



FIL

THE DAIRY FARMER

FARM INNOVATION / HYGIENE/ ANIMAL HEALTH / MARKERS / NUTRITION

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AUTUMN 2009

NEXT GENERATION DAIRYING FOR MATAKANA

Maori farming has enjoyed a renaissance over the past 10 years, as the full value of lands returned under Waitangi settlements are harnessed with astute management and sharp minds at board level. So much so that today their shareholding in Fonterra amounts to many millions of dollars in the giant co-operative.

High profile competitions like the Ahuwhenua Trophy for Maori Excellence in Farming has given young Maori much to aspire to should they choose to return to their ancestral lands to make a living. However, often the biggest challenge is getting young people to come back to the land and skilled to harness the opportunities it presents.

Matakana Island in the Bay of Plenty is one area that is not struggling to get the next generation back on the land, with dairying on the island rejuvenated by the return of young Maori couples to run the seven farms on the island.

Matakana's coastal profile and hectares of pines is deceptive from the seaward side, for the pastoral area supports almost 2000 cows across seven dairy farms, and 250 people live on the island.

Maria Taiapa and her husband Cale came back to Matakana almost a year ago to work for Maria's Dad John Gardiner. Both had tried life in the big cities – they crossed the Tasman to Sydney ("too big and fast" says Cale) and then up to Brisbane where Cale easily found his choice of job as an electrician.

However the opportunity to return was a chance for them to get ahead and also for Maria's Dad to step out of the shed and back into his other passion, for large green tractors and jobs using them.

The farm runs a split calving pattern with 120 cows to calve this autumn and 280 in spring, aiming to capitalise on the island's mild winters (coastal pasture management systems).

After a season on wages this bright young couple are happy to admit there is still plenty to learn about dairying and both look forward to Ag ITO and Dairy NZ holding training courses on the island for the growing number of keen dairy workers.

Maria has helped kick start an unofficial young farmers club on the island. One of the first trips for the group

was in February, to visit some large scale farm operations in the South Island with an aim to bring some ideas back to the Island to put into practice.

Maria has a degree in Human Resources and Industrial Relations and appreciates the value of sharing time and ideas.

"The mainland is only a short boat trip away, but it can be very easy to just opt to stay here, even on your time off."

It is not without co-incidence their young farmers trip includes a visit to another island - the Turner brothers property on the Rakaia River in Canterbury. They will journey as far as Winton in Southland to visit the property of their ex DairyNZ advisor Sharn Edwards before returning up the West Coast.

"The whole purpose of the club is to try and make this an annual thing and we would like to visit other Maori operators who have been successful, including Dean Nikora, winner of the Ahuwhenua Trophy," says Maria.

FIL SUPPORTS MATAKANA SUCCESS

FIL area manager Allan Clarke is proud of the fact all the Maori farming businesses on Matakana use FIL product and services.

He has enjoyed a "hugely rewarding" relationship with the easy going, hospitable families who always find time for a catch up, giving him some gentle jibing about his best deals and fishing successes.

FIL has taken its support a step further this summer, auctioning off a 200 litre drum of Jetset acid to the families to help fund the trip to the South Island in February. Over scones and coffee at John and Ave



ABOVE: FIL AREA MANAGER ALLAN CLARKE (CENTRE, ON TRUCK DECK) AND FIL MARKETING MANAGER ROSANNE OBITZ WITH SOME KEEN FIL SUPPORTERS ON MATAKANA ISLAND, BAY OF PLENTY.

Gardiner's house the drum was sold under some good natured but intense bidding to John – with his bids inevitably and enthusiastically supported by milker and daughter Maria.

At auction's close, over \$700 went towards the trip south. John does not spend as much time in the dairy shed these days now Maria and Cale are milking but says he has enjoyed an excellent relationship with Allan over the years.

"It is great to see the next generation continuing that relationship, and the support from FIL and Allan for this trip."

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A WORD FROM FIL:

Another year starts for the team at FIL after an unexpected busy Christmas period. The production, logistics and admin team remained on duty right up until Christmas Eve getting products made and orders processed.

The horizon for dairy farming this year is looking a little hazy, however we should remind ourselves that the world needs food, particularly good quality dairy products. We will all collectively ride this out and as always, FIL is committed to making the best quality products that are backed by innovation, local knowledge and a world-class team of people.

The horizon starts to get a little clearer when I look at our new products under development and the enthusiasm shown by some of the younger people moving into agriculture in general.

All the very best for 2009

WARWICK DOWSE
General Manager



FIL

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EFFLUENT A SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITY FOR FERTILITY

EVEN THOUGH FERTILISER PRICES ARE EASING BACK FROM LAST YEAR’S HIGHS, DAIRY FARM EFFLUENT STILL REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT POTENTIAL SOURCE OF SAVINGS FOR MOST DAIRY FARMERS.

SOIL SCIENTIST
& FERTILISER CONSULTANT
DR DOUG EDMEADES



One of New Zealand’s leading soil scientists and fertiliser consultants Dr Doug Edmeades says there are still only a minority of farmers taking full advantage of the benefits from effluent application.

“You could safely put the value of effluent to your fertiliser programme at around \$25/cow/year, that is a saving of over \$7000 a year for the average dairy farm, and well over \$10,000 for the many larger farms now operating.”

Dr Edmeades’ first advice to many of the farmers he visits is to get the effluent system upgraded so fresh, quality effluent can be applied on a daily basis.

“It really is a case of fresh is best. Any farm with a two pond system for storage and treatment will find that leaving the effluent sitting around through the year before application will only see it degraded.”

The two key fertiliser elements of effluent are potash (K)

and nitrogen (N), significantly greater than phosphate (P) and sulphur (S). Nitrogen is volatile and in stored effluent ponds tends to be lost to the atmosphere, while other elements get locked up in the pond soil base.

Applying effluent every day through an effective sump and sprinkler system may involve an upgrade for many properties, but the payback can be within five years for effective systems says Dr Edmeades. Regulations prevent more than 150kgN/ha/year being applied, eliminating the need for urea on those areas effluent is applied.

“Even if you do apply right on this rate, you are still not optimising your application because of some fundamental imbalances that occur,” says Dr Edmeades.

K and N levels are similar in effluent, but applying at the higher rate will see too much K going on, causing plant growth problems and even metabolic problems in stock.

“A better balance is to reduce the loading, to the equivalent of around 70kgK/ha/year, but keep in mind the P and S levels will be lower and will need maintaining with fertiliser. It is not a completely self contained system just because you are putting effluent on.”

While the application balance is not ideal for pasture, it is for crops, and in particular nutrient hungry crops like maize. “You could look on a system that applies effluent to crops as the Rolls Royce of application options.”

Trial work on four properties in the Waikato at Orini, Ngahape, Matamata and Ohaupo was carried out last year on maize crops, in conjunction with Foundation for Arable Research (FAR) and Environment Waikato (EW). Maize was grown on these properties using no chemical fertilisers, with effluent the sole source of nutrient inputs. Crops were also grown alongside using commercial side dressings of fertiliser or starter fertilisers.

No significant difference was found between the side dressing/starter fertilised crops and the effluent treated crops. Savings of between \$250 and \$450/ha were recorded for crops using only effluent treatment and longer term studies aim to see if effluent could be used on lower fertility sites.

The use of effluent on crops was welcomed by EW as a means of stripping nutrients out of effluent that may have otherwise ended up in waterways, and saved farmers money in a sustainable manner.

Dr Edmeades advises farmers to take a “good long look” at pastures in effluent paddocks, particularly when grass growth is high in October.

“If they don’t look right, clover composition in particular could be affected by the ratio of nutrients and you will have to adjust the nutrient programme for those paddocks.” He recommends effluent blocks be soil tested separately from the rest of the farm.



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BEFORE USE



AFTER USE







We have been involved in a volatile ride over the past 6 months. Essentially, the world has changed.

Global financial, equity and commodity markets have seen some of the largest slides in history, with many picking that we are in the midst of the worst economic ‘shock’ since World War II.

NEW ZEALAND ECONOMY

Essentially, the NZ economy has been in mild recession through to the end of 2008. However, with an export-led recovery now looking difficult, we are about to see the recession intensify in early 2009 - it is likely to continue through to the end of the year.

The enormity of the situation (and likely severity of the recession) has seen the Reserve Bank of New Zealand drop the Official Cash rate by another 1.5% to 3.5% on 29 January. We now expect the OCR to drop to 2.0% over coming months, and see early 2009 as a good time to be locking in some favourable long-term interest rates.

GLOBAL ECONOMY

Growth in our major trading partners has stalled as the financial crisis continues. The US, UK and European economies have been hit hard. In turn, due to this big drop in demand for products produced in Asia has meant the ‘rot’ has spread.

The implications for us are that our export markets have started to dry up so it is difficult for us to offload our products to our traditional consumers.

AGRICULTURE

DAIRY - So what does this mean for New Zealand agriculture? Dairy markets have already been affected by what has happened internationally, with international commodity prices falling rapidly. While they have recently shown some signs of stabilising, the reintroduction of EU subsidies may force prices lower again over coming months. Governments have been purchasing product in order to stabilise prices, while producers seem to have plenty of stock available. It is likely that it will take some time before buyers get back in the market and cheaper inventories are run down. While the strong long-term fundamentals for dairy remain, it could be some time before we see a significant change in international prices - which would influence payouts.

LAMB - The lamb industry seems to be bucking the trend of our other commodities. Basic economic theory would indicate that international demand for lamb should have decreased, given that the UK is our largest importer of lamb and their economy is in real trouble. However, this does not seem to be the case – local prices remain strong. However, we take a cautious view on higher prices for the sector given the current global uncertainty.

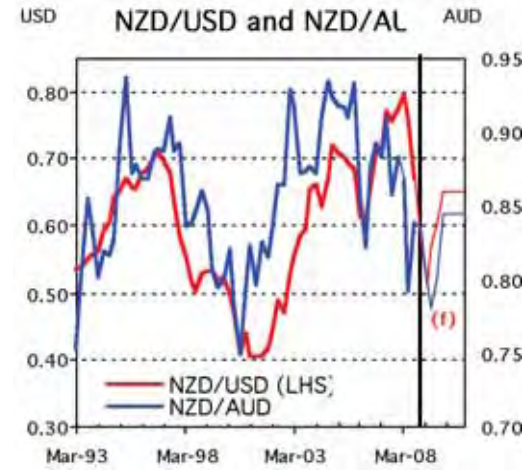
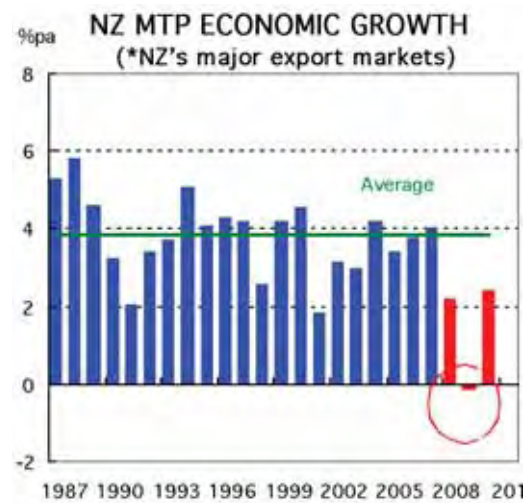
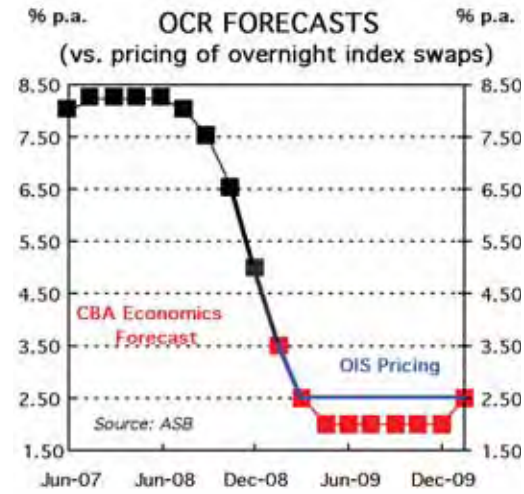
BEEF - International beef prices have followed a more consistent economic trend than its lamb counterparts. Since the beginning of the financial crisis, they have come off the historical highs seen in mid 2008, to now sit at their long-term averages. Local prices have been boosted by the low NZD as well as reports that indicate supply will tighten in the US in 2009. It is likely they will be stable in the short term.

CURRENCY - The NZD is expected to remain in the low 50s for the early part of 2009 as risk-averse investors retreat to ‘safe’ currencies such as the USD (also now the Euro) – this has had a major effect on the decrease in the NZD over the past few months. Once investors become less risk averse we would expect to see the NZD move into the 60s against the USD, as the economic trouble in the US continues and weighs on the Greenback.

CONCLUSION

Amidst all the gloom, it is important to remember people still need to eat. New Zealand agriculture provides some of the safest food sources in the world and the long-term fundamentals of the industry remain sound.

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BLAIR AIMS FOR SUCCESSFUL RUN WITH FIL

FIL has been part of Blair Jordan’s life before he even left school. Now he joins the company with plenty of skills to apply on the business jointly owned by his father Arthur and business partner Dave Hancox.

Blair returned to FIL late last year as Operations Engineer, and while he welcomes the chance to work in the business his Dad help build, he is under no illusions about the challenge ahead.

“When you look at what Dave and Arthur have built up over the last 30 years, it is certainly an awesome effort. Their goals for a sustainable business are well ahead of many businesses, and closer to what you see happening in Southern California,” he says.

He appreciates their efforts to integrate sustainability throughout the company, rather than simply use it as a corporate buzzword without any substance behind it.

Blair completed six months last summer helping commission FIL’s new state of the art head office at Mount Maunganui with its many sustainable design features. However his stints working for FIL go back as far as age 12 when he started spending holiday time working intermittently for FIL. Blair has witnessed the company’s strong growth from both first hand and afar in more recent years.

With his degree in electrical engineering he has had extensive experience in the industrial sector, working on electrical and process control at Orica, Fonterra Tirau and offshore nickel mine projects in Indonesia.

The last two years have been spent on the demanding World Triathlon circuit which saw him achieve an impressive world ranking of 110th.

Returning to a “serious job” however does not mean he has dumped his fitness regime entirely. He managed a healthy fourth placing in the hotly contested Mount Maunganui Half Ironman competition, with a time of three hours, 58 minutes.

“Moving to the Bay of Plenty has meant I can combine that passion with my engineering skills, and be a part of Arthur and Dave’s efforts to make FIL a sustainable, global company.”

HAVE YOU EVER OBSERVED INFECTIOUS TEAT CONDITIONS ON YOUR COWS?



You will be surprised at what you see across a herd after cluster removal and teat spray application. This is an opportunity for staff to learn about teat diseases, protect themselves and to foster a work environment that is one of observation leading to action.

PSEUDOCOWPOX

This is a common viral infection of the teat skin and causes a characteristic horseshoe-shaped ring of small scabs surrounding a larger sore. It initially begins as a vesicle 0.5-2.5cm diameter that ruptures producing the thick scab – which after milking may lift off to produce the typical lesion. See Figure 1.



Most lesions heal in 3-4 weeks and the cow forms immunity – but is short lived. It can occur at any time of the year and somewhere between 5-10% of the herd is affected. It seems that the virus spreads slowly through the herd and can only infect the cow when the skin integrity is disrupted. This disease is transmissible to humans called a zoonosis. It results in the development of ‘milkers’ nodule’ on the hand. They are raised reddened small warts. See Figure 2.



An iodophor teat dip is recommended as the most effective means for controlling an outbreak and limiting the spread of pseudocowpox within the herd. Puddle et. al (NZVI,1985) compared iodophor, chlorhexidine and dodecyl benzoic sulphonic acid in a randomised controlled challenge experiment. The iodophor group had a significantly lower proportion of challenged cows developing lesions on their teats.

Milking gloves would be recommended in a herd with a high incidence of pseudocowpox to protect milkers from getting ‘milkers’ nodule’.

PAPILLOMAS

Spread like pseudocowpox, papilloma virus is transferred through abrasions in the skin from contaminated teat cups or milkers’ hands. The papilloma virus has a number of ‘strains’ and this leads to differing wart e.g. ‘rice grain’ flat white ones to ‘feathery’ protruding ones. Most self limit and only appear to cause problems if they interfere with teat cup attachment. It is thought iodine based teatsprays with emollients to keep teat skin healthy and damaged warts ‘clean’ may contain the spread of the organism. See Figure 3.



BOVINE HERPES MAMMILLITIS

This is a much more severe viral condition, that to the untrained eye would not go unnoticed. Presumptive cases have been reported in NZ, but not confirmed. A recently reported case in Northland by Petrovski (NZVI, 2005) affected 38% of the herd when small red papules formed that developed into up to 3cm blisters that burst into shallow erosions that had black scabs. See Figure 4.



It ran its course over 11 weeks from September through to December. Overseas it commonly occurs in outbreaks in Autumn and Winter months. The author reported the following control measures reduced the incidence of new cases. Isolation of affected cows,

flushing of teat cups with an iodine based sanitiser and teat spraying with iodine based teat spray with added emollient.

Other more individual infections of cows’ teats and udder may be ‘Udder impetigo’ – a bacterial infection (usually Staph. aureus) causing a raw rash on the udder. Also ‘Ringworm’ too may appear as a grey – white crustiness. Care is needed as this may spread to milking staff.

Key message: Observe the teat/ udder condition of the herd – be aware of infectious diseases (not necessarily machine induced). Involve your veterinarian if you are unsure. Remember exotic diseases such as Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) may appear on the teat.

Acknowledgements: Countdown Downunder, Eric Hillerton, DairyNZ, Hamilton

“We have trialled Iodoshield Active through some trying weather conditions and we are confident it doesn’t require added emollient when used at the recommended rate.”

HENRY & ALISON VAN HOUT, WAIKATO.



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PAKISTAN A CHALLENGE FOR KIWI FARMER

IN THE HUGE POPULOUS COUNTRY OF PAKISTAN, FARM TRAINER AND EX ROTORUA FARMER DENNIS HUTCHINGS HAS FOUND SOME VALUABLE LESSONS FOR HIS COLLEAGUES BACK HOME IN NEW ZEALAND.

Dennis spent 14 months working out of Hyderabad in Pakistan’s Sindh region. He was a farm trainer working outside the city for the Pakistan Dairy Development Company. While there his brief was to run the farm training venture, lift the genetic potential of the dairy cattle and boost farm production. He also had to try and remove illegal squatters off the property who were growing cash crops on the land. Dennis returned 14 months later, and 12kg lighter, to recharge at his seaside home at Papamoa, Bay of Plenty.

The ex-Rotorua farmer was “blown away” at the potential of the southern fertile region that consists of the Tharparkar Desert, the only fertile desert in the world. The area is gifted with relatively plentiful water supplies delivered via a massive series of irrigation canals, a legacy of British colonial engineering.

However it is the combination of flood irrigation systems and soils where Dennis saw the greatest loss of productive potential in the region.



DENNIS HUTCHINGS WITH ONE OF THE CONVERTED SEED DRILLS USED TO SOW CROPS LIKE SORGHUM AND MAIZE. BELOW LEFT TO RIGHT: VIEW ON FARM. WAGON WHEEL PRODUCTION. NEW WATER AND TROUGH. TRANSPORTING TWO AND A HALF TONS OF HAND CUT BURSEEM (FODDER).



“The irrigation works by simply running the water off a central irrigation ditch, and letting it progressively flood down each paddock, as one is flooded a gap is made for the water to move and flood the next.”

What he quickly came to realise was that the water was lifting nutrients out of the first paddocks irrigated, and transferring those nutrients down to the subsequent paddocks. The resulting nutrient gradient saw poor crops in the first irrigated paddocks, to progressively better in the lower ones, where the nutrients ended up.

In places the fragile alluvial soils have been transformed into soils with dense pans that fail to drain properly and break up into rock like chunks when cultivated.

“I appreciated how so many New Zealand soils are also alluvial, and the increase in irrigation we have seen on those soils – you quickly see how it is possible to create a poorer and different soil as a result of bad practice,” he says.

The canal water is also badly polluted, so much so stock would only take a couple of drinks from it, and many live in a dehydrated state, simply unfamiliar with

being able to drink ad lib from fresh water sources. The effect on cattle condition was significant. When he arrived many of the 2500ha property’s 300 cattle were in condition score 2.

Any re-development work on a farm in New Zealand usually involves fencing, water and fertiliser, and much of his work in Pakistan was no different. To try and ensure fresh water supplies he went underground, setting up three shallow surface wells to pull up fresh water for stock and humans to drink.

“By the time we had finished the farm had a drinking water facility up to WHO standards, better than most had in the cities.”

Part of Dennis’s time there was spent teaching staff on the farm about deep ripping to aerate and break up the solid pan, discing, power harrowing and seeding with a converted cotton seed drill for crops like sorghum, maize, and burseem, a type of Egyptian clover crop.

The staff he worked with came from a culture that lacks the ability to communicate openly, with staff often knowing very little about management’s plans.

“There are simply so many people, everyone is pretty much having to just look after themselves and the result is little management of the significant resources they have.”

The fact that wagon wheel manufacture is still a major business in Pakistan gives some indication to the yawning gap between farming there and here. However the resourcefulness of Pakistanis would leave even New Zealand’s “number eight wire” philosophy well in its excessive dust.

He also came to see the flow on effect well intentioned aid can have in undoing the fabric weaving farming and community. One of his goals was to improve the feed quality for cows with greater green feed and less straw by product.

“However, in doing that you came to see you were taking away an important resource – village woman would collect the straw based muck, dry it and stack it for cooking fuel, so the new feed regime would effectively remove that.”

HYGIENE: ✓

FIL TROUGH BLOCKS

CLEAN DRINKING WATER RANKS RIGHT ALONGSIDE GOOD QUALITY GRASS AS A NECESSITY TO ENABLE DAIRY COWS TO REACH THEIR FULL PRODUCTION POTENTIAL.

During the summer as the daily round is extended it does not take long for slime and algae to build up in the water trough, tainting cows’ supply. Their desire to drink as much as they should is reduced, threatening milk production and their welfare.

FIL Trough Block will help prevent a build up of slime and algae over the summer-autumn period thanks to a high quality blend of zinc sulphate, copper sulphate and cobalt sulphate. Trough Blocks are compatible with all water types, and are suitable for use any time of the year.

FOR BEST RESULTS FIL RECOMMENDS:

- The trough should be cleaned prior to treatment.
- Place the block in the trough near the inlet valve.
- One block will treat approximately 1000 litres of water.
- Treat the trough every six weeks or when slime or algae begin to re-appear.



MAINLAND VIEWS



SOUTHERN GIRLS APPLY SCIENCE TO FIL FLUORO

SCIENCE AND FARMING ARE OFTEN TWO AREAS LESS THAN POPULAR WITH YOUNG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, BUT A SOUTHLAND SCHOOL GIRL HAS COMBINED BOTH RECENTLY, THANKS TO HELP FROM FIL.

Lutte Thys of James Hargest College in Invercargill and her friend Madison Moyhain completed their science project on the comparative visibility of FIL Fluoro paints on dairy cows, to establish which were the most visible, and lasted the longest.

The idea for the project came from Lutte overhearing a conversation between her parents Harman and Tinneke about the importance of identifying cows which have been treated with antibiotics.

“We spoke to Southland Fonterra area manager Michael Blomfield who made us aware about how important it was to have colours that stand out to identify cows, and avoid getting antibiotic treated milk into the milk Silo, and then the tanker.”

The financial impact of an antibiotic grade motivated Lutte to conduct a trial to find out what colour lasted the longest and made it the subject of her and Madison's school science project. Her Dad is a supporter

of FIL products, and encouraged her to contact FIL's area manager Mike Broomhall.

Mike was only too happy to supply the range of FIL's Tell Tail Fluoro paints for the girls' experiment. Available in six high visibility colours, the paint has quickly established itself as the first choice for dairy cow identification for antibiotic treatment.

In May the girls painted 24 different cows in Lutte's father's herd with the range of FIL Fluoro colours, comprising two dots on the left side and a stripe across their udder. Ten days later they re-sprayed, this time putting the dots on the right side, taking photos to compare the difference after 10 days.

Taking the photos to school they got 16 pupils and teachers to choose which colours stood out the most, and had lasted the longest. Graphing their results, the girls found the colour blue was perhaps surprisingly the most visible and lasted the longest, closely followed by red and orange. Their efforts won them a place in the regional science competition held at Ascott Park in Invercargill.

If she were to take the work further, Lutte believes it could be worthwhile sampling the paint's appearance across a wider range of people, including those who are colour blind.



Mike Broomhall of FIL says he was only too happy to support a worthwhile project, and see young talent working on agricultural science projects.

“It is encouraging to see students like Lutte coming through, the industry needs people who can think like this and offer skills that support research and technology, it was rewarding to be involved,” says Mike.

Meanwhile her Dad has switched to FIL's high visibility Fluoro paints, and her Mum has suggested a purple colour addition to the range!

NB: FIL manufacture an aerosol paint called Udder Mark specifically for the cows udder utilising an anyway actuator which enables the farmer to mark the udder from various angles including upside down. The paint comes in two colours Red (stop – this cow has been treated with antibiotics - do not put milk from this cow into the milk Silo) and Green (go – this cow's milk is now clear to be put into the milk Silo).

A NEW BREED OF DAIRY PROCESSOR AND EXPORTER

New Zealand Dairies Limited (NZDL) based at Studholme in South Canterbury is one of the new breed of processors and exporters in the global dairy market.

The independent dairy company took the first milk into its \$100 million-plus plant almost 18 months ago, and continues to perform well in its second year of operation.

The plant was designed to process high nutrition products and is capable of making a wide range of milk powders. It has two evaporators and a spray drier which can handle up to 38,500 litres of milk an hour. There is room to install a further evaporator and drier to increase capacity in the future.

Since late in 2008, NZDL has been majority owned by the Nutritek Group, a thoroughly modern and progressive Russian-based company operating in one of the most highly specialized segments of the food industry – baby foods, infant formulas and specialist nutritional products. Nutritek was initially a small shareholder and then became the major investor.

As well as building the state-of-the-art plant, the Company also had to build a supply base of dairy farmers in and around Waimate, most of who irrigate for production.

Chief Executive Aidan Johnstone says that as an independent, the company was an attractive prospect to those farmers who did not want their capital tied up in the company they supplied, as well as to farmers considering dairy conversion.

During the current season NZDL is matching the level of Fonterra's payments, but its suppliers have had a significant cash flow advantage over the big cooperative's suppliers because of NZDL's higher advance payments.

Mr Johnstone says that since it started operating, the NZDL plant has demonstrated its reliability, which is a credit to its workforce.

“As well as our own milk flows we have processed milk from other new dairy companies during their commissioning process. Our plan is to maintain the current level of milk flow next season, and preference in terms of any increase in milk off take will be given to existing suppliers.”

With the price reduction in global milk powder internationally, he said the market was much tougher now than when the plant began operation.

“In this environment our focus has been on maintaining minimal inventory of product not already committed to customers, which is a prudent strategy.”

Mr Johnstone says the emergence of new second tier players was a positive development for New Zealand's dairy industry, and that they did not threaten the pre-eminence of Fonterra.

“New players bring new ideas and diversity in products, markets and technology. This helps increase the breadth and depth of the New Zealand dairy industry. It is a situation that serves farmers well and it has been good for the region in which we operate.

“The establishment of the plant represented a major boost for the district of Waimate and NZDL has become one of the larger employers in the Waimate region with over 60 staff.”

A moderate La Niña in the tropical Pacific is expected to continue through autumn before returning to ENSO-neutral conditions by the start of winter (ENSO = El Niño Southern Oscillation). NIWA's National Climate Centre says the late summer and early autumn of 2009 is likely to be warmer than average in many areas, with dry conditions likely in the south.

The centre's Seasonal Climate Outlook for February to April 2009 indicates that average or above average temperatures are the most likely outcome across the whole country. Normal or below normal rainfall is likely in the west, south, and east of the South Island, while normal or above normal rainfall is likely over the north of the North Island.

Soils are presently drier than normal in many regions of the country, except for the southwest of the South Island. Normal or below normal soil moisture levels and streamflows are likely throughout the South Island through to April, while near normal conditions are likely in the North Island.

Mean sea-level pressures are likely to be higher than normal over southern New Zealand and to the east, with more easterly wind episodes than normal over the North Island, and lighter winds than normal over the South Island.

For the tropical cyclone season (through to May 2009), there is an average chance of an ex-tropical cyclone passing within 500 km of the country.

OVERALL PICTURE

TEMPERATURE:

Air temperatures are likely to be above average in the North Island, and average or above average in the South Island. Sea surface temperatures around New Zealand are expected to remain above normal through the season.

RAINFALL, SOIL MOISTURE, AND STREAM FLOWS:

Rainfall is predicted to be normal or above normal in the north of the North Island, normal for other regions of the North Island, and normal or below normal for the South Island. Normal soil moisture levels and streamflows are likely in the north and west of the North Island, and below normal conditions are expected in the east of the South Island. In other regions, normal or below normal soil moisture levels and streamflows are likely.

COASTAL CANTERBURY, EAST OTAGO:

Average or above average temperatures are likely for February–April. Rainfall is likely to be normal or below normal, with below normal soil moisture levels and stream flows.

BACKGROUND

CLIMATE AND OCEANS:

In the New Zealand region, mean sea level pressures are likely to be higher than normal over southern New Zealand and to the east, with more easterly wind episodes than normal over the North Island, and lighter winds than normal over the South Island. Sea surface temperatures around New Zealand are currently about 0.5°C above normal, and are likely to remain near this level through the coming season. La Niña conditions, which redeveloped in the tropical Pacific during December, are expected to continue through autumn, and then dissipate.

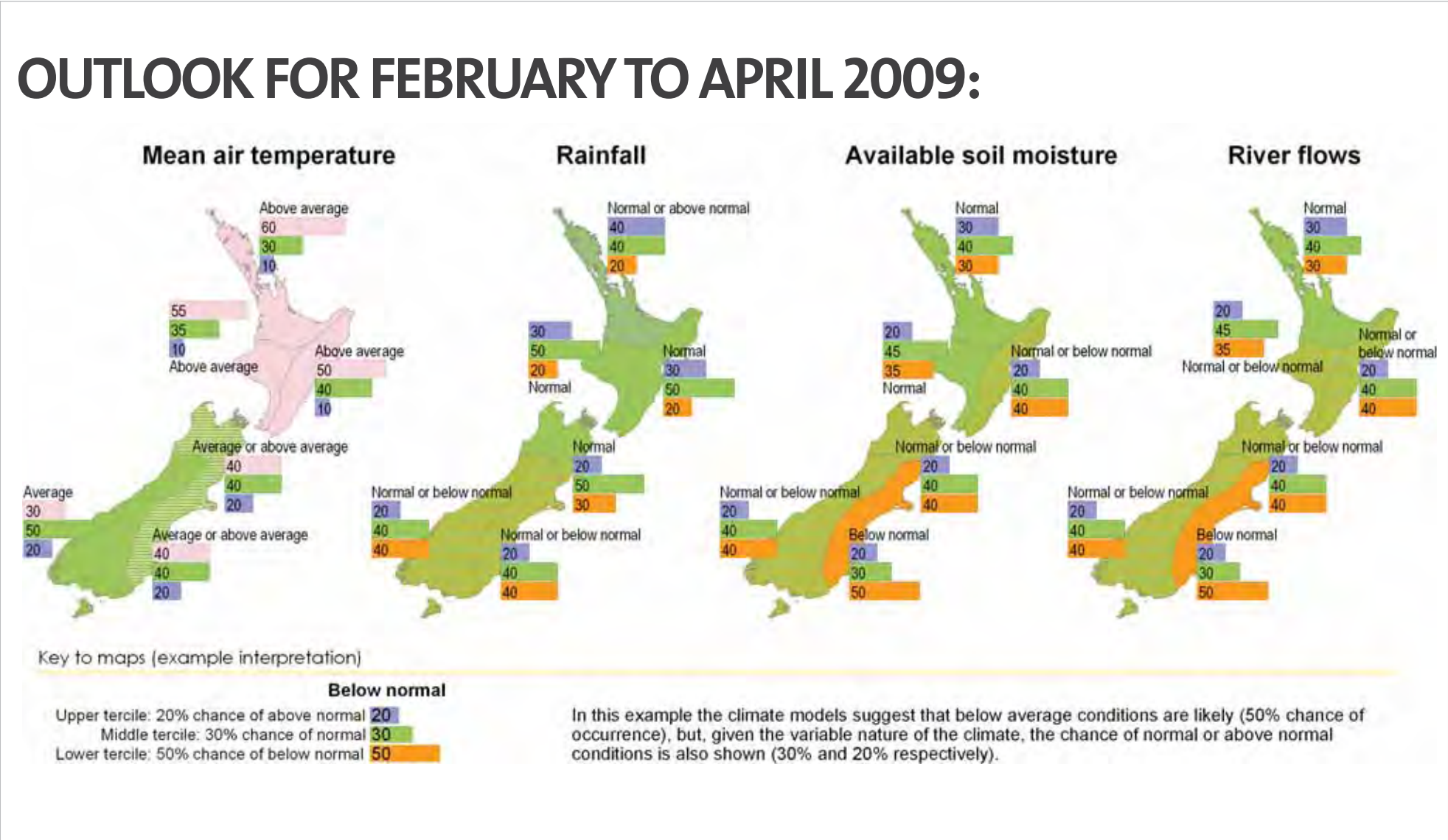
The tropical cyclone season for the southwest Pacific runs from November to May. With current conditions in the Pacific, there is an average chance of an ex-tropical cyclone passing within 500 km of the country between February and May. The districts at highest risk are Northland and Gisborne.

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BOUND TO SUCCEED FULL OF PROSPECTS

THIS AUTUMN MARKS THE FIFTH YEAR OF FIL’S SPONSORSHIP OF AGRICULTURE ITO’S BOUND TO SUCCEED OUTWARD BOUND COURSE AT ANAKIWA IN THE MARLBOROUGH SOUNDS, AND THE QUALITY OF PARTICIPANTS IS HIGHER THAN EVER.



Bound to Succeed has gained a reputation among young agricultural workers as a means to lift their career focus and be physically and mentally challenged in remote, demanding surroundings.

Agriculture ITO marketing and events organiser Katie Abbot says over half the applicants to this year’s intake stated they were aware of how Bound to Succeed had helped to focus career goals and push physical boundaries.

“Those who are attending this year all want to, or in some cases already are, farm managers and many have farm ownership as a goal. They have recognised that the course will help them get further ahead, and importantly build their leadership skills.”

One such participant for the three week course commencing in early April is Lumsden farm manager Jason Checketts. The 22 year old says he has thought about the course for a few years and his final motivation to apply this year came from last year’s winner Tracey Ashton.

“I am looking forward to the physical side and how far I can push myself, but the chance to improve my leadership skills will be a great one to have.” He says he appreciates the future of farming lies in being able to get on and manage people, and understands the course gives plenty of scope to build on that.

Waikato dairy farm assistant Tim Fransen is making the move to a contract position next season, and believes

Bound to Succeed will be an ideal kick start into the new and demanding position.

“I am hoping to lift my time management skills and be physically challenged, I think what I learn from Bound to Succeed will really help through the hard stressful times over the season.”

FIL company director Arthur Jordan says FIL remains completely committed to a programme that benefits everyone in the industry, not only the recruits fortunate enough to attend Outward Bound.

“For agriculture to be sustainable it requires good people and good leaders to take it forward. Bound to Succeed provides a platform to develop those leaders, testing the talents they have, and helping them work on skills they need to develop to work well with others, now so critical to the success of large farming operations,” says Arthur.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE 2009 BOUND TO SUCCEED COURSE	
REGION	AGRICULTURE ITO PARTICIPANT
Wairarapa	Richard Southey
Manawatu	Sam Olney
Taranaki	Jorg Sahin
Hawkes Bay	Nathan Udy
Eastland	Patrick O’Brien
Bay of Plenty	Robert Richards
Central Plateau	Jemma Lourie
Waikato	Tim Fransen
Northland	Katherine Tucker
Top of the South	Daniel Hunter
West Coast	Michael Baxter
Central/Nth Canterbury	Thomas Haffner
Mid Canterbury	Ronald Grant
South Canterbury	Emma Love
Otago	Brendan Morrison
Southland	Jason Checketts



JOHN ATKIN WITH THE GREEN MACHINE HE USED TO KNOCK MOTOROA ISLAND INTO SHAPE, IN NORTHLAND.

FIL MANAGER RETURNS FROM THE NORTH

Long time FIL area manager John Atkin is returning to his beloved Taranaki after almost a two year sojourn from the job and the region.

John spent 13 years as FIL’s area manager for South Taranaki before heading to the winterless North to run a water taxi business. However John and his partner Sharon have returned to the region and John has replaced FIL’s long serving North Taranaki manager Phil Gulliver who retired last year.

As ex-Commodore of the Patea Boat Club, John welcomed the opportunity to make his boating passion his life. Plying the waters around the Bay of Islands’ jetties and visiting yachts was an ideal way to do that.

Taking advantage of his practical farm skills and love of the water, he also got the job of managing Motoroa Island, a privately owned farm and native bird refuge off the coast of Russell.

“We were farming sheep and Kiwis, 1200 of one and 80 of the other!”

Taking on the job last autumn he had to knock the island’s pastures back into shape, as well as manage the pest control programme on the island which is owned by 20 families.

With much of his family in the Taranaki region and two sons milking herds of 500 cows each, he is looking forward to re-establishing old friendships and contacts when he re-joins FIL.

“FIL is really the only company I would have considered going back to Taranaki to work for. It is New Zealand owned and is very open to ideas and input from its area managers who deal with farmers every day,” he says.

FIL’s ability to deliver innovative, practical solutions for New Zealand dairy farmers has always excited John, and in his absence the launch of a new teatspray, Iodoshield Active with Manuka honey as an ingredient has been highly successful.

In the meantime he should still have time for his boating passion. “We are bringing the boat back down with us and hope to take trips out from the Taranaki coast. As far as milking for the boys go, it will probably just be the occasional relief job I think!”

