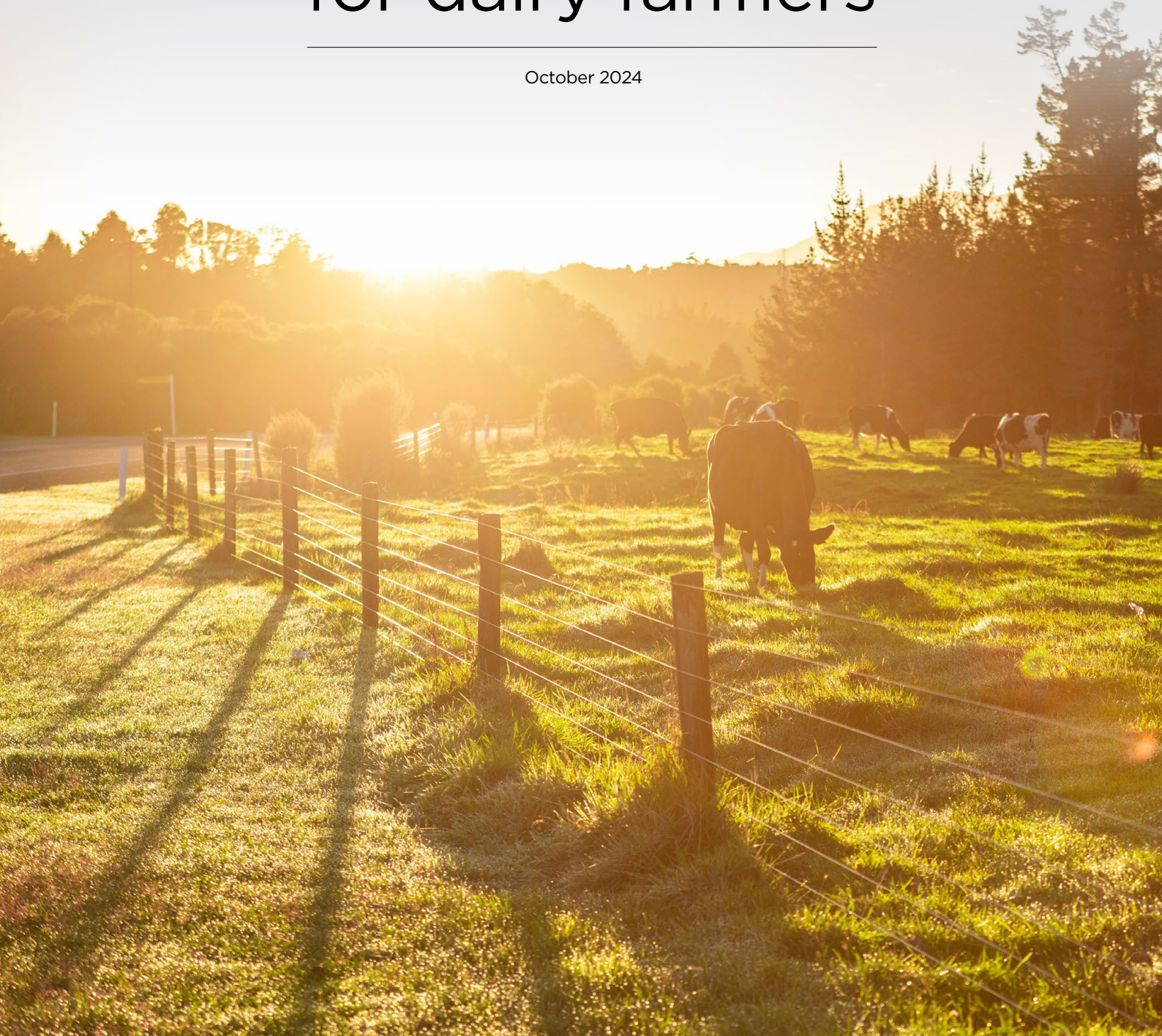




# Beef levies for dairy farmers

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October 2024







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#### *Resource Book 59*

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## INTRODUCTION

# Beef + Lamb New Zealand is focused on providing significant return on investment for dairy farmers' beef levies.

The dairy, sheep and beef industries are linked, through activities such as:

- non-replacement dairy calves in beef finishing
- the provision of beef semen or bulls
- grazing young stock
- wintering dairy cows
- providing feed.

Cull cows are a significant source of NZ's exported beef.

Given these relationships, B+LNZ continually looks at further opportunities for integration between the sectors. We work collaboratively with DairyNZ and others such as Federated Farmers in areas of mutual concern and to avoid duplication of resources.

Some of our work is specifically focused on dairy beef while we frequently run a dairy lens across other B+LNZ work.

### What levies do dairy farmers pay?

Dairy farmers pay beef levies on cull dairy cows (\$5.20 per head at slaughter).

Beef levies are also paid (\$5.20 per head at slaughter) on cull dairy heifers and bulls. No levies payable on bobby calves.

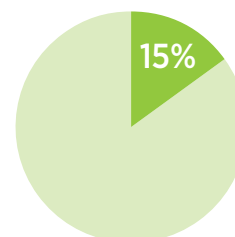
### How much do dairy farmers pay in beef levies?

On average, dairy farmers pay around \$425 a year in beef levies. In total, dairy farmers accounted for around 15 percent of B+LNZ's levy income in the 22/23 financial year.

On average dairy farmers pay around

**\$425**  
per year

Dairy farmers account for around 15 percent of B+LNZ's levy income



### How are dairy farmers' beef levies invested?

B+LNZ invests levies in two main areas:

- post-farm-gate investment that seeks to maximise the value of animals sent for slaughter
- on-farm research and extension investments where we need to take a leading approach to addressing challenges or there are industry-wide issues to solve (this is our largest area of investment).



# At a glance: summary of key levy-funded projects that benefit dairy farmers

## Inside the farm gate

- **Dairy beef progeny test** – improving the quality of NZ dairy beef by identifying superior beef bulls and enabling their widespread use across dairy herds.
- **Combatting internal parasites** – B+LNZ is the sole funder of Wormwise, giving farmers tools to minimise the impact of parasites on production and combat parasite resistance on farms. Delivering Wormwise for Dairy and creating tools and resources specifically for dairy farmers.
- **Facial eczema (FE)** – B+LNZ is the primary funder of, and leads, an ambitious, collaborative \$20.75 million seven-year programme to eliminate the impacts of FE in NZ. Working across the beef and dairy cattle industry, and with leading research scientists and consultants, investigating all aspects of the disease, its prevention and treatment.

## Outside the farm gate

- **Cross-sector work on non-replacement dairy calves** – B+LNZ, DairyNZ, MPI, the Meat Industry Association, DCANZ, and farmers together finding workable solutions to help reduce the number of bobby calves sent to slaughter. This project will investigate how to create better dairy beef calves through better genetics, calf rearing and farm management systems, less bobby calves through extended lactations and new dairy beef products, assessing new markets and processing systems.
- **Dairy beef market access** – influencing free trade agreements (FTAs) to increase beef access into global markets, advocating with MIA for the removal of the most impactful barriers, furthering our sustainably-produced beef story globally, working in key overseas markets to represent beef interests.
- **Taste Pure Nature origin brand** – B+LNZ, with the red meat sector, developed this country-of-origin brand campaign to raise awareness of, and drive preference for, grass-fed beef and lamb from NZ – focusing on China and US, significant markets for ingredients beef (the main output from cull dairy cows).
- **Domestic marketing of beef** – in partnership with retailers and processors, B+LNZ invests \$3.6 million annually to drive consumption of beef domestically and underpin confidence in the product and industry. Including campaigns such as 'Good things start with NZ beef and lamb' featuring Stacey Waaka and partnering with NZ Olympic Committee. Investing in nutrition education and advocacy on the important role beef plays in nutrition for all ages.
- **Pasture Raised Advantage research** – jointly funding research exploring the differences between pasture-raised beef and both grain-fed beef and alternative proteins – the first clinical trial of its kind to compare the effects of flexitarian and vegetarian lifestyles on a range of health and wellbeing outcomes.
- Plus **collaboration** with DairyNZ on advocacy, event delivery, resources, product development and more.





## CHAPTER 1

# Adding value to dairy beef

B+LNZ is leading projects that maximise the value of dairy beef at each stage of the supply chain. This starts with the selection of beef genetics that add value to the dairy farmers' calf crop through to the capturing of a premium for NZ's grass-fed, naturally raised beef.

The following is a snapshot of key B+LNZ-led projects adding value to dairy beef.



### Dairy Beef Progeny Test

B+LNZ Genetics' Dairy Beef Progeny Test (DBPT) has shown that using superior beef sires across dairy cows has the potential to improve outcomes for both the dairy farmer and beef finisher.

#### About the DBPT

The DBPT followed the five-year B+LNZ Dairy Beef Integration programme (see following section for more information).

The DBPT began at Limestone Downs in 2015, where Hereford and Angus bulls with a range of Estimated Breeding Values (EBVs) were tested in a dairy herd to determine how well the progeny performance matched the EBV of the sire.

EBVs proved to be a good predictor of performance in the dairy beef system, and so the second phase of the DBPT was established at Pāmu's Renown farm at Wairakei Pastoral Estate near Taupō.

This phase involved the selection of bulls, from any breed, whose EBVs indicated their potential to be excellent bulls for dairy beef systems. The selected bulls underwent progeny testing by generating offspring within Renown's crossbred dairy herd. Calves were born and subsequently raised at Renown farm, then transferred to other farms within Pāmu's livestock portfolio for finishing under commercial conditions.

Calving ease, gestation length, birthweight, days to weaning, 200,400 and 600-day weights were all recorded along with carcass data.

#### What the DBPT showed

The DBPT has shown that selecting the right recorded beef sires can improve outcomes for both the dairy farmer and beef finisher.

Dairy farmers will benefit from short gestation lengths, low birthweight calves and ease of calving while beef finishers will benefit from animals that are able to be finished quickly to processor specifications. These calves will also reach weaning weights quicker, saving money and time in the calf barn.

Quality beef sired calves are essential for a well-functioning dairy beef system. The purchasing patterns for beef rearers and finishers are starting to change and buyers are demanding more.

The DBPT has shown there are bulls from all breeds that can deliver for the dairy farmer and the beef farmer. Look for good figures, not good colours.

The breed of the cow is also proving to be less important. Analysis of the Progeny Test data shows that Jersey cows mated to top 10 percent beef bulls will produce steers that grow to a better carcass than Friesian cows mated to a bull from the bottom 10 percent of the DBPT.

The bottom 10 percent of the progeny test are still really good bulls, however, and significantly better than most bulls you could buy to use as a follow-up bull.

When bred to crossbred cows, the best 10 percent bulls from the DBPT produced calves with a 34 kg bigger carcass.

If you want to produce really good dairy beef calves, consider using a straw and buying proven genetics. Your rearer and finisher will thank you for it – and come back next year.

The DBPT has shown that there are sires that deliver right along the supply chain. Taking the time to select these genetics in the lead up to mating will pay dividends in the quality of the non-replacement calf crop and the value of those calves to rearers and finishers.



## B+LNZ Dairy Beef Integration programme

When this five-year programme concluded its findings continued to have lasting benefits for dairy farmers, as it was the catalyst for the Dairy Beef Progeny Test. It demonstrated that using beef sires with good EBVs for calving ease and growth on dairy farms can benefit both the dairy and beef industries.

The programme compared the use of Ezicalve (high EBVs for calving ease and liveweight) bulls with unrecorded Hereford sires on dairy farm. The impacts on mating, calving, calf rearing and beef finishing were assessed.

### Findings:

- Using beef semen reduced mating costs by at least 20 percent per insemination.
- Selecting cows for insemination with beef semen required minimal extra time.
- No calves born to natural matings by Ezicalve bulls required assistance at calving.
- Ezicalve AI sired calves were 3.5-4kg lighter at birth than calves sired by unproven Hereford bulls.
- Despite lower birthweights, Ezicalve sired calves took a similar time to reach 100kg liveweight as those sired by unrecorded Hereford bulls.
- Cattle sired by AI were consistently heavier during finishing than those sired naturally. This was a consequence of the calves being born an average five weeks earlier rather than greater liveweight gains.
- Selecting bulls with high growth EBVs showed an advantage during beef finishing.

## Profitable calf rearing

Over 1.5 million calves are reared annually in NZ as both dairy replacements and for the beef industry. Artificially reared calves account for around 65 percent of NZ's beef output through the slaughter of bulls, surplus heifers and cull cows.

To compare different calf rearing systems and provide advice and information to calf rearers, B+LNZ and other industry funders undertook various studies to determine which calf rearing system were the most advantageous.

### Poukawa Calf Rearing Project

This project was run at On Farm Research Ltd in Hawke's Bay from 1999-2010. It was funded by B+LNZ, the Ministry for Agriculture, Dairy Insight, The Sustainable Farming Fund and AGMARDT.

A number of different calf rearing practices were tested and good management practices recommended.

Successful calf rearing and cost savings can be gained by:

- purchasing the right calf – four-day calves should weigh a minimum of 35kg and have been fed at least two litres of colostrum,
- once-a-day feeding with a restricted volume of milk and free access to cereal-based, high protein meal or pellets to aid the development of rumen tissue, and
- facilities must have good drainage, and dry weather vehicle access for unloading calves and milk feeding – daily attention to hygiene and animal health is critical.





## Eliminating Facial Eczema Impacts Programme

The Eliminating Facial Eczema Impacts (EFEI) Programme is a seven-year initiative with the ambitious goal of eliminating the impacts of facial eczema (FE) for New Zealand. With a budget of \$20.7 million, this collaborative effort involves B+LNZ, the Ministry for Primary Industries' Sustainable Food and Fibre Futures fund (with \$8.3 million funding announced in March 2024), 350 participating farmers, industry partners, and research providers. B+LNZ is the primary funder and leads the programme.

FE is a challenging disease associated with the toxin-producing fungus *Pseudopithomyces*, significantly affecting livestock health and productivity. Climate change has exacerbated the distribution of FE, making it a pressing issue for farmers across New Zealand. Much of programme's work is based in the Waikato, where the effects of FE are worst. The programme is designed to be genuinely cross-species.

### Key initiatives and studies

- **Facial Eczema Tolerance Test for Sheep:** Aims to develop a welfare-friendly, cost-effective laboratory test to identify sheep tolerant to the toxin associated with FE. The approach could potentially be expanded to other ruminants such as cattle (beef and dairy) and deer. It offers valuable insights even if optimal results are not achieved, paving the way for alternative strategies. This test is part of a comprehensive whole-farm system approach to tackling FE, with multiple strategies considered to ensure effective management.
- **The Sheep Poo Epidemiological Study:** Aimed at understanding the risk and prevalence of FE across New Zealand. The study involves farmers from 16 regions collecting sheep poo samples from October to May for three years. Participation is free, with B+LNZ providing kits and prepaid courier bags. With over 200 farmers participating in the first year and a goal of reaching 350, the programme actively

collaborates with farmers to pioneer innovative solutions for FE management. Participating farmers receive regular spore counts, access to a spore detection map, and networking opportunities via WhatsApp and webinars. Sheep are a sentinel animal for FE and the work in this study has cross-species impact.

### Livestock farmers at the core

Livestock farmers are central to the success of the EFEI programme. The goal is to engage with a broad spectrum of livestock farmers throughout the programme, from on-farm operations to governance, ensuring that initiatives are not only impactful but also practical and beneficial.

### Farmer Research Advisory Group (FRAG)

B+LNZ's Farmer Research Advisory Group (FRAG) is composed of 16 B+LNZ Farmer Councillors dedicated to on-farm research and innovation. FRAG provides essential input and guidance to the B+LNZ research team, ensuring levy funds are allocated to research that directly enhances farmer profitability and productivity. Integral to the EFEI programme and other B+LNZ research initiatives, FRAG serves as a crucial sounding board, keeping the farmer's perspective central to all decision-making.

Richard Fowler, Dairy Beef Representative of FRAG, says, "There's scope for beef and dairy farmers to work much closer together on a number of fronts, but dairy beef production is an obvious one. The research that Beef + Lamb is doing into the likes of facial eczema, internal parasites, and dairy beef genetics has real benefits to both sectors."



➔ Learn more about EFEI at:  
[www.beeflambnz.com/EFEI](http://www.beeflambnz.com/EFEI)

**EFEI** Eliminating  
Facial Eczema  
Impacts

Ministry for Primary Industries  
Manatū Ahu Matua







## Reaping the rewards of trade negotiations

Irrespective of market fluctuations, B+LNZ's Trade Policy team continues to represent the interests of NZ's beef farmers in global trade discussions.

The team's strategy is to improve access into current markets and look for other opportunities within those markets, explore new market opportunities and protect access in existing markets.

Beef remains very protected globally, and efforts to reduce these barriers benefit dairy farmers' red meat exports.

NZ's red meat exports total \$11.8 billion in export earnings, but tariffs cost this country \$197 million annually and non-tariff barriers \$1.5 billion, hence the importance of continued trade negotiations with existing and future markets.

B+LNZ plays an influential role in securing Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) to increase beef access into global markets.

- CPTPP secured access for NZ beef into Japan and is reducing tariffs from 38.5 percent to nine percent in 2033.
- The NZ-Korea FTA will see tariffs fall from 40 percent to zero in 2029.
- The UK FTA has secured outstanding access for beef where before NZ had practically none. In the first year NZ has a duty-free beef quota of 12,000 tonnes, increasing to 38,820 tonnes in year ten, after which beef exports will be tariff-free (although a safeguard mechanism is in place from years 11-15). There are greater opportunities for cull cow beef through access for manufactured and cooked products.
- The EU FTA will slowly improve beef access over seven years to 10,000 tonnes (from 1,102 tonnes product weight previously).
- Tariff reduction benefits flow through to schedule payments.

B+LNZ works with the Meat Industry Association to advocate for the removal of the most impactful barriers – non-tariff barriers cost the red meat sector \$1.5 billion in 2022.

## Building a case for beef

B+LNZ furthers our sustainably-produced beef story globally. We sit on the Board of the Global Roundtable for Sustainable Beef as well as the Board of the International Meat Secretariat. Both are international groups which advocate for sustainable beef production and promote beef consumption at a global level.

B+LNZ attends United Nations FAO and COP events advocating for international policy that protects beef production and recognises the importance of red meat for global nutrition. It also calls for fairer metrics for measuring methane's impact on global warming.

We also have representatives in key overseas markets (UK and Europe, and the US) troubleshooting, maintaining quotas and representing beef interests.

## Pasture Raised Advantage

A groundbreaking study examining the differences between pasture-raised beef and both grain-fed beef and alternative proteins showed that red meat was a better source of protein than a processed plant-based alternative.

The study, the first clinical trial of its kind to compare the effects of flexitarian and vegetarian lifestyles on a range of health and wellbeing outcomes, also found that pasture-raised meat contains more omega-3 polyunsaturated fat than grain-finished meat. Polyunsaturated fats are more beneficial to health than other fats.

Jointly funded by B+LNZ, the High-Value Nutritional National Science challenge and Ministry for Business Innovation and Employment Research Partnership Fund, the study was undertaken by researchers, scientists, dietitians and nutritionists from AgResearch, Massey University, the Riddet Institute and University of Auckland.

It was also supported by the Meat Industry Association of New Zealand Innovation Ltd (MIA Innovation).





## Taste Pure Nature origin brand

Launched in 2019, the Taste Pure Nature country of origin brand provided a platform for collaboration between NZ exporters and in-market partners to promote NZ's grass-fed beef and lamb.

The role of the country-of-origin brand was to provide:

- a global brand platform to enhance the positioning of NZ grass-fed beef and lamb
- a marketing umbrella to underpin NZ meat exporter brand building activities
- integrity to the product sold under the brand. Only meat from farms that are part of the New Zealand Farm Assurance Programme or processor equivalent is eligible to be sold under the Taste Pure Nature origin brand. This provides assurance on integrity, origin, traceability, biosecurity and animal welfare.

It built on the findings of a major B+LNZ-commissioned study into alternative proteins, which found the same forces driving investment in and demand for alternative proteins, including concerns about industrial farming, health and the environment, offered a chance to differentiate NZ red meat internationally.

The Taste Pure Nature brand has significantly increased awareness of NZ's grass-fed farming systems amongst targeted 'conscious foodies' in China and the US. It has also driven the aspiration to purchase grass-fed NZ beef.

The US and China are very significant markets for ingredients beef (derived from cull dairy cows) and the Taste Pure Nature work is driving demand for NZ's grassfed, free range, burger beef.

An independent cost benefit analysis on Taste Pure Nature's impact concluded that it generated an \$8 return for every dollar spent. Processors now lead Taste Pure Nature activity, with B+LNZ remaining an active support partner.



## Domestic promotion

B+LNZ invests levies, along with funding from retailers and processors, to drive the domestic consumption of beef and build confidence in the product and industry.

This includes funding campaigns such as the 'Good things start with NZ beef and lamb' featuring Stacey Waaka and partnering with the NZ Olympic Committee. It also includes significant investment in nutrition education and advocacy on the important role beef plays in nutrition for all ages.

Ongoing independent tracking shows consumer trust in the NZ beef sector is strong and trending upwards.



## Beef + Lamb New Zealand Awards


The annual Beef + Lamb New Zealand Awards celebrate the people, businesses and technologies that are making an impact in the sheep, beef and dairy beef industries.

Dairy beef has been well represented in the Awards so far, with Canterbury calf rearers Maatua Hou winning the Gallagher Innovative Farming Award in 2022, while Pearl Veal, a company that adds value to calves of dairy origin, won the Silver Fern Farms Market Leader Award in 2023.

➔ Find out more: [www.beeflambnz.com/awards](http://www.beeflambnz.com/awards)

**Beef+Lamb**  
New Zealand **AWARDS**





## CHAPTER 2

# Working in collaboration

B+LNZ works closely and collaboratively with DairyNZ in areas of shared interest. As well as avoiding the duplication of resources, this means the sharing of knowledge and skills across both organisations for the benefit of levy payers.

## Working across the sector on dairy calf opportunities

New Zealand's dairy sector faces a growing challenge and opportunity with the early slaughter of surplus non-replacement dairy calves. Addressing potential reputational risks and unlocking valuable opportunities requires an innovative, collaborative approach across the dairy and beef sectors.

B+LNZ, DairyNZ, Meat Industry Association (MIA), Dairy Companies Association of New Zealand (DCANZ) and Fonterra are working with the Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) to launch a programme that will enable the next logical steps for improved dairy-beef integration.

The goal is to reduce bobby calf numbers by 30 percent by 2035 and 90 percent by 2050, while enhancing the value of dairy-beef through improved genetics, rearing and farm systems, information sharing, relationships and new market opportunities.

This programme focuses on three pillars:

1. **Driving Dairy-Beef Efficiency:** Led by B+LNZ, this pillar aims to improve dairy-beef genetics, rearing practices, farming and supply chain systems.
2. **Reducing Non-viable Calves:** Led by DairyNZ, it targets extending lactation and refining mating programmes.
3. **Developing New Products and Markets:** Led by the MIA, this involves creating innovative products, enhancing processing, and marketing strategies.

With strong support from farmers and industry stakeholders, this programme aims to transform the dairy-beef landscape, adding an estimated \$1.48 billion in value by 2050, while significantly reducing the reliance on bobby calf slaughter.

The initiative will offer dairy farmers, calf rearers and cattle finishers sustainable, profitable alternatives that align with evolving market expectations and ethical standards.





## Dairy heifer grazing

Growing-out dairy heifers is a significant part of many dry stock businesses and B+LNZ is working alongside DairyNZ to promote best-practice dairy heifer management.

B+LNZ features DairyNZ-developed resources on its website to give farmers grazing dairy heifers the information they need to ensure the heifers in their care have the opportunity to realise their genetic potential over their lifetime.

Dairy farmers trust graziers with the future performance of their dairy herd while for graziers, dairy heifers generate valuable cashflow and are a valuable stock type to accommodate within a dry stock system.

Dairy heifers are managed as a “finishing animal” and should gain weight almost every day they are on a grazier’s property. Their feed requirements, both in terms of quantity and quality, take careful planning to meet.

To help graziers understand the nutritional requirements of dairy heifers, a Heifer Feeding and Nutrition resource details the energy and protein

requirements of heifers at different ages and stage as well as the quantity of drymatter required to drive growth rates. It also provides weight-for-age liveweight targets.

Nutrition pre-puberty influences the skeletal size of the heifer and well-grown heifers will ultimately produce more milk, compete better with mature cows and have greater longevity within the herd.

The resource also covers the use of crops, supplements, water and mineral requirements.

A Weights and Weighing resource provides practical advice around weighing, including targets, timing, weighing systems, how to take into account gut fill and identifying the reasons behind poor animal performance.

Both the Heifer Feeding and Nutrition and Weights and Weighing resources have links to more detailed information about related topics which allows graziers to drill down into detail about specific management practices.

➔ For more information go to: [www.dairynz.co.nz/animal/heifers/weights-weighing/](http://www.dairynz.co.nz/animal/heifers/weights-weighing/)





## Winter grazing

Winter grazing practices have come under increasing scrutiny in recent years. To help farmers protect their water, soil and nutrient resources and maintain high standards of animal welfare while intensively grazing winter forage crops, B+LNZ has worked alongside DairyNZ, Federated Farmers and regional councils to run campaigns promoting good management practices.

B+LNZ has a dedicated Intensive Winter Grazing webpage and has developed a number of resources including factsheets, videos and podcasts to help farmers make the most efficient and effective use of their forage crops while minimising their environmental footprint.

The Forage Cropping module of the B+LNZ Farm Plan helps farmers identify and mitigate risks associated with winter grazing and develop a wintering plan to help minimise nutrient and soil losses while ensuring stock have feed, water, shelter and dry loafing areas.

Winter grazing resources contain information around management of livestock and crops including paddock selection, identification of critical source areas, pre and post-grazing management and strategic grazing.

These resources draw on research carried out by AgResearch which shows how, with the correct management, nutrient losses and run-off from winter feed crops can be reduced by as much as 70 percent.

## Ten top tips for grazing winter forage crops

- 1) **Exclude stock from waterways.** An ungrazed buffer zone of five metres around waterways is recommended, however this could increase with slope and soil instability.
- 2) **Leave an ungrazed buffer zone around critical source areas (CSAs).** CSAs are areas where contaminants concentrate and work their way into waterways. These include gullies, swales, wet areas, springheads, waterway crossings, stock camps and vehicle access routes.
- 3) **Graze paddocks strategically.** On a sloping paddock, it is recommended that fences are run across the slope and the paddock grazed from the top. This allows the standing crop to act as a filter by reducing the overland transportation of contaminants. Ideally grazing should start at the opposite end of the paddock from any waterways.
- 4) **Make breaks long and narrow, especially for cattle.** This will help with crop utilisation and reduce wastage.
- 5) **Back fence.** Regularly back fencing to keep stock off previously grazed breaks will help minimise pugging damage and reduce the risk of run-off.
- 6) **Place troughs and supplementary feed in a dry central part of the paddock.** Portable troughs and feeders are ideal as they can be moved to reduce pugging risk and make back fencing easier.
- 7) **Animal welfare.** Stock should have adequate feed, shelter, access to drinking water and an area where they can lie down and ruminate.
- 8) **Plant a catch crop.** A catch crop, sown as soon as possible after grazing has been completed, can capture the nutrients left in the paddock and turn them into dry matter. Oats are ideal as they can be sown into colder soil temperatures.
- 9) **Plan, plan, plan.** A wintering plan will help identify and mitigate any risks associated with intensive winter grazing. This plan should include contingency plans in case of extended periods of bad weather.
- 10) **Keep a record.** A record of management practices, which include photos and diaries, could be useful if required for compliance.

➔ **Find out more at:**  
[www.beeflambnz.com/wintergrazing](http://www.beeflambnz.com/wintergrazing)

**KEEP UP THE GREAT WORK THIS WINTER**

*Minimise the impacts on the environment and animals.*

**Exclude stock from waterways.** Create an ungrazed buffer zone between the livestock and the waterway. At least 5 metres, but this should increase with slope and soil instability. Check with your local council for any regulations about buffer widths.

**Back fence.** Regularly back fence stock off grazed breaks to help minimise pugging damage and to reduce runoff risk. Doing this will limit stock wandering excessively, while still allowing them to exhibit natural behaviours.

**Leave an ungrazed and ungrazed buffer zone around critical source areas.** Critical source areas are parts of the paddock that can channel overland flow directly to waterways (e.g. gullies, swales, very wet areas, spring heads, waterway crossings, stock camps and vehicle access routes).

**Write down your wintering plan**  
 Document your plan explaining how you will minimise your environmental losses and look after your stock over winter.

**Prepare for adverse weather events.** Have a plan in place to cope with bad weather: how you will protect waterways and provide clean drinking water, feed and shelter to your stock.

**Plant a catch crop.** Where soil conditions and farm management allow, consider planting a fast growing crop, such as greenfeed oats, straight after grazing. It can help reduce nitrogen losses.

For more information and useful resources visit: [www.beeflambnz.com/wintergrazing](http://www.beeflambnz.com/wintergrazing)





## NAIT and eASDs improve traceability

OSPRI shareholders B+LNZ, DairyNZ and DINZ work together seeking better performance and usability of the NAIT system. Industry bodies routinely adopt a team approach to supporting each other in policy discussions and in developing submissions in response to legislative consultations on behalf of levy payers.

In addition to promoting better compliance with NAIT rules the industry bodies have supported improvements such as a review of NAIT standards with the aim of achieving more alignment with systems such as MINDA, where dairy farmers should ideally only have to enter information about traceability into one system.

Additionally, B+LNZ as a lead funder in the Red Meat Profit Partnership invested in the development and testing of an electronic Animal Status Declarations (eASDs) system. This proved very popular with meat companies and farmers and highlighted the advantages eASDs for efficiently capturing whole of life farm management information of value to customers of meat and dairy products.

## Animal welfare

B+LNZ is actively involved with other sector organisations in the Farm to Processor Animal Welfare Forum where animal standards and codes of welfare in NZ are reviewed. B+LNZ has provided submissions to the National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee about how the codes can best operate within NZ's grazing systems, including standards such as pain relief, shelter, and winter grazing.

B+LNZ works closely with transporters, processors, and regulators to ensure that welfare standards remain high while being practical and achievable across the supply chain.

B+LNZ is also promoting NZ's high animal welfare standards to the world through initiatives such as the Global Roundtable for Sustainable Beef and the NZ Farm Assurance Programme.

See also other animal welfare-related sections in this book such as B+LNZ Wormwise.



## Building sector capability

B+LNZ invests in a range of initiatives to attract and retain talent, build skills and knowledge and support the development of leaders in rural communities. B+LNZ often co-invests with DairyNZ to maximise benefit for both industries.

Working collaboratively across the wider primary sector helps to create awareness about careers in agriculture. This involves targeting students who are making career decisions and the people who influence them such as teachers and career advisors, through relationships with NZ Young Farmers and the Horticultural and Agricultural Teachers Association.

B+LNZ's Employment Hub, which pulls together employment-related resources from both B+LNZ and DairyNZ, is helping farm employers through every stage of their journey from recruiting right through to exiting staff and reviewing processes.

B+LNZ, alongside DairyNZ and St Paul's Collegiate School, has been a proud partner of the Agribusiness in Schools programme for over 10 years. This programme has 'taken the bull by the horns' and addresses the lack of substantial agricultural curriculum for high school students.

B+LNZ also invests in vocational training through partnering with Primary ITO, cadet training farms and Growing Future Farmers to support the development of skills and knowledge of entrants into the sector. B+LNZ provides funding to dairy employees who choose to do the beef strand of the national certificate.

B+LNZ supports programmes that ensure leaders are developed at all levels of the sector. We support the Rural Leadership Trust which run the Nuffield and Kellogg Rural Leadership initiatives, Value Chain Innovation programmes, NZ Young Farmers and a range of Agri Women's Development Trust programmes that aim to have 20 percent dairy industry women participate.



## Past projects run in collaboration with DairyNZ

### Eradication of *Mycoplasma bovis* (*M. bovis*)

B+LNZ and DairyNZ, along with the Ministry for Primary Industries, partnered in the programme for the phased eradication of *M. bovis*.

*M. bovis* is a bacteria that can cause significant health conditions in cattle, including mastitis (udder infection), pneumonia, arthritis, and ill-thrift in calves. Less commonly it can cause progressive neurological disease in calves, conjunctivitis and reproductive losses.

The programme aims to eradicate *M. bovis* from NZ, reduce the impact of the disease and the eradication programme for everyone affected, and leave NZ's biosecurity system stronger.

Following the move to a surveillance phase, in November 2023 the programme contracted out the day-to-day management of its operations to disease control and traceability agency OSPRI.

### Pastoral 21

Pastoral 21 (P21) was a five-year collaboration that ran between 2007-2012. Jointly funded by B+LNZ, MBIE, DairyNZ, Fonterra, the Dairy Companies Association of New Zealand (DCANZ) and AgResearch, its goal was to boost farm profits and production while reducing agriculture's environmental footprint.

It covered three broad areas:

- next generation dairy systems (production systems were tested in four key dairy regions, using readily adoptable approaches expected to increase profitability from production while reducing nutrient losses to water – researchers found that profitability could be maintained while nutrient losses were reduced significantly)
- lifting profitability for mixed livestock systems (optimising the forage grown on farms where lambs and young beef animals were finished on hill country)
- breakthrough technologies (to prove new concepts that had the potential to change the relationship between production gains and environmental footprint).



### Pastoral Genomics

Pastoral Genomics was a consortium for forage improvement through biotechnology. It included B+LNZ, DairyNZ, DEEResearch, Grasslands Innovation (a joint venture between Grasslanz Technology and PGGW Seeds), Agriseeds, AgResearch and Dairy Australia.

Its aim was to deliver smart, sustainable forages to NZ, using plant biotechnologies to improve the productivity, sustainability and quality of NZ's forages. Pastoral Genomics developed tools to breed cultivars with smaller environmental footprints, greater productivity and other traits to meet industry targets.

### Biocontrol of clover root weevil

In 2015, B+LNZ and DairyNZ collaborated to run a series of workshops to provide South Island farmers with vials of clover root weevil parasitised with the tiny Irish Wasp (*Microtonus aethiopoides*) for release. This was to ensure the spread of this biocontrol agent to help control clover root weevil, which has the potential to reduce clover production by up to 33 percent.

### Solutions to Johne's disease

Johne's disease (JD) is a chronic, progressive, contagious and generally fatal infection of cattle, sheep, deer, goats and wildlife. It is an ongoing disease of concern for the livestock industry. While levels are low in NZ, JD has the potential to have a significant impact on animal welfare and market access.

The Johne's Disease Research Consortium (JDRC) was a joint venture between industry and the science community that ran from 2008-2016 to coordinate JD research in NZ.

The Consortium's research programme focused on issues behind the farm gate and its goal was to develop practical and cost-effective tools which could be used to reduce the prevalence of JD in herds or flocks in NZ. Alongside the research programme, the JDRC was responsible for developing a coordinated set of resources for the management and control of JD in cattle and sheep in NZ.

After the JDRC concluded in 2016, the Johne's Advisory Group (JAG) was established as working group to provide ongoing support and insight for industry on research and development and the control and management of JD in NZ. The group is jointly managed by B+LNZ, DairyNZ and Deer Industry New Zealand.



## CHAPTER 3

# Farm management tools

B+LNZ has developed farm management tools to help farmers make the most effective and efficient use of their natural and human resources to help drive productivity and profitability while protecting and enhancing their environment. These workshops, tools and resources are available to all levy payers and we encourage dairy farmers to use them. The following is just a sample of what's available.



### Wormwise® for Dairy

The B+LNZ Wormwise® initiative aims to minimise the impact of internal parasites on NZ's livestock industries, by assisting farmers with their on-farm management practices.

Wormwise has an agreed strategy for managing and integrating research work, education, communication and extension services for farmers, veterinarians, key influencers and retailers.

B+LNZ is the sole funder of Wormwise and its resources and activities – this funding provides information, advice and resources for all cattle farmers.

#### What's the issue?

Growing replacement heifers out to their full potential is still a big challenge and opportunity for many dairy businesses. Worm larval challenge and drench resistant parasites can be an underlying cause of suboptimal performance in heifers. Nutrition and grazing management have a big impact on worm challenges and can be used to reduce dependence on drench.

Of major concern in recent years has been the emergence of internal parasites that can survive the commonly used double and triple combination drench treatments used on dairy heifer rearing and intensive beef properties.

Wormwise has identified that dairy farmers may not be accessing the same level of advice around sustainable worm management and drench use as beef and sheep farmers.



#### What are we doing about it?

Wormwise for Dairy is a series of resources specifically for dairy producers – all dairy levy payers have received the first edition, covering worm management in calves, as a hard copy through Inside Dairy and in a number of rural newspapers.

Cattle-specific Wormwise workshops have been developed and are being delivered in many areas of the country.

Veterinarians are identified by farmers as a key source of parasite management advice, and Wormwise has been running workshops to help upskill dairy veterinarians, as well as providing an online discussion forum for vets to post cases and ask for advice about cattle worm management.

The Wormwise Facebook page also shares regular tips on worm management, including videos specifically covering worms in dairy cattle.

The Wormwise web-based information was comprehensively updated in March 2024.

➔ See: [www.beeflambnz.com/wormwise](http://www.beeflambnz.com/wormwise)





## Hill Country Futures Programme

The Hill Country Futures (HCF) Programme focused on future-proofing the profitability, sustainability, and well-being of hill country farmers, their farm systems, the environment, and rural communities. While its primary focus was on sheep and beef farming, the insights and tools developed through the programme also have applications in the dairy sector.

This five-year initiative was structured into two main workstreams: one dedicated to building resilient farmers and the other to developing resilient forages.

### Resilient Farmers:

Through engagement with over 300 people, mainly from the sheep and cattle farming sectors, valuable perspectives into challenges were gained – issues such as barriers to on-farm environmental action, economic diversification, resilience, and succession planning will be familiar to many farmers.

A key output from this work was the FarmSalus tool.

- FarmSalus is designed to support meaningful conversations and monitor farm success through farmer health and wellbeing.
- It has been integrated into some agricultural development programmes and can help farmers, catchment groups, and rural professionals:
  - measure and monitor farm success, considering healthy farm business, healthy farmer, healthy environment, and the importance of support networks
  - facilitate discussions on how farmer health impacts overall farm resilience.

### Resilient Forages:

The programme developed numerous resources, including the Soil and Fertiliser factsheet series.

- Produced by Lincoln University, this series includes resources on fertiliser and lime strategies, trace elements, nitrogen use, soil testing, aluminium toxicity, and sulphur requirements. These practical insights help rural professionals and farmers enhance soil testing efficiency and nutrient application.
- As part of the series, a study on the strategic use of nitrogen (N) fertiliser was conducted to boost pasture growth. The study found that applying N at commercial rates (up to 50kg N/ha annually) is environmentally safe and effectively increases pasture production. When applied correctly, N fertiliser can enhance out-of-season feed without significantly increasing leaching or harming waterways. For optimal results, N should be applied strategically to steep or sunny slopes, particularly where legumes are scarce, and combined with products like Sustain or N-Protect to minimise nitrogen loss if rain isn't expected shortly after application.

HCF was completed in 2023 and was co-funded by B+LNZ, MBIE, PGG Wrightson Seeds, and RAGT New Zealand.

➔ For resources and tools developed from HCF, visit: [www.hillcountryfutures.co.nz](http://www.hillcountryfutures.co.nz)





## Farm Safety Management System – processes, plans and workshops

An average of 17 people die in farm workplace accidents every year. Additionally, there are thousands of injuries that lead to a loss of productivity and income for farmers.

Families and rural communities, as well as individuals directly affected, bear the cost of these on-farm accidents.

B+LNZ has funded the development and delivery of workshops, events and resources to help all farmers, dairy or drystock, successfully implement good health and safety practice on their farms. These resources and events are available free to all B+LNZ levy payers.

B+LNZ's health and safety resources are available on B+LNZ's website and Farm Safety Management System workshops can be delivered upon request by contacting 0800 BEEFLAMB (0800 233 352) or a B+LNZ Extension Manager.

B+LNZ has also been using its Event Safety Management System for all events with clear standards and expectations for facilitators and farmers, particularly around vehicle use.



## Northland's Beef Profit from Pasture Project

The three-year Beef Profit from Pasture project, funded by B+LNZ in 2016, aimed to increase pasture consumption on Northland farms by 1000kgDM/ha from May to December.

Most of the participating farms focused on finishing dairy beef bulls. By increasing pasture growth during these months, farms could see up to a \$300/ha revenue increase, representing a 25-35 percent rise for a typical Northland farm.

Facilitated by AgFirst farm consultant Gareth Baynham, the project explored pasture management strategies, drawing on techniques used in dairy farming. The group emphasised managing existing pastures rather than re-grassing or cropping, although they did consider sowing annual ryegrass into Kikuyu. Key practices evaluated included rotational grazing versus set-stocking, varying winter rotation lengths, Kikuyu management, and the effects of stocking rate on pugging.

### Key findings from the project:

- Rotational grazing resulted in 29 percent more pasture harvested, 50 percent less pugging, 60 percent more liveweight gain, and \$574/ha more income compared to set-stocking. A 60-day winter rotation produced 77 percent more pasture, 44 percent more liveweight gain, and \$212/ha more income than a 30-day rotation.
- Mulching or mowing Kikuyu improved liveweight gain by 35 percent, with mowing providing the highest financial benefit at \$240/ha due to its lower cost.
- Lower stocking rates reduced pugging, but production and revenue remained similar across different stocking rates. A strategy of lower stocking rates in winter, followed by increased cattle numbers in spring, maintained high pasture cover and minimised pugging.
- Sowing annual ryegrass into Kikuyu increased pasture growth and liveweight gain by 10-50 percent, but the cost of seed and establishment reduced the overall financial benefit.

The project highlighted that effective pasture management, particularly through rotational grazing and careful Kikuyu control, significantly improves pasture utilisation and farm profitability in Northland.





## Tools and apps

B+LNZ supports and funds a range of useful resources.

### AgPest

AgPest is a free tool to help farmers and agricultural professionals in their decision making. It provides information about weed and pest identification, biology, impact and management.

The website has practical information on over 80 common pest and weeds and users can register to receive alerts with timely information about pest issues in their region and suggested management responses.

B+LNZ funds and operates a free AgPest text message service for all farmers, whatever their farm type.

➔ Find out more: [www.agpest.co.nz](http://www.agpest.co.nz)

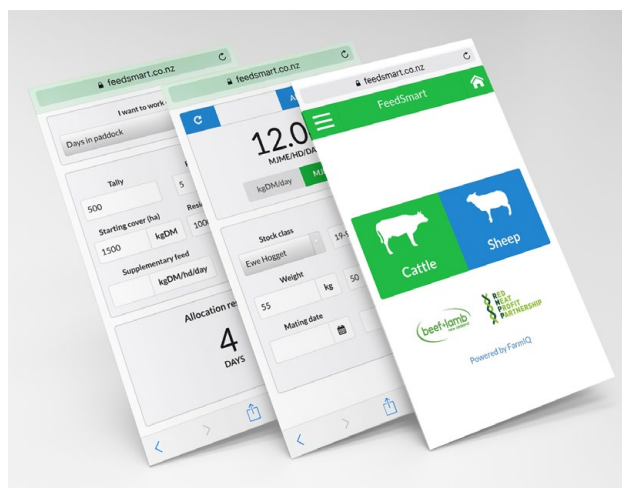
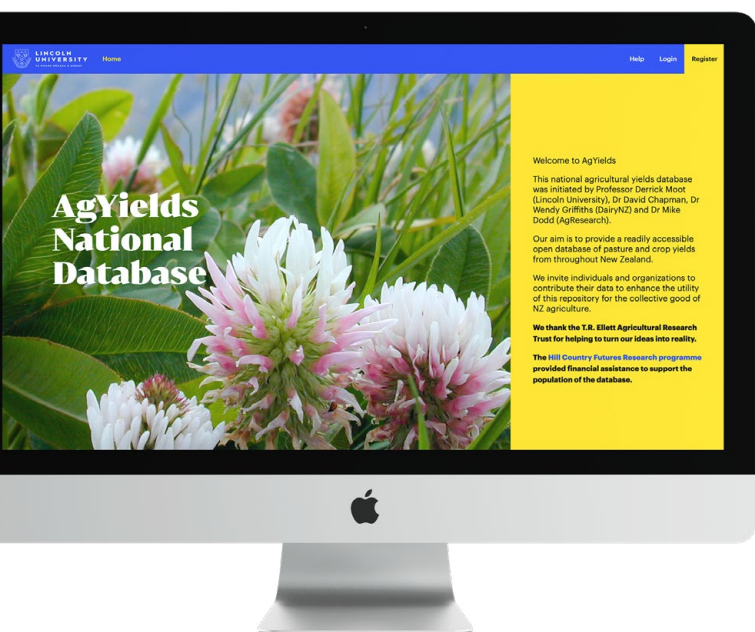
You can sign up for pest alerts via text message on the Subscriptions page in an online B+LNZ account – call 0800 BEEFLAMB (0800 233 352) if you need support with this.

### AgYields national forage database

Launched to help farmers and rural professionals make informed decisions around pasture planning, AgYields is a central repository for all pasture and crop yield data and growth rate information collected in NZ. It allows farmers to see which pastures and crops have been grown in their region and how they yielded. This information gives farmers the ability to select more resilient pasture and crop systems.

AgYields was developed through the \$8.1 million Hill Country Futures programme which was co-funded by B+LNZ, the Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment, PGWrightson Seeds and Seed Force.

➔ Find out more: [www.agyields.co.nz](http://www.agyields.co.nz)



### Feedsmart tool

The FeedSmart tool brings together a raft of variables to give farmers instant information on nutritional requirements of different classes of livestock, feed values and feed allocation. It is applicable for young dairy stock and wintering cows, as well as beef production.

Developed by B+LNZ in conjunction with the Red Meat Profit Partnership (RMPP), the tool helps farmers estimate the feed requirements for sheep and cattle at any time of the year and for different levels of production.

The tool is available free of charge at [www.feedsmart.co.nz](http://www.feedsmart.co.nz) and once downloaded it works offline anywhere as no internet connection is needed. FeedSmart is compatible with any computer, tablet or smart phone.

➔ Find out more: [www.beeflambnz.com/knowledge-hub/PDF/feedsmart-user-guide.pdf](http://www.beeflambnz.com/knowledge-hub/PDF/feedsmart-user-guide.pdf)

### Lucerne Texts

B+LNZ offers a free text message service for all lucerne farmers, irrespective of stock or farm type, with reminders and tips about lucerne management.

Written by Professor Derrick Moot of Lincoln University, these texts give timely reminders of the best management practices for lucerne. Access to updates is available from Lincoln University's ongoing lucerne research and management - such as warnings about potential pest or disease issues. The service also allows farmers to send in questions, which will be answered by Professor Moot or one of his our team.

➔ To join this service: please email [resources@beeflambnz.com](mailto:resources@beeflambnz.com) or phone 0800 BEEFLAMB (0800 233 352). Please provide a phone number and postal address.

Or you can sign up for this service on the Subscriptions page in an online B+LNZ account – call 0800 BEEFLAMB (0800 233 352) if you need support with this.



## CHAPTER 4

# Enhancing our environmental position

B+LNZ offers a range of environmental initiatives to support sheep, beef and dairy farmers. We collaborate closely with DairyNZ and other stakeholders in this work.

### Trees within farms workshops

Launched in 2019, B+LNZ's 'Trees within Farms' workshop is relevant to sheep, beef and dairy farmers.

It focuses on opportunities to integrate trees into farm systems and generate a return from the Emissions Trading Scheme and other localised tree planting and land retirement funding programmes.

B+LNZ encourages dairy farmers to attend these workshops in their region.

→ Find out more:  
[www.beeflambnz.com/trees-within-farms](http://www.beeflambnz.com/trees-within-farms)



### Catchment Community Groups

Encouraging and supporting all farmers, whether sheep, beef, dairy or other, to work together at scale can help build more resilient, connected communities that can respond to local opportunities or issues.

A catchment group is a gathering of people working together, who identify with a geographical area, usually based around the catchment of a river or lake.

Catchment Community Groups collectively take actions to achieve long-term goals based on a healthy environment (from water quality to biodiversity goals) and a thriving community.

B+LNZ works with others to support catchment groups and connect them with a range of resources and expertise.

Farmer-led catchment groups are a great platform for building profitable and sustainable farming

businesses. To be effective, group members need to agree on common goals. Reasons for creating a catchment group include:

- creating and owning their community's future
- seeing a greater return on their individual actions and connecting them to meet catchment priorities
- establishing an authoritative voice with decision makers and rule shapers - working together to influence regional plans
- engaging with, connecting and empowering the wider community
- creating and demonstrating a catchment story and highlighting the great progress farmers are making to improve the environment
- improving profitability - creating a demonstrable local story that leads to a value-added product
- kaitiakitanga - for future generations.

→ Find out more:  
[www.beeflambnz.com/catchments](http://www.beeflambnz.com/catchments)



## CHAPTER 5

# Services and resources

B+LNZ invests in a range of services and resources relevant to dairy farmers, helping to build a complete picture of our sector, providing relevant information and working with DairyNZ to avoid duplication.

## B+LNZ insights

B+LNZ's Insights team provides critical information across the entire agricultural sector, including dairying. Its forecasting and statistical analyses form the basis of much industry knowledge and planning of pasture management, pasture species, management systems and environmental management.



## Publications and farm data

B+LNZ's Insights and regional teams work together to carry out data analysis and forecasts used by B+LNZ, local and central government, farmers, agribusiness and economists.

- On-farm information is primarily based on the B+LNZ Sheep and Beef Farm Survey, which represents the sheep and beef farming sector. This includes farmers who rear dairy calves.
- Among the tools and publications particularly valued by farmers are benchmarking tools, pricing data, market deep dives, the New Season Outlook, Mid-Season Update, On-Farm Inflation Report, Lamb Crop Survey and Stock Number Survey.
- B+LNZ also makes on-farm data and industry production information available on its website. This includes a mix of monthly and annual data for exports, global indicators, on-farm benchmarking data, industry production information and farm-gate prices for lambs, sheep, wool, cattle and milk.

## Forecasts

The Insights service's forecasts for total beef production - including beef from dairy cattle - are used for planning in the meat industry for production, shipping and marketing.

Most beef from the dairy herd is manufacturing and processing beef. Market access, processing and product development are therefore of common interest among dairy, sheep and beef farmers.

Dairy cows, heifers and cull bulls have been identified at slaughter since August 2016, using data from the Ministry for Primary Industries.

## Further resources and tools relevant to the dairy industry

Recognising that a significant amount of its beef levy comes from cattle from the dairy industry, B+LNZ specifically takes into account the information needs of dairy farmers when developing resources, specifically in areas where beef farmers and dairy farmers face similar issues such as winter grazing, fodder crops, lucerne management and internal parasite management.

There are a number of free multimedia resources which are useful regardless of species or industry. Our online modules are an interactive way to learn about a range of subjects, featuring a mix of audio, video, features and interactive text. In particular, B+LNZ pioneered the use of podcasts and these have grown to be one of our most popular resource types. Many of these are applicable to all farming systems.

➔ Check out our podcast channel 'Scene + Herd': [www.beeflambnz.podbean.com](http://www.beeflambnz.podbean.com)




We also work closely with DairyNZ to develop and share resources and approaches. We link to DairyNZ resources from our website and they likewise link to relevant B+LNZ resources from their website.



# We have over 1100 resources on our website

A selection of interest to dairy farming are listed here but there are many more all available at: [www.beeflambnz.com/knowledge-hub](http://www.beeflambnz.com/knowledge-hub)

To find a resource search by keyword or phrase like the example.

 Winter forage crops

## Animal health, welfare and performance

### Podcasts

- Good management practice for winter grazing: Ross Monaghan, Soil Scientist, AgResearch
- Eradicating *M. bovis*—How to keep your farm free from disease
- Richard Laven of Massey University: Managing the risk of *M. bovis* during the winter grazing season

### Online modules

- Animal welfare on farms
- On-farm biosecurity
- Stock water management

### Publications

- The value of the dairy-beef progeny test
- Johne's disease in cattle
- Animal welfare obligations for painful husbandry procedures in cattle
- B+LNZ Wormwise resource book – managing internal parasites
- Wormwise for Dairy factsheet
- Heifer calving and breeding cow efficiency
- Management of cattle for high fertility
- *M. bovis*—Precautions for calf rearing
- Worm management
- Protecting your animals from *M. bovis*
- Worms in refugia
- *M. bovis* guidance for beef cattle farmers
- B+LNZ commitment to the welfare of sheep and beef cattle

## Genetics

### Podcasts

- Better beef genetics and the dairy industry: The dairy beef integration project

### Videos

- Dairy beef integration

### Publications

- Benefits of dairy farms using better beef genetics

## Feed and pastures

### Podcasts

- San Jolly—Feed quality
- Derrick Moot—Lucerne and other dryland legumes

### Online Tools

- FeedSmart—[www.feedsmart.co.nz](http://www.feedsmart.co.nz)

### Videos

- Feedsmart app: introduction
- Feedsmart app: feed allocation tools
- Feedsmart app: adjusting settings
- Californian thistle control—Mowing in the wet
- Linklater: fodder beet trial
- Profitable for cattle wintering

### Online Modules

- Feed fundamentals
- Principles of pasture establishment
- Stock water management

### Publications

- Endophytes on hill pastures
- Extreme dry management and planning toolkit
- Feedsmart user guide
- Management practices for forage brassicas book
- Feedsmart 2
- Summary of the fodder beet profit partnership experiences
- Pasture quality—Q-graze
- Poplars and willows as fodder
- Thistle biocontrol ute guide
- Chilean needle grass ute guide
- Velvetleaf ute guide
- Feedsmart pasture calibration sheets
- Controlling Californian thistle
- Endophyte update
- Lucerne establishment—Spring weed control options
- Lucerne winter weed control options
- Lucerne establishment weed control options



## Environment

### Podcasts

- Farming the future, the 2019 New Zealand Grassland Association Conference
- Doug Edmeades—Making the most of your fertiliser

### Videos

- Land and Environment Plans overview
- LEP, FEMP or FEP: What's the difference
- Best practice winter feeding cattle

### Online modules

- Understanding your soils
- Waste and chemical management
- Native biodiversity
- Responding to a changing climate

### Publications

- Flood preparation fact sheet
- Flood recovery fact sheet
- Winter forage crops: management before grazing
- Winter forage crops: management during grazing
- Winter forage crops: management after grazing
- Ten top tips for winter grazing of crops
- Flood recovery factsheet
- Industry agreed good management practices to water quality
- Trees for the farm
- Top tips for winter crop paddock selection
- Overseer nutrient budget form
- Climate change 101

- How to start a catchment group
- Community based freshwater monitoring
- Principles for the allocation of nutrients
- Soil characteristics important to management

## Business management

### Online Modules

- Understanding your farm business profitability
- Annual cash budgets and monthly cashflows
- Measuring progress—KPIs and benchmarking
- Farm business succession planning
- Business planning

### Videos

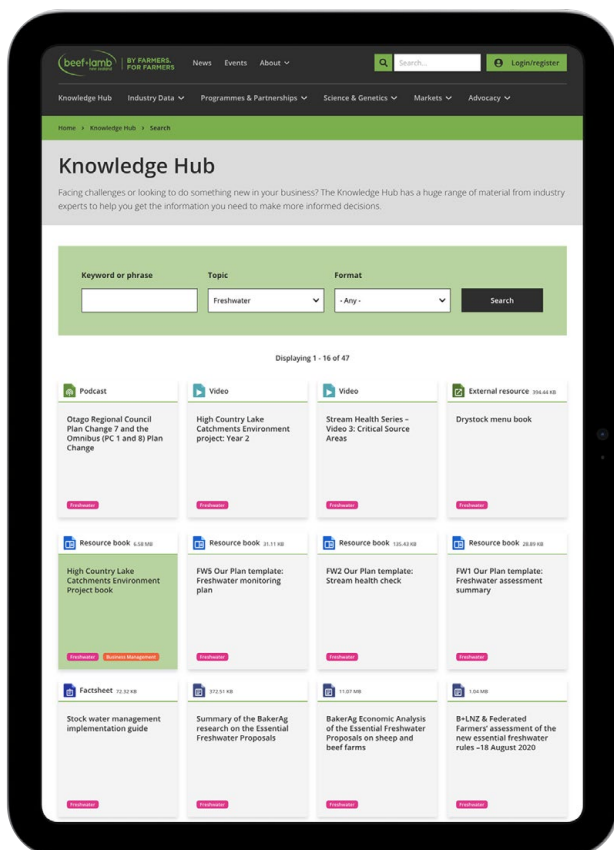
- Farm transition through an equity partnership
- Pathways in transition of the family farm business
- Family challenges during farm succession
- Bowie family farm succession story

### Publications

- Farm safety management system
- Farm ownership and transition
- The road to succession—Bowie family
- Extreme dry management toolkit

### Podcasts

- Bringing the best minds to the biggest challenges for sheep, beef and dairy farms



## No internet? No problem

We can provide hardcopies and USB drives of resources by post.

Contact us on: [resources@beeflambnz.com](mailto:resources@beeflambnz.com) or phone 0800 233 352





*By Farmers. For Farmers™*