinds Hill Country catchment group has had a busy few months hosting events.

The first was an in-stream ecology day hosted by Mitch and Anna Munro at Cravendale.

The group located the sites at the confluence of the Gawler and Limestone streams which gave a great comparative survey with the streams having differing substrates and flow regimes.

The Gawler Stream joins the Limestone on Cravendale which then flows into the South Hinds at the bottom of the catchment.

Wai Connection/EOS Ecology's team of ecologists started the surveys with electric fishing.

Abundant fish populations were collected of Upland Bully (*Gobiomorphus breviceps*) and Kākahi/freshwater mussel shells were collected in the Gawler Stream.

With the differing streambed type of the Limestone (stony and faster flowing) both upland bully (*Gobiomorphus breviceps*) and Canterbury galaxias (*Galaxias vulgaris*) were identified.

Canterbury galaxias have a



Hekeao Hill Country Catchment Group members and guests enjoyed the biodiversity event at Okawa. PHOTO SUPPLIED

conservation status of at risk – declining, however, the populations were in abundance.

Both stream sites have been under monthly baseline water quality testing for 18 months so it's great to build a picture of the evidential water quality as well as ecological habitat supported within the catchment.

An invertebrate survey was also carried out with positive findings.

Rare amelotopsis were found which is indicative of a very good habitat and water quality.

The second event was jointly hosted at Okawa by Nick and Penny France and at Anama by Mark and Jenny McDonald and was collaboration between BLNZ and MCCC with Emeritus Professor David Norton.

Professor Norton presented to the group on the value of integrating biodiversity into farm systems.

Its importance of adding direct value, such as provision of shade and shelter for livestock, native woody vegetation can earn carbon credits as well as it can be a form

of market access for farmers.

It forms the basis of a farmer's social licence.

The indirect are things like the wider aesthetics of the property and forms part of the intergenerational story of the farm of land stewardship and can aid in addressing regulatory pressures.

Professor Norton's top take home messages were to look for the win-win outcomes – how can biodiversity be integrated into our farm systems that will aid in an environmental benefit, eg mitigate

nutrient pathogen sediment loss.

Native biodiversity establishment requires management – we have an industry challenge to create incentives and support this management time and cost.

This point was also stressed by Nick France, there has been considerable time, cost and effort go into managing areas until established.

Creation of biodiversity integration is a journey not a destination. Start with a vision and work your plan backwards into first steps. Getting started is key. Take photo points to measure and exhibit progress.

Climate change will put pressure on our biodiversity but it can also aid in the mitigation of its effects, the greatest risk is the spread of invasive weed and pest species.

David summarised the day with the opportunities for the future with strength of catchment groups working together for biodiversity initiatives and collaboration for funding or expert advice.

Nicole Lang is outgoing Hekeao Hinds Hill Country Catchment Group facilitator

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Farmer-led approach fuels growth

CLAIRE INKSON

Since 2020, Thriving Southland has helped the number of catchment groups in the region grow from 18 to 37.

According to Ginny Kennedy, the organisation's newly-employed catchment co-ordinator, the catchment collective's success is due to its farmer-led approach.

"We aren't the heroes or the experts. It's farmer-led and it's got to come from them."

Kennedy said a catchment co-ordinator's role is not to offer solutions but to help farmers access what they need, whether that be more funding, scientific expertise, or help with administration so that they can achieve their desired outcome.

"Farmers all have the knowledge and the solutions.

"If you give farmers a problem, they'll solve it."

Kennedy has been hired due to the significant growth of the collective, whose groups include over 2000 farmers and community members and cover 95% of the Southland area.

Kennedy said that community engagement is compounding.

"People see good things happening and want to be a part of that.

"Farmers learn so much from each other."

Kennedy is supporting the Waiau, Upper Oreti and Upper Mataura catchment groups.

Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust's Wai Connection initiative funded the role.



Catchment co-ordinator Ginny Kennedy said the success of Thriving Southland is due to its farmer-led approach. PHOTO SUPPLIED

The initiative aims to empower community catchment groups by providing tools and knowledge to help them identify issues in their local catchment area.

Kennedy grew up near Rakaia and studied environmental resource management at Lincoln University.

For 12 years, Kennedy and her husband managed a sheep and beef farm in Wakitipu.

Two years ago, after the farm was sold to foreign investors, the family moved to Southland, settling in Te Anau.

Until recently, Kennedy has been working in the farm environment

field in farm planning and consultancy for Landpro.

Kennedy's farming background means she can empathise with the challenges farmers are facing.

"I've always felt a real connection with farming.

"From a young age, I loved farming and the environment I was in."

Kennedy has a balanced perspective, having been on both sides of the table as a farmer and as a farm consultant.

"It's beneficial knowing how to relate to farmers and knowing the pressure they have on a day-to-day basis, and being practical with solutions, approaches and mitigation."

Likewise, Kennedy said her consultancy role has given her a good understanding of regulations, preparing her well for the co-ordinator role.

"I had three years in a farm environment team, got good exposure and experience doing farm environment plans and consenting.

"But I could see at the time there was more value to be given to farmers through other means."

Kennedy believes the more flexible approach of catchment groups achieves better results than steadfast regulations.

"When people are just ticking boxes, they lose the whole purpose of what they are trying to achieve.

"People end up fighting the regulations, and trying to outsmart them, and lose sight of the fact we all want to improve the environment with the best practice we can."

Kennedy said she would measure her success as a co-ordinator by determining whether the farmers in the catchment groups are achieving the outcomes they are aiming for.

"Have they achieved their project? Have they achieved their goal? Our success is only measured by their success."



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Rivers of change – Sara Black’s



The Amuri Irrigation scheme now delivers water to 149 properties via a partially piped, partially open-race network from the Waiau Uwha and Hurunui rivers. PHOTOS SUPPLIED

CLAIRE INKSON

When Sara Black completed her law degree, she would never have imagined she would become the chief executive of Amuri Irrigation, a director on Marble Point Station, and the North Canterbury Federated Farmers meat and wool chairperson.

But along with being a farmer and mother, Black considers her responsibilities just part of the fabric of rural life.

“In rural communities, it’s people juggling multiple hats that keep this place running.

“I’m sure I’m not doing any more than anyone else is doing,” she says.

Black grew up in North Canterbury on a dryland sheep and beef property near Hanmer Springs.

After attending Amuri Area School and Christchurch Girls High School, she studied law and arts at the University of Canterbury.

In her final year of study, she met her now husband Matt, a farmer.

The following years were spent with Black practising law, while Matt took on farming positions that had the couple moving around the country, including a stint in Southland.

In 2010, the pair settled back in the Amuri district, running a 2400-hectare sheep and beef property that supports angus cattle and corriedale sheep.

Black believes that the unique skills involved in law and farming have prepared her well for the chief executive role.

“I think law was useful for teaching me the right way to do things and the right steps involved.

“But having a farming background teaches you about the practicalities of life, and despite the best intentions, not everything goes according to plan.”

Law taught Black how to invite different



perspectives when seeking solutions to problems, a skill she utilises in her leadership style.

“I believe that there is no one thing that can dictate an answer.

“So actually, the right answer takes input from a variety of sources or a variety of different people.”

Amuri Irrigation was formed in 1990, a consolidation of three irrigation schemes built by the Ministry of Works covering the Amuri Basin, including the towns of Culverden, Rotherham, and Waiau.

“Anyone who knows Hurunui and North Canterbury knows that even though we have delightful hot summers, sometimes they go on a bit long, and rain isn’t always guaranteed.

“So, in the 1970s and 1980s, local farmers got together with the government of the time, who was championing irrigation schemes,

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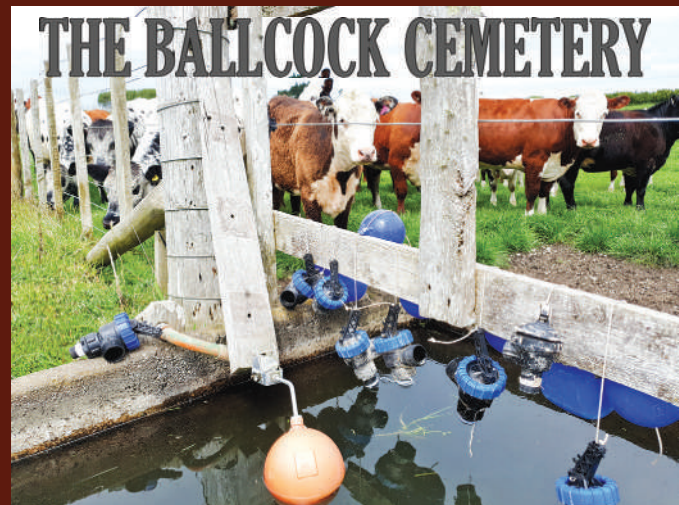
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leadership in irrigation



Above – Amuri Irrigation was formed in 1990, a consolidation of three irrigation schemes built by the Ministry of Works covering the Amuri Basin, including the towns of Culverden, Rotherham, and Waiau.

Right – Amuri Irrigation chief executive Sara Black sites the partial piping of the network as the company's biggest development to date, with a water storage facility the next significant project on the horizon.

and built three schemes.”

The schemes now deliver water to 149 properties via a partially piped, partially open-race network from the Waiau Uwha and Hurunui rivers.

“We were very lucky that the government of the day had a long-term outlook and saw irrigation as the solution to continuous drought, and we got some really strong infrastructure in place.”

While initially set up to support drought protection for sheep and beef farming, the network now also supports a thriving dairy

sector.

Black sites the partial piping of the network as the company's biggest development to date, with a water storage facility the next significant project on the horizon.

“One of the core work streams next year is to hopefully acquire consent and work on a detailed design.

“Part of that is talking to our shareholders and assessing how much value they place on additional storage.

“We want to future-proof it, and at the same time, not build something that is be-

yond the requirements we can envisage.”

Water quality remains both a challenge and a priority.

The company has focused on supporting farmers in irrigating efficiently and has 102 water monitoring sites across the basin.

The company has invested in wetland projects, and the four-year Amuri Basin Future Farming project, which includes the formation of 13 catchment groups, is geared toward improving water quality in the long term.

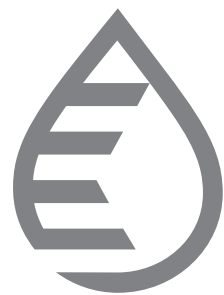
“We want to improve water quality and set generations up with an asset they can farm

with. That might not be sheep and beef and cows like it is at the moment.

“This area might move into horticulture or some other area we don't know about, so we have to hold onto what we have got, so that's a possibility in the future.”

Black said that the company faces the same challenges as farmers, with increased cost pressure, but the goal remains to keep water to charges to shareholders affordable.

“I feel like irrigation is so important in supporting our community, and it's being part of that that gets me up in the morning.”



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The Trekka's bumpy ride into New

CLAIRE INKSON

It's 1966. Kevin Holyoake is New Zealand's Prime Minister.

The airwaves are dominated by the sounds of The Beatles and Simon and Garfunkel.

The first episode of Country Calendar has aired and US President Lyndon B. Johnson has visited our shores, rallying support for the Vietnam War.

The new Interislander ferry, the Wahine, arrived in Wellington in July, making its maiden voyage to Lyttelton in August, while pirate radio station Radio Hauraki made its debut transmission from the ship Tiri in the Colville Channel.

It's also the year New Zealand's first and only mass-produced motor vehicle - the Trekka - trundled off the production line and into our history books.

The Trekka boasted a New Zealand-designed and built body resting on a Skoda chassis, and was manufactured by Motor Lines in Ōtāhuhu with an eye on the rural market.

In a recent Facebook tribute thread to the once-iconic vehicle, one commenter jokingly described the Trekka as "what happens when you purchase a Land Rover from Temu", while another described the colour options for prospective buyers as "karitane yellow or mucus green".

Despite being marketed to farmers and tradies, it was only two-wheel drive and with a 1200cc motor, it wouldn't win any races either.

It was the car we loved to hate, but at the time, it made car ownership affordable and accessible for the average New Zealander, mainly due to the government's protectionist policies that discouraged the import of assembled cars.

There were waiting lists for new vehicles, and even buying a second-hand car was



The Trekka was lighter than a Land Rover and less robust, but was a considerably more affordable option when it was first produced in 1966.

PHOTO SKODA AUTO

challenging.

"In simple terms, the whole of New Zealand was locked up with import licensing for pretty much everything," says New Zealand's unofficial Trekka historian and author of *The Trekka Dynasty*, Todd Niall.

"The government controlled how money left the country, and what it bought, and effectively rationed how many cars could be imported, and which ones."

Government policy encouraged local manufacture, keeping Kiwi dollars within our shores and providing employment.

The concept of the Trekka was developed by Skoda franchise holder Phil Andrews, who negotiated a deal with Skoda for the mechanical kits to be imported from the then-communist Czech Republic.

"They realised they could take all the mechanical components of a Skoda design, build a body in New Zealand, put the two of them together and have a very cost-effective New Zealand-built car."

With 70% of the vehicles' content Kiwi made, the politicians were happy.

Over a six-year period, around 2500 Trekkas

were produced.

Fifty were exported to Australia and 100 to Indonesia before payment issues saw that export agreement collapse.

Five were flown to Vietnam to a New Zealand-aided civilian hospital in Quy Nhon.

Domestically, their price point and accessibility meant they were popular.

"In 1966, you couldn't just go out and buy a new car because they were in short supply.

"Suddenly, there was a vehicle you could just walk into a showroom and buy.

"They were cheap, you didn't need much

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Zealand history



The Trekka had a New Zealand-designed and made body, on a kit-set Skoda chassis PHOTO SUPPLIED

money, and you could just drive off in one."

While the Trekka's shape resembles that of a classic Land Rover, the similarities end there.

"The Land Rover was quite heavy duty, a proper 4WD, whereas the Trekka was like a Morris Minor that looked like a Land Rover."

Despite not being a 4WD, the Trekka was popular with farmers.

"It had big chunky tyres, so you could drive it around your farm, throw haybales or a sheep or two in the back, but it wasn't really for crashing through rivers and doing all the things a Land Rover could do.

"I guess farmers know what they need, and they didn't need everything a very expensive Land Rover provided, and if they understood the limitations of the vehicle, it was an effective solution for them."

As import restrictions eased and Japanese vehicles began to flood the New Zealand market, the Trekka's popularity waned, and by 1973, production of the vehicle had ended.

It's unknown exactly how many Trekkas remain, but with a susceptibility to rust, it's likely few survived.

Despite this, Niall estimates that around 30 are either restored or being restored, as the vehicle has seen a surge in popularity recently.

"It might have been a bit dodgy, but in a country that no longer has a motor industry and no longer builds anything, there was this thing



2500 Trekkas were manufactured by Motor Lines in Otāhuhu between 1966 and 1972

we designed, stuck a Kiwi badge on and called our own.

"People still hate them, but that was my fascination.

"It was never a great motor vehicle, but it was an interesting part of our history."

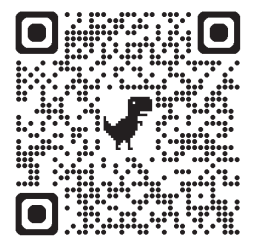


The Trekka holds an iconic place in Kiwi motoring history. PHOTO SUPPLIED

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Give that dairy woman a nudge

CLAIRE INKSON

The 2025 Fonterra Dairy Woman of the Year Awards are open, and Methven-based 2020 winner Ash-Leigh Campbell is urging people to get their nominations and applications in.

"We all know someone we could tap on the shoulder and nominate.

"That's what makes the awards special - it's generally women from the dairy sector nominating other women from the dairy sector; it's about uplifting others and sharing success."

The award is open to nominations and applications for women who support the wider dairy sector and its people, are committed to giving back to their communities, and have a vision to add value to the future of dairy through their leadership aspirations.

The awards, run by the Dairy Women's Network (DWN), are in their 14th year. Campbell's win in 2020 occurred during Covid restrictions, making her experience different from most other winners' as the process took place online.

"I remember they announced the winner online, and it didn't sink in because it was just me and my flatmate in lockdown."

Despite this, Campbell said she has benefited from winning the coveted award.

"It was different to others, but I definitely made the most of the opportunities that came my way, and DWN was very supportive, helping



2020 Fonterra Dairy Woman of the Year Ash-Leigh Campbell is encouraging people to get their nominations and applications in for the 2025 awards. PHOTO SUPPLIED

me to still achieve and make the most of my year in 2020."

Campbell exited a sharemilking partnership in North Canterbury at the end of last season and is focusing on her role as key account manager for Halter.

Campbell said winning the award helped develop her career inside and outside the farm gate.

"It helped me in my career,

getting exposure to networks and connections.

"Dairy Women's Network did such a good job of connecting me with people; that's one of the things I took away from it."

The award winner receives a scholarship to the Kellogg Rural Leadership Programme, which includes the programme fee, travel and accommodation, mentoring,

and access to the Dairy Women's Network and Fonterra platforms to share their research.

Campbell received scholarship money for her win, which funded a five-day company governance director course with The Institute of Directors New Zealand.

This course paved the way for her internship as an associate director for Pāmu Farms.

"It enabled me to follow my passion and interest in governance and created a snowball effect for governance opportunities.

"I don't think I would have received that associate directorship without the stepping stones that came out of winning the award in 2020."

DWN trustee and lead judge Jenna Smith said judges for this year's awards will be looking for a person who demonstrates diverse leadership talents to become the 2025 Fonterra Dairy Women of the Year.

"She will embody the skillset needed for the current and future state of dairying in Aotearoa - a blend of community engagement, environmental stewardship, professional expertise, and commercial insight.

"This woman will know how to influence change and have the courage to steer down the challenges and opportunities our sector presents."

The selection panel consists of five judges including representatives from DWN, Fonterra, Ballance Agri-Nutrients, Rural Leaders and a previous Fonterra Dairy Woman of the Year recipient.

Nominations and applications for the award close on February 28, 2025, and winners will be announced at a gala dinner later in the year.

The finalists will receive complimentary registration to the DWN2025 conference, a ticket to the Gala Dinner, and travel and accommodation.



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Blooming

LOVELY

CLAIRE INKSON

In 2022, Zoe Topp was standing at a crossroads. Recently separated, with a toddler in tow and no income to speak of due to walking away from her previous market garden Partnership, the Permaculture enthusiast found herself back at the very place where it all began – the 50-acre property where four generations of her family live and work together, on the outskirts of Amberley.

But instead of feeling defeated, Zoe embraced the challenge, drawing on the same grit and resilience that had shaped her life.

“I returned to what had always grounded me and focused my energy on re-establishing a backyard vege garden for my daughter and I to eat from, involving her in the gardening process just as my mother had done with me.”

Topp focused on returning to the basics and steadily growing her garden, motivating herself with the motto “metre by metre” mindset.

To make ends meet, Topp, a former chef, worked nights utilising her cooking skills at the Brew Moon Brewery in Amberley.

By day, she gardened.

“Over that first year after leaving my husband, I re-established on my own another quarter-acre market garden that now consists of six medicinal and culinary herb beds, a berry cage with 16 different types of



berries, three edible flower beds, several production beds for salad greens, root veggies, and brassicas, and two greenhouses for my cucurbits, tomatoes, peppers and seed raising.

“It has been a hard slog and it is an ongoing project developing the gardens to where I want them to be, but I continue, ‘metre-by-metre.’”

The garden is lush and abundant and with companion planting, no-till permaculture principles, and an organic ethos, Topp is able to keep pests and disease to a minimum without the need for chemical sprays.

“I have found if you are in doubt

about something going on in your garden, the best thing you can do is ask yourself what nature would do. “Nature has a way of balancing itself so it can thrive.”

Topp quickly learned that to juggle work and motherhood, the garden would have to be capped at a quarter acre.

However, she was also conscious that she needed a diversified income stream from the homestead and knew there was a market for her produce.

She also knew from experience

that a market garden would not make enough to support her and her daughter unless it was double the size she was able to put labour input into.

So, in August 2023, Topp drew up a business plan, drawing on her skills as a gardener, chef and entrepreneur, and came up with a new business venture, Bloom Enterprises.

“This new business would allow me to maintain a quarter acre market garden with about 10 hours labour a week input.

“I am still able to work part-time

off the homestead cheffing, offer private catering from the homestead and attend one or two markets or events weekly for sales outlets.

“And still be able to have flexibility with my schedule to be a present mum.”

Topp’s current homestead and market garden are no longer laid out according to the standard commercial method she had previously used, which involved rows of long mono-cropped beds in full sun for as long as possible.

Instead, she created a food forest,



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Above - Zoe Topp's market garden is grown by permaculture principals.

Left inset - The former chef runs a catering business as well, using produce she grows herself.

Right - A berry cage keeps birds at bay.

Below inset - A ReaNZ farm tour bus stops at Zoe Topp's to collect box picnic lunches while tourists get the chance to feed her pony a carrot.

PHOTOS CLAIRE INKSON

flowers interplanted throughout to attract beneficial insects."

Although small, the garden is prolific, and Topp sells produce in a roadside stall and by pre-order under the label Bloom Homestead.

Bloom Catering focuses on whole foods utilising seasonal produce from Topps garden.

She recently catered for the president's tent at the Amberley A&P Show, provides the menu for wedding guests at the nearby Starlings Homestead function venue, and supplies Real NZ Farm tours with boxed picnic-style lunches for tour groups.

"My cooking skills are so vast there isn't much I can't tackle."

Topp plans to be a 100% paddock-to-plate business using produce and meat grown on her own soil, or sourced from other local producers in North Canterbury.

"I am producing as much of the vegetables, herbs and edible flowers as I can myself year round.

"I am currently sourcing Harris Farms meat and produce I don't have ready from other local producers. But metre by metre, I am sure I can achieve this goal."

With a degree in the fields of education and psychology, Topp recently became a certified natural health coach with a specific interest in nutritional therapy, adding another income stream to Bloom Enterprises.



"After a decade now of successful self-employment I also wanted to use my business knowledge to assist others to help their business-

es Bloom; so for a few years I have also been providing entrepreneur coaching for new business start-ups, mostly sole traders, although I also

have some companies on my books too.

"I also have a couple of youth clients seeking guidance to unlock their potential for their futures."

Although life is busy, Topp has succeeded in diversifying her income stream, allowing her to work from home and spend time with her daughter, Daisy.

"Bloom is more than a name. It's a concept I have come to live by that encompasses my journey the last few years.

"Like a flower bursts to life from a seed in the soil; you too have the ability to rise from the darkness and bloom into the world."



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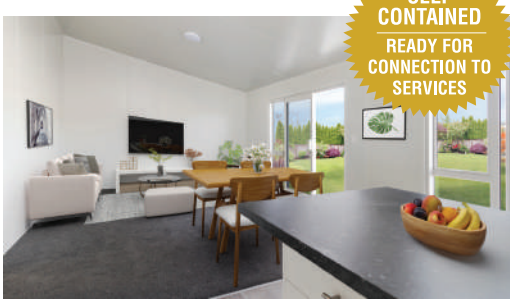
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Citrus treats?

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Base:

170g butter
3/4 C Chelsea icing sugar
1 1/2 C Edmonds Standard Grade Flour

Topping:

200g Chelsea caster sugar
1 1/2 T Edmonds Standard Grade Flour
Zest of 2 lemons
Juice of 3 lemons
3 eggs
Chelsea icing sugar

- Preheat the oven to 180°C. Lightly grease a 20cm x 30cm shallow tin and line the base and two sides with baking paper.
- Combine the base ingredients in a food processor, or rub the butter into the flour and icing sugar and work into a smooth paste with your fingers. It should be fairly soft and malleable.
- Press the dough evenly into the prepared tin.
- Bake for 15-20 minutes until lightly golden. Don't overcook as it is going back into the oven later.
- Combine the topping ingredients in a bowl, mixing with a fork until well amalgamated. (If you make the topping in advance, make sure to mix it again before you pour it on or all the sugar will stay at the bottom of the bowl.)
- Pour the mixture on to the hot biscuit base and return to the oven for another 30 minutes.
- Remove from the oven and place the tin on a wire rack to cool. Dust the top with icing sugar and chill for at least 1 hour then cut into bars.

Recipe courtesy of Edmonds



LEMON CURD

A delicious spread that is so simple to make and tastes yummy!

100g butter, cut into small cubes
3 med lemons, zest and juice
180g caster sugar
3 eggs, whisked with a fork

- Place a bowl over simmering water in a pot. Ensure the bowl is not touching the water.
- To the bowl add the lemon zest and lemon juice, butter cubes, sugar and eggs.

- Slowly stir the mix until butter is melted and sugar has completely dissolved.
- Keep stirring occasionally until the mixture thickens – around 20 minutes.
- Pour into pre-sterilised jars and seal for storage or use immediately. Refrigerate after opening.
- Serve on warm toasted bagels or toast, use as a spread on sandwiches or fill mini tartlet cases topped with fruit.

Recipe courtesy of NZ Eggs

Benefits of a multi-nutritional supplement □Part 2□

If you take a multi type supplement you should carefully read the mineral contents on the label. Minerals are critical for the health and development of every cell in our body. Insufficient trace minerals can weaken immune response and leave people feeling tired and run down. This is my recommendation for those who are tired with no medical cause.

The major minerals are calcium, magnesium and potassium. Of these it is usually magnesium that is insufficient in many diets. Low magnesium can cause many health problems including cramp, restless legs and heart rhythm problems. Our focus here though is on the trace minerals especially zinc, copper, boron, selenium and manganese.

We use these to make a group of antioxidant enzymes. The two most important are superoxide dismutase (SOD) and glutathione peroxidase (GPx). We make SOD from zinc, copper, iron and manganese. We make GPx from selenium.



While these may sound like obscure chemicals, they are the front line of our cell defenses against free radical damage and are important for immune defenses among others. Farmers know that NZ soils are deficient in selenium and other trace minerals and are aware of the benefits of adding these for animal health and productivity. It is a pity that the human health system essentially ignores many trace elements leading to many health problems. While people often respond quickly to antioxidants and vitamins, the benefits of these minerals can be significant over time. This is why any good multi-nutritional will have these minerals at the right levels and in a form our body can absorb. Over the years I have seen profound health improvements by adding a multi that is a true multi-mineral. Try a good multi mineral/vitamin and antioxidant for 3 months and see what you have been missing.

John Arts (B.Soc.Sci, Dip Tch, Adv.Dip.Nut.Med) is a nutritional medicine practitioner and founder of Abundant Health Ltd. For questions or advice contact John on 0800 423559 or email john@abundant.co.nz. Join his all new newsletter at www.abundant.co.nz.



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John Arts, Founder, Abundant Health

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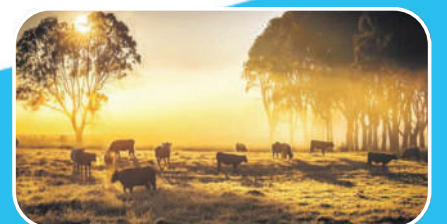
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New Year, New Carbon Project, Long-Term Benefits

Written by Emma Warmerdam, Field Technician for Verity NZ based in Methven



Are you passionate about conservation? Would you be interested in an extra source of income from your land? If yes, Verity NZ would love to hear from you and work together to explore opportunities for a carbon project on your land.

Verity NZ is a branch of Verity Nature led by Duncan and Fee Ensor, high country farmers up the Rakaia Gorge in Mid Canterbury. Our purpose is to use agriculture and nature-based solutions to drive large-scale climate action. We achieve this through a combination of science, technology and innovative financing.

“As farmers, we know that if you want to protect something, make it commercially viable. Verity NZ is here to do this with conservation, utilising revenue gained from selling carbon and co-benefits.” - Duncan Ensor, CEO of Verity NZ

We know that often the biggest hurdle for starting a native conservation project on private land is the high up-front costs, especially if that land is being retired and not able to bring income from grazing. When working with Verity NZ, landowners do not have to spend money setting up a carbon project. Verity NZ covers the implementation costs, ongoing operational expenses (such as maintaining fences), MRV (Measuring, Reporting and Verification) and credit trading costs – for the life of the project. On top of that, you are rewarded by receiving proceeds from the carbon credits generated by your land.

You may be wondering how a project like this works. No upfront costs for you as a landowner while receiving the proceeds from credits as natural regeneration does its thing. It almost sounds too good to be true. So let me break down the ‘innovative financing’ that enables Verity NZ to commercialise conservation.

Innovative Financing

Once you’ve got in touch with us and we have visited your land to identify what areas are eligible, you can enter an Integrated Land Management Agreement with Verity NZ. Baseline measurements will then commence so we have a good ‘before’ picture of your land. This allows the project to generate high-integrity credits and will allow for some awesome before and after photos down the track. Once baselining is complete, project activities such as fencing, de-stocking, aerial seeding and pest control can begin.

As mentioned above, Verity NZ pays for all reasonable costs associated with the project.

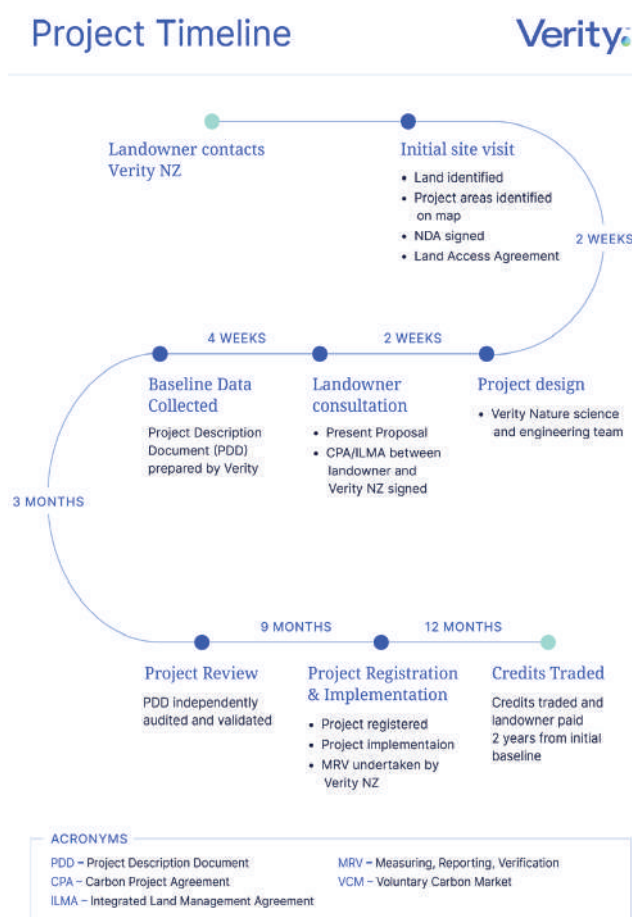
Verity NZ registers the carbon project with an international registration body, then an international independent third-party verifier will visit the site to check that the proposed project meets all the requirements. Once the project is verified the project can qualify for Verified Carbon Unit credits. Each credit represents the reduction or removal of one tonne of carbon dioxide equivalent achieved by your project. Investors will pay a premium for these Verified Carbon Unit credits, particularly if we can demonstrate an additional community, biodiversity or nature-based benefit.

As part of the Integrated Land Management Agreement, the proceeds of these sought-after carbon credits are then split between you and Verity NZ. At the start of the project the landowner will receive 20% of the carbon credit proceeds, and Verity NZ will receive 80%. This allows Verity NZ to cover the implementation costs and makes our business model viable (so we can help more landowners reach their conservation goals). Investors provide Verity NZ with the funding to cover the initial project costs based on the guaranteed return from this funding model. After this return on investment the split changes to 70% of proceeds going to the landowner and 30% to Verity NZ.

Other carbon project developers implement a 50/50 model. Our model has a 20/80 to 70/30 split as the bulk of carbon credits are earned later on in the project when your native trees are sequestering the most carbon. We believe the landowner should receive the bulk of these proceeds, not the project developer.

As we all know, native plants can take a bit of time to grow so the first payment of carbon credits will come approximately two years after your project has been verified. Verity NZ will be upfront and open about our terms so you understand how the costs and benefits from our structure will work for your specific project.

Project Timeline



Indicative project timeline.

Project longevity

The minimum project lifespan set by most registration bodies is between 30 and 40 years. We want to implement projects with a 60-year lifespan to ensure intergenerational success. Our primary goal is to ensure that New Zealand’s rich biodiversity is preserved for future generations. As part of the Integrated Land Management Agreement, a covenant will be placed on the land title (similar to a QEII covenant in principle). This means that if the land is sold the new owners must enter an Integrated Land Management Agreement with Verity NZ and allow the project to continue. The new owners will then receive the carbon credit income.

“Our NZ projects are designed to be sustainable, science-driven, evidence-based, and, most importantly, beneficial to the communities we serve over many

generations.” - Richie Phillips, Chief Scientist for Verity Nature

Long-term monitoring

To ensure our projects generate high-integrity credits we will conduct monitoring and verification every two to three years. Baseline measurements will be repeated to measure the actual carbon sequestered by your native plants and ensure the right number of credits are issued. We use remote sensing and Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) technologies in combination with on-the-ground vegetation surveys.

In addition to monitoring carbon stocks, projects with a focus on biodiversity benefits will involve extra monitoring. Vegetation plots will be set up to record species presence, abundance and canopy cover. Bird surveys will be conducted and ecosystem indicators such as water and soil health will be monitored for the life of the project.

Not just carbon credits

At the core of Verity NZ’s mission is a deep commitment to restoring the land and conserving it. Therefore, just focusing on carbon is not enough. Biodiversity and community benefits are integral to the success of our projects. Talk to us about the potential to incorporate

biodiversity and community co-benefits. This could look like focusing on increasing native habitat for endemic birds and ensuring a pest control plan is in place so your native species can flourish. Getting your community on board, conducting five-minute bird counts and checking trap lines are all things Verity NZ would love to support as part of your project

Give us a call!

It’s a new year, so what better time to start exploring a new project, especially one that will have important long-term benefits for our climate, biodiversity and community? Get in touch with Duncan Ensor and the team in Methven for further information. We’ll be happy to answer your questions over the phone or arrange to come and meet you on your land.