

## IRELAND SHOWS PROMISE FOR FIL

County Donegal Ireland is the base for the Gregg family, FIL’s Irish distributors for over 12 years, and where their organic farm operation is based.

Ireland represents a significant growth market for FIL products at present, and the whole Irish dairy industry is increasingly looking to grow in herd size and area per farm to capture greater economies.

“The number of smaller farms is rapidly declining, and many of the smaller units are no longer viable,” says Richard Gregg. If this all sounds familiar to Kiwi farmers, then land prices will come as a shock. The Irish are inherently reluctant to sell land, instead preferring to lease smaller blocks to larger operations. Land has been selling for as high as NZ\$100,000 per hectare, but the recent economic downturn and drop in interest from developers has seen those prices now vary from between NZ\$35,000 to NZ\$70,000 per hectare.

Leases are only usually based on an annual basis, often used as run-offs or for crop growing.

The Republic of Ireland’s potential is very real for FIL, as more Irish farmers adopt New Zealand style management practices to try and keep costs down on expensive pastoral land.



IRELANDS ROLLING PASTURE LAND.

Richard says this spring has been very short on feed and one of the wettest on record. Most farmers are out of feed and this spring is turning into a very costly one for those needing to source feed. Milk prices have also collapsed with farmers receiving returns last seen in 1983 at 20-24c/litre.

The vast majority of herds in the Republic are spring calving, with 80% of production coming from spring grass growth. The average herd size is around 70 cows, but these are growing. Northern Ireland herds tend to be bigger than those in the Republic, averaging 130 head and more intensive production systems see cows housed indoors, often all year around and

average 7000 litres per cow per year. Farm dairies tend to be herringbone from 4-60 units and some rotary platforms do exist.

Richard also sees Eastern Europe as a potential market for FIL products, but from a long term perspective. Significant expanses of cheaper land in places like Poland sell for around NZ\$5000 per hectare and labour is relatively inexpensive and available.

“On my last visit to Ireland I received very positive feed back from farmers there about how effective FIL’s Quantum range of acids and alkali were,” says Business Development Manager Trevor Gulliver.

## FIL IRISH DISTRIBUTOR GOES ORGANIC

**IAN WITHEROW IS THE ORGANIC DAIRY FARM MANAGER FOR GREGG CARE, FIL’S IRISH DISTRIBUTOR OF TAIL PAINT AND DAIRY HYGIENE PRODUCTS. THE FAMILY BUSINESS ALSO OWNS AN ORGANIC DAIRYING OPERATION, MILKING 300 COWS WITH 200 CALVING IN SPRING AND 100 IN AUTUMN.**

Ian says the genetics mainly comprise of New Zealand Friesian-Jersey cross and another 100 heifers coming into the herd next season will push the cow numbers to 400.

In total 280ha are farmed, with 160ha in permanent pasture as a white clover-ryegrass blend. The remaining 120ha is sown as red clover and used for silage as winter feed, with the cows housed during winter.

Converting to organic dairying in Ireland is a two year process before becoming fully certified. The Gregg operation is 18 months into the conversion.

“Organic farming in Ireland has enjoyed renewed interest in recent years, but the numbers operating this system of farming still only account for just one percent of the land being farmed. Despite the current economic downturn the retail market for organic food is still growing,” says Richard Gregg.

Mastitis is permitted to be treated with antibiotics, but withholding periods are doubled, and no dry cow therapy is allowed to be used. The key means to successfully manage somatic cell counts and mastitis is to keep the herd age profile young.

**“We find crossbred cows are very low maintenance, with few health problems and are well suited to the organic system,” says Ian.**

### WHAT’S INSIDE:

<b>Global challenges for optimum FIL production</b> <span>2</span>	<b>Stress management a family and farm issue</b> <span>5</span>
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### A WORD FROM FIL:

The 2009-2010 season is getting closer...like the Super 14 there seems so little time between one season and another.

Our production facility received its GMP approval from the government auditors recently and judging from the level of activity from trucks, forklifts and tight work schedules we are geared for another good year.

With some recent successes at the sales front I was pleased to hear that farmers are still making their purchasing decisions on product quality and service as the primary drivers followed with pricing as the third consideration. We understand things will be tight this year and it is important that we do not relax our standards with respect to product quality and service.

Good luck with calving over the next 2-3 months and all the best for the new season.

WARWICK DOWSE - General Manager





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Just as farm gate prices for fertiliser shot up 18 months ago, David also had to deal with similar increases on most of FIL's key product components, along with earthquakes in China, the Beijing Olympics and a see-sawing Kiwi dollar.

“At the same time fertiliser prices were soaring, we saw one of our key ingredients that had cost US\$840/t shoot up to US\$1500/t, making it very difficult to maintain some margin,” he says.

A key ingredient like phosphate is one FIL shares at source with farms using it as fertiliser. It is also a base source for phosphoric acid, a key ingredient in products like Quantum Blue.

Throw in an earthquake in China where the mineral is sourced and supply lines became tight and slow last year. “Few people here would also appreciate how dominant the Olympic Games were in the Chinese economy, and their effect on supply. Shipping was tight and freight movements restricted from May right through to September.” Rolling electricity blackouts in parts of China can also add to the unpredictability of material supply.

Even with the easing of global commodity prices, the following drop in the Kiwi dollar has meant the prices on ingredients have not eased as much as David had hoped.

Competition for ingredients like iodine from completely unrelated sectors is another curve ball that global commodity markets throw at a production manager's budget. “Something like iodine, such a major item for us increased in price 30% in the last quarter of 2008, thanks in part to competition from the X-Ray industry and LCD businesses.”

He focuses on trying to iron out such volatility to arrive at a price for farmers that is competitive and sustainable.

“Then the best we can do is endeavour to really focus on those costs we can control at this end, a bit like farming really.”

At this end, David appreciates FIL's major investment in a new processing plant within its new head office in Mount Maunganui, Tauranga. The business of turning those raw materials in to high value dairy hygiene products is now significantly more efficient, thanks to excellent flow technologies and investment in sustainable, energy saving technology throughout the production process.

Major savings are being recouped on water through rainwater retrieval systems and electricity by using waste oil for process heating. This alone chops 40% off using diesel fuel.

The future proofed building has significant capacity available to provide an ideal base for export expansion all within a fully compliant site, something not easily achieved in the risky business of chemical processing. “This gives a lot of confidence to the staff here, our industrial neighbours and protects Tauranga's environment.”

A future challenge for David and his team is the trend for retailers to hold lower stock levels. This will mean shorter notice on production runs, and tight inventory control and turnaround at FIL's processing plant.

“We have a very experienced team here, and a sales force who recognise the value of relationships with retailers and farmers - given our size and our people we have the ability to adjust and respond very quickly to what our clients are demanding.”



## NUTRI-MAG

### WHEN QUALITY COUNTS

When magnesium supplementation is crucial to your herd's health, it pays to invest in the highest quality product on the market.

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## NUTRITION

### FIL NUTRI-MAG

#### WHY

This supplement plays a crucial role in muscle control and nervous system function. Helps prevent staggers and maintain high milk yields.

#### WHEN

Commence 4-6 weeks before calving and early lactation when the animal's magnesium requirements are not met through normal food sources. Continue until the end of mating or longer if necessary.

#### HOW

Suits your preferred method of application - either by drenching or pasture dusting.

**PRICES HELD FOR SEASON**

Despite the volatility in raw material prices in recent months, FIL has undertaken to hold its Animal Health and Dairy Hygiene products at 2008 price levels until 1 July 2009.

**“We recognise that this season has been a particularly tough one for our valued farmer clients, many who face very tight cash flow situations. We want to help as much as we can and see them thrive when better times for the industry return,”**  
**says Arthur Jordan Director FIL.**

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# COURSE TO HELP MANAGE SUSTAINABLE NUTRIENT SOURCE

AGRICULTURE ITO HAS RECOGNISED THE INCREASING VALUE OF EFFLUENT TO DAIRY FARMERS BY OFFERING A NEW TRAINING PACKAGE, DEALING WITH DAIRY FARM EFFLUENT.



Developed in conjunction with DairyNZ and with support from Fonterra the course aims to lift awareness among farm staff of effluent’s value as a nutrient source and the role they have in managing its application.

The course has been developed in consultation with Fonterra, regional councils and farming experts. It will run depending on demand along lines similar to Agriculture ITO’s milk quality courses.

**“Farmers have told us they needed this training for their employees and themselves. The best plan is for the whole farm team to do it together,” says Agriculture ITO pastoral business coordinator Katrina Knowles.**

The course training has a practical focus that will relate directly back to what participants experience in their daily farm routine.

Every participant will be asked to do a walk through of their farm system before starting the workshop so what is learnt can be related directly to their own operation. Tutors will cover how to operate and maintain various systems correctly. As regulation and enforcement has increased, legal, environmental and health issues will also be covered. Because of differences between local authority regulations there will be material provided relevant to participants’ farming regions.

To determine how well the course learning has sunk in, a follow up assessment will take place a month later on the farm. Here staff will have to demonstrate that learning has stuck, and is being used routinely to achieve a complete qualification.

Katrina Knowles says it is often the less obvious aspects of behaviour and management that can affect how well effluent is managed. Dropping litter in the farm dairy can result in effluent pumps blocking up, and behaving

ABOVE: TRAVELLING EFFLUENT SPREADER.

quietly in the dairy can reduce the amount of effluent created by cows in the first place. As a result pumping costs are less and area required to be covered is reduced.

The course has been tested on farm, with Rakaia Island Dairies conducting a pilot course in February.

Johan Geerts of Rakaia Island Dairies says some farmers do regard effluent as simply an expense and a hassle. “However it is not. It can save money and grow grass. Nutrient budgeting is so important. If you tell farmers they can knock down their fertiliser budget by 10%, they will sit up and listen.” Independent tutors from AsureQuality will run the courses in lower North Island and the South Island. Auditing company QCONZ will look after the upper North Island.

Later in the year Agriculture ITO aims to develop a stage two course offering experienced farmers and staff the opportunity to improve their effluent management systems and operations.

## MANY PATHS LEAD DREW TO FIL

Take eight years in the petroleum industry, blend in three with a pharmaceutical company, and add nine working with natural food products. With some dairy processing work and a love of sunshine added to the career mix, it was inevitable Drew Chadwick would end up at FIL.

As FIL’s new Technical Manager, Drew takes on the white coat job of turning innovative ideas into product realities that make farmers’ jobs easier. With two labs and a state of the art processing plant at his disposal, he has a job anyone with a commercial scientific interest would envy.

Originally from the UK, Drew says coming to work at FIL brings together many of the strands of his professional experience over the past two decades, particularly his work with human health products when he worked with another local firm, Comvita.

He also developed some understanding of the dairy industry through involvement with the installation and commissioning of the Independent Dairy Processors plant in Tauranga.

Comvita built much on its success with Manuka honey’s antibacterial properties, something not lost

on Drew when he researched FIL and the success enjoyed with its latest product Iodoshield Active. Honey plays a significant role as a natural healer in Iodoshield Active teatspray.

One of the challenges Drew is looking forward to is developing other treatments drawing on natural products that can enhance animal health and hygiene.

Producing environmentally sustainable products in the chemical industry is a real challenge, but he sees opportunity for development as long as they are effective and meet farmers’ daily needs.

The significance of a chemical based company being awarded the Regional Sustainable Business award for 2008 has also not been lost on Drew. “It is not an easy industry to achieve such an award in, and says much about the vision directors Arthur Jordan and Dave Hancox have for FIL.”



With significant investment in research facilities at FIL’s new Tauranga headquarters, Drew is already trialling new formulations of products and tweaking those already put together by “some very smart people”.

He welcomes the encouragement to think creatively about solutions to health and hygiene problems, and the ideas fed through to him from people like FIL’s Business Development Manager Trevor Gulliver. “Being in direct contact with our farmers there are always new ideas and opportunities to pursue back here,” he says.

# PACK UP YOUR TROUBLES IN YOUR OLD KIT-BAG....

SPRING CALVING ONLY JUST AROUND THE CORNER - HOW ABOUT HAVING A PLAN TO DEAL WITH TWO COMMON ANIMAL HEALTH EMERGENCIES. THE ‘CALVING COW’ AND ‘DOWN COW’.

DAVID McDONNELL  
BVSc MACVS



It is my belief the ‘Calving cow’ and ‘Down cow’ only become an emergency once there is -

1. A failure to recognise the problem
2. Intervention occurs too late
3. Inadequate treatment is given

Animal husbandry for most farmers is assumed to be a necessary skill - it is a skill that requires experience and education, as well as, attributes such as, ‘gut feeling’ and ‘interest’. In other words - there are always areas to improve. The demand for training such as - ‘Spring Seminars’ in veterinary practices, or on-farm consultations using resources such as practical demos, slide shows, DVD’s, pamphlets, books etc by all farmers at all levels, show how important this is and the thirst for knowledge.

Let’s return to our two examples above and break down the approach in a step-wise fashion.

### A FAILURE TO RECOGNISE THE PROBLEM:

This is the crux of good animal husbandry. Observation of Springer/Calving cows for any untoward behaviour is paramount. Unlike the ‘down cow’ (which is very obvious!), the cow with calving trouble requires a motivated individual with instinct to detect that something is wrong. You want to create a culture in your team that if a cow is uncomfortable, separate from the mob, reluctant to move/graze or is standing (for greater than 6 hours) and pushing (greater than 2 hours) is examined. This is becoming a real welfare problem in large calving herds with inexperienced staff.

### INTERVENTION OCCURS TOO LATE:

Once a cow is pushing (Second Stage) things should progress within 1-2 hours. If no progress has occurred or you are unsure about the colicky cow that has ‘sprung’ then intervene by examining the cow. Obstetrical lubricant and a glove should be a must in your ‘calving kit’. This serves two purposes- you gain experience and confidence of what normal/abnormal is and you greatly improve your chances of having a successful outcome by early intervention (live calf/cow). Select paddocks with dedicated handy facilities nearby so this isn’t a chore.

For a ‘down cow’ experimental data shows irreversible muscle damage as early as 3 hours if a cow is lying down inappropriately. Therefore immediate treatment with rapid release Calcium salts (peri-calving especially) will restore electrolyte balance in the nervous system and musculoskeletal system. The convenience of sterile injectable Calcium bladder bags (or alternative oral drenches) are a must in your ‘calving kit’.

### INADEQUATE TREATMENT IS GIVEN:

If a ‘calving cow’ is not recognised and given assistance to calve, the outcome is a septic cow with an emphysematous (rotten) calf inside. Despite the loss of calf, the cow’s ability to survive is compromised if she needs veterinary intervention. Allow yourself 10 minutes to work on it and if no progress is made or it is different to your prior experiences - seek help. Remember to check for twins, retained membranes etc.

Often the failure for a ‘down cow’ to rise is insufficient treatment of calcium salts. Especially large Friesian Holstein cattle - follow the label directions for products. If possible, the intravenous route is the route of choice followed by subcutaneous, then lastly oral formulations (longer action to prevent relapse). Sit the cow up

and supply sufficient water (>30litres/day)/energy supplements/grass. Contact vet or seek help if no response in 2-3 hours.

### DID YOU NOTICE ANY PATTERN IN OUR EXAMPLES?

Once the problem was identified at the start - the rest followed suit, i.e. timelines and treatments. It’s that easy! The key is to develop a team culture of keen observation leading to early problem intervention and appropriate



treatment. This can be made easier by outlining your expected approach and making it convenient - all your troubles could literally be solved by the ‘calving kit-bag’!



## LAW PUTS TAILPAINT UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

Even rural areas are not immune to the visual pollution of tagging and the latest legislation aims to try and keep aerosol paint sales to those who really need it, including FIL clients.

The new retail law passed last year to try and curb graffiti vandalism however may make it slightly harder to track down FIL Tailpaint from its usual shelf position.

Aerosol paints are now treated similar to cigarettes, requiring proof of age that the purchaser is 18 or over, and the assistance of a staff member to access the paint for you.

If at first glance FIL Tailpaint is not where it used to be, look for the new FIL merchandise display unit, or enquire at the counter. You can be sure the full range of quality paints will be there when you need them.



# TELL TAIL MARK WITH CONFIDENCE

FIL’s Tell Tail range of animal markers has got you covered. The first fluorescent animal markers available to New Zealand farmers now available as aerosols, applicator bottles and with the dedicated Backpack Tailpainter for faster, safer application of tail paint.

A comprehensive range guaranteeing performance when you mark the herd for mating this season.

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# STRESS MANAGEMENT A FAMILY AND FARM ISSUE

LAST YEAR'S DROUGHT  
FOLLOWED BY A CASH FLOW  
DROUGHT THIS SEASON HAS  
RATCHETED UP STRESS LEVELS  
ON MANY DAIRY FARMS.



The South Island, with its higher proportion of newer, large conversion units has farmers facing even greater pressure in a hard cash flow environment.

MAF policy manager Phil Journeaux says while dairy farms were starting to recover from the drought, the prospects of a \$6.00-plus payout evaporating have slowed moves to recover. Cash flow issues are now a serious stress in the sector.

“We are picking this up in discussions with bankers and farmers more than before.” He says dairy farmers have been accustomed to regular monthly cash flows. For some, cash management is a new but critical requirement to survive the next few months.

Most dairy farmers manage the “positive” stress that goes with a large seasonal business well, but it is recognising and dealing with the “negative” stress the present environment creates that is now important.

DairyNZ business development manager Simon Sankey says the pointers to negative stress are important to recognise, as much by partners and family as by the individuals suffering from it.

**“The brain becomes physically altered and a number of functions affected include the ability to make decisions, judgement and plan.”**

He outlines three stress stages that can occur. The first physical signs are increased heart rate, sweating and even indigestion.

The second is failing to gain relief from these. This sees the body drawing on its energy reserves to cope, accompanying a sense of pressure, fatigue, nervousness and often illnesses that go with being run down like colds and flu.

While the seasonal stress that goes with managing, say, a bad spring inevitably passes, the unrelenting nature of low cash flows and financial demands can see chronic stress symptoms appear. These manifest themselves as ulcers, heart disease and even personality changes or mental illness.

CEO for Rural Women New Zealand, Noeline Holt says research reveals spikes in domestic abuse after significant adverse rural events like drought or flood.

“The problem for rural communities is the lack of facilities for spouses and families to go to when this sort of issue arises.”

Families withdrawing from community activities, neglect of children and animals can all be outward indicators that all is not well at home.

“Often for spouses the problem is complicated due to them being a key part of the business, and not able to leave the situation, even for a short time.”

Those suffering the results of stress are not completely alone however.

Throughout New Zealand Rural Support Trusts have established effective networks to help with day to day management, and wider stress issues. They can put farmers in touch with professional help and provide some simple guidelines to handling stress.

Ultimately a farm will come right, but meanwhile it is the damage to family and marriages where prolonged stress leaves things far from where they were, says Noeline.

To find out more about Rural Support Trusts, visit:  
<http://www.maf.govt.nz/mafnet/rural-nz/assistance/rural-coordinators/>

## SHORT TIPS TO MANAGE STRESS.

### SORT OUT YOUR PRIORITIES:

Know what can't be changed (the weather or the payout) and don't waste time analysing it, focus on what you can make a difference on ie grazing rotations, residuals - it will not only drive better returns into the cash flow, it will make you feel you are still in control of the business.

### GET OFF THE FARM:

Even a day away with family can lift spirits. Winter is a great time to get off the farm to visit family, see some different sites or spend time with your partner.

### TALK ABOUT IT:

Seek out company beyond the farm gate, but pick your companions - talk to optimistic, experienced people from within and beyond dairying. Keep your staff in the loop with what you are thinking.

### EAT WELL AND EXERCISE:

Keeping fit and healthy will keep stress related bouts of flu and cold at bay, and give you an off-farm activity that may also have some social contact too.

GET CHECKED OUT: VISITING YOUR DOCTOR MAY HELP  
DIAGNOSE STRESS SYMPTOMS, AND HELP DEAL TO THEM  
BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE.

## GRADE PROBLEMS ANSWERED WITH DAIRY HYGIENE HANDBOOK

FIL's Dairy Hygiene Handbook has become a valuable addition to many farm dairies over the past five years with its information on dairy hygiene issues and solutions.

“Farm dairies have become complex food processing plants that staff could find bewildering at first when it comes to tracing problems. The Handbook helps to provide some good starting points, and ideas to help keep plant grade free,” says Trevor Gulliver.

Experienced dairy farmers may also find some valuable information they want to refresh themselves about within the ‘pocket sized’

Handbook that comes in a hard wearing ring bound format.

Trevor also expects the Handbook will prove popular with training bodies and on larger farms where staff are encouraged to complete QCONZ courses.

TO ORDER: CONTACT YOUR  
AREA MANAGER.



## HYGIENE ✓ KEY AREA'S FOR A WINTER PLANT CHECK

### MILK SILO - 40% OF GRADES OCCUR HERE.

- Visually check for “rainbow” appearance for protein build up.
- Inspect the spray ball for blockages and grit.
- Does your Silo paddle require scrubbing and do the donut seals require replacement?
- Check the three way tap.
- Is the Chiller operating efficiently?
- Is it time to install a recycling system for silo wash water?

### MILKING PLANT

- As milk residue can build up due to plant flooding through the season, check and clean the sanitary trap, receiving can and pulsator line.
- Replace all liners (once exceeded 2500 cow milkings).
- Replace all other joiners, seals and elbows every second season.

### MILK ROOM

- Check vacuum pump and replenish oil as required.
- Check milk filter, replace rubber bung and washers if worn.
- Open the plate cooler to check joins and measure distance before splitting plates.
- Inspect the delivery line from the cooler to the bulk milk silo.

### WASH SYSTEM

- Check for sufficient hot water and ensure the temperature is at 85°C.
- Replace cracked or perished jetters and check rate of flow and turbulence through the plant system.





# MAINLAND VIEWS



## OLYMPIC SUCCESS BECKONS FOR ADAM

THE WINTER DRY PERIOD IS AN IDEAL TIME TO GET OFF THE FARM AND HIT THE SLOPES IF YOU HAPPEN TO BE A DAIRY FARMER WHO LIKES THE SNOW.

Adam Hall of Taieri appreciates this more than most - the world class disabled skier has his dairying parents to thank for getting him interested on a sport that today is his life.

The 21 year old was born with spina bifida and his mother Gayle saw the success a friend's child enjoyed skiing with the condition, and from then on he too was hooked on the slopes.

Weekends and holidays down South were soon filled with skiing, and Adam can today confidently call himself a full time athlete with an international reputation. With only a year to go to the Winter Olympics in Vancouver this season is a vital build up that will include competing at Queenstown's Winter Games in August.

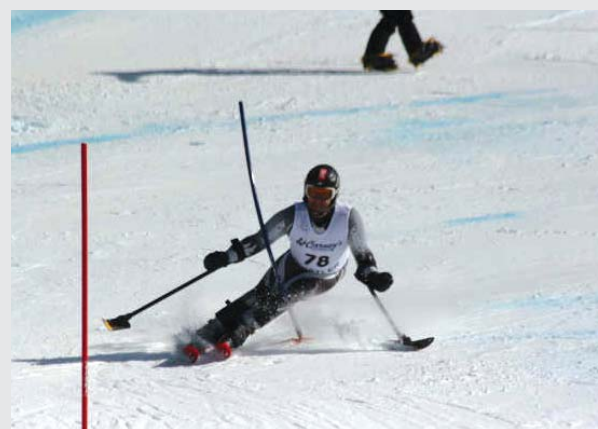
Adam's family have enjoyed a long time relationship with FIL. His Dad Lindsay is a long time user of FIL products. FIL has sponsored Adam's pursuit for many years by donating a drum of Bloateze each year. While not too useful on the slopes in itself, Lindsay has been happy to give Adam the value of the Bloateze to put toward skiing.

**"Skiing is not a cheap sport, and following winter around the world makes it even more so. FIL's support over the years has really been appreciated by Dad on the farm, and certainly by me for funds!"**

Fitting study in Agribusiness through the Open Polytech around ski competitions and travelling works well for Adam who intends to ultimately go dairying.

Adam's preparation for next year's Winter Olympics received a boost in March when he won a Silver medal in the slalom event and a Bronze in the Super Combined event of the IPC World Cup, a test run for the Olympics.

The slalom silver medal was a career best for Adam and secured his ranking as world number 2 in the discipline.



ABOVE: ADAM HALL IN ACTION - PHOTOGRAPHED BY KURT SMITZ

This success followed a silver in the World Champs, and gold medals in the Nor-Am cup races throughout North America.

"What has been really encouraging is that this was at Whistler, the same mountain we will be racing on for the Olympics, so as a test event I am very encouraged."

Skiing almost fulltime is a dream few keen skiers get to fulfil, and Adam is conscious of the support he has received not only from FIL, but also sponsorship from Scenic Circle Hotels, Cardrona Skifield and the Pinnacle sports programme.

FIL Area Manager Graham Beggs says it is rewarding to see Adam achieving at the highest level, and very encouraging to hear he may be interested in returning to dairying at a later date.



## REWARDING COAST PARTNERSHIP WITH FIL

DAIRYING, ALONG WITH TOURISM AND MINING HAS PLAYED A BIG PART IN THE ECONOMIC REVIVAL OF THE WEST COAST OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS.

Expansion at the Hokitika based Westland Milk Products plant, and the arrival of large corporate farming entities like Landcorp have helped provide a valuable addition to a region impacted hard by the downturn in forestry operations.

Richard Knight and his wife Alison's success in dairying on the coast has mirrored that of the industry there, moving forward into multiple farm ownership and expanding their original home farm at Ahaura.

Today their operations consist of three farms milking 1200 cows, an admirable effort after 25 years dairying. Richard is a typically modest West Coaster when talking about their success, putting it down to hard work and taking opportunities as they arise.

The couple share milked for five years at Arahura, just out of Hokitika before moving to the farm they are on today. Located up the Grey River Valley 35km from Greymouth the climatic differences are

marked compared to the coast. "We would average around 80 inches (2000mm) which is significantly less than the 130 inches you get nearer the coast," says Richard.

Summers can get surprisingly dry with some farms in the region irrigated. Turnips formed a useful, and less common, supplement on one of their farms this summer and Richard also feeds molasses and barley through the year.

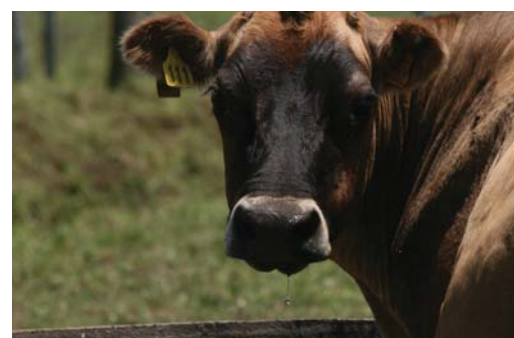
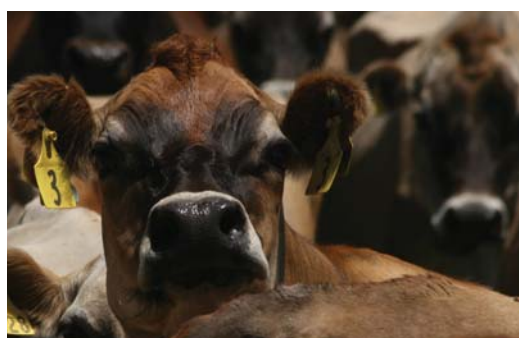
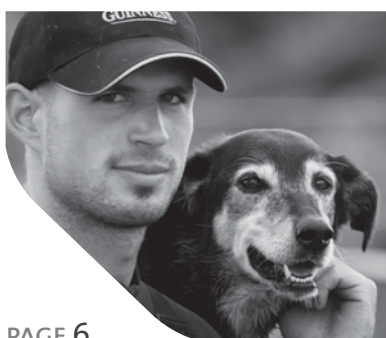
Over their dairying career Richard and Alison have been loyal FIL supporters. They initially built a rewarding relationship first with Colin Bishop, now FIL's South Island manager, and then Ian Grooby, area manager for the upper South Island.

"When we were working at Kowhitirangi down the coast our boss used FIL, and we decided if it was good enough for him, we would stick with it too," says Richard.

With three dairy sheds operating Richard appreciates the high level of service he receives from Ian, who is always happy to come out and deal with any hygiene problems they may encounter.

**"It is excellent service, and just as importantly it is backed by an excellent product. Ian takes the time to talk to the staff and explain what needs to be done, he's been very good to us."**

Meantime, despite the drop in payout Richard remains optimistic about the opportunities that still exist in dairying. "Interest rates are low, it is probably a good time to be buying if you are in a position to do so."





# SEASONAL CLIMATE OUTLOOK

## LA NIÑA OVER, WITH A NEAR-NORMAL WINTER ON THE WAY

The La Niña in the tropical Pacific has faded out, and conditions in New Zealand over the coming 3 months are looking close to normal in many places.

The NIWA National Climate Centre’s latest outlook states that over the three months of May, June, and July, average or above average temperatures are likely across the whole country. While this is the overall expectation, it does not rule out occasional cold spells typical of winter. Most of the country is likely to experience near normal rainfalls for the three months as a whole, but normal or above normal rainfall is likely over the north of the North Island.

The Centre says that normal or below normal soil moisture levels and streamflows are expected in the east of both Islands, while near normal soil moisture levels and normal or above normal streamflows are expected in the northern North Island. Normal soil moisture levels and streamflows are expected elsewhere.

Mean sea level pressures are likely to be lower than normal to the north of the country, with slightly weaker than normal westerly winds over New Zealand.

For the final weeks of the tropical cyclone season (May 2009), there remains a small chance of an ex-tropical cyclone passing within 500km of the country.

### OVERALL PICTURE

#### TEMPERATURE:

Temperatures are expected to be average or above average in all regions. Sea surface temperatures around New Zealand are expected to be average or above average through May-July.

#### RAINFALL, SOIL MOISTURE, AND STREAM FLOWS:

Rainfall is likely to be normal or above normal over the north of the North Island, and near normal elsewhere. Normal soil moisture levels and normal or above normal streamflows are expected in the northern North Island; normal or below normal soil moisture levels and streamflows are expected in the east of both islands. Normal soil moisture levels and streamflows are expected elsewhere.

### REGIONAL PREDICTIONS FOR THE NEXT THREE MONTHS:

#### NORTHLAND, AUCKLAND, WAIKATO, BAY OF PLENTY:

Average or above average temperatures are likely. Rainfall and stream flows are likely to be normal or above normal for the season as a whole, while soil moisture levels, are likely to be near normal.

Probabilities are assigned in three categories; above average, average, and below average. The full probability breakdown is:

	TEMPERATURE	RAINFALL	SOIL MOISTURE	STREAM FLOWS
Above normal	40 %	40 %	30 %	40 %
Normal	40 %	40 %	40 %	40 %
Below normal	20 %	20 %	30 %	20 %

#### CENTRAL NORTH ISLAND, TARANAKI, WANGANUI, MANAWATU AND WELLINGTON:

Average or above average temperatures are likely. Normal rainfall, stream flows, and soil moisture levels are likely for the three-month period.

Probabilities are assigned in three categories; above average, average, and below average. The full probability breakdown is:

	TEMPERATURE	RAINFALL	SOIL MOISTURE	STREAM FLOWS
Above normal	40 %	30 %	30 %	30 %
Normal	40 %	50 %	50 %	40 %
Below normal	20 %	20 %	20 %	30 %

#### GISBORNE, HAWKE’S BAY, WAIRARAPA:

Near average temperatures are likely for the three months. Normal rainfall is likely overall, with normal or below normal soil moisture levels and stream flows.

Probabilities are assigned in three categories; above average, average, and below average. The full probability breakdown is:

	TEMPERATURE	RAINFALL	SOIL MOISTURE	STREAM FLOWS
Above normal	30 %	30 %	20 %	20 %
Normal	50 %	40 %	40 %	40 %
Below normal	20 %	30 %	40 %	40 %

#### NELSON, MARLBOROUGH, BULLER:

Average or above average temperatures are likely. Rainfall, soil moisture levels and stream flows are all likely to be near normal, averaged over the full three month period.

Probabilities are assigned in three categories; above average, average, and below average. The full probability breakdown is:

	TEMPERATURE	RAINFALL	SOIL MOISTURE	STREAM FLOWS
Above normal	40 %	20 %	30 %	30 %
Normal	40 %	50 %	40 %	40 %
Below normal	20 %	30 %	30 %	30 %

#### WEST COAST, ALPS AND FOOTHILLS, INLAND OTAGO, SOUTHLAND:

Average or above average temperatures are likely. Rainfall is likely to be near normal, with near normal soil moisture levels and stream flows.

Probabilities are assigned in three categories; above average, average, and below average. The full probability breakdown is:

	TEMPERATURE	RAINFALL	SOIL MOISTURE	STREAM FLOWS
Above normal	40 %	20 %	30 %	20 %
Normal	40 %	50 %	40 %	50 %
Below normal	20 %	30 %	30 %	30 %

#### COASTAL CANTERBURY, EAST OTAGO:

Near average temperatures are likely for the three month period. Rainfall is likely to be near normal, while soil moisture levels and stream flows are likely to be normal or below normal.

Probabilities are assigned in three categories; above average, average, and below average. The full probability breakdown is:

	TEMPERATURE	RAINFALL	SOIL MOISTURE	STREAM FLOWS
Above normal	20 %	25 %	20 %	20 %
Normal	50 %	50 %	40 %	40 %
Below normal	30 %	25 %	40 %	40 %

### BACKGROUND

In the New Zealand region, mean sea level pressures are likely to be lower than normal to the north of the country, with a weak easterly flow anomaly over the country. Sea surface temperatures around New Zealand are expected to be average or above average through May-July.

The La Niña in the tropical Pacific has weakened to a neutral state and is likely to stay neutral through the outlook period.

The tropical cyclone season for the southwest Pacific ends in May. With current conditions in the Pacific, there is still a small chance of an ex-tropical cyclone passing within 500km of the country during May. The districts at highest risk are Northland and Gisborne.

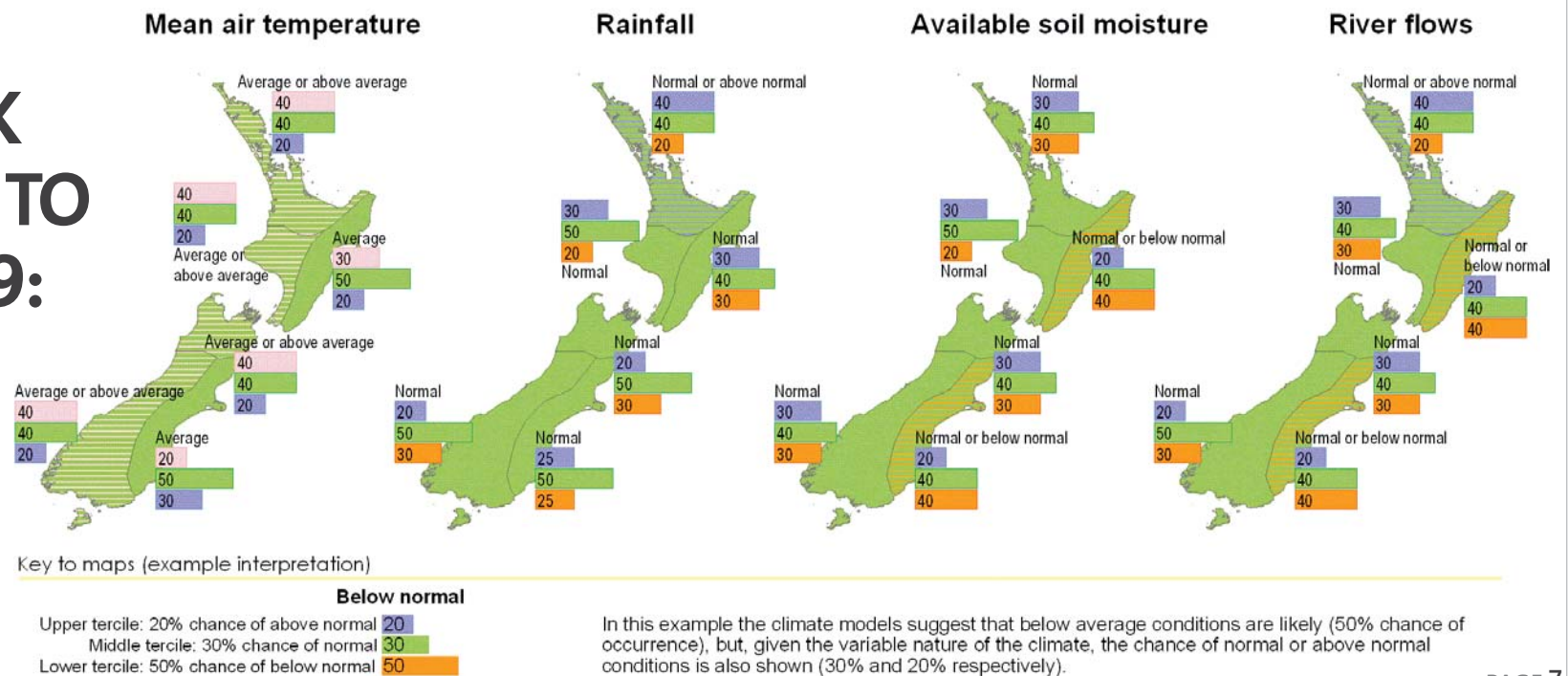
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## OUTLOOK FOR MAY TO JULY 2009:



# MIND, BODY AND SOUL CHALLENGED IN BOUND TO SUCCEED

DROP 13 YOUNG FARM WORKERS IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE FOR THREE WEEKS AND IT COULD BE A RECIPE FOR CONFLICT AMONG PEOPLE MORE ACCUSTOMED TO WORKING ON THEIR OWN THAN IN A GROUP.

However this year’s participants on Agriculture ITO’s Bound to Succeed course at Anakiwa speak as one about the value of teamwork and co-operation they enjoyed, and how valuable these skills will be once back on the farm.

Oamaru herd manager Emma Love thought she may struggle to make the Outward Bound course relevant to her work back on the 900 cow farm she is on. However once home and back with the four older staff she supervises, she could soon see the benefits.

“There were 13 of us out there, all pretty opinionated and you definitely had to take on board other people’s opinions and thoughts, it is something I brought right back to work with my staff here,” she says. While all found the physical side of the 21 day course manageable, there was plenty of mind work that left Emma a lot wiser about herself and what she was capable of.

“The need to get on with others, combined with the physical challenge and the remoteness made me realise potential I never knew I even had.” She said like most people she has a tendency to stick to her comfort zone, but having to complete daunting challenges like rolling a kayak, and coming up again, pushed her well beyond any comfort zone.

“In farming if there has been something I didn’t know about, I probably shied away from it, I am much keener to step up to new things now.” Meantime she is recommending Outward Bound to her sister, and Bound to Succeed to anyone in farming and keen to step outside their comfort zone.

Working in the cold country of Lumsden on a 500ha property Jason Checketts is a young southern man accustomed to pretty tough physical challenges just stepping out the door on a cold Otago winter’s morning. He admits he was “pretty casual” going into Bound to Succeed, and confident about managing the physical side of things. However after only a couple of days he could see the benefits he might take away with him on another level.

“There were plenty of tasks we had to complete that relied completely upon team work, or the whole thing would have fallen to bits.” He believes he has developed a far better understanding of team dynamics. This is not an easy thing to achieve when much of your working time is spent as your own boss with plenty of space and few people around you.

**“At one point we got lost on a big tramp, and things got tense within a group of people used to being managers. You soon learnt you had to sort things then and there.”**

He is grateful to his bosses Russell and Janine Drummond for valuing off farm training, particularly something like Bound to Succeed which is far more than a conventional day off the farm to attend a field day or discussion group.

“I really did not expect to get out of it what I did, and I think only over time will I really see all the things I learned and how they will help me in my career.”

## BOUND TO SUCCEED - THANKS TO BOSSES

FIL has sponsored the Bound to Succeed course for five years now and company director Arthur Jordan urges young farm workers and managers to put it on their “must do” list.

Arthur acknowledges the big sacrifice most participants’ bosses make to allow their staff to go on the courses. This is even more so with the course set towards the end of the farming year when cows are being dried off and farms set up for winter.

“It says a lot about this industry that there are bosses out there prepared to step back into the dairy for three weeks to fill in the gap - they obviously appreciate what can be gained by improving the good people they already have.”

Agriculture ITO chief executive Kevin Bryant says the course helps young managers realise that achieving



PHOTO BY JEMMA LOURIE

goals is not only about themselves. “It involves teamwork as well as learning to lead. We hope to see some of these people taking what they learned back to the work place and their wider communities.”

ANYONE INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE CAN CONTACT AGRICULTURE ITO ON 0800 691 111



## PERFORMANCE PARTNERSHIP

Agriculture ITO’s Bound To Succeed programme sponsored by FIL New Zealand is a forward thinking industry-led initiative designed to encourage, connect, develop and nurture future rural community leaders.

Held annually at Outward Bound Anakiwa, this 21 day personal leadership and development programme delivers what trainees have described as a “life changing” experience.



SPONSOR OF

**Agriculture ITO**  
Industry Training Organisation

“Bound to Succeed”



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