



# Dad and daughter on course for inspiration

**FIL's sponsorship of the Agriculture ITO's Bound to Succeed programme at the Outward Bound school, Anakiwa, provides young farm workers with the invaluable opportunity to benefit from greater personal development and leadership skills.**

However they are not the only ones dairy farming to benefit from the Anakiwa courses over the years.

Taranaki farmer Mark Henderson has a big goal – to attend Outward Bound with all four of his daughters. He completed the first course 18 months ago with second eldest daughter Louise and is now gearing up to return in autumn with eldest daughter Emma.

At this rate he reckons he will have them all through it within six years by the time he gets to his youngest daughter, Sarah, aged seven.

"It was magic, the best experience of my life," is Mark's succinct summary of the course, Leaps and Bounds, designed especially for parents and their teenagers.

So when Mark learned about Agriculture ITO's Bound to Succeed

programme sponsored by FIL, he strongly recommended it to his farm assistant Daniel Baeyertz.

Daniel was one of 16 students who attended the 21 day Bound to Succeed course in April. He returned with clearer goals on where he was heading in the industry and is keen to eventually go share milking.

For Mark, the chance to spend an extended period of time with one of his children was a rare and valuable opportunity.

He was surprised at the time spent on "black board stuff", really examining values, strengths and relationships.

When it came to the physical side of the course his daughter Louise left him in no doubt she had little fear. She unhesitatingly took on the soaring ropes course while Dad convinced himself the safety harness would stop his fall.

**"The whole time is spent getting you outside your comfort zone."**

Much of the course was a scaled down version of the classic 21 day challenge, with many challenges taking one day rather than three.



Mark Henderson

Even though she completed the eight day course, Mark's daughter Louise is still keen to return and do the 21 day classic. She is also considering becoming an Outward Bound instructor.

Losing the personal space he takes for granted on the farm meant Mark took some time getting used to sharing with 14 others 24/7.

"It made it a good tolerance builder."

He believes few would attend such a course with one of their children and not make some changes to how they are living their lives.

"For us, we have decided to scale down a bit and enjoy our family- they say life is not a practice run!"

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Visit: [www.fil.co.nz](http://www.fil.co.nz)



Participants of the 2007 Agriculture ITO Bound to Succeed Programme sponsored by FIL

*Few businesses require the kind of long term planning that is essential for successful farming. For some years your planning has had to balance changing market demands and new technologies with growing expectations for on farm environmental best practice. In typical style most of you have applied all manner of innovative solutions to this challenge, ranging from nutrient management systems to energy recovery.*

*Through ownership of dairy companies you employ some of the world's best people to manage the environmental impact of the demand side of your value chain. The only way your supply side can be managed is to select companies who conduct their business in a truly environmentally responsible fashion.*

*FIL customers can be confident they are aligned with world's best practice in this regard. This edition of The Dairy farmer profiles the new FIL site at Mt Maunganui. Taking two and a half years to plan and 10 months to construct, it is the most eco-effective industrial building in the world. Knowing that a company fully committed to environmental responsibility is supplying your farm inputs allows you to focus your efforts on farm where they deliver the greatest benefit to your business and to New Zealand.*

Cheers

Gavin Cherrie, General Manager

# Tactical thinking going into Summer

David McDonnell BVSc MACVS



Whilst the reversal of Dairy pay out predictions occurred later in the Autumn of this year - it meant strategic planning was too late to capture the full benefits until next year. Therefore to make the most of this season, tactical planning will be required to maintain the persistency of your herd's lactation curve.

**That means the key areas to focus on are higher daily production and lengthened lactation. See Figure 1.**

This may sound easy as we understand that in order to drive lactation, we firstly have to supply plentiful dry matter of sufficient protein and energy quality to assist a persistent lactation. However there is a risk of complacency on our part if we simply just order more feed to fulfill the shortfalls in times of higher pay out - whether it be dry matter (Maize/Grass Silage/Hay), energy (PKE/Tapioca/Maize) or protein (PKE/Lucerne) to chase the holy grail of production. The sharp price rises in

these commodities further illustrates the importance that these options may not be as profitable as a 'back of an envelope' calculation may imply.

This suggests the immediate answer for maximizing cash returns is utilizing what you are standing on - pasture! How you manage the Spring pasture surpluses and maintain pasture quality over the Summer will be your primary concern. You may be best to concentrate or employ resources to make better tactical decisions over this time period, and start thinking strategically for the end of the season.

For most farmers in New Zealand utilization of pasture still remains a distinguishing feature amongst successful grass based farming. Hainsworth and Thomson (1997) discuss farm surveys and review New Zealand grazing trials to reaffirm that more intensely grazed pastures in the Spring months (and greater feed conservation) result in higher milk solids production per day over the Summer. The key here is not to let post-grazing residuals compromise pasture growth, nor impact on cow voluntary feed intake. The greater amount of supplement conserved here, will be a useful adjunct to extend lactation further on. See Figure 2.

Failure to control surplus pasture growth results in the pasture sward moving rapidly from a predominant

vegetative state of higher quality to an accumulation of stem, dead material and subsequent decline in digestibility of a flowering sward. See Figure 3. Highly digestible grass with high 'Metabolisable Energy' (>11 MJME/KgDM) and 'Crude Protein' (>17%) are key drivers for a persistent lactation curve.

Listed below are some key indicators one could use to access grass quality into Summer:

- Green content vs. dead matter e.g. 3:1 ratio
- Maximum 3 leaves per ryegrass tiller
- Leaf vs. stem ratio
- Ryegrass vs. clover e.g. 75:25
- Pasture length should be 7-8 cm (rising plate 8 notches) post grazing e.g. 2000-2200
- 10% clumps remaining, but all clumps partially grazed

It is more likely that the feed you have already paid for will have good feed conversion ratios in excess of 70gMS/KgDM. There is little risk in this decision to make greater utilization of pasture. It simply requires acceptance that it can be done better. On the other hand, if you purchase feed to drive a lactation curve over the Summer, without considering an overall farm strategy, all you may do is substitute expensive feed for grass or place condition on a cows' back to remove for a \$3.95 pay out.

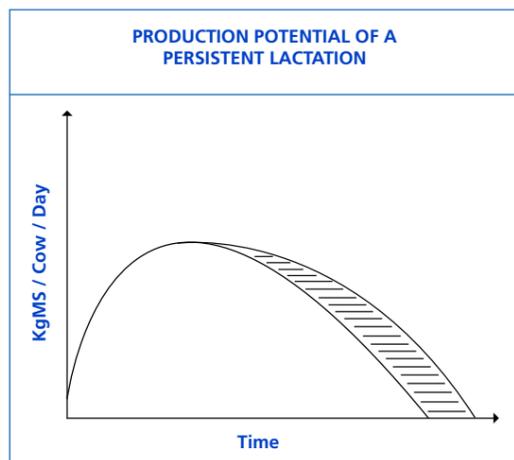


Figure 1

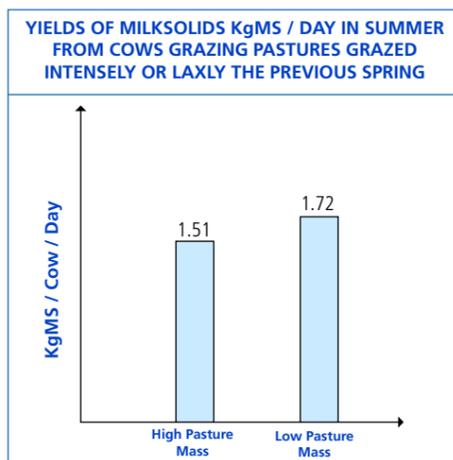


Figure 2

RYEGRASS/WHITE CLOVER	ENERGY (MJME/KG DM)	PROTEIN % CRUDE PROTEIN (DM BASIS)	
SPRING	- SHORT - MIXED - RANK	12 11.2 10.3	22 20 15
SUMMER	- LEAFY - DRY STALKY	10.3 8	15 10

Figure 3 Source: Dexcel

## Noel has best of both worlds with FIL in Bay

South Africa is where Noel Fletcher is from, but New Zealand is well established as home for FIL's new National Sales Manager.

Noel kicked off with his new job in September after coming from a long stretch in the animal health business with pharmaceutical company Intervet. He has strong connections to the rural industry, not only professionally. His family farmed sheep and beef on the Eastern Cape, in South Africa.

Like many people in the Bay of Plenty, Noel has chosen to live in a region offering exceptional lifestyle and good educational opportunities for his growing family of three girls. The opportunity to live here, and work for a company like FIL means he has the best of both career and personal opportunities.

**"I have very quickly come to see, and be excited by the immense level of innovation and experience the team at FIL have. It makes FIL an inspiring and interesting company to be part of," says Noel.**

He brings with him not only his experience in the animal health sector, but the skills to manage and

enhance FIL's experienced and widely spread sales team who appreciate having someone on board with Noel's knowledge.

The huge level of experience within the team is an asset few multi-national companies can boast, and is testimony to FIL's strong commitment to staff and company values.

He says the constant level of innovation and recognition of area managers' performance means they are competitive and value their regions' highly. With that comes a high level of trust in the relationships they enjoy with their farmer clients.

With the move to FIL's new corporate head office in Portside Drive Mount Maunganui this spring, Noel's timing could not have been better.

**"I feel very privileged to come in at a time when so much is happening in the company, and to know it is all underscored by strong ethics and commitment."**



Noel says he admires directors and owners Dave Hancox and Arthur Jordan for their foresight in committing to a new production and head office facility.

"It is quite a statement to make. Both could have taken the view they want to exit the company and retire happily.

"Instead they are boldly taking it to the next level, whilst retaining the values of innovation, performance and trust that they built FIL on almost 30 years ago."

# Tax takes bite in farm budgets for 2007/08

For some dairy farmers over the last two seasons tax would have been a minimal concern, so it pays to spend some time on good advice and plan ahead.

Colin Vazey, senior partner of Hamilton accounting firm Vazey Child has a number of dairying clients.

He says a large tax benefit can come from picking the right time to move between the Herd and National Standard Cost schemes (NSC).

It is anticipated the herd value for cows will increase significantly in the 2008 farming year, from its present value of \$1245 per head for mixed age cows and \$1075 for rising two-year heifers.

***"Farmers will want to have as many animals in the herd scheme now as they can when they file their 2007 tax returns. Any increase above the present values in 2008 will be tax free to those in the herd scheme."***

The increase in values generated by moving from NSC to Herd schemes will be taxable in the 2007 financial year, so the numbers of stock being put into

the scheme will depend on the taxpayer's tax rate.

Up to \$38,000 the tax rate is 19.5c, from \$38,000 to \$60,000 it is 33c and over \$60,000 it is 39c.

"Obviously your goal is to make the most of the lower rates," says Colin.

Once in the scheme, the next decision is to decide when to opt out.

"There is some benefit in delaying filing the 2007 return as late as possible because of the lead time required in notifying IRD of your decision."

Some crystal ball gazing is needed if farmers want to take advantage of stock valuation changes. This is not always easy in the volatile market experienced for dairy cattle that only in the last 6 months has seen prices almost double.

If values are expected to fall in 2010 for example, the election to back out of the scheme has to be made before filing the 2008 return.

Colin says paying higher voluntary 2008 provisional tax based on the 2007 returns could be wise.

IRD charges for use of money if provisional payments are underestimated are high, at 14.4%pa,

and best avoided.

For this season Colin is advising farmers to catch up on any repairs and maintenance to help reduce the amount of tax incurred.

Deferring fertiliser payments where possible into the 07/08 year could be one significant expense used to lower tax liabilities.

***He cautions against the temptation of purchasing large one off capital items before tax has been allowed for, given the pressure it can put on incomes that are only now lifting many dairy farmers out of record over drafts.***

Farm businesses today are complex enterprises, often with multiple ownership and trust arrangements.

Colin strongly recommends some time be set aside by owners and operators to talk with their business accountant about ways to plan and budget effectively not only for tax, but for effective management of business surpluses.

# Eyes on the prize of quality milk

***FIL's Canterbury Area Manager Bruce Smith has some big clients on his books who know the importance of keeping grades out of milk consignments that can be easily 9000 litres a day.***

He says now more than ever before each silo holds a valuable product requiring good systems, people and detergents to keep to the highest standard.

Going forward into the summer, he is seeing larger farms particularly putting good system inspections into their dairy shed cleaning routines. Coupled with the use of FIL detergents he hopes to keep the risk of grading to a minimum with all his clients and has some simple advice that he is passing on to owners and their staff.

***"The key thing of course is keeping milk from penicillin treated cows out of the silo, and that's where one of FIL's newer products, Udder Mark is invaluable," says Bruce.***

The highly visible specially formulated paint in Udder Mark retains its brilliance for at least 10 days, and was developed especially for application to udders as an ID paint for treated cows.

"We have had heaps of interest in it from farmers – it is an ideal product that many have built into their treatment programme to ensure those cows are easily identified."

His experience in large herd management means Bruce is an invaluable source of hygiene information, and will gladly visit farmer clients having problems.

***"We are here to help. FIL Area Managers are only too happy to advise on hygiene issues, or to come out and spend time with new staff taking them through the hoops of hygiene management and wash programmes."***

## Thermodurics – summer loving bugs

"Usually with thermos it will be something simple, and good inspection routines should identify the problem. There are a few key areas I always advise my clients to go and look first."

**Jetters:** Jetters on the end of a straight line can often become blocked with pieces of plastic, grass and debris. "Check flow rates, they should not be under 3 litres a minute."

**Rubberware:** Larger herds in Canterbury will change rubberware frequently, but a split in a liner can cause milk ingress, and once mixed with air provides plenty of on-going food supply for bacteria until discovered. To make matters tricky though, thermodurics will be aged and will not smell.

**Milk Silo & Door:** "Plenty of people don't take the door off to clean it, and it can be common that over time you will get a thermo problem here if detergent is not reaching under the seal and behind the door," says Bruce. He urges clients to take the door off every wash and give it a scrub, also removing the rubber seal.

The large area of stainless steel in the vat means it is usually the first place to look for a thermo problem. Thermo build up will accompany protein accumulation, detected in a rainbow tint that requires scrubbing with alkali to remove. Bruce advises his clients to also check for blocked spray balls in the cleaning system and at the back of the silo where the inlet hose is located.

**Test Buckets:** Some clients have got rid of these problematic hygiene areas altogether, but Bruce still finds a number in larger herds with separate sick mobs.

"It is absolutely critical to make sure the hoses are clean, along with the bucket lid, as contact with plant rubberware can spread bacteria."



**Milk Lines:** Most larger plants have air injectors that need to be properly adjusted to give the right slug of water. A check at the start of the season and before summer should ensure they work correctly and is essential for large bore lines.

**Plate Cooler:** "No one likes taking this apart, but it can be a haven for bugs to live and a build up of grass, muck and debris can occur," says Bruce. Carefully measure the distances of the plates prior to dismantling and look for blockages, split seals and damaged plates.

**Refrigeration unit:** It is easy to just throw the switch and hope the unit is doing its job, but over summer even a slight loss of cooling can bring bacteria problems. Ensure the milk is hitting the vat at 18°C, and is cooling down to the required 7°C within 3 hours of milking completion.

Bruce's final recommendation is - Don't be afraid to ask for help: Nothing can be more frustrating than a grading problem you cannot find. It may just be you need a fresh set of eyes to come into the plant and identify the problem. Bruce or any of the FIL reps are only a phone call away. They bring expertise and knowledge of a wide number of grading problems with them.

# New FIL building focuses on the future

*FIL staff are settled into the new office and plant in Mount Maunganui and are very happy about it. There are many features that make it a comfortable and efficient place to work right now. But it has also been built with the future in mind.*



General Manager, Gavin Cherrie says "Farmers have a legitimate expectation of their suppliers to strive for best practice in quality, productivity and environmental performance. We have taken this opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to world best practice."

Company director, Arthur Jordan, echoes these sentiments, saying, "Business needs to take a lead role in caring for the environment. We have to look at all aspects of our activities and do everything we can. Attention to how we designed the new building is part of it".

The facility will bring major reductions in energy and water requirements, allows efficient management of solid waste and decreased roading congestion and parking requirements.

A whole range of features in the office and plant will lead to energy use some 80% less than in traditional buildings of a similar size. (See 'Energy Conservation' for a list of some these features.)

Reduction in water from city supply will be even more dramatic – fully 95% below quantities used at the company's previous site. Two 30,000-litre tanks capture rainwater from the factory roof which is then filtered to provide process water. As a result of this, the amount of stormwater leaving the site will be reduced by close to 50%. Condensate from the heating/ventilation system will irrigate the atrium gardens in the front office area.

***The new FIL building is designed for an 80% reduction in energy use (compared to a standard building of its size) and a 95% reduction in the use of municipal water supply. This is a significant accomplishment, even by international standards.***

"The same care has gone into solid waste management and transportation planning," says Gavin, "Segregation of waste materials at source is accompanied by reuse of packaging wherever possible. Delivery of raw materials and pick-up of finished products are done at opposite ends of the plant via a one way road around the site. This streamlines the movement of vehicles and completely eliminates any congestion on the street in front".

***All staff members had an opportunity for input during the two and a half year planning and design period. Company directors and managers led the process, working closely with Matrixx Consultants Ltd, the local architects commissioned to design the building.***

"It was a very hands-on approach by FIL" says Rob Benge of Matrixx Consultants Ltd, "They pushed us to explore many design features that lift the environmental performance of the building. It was a very positive and constructive process to achieve the end result".

Local structural engineers, Arnold and Johnstone, played their part as did Marra Construction and John Spooner, who was involved as an independent project manager.

How did it all come out? "It has exceeded everyone's expectations," says Gavin. "We went into this knowing it was going to cost more money than a conventional building, but you may only get one chance in a lifetime to design a new building and we were going to do it right".

## Bold re-brand for FIL

***Farmer clients of FIL will soon notice the familiar FIL logo has gone, to be replaced by one that captures many more facets of the growing company's business, and the values that business is founded upon.***



Several options were presented to FIL management over the long intensive period of research, and company director Arthur Jordan says the new logo you see here was met with unanimous approval from the managers and staff.

Evolving a brand for any business is a tricky, sensitive issue that will often involve much soul searching about what a company is about, how it perceives itself and how its customers perceive it.

Arthur Jordan understood this. He says FIL farmer clients are no-nonsense, sensible business people who would appreciate the need to stay modern and stylised. However he says they would accept no compromise in company values of integrity, quality, innovation and success so the new brand had to capture these elements.

"We have retained the distinctive bright yellow which our customers associate with the FIL brand but adopted a stylised 4-leaf device to accompany the initials FIL.

There are four elements to many things in our business, as basic as the four product categories we operate in – hygiene, animal health, nutrition and animal markers and the four seasons of the year. We wanted a symbol every customers, retailer and staff member could relate to and we are confident we are presenting that with the new brand."

We are currently working on applying the new branding to all of our product packaging and labelling applications. As we always strive to make the job easier for our customers, we have taken this opportunity to develop a much simpler layout for product information and directions of use.

We expect the roll out of the new packaging to take some time, however our customers can be re-assured that FIL, old or new, represents quality products and accessible expertise to make the job of farming easier."



# Building 72 Portside Drive – A real team effort

*The old saying “too many cooks spoil the broth” is clearly wrong when it comes to the approach taken in planning FIL’s new head office and plant. All staff members contributed ideas to the design and a more functional and efficient facility is the result.*

Terry Burke, Dispatch Supervisor and 21 years with the business, says “This is an informal and friendly place to work. There aren’t many businesses that would involve their staff like this in planning a new building”.

With the growth of the business and space limitations at the old site, there was a lot of juggling around for inwards goods, container devaning and stuffing, and shipping of finished products. He’s pleased he could play a part in planning the new facility for good flow.

“We have a lot of space now for storage inside and out. We can accommodate quite a number of large containers. It’s certainly more user-friendly for all the truck drivers and safer for pedestrians on the street out front”.

The large covered area at the end of the plant where raw materials are brought in is appreciated by everyone. “In our old plant, the all weather area used to mean putting on your raincoat,” quips Terry.



Office Manager, **Angela Beary**, put her 19 years’ experience with FIL to work in helping to plan the front office and administration areas. “We have twice the area for records storage now, good space for the photocopier

and office supplies, and a kitchenette nearby,” says Angela, “It’s a bright and cheery environment and with all the windows between the offices and hallways you don’t feel isolated”.

*Opening windows allow for fresh air and the showers, lockers and change areas for staff are a real plus. It makes it easy to freshen up after a bike ride to work or a lunch-time run.*

An enthusiastic hockey player – she’s been playing since she was 12 – Angela appreciates the change area as she is often heads straight to hockey practice after work. “This is great,” she says, “The area I used to change in was the size of a cubby hole”.



**Paul Friis**, Manufacturing Supervisor and another staff member with 21 years experience with FIL, smiles when he looks around the new building and thinks back to the limited space and equipment in his early years on the job.

He, too, has played a part in planning and is pleased with the flow they now have from raw materials at one end of the plant, to manufacturing, to finished product. “It will be great for efficiency and will increase our productivity enormously,” he says.

“In the manufacturing area, we have a specialized dye room, a tool room, and labels room and the layout offers good access to the tanks, with a real attention to safety throughout,” says Paul.

He appreciates the bright, new environment, adding, “There is a great spirit about this. I’m looking forward to getting stuck into it”.



## Green by Design

*Buildings that encompass sustainability features are now commonly described as green buildings.*

By definition, a green building incorporates design, construction and operational practices that significantly reduce or eliminate the negative impacts of development on the environment and occupants. The New Zealand Green Building Council, established in 2005, is the key national organisation promoting and supporting green design.

For more information go to [www.nzgbc.org.nz](http://www.nzgbc.org.nz)

## Energy Conservation

*Minimising resource use is now one of mankind’s biggest environmental challenges, efforts to reduce energy consumption are crucial.*

### In the office area:

- an atrium for natural light and ventilation
- concrete slab floors on both levels bringing reduced cooling demand
- fiberglass wall and roof thermal and acoustic insulation
- reverse cycle regenerative heat pumps (that move heat from warm to cool areas and vice versa)
- solar water heating
- double glazing and window louvres
- compact fluorescent lighting on motion sensors and solar tubes to capture natural light
- light-coloured décor to prevent solar gain.

### In the factory and stores area:

- Alsynite Topglass Cool Extreme roofing (with underlying insulation)
- Indal Highbay T5 lighting system (on sensors)
- process heating met via heat recovery and a waste oil boiler recovering heat content from a product that would otherwise be disposed of in a liquid waste system
- gravity filling system for manufactured product.





# Large herd health demands simple systems

*Prevalence of large herds in the South Island and stretched labour resources mean herd health management can be an expensive exercise if disease gets a hold and is not detected.*

Dairying is also under the spotlight now more than ever on effluent and health issues. Good systems and management are critical to keep dairying attractive for employees, and to ensure issues of animal welfare are being addressed by the industry.

Mark Bryan of Vet South in Winton highlights several issues facing large herd managers that effective management and communication can deal with. His practice specialises in large herd management due to the larger average herd size in Southland.

***He says taking preventative measures is the best approach to dealing with lameness and disease before they snowball out of control.***

Missed health signs, herds mixed from all over the country, and long distances to the shed can all contribute, but Mark offers some positive ways to deal with the issue.

## Plan and be proactive

The quieter summer period is a good time to think about how to plan a pro-active approach to next spring.

Mark suggests splitting the main diseases up, and talking to clients about a plan to deal with them before they arise. Good strategies can then be communicated to staff.

Calving time for example could use a "signal" approach to identifying sick cows.

That signal could be retained membranes and a policy could be to allow 48 hours post calving for the membranes to disengage before seeking treatment.

"This is a simple, easily communicated marker that could indicate a range of diseases that we know lead to economic loss. Working with us as vets, we can decide what a good protocol is to act on this marker."

Downer cows can consume time at the expense of other animals. A simple policy of ensuring staff know the basic differences between metabolic conditions and the right treatment means that downer cows can be stabilised until a more expert opinion is sought.

***"This not only saves the cow, but empowers the staff by enabling them to provide some quality first aid."***

## Simple systems get results

Multiple farm ownership with larger herds brings complications, but these can be minimised by applying the same system across all.

Mark says systems as simple as identifying all empties with a red sheep tag, and lates with a yellow tag, regardless of farm, eliminates the need to match up cows with their numbers from herd data. Drafting is quick and accurate and easily delegated.

Breaking the season into simple systems will do much to prevent the "ambulance at the bottom of the cliff."

Much of the sharp end of decision making is being done by young, less experienced staff and more of Mark's time is spent up-skilling these keen, valuable young people on identifying cow problems early on.

Despite the challenge of large herds, he says they offer plenty of opportunity for young people to become skilled in herd husbandry and management, something the industry desperately needs more of.

## FIL PRODUCT PROFILE

### Quantum Powder

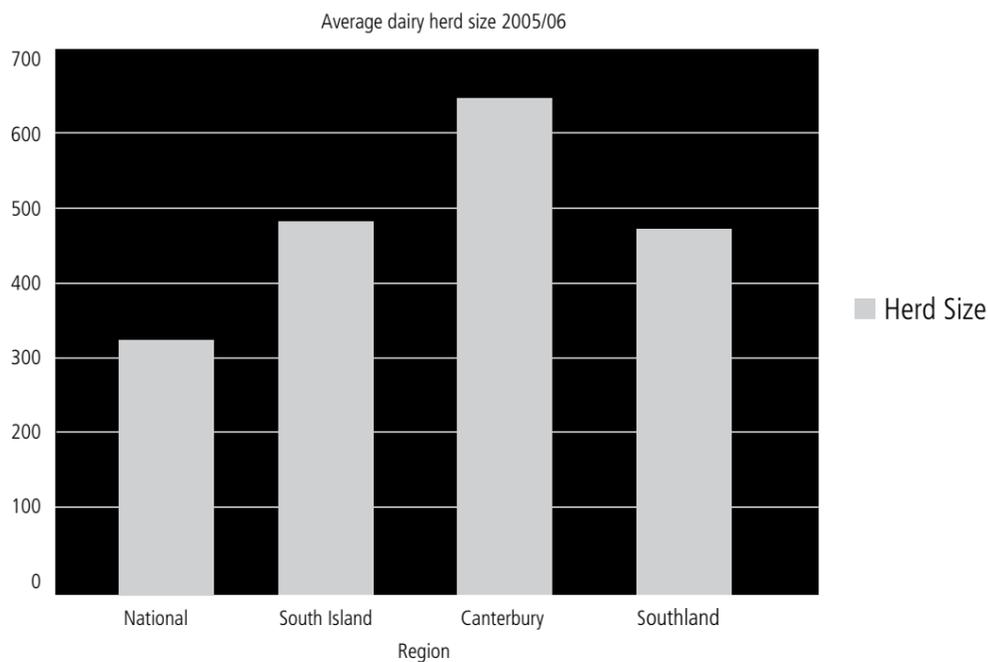
Farmers looking for a high quality dual purpose sanitiser and alkaline detergent to deal with protein and fat build up will find the answer in FIL's Quantum Powder.

Key components of Quantum Powder deliver a quality cleaning solution every time. Caustic ingredients remove fat deposits, while the chlorine component destroys protein deposits. The surfactants help dissolve and emulsify soils while the conditioners ensure constant performance in mineralised water.

#### Quantum Powder – Benefits:

- Low Foaming: suitable across all machine types and levels of water hardness
- Sanitiser: combination of alkaline pH and chlorine chemical ensures complete bacteria kill every wash.
- Powdered formulation: ensures exact measure for optimum performance every wash
- High Strength: will remove the most tenacious milk deposits
- Suitable across all levels of water hardness: ensures a constant level of cleaning performance, regardless of water quality.

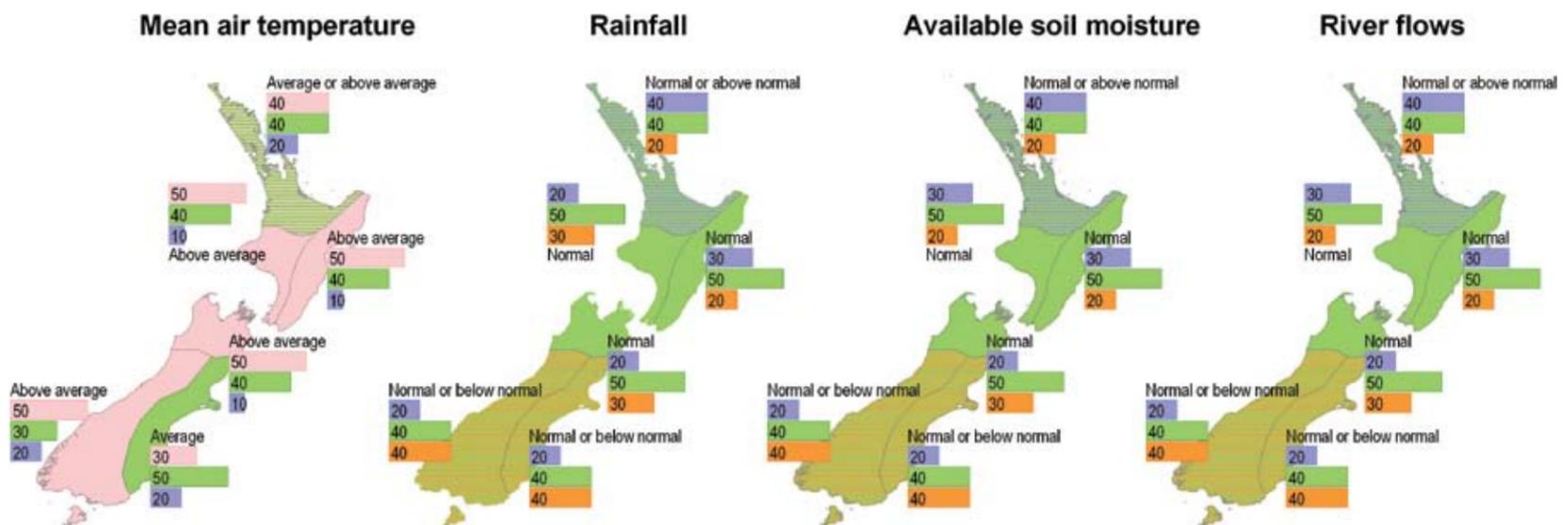
Alkaline detergents leave a powdery residue on stainless steel and need to be rinsed from the plant. The best way to do this is to follow the alkaline wash with an acid wash, as this will neutralise the alkali residue and flush any remaining alkali out of the plant. FIL recommends a hot or cold water rinse be put through the plant between the alkaline and acid wash.



# Seasonal climate outlook

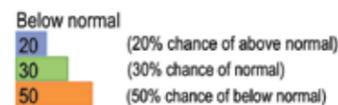


## NOVEMBER 2006 TO JANUARY 2007



### How to interpret these maps

In the example here the climate models suggest that below average conditions are likely (50% chance), but, given the variable nature of the climate, the chance of normal or above normal conditions is also shown (30% and 20% respectively).



## Warmer start to early summer likely ; drier in the south

Temperatures in the period November – January are likely to be at least average for the time of year according to NIWA's National Climate Centre.

According to the centre's seasonal climate outlook there is only a 10-20% chance of cool (below average) conditions over the country. In all regions except the far north and the far south, there is a 50% chance of warm (above average) temperatures with a 40% chance of average temperatures.

The centre says La Niña conditions are well established in the central and eastern Pacific.

As a result, normal or above normal rainfall is expected in the north of the country, and normal or below normal rainfall in much of the South Island.

The centre is expecting more anticyclones over southern New Zealand and these are likely to bring more settled weather over the South Island. The prevailing westerly winds, which can be particularly strong during the late spring, are likely to be weaker and less frequent than normal for the three months as a whole, with easterly winds at times.

The Centre says there is about a 90% chance of La Niña conditions persisting in the tropical Pacific through to the end of summer 2007/08. For the coming tropical cyclone season (November 2007 – May 2008) there is a slightly reduced risk of an ex-tropical cycle passing within 500 km of the country. Should an ex-tropical cyclone approach New Zealand, the regions most at risk are the north and northeast of the North Island.

### Overall Picture:

#### Temperature:

Air temperatures are likely to be average or above average in all regions. Sea surface temperatures are expected to be above average around the North Island, and near average around the South Island.

#### Rainfall, soil moisture, and stream flows:

Rainfall, soil moisture and stream flows are likely to be normal or above normal in the north of the North Island. Normal or below normal rainfall, soil moisture and stream flows are likely in the west, south and east of the South Island. Normal rainfall soil moisture and stream flows are likely elsewhere.

### Regional predictions for the next three months:

#### Northland, Auckland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty:

Average or above average temperatures are

likely with normal or above normal rainfall, soil moisture and stream flows.

#### Central North Island, Taranaki, Wanganui, Manawatu and Wellington:

Above average temperatures are likely. Normal rainfall, soil moisture and stream flows are likely.

#### Gisborne, Hawkes Bay, Wairarapa:

Above average seasonal temperatures are likely. Normal rainfall soil moisture levels and stream flows are likely overall.

#### Nelson, Marlborough, Buller:

Above average temperatures are likely, with normal rainfall. Soil moisture levels and stream flows are likely to be normal.

#### West Coast, Alps and Foothills, Inland Otago, Southland:

Average or above average temperatures are likely. Normal or below normal rainfall, stream flows and soil moisture levels are likely.

#### Coastal Canterbury, East Otago:

Average or above average temperatures are likely. Normal or below normal rainfall is likely, with normal or below normal soil moisture and stream flows.

### Background:

#### Climate and Oceans:

Over the November 2007 to January 2008 period, mean sea level pressures are expected to be higher to the south of New Zealand, with weaker than normal westerly winds across New Zealand.

La Niña conditions have become well established in the central and eastern Pacific over the last month, and the majority the climate forecasting models indicate these conditions continuing to the end of summer 2007/08. The chances of El Niño re-emerging are at or below 10%.

# All roads lead home for Keith

Keith Stockman has worn a few grooves into the roads of central and south Taranaki over the last 20 years, and worn out more than his share of company utes doing it.

Today Keith's gun-metal grey Toyota Surf is a far cry from the lime green Mazda he kicked off his rural servicing career in all those years ago.

However enthusiasm for farming and empathy for farmers remains as strong as ever for FIL's new South Taranaki-Wanganui area manager. The no nonsense, straight up approach of his farmer clients means Keith knows he would never get away with selling anything but best quality products.

**"My conscience simply won't allow me to sell anything that was poor quality or didn't deliver. In FIL I see a company with very closely held values of quality, expertise and innovation."**

Keith has just made the step from overseeing the integration and management of Hawera Mitre 10 by Taranaki Farmers. This came after six years with

Taranaki Farmers based at Patea and Hawera.

Keith's background is an interesting mix of rural service and retailing and this means he appreciates more than most not only the value of personal contact, but being able to offer a clearly branded, high quality product.

**His early days were spent racking up the kilometres in that lime green Mazda as a stock and station agent, and the appropriateness of his surname meant few forgot his vocation.**

In between stock and station work he and his wife Raewyn had one of the first Lotto franchises in New Zealand in Eltham, building the business and many friendships over 11 years. Their talent at retailing also extended to owning a franchise business.

The lure of Taranaki's open roads and seeing farmers on their own patch added to the appeal of taking on the FIL position.

Completing a QCONZ course in dairy hygiene and milk plant equipment means Keith's easy rapport with clients is backed with the latest in dairy shed knowledge. Coupled with his familiarity with FIL's dairy detergents he is aiming to deliver farmer clients timely, useful advice on keeping grades out of milk worth more than ever.

Keith makes no secret about his love of fishing, and with the whitebait running he can be found up a tributary of the Patea river during the season. He admits it is no co-incidence he wants to spend more time around the Taranaki coastal farms, sussing out likely paua spots after a day spent with farmer clients.



Keith Stockman

**He treats his territory as if it were his own business, and says self discipline is essential to run an effective service focussed business that is able to offer assistance any time.**

Being born and bred in The 'Naki means Keith knows his way around all the back roads and has a clear idea of what areas he can build business in and how FIL can integrate even further into the often tight knit communities.



He attributes much of FIL's strength in the southern Taranaki-Wanganui region to previous area manager John Atkin.

"John has done an immense amount of leg work in the region, and was well respected by his clients, he leaves some big boots to FIL!"

For his part Keith would like to focus some more FIL resources into supporting rural schools. There are many small ones in the region and they play such a vital part in the Taranaki rural scene.

This has already included sponsorship of calf clubs at Opunake and the tiny Hurleyville school with only 14 pupils.

**"The future at FIL looks to be pretty exciting. There are a lot of innovative products coming out in the next 12 months that promise to keep the company well ahead of the rest of the pack."**

Being kiwi owned and operated is also a valuable, and increasingly rare thing too, so it can only be onward and upward."

## Your FiL Farm Service Team have got the country covered.

Hard work, proven expertise and unbeatable service throughout New Zealand from a 100% New Zealand owned company. Our experienced and highly focussed team pride themselves on delivering service above and

beyond expectations and helping the farmers they serve achieve real results.

Call our hotline now and we'll put you in touch with your local FIL team member.

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