Farmer Council Operating Procedures

Version Seven - April 2026



beef+lamb new zealand


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Contents

The B+LNZ Strategy	2
Operative Part to B+LNZ Farmer Council Operating Procedures	5
Farmer Council and B+LNZ Extension Flightpath 2024 - 2027	14
B+LNZ Farmer Council collective role	16
A brief history of the evolution of B+LNZ's Farmer Council	18
Communicating who the B+LNZ Farmer Council is	19
B+LNZ needs of the Farmer Council	20
B+LNZ Farmer Council Member Role Description	22
B+LNZ Farmer Council National Executive Role Description	24
Terms of Reference for B+LNZ Board Member allocated B+LNZ Farmer Council Portfolio	25
B+LNZ Farmer Council Relationship Framework	26
Paths to Mutual Understanding and Moving Forward	31
Escalation Framework	32

Beef + Lamb New Zealand strategy 2024–27

VISION

Thriving sheep and beef farmers, now and into the future

PRIORITIES

Championing farming excellence

On-farm extension focused on enhancing productivity, profitability and sustainability.

Investing in reseach and innovation to solve sector production challenges.

Advocacy

Championing farmers' interests.

Shaping the future, domestically and internationally.

Energising the sector

Leading, building trust, reputation and confidence.

Proudly celebrating sheep and beef farming.



By Farmers. For Farmers

Championing Farming Excellence On-farm Extension

B+LNZ Extension 2024 - 2027

Championing Farming Excellence Profitable and sustainable on-farm practice and management systems

FUTURE Focus Shifting the dial 3 – 5+ years

NOW Focus Continual and incremental performance

B+LNZ Farmer Council and MAB Kahui Community connection and farmer insights leading regional priorities and supporting delivery

Solving Sector Challenges

B+LNZ led groups supporting Farmers innovating and creating solutions to on-farm sector level challenges.

Regional and National groups.

Sharing and Connection

'Hub' Farms providing a regionally representative farm. Follow a farm business journey and provide a venue for sharing learning and creating awareness of challenges and opportunities.

Range from Hub to Monitor.

Farmers learning from Farmers

B+LNZ led regional groups supporting Farmers adopting, adapting and implementing into their farm and farm business.

Topic based, fixed term, farmer learning groups.

Regional Delivery

1: Many and 1:Some Extension Awareness, Knowledge and Skills based.

Field days, workshops, seminars, conferences.

Products, templates, tools, resources. Knowledge Hub

Delivery in Partnership Model

Regional Presence

Championing Farmer Interests in our regions.

Showing up, coordinating, supporting and bringing farmer voice input into local and regional issues and opportunities.

By Farmers. For Farmers


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Operative Part to B+LNZ Farmer Council Operating Procedures

Purpose of Operating Procedures

These operating procedures are provided in support of the B+LNZ Farmer Council (FC) and National Extension Team to:

- Understand the purpose, scope and role of the B+LNZ Farmer Council.
- Create consistency of process and approach for B+LNZ Farmer Council activity across New Zealand.
- Have a guide for good practice.
- Support the B+LNZ Constitution and operating policies.

Reviewing the B+LNZ Farmer Council Operating Procedures

These Operating Procedures are able to be reviewed as required and whenever there is a:

- Change in the B+LNZ strategy or strategic direction.
- Change in the Extension Team or Farmer Council structure or available resources.

The 2024 review has been comprehensive and it is planned for a full review to be completed every three years from June 2024.

The purpose of any review is to ensure:

- Current operating and business context of B+LNZ is accurately reflected and supported.
- The B+LNZ Farmer Council purpose, scope and role is clearly identified and able to be communicated.
- Relationships between B+LNZ Farmer Council, Extension and B+LNZ are supported with clarity of purpose, communication process and escalation options.

Annual reviews

B+LNZ management will actively review Farmer Council direct and supporting activity including:

- Farmer Council operation and operating procedures (this document)
- FCNExec operations and context.
- FC Conference delivery
- FC professional development programme
- RDP delivery

Farmer Council Membership

Eligibility for Farmer Council membership:

- Any person entitled to vote in a B+LNZ election.
- Any person employed in a farm business that is entitled to vote in a B+LNZ election.

If the regional Farmer Council total membership is to exceed 16 this must be approved by the GM - Farming Excellence and Extension, who will confirm the length of time the membership can exceed 16 members.

Farmer Membership of the regional Farmer Council needs to represent and reflect:

- The range and mix of farming systems in region, sheep, beef and dairy farm systems.
- A range of age and stage of farming career.
- Between 10 and 12 farmers

Alongside the Farmer Members each regional Farmer Council can co-opt members, either Farmers or non-Farmers. Co-opted members must be connected to the sheep and beef industry by being a rural professional, owning or employed by a regionally significant agri-business or an employee, trustee or director of a food and fibre organisation.

Number of co-opted members:

- Up to 4 Co-opted members to balance the regional Farmer Council range of perspectives, knowledge and experience in support of the identified Regional Delivery Plan purpose, objectives and opportunities.
- The makeup of the regional Farmer Council membership of Farmer Members to Co-opted Members should be kept to near a 10:3 ratio.

The term for regional Farmer Council Members (Farmer Members) is three (3) years with maximum term guide of three (3) terms equating to 9 consecutive years.

The term for co-opted regional Farmer Council Members (Co-opted Members) is one year with maximum term guide of six (6) terms equating to 6 consecutive years.

To support succession planning and recruitment members intending to retire at the next Annual Meeting should provide an indication to the RDP meeting and confirm their intention 8 weeks prior to the Annual Meeting date.

Identification of potential new Farmer Members for the Farmer Council is a joint responsibility of:

- Current Farmer Council Members
- The regional Extension Team
- The regional Chair and the regional Extension Team will create a plan for member recruitment and clearly allocate tasks amongst themselves to support clarity of the process being implemented between the RDP Meeting and the Annual Meeting.

Process for identifying new Farmer Members

- Potential new member names are to be put forward to the Extension Coordinator who will keep a list of names ready for consideration.
- The regional Extension Team may advertise publicly for new members, usually via B+LNZ communication and social media channels as a priority.
- Ahead of the Annual Meeting, ideally as soon as retiring Farmer Council members have confirmed their intention to resign, the Extension Coordinator will circulate the potential member list to the regional Extension Team and Farmer Council to establish any existing connections or relationships that can be used to approach the potential members.
- If the potential member is not known personally to any of the Farmer Council then the regional Extension Team will be responsible for discussing the possibility of joining the Farmer Council and encouraging the potential member to put their name forward for nomination.

- Potential new Farmer Members can be brought along to any regional Farmer Council meetings with the approval of the regional Chair. This can help people to understand what the Farmer Council does and encourage potentials to agree to be nominated as a member.

Election of new members at an Annual Meeting of the regional Farmer Council

Potential members must be supported by two Farmer Members and have the support of the regional Extension Team to be nominated for membership.

Potential members who have been nominated for membership to the regional Farmer Council must be notified to the regional Farmer Council when the Annual Meeting agenda is circulated, ideally at least 30 days ahead of the Annual Meeting date.

Potential members will ideally provide a brief introduction to who they are, the regional Extension Team will help present these brief biographies in a consistent format.

Where required, the regional Farmer Council will vote on candidates at the Annual Meeting. The regional Chair will manage the voting process:

- A simple majority vote from farmers eligible to vote, (on the B+LNZ electoral role), will confirm a candidate's election to the regional Farmer Council.

Process for appointing Co-opted Members:

- Identifying potential new co-opted members is a joint responsibility of all regional Farmer Council Members and the regional Extension Team.
- At the next meeting after the Annual Meeting the regional Farmer Council will review their membership and their Regional Extension Delivery Plan with a view to establish the perspectives, experiences and support requirements that the regional Farmer Council will need to support the delivery of the plan.
- Any identified gaps in perspectives, experience or support requirements can be brought into the regional Farmer Council through the co-opting of rural professionals or farmers.
- The regional Chair will canvas the regional Farmer Council members and the regional Extension Team for potential members.
- Proposed potential member names are to be circulated to the regional Farmer Council and the regional Extension Team to identify feedback and raise any risks (conflicts of interest or other).
- A final short list of co-opted candidates is to be circulated to the regional Farmer Council with a short biography. The regional Extension Team will organise the biographies and ensure these are circulated to the regional Farmer Council at least 5 days prior to the meeting date where the candidates will be considered.
- A regional Farmer Council meeting, usually online for the express purpose of considering co-opted member appointment, will discuss the proposed names. The purpose of this meeting is to:
  - Decide the co-opted candidate/s to offer an appointment to the regional Farmer Council.
  - Decide who and how the identified individuals will be approached about joining the regional Farmer Council.
  - If required, decide how to provide an opportunity for the co-opted member to assess the commitment required and ensure their confidence in being able to make a suitable contribution.
- The co-opted member process may be used to appoint Farmers to the regional Farmer Council as a supporting process to recruit Farmers. When a co-opted process is used to appoint Farmers at the next Annual Meeting after their appointment they are to be nominated, elected and transferred to the usual three (3) year term for Farmer Members.

Retired Farmer Councillors are important relationships for the Farmer Council and the regional Extension Team to maintain. We encourage their knowledge and experience to be utilised in support of local steering groups, activities and events.

Acknowledgement guidelines for retiring Farmer Councillors:

- The regional Extension Team will organise a thank you gift to be presented at the retiring members last meeting.
- The regional Chair presents the gift and shares the retiring member's story of contribution to the regional Farmer Council.
- The retiring member has the opportunity to reply.

Regional Farmer Council Structure

Funding for Farmer Council activity is allocated to National Farmer Council Operations and regional Farmer Council Operations from the levy allocated to Extension.

- The GM - Farm Systems and Adoption determines the allocation of the Extension Budget to the Farmer Council Operations and to RDP activity.
- National Farmer Council Operations budget is managed by the GM - Farm Systems and Adoption.
- Regional Farmer Council Operations and RDP budgets are managed by the regional Extension Team.
- Non farmer co-opted members of the regional Farmer Council will contribute to discussion and debate on investment prioritisation but do not have any voting rights if any voting process is followed to confirm prioritisation of funding allocations.
- The regional Extension Team will maintain a conflict of interest register to ensure integrity and transparency in all Farmer Council activities and decision making.

Each regional Farmer Council will elect a Chair and Deputy Chair:

- The term of the Chair and Deputy Chair role is annual.
- Nominations are called ahead of the regional Farmer Council Annual Meeting, and are confirmed in the Annual Meeting agenda circulated at least 5 days prior to the Annual Meeting date.
- When required a ballot vote of regional Farmer Council members attending the Annual Meeting will decide the appointment of both Chair and Deputy Chair roles; the regional Extension Team do not participate in voting for the Chair and Deputy Chair roles.

- The Extension Team will organise and support the nomination and voting process.

Minimum attendance for meeting decision making and voting processes is 60% of current regional Farmer Council membership.

Resignation and termination of appointment:

- Resignation: members resigning from the regional Farmer Council will, ideally, notify the regional Chair at their RDP meeting and confirm their intention at least 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting.
- Notification of resignation is considered to be provided when an email outlining the intention to resign, including the planned last meeting to be attended, is sent by the retiring member and received by the regional Chair.
- Termination: in the event that a regional Farmer Council feel the need to terminate the membership of any member this is able to be completed with the support of a majority vote of current members and the regional Extension Team.
- Reasons for termination of membership include:
  - Lack of active participation, including not being present at more than two consecutive meetings (online and face to face) without a fair and reasonable reason for apology.
  - Disregard for operating within the guidelines of these B+LNZ Farmer Council operating procedures.
  - Misappropriate use of B+LNZ levy funding allocated to extension activity.
  - Members may be terminated by the CEO of B+LNZ, in conjunction with the Executive Farmer Council Chair and/or the relevant Regional Farmer Council Chair, where all reasonable avenues to resolve the matter have been exhausted. Termination will be considered a last resort, with the final decision remaining at the discretion of the CEO.

All regional Farmer Council meetings:

- Will prioritise discussion on supporting the delivery and achieving the outcomes of the Regional Extension Delivery Plan.
- Will be organised and administered by the regional Extension Team.
- Must have an agenda and required supporting documentation circulated to members at least 5 days prior to the proposed meeting date.
- Will record discussion topics and key points and circulate summary notes within two weeks of the meeting date.
- Notice, agendas, supporting documentation and meeting summary notes will be distributed via email to the email addresses provided by members.

Farmer Council Member expectations in meetings:

- To attend meetings having read and considered supporting documents.
- When relevant, to canvas local farmers for feedback and sentiment on matters to be discussed.
- To contribute insights, feedback, perspectives positively and constructively.
- To raise concerns with any matters.
- To listen and seek to understand the perspectives presented by other members and weigh this understanding against own views and perspectives.
- To consider all matters with a farmer centric lens seeking to create value and impact for the sheep and beef farmer and farm business.

Regional Farmer Council Annual Meetings:

Are held between 1st September and 31st October annually, unless otherwise proposed and approved by the GM - Farm Systems and Adoption.

Purpose is to:

- Elect Farmer Members.
- Elect Chair and Deputy Chair positions.
- Select representatives to B+LNZ Advisory or Reference Groups as required.
- Confirm appointment of Co-opted Members.
- Present the delivery of the Regional Extension Delivery Plan including allocation of levy funding and partnership contributions, participation and estimated impact return on investment.
- Present the planned Regional Extension Delivery Plan for the new year.

Notice for the annual meeting is a minimum of 21 days, with notice given through B+LNZ communication channels.

Regional Farmer Council general meetings:

Are held throughout the year as determined by the regional Chair and the regional Extension Team:

- In person meetings are typically in February/March and October/November and at another time suited to the regional farming calendar.
- Regional Extension Delivery Planning meeting is held over two days in May or early June.
- Online meetings may be used in either an ad hoc or planned meeting approach to meet regional Farmer Council needs.

An annual meeting calendar will be created, maintained and available to support planning for all Farmer Council members and the Extension Team.

B+LNZ Farmer Council National Executive Structure

The B+LNZ Farmer Council National Executive (FCNExec) purpose is outlined in their role description.

In summary this group is in place to support:

- Consistency and cohesion of the national Farmer Council collectively.
- The GM - Farm Systems and Adoption with a national collective view:
  - Raising and providing feedback on opportunities, issues and challenges.
  - Supporting communication throughout the Farmer Council network.
  - Supporting the delivery of the national extension strategy and strategic priorities.
- National communication with the regional Farmer Councils and with B+LNZ Board and Management.

The FCNExec is led by a national chair, elected annually by a majority vote of the FCNExec members; the National Chair once appointed must not hold a regional Chair or Deputy Chair role to:

- Support their availability to attend other regional Farmer Council meetings.
- Mitigate conflicts of interest when supporting regional Farmer Councils manage issues and challenges.
- Mitigate conflicts of interest when supporting the GM - Farm Systems and Adoption manage issues and challenges across the regional Farmer Council network.

The FCNExec is made up of the regional Chairs and Deputy Chairs from the seven B+LNZ Farmer Councils.

- Terms for members is limited to the term they serve as the regional Chair and/or the Deputy Chair of their regional Farmer Council.
- The term of the FCNExec Chair is one year, from the November Annual Meeting of the FCNExec.
- Resignation: members resigning from the regional Farmer Council will ideally notify the National Chair at the meeting alongside the National Farmer Council Conference.
- Notification of resignation is considered to be provided when an email outlining the intention to resign, including the planned last meeting to be attended, is sent by the retiring member and received by the National Chair.
- Termination: in the event that the FCNExec feel the need to terminate the membership of any member this is able to be completed with the support of a majority vote of current members and with the approval of the GM - Farm Systems and Adoption and the B+LNZ Board Member appointed to the Farmer Council.
- Reasons for termination of membership include:
  - Lack of active participation, including not being present at more than two consecutive meetings (online and face to face) without a fair and reasonable reason for apology.
  - Disregard for operating within the guidelines of these B+LNZ Farmer Council operating procedures.
  - Misappropriate use of B+LNZ levy funding allocated to extension activity.

B+LNZ Farmer Council National Executive meetings

Generally the FCNExec will meet three times per annum in person, usually November, March/April and June/July. Updates and other business is able to be discussed between these face to face meetings via online meetings.

Generally the FCNExec meetings will:

- Consider reports and updates on Regional Extension Delivery Plan activity, supporting sharing of information and identification of opportunities and challenges needing support to resolve.
- Provide a forum for regional Council Chairs and Deputies to exchange ideas and information on farmers' needs.
- Act as a conduit for the identification of national extension needs and priorities across all regions.

The GM - Farm Systems and Adoption is responsible for administering and organising meetings:

- Providing an agenda and required supporting documentation circulated to members at least 5 days prior to the proposed meeting date.
- Recording discussion topics and key points and circulating summary notes within two weeks of the meeting date.
- Notice, agendas, supporting documentation and meeting summary notes will be distributed via email to the email addresses provided by members.

FCNExec Member expectations in meetings include:

- To attend meetings having read and considered supporting documents.
- When relevant to canvas regional Farmer Council members for feedback and sentiment on matters.
- To contribute insights, feedback, perspectives positively and constructively.
- To raise concerns with any matters.
- To listen and seek to understand the perspectives presented by other members and weigh this understanding against own views and perspectives.
- To consider all matters with a farmer centric lens seeking to create value and impact for the sheep and beef farmer and farm business.
- To consider matters as a collective with a view to the benefit and/or impact for the National Farmer Council collectively.
- To report back to regional Farmer Councils meeting discussion outcomes and updates.

The minimum attendance at any B+LNZ Farmer Council National Executive is 60% of National Councillors.

Members will prioritize attendance at FCNExec meetings to ensure at least one member from each region is able to be present.

Farmer Council National Executive Annual Meeting

The FCNExec annual meeting is in November annually.

Notice for the annual meeting is a minimum of 30 days, with notice given through direct email to FCNExec members.

At the November annual meeting:

- The National Chair will be appointed.
- The GM - Farm Systems and Adoption will present a report on national extension delivery and planning for the year ahead.

B+LNZ Farmer Council National Executive Chair

The FCNExec Chair is elected annually from the current members of the FCNExec and the current FCNExec Chair; both Regional Chairs and Deputy Chairs are able to be nominated.

The election process for the FCNExec Chair is:

- Nominations are called for and must be submitted to the GM - Farm Systems and Adoption prior to 31st August annually.
- Nominations will be communicated to regional B+LNZ Farmer Council Chairs for discussion at their

Annual Meetings through September and October, if their Annual Meeting date has been approved to be earlier/later an online meeting must be called to discuss nominations.
- Where there is more than one nomination the FCNExec will vote at their Annual Meeting in November:
  - If the current FCNExec Chair is one of the nominees a person not nominated will assume the chair role for the election process.
  - All nominees will have five minutes to talk to their nomination, with the purpose of articulating their thoughts on priorities and focus for the FCNExec.
  - Nominees will leave the room and the FCNExec will have the opportunity to discuss and complete their voting process.
  - Nominees will return to the room and the outcome of the vote provided.
  - The assumed Chair will provide summary feedback to nominees personally and privately after the close of the meeting.
- The term of the FCNExec Chair is for one year with a maximum tenure of 6 years.
- The FCNExec Chair must resign from their regional Chair or Deputy Chair role with effect at the next meeting of that regional Farmer Council, the relevant regional Farmer Council will elect a replacement Chair and/or Deputy Chair.
- Primary responsibilities of the National Chair role are outlined in the FCNExec Chair role page 24.

Decision Making and Voting

Processes that support engaged discussion and robust debate to create collectively agreed positions, recommendations and decision are encouraged. When necessary, voting can be used to support the process of providing clarity on discussion outcomes to the regional Extension Team.

Matters that must be voted on are:

- Farmer Member appointment
- Co-opted Member appointment
- Appointment of the Chair and Deputy Chair
- Termination of a Member.

Options for voting

The Chair will determine the method of voting, either a show of hands or an anonymous ballot, taking into account:

- The sensitivity of the issue being considered.
- The range of views in the room.

Who can vote

All present members of the Farmer Council, the electorate B+LNZ Board member and the present members of the regional Extension Team on all issues except:

- The appointment of the Chair and Deputy Chair where only members of the Farmer Council present may vote.
- Prioritisation of funding allocations where Co-opted Members are not able to vote.
  - Use of proxies is allowed, where the proxy is allocated and notified in the meeting agenda circulated at least 5 days prior to the meeting.
  - If a proxy is used, it must be held by either the Chair or the Deputy Chair on behalf of the Member who is not present.
  - At the FCNExec meetings the GM - Farm Systems and Adoption and the B+LNZ Board appointed member can vote on all matters of the FCNExec except the appointment of the National Chair.
  - At regional Farmer Council Annual Meetings any person registered to vote on the B+LNZ electoral role that is in attendance at the meeting may vote. Where more than one person is present from a registered voter on the B+LNZ electoral roll they are entitled to only one vote between them.

Remuneration and Expenses

Mileage and Expenses:

1. FC Members can claim mileage at the standard B+LNZ per kilometre rate.
2. FC Members can claim direct costs and other approved expenses related to attending FC meetings, events and supporting regional activities.
3. Claims must be made using the appropriate forms depending on GST registration status; your Extension Coordinator will provide you with the forms you require.
4. It is expected that Co-opted Members who work for regional or national agribusiness or industry organisations will not claim for mileage unless they are also taking annual leave to carry out their duties as a B+LNZ Farmer Council Member.

Flights and Accommodation:

1. B+LNZ organise and manage flights, accommodation, airport/hotel parking, meals, and taxi transfers for FC business-related travel agreed upon prior to travel.
2. If a FC Member incurs additional costs and pays for them personally, as long as they are fairly and reasonably incurred as a result of attending to business in their capacity as a B+LNZ Farmer Council Member then these can be claimed through the usual expense claim process.

New Farmer Councillor Clothing:

1. B+LNZ Farmer Council branded clothing will be coordinated for you by your regional Extension Coordinator.
2. Orders for branded clothing are placed weekly as they are received.
3. B+LNZ Farmer Council branded clothing is provided for members to wear at B+LNZ events and FC activities.

Fee for Services:

1. The purpose of paying a fee for services to Farmer Council Members is to contribute to the costs incurred by members leaving their farming business to carry out Farmer Council duties.
2. Fees for Services are reviewed annually by the B+LNZ Board Remuneration and Expenses Committee.
3. Fees for Service for the National Chair and Regional Chairs are paid quarterly, a schedule of planned payment dates is able to be provided on request.

4. Meeting fees for regional B+LNZ Farmer Councillor Chairs and Deputies attending B+LNZ Farmer Council National Executive meetings are paid following each meeting.

Conflicts of Interest

- Each Farmer Council member is responsible to identify and declare any actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest that may arise between their responsibilities to B+LNZ an any other interest or duty the member may have.
- Any declared conflict will be recorded in the regional or FCNExec interest register and must then be managed in the best interests of B+LNZ.
- The Intent behind this conflict of interest register and management is to protect rural professionals and industry representatives serving on the B+LNZ Farmer Council from any perceived conflict of interest associated with activity investment. This is to support and be able to promote industry professional participation in Farmer Councils to benefit all sheep and beef farmers.

Extension Team responsibilities

Your regional Extension team will support your regional Farmer Council with:

- Administration and communication support
- Meeting planning, organisation and administrative support

Your regional Extension team is directly responsible for:

- Listening to and prioritising feedback from their regional Farmer Council and its application to their extension activity plans and delivery.
- Regional Extension Delivery Plan development, delivery and management
- Communication and reporting to B+LNZ, Farmer Council and regional farmers.
- Regional extension budget management, monitoring and reporting. This includes invoice coding, payment and providing summary updates to your FC meetings.
- Operational matters related to the delivery of the Regional Extension Delivery Plan (RDP) are managed by your regional Extension Team with support from their Island Team Manager.
- Organising and coordinating your regional Farmer Council activities, including programme development, speaker coordination, advertising, promotion, support materials, and handouts.
- Managing communication and coordination with B+LNZ and other groups involved in aligned activities.
- Managing extension “on the day” venue logistics.
- Collecting participant feedback from activities.
- Managing B+LNZ branding.

Each regional B+LNZ Farmer Council will have a designated B+LNZ Extension Manager responsible for:

- Supporting your regional Farmer Council Chair and Deputy.
- Attending and supporting your regional meetings.
- Communication and reporting on Regional Extension Delivery Plan operation and progress.
- Leading the planning and management of your regional Farmer Council activities.

National Farmer Council Conference

B+LNZ hosts an annual National Farmer Council Conference with the purpose of bringing together regional Farmer Councils from across New Zealand, sharing information, sharing learning and creating national networks and relationships.

It is expected that Farmer Council Members will prioritise attendance at the National Farmer Council Conference as a development opportunity and a chance to build relationships across the national Farmer Council.

Farmer Council Professional Development Programme

Purpose and approach

B+LNZ invests in opportunities to support our B+LNZ Farmer Council members’ professional development:

- The B+LNZ Farmer Council Development programme is a modular programme to support members with leadership, communication and governance skills and influence.
- Adhoc opportunities to attend conferences or educational tours to specific events with the objectives of supporting members grow their exposure, experience and context of the international context, global and local influences impacting our sheep and beef farm business operating context.
- The B+LNZ Farmer Council Development programme is reviewed, updated and developed regularly to ensure it is relevant to the current context of the B+LNZ Farmer Council and sheep and beef farm business leadership needs.

When B+LNZ supports Farmer Council members to attend an event or participate in a programme the general expectations of those participating are:

- To engage fully in the learning opportunity.
- To attend all sessions and events.
- To prioritise attendance, and only cancel in dire or circumstances beyond individual control.
- To share learning, insights and ideas with your Farmer Council.
- To participate in sharing learning by contributing to farmer panel conversations at events.
- At times to contribute to a written report or presentation to the B+LNZ Board.

B+LNZ Extension Team will manage the logistics of your participation including travel and accommodation to events or programmes you are invited to attend in your role as a B+LNZ Farmer Councillor.

B+LNZ Formal Advisory and Reference Groups

Succession planning and development

Other B+LNZ advisory and reference groups will have an associated terms of reference to outline their purpose, scope, membership and expectations.

Generally, these advisory and reference groups will have connection to the B+LNZ Farmer Council through an appointed member from each regional Farmer Council across New Zealand. The expectations of this member for their contribution to the group will be contained in the relevant terms of reference. The B+LNZ Farmer Council expectations of the Farmer Council members of any advisory or reference group are:

- To seek feedback on agenda items and collate, understand and represent that feedback into the group discussion.
- To circulate and/or present to their Farmer Council updates and outcomes from group meetings.
- To keep their regional Chair up to date with discussions, challenges, issues and opportunities the group is considering.
- To provide an update on group activity to each regional Farmer Council meeting.
- To attend the regional Farmer Council RDP meeting and contribute insights from the group that may impact the regional extension priorities and plans.

Duration and rotation

- Length of term on an advisory or reference group will be outlined in their terms of reference.
- Number of terms consecutive service allowed will be outlined in their terms of reference, the Farmer Council general recommendation is a maximum of two terms to ensure regular refreshing of perspectives and to encourage succession and development opportunities across the Farmer Council.
- Each advisory or reference group will maintain an appointment calendar to keep track of people's terms and need for succession.

Appointment process

Each group's terms of reference will hold their group requirements for membership, appointment process, resignation notice and termination process.

The B+LNZ Farmer Council best practice approach to appointing the Farmer Council members to B+LNZ advisory or reference groups is:

- Circulate the relevant terms of reference and call for expressions of interest from your entire regional Farmer Council. Ideally this will be done 6 – 8 weeks prior to the Annual Meeting date.
- Use the regional Farmer Council Annual Meeting to confirm appointments, using a ballot vote as required.
- Submit proposed members to relevant advisory or reference group to confirm their appointment. Usually terms of reference will include their own confirmation of appointment and appointment process that will require a majority of the existing group and B+LNZ management support for the proposed member.
- Confirm appointment to the group via a phone call and an email to the appointed member.
- Confirm the appointment to the group via an email to the regional Farmer Council.

If there is a requirement for an 'out of cycle' appointment to maintain the required regional Farmer Council representation on the group for any reason then options to do this include:

- Following the best practice approach but confirming or completing voting or ballot via an online meeting if required.
- The regional Chair or Deputy holding the position on the group until the next regional Farmer Council annual meeting.

Selecting Farmer Council Members for B+LNZ Opportunities and Activities

These are guidelines for selection of participants from the B+LNZ National Farmer Council for B+LNZ opportunities and events with the purpose of keeping the process simple, efficient and transparent.

Generally, the approach used to select participants is:

Farmer Council Development Programme

- Regional Farmer Councils nominate 2 participants each year to attend the annual programme.
- Each regional Farmer Council is able to determine their own selection process.

Education Tours

- The GM - Farm Systems and Adoption will work with the FCNExec to confirm the selection process which will be determined by the scope of the tour and the number of participants being catered for.
- An outline of the tour commitments and expectations of participants will be provided to be shared and discussed with regional Farmer Councils.
- Regional Farmer Councils will be asked to nominate participants.
- The FCNExec will determine how participants are selected from the regional Farmer Council nominations. Options will usually be one of the following:
  - Draw the required number from a hat; randomly select from the nominations.
  - FCNExec review nominations and select from all nominations.
  - Require an application and interview from applicants.

New Zealand Conferences, such as the Red Meat Sector Conference:

- Usually, a direct invitation will be offered to FCNExec members.
- If the opportunity is open to all B+LNZ Farmer Council members, then either:
  - An invitation will be offered to B+LNZ Farmer Council Members.
  - Regional Farmer Councils will be asked to nominate participants from their region.

Our general guideline for all application and selection processes is:

- Keeping it simple, efficient and transparent.
- Ensuring the application process itself isn't a barrier to members willingness to put their name forward.
- Ensure applicants understand the expectations that will be placed on them.

General requirements of members to qualify for nomination are:

- An active and contributing member of the regional Farmer Council.

- Ability to commit the time and effort required by the programme, event or tour.
- Have attended their regional RDP meeting.
- For Education Tours have been in part of the regional Farmer Council for more than 2 years.
- Being willing to proactively share their learnings with the B+LNZ Farmer Council, the Extension Team and to participate in sharing learnings widely through participation in panel discussions or other like activities.

Engagement with B+LNZ Board

The Farmer Council relationship with B+LNZ is a priority for the B+LNZ Board. The opportunities for two-way communication are outlined in the Relationship Matrix in this operating procedure booklet.

Broadly:

- FCNExec Chair will meet with the B+LNZ Board twice annually.
- At the Farmer Council National Conference members of the B+LNZ Board will attend and engage with the Farmer Council during a panel discussion session.
- Elected Farmer Directors are expected to regularly attend regional Farmer Council meetings in person or via an online link.
- The GM - Farming Excellence and Head of Extension - Delivery will provide the primary link between B+LNZ management and the Farmer Council.

Communication

The Relationship Matrix outlines the structure for internal communications between the Farmer Council and different parts of B+LNZ. The objective is to have productive, proactive and positive communication that keeps the Farmer Council well informed and facilitates the Farmer Council feedback and input into B+LNZ work, decision making and strategic thinking.

External communications are encouraged at a regional level through inviting industry group representatives to attend and talk at regional FC meetings.

Your regional and national Extension Team also has active communication plans in place with:

- Regional stakeholders or partners (investing in RDP delivery)
- National stateholders or partners (investing in RDP delivery)
- Media; local and national.

Code of Conduct

- Professional standards of conduct are expected from all members; communication, engagement and attendance, feedback.
- All members must adhere to any applicable B+LNZ Policy, particularly in regard to expenditures of levy funds, media and communication standards.
- Confidentiality is important, primarily under a Chatham House Rules agreement. B+LNZ Farmer Council members are free to discuss B+LNZ positions and processes to reach those positions. At times to support free and frank discussion on operational matters confidentiality will be requested, this will not extend to the topic that was discussed and the outcome of that discussion.

Alterations to these B+LNZ Farmer Council Operating Procedures

These Operating Procedures are to guide our national and regional Farmer Council activity and processes. The intention is for these Operating Procedures to be applied with common sense and positive intent.

Alteration to these Operating Procedures can be effected by:

- A Farmer Council Member raising an alteration for consideration at their regional Farmer Council meeting.
- If the regional Farmer Council meeting supports the proposal, the proposal will then be brought to the FCNExec by the regional Chair.
- The FCNExec will consider the proposed alteration and if they support the proposal the GM - Farm Systems and Adoption will consider the inclusion of the proposal in the next review of the Operating Procedures.
- If the FCNExec and the GM - Farm Systems and Adoption agree there is value in adopting the proposed alteration immediately an amendment will be attached to these Operating Procedures for immediate effect.

If there are any issues or situations where the Operating Processes have not been followed and any conflict or challenge arises as a result of this then the matter will be referred to the GM - Farm Systems and Adoption who will determine the process to resolve which may include:

1. Presenting and reviewing the matter with the FCNExec Chair to determine a resolution process.
2. Presenting and reviewing the matter with the FCNExec to agree a resolution process.
3. Presenting and reviewing the matter with the B+LNZ CEO to determine a resolution process.

The decision of B+LNZ GM - Farm Systems and Adoption and CEO will be the final decision on any matter of contention created through the application or non-application of these B+LNZ Farmer Council Operating Procedures.

The Regional Extension Delivery Plan (RDP)

The Regional Extension Delivery Plan (RDP) is an extension activity plan for a 12 month period from 1st October to 30th September.

An RDP is a regional extension plan that ensures the regional extension delivery is led and supported by the regional Farmer Council and it represents a 'By Farmers. For Farmers' approach.

The RDP will:

- Meet the strategic objectives of B+LNZ for Extension investment.
- Outline the plan of annual delivery in the Farmer Council region.
- Reflect the identified needs, priorities and opportunities of the regional farming community.

The RDP is developed in partnership between the regional Farmer Council and the regional Extension Team. Each year a process will be followed that supports:

- Local and regional farmer voices being brought into the RDP development process.
- Regional data and insights being used to understand regional farm business performance and opportunities.
- The regional Farmer Council and the regional Extension Team working together to plan a delivery programme that:
  - Sets a clear purpose, objectives and priority needs for delivery.
  - Identifies potential topics and initiatives that will deliver to the purpose, objectives and priorities.
  - Keeps a farmer centric approach to developing the regional plan.

Principles for developing an RDP:

- For farmers, by farmers.
- Outcome focused; it is about delivering impact for farmers first and foremost.
- Identify some measures to be able to assess performance of the RDP against; how will the region know the RDP has 'shifted the dial'.
- Farmer centric design; for initiatives, activities, and budget prioritisation.
- Farmers learning from farmers; ensuring planning and delivery captures the benefits and impact of farmers sharing experiences, their own learning, their application and their challenges.
- Firstly we focus on farm business performance, and we ensure we understand the context of the environment farm businesses are operating in.
- The Farmer Council drives the purpose and objectives, the Extension Team drives the development of initiatives, activities and budget allocation.
- The Extension Team and the Regional Farmer Council will work together to develop the draft RDP. Guidance will be provided on the proposed timing and prioritisation of topics, along with feedback to refine the plan and agreement that the proposed plan will deliver on the stated objectives of the RDP.

The RDP development will start in a workshop meeting of the regional Farmer Council. At least every third year this workshop will be reviewed and facilitated by an external facilitator in a national process.



Farmer Council and B+LNZ Extension Flightpath 2024 - 2027

beef+lamb new zealand
FARMER COUNCIL

Core Purpose:

Partnering with the Extension Team to champion farming excellence across New Zealand.

Underlying Mission:

Bring a farmer lens to develop targeted, farmer-centric Regional Extension Delivery Plans and action to create positive impact on-farm ensuring as a sector we are profitable, productive and sustainable now and into the future.

Core objective:

To enable and support farm business adoption, adaption and implementation of identified management practice and technology changes.

Core principles:

- Living "by farmers for farmers".
- Drive on farm profitability, productivity and sustainability.
- Engage farmers in solving sector challenges.
- Create value for and support the wellbeing of farmers through positive engagement with B+LNZ.

Critical Success Factors for B+LNZ Farmer Council:

Critical Success Factor	What it looks like
Partnership with B+LNZ Extension team.	B+LNZ Extension team and FC enjoying working together. Collaborative planning, supported delivery and proactive two-way communication.
Farmer-centric regional Extension planning and delivery.	Regional Extension Delivery Plans are being formulated from a farmer-first view, considering and capturing the opportunities and needs of farmers in the region. Delivery of activities and events is focused on Farmers, what works for them to turn up, engage, make connections and go home with something of value for them and their business.
Proactive farm community connection, insights and engagement.	Farmer Councillors talking to farmers and rural professionals in their district, sharing information and being confident in the general sentiment, opportunities, challenges and needs of their region's farmers.
Communication supporting connection, engagement and feedback throughout the B+LNZ Farmer Council.	Farmer Council members keeping up to date with 'what is going on' through e-diaries, newsletters, group chats and other FC and B+LNZ communications, actively contributing their own thoughts and ideas, listening and considering what others are saying.



Core Activities:



Farmer Perspective

Understanding regional farmer and farming context, challenges and opportunities to inform high impact regional extension delivery.



Strong Connection

Presence in local communities to link the B+LNZ Farmer Council, sheep and beef producers and B+LNZ national extension team, bringing community insights, needs, challenges and priorities to the fore.



Informative Targets

Provides advice to support the extension team in establishing clear, aspirational goals informed by regional insight, inspiring extension plans and activities that create positive on-farm impact underpinning our strategic focus area championing farming excellence.



Effective Leadership

Working constructively as a council to support regional extension impact targets, raise challenges, identify opportunities and ensure action is taken to create positive farmer engagement with regional extension initiatives.

How we operate:



Farmer-centric

Living our "by farmers for farmers" philosophy to create regional extension delivery plans addressing regional challenges and opportunities for profitable, productive and sustainable farm business.



Innovation and collaboration

Working with the Extension Team and regional partners to encourage forward thinking action that supports thriving sheep and beef farmers now and into the future.



Empowering farmers, supporting change

Supporting farmers to find solutions and then adopt, adapt and implement farm business and farm management practices that grow farm productivity, profitability and sustainability.



Creating positive impact

Ensuring extension activities create measurable positive impact for the sector and value for the farmers who engage with them.

Broad scope:

- **Feedback and Farmer Insight:**
  - Gathering insights and representing regional farmer needs, challenges, opportunities and priorities to support developing a relevant, impactful extension delivery plan for the region.
  - Keeping connected to regional seasonal on-farm challenges and opportunities translating these into farmer needs to support B+LNZ Extension creating solutions through adapted extension activities.
  - Provide farmer sentiment, insight or feedback on issues to the GM - Farm Systems and Adoption, or at times when requested by B+LNZ Board or Leadership Team, to support B+LNZ decision making, communication and establishing informed positions on sector issues.
- **Connecting:** Identifying potential farmers and farms to host and contribute to regional extension activities and encouraging farmer engagement with B+LNZ extension activities.
- **Championing:** Being a visible representative of B+LNZ's 'by farmers for farmers' philosophy locally and regionally, showing up and supporting events, encouraging farmer engagement, seeking feedback.
- **Regional extension delivery:** Supporting the planning, implementation and review of extension activities to ensure relevance, impact and value for farmers.

B+LNZ Commitment to the Farmer Council:

- **Partnership:** Supporting, communicating and engaging with the B+LNZ Farmer Council as the critical partner that it is.
- **Leadership development:** Investing in opportunities for B+LNZ Farmer Council members to grow their local, regional and national leadership preparedness, skills and influence.
- **Learning:** Investing in and ensuring that regionally and nationally the B+LNZ Farmer Council has opportunities to connect with information, expertise, insights and research that inspires, challenges and encourages fresh thinking.
- **Network:** Supporting opportunities for B+LNZ Farmer Council members to grow their professional network and relationships beyond their own farm gate.
- **Frameworks and clarity:** Supporting the B+LNZ Farmer Council with clear communication and feedback frameworks that support the Extension partnership and contribution pathways beyond Extension.

B+LNZ Farmer Council collective role

Value and Opportunities

- **Farmer perspective:** Bring the farmer voice to the regional and national delivery of B+LNZ Extension living our 'By Farmers, For Farmers' philosophy.
- **Regional Extension Delivery Plan:** Contribute to the development of an Extension Delivery Plan that is tailored to address the region's priority opportunities and challenges to grow the profitability, productivity and sustainability of sheep and beef farm businesses.
- **Regional Extension activity implementation:** Collaborate with B+LNZ regional extension teams to effectively implement the Regional Extension Delivery Plan and regional extension strategies, adapting to meet any changing seasonal challenges or opportunities.
- **Farmer engagement:** Actively engage with local farming communities across the region to gather feedback and insights to represent their interests, promote and connect them with B+LNZ extension objectives.
- **Information and resource distribution:** Supporting the flow of B+LNZ information and educational resources to farmers: farmer messaging, sharing social media, encouraging uptake, being familiar with B+LNZ Knowledge Hub.
- **Region specific knowledge:** Communicator of region-specific needs relating to B+LNZ extension execution.
- **Collaboration and networking:** Foster strong networks among farmers, industry stakeholders, regional partners and B+LNZ regional Extension Teams, looking for areas of commonality and opportunities to cross pollinate ideas.
- **Regional connection:** Bringing a connection to local communities to support B+LNZ elected Farmer Directors when seeking feedback, perspective or insight.
- **Levy investment:** Although accountability for your region's extension budget sits with your Extension Team, you influence the investment made and where appropriate you will be provided with transparency of the budget.
- **Supporting communication:** Guide farmers to appropriate feedback channels for issues related to B+LNZ that fall outside the domain of extension services. (refer to feedback diagram page 33)

Measuring the Collective Farmer Council impact

Success Indicators	B+LNZ Extension measures and targets
Engagement Quality: Consistency and effectiveness of engagement with the farming community.	**Impact:** modelled return on investment for every levy dollar invested, our extension target is 10:1.
Relationship and Partnership: Quality of relationship with regional extension team.	**Farmer engagement and feedback:** we will be monitoring adoption and implementation, perception of extension value and Net Promotor Scores for extension activity.
Regional Extension Delivery Plan: A quality REDP, engaging farmers and creating value.	**Actual delivery:** events, topics, participating farm businesses and progress against the Regional Extension Delivery Plan.
Farmer Lens: Effectiveness of integrating the farmer voice into B+LNZ extension programmes to create an annual plan and individual events and activities that farmers want to engage with.	**Farmer Council Feedback:** annual survey results (Net Promotor Score), attendance at National Farmer Council Conference, tenure and succession.
Feedback Loops: Supporting the continual improvement of B+LNZ Extension activity enabling the B+LNZ Extension team to identify and resolve issues and remove barriers to farmer engagement.	**Professional Navigation of Differences:** Farmer Council members consistently adhere to the established framework for navigating differences, raising issues and providing feedback on extension and non-extension issues.
Network Contribution: Growth and depth of networks supporting regional delivery to help execute the goals of the Regional Extension Delivery Plan.	**No surprises:** The GM - Farm Systems and Adoption receives information directly from relevant sources rather than indirectly through the B+LNZ Board and/or CEO. Additionally, the B+LNZ Board and/or CEO should not receive any unexpected or spontaneous calls deviating from established processes. (Refer Escalation Framework page 32)

Our B+LNZ Collective toolkit

The diversity of each regional Farmer Council creates a toolkit we all bring something to and can collectively draw on and continue to develop over time.

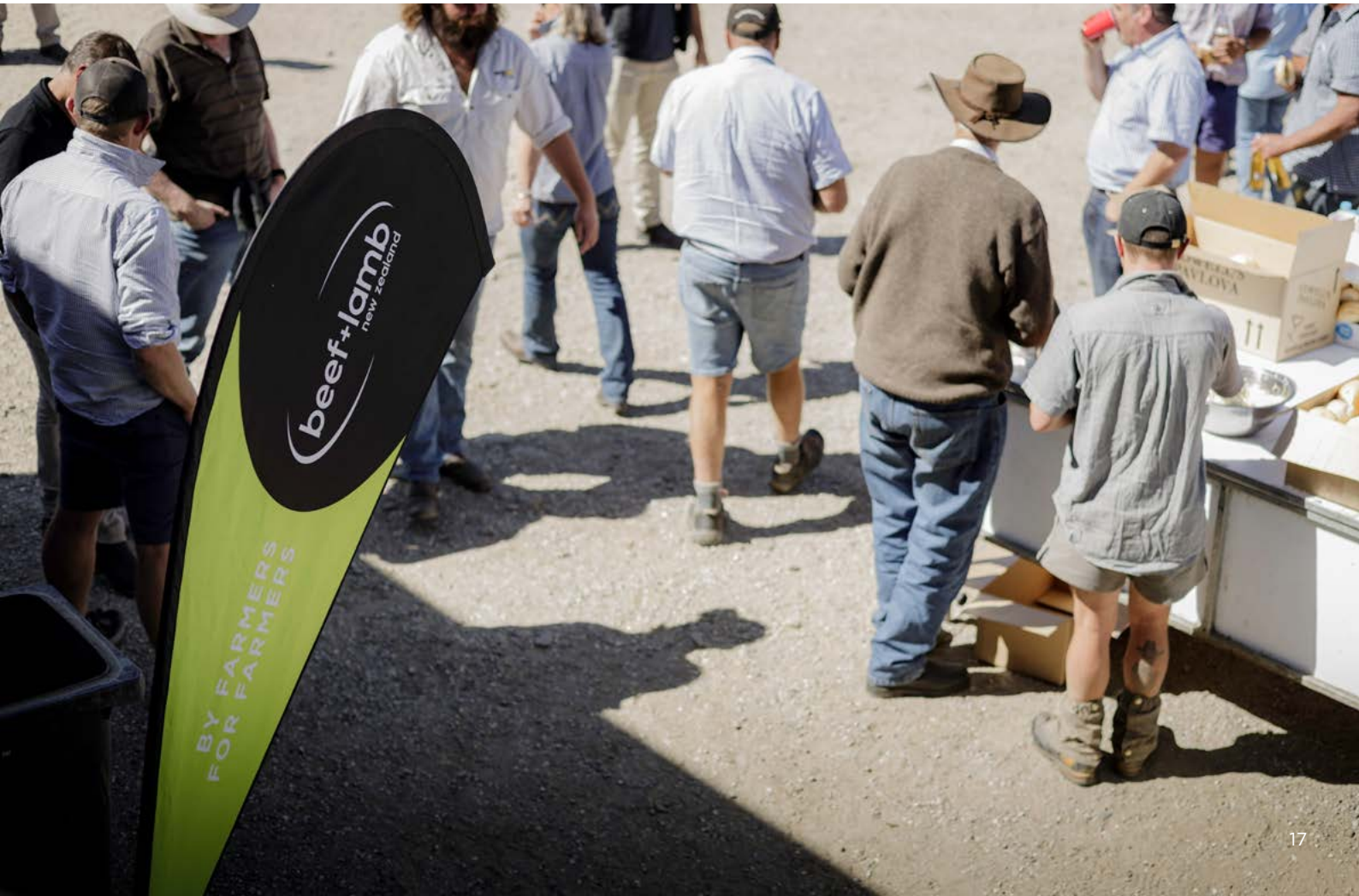
- Curiosity about and passion for growing sheep and beef farm profitability, productivity and sustainability.
- Care for and interest in supporting our farmers wellbeing.
- Deep understanding of and/or commitment to understand regional farming challenges and opportunities.
- Strong, proactive communication and collaboration skills.
- Ability and willingness to represent diverse farming perspectives and diverse farmer views.
- Willingness to talk about what we need to talk about, beyond what we want to talk about with open, candid and honest conversations.

Navigating Differences

It is crucial that the Farmer Council is not overwhelmed by requests for input and feedback on the wide-ranging B+LNZ workstreams, allowing them to stay connected with and focus on regional extension activities. However, we recognize that contribution is an important value of our Farmer Council members, so to support and provide structure to communication channels, we have developed the Relationship Framework (page 26). The objective of this Relationship Framework is to facilitate proactive communication, information sharing, and discussion whilst helping to manage the broad range of farmer input that B+LNZ will want to seek.

If you ever feel like you are getting too much or too little information or requests for action from B+LNZ please raise this directly with your Regional Chair, they will bring the feedback to the FCNExec and the GM - Farm Systems and Adoption.

Where a B+LNZ Farmer Councillor has an issue to raise, the Escalation Framework (page 32), provides a helpful guide on who to raise your concern with.



A brief history of the evolution of Beef + Lamb New Zealand's Farmer Council



Throughout the B+LNZ Farmer Council evolution, the purpose has remained steadfastly grounded in living our 'By Farmers, For Farmers" philosophy, building strong connections with sheep and beef farmers and ensuring that B+LNZ understands and meets the extension needs of each region. This enduring mission reflects both respect for the past and a commitment to continuous improvement in serving farming communities into the future.

Serving as an advisory body, the B+LNZ Farmer Council has supported B+LNZ Extension, Research and Innovation and the Policy team's work align the practical realities and future aspirations of farmers. The B+LNZ Farmer Council has grown to become a core advisory channel, connecting regional needs with B+LNZ operations.

As we look to the future, the B+LNZ Farmer Council is dedicated to advancing the productivity, profitability and sustainability of New Zealand's sheep and beef farmers. By continually adapting to the evolving agricultural landscape and leveraging grassroots insights, the B+LNZ Farmer Council will continue to grow and evolve alongside the changing needs and priorities of farmers and their farm businesses.

Staying true to its origins, the B+LNZ Farmer Council remains focused on partnering with B+LNZ to champion farming excellence across the regions, ensuring their sheep and beef farming businesses thrive in the years to come, and through that success their communities also thrive.

The B+LNZ Farmer Council covers seven key regions across New Zealand:

- Northern North Island
- Mid Northern North Island
- Western North Island
- Eastern North Island
- Northern South Island
- Central South Island
- Southern South Island

Each region has members representing the districts within their region. Each regional B+LNZ Farmer Council elects a chair and a deputy chair who collectively form the B+LNZ Farmer Council National Executive. This structure ensures that local insights and concerns are effectively communicated at regional and national levels, fostering a cohesive and representative approach to B+LNZ's leadership and contribution to sheep and beef farming business and sector challenges and opportunities.



Communicating who the B+LNZ Farmer Council is

In summary the B+LNZ Farmer Council:

- Partners and collaborates with B+LNZ Extension Teams championing farming excellence with a focus on supporting sheep and beef farm productivity, profitability, and sustainability.
- Champion farming excellence by supporting the B+LNZ extension effort to connect and support farmers with what they, and their business, have identified as priorities and needs to thrive, now and into the future.
- Acts as a bridge between farmers and B+LNZ Extension, bringing forward the farmer voice and perspective to live the B+LNZ philosophy, "by farmers for farmers".
- Stays connected with their farming community to identify and provide regional insights, farmer sentiment and feedback to support B+LNZ hearing and responding to farmer needs.

Where we focus:

- **Critical Partnership:** Collaborate with the B+LNZ National and Regional Extension Teams to support the development and delivery of extension plans and activities supporting farm business productivity, profitability, and sustainability.
- **Champion Farming Excellence:** Supporting farmers and farm businesses on their journey to be profitable, productive, and sustainable now and into the future. We do this by supporting the farmer centric approach, bringing a farmer lens and local insights to extension planning and delivery.
- **Bridge the Gap:** Act as a conduit between farmers and B+LNZ Extension, ensuring the farmer voice and perspective shape the focus and delivery of extension activities.
- **Support Collectively:** Work with B+LNZ Extension teams to give farmers access to the tools, information and support they want and need for their businesses, aligning with B+LNZ's purpose of thriving sheep and beef farmers, now and into the future.

What we don't do:

- **Design Research and Development:** We focus on translating and demonstrating R&D outputs practically into farm management systems and businesses. There are Farmer Councilors on the Farm Research Advisory Group (FRAG) and they focus on supporting the R&D direction and work of B+LNZ.
- **Advocacy:** We don't lobby or take sides on major issues. What we do is understand B+LNZ positions so we can confidently contribute into farmer conversations. We are not expected to endorse B+LNZ positions and we are free to agree or disagree, our commitment is to understand the rationale and reasoning from B+LNZ.
- **Represent All:** We recognize that we do not represent every farming concern or farmer, but we do bring a regionally connected farmer perspective to the table.

What we will do:

- **Role Clarity:** Distinguish between our responsibilities as B+LNZ Farmer Councilors and levy payers, using the right channels for feedback from each.
- **Foster Understanding:** Promote awareness of diverse viewpoints without influencing beliefs, we clarify B+LNZ's positions when needed and appropriate.
- **Provide Regional Connection:** Stay connected with the farming community to bring forward their needs and priorities into extension plans. We share regional insights and wider farmer sentiment with B+LNZ Management or Elected Farmer Directors as required to support B+LNZ living their "by farmers for farmers' philosophy.



B+LNZ needs of the Farmer Council

The Farmer Council's effectiveness hinges on its clarity of scope, clarity of what good looks like and alignment with the overall strategic direction and goals of B+LNZ and the extension team. This is supported by clear pathways to engage and/or provide farmer feedback on issues and B+LNZ work beyond extension through appropriate and responsive channels. The B+LNZ Farmer Council Relationship Matrix (page 26) is a reference to support these feedback channels.

B+LNZ Management needs of the Farmer Council

By Farmers, for Farmers

- **Farmer lens:** Ensuring a view from the farming community, understanding their perspectives and particularly their needs to be supported by extension.
- **Consultation role:** Supporting the GM - Farm Systems and Adoption to anticipate changing extension needs in the farming community and ideas on more effective and efficient delivery of extension activities for impact.
- **Feedback role:** Answering calls from GM - Farm Systems and Adoption to contribute farmer insight and farming community sentiment on issues, challenges, opportunities and B+LNZ positions.

Structure and support

- **Integration with B+LNZ:** The B+LNZ Farmer Council being seen by the farming community as an integral advisory part of the B+LNZ Extension Team, including as a vehicle for ideas and feedback.
- **Regional Extension Delivery Plan:** Working with the regional Extension Team to help guide direction and build a delivery plan that will champion farming excellence meeting farm business needs regionally.
- **Onboarding:** Supporting new Extension and B+LNZ Farmer Council members to confidently establish themselves into their roles.
- **Activity review:** Supporting regional Extension Teams with review process to support continual improvement of extension delivery meeting Regional Extension Delivery Plan goals.
- **Risk mitigation:** Supporting the regional Extension Team to scan regional and local challenges and risks to address for future extension delivery.

Game changing thinking

- **Alternative approaches:** Willingness to explore new approaches and new ways to have on-farm impact and deliver on B+LNZ Extension strategic objectives and goals.
- **Leadership on key issues:** Encouraging Farmer Council members to understand farmer leadership needs on crucial sector issues and where relevant supporting the translation of this into extension priorities and activities.
- **Improving processes:** Looking for opportunities to improve how we do things for the B+LNZ Farmer Council and our extension delivery.
- **Feedback and insight:** Providing feedback and contributing ideas with a particular focus on challenges in sheep and beef businesses and insights into farm application of new technologies and innovations.
- **Communication and Promotion:** Assisting the crafting and delivery of key messages and promotion of regional B+LNZ extension events to grow farmer attendance and involvement.

The limitations and challenges of Farmer Council

- **Defining Scope:** The B+LNZ Farmer Council's role and scope are set by the B+LNZ Leadership Team, matching B+LNZ's strategic and extension specific goals. It's important to know what the B+LNZ Farmer Council doesn't cover, and the channels farmers have to contribute, challenge and discuss different workstreams, issues and opportunities across B+LNZ.
- **Decision-Making Boundaries:** The B+LNZ Farmer Council provides valuable input and perspectives to the decision-making process of the GM - Farm Systems and Adoption and therefore B+LNZ more generally. At times the B+LNZ Leadership Team will also ask for wider feedback from the B+LNZ Farmer Council to contribute to their decision-making process.
- **Balance and Timing:** Finding the right balance between B+LNZ Farmer Council involvement and speed of required response.

B+LNZ Board needs of the Farmer Council

Feedback and Farmer Sentiment – on a case by case basis as required

- **Farmer Lens:** Providing a Farmer view of the performance and impact of B+LNZ Extension specifically and B+LNZ more generally.
- **Farmer Community Insights:** Providing insight into farm community challenges, opportunities and needs of B+LNZ.
- **Test and Challenge:** Providing first line feedback to elected Farmer Directors on critical organizational strategies, strategic decisions and issues including referendum and levy management.
- **Farmer Connection:** Support elected Farmer Directors with farming community connection during significant organizational feedback and strategic activity such as engagement with AGM, director voting, director annual regional meetings and referendum engagement.
- **Escalate when required:** Carefully consider situations where the strategic objectives or reputation of B+LNZ are being put at risk and escalate to GM - Farm Systems and Adoption, and if required to the B+LNZ Board Member holding the FC portfolio, supporting B+LNZ Management recognising and addressing emerging challenges. (Page 26 - relationship matrix table)

Supporting Extension Impact

- **Integration with B+LNZ:** The B+LNZ Farmer Council being seen by the farming community as an integral part of the B+LNZ Extension team, including as a vehicle for ideas and feedback.
- **Commitment to Extension Strategy:** The B+LNZ Farmer Council believes in, and champions locally, the B+LNZ Extension strategy, strategic objectives and planned delivery activity.
- **Challenge and Feedback:** Contribute constructive insights on the extension levy investment and it's alignment to achieve targeted on-farm impact targets through extension activity.



B+LNZ Farmer Council Member Role Description

What you do:

Support regional development and delivery of high-impact extension plans and activities, providing a farmer's perspective and community connection.

Other opportunities for contribution as a B+LNZ Farmer Councillor:

- Participation in the B+LNZ Farmer Council Development Programme.
- Attending the annual B+LNZ National Farmer Council Conference; you will get the opportunity to gather new information, network with other farmers from across New Zealand and input into B+LNZ Extension strategy.
- Involvement with B+LNZ reference or advisory groups, such as Environmental Reference Group (ERG) and the Farm Research Advisory Group (FRAG), providing a farmer voice and perspective to the group and a connection and communication channel back to your regional Farmer Council.
- Providing a farmer voice for B+LNZ to test and challenge various B+LNZ activity against.

How we work together:

- **Collaboration:** Work with the Regional Extension Team to design and implement the regional extension delivery plan.
- **Community Engagement:** Gather and provide relevant information, insights, and feedback from local farmers. Practically this is most often through your day-to-day farmer conversations but at times, like for the annual Regional Extension Delivery Plans, we will ask you to talk with a few local farmers on specific topics to collect feedback.
- **Information Sharing:** Engage with B+LNZ information to keep up to date and understand what B+LNZ are doing and why they are doing it to support your contribution to community farmer conversations and be able to bring their insights back to your Regional Extension Team.
- **Support Regional Initiatives:** Assist in developing and delivering region-specific extension plans and local extension activities. Often this will involve helping to identify host farms, other venues, farmers for panel discussions, supporting on-farm field day farm tours and helping out with set up and pack down. It will also include contributing ideas for new event formats, activities to support farmers through seasonal challenges, or developing new ways of bringing important farming fundamentals back into focus.
- **Continuous Learning:** Stay informed about the latest trends and practices in the sheep and beef sector, participate in B+LNZ Farmer Council development programmes and national conferences.

How you know you are being successful:

- **Community Connection:** You have meaningful interactions with local farmers and neighbours that create insights about their challenges, opportunities, needs and priorities.
- **Knowledge Sharing:** You feel confident to participate in farmer conversations about B+LNZ and to collect and share the feedback from farmers.
- **Innovation:** You bring forward new ideas and/or positively engage with the ideas of others that you believe will address farmer needs in your region.
- **Learning Participation:** You engage with the B+LNZ National Farmer Council Conference and other provided opportunities that support and challenge your own learning and development. This includes involvement with the B+LNZ Farmer Council Development programme.
- **Collaborative Connections:** You identify and foster potential collaborations that add value to the regional extension programme. This might be with local farmers, catchment groups, community groups, local businesses or rural professionals.

B+LNZ and your Farmer Council Expectations:

- Attend and contribute into your Regional Farmer Council meetings and the annual B+LNZ Farmer Council Conference.
- Stay updated on B+LNZ, B+LNZ Farmer Council and regional activities through reading newsletters and e-diaries and participating in your regional FC communication channels and social media activity.
- Participate regularly in local B+LNZ extension events to ensure current knowledge of event formats and content, farmer engagement with topics and farmer feedback on events. When attending events in your role as a B+LNZ Farmer Councilor to wear provided B+LNZ Farmer Council branded clothing, as practical and appropriate.
- Be active in your local farming community giving you opportunities to talk with other farmers to help you gather feedback, gain insights and identify regional needs.
- Prepare for meetings by reviewing provided documents and completing pre-work.

While it is important to B+LNZ that you are comfortable to connect farmers with B+LNZ events and encourage attendance at opportunities such as Director Roadshows, it is important to note that B+LNZ will not ask you to participate in any 'cold calling' promotion activity related to any farmer voting or engagement, unless you wish to.

Progression and development

- **B+LNZ Farmer Council:** we have the B+LNZ Farmer Council Development Programme and the B+LNZ National Farmer Council Conference as two specific programmes tailored to support you in your Farmer Council role with B+LNZ.
- **B+LNZ Farmer Council National Executive:** the regional Chair and Deputy come together to form a national executive that works closely with the GM - Farm Systems and Adoption to contribute, challenge, innovate across the extension strategy and national extension delivery. The FCNExec also provides a place where feedback from Regional Farmer Councils can be collated and directed into B+LNZ nationally, either management or board or both to ensure that farmer sentiment and perspective is contributed and heard.
- **B+LNZ Reference or Advisory Groups:** currently there are the Environmental Reference Group and Farm Research Advisory Group in operation with a proposed People and Training Reference Group to be created in 2025. The connection between Farmer Council and these reference groups is both valued and critical.
- **Adhoc Farmer Groups:** The Policy and Advocacy review completed in 2023 also identified the opportunity to have adhoc and subject specific groups to support B+LNZ developing policy positions and/or input into regulatory development with farmer perspectives.



If you are interested in any of these opportunities please raise with your regional Chair or your Extension Manager and they will work with you to support your next steps in contributing to what we do at B+LNZ for and on behalf of our New Zealand sheep and beef farmers.

Places that you can contribute to B+LNZ operations and activities:

Farmer Council

- Focused on Extension and partnering with Regional Extension Team
- Supporting and contributing to the RDP build and delivery.
- Contribute to overarching support of B+LNZ Extension Team.
- Contribute to identifying farmer needs, support the allocation of focus and resources against extension priorities to meet those needs, and help address emerging opportunities and challenges.

Environmental Reference Group (ERG)

- Contribute to overarching support of B+LNZ Policy team.
- Contribute to identifying priority policy and regulatory farmeworks for B+LNZ investement.
- Contribute to B+LNZ policy position through provision of farmer perspective, impact and on-farm implications of proposals

Farm Research Advisory Group (FRAG)

- Contribute to overarching support of B+LNZ Research and Innovation team.
- Contribute farmer perspectives, insights, challenges and opportunites for research and innovation.
- Support connection of research findings, outcomes and programme progress with farmers through extension.

People and Training Reference Group (P&TRGP)

- Being established in 2025.
- Contribute to overarching support of B+LNZ people and training investment.
- Contribute farmer perspectives and needs to the agricultural sector training and education conversation.
- Engage with agricultural sector training and education frameworks and forums.

Farmer Council National Executive (FCNExec)

- Chair and Deputy of Regional Farmer Councils form the B+LNZ Farmer Council National Executive.
- Contribute to Extension Strategy design, development and implementation.
- Contribute, innovate and challenge extension team planning and delivery and Farmer Council operations.
- Lead B+LNZ Farmer Council and the contribution to wider B+LNZ activity and operations.

B+LNZ Farmer Council National Executive Role Description

Purpose:

To provide a national point of connection for the GM - Farm Systems and Adoption with the B+LNZ Farmer Council, facilitating national collaboration, coordination, and insights.

Goals:

- Ensure the effective and cohesive functioning of regional Farmer Councils.
- Grow the impact of B+LNZ Extension programmes and activities.
- Enable the B+LNZ Farmer Council to champion farming excellence across New Zealand.

Primary Focus:

- Align and coordinate regional Farmer Councils with B+LNZ Extension strategies and programmes.
- Foster a strong collaborative network among regional Farmer Councils.
- Support consistent communication and high-performance extension delivery.
- Support the GM - Farm Systems and Adoption to challenge, innovate and deliver the national extension strategy and extension plan across New Zealand.
- Collect, collate and raise regional Farmer Council feedback and represent regional farmer sentiment with the GM - Farm Systems and Adoption and then support communication into B+LNZ management and board as needed.

Additional roles of the FCNExec Chair:

- **Media:** Serve as the sole spokesperson for the B+LNZ Farmer Council in public media, adhering to B+LNZ media policy.
- **Leadership Connection:** Act as the primary liaison for the B+LNZ Farmer Council with:
  - GM - Farm Systems and Adoption
  - B+LNZ Leadership team
  - B+LNZ Board
  - Head of Extension - Delivery
  - This includes ensuring the correct escalation process is followed by the NFCExec, regional Farmer Councils and Farmer Council members where needed.
- **Coaching and Guidance:** Assist Regional Chairs with their role and navigating any challenges with or inside their regional Farmer Council.
- **Understanding Messaging:** Support Regional Chairs, Deputies and Farmer Councils to understand and communicate agreed messaging, guiding them through any disagreements with B+LNZ positions and ensuring GM - Farm Systems and Adoption is proactively supported to progress discussion, understanding and to be able to represent the Farmer Council feedback accurately into B+LNZ.
- **Meeting Process:** Set agendas, facilitate meetings, ensure proper procedures and processes are followed, and fulfill chair responsibilities.

FCNExec Remuneration:

- Regional Chairs are supported with an annual fee for their role as Chair and member of FCENExec; remuneration is reviewed annually and paid quarterly.
- Regional Deputies are supported with a daily rate paid quarterly for attendance at FCNExec meetings and activities.
- FCNExec Chair is remunerated for their work; remuneration is reviewed annually and paid quarterly.
- Travel costs, including accommodation, flights and vehicle mileage, when not paid directly by B+LNZ, are to be reimbursed through the B+LNZ expense claim process.



Terms of Reference for B+LNZ Board Member allocated B+LNZ Farmer Council Portfolio

This portfolio requires the assigned B+LNZ Board Member to actively engage with the B+LNZ Farmer Council National Executive (FCNExec).

1. Purpose:

- **Effective Communication and Alignment:** Facilitate two-way communication and information transfer, focused on Extension, between the B+LNZ Board and the Farmer Council.
- **Observation:** Support understanding of the interests and viewpoints of the B+LNZ Farmer Council, particularly in relation to Extension, contributing into the B+LNZ Board consideration and decision making.

2. Accountability & Responsibility:

- **To the B+LNZ Board:** Accountable for accurately conveying board messages, policies and decisions, when applicable, to the FCNExec.
- **To the Farmer Council:** Responsible for communicating themes of the B+LNZ Farmer Council's activity, successes, challenges and regional extension needs to the B+LNZ Board.

3. Roles and Responsibilities:

- **Communication:** Serve as a liaison between the FCNExec and B+LNZ Board, fostering transparency, communication and effective information exchange.
- **Feedback:** Regularly relay feedback to both the FCNExec and B+LNZ Board regarding discussions, decisions, and progress in both arenas.
- **Strategic Input:** Offer strategic insights to the FCNExec from the B+LNZ Board's perspective, and vice versa.
- **Policy Alignment:** Ensure the Farmer Council's actions and decisions are in sync with the overall strategy and policies of the B+LNZ Board.
- **Reporting:** Consistently update the B+LNZ Board on the FCNExec and wider Farmer Council's activities, challenges, and successes.

4. Meetings and Participation:

- **Farmer Council National Executive Meetings:** Attend FCNExec quarterly face to face meetings as a non-voting member, and as possible, join adhoc online meetings.
- **Active Participation:** Engage in pertinent discussions and activities with the FCNExec regarding on-farm extension, where applicable on behalf of the B+LNZ Board.
- **Attend the B+LNZ Annual Farmer Council Conference**

5. Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest:

Confidentiality: Uphold confidentiality regarding sensitive discussions in both the FCNExec and B+LNZ Board meetings.

Conflict of Interest: Disclose and manage any potential conflicts of interest due to overlapping roles.

6. Term and Review:

Term Alignment: The role's term will roll annually to allow for fresh perspectives and transition of B+LNZ Board members.

Annual Review: The B+LNZ Board will annually review the effectiveness of this role.

This Terms of Reference serves as a guideline for the responsibilities and expectations of a B+LNZ Board member assigned to the Farmer Council National Executive and may be updated as needed to reflect the evolving needs and policies of both B+LNZ and the B+LNZ Farmer Council.



B+LNZ Farmer Council Relationship framework

From	To	Frequency	Format	Objectives	Key notes
Farmer Council National Executive (FCNExec) Chair	B+LNZ Board	2 x per year	Online or in person	Direct communication from Farmer Council to B+LNZ Board	Directly update B+LNZ on Farmer Council their view of: • B+LNZ Extension challenges and opportunities. • B+LNZ Extension team performance and relationship with B+LNZ Farmer Council. • Broader current farmer sentiment. *There may be occasions where insights on broader topics are sought. In such instances, the B+LNZ Farmer Council via the FCNExec will be invited to provide feedback on specific challenges, issues, opportunities or positions beyond extension.*
B+LNZ Farmer Directors	Regional Farmer Council Chair and/or Council	When required	1:1 discussion Or Email Or At regional Farmer Council meeting	Opportunity to invite feedback when required on specific regional and/or wider B+LNZ issues and positions.	There may be occasions where insights from farmers are sought on broader topics. In such instances elected farmer directors will connect with their local Farmer Council for feedback on specific issues beyond extension. This may include Farmer sentiment on positions and B+LNZ referendum offers.
B+LNZ Leadership Team (Through GM - Farm Systems and Adoption)	National Farmer Council Executive (FCNExec)	When required	Online discussion Or Email Or At regional Farmer Council meeting	Opportunity to invite feedback when required on specific regional and/or wider B+LNZ issues and positions. When feedback is requested at FCNExec it is generally expected that each Chair and Deputy will canvas their wider Farmer Council for feedback and insights.	The B+LNZ Farmer Council do not 'represent' all farmers, they do provide strong community connection, a valued farmer perspective and an engagement with B+LNZ supporting a deeper understanding of the organization. Page 20 – B+LNZ Needs of Farmer Council
B+LNZ Senior Management and Board	Famer Council Executive and the B+LNZ General Meeting Host Farmer Council	1 x per year B+LNZ General Meeting	Face to Face – Breakfast post General Meeting	Connection, feedback and information transfer. Topics of the day will be decided between the B+LNZ Board Chair, CEO and FCNExec Chair.	Supporting open dialogue and cooperative effort. This forum can involve other Farmer advisory or reference groups and members from the Kahui. This breakfast, at times, will include a wider audience depending on the issues of the day and what is raised through the General Meeting.
B+LNZ Farmer Council ALL	B+LNZ Senior Management and Board	1 x per year Annual B+LNZ Farmer Council Conference	Face to Face at annual conference	Connection and Information transfer. Farmer sentiment and feedback. Consideration of B+LNZ priorities and insights into Regional Extension.	Supporting open dialogue and cooperative efforts. The FCNExec will canvas topics ahead of the Conference to support and ensure core strategic challenges, issues and opportunities are raised for discussion.

From	To	Frequency	Format	Objectives	Key notes
GM - Farm Systems and Adoption	FCNExec Chair	Fortnightly	Online	Relationship building, updates, issue escalation, feedback, idea exchange. Planning and coordinating upcoming events including: • FCNExec meetings • B+LNZ FC Annual conference • Regional Extension Delivery Plan meetings Provide opportunity to capture B+LNZ FC feedback on relevant items for upcoming meetings: • National Extension Team meetings • B+LNZ Leadership Team meetings • B+LNZ Board meetings	Supporting: • Alignment with B+LNZ extension. • Feedback and farmer insight being added regularly into GM - Farm Systems and Adoption thinking and activity. • Effective and relevant meetings, community and activity for FCNExec. Provides a critical opportunity to regularly and proactively address issues at an early stage to support quick resolution and prevent unnecessary escalation.
GM - Farm Systems and Adoption	FCNExec	Quarterly	Face to Face	Updates, strategic discussions, monitoring extension delivery, sharing learning, identifying potential national challenges and opportunities.	Focusing on the cohesive functioning of regional Farmer Councils. Provides the opportunity to involve B+LNZ GMs or teams as appropriate for topics. Provides the opportunity to involve other B+LNZ Farmer Reference Groups (Research, Environment, People and Capability) activity updates and feedback.
GM - Farm Systems and Adoption	FCNExec	As needed	Online update meeting	Addressing interim issues, feedback needs, urgent decision-making or feedback.	Supporting collaborative efforts with B+LNZ management. Supporting channel for rapid feedback and/or updates and progress on projects or significant and ongoing workstreams. Provides an opportunity to involve other B+LNZ GMs on an ad hoc basis.
FCNExec	Regional B+LNZ Farmer Council	Quarterly	Face to Face	Promoting a strong regional Farmer Council and relationship between Farmer Council and Regional Extension Team. Supporting the delivery of the Regional Extension Delivery Plan. Providing opportunities to challenge thinking, access information and engage with other relevant B+LNZ activities. Provide updates and communicate activity and discussions from FCNExec meetings.	Regular regional Farmer Council meeting led by Regional Farmer Council Chair and Regional Extension Team. Meetings will be supported by: • Regional B+LNZ Electorate Director • Island Extension Team Lead or GM - Farm Systems and Adoption. • FCNExec Chair will attend at least one meeting per year. Opportunity to also canvas feedback about other B+LNZ workstreams, positions, challenges and opportunities to feedback into FCNExec and FCNExec Chair work.

B+LNZ Farmer Council Relationship framework Continued

From	To	Frequency	Format	Objectives	Key notes
B+LNZ Regional Extension Manager and Team	Regional Farmer Councils	1 x per year	Face to Face	Regional Extension Delivery Planning. Workshop meeting to establish the overarching regional extension delivery plan.	Will include pre-work to ensure rigorous regional insights support development of regional extension needs and priorities to inform the annual extension delivery plan for the region. Will be supported by: • B+LNZ Electorate Director • FCNExec Chair • GM - Farm Systems and Adoption and/or Island Extension Team Lead Opportunity to capture content from the RDP meetings to tell the story about B+LNZ's FCs and its process via support from Communications team.
FCNExec	Whole of B+LNZ Farmer Council	3 – 4 times per year between Regional F2F Meetings	Online update meeting. Led by FCNExec Chair.	Optional and as needed. Promoting a strong collaborative network. Alignment of regional activities with national goals, sharing best practices and learning.	Short update and question and answer session to support whole of B+LNZ Farmer Council connection, engagement and awareness of relevant workstreams, projects and activities.
B+LNZ Regional Extension Manager	Regional Farmer Council Chair	Fortnightly	Online or Face to Face	Transparency, connection and communication to maintain partnership strength.	Planning, pre-briefing events, debriefing events, sharing farmer feedback, actions (if any) to be completed before the next regional Farmer Council meeting, content for regional Farmer Council meetings, online and F2F. Opportunity to ask about any new Farmer Council achievements we should be celebrating wider, any other profiling opportunities, and how 'raising the profile' is tracking.
B+LNZ GM - Farm Systems and Adoption	Whole of B+LNZ Farmer Council	Ad hoc	Online	National extension updates. B+LNZ updates. Feedback of farmer sentiment or views on specific B+LNZ topics, workstreams or positions.	Use to provide direct communication to all Farmer Council members on projects or issues that are evolving. Will be on an as needed basis and may be called by FCNExec Chair or GM - Farm Systems and Adoption.
Island Extension Teams	B+LNZ GM - Farm Systems and Adoption	Weekly	Online	Updates from B+LNZ management. Updates from Farmer Council National FCNExec. Supporting team delivery of Regional Extension Delivery Plans and the National Extension Team plan.	BAU meeting cadence GM - Farm Systems and Adoption supports Island and Māori AgriBusiness regular team meetings. These meetings are led by the relevant reporting team leader.

From	To	Frequency	Format	Objectives	Key notes
ERG	Farmer Council	Following ERG Meeting	Email or link through FC Newsletter	To provide information about Environment Reference Group activity, context and support translation into regional extension opportunities, collaborations and needs.	Critical communication channel for connecting B+LNZ FC and ERG updates. FCNExec will discuss and identify issues for potential feedback, input or further discussion across B+LNZ Farmer Council. Priority will be placed on need for Extension activity and support.
FRAG	Farmer Council	Following FRAG Meeting	Email or link through FC Newsletter	To provide information about Farming Excellence Research and Advisory Group activity, context and support translation into regional extension opportunities, collaborations and needs.	Critical communication channel for connecting B+LNZ FC and FRAG updates. FCNExec will discuss and identify issues for potential feedback, input or further discussion across B+LNZ Farmer Council. Priority will be placed on need for Extension activity and support and/ or opportunities to connect with current research outputs.
P&C Farmer Reference Group	Farmer Council	Following P&C FRG Meeting	Email or link through FC Newlsetter	To provide information about People and Capability investment and Farmer Reference Group activity, context and support translation into regional extension opportunities, collaborations and needs..	Critical communication channel for connecting B+LNZ FC and P&C Farmer Reference Group updates. FCNExec will discuss and identify issues for potential feedback, input or further discussion across B+LNZ Farmer Council. Priority will be placed on need for Extension activity and support and/ or opportunities to connect with current People & Capability outputs.
Kahui	Farmer Council	TBC		Connect Farmer Council with Kahui to update on B+LNZ Māori AgriBusiness strategy, Whenua Māori context and support translation into regional extension opportunities, collaborations and needs.	

Other communications

1. **Weekly E-Diary**
   a. Regional extension team update for region.
   b. Upcoming events and activities.
   c. Important B+LNZ headlines and activity updates.
   d. Media links to articles about B+LNZ or other interesting topics.

2. **Fortnight Farmer Council Newsletter**
   a. Update specifically for B+LNZ Farmer Council.
   b. Updates on B+LNZ Farmer Council workstreams and activities.
   c. Updates from wider B+LNZ team and workstreams.
   d. Media links to current articles and activities.


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Paths to Mutual Understanding and Moving Forward

If you have a concern to raise, the first step is to pinpoint the origin of your concern, as different concerns require different approaches to resolve:

1. Is this a personal concern or disagreement as an individual levy payer?
2. Is this a personal concern or disagreement relating to a position taken or statement made by B+LNZ
3. Is this a concern, that is informed by farmer feedback in your region, that relates to a position taken or a statement made by B+LNZ?
4. Is your concern or disagreement directly related to extension activities?

If the concern is point 1 or point 2 in the above this is best raised outside of the Extension escalation framework through direct discussion with your Elected Farmer Director.

If your concern is point 3 or point 4 above, then your first discussion is usually best had with your Regional Farmer Council Chair or refer to the Escalation Framework to guide you on where to raise your concern.

B+LNZ does not require you to:

- Participate in the levy vote or annual remit voting 'phone chain', unless you wish to.
- Conform to a B+LNZ position you disagree with; we will always work hard to ensure you have enough information to understand the rationale behind a position taken but you are free to hold your own opinions.
- Serve as a primary communication channel to levy payers on behalf of B+LNZ.

B+LNZ asks that you:

- Encourage participation in voting, allowing individuals to choose their own candidates or desired outcomes without influencing their decisions. Please note that no one at B+LNZ, from directors to staff, should ever prompt you to sway the direction of voting.
- Take the time to fully understand our positions and statements, even those you may disagree with. This initiative is not aimed at altering your perspective, but rather at deepening your understanding of the rationale behind our decisions to support consistent messaging across regions which helps to provide clarity for all stakeholders.
- Clearly understand and execute your role and responsibilities as a B+LNZ Farmer Councillor to ensure a positive impact for our levy payers.
- Engage with communication channels that are designed to provide the B+LNZ Farmer Council with information, updates and connection.

Other ways farmers can get involved with things that matter to them:

1. **Multiple channels are available to provide feedback and contribution to wider B+LNZ initiatives:** For things like R&D, policy or advocacy, B+LNZ has other ways you can share your thoughts and get involved, just ask your Regional Extension Team or jump online www.beeflambnz.com

2. **Seek to understand:** Before deciding on the best channel for feedback, use the flow chart below to determine the most effective place to direct your feedback.

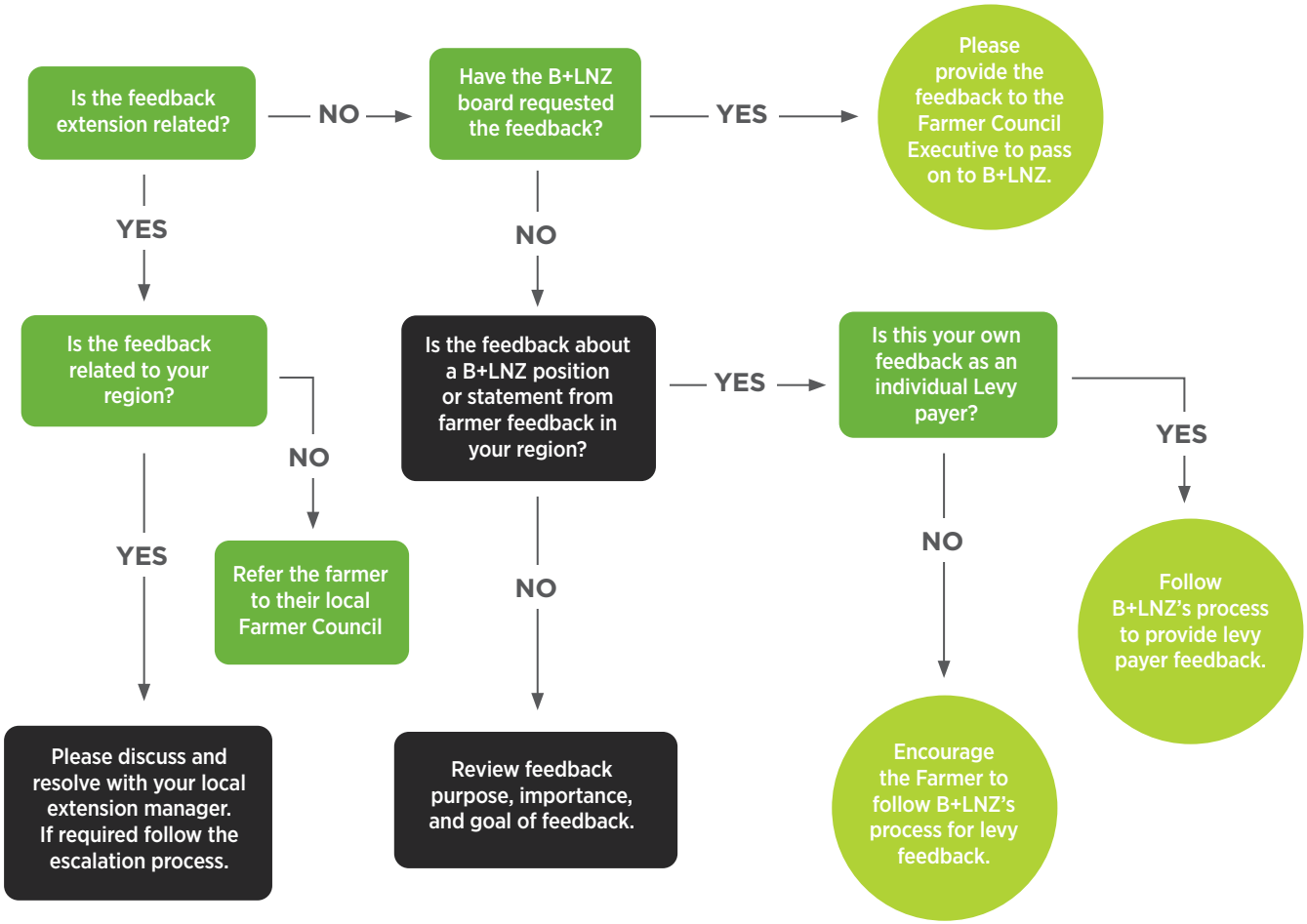
Escalation Framework

Below is an outline of the concerns and Escalation framework relationship map. Please note that the escalation process will only commence once it is confirmed that the appropriate feedback process was followed and genuine efforts were made to reach a compromise or consensus.

From	Concerns regarding	Notify	Escalation Party *(if resolution not presented or progressed)*	Notes
B+LNZ Extension Managers and/or team	B+LNZ Farmer Council or Members	**GM - Farm Systems and Adoption**	B+LNZ CEO	GM - Farm Systems and Adoption will ensure FCNExec Chair is informed and supporting where relevant. Where required feedback will be closed with FCNExec through either GM - Farm Systems and Adoption or FCNExec Chair.
B+LNZ GM - Farm Systems and Adoption	Farmer Council member in a region	**Regional Farmer Council Chair** GM - Farm Systems and Adoption will also inform FCNExec Chair.	FCNExec Chair	GM - Farm Systems and Adoption available to support. FCNExec Chair to support as needed.
	FCNExec members	**FCNExec Chair**	B+LNZ CEO	B+LNZ CEO to support resolution as required. FCNExec Chair to support as needed.
	Farmer Council Collective Regional or National	**FCNExec Chair**	B+LNZ CEO	FCNExec Chair responsible for leading closing of feedback loop on resolution.
FCNExec	B+LNZ Extension Managers/Team	**GM - Farm Systems and Adoption B+LNZ**	B+LNZ CEO	FCNExec Chair responsible for leading closing of feedback loop on resolution back to FCNExec.
	GM - Farm Systems and Adoption B+LNZ	**B+LNZ CEO**	B+LNZ Board Chair	FCNExec Chair responsible for leading closing of feedback loop on resolution back to FCNExec.
	B+LNZ statements, positions or other activity.	**GM - Farm Systems and Adoption B+LNZ (via the FCNExec Chair)**	B+LNZ CEO	FCNExec Chair responsible for leading closing of feedback loop on resolution back to FCNExec.
	B+LNZ Board members	**GM - Farm Systems and Adoption B+LNZ**	B+LNZ CEO To refer on to B+LNZ Board Chair as required.	FCNExec Chair responsible for leading closing of feedback loop on resolution back to FCNExec.
B+LNZ Farmer Council	B+LNZ Extension Managers/Team	**Chair of Regional Farmer Council**	GM - Farm Systems and Adoption	FCNExec Chair will be advised by GM - Farm Systems and Adoption and support feedback loops on resolution.
	B+LNZ statements, positions, decisions or other activity.	**Chair of Regional Farmer Council** to discuss with FCNExec Chair before escalating.	GM - Farm Systems and Adoption (will raise and access support from FCNExec Chair and B+LNZ CEO)	GM - Farm Systems and Adoption will support raising with relevant B+LNZ GM and/or B+LNZ CEO and/or Board through formal feedback channels.
	B+LNZ Board members	**Chair FCNExec**	GM - Farm Systems and Adoption to raise with CEO and B+LNZ Board Chair.	GM - Farm Systems and Adoption and/or CEO will support closing feedback loops and/or resolution support if required.
	GM - Farm Systems and Adoption	**Chair FCNExec** to discuss with GM - Farm Systems and Adoption before escalating.	B+LNZ CEO	FCNExec Chair responsible for closing feedback loop with FC.

	B+LNZ Team outside of Extension	**Chair FCNExec** to discuss with GM - Farm Systems and Adoption before escalating.	B+LNZ CEO	GM - Farm Systems and Adoption will support raising with B+LNZ CEO through formal feedback channels.
From	**Concerns regarding**	**Notify**	**Escalation Party** *(if resolution not presented or progressed)*	**Notes**
B+LNZ Board	B+LNZ Extension Managers/Team	**GM - Farm Systems and Adoption**	B+LNZ CEO	
	Farmer Council member	**GM - Farm Systems and Adoption**	FCNExec Chair	GM - Farm Systems and Adoption available to support resolution. GM - Farm Systems and Adoption and/ or B+LNZ CEO responsible for closing the feedback loop on resolution back to B+LNZ Board.
	Farmer Council collective for a region	**GM - Farm Systems and Adoption**	B+LNZ CEO and FCNExec Chair	GM - Farm Systems and Adoption available to support resolution. GM - Farm Systems and Adoption and/ or B+LNZ CEO responsible for closing the feedback loop on resolution back to B+LNZ Board.

Feedback Framework Farmer Council



Appendix 1

Farmer Council Only Time alternative process map – Background and Purpose

Background

Historically, some Farmer Council (FC) regions have used "FC only time" as a dedicated forum. This time was primarily intended to allow individual FCs to discuss and make decisions regarding feedback and communications received from levy payers, particularly during the HWEN consultations. However, the application of FC only time has varied across regions. Recently, this forum has increasingly been used to discuss and critique matters that, in many cases, could be more appropriately addressed through other channels.

Purpose & Intent of Document

This document aims to outline an alternative process for managing issues that arise within individual FC regions. The intention is to ensure that the FC, as a collective body, operates and conducts itself in a professional manner. The proposed approach does not eliminate the possibility of having FC only time when necessary; rather, it seeks to remove it as a standing agenda item. This change is designed to ensure that all issues and items are addressed in a more effective and efficient way.

In addition, this document will help to establish a consistent approach throughout the FC network and to elevate the professional standards by which all FCs operate. Additionally, the document seeks to foster an environment that is less confrontational than what has sometimes occurred in certain regions in the past.

FC Only Time alternative process

- **Regular Communication:** Regional and National FC Chairs must maintain ongoing communication with their respective FC members to ensure early awareness of any emerging issues.
- **Pre-Meeting Check-In:** Prompt for communications around any pending issues with councillors at least one week prior to each FC meeting, at minimum.
- **Issue Confirmation and Management:** Once topics or issues are identified, the Chair should manage them according to FC operating procedures and established reporting lines.
- **Efficient Issue Resolution:** If an issue can be addressed outside of the FC meeting, it should be managed accordingly for greater efficiency. The Chair must still briefly outline the issue and its resolution during general business, so all FC members are informed.
- **Operational Matters:** Any issues related to operational matters or staffing should be reported by the Chair to line managers and the relevant GM or CEO. Chairs and FC members must not engage directly in operational duties or issues.
- **Agenda Inclusion**: If an issue is suitable for FC debate and pertains to FC responsibilities, it should be added to the meeting agenda—either as a specific item or under general business.
- **Special Agenda Item:** If an issue, raised through the appropriate channels, still requires FC-level discussion for clarity or transparency, "FC only time" may be added as a special agenda item.
  - When FC only time is held, A senior Leader (CEO or GM responsible for FC) will be present. The intent here is to answer any questions raised and provide clarity on an issue.
    - In this instance the senior leaders will only be present for clarification, not justification. They will not actively participate in the conversation unless addressed directly.
- **Post-Meeting Feedback:** Within 24 hours of meeting closure, feedback on topics discussed through FC only time should be provided in writing to the GM responsible for FC and the CEO. This email should detail the topic, discussion points, agreements reached, and the desired outcome.

Visual Representation of Meeting Preparation and Issue Management

Step	Description
1. Regular Communication	Regional and National FC Chairs maintain ongoing dialogue with their FC members to quickly identify emerging issues.
2. Pre-Meeting Check-In	Full check-in with councillors at least one week prior to each FC meeting.
3. Issue Confirmation & Management	Chair manages identified issues following FC procedures and reporting lines.
4. Efficient Issue Resolution	If possible, resolve issues outside the meeting for efficiency. The Chair summarises the issue and solution during general business.
5. Operational Matters	Chair reports operational or staffing issues to line managers and relevant GM/CEO. FC members do not engage directly in these matters.
6. Agenda Inclusion	Relevant FC issues are added to the meeting agenda as specific items or under general business.
7. Special Agenda Item ("FC Only Time")	If further discussion is needed, "FC only time" is added to the agenda for clarity or transparency.
8. Post-Meeting Feedback	Within 24 hours, written feedback on "FC only time" topics is sent to the GM and CEO, detailing topics, discussions, agreements, and outcomes.



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