





## A menu of possible extension activities

Workshop 	Farmer-to-farmer discussion groups 	Processor field days 
Field Day 	Farm field days 	Online chats 
Farm Tour 	Visits to other farmer-led groups 	DVDs/No 8 Wired 
Webinar 	Partner farms 	Facebook 
Conference call 	Farmlet studies and trials 	Twitter 
Expert presentations 	Learning groups (including farmers, rural advisors and scientists) 	Periscope App 
Mail outs/ newsletters 	Research projects 	VoiceByte App 
Advertising/articles in farming media 	Conference presentations 	Vine App 
Farm trial 	Farmer training 	Texts 
One-on-one advice from retailers, rural advisors and contractors 	Visits to other extension projects 	Podcasts 
Surveys 	Rural advisor trials 	Internet forums 
Interviews and focus groups with farmers 	Rural advisor training 	Pub talk 
Farmer discussion groups at farm trials 	Scientist and rural advisor exchanges 	Suppliers' events 
Extension agent one-on-one discussions with farmers 	Farm, processing, rural advisor and consumer trials 	
Demonstration and focus farms 	Processor training 	

### Key

Demonstrating skills 	Developing practicing skills 	Others sharing information with farmers 	Farmers asking questions 	Gathering information from farmers 
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## Possible extension activities

Activity	Description and examples
<b>Workshop</b>	<p>A facilitated interactive, activity-based session, sometimes led by a subject matter expert on a particular theme.</p> <p>In a workshop, participants are engaged to learn and apply the ideas being discussed to their own situations through carefully planned activities.</p> <p>To get the most out of the session, the facilitator should plan some preparation reading or practical tasks that participants complete before attending the workshop to get them into the best space for learning.</p> <p>Follow-up activities where participants go back and apply their new learnings to their own situation also help participants translate theory into practice, and can promote longer-lasting behavioural and practice change.</p>
<b>Field Day</b>	<p>Field days are usually opportunities to hold method or result demonstrations on a slightly larger scale, and are usually run in a more informal and less structured manner.</p> <p>The purpose of a field day is often to introduce new practices or technologies, and to stimulate the interest of as many farmers as possible.</p>
<b>Farm Tour</b>	<p>Farmers like to visit farms in other districts to see how they work and hear what kinds of issues the farmers there are facing and how they are managing those.</p> <p>A farm tour is a series of field demonstrations on different farms, or at different centres, and can often attract a lot of interest from local farmers. The tour should give local farmers a chance to see how other farmers manage their farms, and to exchange ideas and experiences with them.</p>
<b>Webinar</b>	<p>A webinar is basically a seminar/presentation that takes place on the Internet, allowing participants in different locations to see and hear the presenter, ask questions and get responses in real time, and sometimes answer polls.</p> <p>Webinars require participants to have a broadband Internet connection and a computer/laptop with a built-in microphone and speaker.</p> <p>Webinars can be facilitated by extension agents, processors, scientists or even other farmers. Webinars, like conference calls, are especially useful when participants are geographically spread out, making a face-to-face meeting more challenging.</p> <p>Webinars can also be recorded for others to watch to later, or attendees to re-listen to.</p>
<b>Conference call</b>	<p>Conference calls can be set up via phone or Skype.</p> <p>They are really just an opportunity to for multiple people to participate in a conversation at the same time. Conference calls, like webinars, are especially useful when participants are geographically spread out, making a face-to-face meeting more challenging.</p> <p>Conference calls can be managed for very large numbers of people by muting callers lines (so they can hear speakers but the speakers cant hear them), and taking questions and comments by email, text or Twitter.</p> <p>Calls can also be recorded for later playback, and for those who miss the call.</p>
<b>Expert presentations</b>	<p>One-off presentations to groups of farmers (and other interested parties) for experts on a particular subject can be a good way to share information and results and raise general awareness around a topic.</p> <p>The effectiveness of such a session relies heavily on the ability of the presenter to communicate their ideas and information to the audience in a way that will engage them and encourage them to think about subsequent practice change.</p>

Activity	Description and examples
<b>Mail outs/ newsletters</b>	<p>Mail outs can take the form of brochures about upcoming events, newsletters updating a project group on recent results or actions taken, fact sheets, links to relevant resources... the list is endless!</p> <p>When we think mail out, we need to consider if this requires a physical sending of hard copies, or whether emailing electronic copies will be sufficient for the target audience.</p>
<b>Advertising/articles in farming media</b>	<p>Consider the opportunities presented by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• specialist rural newspapers (eg. National Farming Review, Straight Furrow, Rural News, CountryWide)</li> <li>• dedicated farming sections in major newspapers (eg. NZ Herald, Stuff.co.nz, Otago Daily Times)</li> <li>• rural radio shows (eg. On the Field, The Farming Show, Radio New Zealand's Rural News)</li> <li>• rural television (eg. CountryTV, ruraltv.co.nz, Country Calendar, Rural Delivery)</li> </ul>
<b>Farm trial</b>	<p>Farms are highly complex systems with a multitude of variables that change from location to location to different degrees and on various time scales. Due to this complexity, practices optimised for a research farmlet or focus farm might not be so successful when transferred to another location.</p> <p>Carrying out a small-scale farm trial, actually at the new location, will help establish the optimal local farming practice (ensuring practices are 'fit-for-purpose' locally).</p>
<b>One-on-one advice from retailers, rural advisors and contractors</b>	<p>Retailers, rural advisors and other contractors often offer one-on-one information and advice to farmers. The criteria for this activity to become part of a structured extension approach is ensuring these information providers are supported by training, so they are confident and capable of delivering the desired messages.</p> <p>An example is seed merchants providing advice on the best seed for pasture renewal, along with advice on land prep for pasture renewal.</p>
<b>Surveys</b>	<p>Giving farmers the opportunity to provide feedback or ask questions confidentially and anonymously can be a powerful tool. Surveys involve asking a group of people (or a representative sample of that group) a question or a series of questions in order to gather information about what most people do or think about a particular issue/opportunity.</p> <p>Information can be collected for participants verbally (by phone, Skype or face-to-face) or in written form (via hard copy or electronically using a web-based survey tool, eg. SurveyMonkey).</p> <p>SurveyMonkey is one example of a free website that lets you create, send and analyse your own online surveys. This takes away the risks of peer-pressure and group-think, and can be given to attendees at an event sometime later. Questions can be multi-choice, ranking, open and can also be set up to be dependent on answers to earlier questions.</p>
<b>Interviews and focus groups with farmers</b>	<p>Surveys assume that people know how they feel. But sometimes they really don't. Sometimes it takes listening to the opinions of others in a small and safe group setting before they form thoughts and opinions. Focus groups are well suited for those situations.</p> <p>Whereas a survey gathers information from one person at a time before collating and analysing that information for commonalities and trends, focus groups involve talking with a group of farmers/farm teams to ask them in greater depth about their perceptions, opinions, beliefs, and attitudes towards an issue/opportunity.</p>

Activity	Description and examples
<b>Farmer discussion groups at farm trials</b>	An opportunity for farmers to observe, at first hand, the practice under consideration. Discussion at these trials offers farmers the opportunity to explore barriers and challenges to implementation, as well as potential benefits. They can also get advice on what might be required to tailor the practice for their particular farm situation (ensuring fit-for-purpose).
<b>Extension agent one-on-one discussions with farmers</b>	<p>These could take the form of an informal drop-in on a farmer, but are more likely to be productive if they are planned in advance by the extension agent, so both parties are clear and agree on the purpose of the visit and can plan accordingly. These discussions can be used to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• familiarise the extension agent with the farmer and the wider farm team – including their specific goals and needs</li> <li>• enable the agent to give specific advice or information to the farmer</li> <li>• build up the agent's knowledge of the area, and of the kinds of issues which farmers in that area face</li> <li>• allow the agent to explain a new recommended practice or follow up and observe results of any practice change to date</li> <li>• arouse general interest among the farmers and stimulate their involvement in extension activities.</li> </ul>
<b>Demonstration and focus farms</b>	<p>Focus farms are commercially-operated farms that focus on production and financial performance by addressing specific issues over time, often in partnership with other interested parties.</p> <p>An example is the network of 11 IQ Farms across New Zealand. Each IQ Farm team works with a group of local rural professionals such as vets, agronomists and accountants, taking a joint focus on driving the farm's performance, as well as assessing the value of measuring and monitoring.</p>
<b>Farmer-to-farmer discussion groups</b>	Recent research has told us that farmers value learning from other farmers. Facilitating farmer-to-farmer discussion groups, where discussion is supported by input from invited providers of knowledge such as rural advisors, vets and scientists, can be a powerful extension activity that supports knowledge transfer, idea generation and networking/relationship building both within the farming community and outwards to other trusted advisors.
<b>Farm field days</b>	These tend to be held on the land of a local farmer, and that farmer may play a part in running it and explaining the purpose.
<b>Visits to other farmer-led groups</b>	An opportunity to observe how other groups are tackling similar issues or taking advantage of opportunities. Again, draws on the idea that farmers value learning from other farmers.
<b>Partner farms</b>	Partner farmers are focus farms matched for farming systems and practices, so information and data from both can be benchmarked against each other.
<b>Farmlet studies and trials</b>	<p>Farmlet studies and trials are basically experiments into farming practices carried out on a small scale farm, before the practices are scaled up to full-size commercially-operated farming situations.</p> <p>Full-size farms are complex systems, with many variables that are challenging to control, therefore making it difficult to pinpoint the effects of a particular practice change. By working on a farmlet, more variables can be controlled, allowing for a clearer causative link to be established between any practice change and productivity and/or profitability results.</p>
<b>Learning groups (including farmers, rural advisors and scientists)</b>	Learning groups are distinguished from discussion groups by being focused on joint learning among participants in the group. This involves recognition of the knowledge that the different participants bring to the group and the co-development of knowledge in the group.

Activity	Description and examples
<b>Research projects</b>	<p>Research projects will involve a scientific investigation based on five key steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying the problem or question</li> <li>• Coming up with a hypothesis as to the solution or answer</li> <li>• Designing an experiment to test the hypothesis</li> <li>• Carrying out the experiment to gather the necessary evidence and data</li> <li>• Interpreting the results and drawing conclusions</li> </ul> <p>Complex research projects will need to be supported by scientists, but farmers can use this same method to complete basic tests of their hunches on-farm.</p>
<b>Conference presentations</b>	<p>A formal meeting of people with a shared interest, where a series of presenters speaks on topics related to the overall conference theme. Generally involves limited contribution for the audience, where typically only a few questions are fielded from the audience by the presenter at the end of their session.</p>
<b>Farmer training</b>	<p>Farmer training opportunities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• informal offerings, such as short courses available through Massey and Lincoln Universities or Beef + Lamb New Zealand</li> <li>• accredited on-farm qualifications run in conjunction with the industry training organisations such as Primary ITO</li> <li>• off-farm qualifications, for example the National Certificate in Agriculture (Production Management) Level 5 offered in conjunction with the Open Polytechnic and Beef + Lamb New Zealand, and Diplomas, Bachelors and postgraduate degrees offered through Lincoln and Massey Universities.</li> </ul>
<b>Visits to other extension projects</b>	<p>Like farm visits, visits by farmers to other extension projects can help with the transfer of information and ideas, as well as sharing solutions to common challenges or barriers.</p>
<b>Rural advisor trials</b>	<p>Rural advisor trials are used when new farm practices also require rural advisors to change their own practices. For example, using Farmax to assess how to manage the farm stock and feed for hogget lambing often requires a rural advisor to use Farmax with the farmer.</p> <p>Rural advisor trials involve testing if a new tool or technology rural advisors needs to use with farmers, not only fits with the farm, but also how the rural advisor works with the tool.</p>
<b>Rural advisor training</b>	<p>Training providers for rural advisors include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NZ Grasslands Association (NZGA), NZ Society of Animal Production (NZSAP), NZ Institute of Primary Industry Management (NZIPIM) and other professional associations/societies</li> <li>• Beef+Lamb New Zealand</li> <li>• AgriOne and OneFarm – joint ventures between Massey &amp; Lincoln Universities offering training to the agricultural sector.</li> </ul>
<b>Scientist and rural advisor exchanges</b>	<p>These could take the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• scientists working in residency within an advisory firm, providing opportunities for scientists to share their research within the advisor and wider farming community</li> <li>• a rural advisor working in a research organisation on a research project or study that is of interest to them – it's an opportunity for rural advisors to develop indepth understanding of a topic, as well as help scientists to understand issues rural advisors are working on.</li> </ul>



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<b>Farm, processing, rural advisor and consumer trials</b>	Involves development and testing of practices that link each aspect of the supply chain. For example, increasing the supply of lambs outside the normal season not only requires changes on-farm but also in how processors manage their operations.
<b>Processor training</b>	Offered in-house, or through similar providers who offer training to rural advisors (eg. NZ Grasslands Association (NZGA), NZ Society of Animal Production (NZSAP), NZ Institute of Primary Industry Management (NZIPIM) and other professional associations/societies, Beef+Lamb New Zealand, AgriOne and OneFarm.
<b>Processor field days</b>	Like a farm field day, but held at a meat processing plant. Again, the purpose of a processor field day may be to introduce new processing practices or technologies, and to stimulate the interest of as many farmers as possible.
<b>Online chats</b>	A Web service that allows an organisation to communicate, or “ <i>chat</i> ,” in real time with visitors to their Web site. It enables visitors to a website to ask questions on a website, without requiring the users to have access to any special software or apps. For example, AgriHQ hosted a Live Chat for their customers with Beef + Lamb New Zealand chief executive Scott Champion during the 2015 B+LNZ levy referendum.
<b>DVDs/No 8 Wired</b>	Visual images, especially video clips, are a powerful tool for adults. Broadband speed and/or data caps can limit use of online hosting of videos. A very successful series of farm management videos were produced and distributed by B+LNZ’s predecessors in the 1990s, called ‘No 8 Wired’. Each video cassette contained several clips. With DVD and/or USB memory stick technology now, physically sending farmers a copy of videos is easier and cheaper, and is more accessible.
<b>Facebook</b>	An online social networking website where registered users can create profiles, share information (including photos and video), and respond or link to the information posted by others. Facebook Groups can also be set up, which allow public or closed membership for specific sets of people such as the wider farming community (eg. NZ Farming), an organisation (eg. a meat processor or a fertiliser company) or a particular regional interest group (eg. Otago/Southland Regional Young Farmers).
<b>Twitter</b>	Twitter is a microblogging tool – think of it as a more interactive form of texting. Messages can only be 140 characters long, but can include links to websites and also images. Your messages go to people who follow you (they choose to follow you, but you can block them), and you see messages from those you choose to follow. Plus you can ‘retweet’ – forward someone else’s Tweet (message) to your followers. Twitter provides a quick and easy way to follow headlines and summaries, and linking to more information or adding an image makes it powerful. In addition, once you’re on Twitter you can make use of apps such as Periscope, VoiceByte, Vine and Instagram.
<b>Periscope App</b>	‘Periscope’ is an app (for both iOS and Android) that lets Twitter users stream videos directly from their Smartphone. Users of Periscope are able to choose whether or not to make their video public or restrict viewership to certain users. You can also engage your potential viewers to chat and leave their comments, as well as tweet something about your video.
<b>VoiceByte App</b>	Linked to Twitter and Facebook, this app (for both iOS and Android) lets you record and share 15 second long voice messages. That’s quite a long time and a lot of information can be shared.

Activity	Description and examples
<b>Vine App</b>	A Twitter linked app (ie. you share it via Twitter) that lets you record and share 6 second videos.
<b>Texts</b>	Texting is old technology but remains the most suitable social-media for working with farmers – there is a very high use of mobile phones, data and time requirements are low, connection does not need to be great, the message is stored and ready when the farmer is ready, and they can interact via text while doing their day to day work. Online software is the easiest way to send broadcast messages. Text systems work best as a mix of scheduled messages (ie. for an activity that always occurs at a certain time of year), alerts or warnings (to respond to something that has just occurred or been noticed) and to respond to questions.
<b>Podcasts</b>	Recordings of talks or discussions can be made available for download and listening at a time/place that suits the individual. It's a bit like an online radio station, where what is listened to is in the listener's control.
<b>Internet forums</b>	An internet forum, or message board, is an online discussion site where people can hold conversations in the form of posted messages. An example is the 'Farmers Tips' forum available on <a href="http://www.farmchat.co.nz">www.farmchat.co.nz</a>
<b>Pub talk</b>	Informal gatherings of farmers tossing around ideas.
<b>Suppliers' events</b>	Farmers turn up to an event put on by a supplier (eg. a drench or machinery demonstration).