



# PASTURE SUMMIT

## SOUTH WAIKATO AUTUMN EVENT

**MONDAY, 11 MAY 2026**

*Kindly hosted by Hugh & Anna Edward  
Trifecta Farming Ltd, Waotu South Road, Putāruru*





# VIEW FROM THE SUMMIT

## PROGRESSION, PASTURE, PROFIT

A very warm welcome to everyone, and a big thank you to **Hugh, Anna, their family and team** for hosting us today, to share their thinking and their results.

Pasture Summit events are held for farmers, by farmers who believe dairy farming can and should be profitable and rewarding, and that our pasture fed dairy products are best for the consumer and the environment. Central to this is our desire to inspire the next generation of dairy farmers by demonstrating that with the right strategies and execution, profitability, equity growth and land ownership are all achievable.

A big thank you today to our speakers, facilitators and panelists, and everyone involved in organising and running this event. A huge thanks to our Headline Partner **DairyNZ**, to our Headline Sponsor **ASB Bank**, and our other valued sponsors who have generously supported these events, and we ask that you, in turn, support them.

Our host farmers today, have a passion for learning and for upskilling themselves and their staff. They are focused on and are achieving very strong bottom-line financial performance and growth. This day is all about real stories, proven systems, and forward-thinking discussions, with the following highlights:

- **Farmer-Led Insights:**

Host farmers share their goals, journey, lessons learned, and detailed financial and physical results.

- **Benchmarking Excellence:**

Results are compared against regional averages and best-in-class, showcasing pasture-focused, repeatable, highly profitable systems.

- **On-Farm:**

See the host farm operation and engage in Q&A throughout the day.

- **Science Meets Practice:**

Scientists & farm system specialists from DairyNZ, to add a science & research lens to our discussions.

- **Progression & Succession:**

Panel discussion and open Q&A, supporting progression and succession.

Thank you once again for your support. We hope you enjoy the day and we look forward to catching up with you during the event.



Robert Ferris  
**Chair**



Colin Glass  
**Treasurer**



Alistair Rayne  
**Secretary**



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# VIEW FROM THE SUMMIT

## PROGRESSION, PASTURE, PROFIT

<b>09:30 - 10:00</b>	<b>ARRIVAL, REGISTRATION &amp; MORNING TEA</b>
<b>10:00 - 10:05</b>	<b>Welcome, Introductions and why we are on this farm</b> <i>Robbie Ferris, Pasture Summit</i>
<b>10:05 - 10:10</b>	<b>Orientation &amp; H&amp;S Briefing</b> <i>Steph Gudgeon, Area Manager - South Waikato &amp; Lower Waipa, DairyNZ</i>
<b>10:10 - 10:15</b>	<b>Opening Comments</b> <i>Craig Young, Senior Manager Rural Corporate, ASB Bank</i>
<b>10:15 - 11:15</b>	<b>SESSION 1: BACKGROUND, GOALS &amp; BUSINESS PERFORMANCE</b> <i>Presented by Hugh &amp; Anna Edward (host farmers)</i> <i>Facilitated by Aleisha Broomfield, Farm Systems Specialist, DairyNZ</i>
<b>11:30 - 12:00</b>	<b>SESSION 2: PASTURE &amp; FEED MANAGEMENT</b> <i>Presented by Hugh &amp; Anna Edward (host farmers) and Jane Kay, Principal Scientist at DairyNZ</i> <i>Facilitated by Mark Williams, Senior Farm Systems Specialist, DairyNZ</i>
<b>12:00 - 12:15</b>	<b>Session break - breakout activity, led by Mark Williams &amp; DairyNZ team</b>
<b>12:15 - 12:45</b>	<b>SESSION 3: COWS &amp; QUALITY FEED</b> <i>Presented by Hugh &amp; Anna Edward (host farmers) and Jane Kay, Principal Scientist at DairyNZ</i> <i>Facilitated by Mark Williams, Senior Farm Systems Specialist, DairyNZ</i>
<b>12:45 - 12:55</b>	<b>Key messages &amp; wrap up of morning sessions</b> <i>Olin Greenan, Pasture Summit</i>
<b>13:00 - 13:45</b>	<b>LUNCH</b>
<b>13:45 - 14:45</b>	<b>SESSION 4: PROGRESSION &amp; EQUITY GROWTH PATHWAYS</b> Panel discussion and open Q&A exploring progression and equity. <i>Panelists:</i> <i>- Sian and Eoin O'Mahony, Tokoroa</i> <i>- Steph and Chris Ferguson, Otorohanga</i> <i>- Bas Nelis, Tirau</i> <i>Session facilitated by Steph Gudgeon, DairyNZ and Grace Waldon, ASB Bank</i>
<b>14:45</b>	<b>CLOSE OF EVENT</b> <i>Scott Armer, Pasture Summit</i>

**Disclaimer:** The views presented at Pasture Summit are the opinions of the individual speakers and are not necessarily shared by the Pasture Summit organising committee or any of the sponsors. Given the general nature of some of the views and information presented at Pasture Summit and the fact that every participant's individual circumstances are different, Pasture Summit delegates should not act solely on the basis of material presented at Pasture Summit but should obtain specific advice as to their own circumstances and actions.

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Peter O'Shea

Co-operative Services Area Manager

027 258 1221

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DairyNZ is an industry-good organisation that helps farmers lead the world in sustainable dairying by investing in research, new solutions and advocacy. We believe that dairy has a bright and positive future and, that by working together with farmers and others, we can achieve purposeful change. We exist to progress a positive future for New Zealand dairy farming.

Contact us:

**Phone:** 0800 4 DairyNZ (0800 4 324 7969)

**Email:** [info@dairynz.co.nz](mailto:info@dairynz.co.nz)

**Website:** [dairynz.co.nz](http://dairynz.co.nz)

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### **Todd Stocker**

ASB Rural Regional Manager – Central North Island

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### **David Salmon**

Key Account Nutrient Specialist

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**Contact:**

Phone: 03 307 0256

Email: [subs@countrywidemedia.co.nz](mailto:subs@countrywidemedia.co.nz)

Website: [countrywidemedia.co.nz](http://countrywidemedia.co.nz)

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### New Zealand's largest dairy farmer Dairy Holdings is focused on "People, Process and Pasture". The people in our business are at the heart of everything we do.

We're committed to 100% pasture, recognising the inherent goodness of a grass-fed diet. Keeping our operations self-contained, maximising economies of scale, and focusing on best farming practices are qualities deeply embedded in the way we do things.

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Get in touch at [dairyholdings.co.nz](http://dairyholdings.co.nz) for more information.

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### Fonterra Co-operative Group Limited

Fonterra is a co-operative owned and supplied by thousands of [farming families](#) in Aotearoa New Zealand. Through the spirit of co-operation and a can-do attitude, Fonterra's farmers and employees share the goodness of our milk through innovative [foodservice](#) and [ingredients](#) brands. [Sustainability](#) is at the heart of everything we do, and we're committed to leaving things in a better way than we found them. We are passionate about supporting our communities by [Doing Good Together](#).

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LIC is a farmer-owned co-operative and world leader in pasture based dairy genetics and herd management. LIC exists to deliver superior genetics and technological innovation to help its shareholders sustainably farm a profitable animal.

With origins dating back to 1909, LIC has a long history of developing and delivering world-leading innovations for the dairy industry. The co-op continues to be one of the sector's biggest private investors in research and development.

Today the New Zealand-based co-op employs more than 700 permanent staff, swelling to 2000 during the spring peak dairy mating season. LIC also has offices in the United Kingdom, Ireland and Australia.

All LIC profit is returned to its farmer owners/shareholders in dividends, or reinvested for new solutions, research and development.

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## The Ministry for Primary Industries' On Farm Support team

The Ministry for Primary Industries' (MPI) On Farm Support team is proud to sponsor Pasture Summit autumn events this year.

On Farm Support offers practical on-the-ground advice and support to farmers and growers. It provides access to the latest agricultural research and regional support, helping to address specific challenges and make informed decisions to enable profitable, productive, and sustainable farming practices.

On Farm Support empowers farmers and growers to improve land management practices through tailored support and funding for catchment groups.

With a network of regional advisers, we provide on-the-ground guidance, facilitate collaboration, and connect groups with resources and funding to deliver long-term solutions for communities that have impact.

### Find out more

The On Farm Support team is here to provide on-the-ground help for farmers and growers.

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At Ravensdown, we believe in *Smarter farming for a better New Zealand*.

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Dom Hardie – Agri Manager  
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# HOST FARMERS

## Hugh and Anna Edward Trifecta Farming Limited

Hugh and Anna have both grown up in rural Waikato, Anna with dairy farming parents in Otorohanga and Hugh in Putāruru. Hugh started as a farm assistant in Matamata and progressed through the traditional pathway to sharemilking. Anna held numerous roles in Otorohanga, before going sharemilking. They met in 2015, while both doing the mahi in their own sharemilking businesses. Over the years to come, their relationship grew and new opportunities came their way.



Anna and Hugh both bring strong business skills and farm management experience to their partnership, having clocked up years of cows, feed management, budgets and people management. Refining their skills over the years and merging as a team, they plan together and implement management decisions together daily.

They now own 2 dairy units, 650 cows and lease a support block. They have a young family and have reached beyond the goal of farm ownership before age 40.

Their system prioritises consistent pasture management, deliberate feeding rules, and practical decision making based on observation and experience rather than unnecessary technology. Financial discipline sits at the heart of their operation, with a strong focus on cashflow, flexibility, and debt reduction—allowing them to stay confident and adaptable in variable conditions.

# FARMER PANELISTS



## Sian and Eoin O'Mahony, Tokoroa

We came on a working OE from Ireland, and just 12 years later we own two herds, have a young family and are heading into farm ownership this June.

We've worked our way from contract milking through to sharemilking, and we're now taking a big step by purchasing our first 450-cow farm in an equity partnership in Wharepapa South.

## Steph and Chris Ferguson, Otorohanga

We are Chris and Steph Ferguson. We have one daughter Quinn (2).

We are in our fourth season sharemilking 450 cows in Otorohanga, and are moving to a 600 cow job next season in Cambridge.



## Bas Nelis, Tirau

I have been farming for the last 23 years, since leaving school at 16, progressing through the dairy industry in the South Waikato, through sharemilking and leasing land.

Myself and Sarah are now owning 1900 cows over 5 farms which is half owned half leased. We have a key focus on progressing people through the business and driving a high returning business.

# ASB SPEAKER

*(Opening Comments)*

## Craig Young

Senior Manager Rural Corporate  
ASB Bank Limited

Craig originates from a dairy farming background on the Hauraki Plains and graduated Massey University with a B.Agr (Rural Valuation).

Craig joined ASB in 2003 and has held a number of senior leadership positions and currently manages the Rural Corporate manager team.

Craig is also actively farming, with ownership in dairy farming syndicates in the Waikato and Southland.



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# DAIRYNZ SCIENTIST

## Jane Kay

Principal Scientist, DairyNZ

Jane has been involved in research since 1999 and is recognised internationally for her expertise in climate change, methane mitigation solutions, cow nutrition and ruminant physiology, once-a-day milking, and milk fat composition.

She has published numerous research articles and spoken at a range of international conferences, and is passionate about using research to help farmers make profitable and sustainable decisions. Jane has a deep understanding of farm systems and the challenges farmers face, and how research can be used to address these challenges and contribute to sector change.

Jane has a PhD in animal science from the University of Arizona, USA. She also holds a Master of Science in biological sciences from the University of Waikato and a Bachelor of Biological Sciences from the University of Otago. Jane has always been interested in understanding physiology and completed a Bachelor of Physical Education in exercise kinesiology from the University of Otago.



# SESSION FACILITATORS



**Steph Gudgeon**

Area Manager, South Waikato & Lower Waipa



Steph initially grounded her studies in Social and Health policy working in this area until she was introduced to Agribusiness as a graduate, where she started out Rural Banking. She moved on to a farming pathway with her husband Andy as Sharemilkers and now they own a farm in Hinuera, Matamata. Where they operate a system 1 farm, focusing on cost control and harvesting above benchmark pasture and crop/ha. Steph has been involved in Mark and Measure as a farmer speaker, Talking Dairy Podcast, Inside Dairy and Federated Farmers. Steph is also a contributing farmer on the Pasture Summit committee, and a Waikato DEL Farmer. Steph has particular interest in on farm teams, pasture-based farm systems, environmental emission, strategic planning and financial management.



**Aleisha Broomfield**

Farm Systems Specialist/Dairy farmer



Aleisha is a farm system specialist at DairyNZ.

Her and her husband James milk 600 cows across two farms near Morrinsville.

Pasture summit is a great fit as they also have a focus on pasture management and financial performance.



**Mark Williams**

Senior Farm Systems Specialist



Mark's role sees him involved in a massive width and breadth of DairyNZ activities. His strength is bringing together skills and experience from 15 years of farming, agribusiness banking, private consulting and working at DairyNZ to build solutions for farmers. This passion started with a Bachelor of Science degree, and a Graduate Diploma in Agribusiness providing a foundation for his future. Within the farm systems team, Mark's main role is to lead the integrated content process. Mark also works on projects within DairyNZ and with sector partners like AgResearch and Beef and Lamb, and gets involved in events occasionally. However, he's mostly office-based, leading the creation of content for DairyNZ's communication channels.



**Grace Waldon**

Rural Manager, ASB Rural Banking



Born in bred in the mighty Tokoroa on a heifer grazing block. I began working for ASB in early 2023 and have spent my time located in Hawkes Bay, Timaru and for the last 2 years in Te Awamutu.

I have a passion for the agriculture industry with a soft spot for helping out the next generation of farm owners into sharemilking opportunities and land ownership.

# Meet DAiSY: A smart new way to get trusted info fast

DAiSY isn't pulling answers from the internet or making things up. It only uses content from the DairyNZ website, so every response is backed by DairyNZ research, tools, and on-farm guidance you already rely on.

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**DAiSY** ™  
Knows dairy

## Welcome, Introductions and why we are on this farm

Robbie Ferris  
Chair of Pasture Summit



## Orientation and H&S Briefing

Steph Gudgeon  
Area Manager, South Waikato  
& Lower Waipa, DairyNZ



## Opening comments

Craig Young  
Senior Manager Rural Corporate  
ASB Bank



## NOTES

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## SESSION 1:

## BACKGROUND, GOALS & BUSINESS PERFORMANCE

### Presenters

Hugh & Anna Edward  
Trifecta Farming Ltd (host farm)



### Facilitated by

Aleisha Broomfield  
Farm Systems Specialist  
DairyNZ



# Key Farm details

Figure 1: Trifecta Farming Ltd. Dairy Map

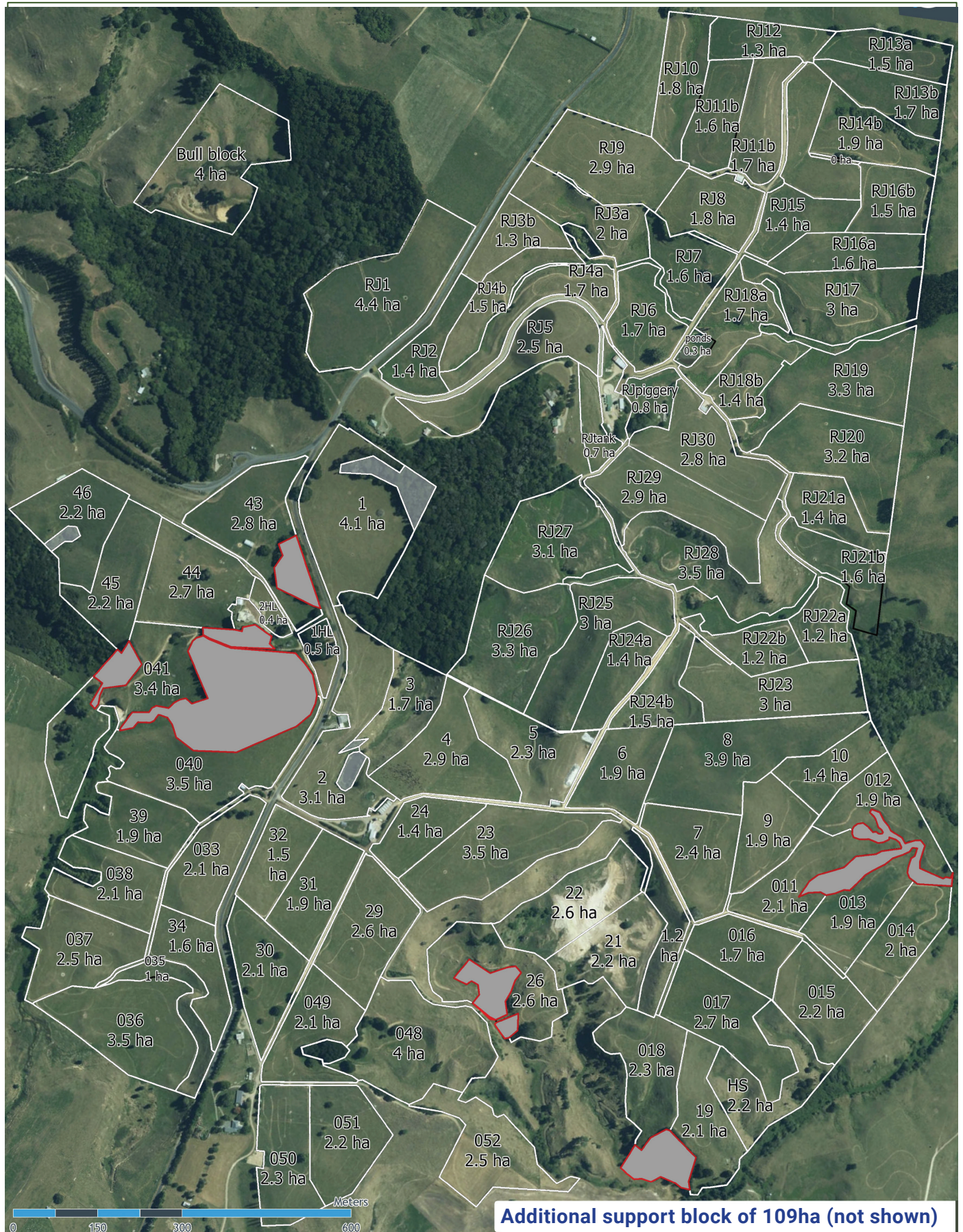


Table 1: Trifecta Farming Ltd. Physical Overview Table

	2024/25		2023/24		2022/23	
	Farm	Benchmark	Farm	Benchmark	Farm	Benchmark
<b>Farm Details</b>						
Effective Ha	188	209	188	163.4	188	158.2
Dairy support (ha)	109	18	109	16.7	109	21.5
Peak cows	630	590	620	471	640	459
Stocking rate	3.4	2.8	3.3	2.9	3.5	2.9
KgLW/ha	1,541	1,336	1,517	1,374	1,556	1,384
Milksolids production	311,486	230,318	306,485	166,625	271,238	187,941
Nitrogen / ha	109	92	95	115	111	106
<i>*Benchmark DairyNZ Waikato Region (~200 farms)</i>						
<b>Physical KPIs</b>						
Milksolids / ha	1,657	1,102	1,630	1,171	1,443	1,188
Milksolids / cow	494	390	494	406	417	409
KgMS as % of LW	107%	82%	107%	85%	93%	86%
CSR	69		68		72	
Pasture & Crop Harvested (tDM/ha)	13.4	10.8	13.9	12.5	15.6	12.6
Imported supplements (tDM/ha)	4.4	3.2	3.0	2.7	1.5	2.6
Imported supplements eaten (kgDM/cow)	1,316	1,305	1,077	1,098	432	1,023
	2024/25		2023/24		2022/23	
	Farm	Benchmark	Farm	Benchmark	Farm	Benchmark
<b>Animal KPIs</b>						
Calving date						
6 WICR	84%	71%	76%	68%	67%	67%
NICR	10%	13%	14%	13%	19%	16%
AI length (weeks)	4/11		4/11		4/9	
Non cyler treatment	0%	4%	0%	4%	0%	7%
Cow deaths	4%		2%		3%	
Antibiotics for Lameness	1%	7%	1%	8%	1%	8%
Antibiotics for Mastitis	16%	13%	17%	14%	8%	14%
SCC ('000s)	198	141	177	160	135	156
<i>*Benchmark DairyNZ Waikato Region (~200 farms)</i>						
<b>People KPIs</b>						
Full time equivalents	1.0 FTE Unpaid mgmt Hugh, 1.0 FTE unpaid Anna, 0.5 FTE Bob (Drystock), 2.0 FTE paid					
Roster & Hours	Alvin (12 on/2 off) = 96 hours per week, Laura (11 on/3 off)					

## Hugh & Anna's Journey

Figure 2: Farming Pathway



## Goals

- 1 - 2 Year goals
  - Get away in the caravan on school holidays
  - Invest in more land and continue to grow the business
- 5 - 10 Year goals
  - Be debt free on the current farm (\$5.5m to pay off)
- 15+ Years goals
  - Continue to grow the business
  - Overseas holidays when the kids are older

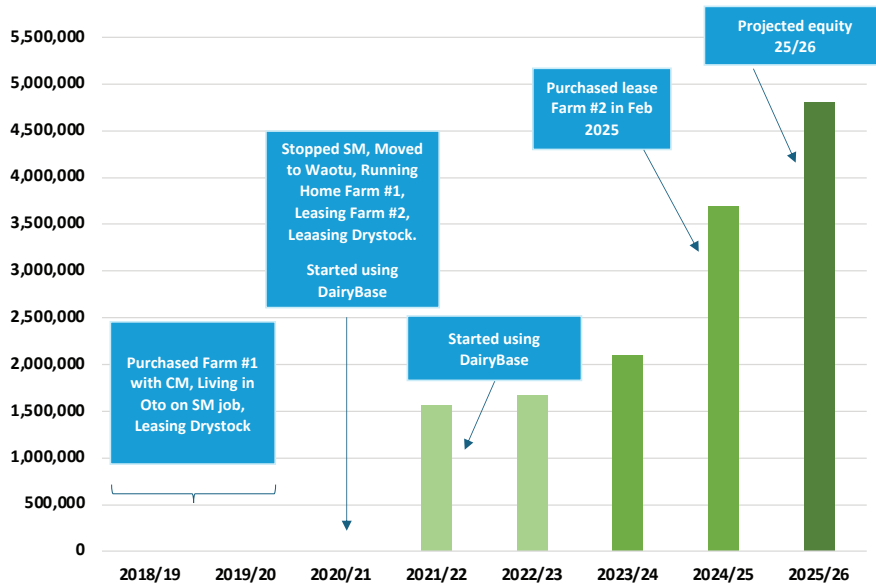
## Farming Philosophies

- Everything we do has a cost, but it must provide value. Every dollar, hour, and decision must earn more than its cost — plus what it could have earned somewhere else.
- Maintain a strong advisory network and use it regularly for challenge, direction, and support.
- Cost discipline with a focus on value—not simply lowest cost.
- Prefer to invest in land and build systems that maximise existing resources, rather than over-capitalising on infrastructure.
- Invest in people and capability—continuous upskilling for the farm team, including ourselves.
- Set uncompromising standards for animal health, welfare, and performance.
- Improve the farm asset over time—leave the land better each season.
- Protect time as a business input—set realistic work standards to sustain performance.
- Operate as a complementary partnership—play to strengths, cover weaknesses, and stay competent across all core areas.
- Balance operational delivery with family and lifestyle goals.
- Engage professional partners (banker, accountant, vet, and farm consultants/suppliers) to strengthen governance and execution.
- Maintain strong cashflow and prioritise disciplined debt reduction.
- Stay motivated and proud of progress—enjoy the work while building long-term resilience.

## The success of Trifecta Farming Ltd – bringing it all together

Figure 3: Equity Growth Over Time

### Equity Growth Over Time (\$)



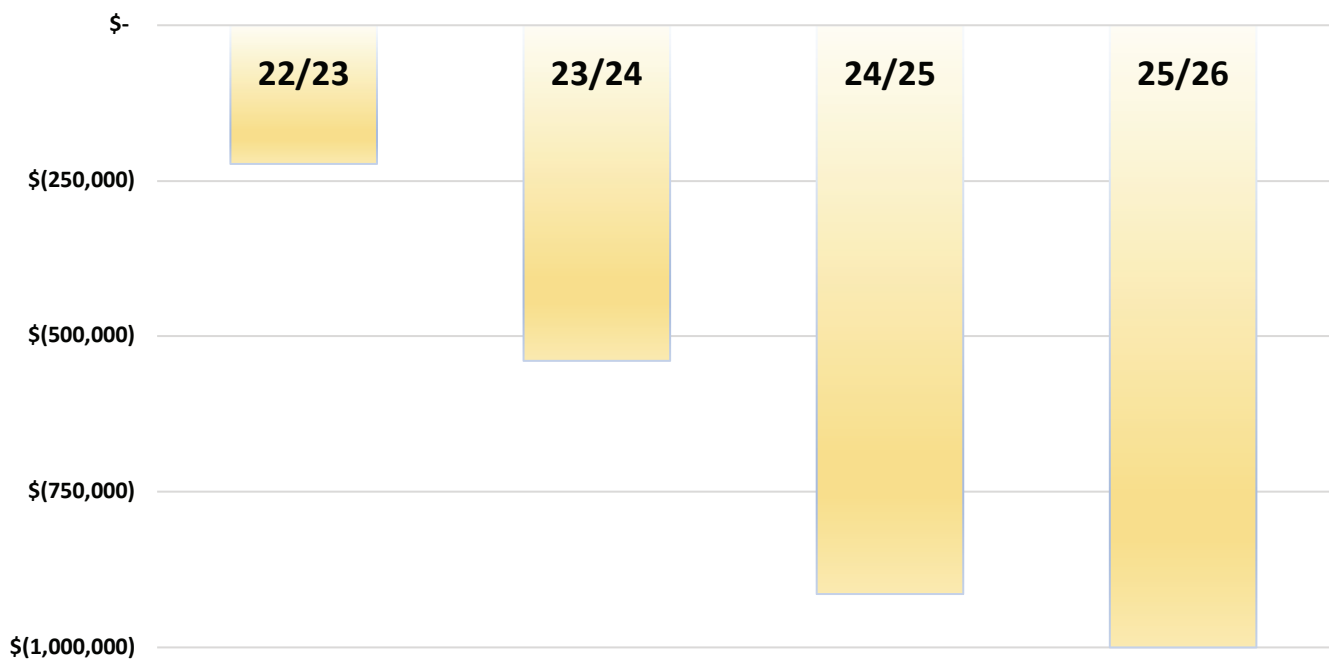
### Key messages for progressing through the industry

- Hugh & Anna have always been involved in the wider industry with YF, NZDIA and Discussion groups
- This has led to strong networks and building a great personal brand which has helped them to get opportunities word of mouth.
- Hugh and Anna have saved well which has enabled them to take the next opportunity as it has arisen.
- Hugh & Anna are consistent, high performers and have continued to grow their business through this high milk price period.

## 3 years of debt reduction

Figure 4: Debt Reduction

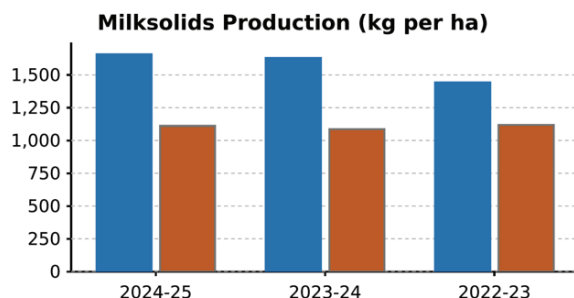
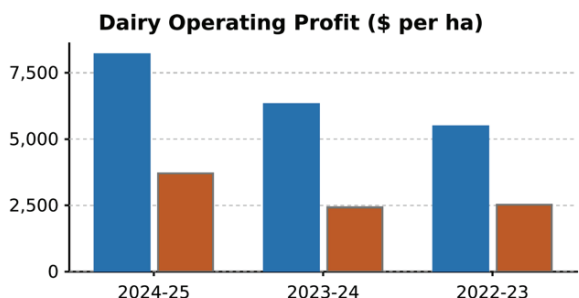
### Debt Reduction



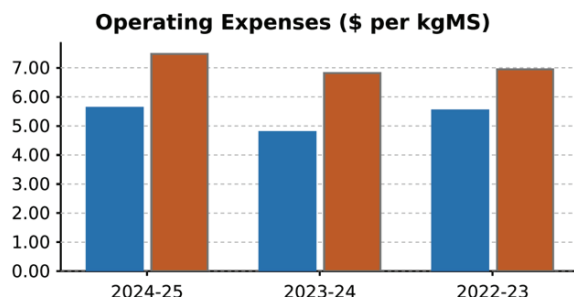
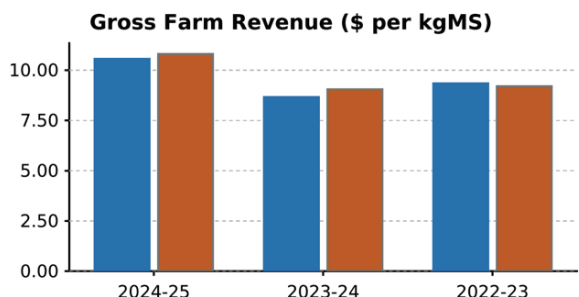
# Financial performance – how the business stacks up

Figure 5: Operating Performance Summary

Trifecta Farming Ltd      Benchmark

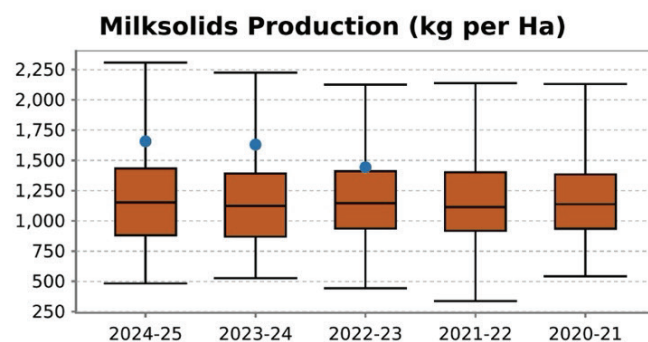
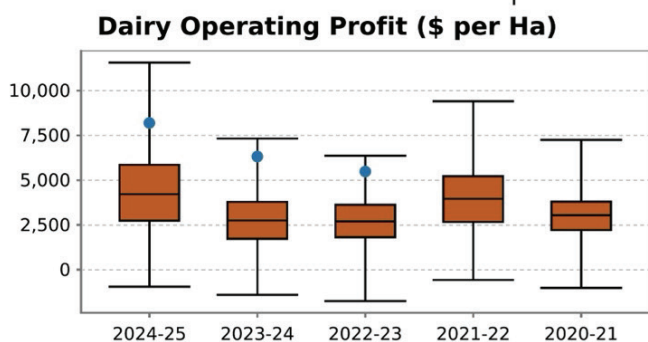


Your Operating Profit for the 2024-25 season was \$8,196 per hectare. This compares to \$3,704 for the benchmark.  
 Operating Profit is made up of Gross Farm Revenue \$10.57 per kgMS less Operating Expenses \$5.62, multiplied by the production per hectare of 1,657kg (Benchmark GFR:\$10.81 Opex:\$7.48 MS/Ha: 1,111kg)

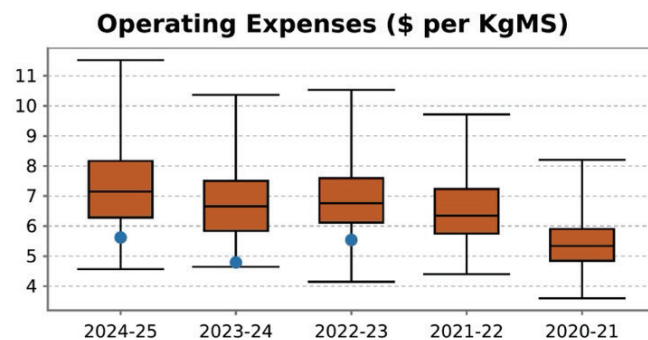
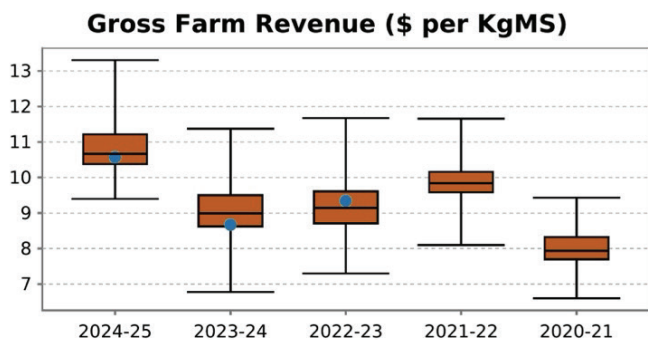


Benchmark: Waikato Owner operator  
 Number of farms in benchmark: 200 (2024-25) 211 (2023-24) 258 (2022-23)

Trifecta Farming Ltd      Waikato Owner operator

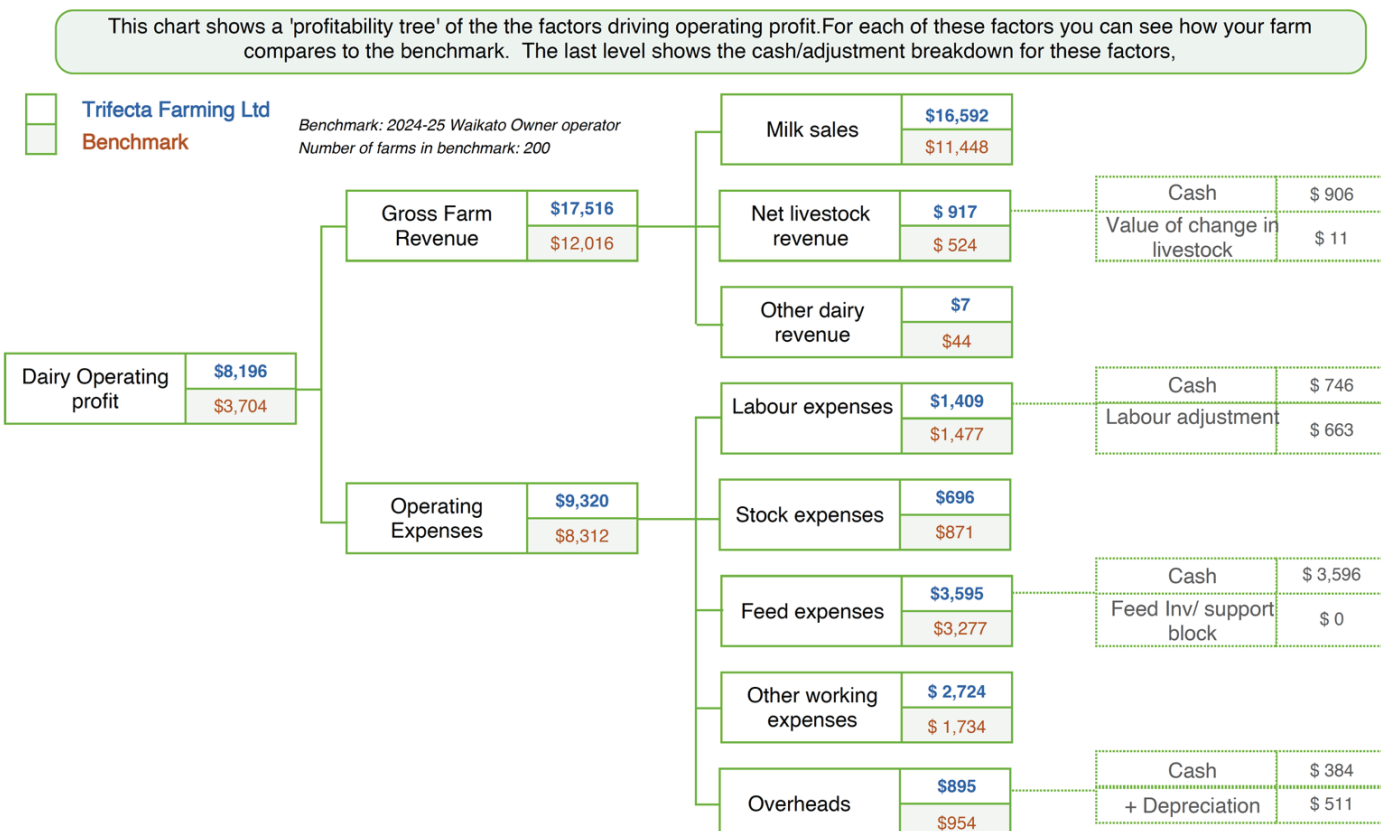


These graphs show your farm in relation to the distribution of the benchmark. The top and bottom lines show the upper and lower ranges, the box shows the range from the 25th percentile to the 75th, and the middle line shows the 50th percentile. The dot shows you where your farm sits within this range



Benchmark: Waikato Owner operator  
 Number of farms in benchmark: 200 (2024-25) 211 (2023-24) 258 (2022-23)

**Figure 6: What drives my operating profit? (\$/ha)**



**Figure 7: How do my costs compare to other farms?**

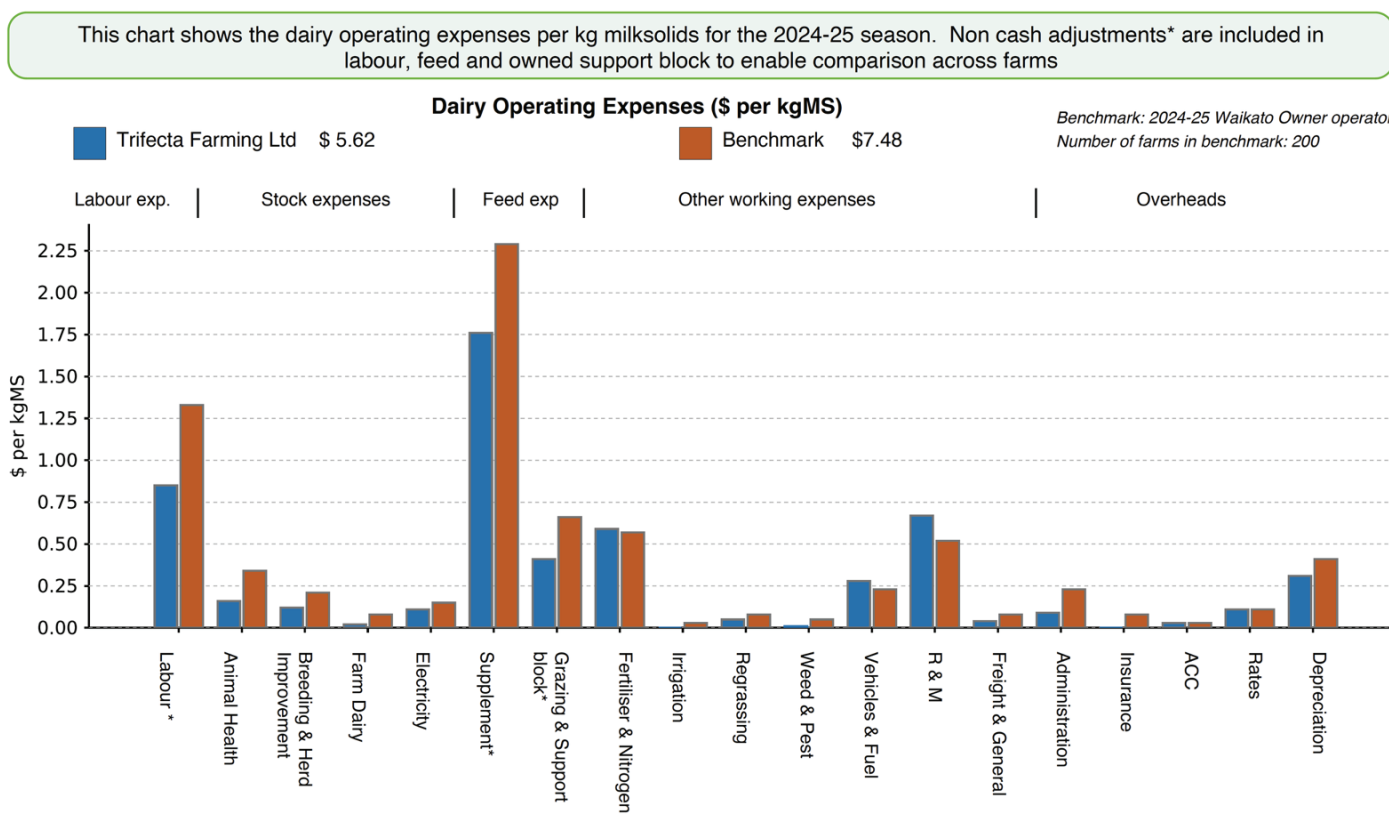
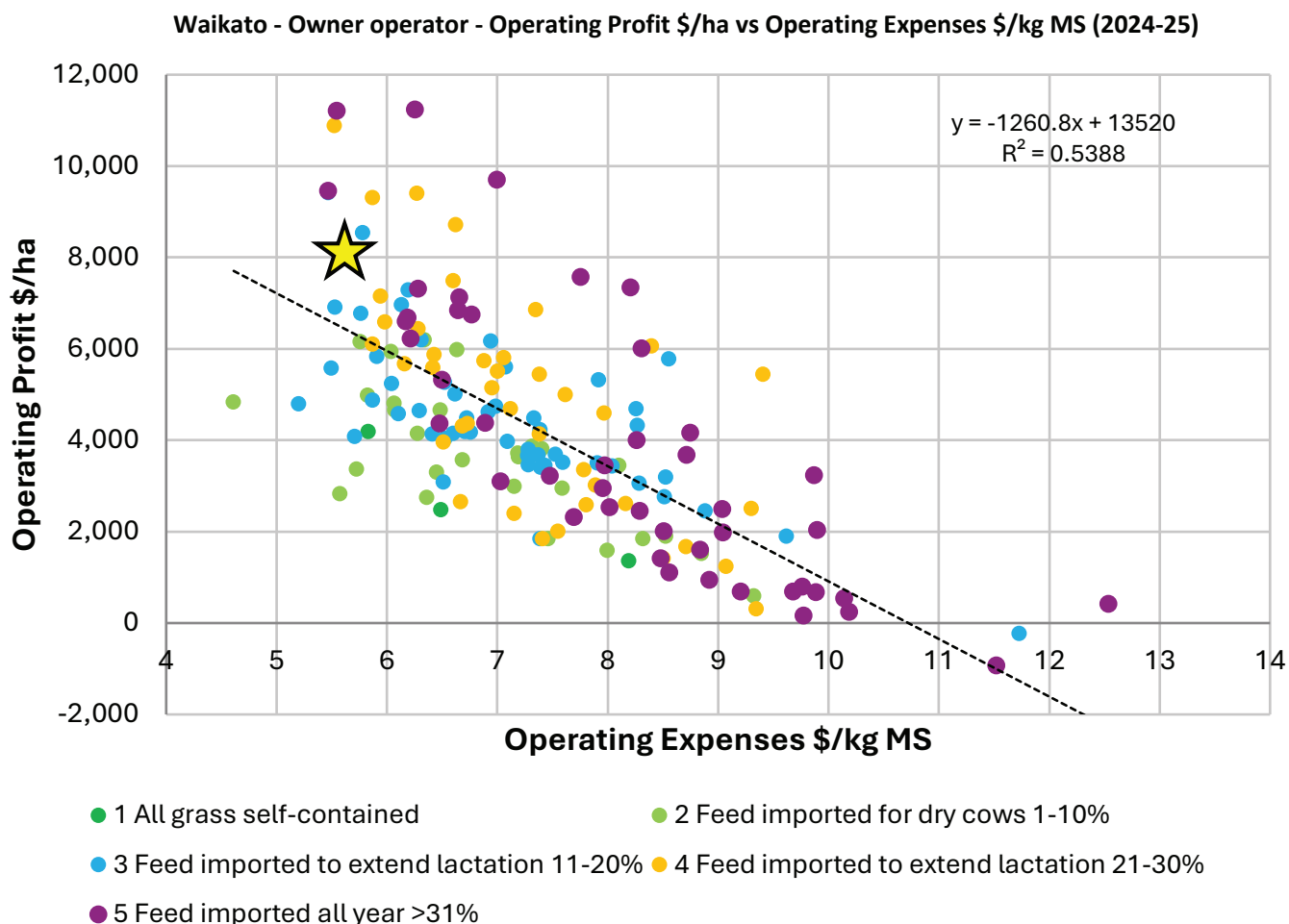


Figure 8: Operating Profit vs Operating Expenses (2024/25)



## Financial Performance in more detail

Table 2: Trifecta Farming Ltd Financial Overview

Trifecta Farming Ltd vs. Waikato Owner Operator Benchmark	2022-23		2023-24		2024-25	
	Trifecta	Waikato BM N=165	Trifecta	Waikato BM N=115	Trifecta	Waikato BM N=101
Gross Farm Revenue (\$/kg MS)	9.34	9.35	8.67	9.08	10.57	10.84
Farm Working Expenses (\$/kg MS)	5.06	6.21	4.01	5.82	4.92	10.84
Operating Expenses (\$/kg MS)	5.54	7.08	4.79	6.86	5.62	7.12
Operating Profit (\$/kg MS)	3.80	2.27	3.88	2.22	4.95	3.72
Gross Farm Revenue (\$/ha)	13,479	11,857	14,132	11,424	17,516	14,131
Operating Expenses (\$/ha)	7,995	8,983	7,810	8,633	9,320	9,279
Operating Profit Margin %	40.7%	24.2%	44.7%	24.4%	46.8%	34.3%
Operating Profit (\$/ha)	5,484	2,874	6,322	2,791	8,196	4,853

## The infrastructure that supports Trifecta

Top farm, Trifecta (3 business structures)	Bottom farm, Double RJ (after family initials)
Farm dairy, walk-over teat sprayers, in-shed	21 ASHB, basic
Calf houses for all calves (200)	All calving at top farm
Send milk from top shed	Use shed from August onwards
Machinery, baling equipment fert spreading	Implement sheds
28 ASHB, acr's	

### The key elements of this successful business:

- High pasture harvested—achieved through cow feed efficiency and minimal substitution.
- Consistent, accurate financial monitoring and planning.
- A disciplined focus on understanding and controlling costs, ensuring each cost creates value and supports clear objectives.
- A commitment to what already works—avoiding unnecessary complexity and “shiny new” additions.
- Infrastructure is planned to make critical tasks safe and efficient, simplify work, and improve cow flow. Hugh’s aim to “monkey-proof the farm” reduces stress, errors, and burnout.
- Continuous, incremental improvement—each year focusing more on the basics and doing them well.
- Low operating expenses and moderate asset value per hectare, combined with high gross farm revenue (driven by feed management and strong per-cow performance), maximise profit margin and return on capital. The system relies on sound fundamentals—Hugh and Anna actively oversee the detail and regularly discuss and challenge decisions to keep it on track.



# What's happening at DairyNZ

## Dairy Training courses

Dairy Training offers two practical free courses to grow pasture skills.

Pasture and Feeding Fundamentals is a hands-on introduction to the core principles of pasture growth, cow nutrition, and daily feed decisions, ideal for newer team members building their foundation. For those ready to take the next step, Feed for Profit provides more advanced skills in feed planning, allocation, and financial decision-making, helping farmers turn feeding choices into measurable performance gains.

Whether you're starting with the basics or develop your expertise, there's a course to suit every role on farm.

[dairytraining.co.nz/courses](https://dairytraining.co.nz/courses)



## Dairy Beef Opportunities

New Zealand's dairy and beef industries are working together on the Dairy Beef Opportunities programme to address a key area of both challenge and opportunity – the management of non-replacement calves that are not required to replenish the dairy herd.

The Programme is a joint initiative with the New Zealand Government to grow the country's dairy-beef sector, create new revenue opportunities for farmers, and strengthen the efficiency and sustainability of the wider livestock industry. It aims to unlock more value from non-replacement dairy calves by strengthening dairy-beef integration and developing innovative pathways for raising them for beef.

The programme is jointly funded by DairyNZ, Beef + Lamb New Zealand, the Meat Industry Association, and Dairy Companies of New Zealand and co-funded by the Ministry for Primary Industries.

[dairynz.co.nz/dbo](https://dairynz.co.nz/dbo)



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## DairyBase

Join DairyBase for free and access all the information you need to make confident and effective farm management decisions.

With DairyBase you can understand your farm system better by comparing key performance indicators with other farms to highlight strengths and identify areas for improvement. With over 20 percent of New Zealand farms contributing to DairyBase, its benchmarks are robust and reliable. A new update now allows you to connect with Farm Focus and tools like MINDA and Fonterra are coming soon too. That means quicker cashflow reports, timely insights, and less time at your desk.

[dairynz.co.nz/dairybase](https://dairynz.co.nz/dairybase)



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## DairyNZ events

Find upcoming DairyNZ events near you, including Progressing Dairy events, workshops, field days, discussion groups and more.

[dairynz.co.nz/events](https://dairynz.co.nz/events)



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## Resilient Pasture Programme

The Resilient Pasture Programme was set up to help solve challenges that farmers across Aotearoa are facing – pastures that don't last as long, more pests, and weather that's harder to predict. These challenges are backed up by DairyNZ data.

A collaborative cross-sector programme was launched in June 2025, led by DairyNZ with MPI through the Primary Sector Growth Fund and industry partners Beef + Lamb New Zealand. Its focus is to enhance the resilience and recovery of pastures to climate and weather events in the future.

[dairynz.co.nz/resilientpastures](https://dairynz.co.nz/resilientpastures)



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## Forage Value

DairyNZ and the Plant Breeding Research Association (PBRA) are committed to working together to understand the root causes of the Forage Value Index (FVI) validation trial result. Our FVI helps farmers choose ryegrass cultivars based on dry matter yield and economic value.

Our research helps to ensure genetic gain in plant breeding, seen in small plot trials, is captured on farm.

[dairynz.co.nz/fvi](https://dairynz.co.nz/fvi)





# On Farm Support

A free service helping farmers and growers boost on farm profitability and improve environmental outcomes.

**Meet the team at Pasture Summit autumn 2026 events and discuss how On Farm Support can assist your farm business.**



[mpi.govt.nz/on-farm-support](https://mpi.govt.nz/on-farm-support)



**SESSION 2:  
PASTURE & FEED MANAGEMENT**

**Presenters**

**Hugh & Anna Edward**  
Trifecta Farming Ltd (host farm)



**Jane Kay**  
Principal Scientist  
DairyNZ



**Facilitated by**

**Mark Williams**  
Senior Farm Systems Specialist  
DairyNZ



**NOTES**

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"I work with Dot to tailor the best plan for my farm."

David van Straalen, Dairy Farmer

We asked David:

# How do you make it count?

**David:** I sit down with my Nutrient Specialist, Dot, and we go over the plan. Some blocks need more, some need less. No point treating them all the same. It means I'm not wasting fert and I get a better result in the long run.

**Ballance:** That's exactly the point of a tailored nutrient plan, getting the most from every hectare.

**Make it count this season with a tailored plan.  
Talk to your Nutrient Specialist today.**

[ballance.co.nz/make-it-count](https://ballance.co.nz/make-it-count)  
0800 222 090



## Pasture and Feed Management

Figure 9: Pasture and Crop Harvested

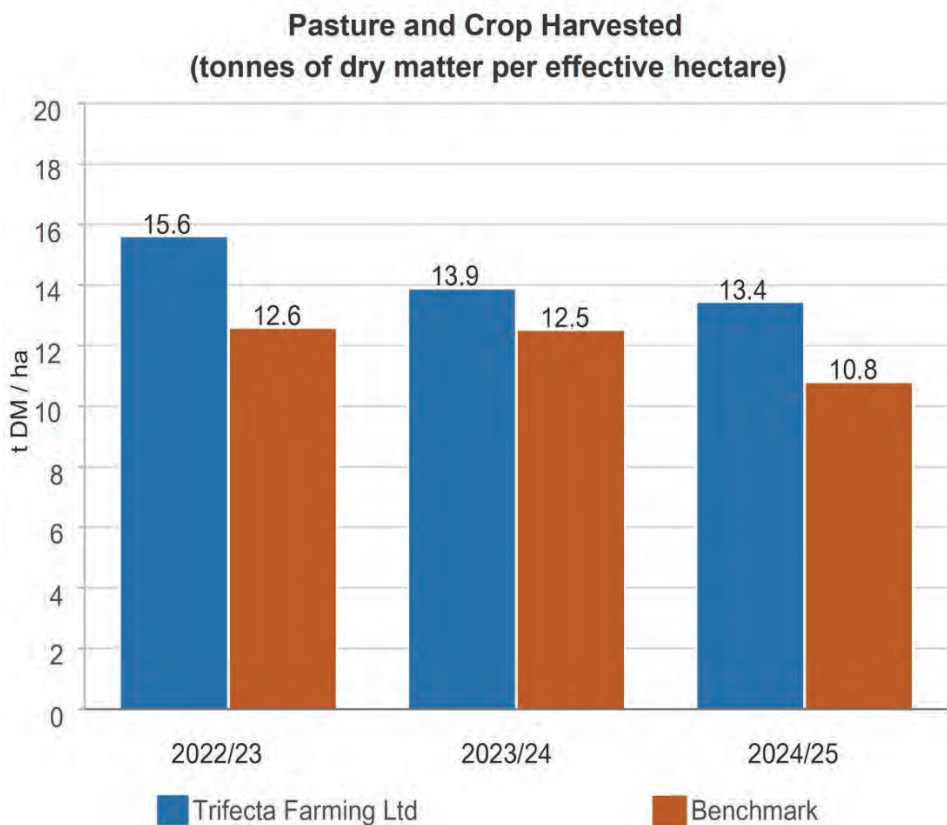
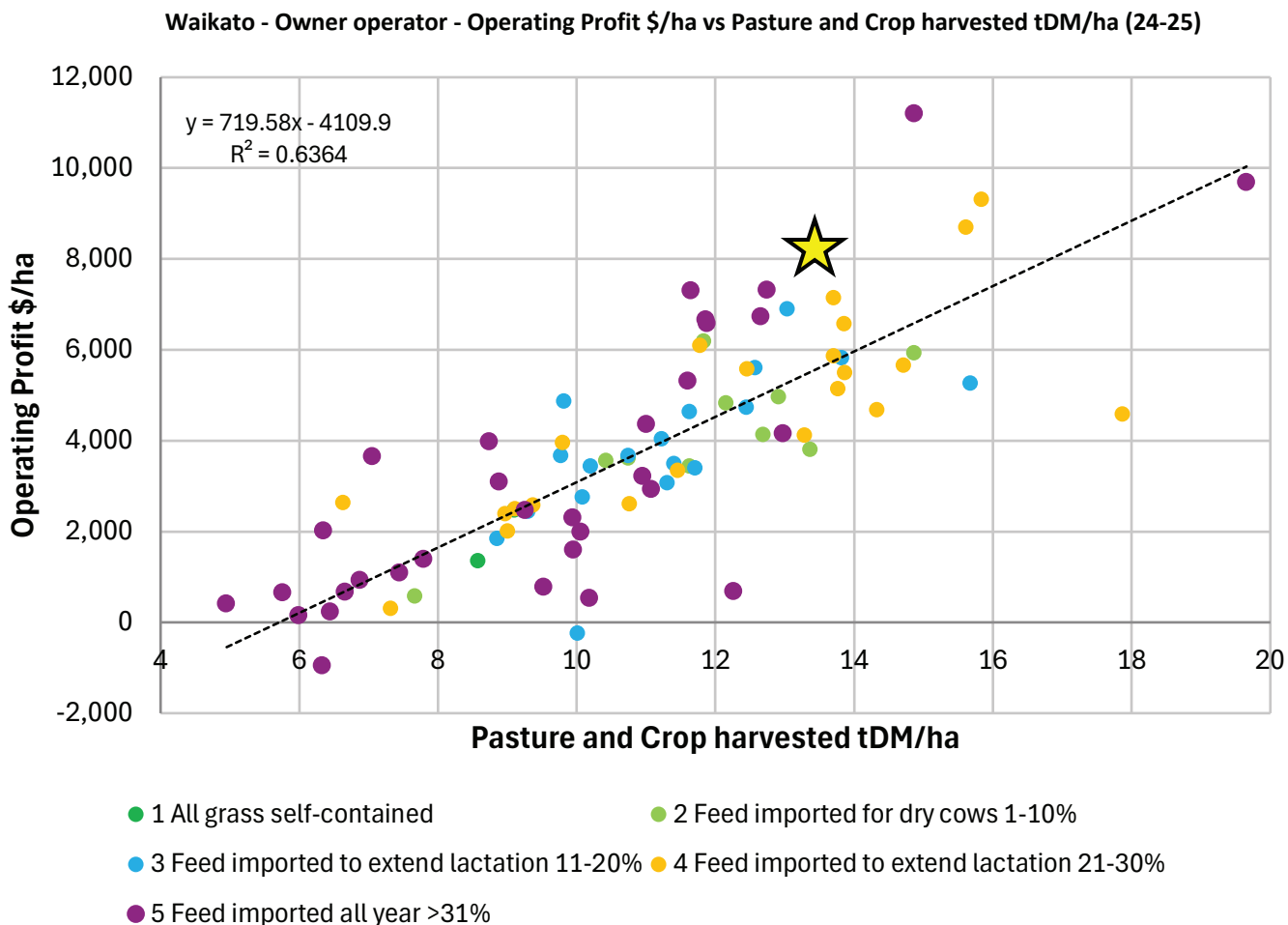


Figure 10: Operating Profit vs Pasture and Crop Harvested



## Key Details

- Pasture-first system with consistent, simple feeding rules.
- Supplement is used to fill an intentional feed deficit, created by the farm's higher stocking rate.
- Running a higher SR 3.4 in-shed used to fill a consistent feed gap.
- Runs low covers into May and winters on the run-off and allows the dairy platform to return to target pasture cover.
- 2800 – 3200 pre-grazing residuals
- Paddocks determined by leaf stage
- Achieves consistent post grazing residuals
- Soil fertility sits between 18-28 Olsen P
- No cropping on the milking platform
- Spring surplus and quality are managed by dropping paddocks out for silage
- Post-graze mowing is reserved for mistakes or when weather factors have affected the residual.
- Decisions largely made by eye and experience
- Round length is deliberately managed to avoid grazing too early or too late.

Figure 11: Seasonal Feed Management

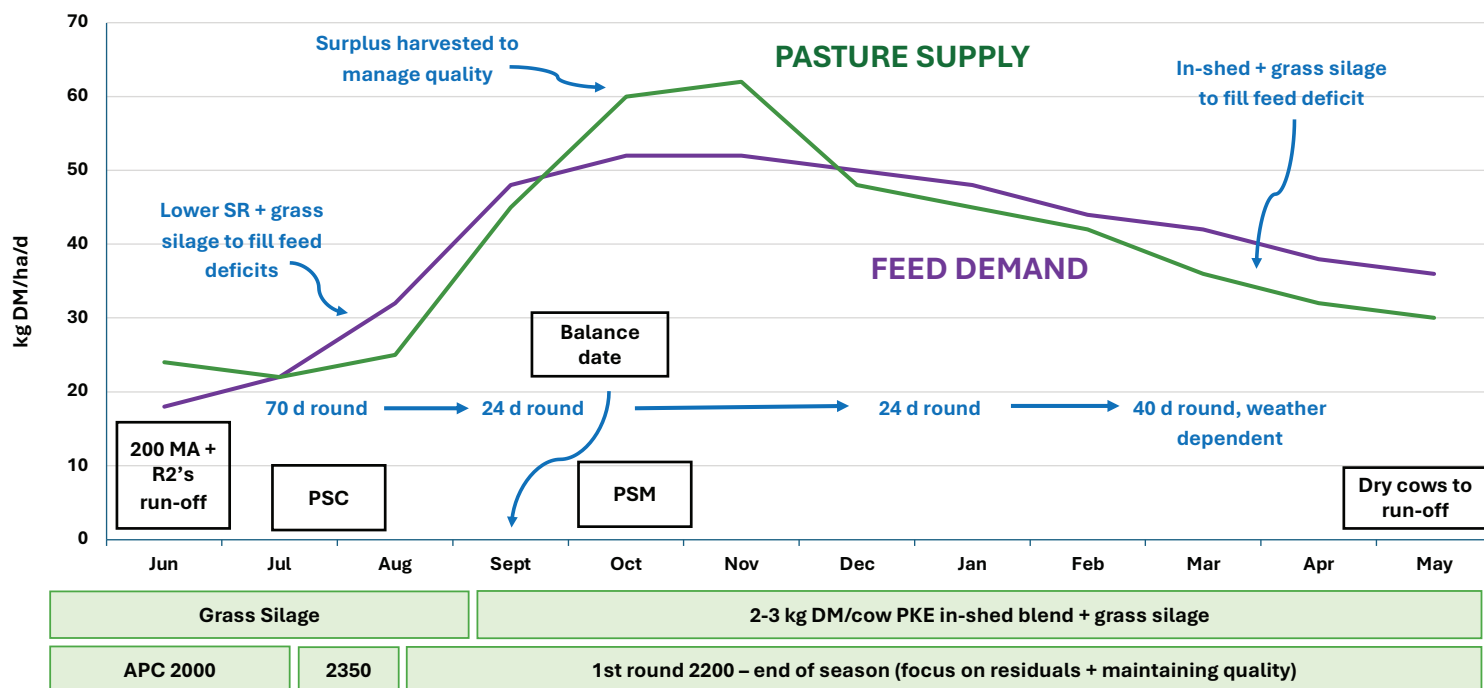
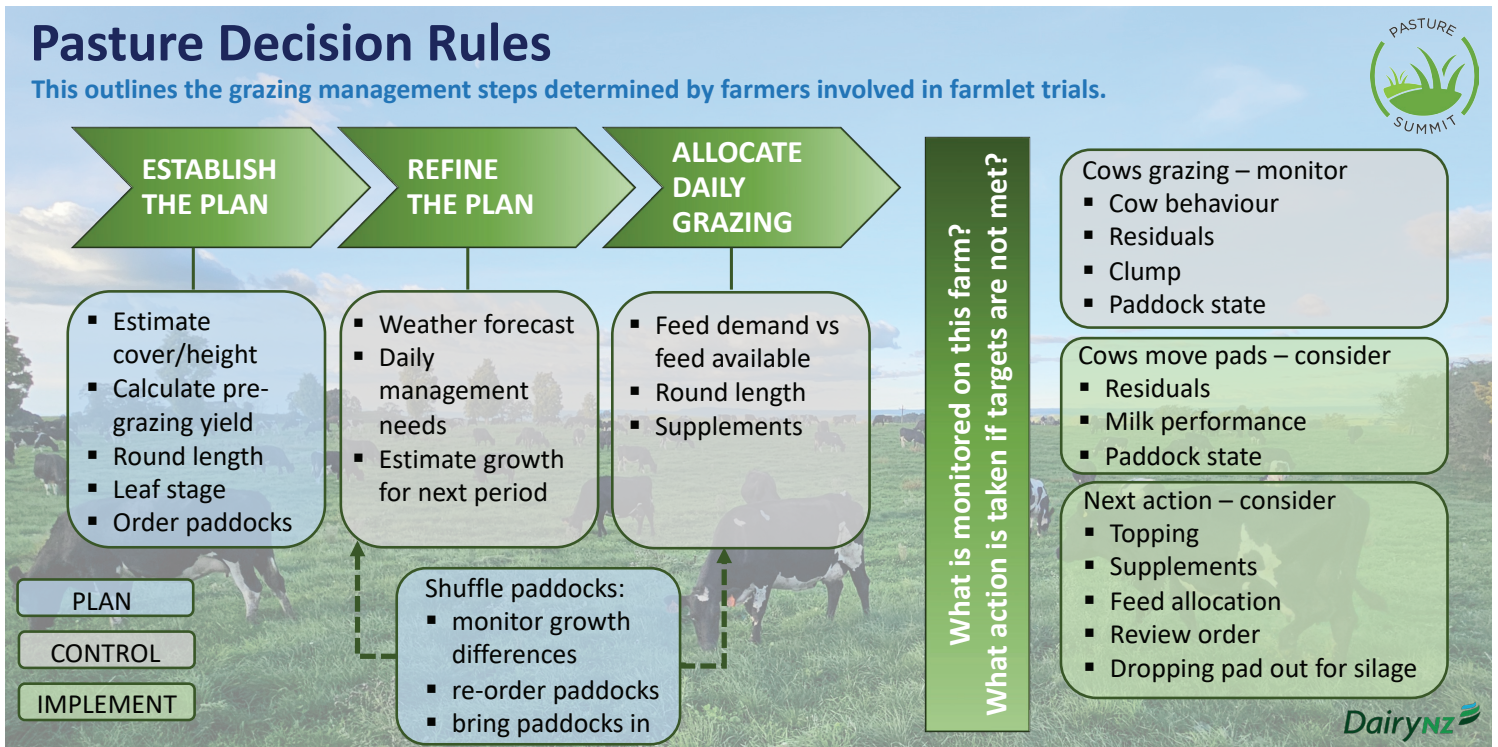


Figure 12: Pasture Decision Rules

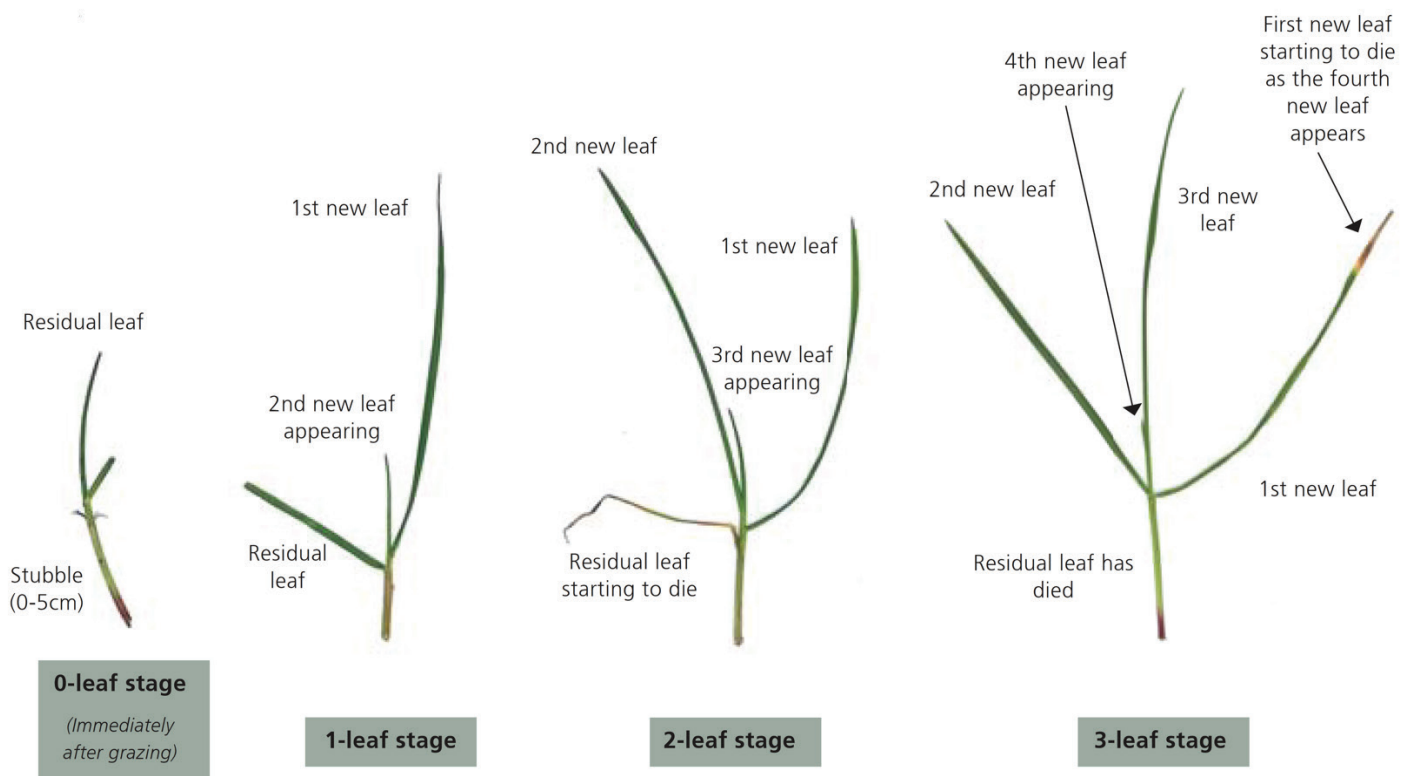


## Maximising Leaf Availability Using Pasture Growth Principles

The optimal time to graze is 2.5–3 leaf stage

Leaf stage is therefore a more reliable indicator than days since grazing, reflecting what is happening in the plant.

Figure 13: The leaf stages of well-utilised perennial ryegrass pasture as it regrows



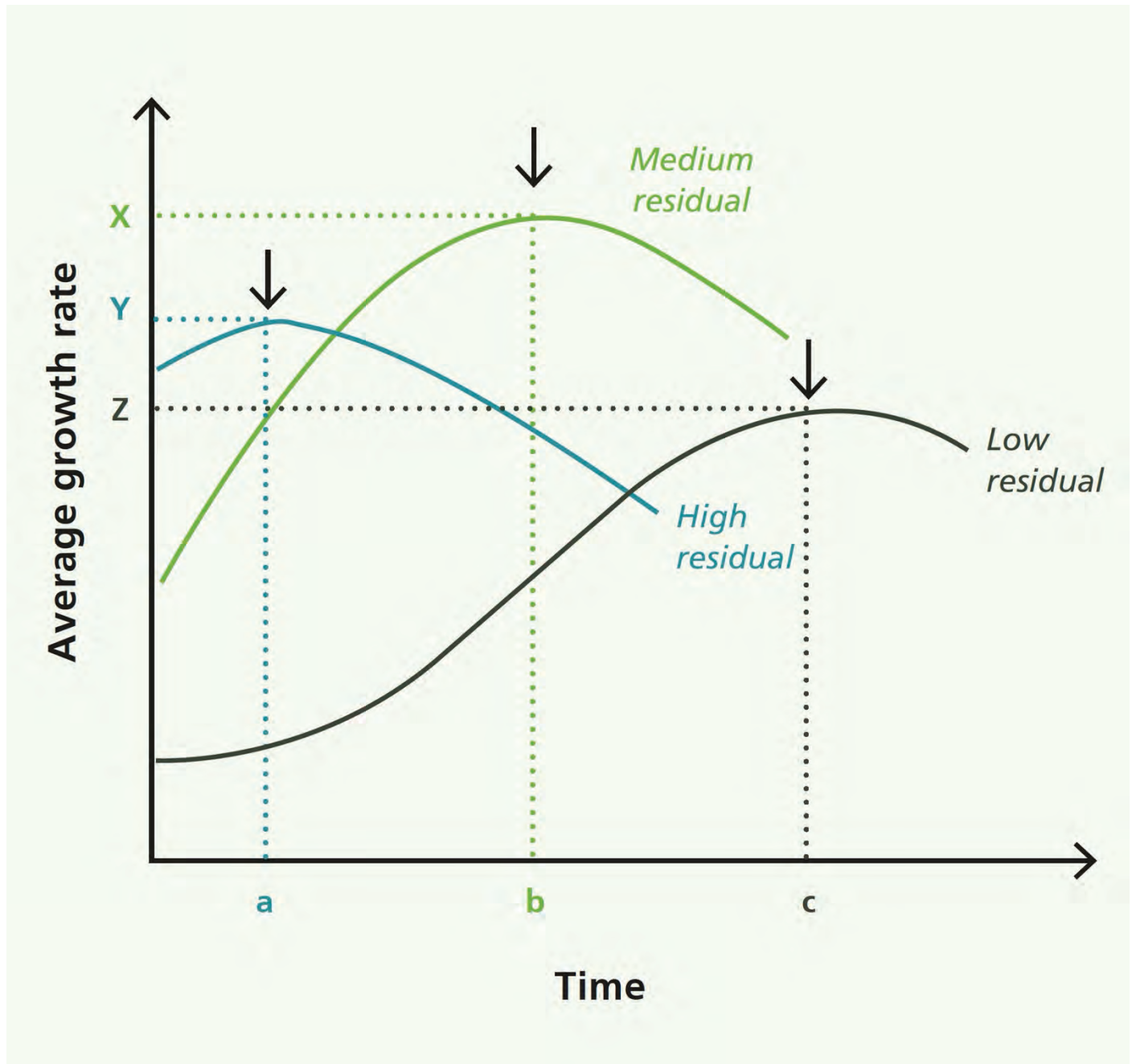
## Grazing Management

Post-grazing residuals are non-negotiable

Figure 14: Impact of post-grazing residual (compressed height) on average growth rate during the subsequent regrowth cycle:

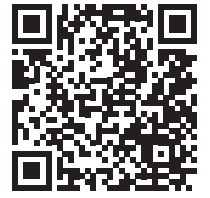
- High residual: greater than 6.5 cm
- Medium residual: 3.5 – 4.5 cm (target)
- Low residual: less than 2 cm

Based on Parsons et al. (1988)



Consistently hitting the residual range is more important than occasional “good” grazing.  
Stabilising tiller density, increasing light penetration, reducing growth re-lag.

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**HawkEyePro**  
by **ravensdown** 

\*Figures are based on published studies on variable rate strategies performed under NZ conditions and are representative of typical gains expected from variable rate strategies, but actual gains will be farm-specific. \*\*Where spreader capability allows.



# Less time entering data. More time on farm.



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**MINDA**®

**LIC**®

## The Cow and Quality Feed

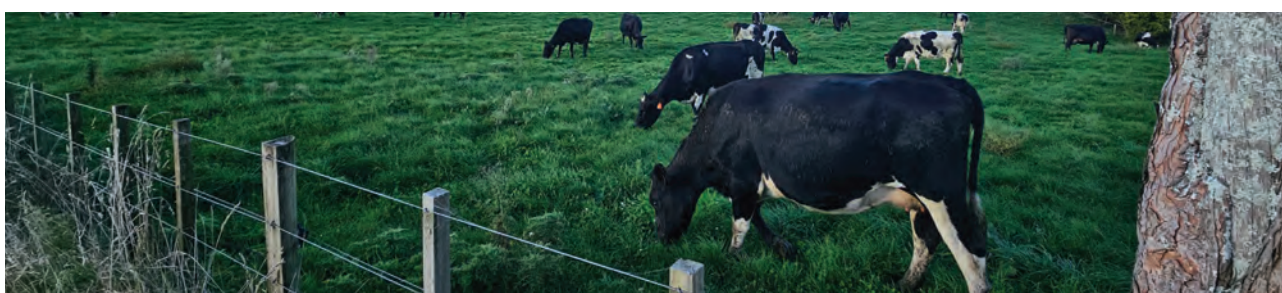
### Mating & Animal Health

- Simplified mating:
  - Mating shortened from 12 weeks to 9 weeks- allows more time for time off farm
  - 4 weeks AB, followed by bulls.
  - No pre-mating treatments
- Emphasis on:
  - Achieving BCS in May going into winter
  - Cow health and selecting easy calving bulls
  - Heat detection with farm team
  - Early planning (thinking about next season from December)
- Breeding Objectives
  - 2 herds: Jersey and Friesian (maintained since SM)
  - 450 kg target LW (bigger Jerseys and smaller Friesians)
  - Generally, target dairy type and cow that can manage rolling topography
- Repro performance, all cows managed under MINDA in one participant code
  - Johne's presence has influenced NICR

**Table 3: Trifecta Farming Ltd Repro results from Fertility Focus Report**

REPRO RESULTS	2024/25		2023/24		2022/23	
	Trifecta	Benchmark*	Trifecta	Benchmark*	Trifecta	Benchmark*
6-wk ICR, %	84%	71%	76%	68%	67%	67%
3-wk SR, %	85%	77%	87%	74%	76%	71%
Not ICR, %	10%	13%	14%	13%	19%	16%
Calved by 6 wk, %	94%	77%	86%	76%	88%	74%
Length of AB, wk	4		4		4	
Length of mating, wk	9		9		9	

\*206 Waikato farms; ICR = in-calf rate; SR = submission rate



**Figure 15: Herd Summary (LIC Report)**

Herd Summary

Report details

Trifecta Farming Limited  
C/O H Edward & A Hogg  
438 Waotu South Road  
RD 1  
Putaruru 3481

Group: Whole Herd  
Total animals: 1026  
Females DNA Profiled: 8%

Date: 01 Jun 2025 - 31 May 2026  
PTPT Code: PRMB

Herd averages as at: 25 Apr 2026  
Ancestry: 93%  
BW: 72/48

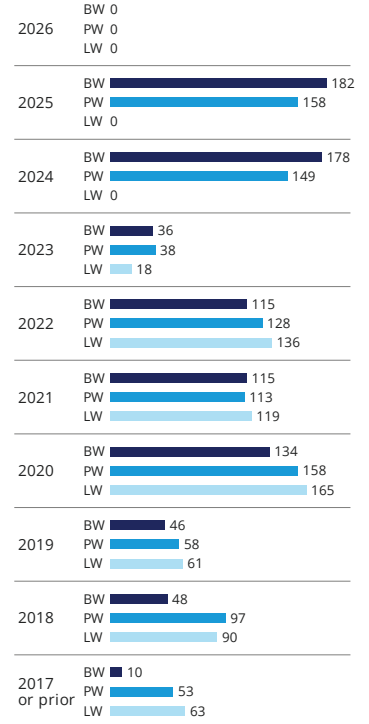
Report generated on: 04 May 2026



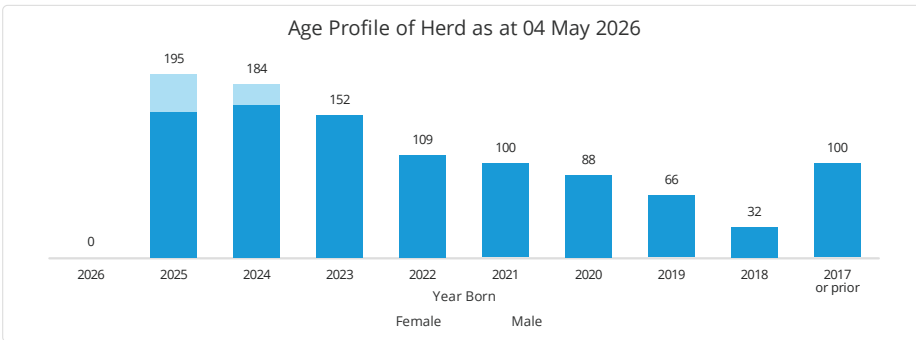
PW: 88/75

Year Group	Total as at 01 Jun 2025	Stock Inventory					Total as at 04 May 2026	
		Incoming		Outgoing			Number	% of Herd
		Purchases	Births	Sold	Culled	Deaths		
2026 Born Females	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
2025 Born Females	0	0	157	0	0	2	155	15.1%
2024 Born Females	162	0	0	0	0	0	162	15.8%
2023 Born Females	163	0	0	7	1	3	152	14.8%
2022 Born Females	131	0	0	13	7	2	109	10.6%
2021 Born Females	109	0	0	4	4	1	100	9.7%
2020 Born Females	99	0	0	5	3	3	88	8.6%
2019 Born Females	76	0	0	2	7	1	66	6.4%
2018 Born Females	39	0	0	0	7	0	32	3.1%
2017 Born Females (or prior)	145	0	0	7	35	3	100	9.7%
Male	43	0	41	21	0	1	62	6.0%
<b>Whole Herd</b>	<b>967</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1026</b>	<b>100%</b>

Current Index Breakdown by Year Born



\*Indices evaluated by LIC using genomic information where applicable

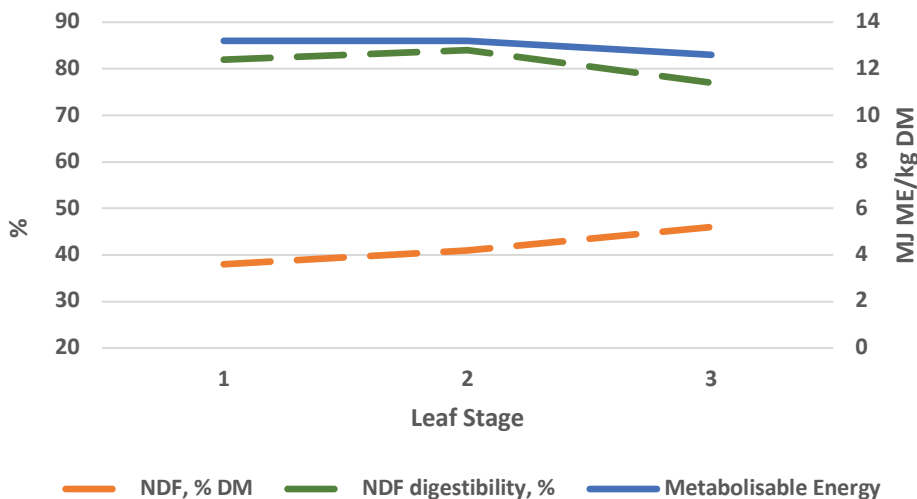


**Core message**

High-quality ryegrass pasture:

- meets energy needs
- meets protein needs

**Figure 16: Pasture composition at different leaf stage**



The greater the nutritive value of the pasture, the greater the intake.

Pasture components:

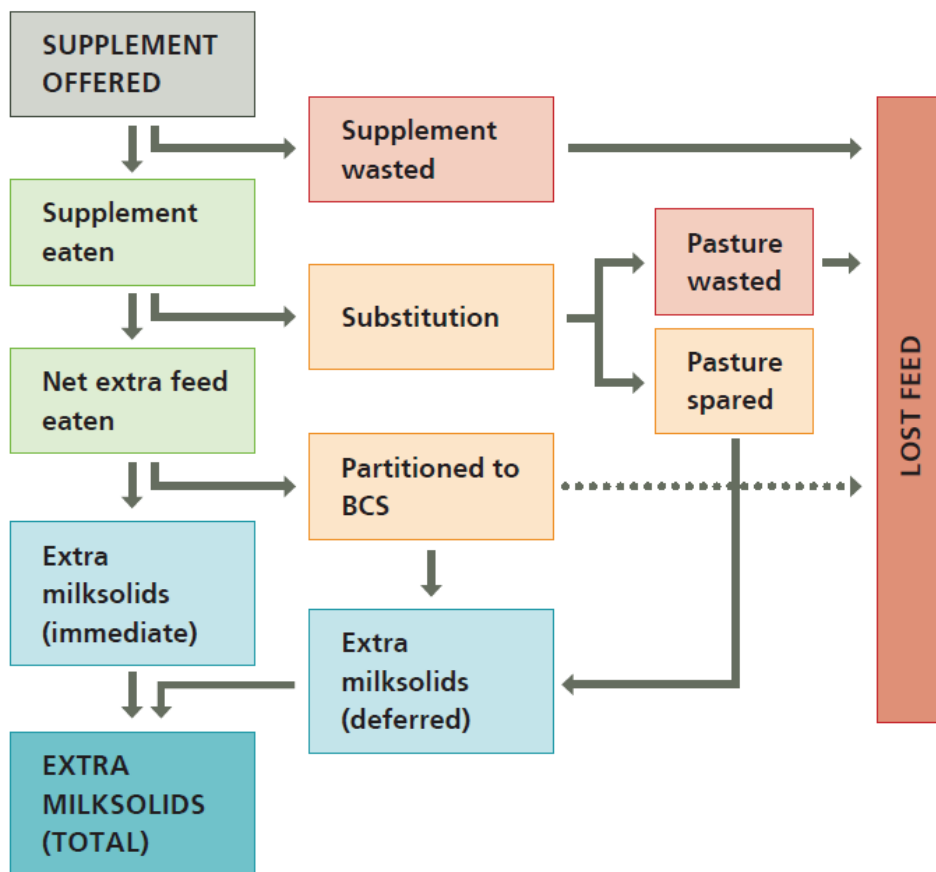
- Leaf = high energy, digestible
- Stem = lower energy, less digestible
- Dead material = very low energy

Successful use of supplements:

- Supplement strategy is intentionally simple and infrastructure aligned.
- Purchased feed is primarily PKE fed in shed; paddock fed supplements (e.g. maize) are minimised due to higher wastage, labour, intake limits, and infrastructure constraints.
- Supplement is used with intent:
  - to carry cows through feed deficits
  - to meet pasture management targets (e.g., residuals, round length)
    - **Target residuals (4 – 5cm)**  
A grazing intensity that results in a post grazing residual of 4-5 cm maintains sufficient plant energy reserves, maximises pasture regrowth and quality, and encourages tiller initiation due to increased light penetration. Minimal pasture wastage is also a consequence.
    - **Over-grazing (less than 4 – 5 cm)**  
Greater lag phase before the first leaf emerges (slower re-growth)
    - **Under-grazing (greater than 4 – 5 cm)**  
Good quality, high energy feed left in the paddock.  
The proportion of stem and dead material in the pasture increases.  
Residual leaves die and pasture quality is reduced.  
Pasture tillering is reduced and aerial tillering occurs  
Pasture quality, cow intake and milksolids production is reduced at the next grazing.
    - **Back fencing is important.**  
Grazing of the same area should not exceed a period of 48 hours, particularly during spring when pasture growth is high. Exceeding this will result in depletion of plant energy reserves, affecting regrowth and plant persistence (Fulkerson & Donaghy, 2001). If cows are grazed in larger paddocks for more than 2 days, a back fence should be used to prevent them from re-grazing the previous area.
- This results in more pasture harvested, high milk solids response and profitable production.

The way pasture and supplement are managed in the system is the biggest driver of profitable production

Figure 17: Factors that affect the response to supplement



Staff capability is built by keeping rules simple: cows are allocated the paddock with the most feed; observation of what cows' leave tells the story (residual). Staff are encouraged to 'own' paddock selection and learn through daily feedback.

Nitrogen use is tactical rather than calendar driven: autumn application to secure winter feed, a spring application, and additional N only on silage paddocks post cut. Avoidance of summer N reflects a preference to let pasture express natural growth without forcing low quality feed.

System flexibility matters more than chase of theoretical targets. Winter rotation (~60–70 days) is made possible by off farm wintering; this avoids dead material build up and supports faster spring response, but is acknowledged as system specific, not universal best practice.

Key grazing signals are triangulated daily: paddock appearance, cow behaviour (walking speed, grazing intensity, shed flow), monitoring outputs (milk response), and weather outlook. Faster feedback allows assumptions to be made and if needed, corrected quickly.

**Mowing:** Tactical tool to fix residuals if not meet

**Research:** DairyNZ study evaluated effects of pre-graze mowing at two pre-graze yields (3500 and 2800 kg DM/ha) on cow and pasture performance. **Key results:**

**MOW vs GRAZE**

- No benefit of pre-graze mowing on DMI, milksolids production or BCS
- Pre-graze mowing reduced silage harvested and increased supplements fed
- Pre-graze mowing reduced pasture tillering and density in the summer

**TARGET vs HIGH Pre-Graze Covers**

- Cows grazing pasture at ~2800 kg DM/ha produced more milksolids than those grazing at ~3500 kg DM/ha

# Looking for greener pastures *in your career?*

## Opportunities for Contract Milkers at Dairy Holdings.

It's the people in our business that are at the heart of everything we do. That's why we're on the lookout for ambitious new team members for the coming season in several South Island locations.

Dairy Holdings is New Zealand's largest dairy company, with a focus on 'People, Process and Pasture'. We're committed to 100% pasture, recognising the inherent goodness of grass. Keeping our operations self-contained, maximising economies of scale,

and focusing on best farming practices are qualities deeply embedded in the way we do things.

No matter what your starting point, the opportunity is there to grow your own herd. With the support of Dairy Holdings behind you, you'll be surprised at how fast you'll be able to build that equity. All the while without leaving the farm you've joined, your family can stay in the same community and make the most of the favourable life balance Dairy Holdings farmers enjoy.



Get in touch at  
[dairyholdings.co.nz](https://dairyholdings.co.nz)  
or scan for more information.

**Farms  
that grow  
farmers.**



**dairy  
holdings**

## KEY MESSAGES & WRAP UP OF MORNING SESSIONS

Olin Greenan, Pasture Summit



### NOTES

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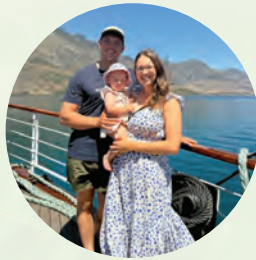
## SESSION 4: PROGRESS & EQUITY GROWTH PATHWAYS

Panel discussion and open Q&A exploring progression and equity growth pathways for young farmers wanting to progress in dairying.

*Sian & Eoin O'Mahony*  
*Tokoroa*



*Steph & Chris Ferguson*  
*Otorohanga*



*Bas Nelis*  
*Tirau*



**Facilitated by:**

Steph Gudgeon, DairyNZ



Grace Waldon, ASB Bank





WEEKDAYS 11AM-1PM

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**03 307 0256**

# FEEDBACK SHEET

## South Waikato Autumn Event 2026

1) Overall the value I got out of today's event was...

Low	1	2	3	4	5	High
-----	---	---	---	---	---	------

2) I attended the following sessions and got the following value from them.... (please tick only the sessions you attended)

Session	Presenters & Facilitators	Value				
		Low 1	2	3	4	High 5
<b>Session 1:</b> Background, Goals & Business Performance	Hugh & Anna Edward (host farmers) Facilitated by Aleisha Broomfield, DairyNZ					
<b>Session 2:</b> Pasture & Feed Management	Hugh & Anna Edward (host farmers), Jane Kay, DairyNZ Facilitated by Mark Williams, DairyNZ					
<b>Session 3:</b> Cows & Quality Feed	Hugh & Anna Edward (host farmers), Jane Kay, DairyNZ Facilitated by Mark Williams, DairyNZ					
<b>Session 4:</b> Progression & Equity Growth Pathways	Panel discussion and open Q&A. Facilitated by Steph Gudgeon, DairyNZ & Grace Waldon, ASB Bank					
<b>Venue: Waotu South Road farm venue</b>						
<b>Morning tea and refreshments</b>						
<b>LUNCH - kindly sponsored by Fonterra, Farm Source &amp; Silver Fern Farms</b>						

3) The best part of the day was .....

.....

4) Something that could be improved is.....

.....

5) How did you hear about this event? (please tick)

Discussion Group / Consulting Officer	
Word of mouth	
CountryWide / Dairy Country Magazine	
Online	
Promotional Flyer in the mail	
Email from Pasture Summit	
Facebook/Instagram	
X / Twitter	
Rural Professional	
Other (please specify)	

6) Please tick a box that relates to you:

Farm Owner	
Herd Owning Sharemilker	
Lower Order Sharemilker/Contract Milker	
Farm Manager	
Farm Employee	
Rural Professional	
Other (please specify)	

# FEEDBACK SHEET

South Waikato Autumn Event 2026

Please take time to complete the feedback sheet on the overside.

Please deposit your completed forms in the collection box as you leave the farm.

You will also be emailed an online link after the event if you prefer to complete your evaluation electronically.

## THANK YOU FOR PROVIDING YOUR FEEDBACK



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ASB Bank Limited's lending criteria and terms apply. Only available for existing or new ASB Rural customers and only for professional installations of on-farm solar equipment on your rural property. Applicants must meet ASB's eligibility criteria. ASB will require evidence of the solar installation to our satisfaction. Offer and fees may change. At the end of the 5-year fixed rate period our Floating Base Rate plus applicable margin will apply. An early repayment adjustment may apply if you break a fixed rate term. See [asb.co.nz](http://asb.co.nz) for details. The ASB Smart Solar Loan offer is available at ASB's discretion, even where lending and eligibility criteria are met. Offer available until 30 June 2026 and may be withdrawn at any time.

**ASB**  
ONE STEP › AHEAD