

APRIL / MAY 2014

Real Farmer

FOR EVERYTHING FARMING AND FAMILY

Destined to stay aloft

The options
are endless

Farm
succession—
a banker's view

A natural
autumn oasis

Work below
headlines lifts
effluent standards

Trusted co-ops working for farmers

ATS  **Ravensdown**

From the CEO

Welcome to the first Otago/Southland edition of the Real Farmer magazine, giving you up to date and relevant farming and industry articles, alongside profiles relevant to your region.



In this edition your feature story showcases farming partners Jock Webster, his son Nick and nephew Peter Mitchell, their farming operation and their bird and small animal feed business, Topflite. The Mitchell Webster Group has certainly stood the test of time and is an extraordinary and inspirational family business.

Dairying and environmental impacts are always a hot topic in the media, especially when the focus is on dairy effluent, but Richard Rennie's article shows there's plenty of positive results being ticked off behind the scenes. He takes a look at DairyNZ's Sustainable Milk Plans, launched following last year's Dairy Industry Strategy for Sustainable Dairy Farming and other industry initiatives.

There's plenty of informative reading to be had with a variety of articles covering a range of topics from hunting, duck shooting, fishing and jet boating; farm succession, the pitfalls and the importance of seeking good advice; how to achieve a truly low maintenance garden; dry cow therapy; herd production; right through to the importance of A & P Shows in linking our rural and urban communities.

This first regional edition of Real Farmer follows the recent Otago/Southland launch of Ruralco at the South Island Field Days at Waimumu. As we grow our business in your region, we are looking for your input. We are always looking to add value to your farming business, and we are keen to hear your suggestions for possible Ruralco Suppliers. Visit www.ruralco.co.nz/supplier/suggestabusiness to let us know about quality suppliers in your district.

We look forward to hearing your suggestions and hope you enjoy this mix of industry and local information.

Neal Shaw, Group Chief Executive

Upcoming Events

Wintering for Success

3 April North Otago
17 April Ranfurly

For more information on the event in your area, visit www.dairyNZ.co.nz/events.

9 April

Farming for profit and FARM IQ Field Day

North and East Otago

For more information, please contact Richard and Jacqui Robinson on 03 693 9077 or robinsonfarmnz@gmail.com

Easter Holidays

18 April Good Friday
21 April Easter Monday

25 April

ANZAC Day



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Topflight Partners
Peter Mitchell and
Jock Webster



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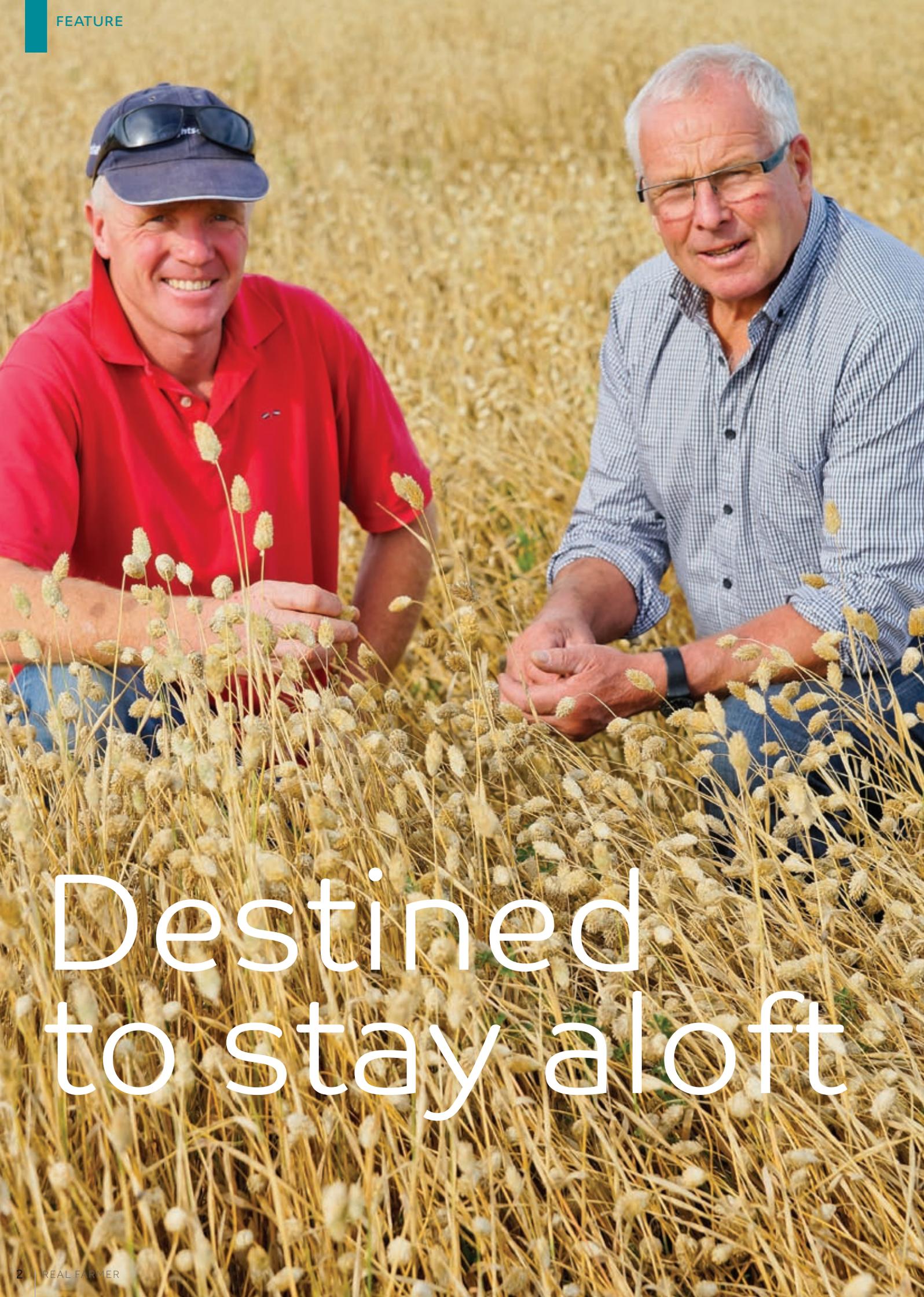
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Destined to stay aloft

Winged freeloaders, droughts and a cement mixer to batch up orders of birdseed. Oamaru's Topflite operation at Weston in the 1980's, selling mail order packets to bird clubs from their sunflower crop, did not appear to be a rising star of North Otago's agri-industry.

BY TIM BREWSTER

Back then they were heavily reliant on rainfall on their Rosedale property and hand-mixing 10 tonnes annually. Farming partners Jock Webster, his son Nick and nephew Peter Mitchell admit they had no idea how large the scale of the operation would get.

"We did a study in the early 90's and the marketing consultant told us the supermarket sales figures he had accessed couldn't be right. The figures were right," Jock said.

Now Topflite produces over 1,600 tonnes of bird and small animal feed a year, with 250 product options from fifteen different mixes, including more than 150 tonnes of budgie mix alone.

Demand for birdseed is still climbing, and not only for caged pets, but feed to attract wild birds and poultry products to cater for an increase in backyard poultry numbers, Jock said.

"Poultry are the new pet. Wild birds are the new pet. There's more interest in nature."

The winged freeloaders are still a problem, "we grow enough to feed them as well," but thanks to the North Otago Irrigation Company (NOIC) scheme which came online in 2006 and some substantial plant upgrades, Topflite and the other aspects of the Rosedale operation seem destined to stay aloft for some time.

As last year's Supreme Award winner of the Ballance Farm Environment Awards for Otago, the Mitchell Webster Group as they are known was cited as "an extraordinary and inspirational family business that has stood the test of time."

Judges also commended them on the "long term sustainability focus through research and



crop trials; wise rotations and agricultural use and comprehensive monitoring."

Diversification over the years has also involved food supplements from flax seed for larger pets and horses, dog and cat food and even aquatic gravel with the Topflite production tidily dovetailing with the more traditional farm animal feed.

The Mitchell family started producing animal feed when they started farming in the area in 1871, introduced continuous cropping in 1968, with sunflowers first being grown in 1974.

Along with the Topflite operation overseen by Jock, the 700ha farm with an additional 674ha of leased land also produces a substantial amount of crops and animal feed.

ABOVE: The Topflight product range

MAIN IMAGE: Peter Mitchell and Jock Webster

BELOW: Wayne McMaster, Dispatch Department

An estimated 40% of the farm's production is for dairy support with fodder beet for grazing and lucerne, grass and maize for silage. Feed wheat, barley, ryegrass, hybrid rape, radish and potatoes are also grown.

The farming side of the operation is managed by Peter and Nick, the result of a partnership between the Mitchell and Webster families formed by Peter's father Ross Mitchell and his brother Bruce after they approached Jock in 1972. As a farming scientist who had "a very brief career" with DSIR, Jock had chosen to return to the land and had previously worked on Rosedale. There was already a strong family connection, with Jock's sister, Ainslie, married to Ross.

In 1992, Bruce retired with Peter coming on board as a partner in 1996 with Nick joining in 2008. Ross retired four years ago.

Farming partnerships between families have a chequered history, but in this case the past forty years at Rosedale seems to be an example of one that has functioned well.

Peter and Jock said there was little doubt the partnership was meant to work.

"Decide that's what you want to do, set up the framework and get on with it. You decide what you want to have with your agreements written up and keep them in the bottom drawer. Use





them if you have to, otherwise you get on with it and do what you have to do," Peter said.

As an A-grade mechanic, he is strongly involved in the agronomy of the operation and the practical side of things such as maintaining and fixing farm machinery especially during crucial harvesting periods. Jock with his agricultural science experience is responsible for Topflite and

The collaboration was recognised by judges of the Farm Environment Awards describing the arrangement as "Remarkable in-business practice, clear lines of communication and demarcation of roles through the development of a formal business structure, maintaining a strong business partnership between the two families."

The birdseed business was seen as an additional

entire Mitchell and Webster Group operation now employing 18 staff year round, with up to 40 employees during busy periods.

Along with mechanisation, seed development and systems to ensure consistency and quality on a large scale have been developed, such as substantially reducing dust irritants from one of their main products, canary seed.

Working through the farming and production process and developing systems for efficiency has been matched by focussing on customer requirements and trends in the marketplace. "Working and listening to what the consumer wants. We work hard making sure the quality of the seed going into the mixes is top quality," Peter said.

"We've been very incremental but irrigation was a huge investment. The North Otago Irrigation Company scheme got up and going and we went from having 60ha irrigated up to 450ha and now 617ha.

Last year the property produced 2,000 tonnes of fodder beet, just less than 3,000 tonnes of silage from maize, grass and lucerne, and 1,400 tonnes of baled straw.

Wheat production over four years has averaged 10.51 tonnes a hectare on irrigated soil, a yield that could drop to 6.5 tonnes under dryland conditions.

"If we didn't have irrigation we would not be able to get contracts for higher value crops such as hybrid rape, radish and ryegrass and we wouldn't be growing maize silage under dryland conditions.



ABOVE: The Topflite manufacturing site

MAIN IMAGE: A crop of sunflowers in the North Otago landscape

Nick with a degree in agricultural commerce takes care of day to day management of operations on the farm and marketing of feed to dairy clients. The three have "a splendid set of skills," Peter said.

revenue earner in the harsh farming climate of the 1980's with high interest rates and drought, with the Mitchell and Webster Group having only 60ha of its land irrigated prior to the establishment of the NOIC scheme.

The original cement-mixer which was loaded by hand with sacks of seed is still on the premises "and still gets used from time to time" with the



it was pretty mean. Farmers being forced to exit the industry. It was boom–bust country down here,” Peter said.

“Irrigation has smoothed a lot of the peaks and troughs out, so there’s more surety there and it’s bought a lot of young people back into the community.”

“When I was entering the workforce people were leaving town in droves really, anyone young.”

Now with the ever-growing dairying industry, the electricity sector, new houses being built, growth of associated trades and a busier

That’s something we’ve supported, within reason, standing in business shoes.”

They say their biggest challenge for farming in the area over the decades has been surety of water and the income fluctuation due to its uncertainty.

Now with irrigation and the boom in dairying, the next step for the future of the Mitchell Webster Group is a logical, but fairly substantial investment.

“We’re doing a dairy conversion at the moment. Just started in the last couple of months with



“There was a lot of on-farm investment, up-skilling and management and it continues. We did spend quite a bit,” Jock said.

With water such a crucial part of the farming venture, Jock had become heavily involved with the NOIC as chairman from 1992 till 2007, with the scheme coming to fruition in 2006. “That was a very major commitment. Not just for me but for everyone here.”

Prior to the scheme, farming fortunes in the area would change drastically from year to year.

“It could be paradise or it could be hell,” Jock said. Certainty of water for farmers in the area meant a big turn-around in fortunes over the past decade.

“It’s changed North Otago. From a return to the viability of the community the irrigation scheme has been very beneficial. In the late 1980’s, 90’s

harbour area, Oamaru has a bustle it has not seen for decades.

Along with traditional processing and manufacturing industries, businesses with a national presence such as Whitestone Cheese have established themselves and the revitalised Victoriana themed mercantile area, tourists coming to see little blue penguins and galleries such as Steampunk HQ have also added diversity to the town.

Witnessing the resurgence of optimism and industry in the area has been gratifying for those with a history in the area and who have been through the hard times.

Like many farming families, community involvement is strongly imbedded as a part of their daily lives within the M&W Group. Sport clubs, local endeavours, school fundraisers and involvement and also understanding that their employees have those commitments is an integral part of the operation, Peter said.

“With community support probably it’s more our nature. Both the Webster and Mitchell families are community minded, from Nick and my point of view growing up, our parents did that. As your kids are growing up that’s what you do, just grow up with it really. The philosophy is you always want to give a bit back. That’s perhaps who we are and that’s what we do, or that’s what we like to do. And as a business had the structure to allow the choice, because ultimately it means time away from the workplace.

a milking unit and a shed on 200 hectares. So that’s a fairly major change. It’s in some degree a shift in focus, but it’s complementary as well. There’s a lot of crossover between cropping and dairying. We’re selling a lot of product so we might make some profit out of it ourselves. Might as well have two bites of the cherry.”

ABOVE: Topflight silos

LEFT: Topflight storage

BELOW: Joanne Parker (left) and Trish Murphy, Manufacturing Department



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Consistency lacking in pollution penalties

Summertime inevitably draws most kiwis to some sort of waterway or beach, and even the stop start nature of this summer had the usual holiday spots in big demand.

But inevitably, perhaps due to the usual news vacuum that media face for a few weeks, the quality of these waterways often becomes the subject of a headline or two.

Equally inevitably, agriculture gets drawn into whatever journalistic analysis these articles endeavour to pursue. Usually the finger is pointed dairying's way as to why a certain river or lake is not all it is claimed it once was in terms of water quality.

But this summer was notable for the "pollution" stories that highlighted locations where farming was far from the cause. They also highlighted the disparity between what was, or rather was not, dealt out to the offenders. The absence of liability and penalties compared sharply to what dairy farmers often face when going to court on pollution charges.

Queenstown, that iconic poster town for New Zealand's 100% pure campaign has suffered repeated sewage spills into pristine Lake Wakatipu.

The past 12 months have seen the town suffer a spill into the lake on average once every six weeks, with two in January this year alone.

Because the spills were deemed to be caused by a "third party" (Joe public) the Queenstown District Council has dodged a fine.

Any farmer smarting from an effluent fine could rightly expect the council to be hunting down the culprits blocking town sewers with fatty waste, just as offending farmers are quickly identified when polluted waterways are detected.

However it appears it was simply too difficult for the council to deal with compared to a dairy farm with effluent problems.

Full credit goes to the Otago Fish and Game Council who called on the council to prosecute those individuals causing the problems in the town. But only now is the council entertaining the idea of creating a trade waste bylaw to prosecute people abusing the wastewater system—this in one of our most treasured scenic locations.

Up north in Auckland residents have learned ferry operator Fullers has been emptying ferry sewage tanks into their beloved harbour.

PR guru and Fullers spokeswoman Michelle Boag admitted the dumping, but said it was only due to "busy trips over summer" when the ferry was full. Such an excuse would fail to turn a council farm inspector from farm prosecution if a dairy farmer dished the "busy" excuse up over the spring period when wet conditions can hamper effluent application.

However Fullers appears to have dodged a prosecution, and even claimed ignorance about a law made three months earlier that no sewerage was to be dumped within 2km of the high water mark.

The good folk of Auckland had their proverbial noses rubbed even further in Fullers' mess when they learned Fullers had failed to use a \$400,000 rate payer funded pumping station installed for handling sewerage at the Downtown ferry terminal. You need to look hard to find media coverage of these events relative to the profile given to the farming community when pollution occurs on farm.

Dairy farming does not neighbour many who live in Queenstown, nor much of Auckland today.

However it will be interesting to observe how strong residential growth in the Selwyn district of Canterbury is managed in contrast to dairying's strong growth in the same region. Selwyn's population has grown 33% in the past 10 years,

incidentally the same as the growth in the number of dairy herds in the district.

In that time dairy farmers have justifiably through compliance, enforcement and personal responsibility come to better manage nutrient and waste losses.

Residential subdivisions may not be businesses, but their residents still discharge waste, including wastewater, deposits of heavy metals from car exhausts and brake linings and of course, smog. In addition the subdivisions themselves contribute to sedimentation and vegetation loss.

As an industry dairying is no longer being dragged kicking and screaming to address its waste issues. Perhaps it is time for councils to have the courage to require similar standards and penalties on water management and emissions also be placed upon their waste generating residential ratepayers.

BELOW: Neal Shaw, Group CEO





Work below headlines lifts effluent standards

When the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment Jan Wright released her report on dairying's impact on waterways last year, it painted a grim picture for the industry's future growth. BY RICHARD RENNIE

The commissioner pointed to issues around rising nitrogen and phosphorous levels in rivers and waterways, and the prospect that this would only continue as dairying intensified on existing farms, and became established on new farms.

The commissioner's modelling exercise reflected a straight line approach to growth occurring in the industry. However not covered in the report were the significant and on-going methods, partnerships, and standards being developed at every level of the dairy industry to mitigate the negative effects of nitrogen and phosphate runoff that formed the key part of her analysis.

A key aspect of dairying's overall environmental footprint under intense scrutiny is the management of dairy farm effluent.

Effluent management is now an issue included in every level of the industry's sustainability assessments, from top level DairyNZ strategy, dairy company standards and expectations,

through to behind the farm gate technology and investment.

The days of effluent management being an inconvenient afterthought to any dairy farm conversion are well behind the industry.

This season, effluent system installers report stronger than ever commitment from farmers to new systems. The interest comes not only from new dairy conversions, but established farmers investing into upgraded, state of the art systems to meet council compliance standards, and reap returns that good effluent management can deliver.

At a strategic level, the Dairy Industry Strategy for Sustainable Dairy Farming launched last year has proactive environmental stewardship as one of the 10 key objectives, including wise use of natural resource. A major part of this includes the Sustainable Dairying Water Accord laying out commitments and targets to reduce

dairying's impact on fresh water. The strategy involved a partnership development with all dairy companies, Federated Farmers and the Dairy Womens Network.

To see this fulfilled DairyNZ has developed Sustainable Milk Plans (SMP) for specific regions around New Zealand, including the Hurunui region in Canterbury.

The SMP's include farm dairy effluent management as one of the key areas covered by the plans which aim to integrate sustainable, environmentally friendly practices within commercial dairy operations.

Tony Fransen, DairyNZ's catchment manager for Canterbury says the plans work to help farmers identify what good practices they are already undertaking that help reduce their farm's environmental footprint, and identify areas to improve.

The plan's structure was first used in the Waituna



ABOVE: Neil Pluck
LEFT: An effluent sprayer in action

Lagoon in Southland, since passed into the upper Waikato catchment and now in Hurunui. Tony has been trialling the plan on two farms since June, identifying areas like effluent storage that required upgrading on one property.

Ultimately the plans aim to be used to demonstrate compliance under Environment Canterbury's Land and Water plan, which will be seeking farm environment plans from many dairy and irrigated properties in the near future.

"Effluent is obviously a component of the entire footprint of the farms under the plan, and if it can be managed correctly, it is a valuable input for many farms' fertility."

While a few non-compliant farmers may capture media headlines when penalised, the significant level of improvement in Canterbury dairy farmers' effluent management has gone largely unreported.

Environment Canterbury's most recent compliance report for the dairy sector reveals significant lifts in the sector's compliance level. Only five years ago barely 40% of properties were compliant, and by 2013 this had lifted to 72%.

At the same time the sector has experienced continual strong growth, with herd numbers in the region increasing 43% over the same period.

The report noted the majority of the non-compliance discovered in the region fell into the "minor" category, and acknowledged

many farmers were going well beyond their minimum compliance standards to improve their environmental performance.

The region's response to dealing with dairy effluent has also been lifted by the Canterbury Dairy Effluent group. Containing all key industry stakeholders from DairyNZ, Environment Canterbury, dairy companies, Federated Farmers, South Island Dairying Development Centre, and PrimaryITO, the group was set up to get all parties on the same page for effluent management.

"By having the group, we have been able to identify issues over consents and get a consistent message to farmers so they are hearing the same thing from all organisations, not three different interpretations, so making decisions on installations is simpler and more efficient."

Regional guides with advice specific to each dairying region have also improved farmer knowledge.

Tony points to the development of a dairy effluent code of practice that has also bought rural professionals and installers on board, with standards and expectations.

Tools like the dairy effluent storage calculator have been widely adopted, helping farmers better determine critical storage capacity based on farm size and conditions, and has been endorsed by most regional councils for compliance.

"We are seeing all the key players getting on the same page, and it's helping ensure better systems and better operations of those systems," says Tony.

Innovators deliver on effluent challenge

After 25 years of effluent system design and development there is not a lot about dairy waste Neil Pluck and his team don't know about.

Ruralco Supplier, Pluck's Engineering in Rakaia have been at the sharp end of effluent system development for the industry and continue to invest significant amounts into the development of new effluent processing methods. The work is timely, as Canterbury's booming dairy sector runs headlong into impending rule changes on nutrient losses that will have a major effect on how dairy waste is managed.

For Neil, the ideal dairy client is the farmer who is not only passionate about minimising their environmental footprint, but also views effluent as a valued input rather than a necessary waste outcome with annoying compliance regulations attached.

Neil is in the process of gaining certification as an approved effluent installer, and believes the day is coming when the voluntary Effluent Code of Compliance becomes a compulsory standard for all systems installed.

"A system that meets the Code of Compliance is achievable, it just takes more money. Farmers have to first accept we are dealing with industrial volumes of waste here which due to that volume are hazardous. As soon as that is accepted by the farmer and the infrastructure goes in the rest is easy, it's no harder than milking to manage it well."

In recent years Pluck's has refined its range of equipment built specifically for effluent management. This includes the Enviro Saucer. The carefully prescribed angles and depths of the saucer ensure no sludge build up in its base and it stores effluent with excellent particle suspension throughout the liquid.

Work by Neil many years ago also led to him developing highly effective stirrers that prevent anaerobic conditions developing in ponds, resulting in clearer ponds, lower smell and more easily pumped and applied liquid effluent from ponds.

More recently Neil developed a solid separation screening plant, with the Pluck's ADR 500 splitting off solids that can be stored and ultimately applied to cropping paddocks, boosting organic matter and fertility.

By the end of the year he hopes to have a "closed loop" system developed that will make wastewater reusable, further reducing the need for extensive effluent storage ponds.

"Like all research and development, it's not cheap, but we have to keep ahead of the rules that will be coming."



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Big wins for a strong finish

How are you going to make sure that your herd meets its production targets this year? After all, with the value of milk at an all-time high and cash flows improving, there's no better time to push for some big wins. ARTICLE SUPPLIED BY SEALESWINSLOW

Farmers who are monitoring their herds with the Tracker™ system operated by SealesWinslow will know exactly where they sit against their target—for the majority, that's somewhere between 60 and 65% of target production (at the time of writing). Having that information means they can go ahead and develop a strategy to help them meet their goals.

At this time of the year, in the aftermath of a dry summer, declining grass growth often puts production targets under pressure. Lack of dry matter intake is often a big issue in early autumn, with many cows only consuming around 3% of their body weight as dry matter, instead of the targeted 3.5–4.0%. If you find yourself in this situation, then you need to look at feed options that encourage more dry matter intake, says James Hague, nutritional consultant to SealesWinslow.

Hague warns against getting hung up on the cost of individual feeds and encourages farmers to keep a close focus on production and margins. "Working out the cost/benefit of each individual feed can be a tricky business, as in practice the total diet is just one feed to the cow. Get a good handle on what the diet costs per cow per day and offset this against the milk income to calculate the margin." While feeding more might cost more, if it is done correctly the benefit will be increased milk production and profit, says Hague.

	STAY THE SAME	FEED MORE	DIFFERENCE
Milk production	1.4	1.6	0.4
Milk income	\$11.62	\$13.28	+ \$1.66
Diet cost	\$3.20	\$3.90	+ \$0.70
Margin over feed and forage	\$8.42	\$9.38	+ \$0.96

Table 1: To calculate the benefit of feed, you need to take account of the additional milk production gained.

For many of SealesWinslow's customers, the margin over feed and forage is excess of \$10.00 per cow per day, when calculations are run using a fair value for the costs of grass and home-grown forages. Done well, feed can definitely pay its way.

The other risk at this time of the year is that farmers focus on putting condition on their cows at the expense of production. It is not a practice that Hague recommends. "Feed cows for production and feed them for weight gain" is his message. "If you feed cows more and they milk more and there is a clear financial benefit, then keep increasing the feed until that financial gain gets too small. Then work out how much you want to invest in weight gain."

The potential lost income from even a modest reduction in production can soon

mount up. For instance, if cows were to milk at just 0.2 kg MS/day below their potential for the rest of the season, it would amount to 20–22 kg MS/cow, a lost income of \$180 per cow. For a 750-cow herd, that would be \$135,000, plenty of reason to spend a bit of time seeing how you can get your cows to meet production targets.

So if you don't have a clear idea of your production potential, or how to make the most of your on-farm and off-farm feed options, contact ATS on 0800 BUY ATS (289 287) or get in touch with SealesWinslow—they can help you have a strong finish to the season.



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Thoughts from across the rivers

A&P shows began as a showcase for farming and have become a bridge between rural and urban New Zealand.

BY ELE LUDEMANN



When I was a child, the North Otago show was an annual highlight and not just because we got the day off school. It was one of few large community events on the calendar and a big social occasion.

It was held mid-week with most judging and the start of equestrian competitions on Tuesday. That day was mainly for country people but town folk arrived en masse for carnival night.

Show Day itself was Wednesday and people dressed up for it.

Farmers arrived early, parking in the grounds with room between the rows of vehicles for picnic rugs.

The town's shops and many businesses closed at midday. Most people went to the show and did the rounds of the exhibits, trade displays, stock and sideshows.

Food features prominently in memories of show days: hot dogs and candy floss, the entries in the baking competitions and picnics in which bacon and egg pie and fruit or chocolate cake often appeared.

In the wake of the ag-sag of the 1980s, A&P shows declined in popularity as farming changed.

But as agriculture has undergone a resurgence, so have A&P shows. The best ones have kept their rural roots and adapted to appeal to urban people, more of whom no longer have family or friends on farms.

One of the best shows in the country is the Upper Clutha one, held in Wanaka in the first or second week each March. It's the second biggest in the

South Island and its setting, just across the road from the lake shore is hard to beat.

It's kept traditional competitions for stock, wool, home industries, equestrian events, dog trials, sheaf tossing and children's art and crafts, including vegetable sculptures.

A more recent addition to the schedule is the judging of Beef + Lamb New Zealand's annual Glammies, the Golden Lamb Awards. This year chief Judge and Chef Graham Hawkes was joined by Iron Maidens and Olympic medallists Lisa Carrington and Sarah Walker, and Prime Minister John Key.

An annual highlight is the Jack Russell race which is followed by the Grand Parade, led by a pipe band, and opening. This timing is traditional though no-one has ever given a satisfactory answer to my question of why shows are opened towards the end of proceedings.

Enhancing traditional activities and entertainment is an ever-growing array of trade exhibits. They've long spilled out of the show grounds and each year creep further along the neighbouring park providing ample opportunity for retail therapy.

A&P shows came up on a nationwide-conference call last year. When the minutes arrived, the scribe had recorded the topic of discussion as AMP shows. She was from Wellington and not knowing what A&P stood for, thought shows were sponsored by an insurance company.

Perhaps this means this bridge between town and country is missing a plank of historical context, but it's still strong in spite of that.

Opinion

A&P Shows in the South Island

21 April	Mackenzie Highland Show Showgrounds, Fairlie
18 Oct	Ellesmere A&P Show Showgrounds, Leeston
24–25 Oct	Northern A&P Show Showgrounds, Rangiora
31 Oct–1 Nov	Ashburton A&P Show Showgrounds, Ashburton
1 Nov	Amberley Show Amberley Domain, Amberley
7–8 Nov	Marlborough Show A&P Showgrounds, Blenheim
12–14 Nov	Canterbury A&P Show Canterbury Agricultural Park, Christchurch
22 Nov	Courtenay Show Showgrounds, Kirwee West Otago A&P Show Tapanui
22–23 Nov	Nelson Show A&P Park, Richmond Southern Canterbury A&P Show Showgrounds, Waimate
29 Nov	South Otago A&P Show Showgrounds, Balclutha
4–6 Dec	Motueka Show Marchwood Park, Motueka
6 Dec	Otago Peninsula Show Portobello Domain, Portobello Wyndham A&P Show Wyndham
13 Dec	Tokomairiro A&P Show Tokomairiro Showgrounds, Milton

Ele Ludemann
homepaddock.wordpress.com





The options are endless

A commitment to providing quality tertiary education coupled with answering the needs of the primary industry has signalled a new phase in the history of Aoraki Polytechnic, and one that Ruralco Cardholders are set to benefit from moving forward.

BY ANNIE STUDHOLME

Whether you are a rural family with tertiary age children, or a farm owner or farm worker looking to expand your knowledge and skills, Aoraki has globally relevant options to suit everybody.

As a regional polytechnic it delivers a wide range of traditional courses such as health and beauty, hospitality, tourism, business, information technology and arts and design, as well as a number of short courses.

However, with campuses in Timaru, Ashburton, Oamaru, Christchurch and Dunedin, Aoraki sits perfectly positioned to seize the growing opportunities in the primary sector. Recently, it has signalled a move to introduce an array of innovative, exciting and effective agriculture, horticulture and apiculture (beekeeping) programmes in addition to its core courses. It is also looking to specialise in agri-technologies such as irrigation in the near future.

"The primary industry is the backbone of the New Zealand economy, and locally it is one of our largest employers, so from that perspective, it makes total sense," says Aoraki Polytechnic Primary Industry Portfolio Manager Andrea Leslie.

Andrea's passion is undeniable and over the past nine months she has poured her heart and soul into setting the wheels of change in motion. Having grown up in South Canterbury, Andrea lives on a sheep and beef farm at Cave. She has a strong education background, and recently completed a Lincoln University Masters in Professional Studies majoring in Agri Business.

"I feel extremely privileged to be in this position. My vision is to meet the needs of the learner and industry, while at the same time creating a sustainable future for the polytechnic. It's about doing what's right and supporting local industry. And if we do it right, it will bloom."

Aoraki's switch to being primary-industry focused came after an extensive assessment of local industry and education needs, and a new strategic direction for the organisation. However, the polytechnic had been skirting around the edges of primary industries for some time, says Andrea. A number of its courses already contain a strong agriculture flavour and since 2008 it has operated the Aoraki Rural Centre (formally the Washdyke Training Centre) which is currently leased from the Timaru District Council.

"Most of what we were already doing was land-based. This new era is just taking it to another level, backed not only by industry, but importantly by other land-based tertiary providers," she says.

Recently Aoraki signed a new Collaborative Relationship Agreement with the country's primary land-based tertiary provider, Lincoln University, following similar agreements with CPIT and Primary ITO, bringing together its facilities, funding and resources to create more opportunities for students and better meet the needs of employers and industry.

"Both institutions believe that New Zealand is best served by the evolution of a network of collaborating tertiary education providers, each

of which develops regional, national and even international excellence in appropriate priority themes," says Aoraki Polytechnic chief executive Alex Cabrera.

The Collaborative Relationship Agreement is built on a number of key principles, including a strong commitment to growing educational outcomes for students and employers, achieving academic relevance and excellence, closer ties with industry, and a contribution to regional development.

"While this collaboration will create efficiencies, it is as much about growth and adding value, as it is about avoiding duplication," says Alex.

In practical terms, the agreement will open the doors to a more seamless educational experience for students, from Aoraki's entry level programmes all the way through to Lincoln's postgraduate qualifications.

"There'll be more of an incentive for some students to go on to higher study—we'll be making it easier for them to get on that pathway. Another benefit is that the two institutions will each be more focused on the level of education that it makes the most sense for them to deliver," he says.

Lincoln University's Vice-Chancellor Dr Andrew West says it's important that partnerships like this are formed, that have a positive impact for meeting the demands and needs of New Zealand's land-based sector. "The agreement with Aoraki Polytechnic is a significant one for Lincoln University," he says.

"We can do so much more together to the benefit of every part of these sectors that are of such critical importance to the local, regional and national economy. Working more closely together makes good sense – for students, for employers, for industry and for each of the institutions involved."

The new arrangement will mean more coordinated ties between the academic institutions and industry.

For Andrea, the Collaborative Relationship Agreements with Lincoln University, CPIT and Primary ITO legitimises Aoraki's roll the in primary industry, and it's likely other relationships will follow with like-minded tertiary providers across the South Island.

The arrangement has given Aoraki the confidence to press on with introducing a range of new courses designed specifically to meet the needs of industry, following a number of well-established pre-employment programmes.

The first of these new programmes is the New Zealand Diploma in Agri-Business Management, which has been designed specifically with farmers in mind. Using a cutting-edge delivery method, the course is tailor-made to each individual allowing them to stay on farm, study on farm for the benefit of their farming business and the industry as a whole, explains Andrea.

It is the first course of its kind that affirms and awards credits for what is already known, demonstrated and evidenced through experience. The remainder of the learning is based on an on-farm project.

"It's just the first in a number of new courses. Our point of difference is that we have listened to the industry and we understand what they need, and we are doing it differently."

Through the relationship with Lincoln, the Diploma of Agriculture (Dip Ag) is also available through Aoraki's Timaru and Ashburton campuses, but run part-time over two-years using a blended delivery model making it more accessible.

Although the agriculture sector will be the first industry to see immediate benefits, Andrea



ABOVE: Kevin Cosgrove and Tom Lambie at the Aoraki Agreement Signing

LEFT: Andy Walne (Aoraki Polytechnic), Darryl Nelson (Deputy Mayor Ashburton), Alex Cabrera (Chief Executive, Aoraki Polytechnic), Kevin Cosgrove (Council Chairman, Aoraki Polytechnic), Robin Kilworth (Council, Aoraki Polytechnic), Tom Lambie (Chancellor, Lincoln University), Dr Andrew West (Vice-Chancellor, Lincoln University), Jeremy Baker (Asst Vice-Chancellor, Lincoln University).

says once it has developed an education framework that works, Aoraki plans to roll it out across others areas of primary industry including horticulture, processing, irrigation and transport.

She says creating exciting new courses is only the beginning. One of its greatest challenges is getting school leavers to open their eyes to the world of opportunities within the primary sector.

While agriculture offers the opportunity to work outside doing physical work, it's no longer just about growing crops and animal husbandry. Nowadays, it involves everything from business, geography, sociology and conservation. The world of horticulture is also diverse with employment in landscaping to viticulture, nurseries and orchards.

"The employment options are endless, but like with many things, people don't know what they want to do until they see it. Our challenge is to create programmes that are exciting."

Aside from the new course options, students will also undoubtedly benefit greatly from the band of qualified tutors who bring with them years of professional experience and industry connections, real world practical experience, and the smaller class sizes and greater flexibility that Aoraki has developed a reputation for at all of its five campuses.

In the years to come, Andrea hopes Aoraki will have created a reputation for excellence in the primary industry with its graduates snapped up by employers, like those from its renowned Outdoor Education and Engineering programmes.

"We want to create programmes that are going to be useful, legitimate and of a certain quality. It's not about complying, but about providing real education for the industry. We have done our homework, we have the right people on board and we are heading in the right direction."

Through Aoraki's relationship with Ruralco, studying just got that little bit easier. Students (or parents), farm owners or farm workers can now pay for their tuition fees in full using their Ruralco Card, receiving 10% off, as long they do not have a student loan. All courses are included.

BELOW: Andrea Leslie



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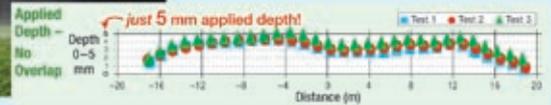
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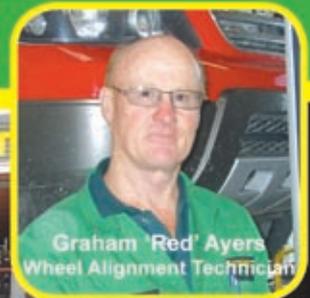
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Dry Cow Therapy

As the end of the milking season approaches, many dairy farmers will be thinking about strategies to successfully dry off the milking herd.

BY IAN HODGE BVSC., MACVSC. VETENT RIVERSIDE.

Importantly, all dry cow treatment decisions should be made in close consultation with the farms primary veterinarian who will have a good knowledge of the mastitis history on the farm, and is in an ideal position to recommend any treatments for a successful dry period.

Dry cow therapy refers to administering antibiotics to cows on an individual basis to treat and prevent the varying types and severities of mastitis they may have. Not all cows will have a mastitis problem so it may be possible in some situations to manage these cows without antibiotics.

Having accurate records of mastitis history for each cow in the herd is a prerequisite to good dry cow therapy and mastitis management. Some cows may have not responded to dry cow antibiotics last season, some may have successfully cured from a mastitis infection during lactation, and others may not have responded to lactation treatments. The ones which haven't responded may remain with hidden mastitis infections which are easily detected on somatic cell count herd test reports. Dry cow therapy can be tailored to each cow in accordance with the severity of their mastitis history.

In preventing and treating mastitis, the antibiotics used are long acting and very high strength. At the time of dry off cows should be producing minimal amounts of milk each day. Many cows reduce their

own production as the season ends while others respond to changes in the diet composition to reduce milk yield. The actual process of drying off should be abrupt. Cows should be milked and then dried off. Playing around with alternate day milking and even once daily milking for too long can make drying off more risky for the development of new mastitis infections.

“Dry cow therapy is a very successful strategy to almost eliminate dry period mastitis and to limit the incidence of mastitis during the early part of the calving period.”

Following dry cow therapy treatments, cows should be kept away from the cowshed for at least 10 days so that there is no stimulus to produce milk. The post treatment diet should be designed so that cows are less likely to make milk. Cows should be visually checked in the paddock every day in the week after drying off to detect any new infections that may have arisen as a result of the drying off process. In some cases cows can be brought back to the shed after 10 days and carefully checked for mastitis.

Dry cow therapy is a very successful strategy to almost eliminate dry period mastitis and to limit

the incidence of mastitis during the early part of the calving period. In addition most existing infections at the time of dry off are resolved. This is an advantage when cows may have had longstanding mastitis infections through the season, or they may have infections caused by “difficult to cure” bacteria.

Current best practice recommendations are that every cow in the herd should receive dry cow therapy at drying off. This has the effect of reducing the overall level (challenge) of mastitis in the herd both during the dry period and at calving time. In those cows that have not had a mastitis problem during the season, mastitis is prevented after drying off and at calving, and in other cows infections are treated and prevented.

As mentioned at the start of this article all dry cow therapy must be prescribed by the farms primary veterinarian.

VET-ENT

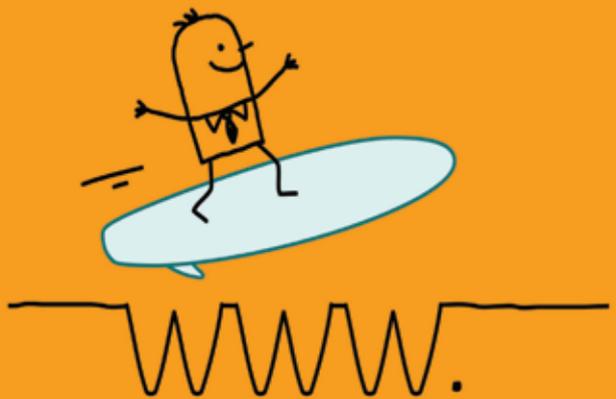
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A parking space for every traveller

If Graeme Harris won Lotto, he'd buy a dairy farm and milk the cows himself. The former farm boy owns and operates a car parking facility near Christchurch Airport, but still dreams of being a farmer.

BY LINDA CLARKE

Airpark Canterbury, just minutes from the busy airport, checked in its first customer in December 2012. Since then, business has boomed and Graeme says they are the cheapest (and the only privately-owned) parking facility serving the Christchurch International and Domestic Airport.

Travellers book a parking space, turn up and park their vehicle, and are then ferried to the airport by the Airpark shuttle. Travellers arriving back at the airport simply use the free phone to summon the shuttle to take them back to their car. The service runs 24-7, and the car keys never leave the owner's hand—unless the vehicle is booked in for a clean, service or repair job.

Graeme says he and a staff of 13 pride themselves on old-fashioned friendly, personal and on-time service.

The former police sergeant was stationed in Auckland and flying regularly into Christchurch with his wife Millie, when the pair decided it was worth researching a car parking facility to beat the high prices charged for airport parking.

Graeme did the research and built a business case that he put to investors Alan Stewart (Calder Stewart founder) and Kevin Arthur. The pair came on board and Airpark Canterbury was born.

A parcel of land on Logistics Drive, just behind The Press building, was bought and converted into a well-marked 620-space car park, fully fenced and staffed 24 hours a day.

Graeme said January bookings last year totalled 261; January bookings this year were in excess of 2,500.

He said competitive rates and personal referrals had helped the business grow. He remains involved in the hands-on operation, happily chatting to travellers as he ferries them to and from the airport.

"Lots of our business is word of mouth. Farmers have heard about it from other farmers, and I love talking about what they are up to on the farm."

Graeme went to school in Auckland but he was not a happy student; he was sent to the family farm, a 1,200 acre hilly dry stock block near Orewa, to learn the practicalities of life.

His nana taught him to fence and to dance, and embedded a love of rural living that is plain to see today. He and Millie live on a small block at Oxford, breeding Irish cattle and running horses and a couple of specialist



chooks. He owns a quad bike, which his 97-year-old nana gives him cheek about.

Graeme said while owning a dairy farm remained a dream, he had honed his business skills setting up Airpark Canterbury. While the aim of the business was to operate profitably, creating a family culture among staff was also important.

His team come from mainly rural backgrounds, are a mix of ages, and enjoy meeting and helping people. Graeme believes in the "pay it forward" philosophy and has helped those struggling to find work or deal with health issues. One staff member has lost 43kg and leads a much healthier lifestyle thanks to a personal trainer

ABOVE: Airpark Canterbury's large carpark
TOP: Caitlin Bartley with Graeme Harris

paid for by Graeme—her Shrinking Violet story is documented online.

Airpark Canterbury's well-organised website allows customers to book parking online, or by phone, and know their vehicle will be safe and secure while they are away. Charges are per night, another point of difference from their competitors - \$19 a night for the first three nights, \$7 a night thereafter, with a discount applied if you use your Ruralco Card.



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Rural 

Farm succession— a banker's view

None of us are getting any younger, so unless you've struck the fountain of youth while drilling for water out the back of your farm, then you will have to address the issue of what to do with the farm assets at some point.

BY STEVE SMITH, BNZ PARTNER-AGRIBUSINESS

Done poorly and a lifetime of asset building may be in jeopardy and, arguably more importantly, family relationships can suffer. So it's no surprise that many farming families are bringing this subject out of the too hard basket and onto the kitchen table for discussion.

The plan may be as simple as selling up at a certain point and dividing any residual cash between family members. However, if you and other family members want the assets to be retained in the family beyond your lifetime then you have some big decisions to make. Our recommendation is to start thinking about this sooner rather than later.

The BNZ has been successfully providing programmes to assist clients navigate succession planning for 12 years now.

When we started asking clients what steps they have taken around succession the responses range from denial or the belief that "we're all sorted" because there is a family trust in the mix, through to some very well considered and structured programmes ensuring all direct family members clearly understand the plan with regard to the continuation of the family business. However, it's fair to say responses were skewed to the former. Ultimately you'll know if your succession planning has been done well if the family can sit down together at the Christmas table and enjoy the festivities.

In my experience, the four C's of a successful succession plan are:

1. Communication—between partners.
2. Communication—within the family, ensuring that all siblings (and any spouses) understand the challenges and consequences of the process.
3. Communication—with professionals such as your accountant, solicitor, banker and farm advisers.
4. Cashflow—the better the cashflow within the existing business the more options you will have.

Every farming business is different regarding size, asset values, debt levels and servicing ability. When you add in a mix of family personalities and expectations, it's easy to see why there is no-one-size-fits-all solution. This is why communication is so important. All family members need to understand the cashflow implications and what equity levels need to be maintained to retain a viable business. It's also critical to consider whether additional debt is required for cash advances and what may be required to support you in retirement.

It's important that you begin discussing the future of your farming business with your spouse and family as soon as possible. I'd also recommend that you don't be shy of investing some money in getting the right advice. Most farmers spend their life time successfully building up their farm asset base and can struggle with the cost of working through appropriate structures. A good start may be BNZ's succession planning workshops. Contact your local BNZ Agri Business Partner for more details.

The reality is that there are no Number 8 wire fixes when it comes to farm succession, and

the investment in good advice is generally a very small sum when compared to the asset base being considered and the implications of getting it wrong.

BELOW: Steve Smith, BNZ Partner—
Agribusiness



A natural autumn oasis

BY MARIE TAYLOR

Cover your garden bed with plants or mulch

When Arne Cleland of Pukerau Nursery hears people want low maintenance gardens, he hopes they don't mean green concrete.

The alternatives are much more attractive the Southland landscaper and nurseryman says, and he has a long list of landscaping prize wins in the past few years to prove it.

"When people say they want low maintenance, it really means they don't have a lot of time to spend in the garden. But they think to have a good garden you have to spend a lot of time in it, and that's not necessarily true."

The key to a low maintenance garden is to cover the ground with plants or use a mulch, and that beats most of the weeds, he says.

The other secret is to get to the weeds before they drop seed.

Arne likes to use pea straw as a mulch, while leaf litter, collected from the lawn in autumn along with the lawn clippings, is just as good.

Compared with bark mulches, pea straw breaks down readily, and helps feed organic matter into the garden. "Once your garden is developed enough it feeds itself and doesn't need a lot of mulching."

The only downside with pea straw is that it makes the garden look like a farmyard for a while.

"If you use lawn clippings as a mulch, spread them very thinly so you don't end up with a gungy mess."

Bark mulches are used extensively in larger landscaping projects, but can create problems if birds spread it out onto lawns. "And it's a bit crunchier on the lawnmower than pea straw."

If drainage is not particularly good, gardens can go anaerobic as a result of thick bark mulches, particularly if weed-mat has been used underneath, he says.

Weed mats can be used where people don't want much work to do, and Arne uses a product called Geocil, which doesn't fray when cut. But it has to be mulched because it is not UV stabilised.

"Some people like to put gravel on as mulch, but sometimes it looks like a gravel yard." It pays to try and make it look a bit more natural.

Arne recently used a gravel mulch in a Wanaka garden, but made the design look like a riverbed. Whichever mulch is used, weeds will still arrive by wind to germinate within the mulch, he warns.

Autumn planting or spring—what's best?

Autumn planting is best to give plants time to get their roots established before winter says landscaper and nurseryman Arne Cleland.



"If you are in a low-lying place prone to early frosts, it may be worth planting in spring, but I think planting early in autumn is best."

"The plant needs to be in the ground early enough before soil temperatures get too low. Early planting lets the plant harden off quietly with the season and not be frosted."

"But any planting in autumn, compared to a spring planting, will look as though it is a year older. Spring plantings are often prone to drying winds. So there are pluses and minuses."

In one district someone on a hill can plant earlier than someone on the flat because their micro-climate is different, he says. "It really depends on your site."

The most important consideration though, is having enough soil moisture. Unless you have irrigation or are planting a wetland, wait until the soil is damp before putting plants in the ground.

Mimic nature

The best plantings mimic nature and reflect the natural landscape says Arne Cleland.

He's a big fan of mixing up native plants with exotic species, and says birds don't differentiate between the two.

More people want to cater for birds and bees in their gardens, he says.

For shelter, the key is to plant pioneering species first and then come back later and add in the

- Prepare planting sites with spot-spraying, apply gypsum to break up clay or compost to condition soil
- Trim hedges earlier rather than later to protect new growth against frosts—early summer and again in autumn is best
- Feed rhododendrons, camellias and azaleas an ericaceous fertiliser for acid-loving plants
- Compost leaf litter
- Mulch around plants with old compost
- Give fruit trees a spray of Conqueror oil for scale and spider mites
- Give citrus a light application of fertiliser
- Apply a seaweed fertiliser at double strength as a foliar spray to help harden off growth heading into winter—this is particularly beneficial in colder areas



taller trees, maybe five years down the track. That will give these later species sufficient protection with shade and shelter.

He's keen on adding beautiful threatened native species into gardens. "Some of our threatened species are very garden friendly, and people don't know about them."

"*Olearia fragrantissima* has an upright, narrow-ish form, is deciduous and doesn't grow too big. It's bushy when small, then looks more like a small tree as it gets older. It has flowers which have a beautiful perfume, and it's good for bees."

Southern Woods garden clean-up advice for April

- Prune to remove any dead wood
- Cut back perennials

Trendy plants

At Southern Woods Plant Nursery just south of Christchurch on the main road, Chris Smith says dwarfing fruit trees are all the rage.

The retail manager is noticing lots of young people coming in to buy fruit trees in particular, as well as shrubs and native species.

A couple of particularly popular trees are the columnar *Magnolia* "Blanchard" and *Cornus* "Eddie's White Wonder".

He says people in smaller properties often don't have a lot of land for larger trees so dwarfing species such as the evergreen *Magnolia* "Little Gem" and *Cercis* "Forest Pansy" are popular, but the latter needs shelter and good soil.

A new pear tree called "Crispie" at only 2.5 to 3m is half the height of a conventional pear



tree, and fits into a smaller property very well. The dwarf nectarine "Nectar Babe" grows only 1.5m tall and has a dreadlock look about it with its leaves in clusters.

"We're seeing a lot of demand for *Grisilinea* broadleaf hedging, the snow tussock *Chionochloa flavicans*, and the large red tussock *Chionochloa rubra*—the latter for the way it blows in the wind, and it has great appeal en masse in our open environment on the Canterbury plains.

"The native climber *Clematis afoliata* is underrated, with its lime green flower and most beautiful scent."

"Colour is starting to creep back in with plants like *Echinacea* and the colourful *salvias* and other perennials."

More people are buying their specimen trees as bare-rooted in mid-winter, she says. "Instead of paying \$48 for a 1.6–1.8m tree, a more affordable way is to spend \$35 for a bare-rooted tree for immediate planting."



ABOVE: Arne Cleland, Pukerau Nursery

Events Coming Up

Timaru Horticultural Society's autumn show at Caroline Bay Hall 26-27 April 2014

Marlborough Home & Garden Show 4-6 July 2014

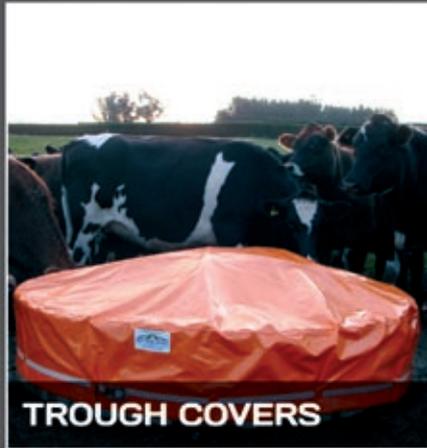
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New innovation for dairy farmers

ATS have much pleasure in introducing our dairy farming members to FarmGuard for the coming dairy season.

BY MARK MAITLAND, ORICA FARM SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE—CANTERBURY REGION

Dairy farmers will be able to access the FarmGuard range of products, including the bulk tank system, through ATS.

Orica have successfully introduced into the South Island our unique delivery mechanism for the bulk delivery of dairy hygiene chemicals. South Island dairy farmers have realised the revolution of moving to bulk supply of dairy sanitisers and teat spray products. The system has proved itself to be seamless, cost-effective, convenient and most importantly, safe.

Never before have dairy farmers had the convenience of bulk acid and bulk teat spray delivered to the farm gate via the Orica BLT Fleet of specialised units based in Timaru. Product is delivered into custom built, high specification double bunded tanks. The tanks are fully plumbed into the dairy shed and can operate in conjunction with any existing equipment. It is important to note that there are no upfront costs associated with implementing this system.

Deferred payment terms are in place with ATS on all bulk FarmGuard products. This gives farmers the option to pay products off over time without incurring interest charges.

Mark Maitland, Technical Sales Specialist for the Canterbury region, is thrilled with the response from farmers. "This system, coupled with premium product quality, is a fantastic offering which has been taken up by many farmers already. This is a real shift away from how business was done previously and I am delighted by the responses from farmers once they have the system in place. We are making a really positive difference to the way things are done on NZ dairy farms".

Product innovation

"The DTP Ultimate (chlorhexidine teat spray) has probably been shown the greatest interest to date. It has the highest active and highest emollient loading of all leading products, yet is one of the cheapest on the market. The most satisfying thing is that pretty much all of the users have reported better teat condition and improved somatic cell counts regardless of what leading brand they used previously".

Orica's new high performance dairy acid sanitiser "Supreme Clean" is a market leading acid which is both functional and cost effective. This product's development was in conjunction to new low

residual regulations set by all milk processors as they expressed a desire to reduce the level of residues in milk from on-farm sources. Orica took this opportunity to work closely with the Orica laboratory team, multiple independent partners and involvement from current farmers using FarmGuard products to produce a market leading acid formulation. Removal of QAC type sanitisers was a large part of our reformulation also.

"We were looking for better ways to use chemicals in our dairy shed. Something that was safe, practical to use, efficient, affordable and with a good service while delivering high quality products. While different companies can provide chemicals with some of these characteristics, we found that Orica chemicals covered all of them. With the Orica concept we don't manually handle the chemical anymore and it didn't cost us anything to change to the new system; the storage tanks and the electrical chemical dispensers are part of the service and Mark Maitland, from Orica Chemicals, installed them in no time. We now only press a button and the chemical is delivered into the wash tub. Orica chemical prices are very competitive and will help us drive our cost down. Before we changed chemical companies we asked people who were already using the Orica concept if they have had any issues with milk quality. They were all happy, as we are now with this novel system. I would recommend giving your ATS rep or store a call to enquiry about the Orica Concept" - Carlos Cuadrado, Ashburton

Advantages of bulk chemical supply;

- No more 200L drums.
- Reduced product usage (dosing systems).
- Reduced chemical wastage.
- Safe handling of toxic/corrosive products.
- Reduced legal liability concerns.
- Security of supply.
- Zero setup cost.
- Premium products.
- Pricing is the same regardless of geographical location.

Orica offers a 24/7 shed service. Our fully trained Dairy Specialists resolve issues regarding grades, training farm staff and equipment maintenance and re-calibration of dosing units.

We are thrilled to be now working closely with ATS and farmers to provide on-farm solutions. We are passionate about on-farm safety, reducing drum waste, ease of management and delivering all of this at competitive prices.

Please don't hesitate to contact your ATS Dairy Key Account Manager to enquire about tank installations and pricing for this coming season or call 0800 BUY ATS (289 287).



INTRODUCING Southland



Putting dairy first

Wondering what proposed new refrigeration rules for milk will mean for your dairy business? Stephen Marr, from DairyFirst in Gore, can help.

Fonterra has flagged the new rule, which means milk must go into storage vats at no greater than 10 degrees Celsius; on most farms milk leaves the cow at around 37 degrees and is chilled to 18 degrees before moving into the vat for further refrigeration. Stephen said farmers at the recent Southern Field Days had lots of questions about how they would need to upgrade existing equipment or install new gear to comply with the proposed new rule, which is aimed at improving milk quality. A water chiller could be the answer for some, but farmers should talk to DairyFirst experts before spending any money.

Stephen said his team of 10 were happy to travel all over Southland to help farmers get to grips with any necessary upgrades, as well as handling any other dairy shed issues, from effluent systems and milking equipment to water treatment and repairs and maintenance.

DairyFirst is the dedicated dairy arm of Laser Electrical Gore. The business began in 1991 as Marr Electrical and Refrigeration and rebranded to Laser Electrical in 2004.

Dairy First Ltd

40 Orsdal Street
Gore
Tel 0508 324 791
Fax 03 208 3441
admin@dairyfirst.co.nz
www.dairyfirst.co.nz



Impressive fashion for women

Sue Shaw and Impress Clothing have the best of two worlds. The classy Winton clothing shop stocks a range of trendy labels, that customers can take home on appo or buy online.

Sue said while customers liked to receive Facebook alerts about new stock, most still preferred a personal visit where they could try on new arrivals and check out new accessories, shoes, handbags and jewellery. She started Impress Clothing in 2006 and three years later moved into spacious, renovated premises in the town's former Food Plaza. The store is light and modern, with a private area for trying clothes.

She describes her garments as every-day casual, but with a classy edge. She said helping clients find the right piece for their body shape and colouring was satisfying, and she loves to see women leave with their purchase and a smile.

Labels proving popular include Ketz-Ke, Augustine, Redhead, OBI and Chocolat and Loobies Story.

She has a loyal clientele on Facebook and will happily respond to messages, texts and emails asking her to "put something aside" or send out on appo.

Four other staff help Sue during a six-day working week, with Impress Clothing open 10am until 5pm, Monday to Friday, and from 10am until 2pm on a Saturday.

Winter lines are arriving, so be in quick.

Impress Clothing

202 Great North Road
Winton
Tel 03 236 1206
impress@xtra.co.nz



Any plumbing needs, any hour of the day

Experience and prompt, friendly service are hallmarks of Laser Plumbing Gore. Co-owners Nathan Hoyle and Paul Richardson have worked together as plumbers for years and can install, fix or service anything from dairy shed plumbing to water pipes, septic tanks, pumps and spouting.

The pair employ three other full-time plumbers and are on the roads of Gore and in the surrounding farm landscape. Nathan said farming customers included both dairy and sheep and beef farmers, and Laser operated a 24-7 call-out service line to match the busy work schedules of the rural community.

Nathan, a plumber for 17 years, said his team was proud of their ability to deal with all work requests. "Gore being a small town, we have just about come across every kind of plumbing call-out and if we don't know, we know who to call."

He said the growing dairy scene meant Laser plumbers were experienced in all shed work, from new conversions to all-important servicing, repairs and maintenance. At the same time, household and other farming customers called them for a wide range of issues, including faulty pumps and spouting leaks.

Nathan and Paul have been part of the Laser family since October 2013 and prior to this, operated from 2008 as Gore Plumbing Services.

Laser Plumbing Gore

33 Gorton Street
Gore
Tel 03 208 6299
gore@laserplumbing.co.nz
www.laserplumbing.co.nz



Check out
www.ruralco.co.nz/southland
 for more suppliers in this region



Creating a warmer home

Awarua Synergy specialises in home heating, including solar panels, and manager Sumaria Beatson says sunny Southland is a perfect spot to harness the sun's energy.

Awarua Synergy grew from the Bluff Healthy Homes project and Sumaria says it is a one-stop shop for trusted advice, products, installation and servicing. The charitable company is dedicated to helping Southland people live in warmer, energy-efficient, drier healthier homes.

The company has a new website packed with information about what it does, www.awaruasynergy.co.nz.

Sumaria said talking over the best options for a healthier home was key and a staff of 17 was on hand to provide assessments and recommend energy solutions. Despite the high number of sunshine hours in Southland, solar was not the best option for some. "We don't want to sell people something that is not the best investment."

Awarua's PV solar electricity systems are currently attracting attention, and these can be options for both households and farming businesses, including dairy sheds.

"These are well worth investigating," Sumaria said. She has one installed in her own home and reports lower power bills.

She says the company uses reliable technology and products with a good reputation. The inverters for the solar system are made in Christchurch and the solar panels are from LG.

Keeping abreast with latest developments meant Southland people could take advantage of technology that would help them live more comfortably. Have a look at page XX for further information on Awarua Synergy.

Awarua Synergy

117 Eye Street
 Invercargill
 Tel 03 214 2927 or
 0800 WARM SOUTH
 Fax 03 214 2928

synergy@awarua.org.nz
www.awaruasynergy.co.nz



From the family cook to the entertainer

Ezy Kitchens in Invercargill has been quietly expanding its range and reach over the past 12 months, installing high-end kitchens all over Southland and in Queenstown, Cromwell and Alexandra.

The company, owned by designer Ricky Pont, has been in business for 13 years and has one of the biggest showrooms in New Zealand, with nine kitchens and three laundries on display. The showroom showcases the latest in design, innovation and appliances.

They have a kitchen for everyone, from basic farm cottages to statement homes. A thorough consultation begins each kitchen, with staff measuring and advising on everything from style to appliances (which they also sell). Everything needed for a new kitchen is under one roof.

The quality joinery is manufactured in Christchurch, and installed by the Ezy Kitchens team, which is happy to travel to all corners of the province.

While the company started out selling basic kitchens, Ricky and his team are keen for people to know they also now cater for those seeking luxury in their cooking spaces.

The kitchen is the heart of the home in many farming households, with design features needing to be practical as well. Be it a family focus or entertainers' dream, they can tailor a solution.

If you need inspiration, Ezy Kitchens also has plenty of images in the gallery section of its website, which is packed full of information about what you need to know about buying a new kitchen.

EZY Kitchens

46 Yarrow Street
 Invercargill
 Tel 03 218 1060
 Fax 03 218 1070
cheryl@ezykitchens.co.nz
www.ezykitchens.co.nz



Taking care of your health

Quins Pharmacy in Gore might be a traditional pharmacy, but owner Bernie McKone has made it stand out from the crowd with his work in the area of men's health.

Bernie travels to farming events like the Southern Field Days and speaks once-a-month on air to The Faming Show's Jamie McKay about melanoma, prostate problems, heart health and all manner of things rural men don't make time to see their own doctor about.

He is passionate about men's health and uses humour and an informal approach to get men thinking about it too.

He said farmers were often more willing to roll up their sleeves at a field day and have pharmacy staff photograph a suspicious mole or freckle, than make an appointment with their GP to have it checked. The photographs are sent to skin specialists for diagnosis and Bernie says about one person a week needs a followup referral.

Bernie also has a number of other tools, like DIY bowel cancer kits, that he uses to get men into early screening. He and pharmacy staff also do vaccinations for the flu, whooping cough and meningococcal.

He says rural towns like Gore struggle to attract doctors, but health professionals like pharmacists were meeting the challenge by running educational and practical programmes aimed at common health problems.

His experience and knowledge is accessible to anyone in New Zealand via the pharmacy's website, which sells products with Bernie's tick of approval online and also features radio discussions about a range of health issues from snoring to blood pressure and arthritis.

Quins Gore Pharmacy

104 Main Street
 Gore
 Tel 03 208 7359
 Fax 03 208 1668
bernie@quinspharmacy.co.nz
www.quinspharmacy.co.nz



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EXPERIENCE - More than 35 local staff with comprehensive experience in all facets of electrical work. ElectraServe provide their staff regular industry training meaning they are at the top of their game and often leaders in their field. They are very proactive in training the next generation of electricians, so their staff have the benefits of fresh ideas and modern training mixed with practical experience and maturity.

VALUE - ElectraServe believe they employ some of the best electricians in Mid Canterbury, coupled with only selling the highest quality parts giving their customers a professional quality installation that will result in better output, less maintenance, less downtime giving customers the best value.

Harmonic filter installations

Due to significant issues caused by network harmonics, EA Networks now require harmonic filters to be fitted to all variable speed drives (VSD's) on irrigation systems that have more than 20 kw of pumps controlled by VSD's. This new upgrade is hassle free and simply involves speaking with Blair

or Graeme at ElectraServe to ensure the new compliance is met. In recognition of meeting this compliance, EA Networks is offering a generous subsidy if the upgrade is carried out within a given time frame. Please phone 308 9008 and talk with Blair or Graeme.



Graeme Church



Blair Watson

Blair Watson, General Manager personally guarantees ElectraServe's tradesmen's workmanship. If you are not 100% satisfied with the quality of the work, ElectraServe will put it right . . . every time, or your money back.



ElectraServe

EcoSmartElectricians



Duck shooting—the rural religion

Every year rural New Zealand pays homage to a religion with its own set of rituals and quirks—duck plucking parties, face painting, and stealthy expeditions through the pre-dawn murk.

BY RICHARD RENNIE

It's also known as duck shooting, and an event that precipitates the cancellation of another provincial religion (rugby) in honour of its opening morning.

Its most ardent followers, who are usually but not necessarily only males, who often display uncharacteristically organised, domesticated behaviour in the weeks leading up to opening weekend. This is in part to obtain sufficient credit from their partner to justify disappearing for a couple of days to paint their face, tell stories with their mates, and pay armoured attention to their feathered targets.

Every region has its own quirks and routines over the opening weekend.

It was not until Warren Williams moved down to Southland that he realised duck shooting was a religion elevated beyond simply being popular in the Waikato where he came from. He knew when he saw major regional games cancelled in Southland for opening weekend how seriously southerners took their ducks.

Now living in Queenstown, he can claim to be an avid southerner and duck shooter, and like many enjoys the opening weekend with its assortment of routines and rituals.

"I think possibly here, down south, duck shooting is very much passed from generation to generation, with the big sheep farms that founded the region always including it in their year."

He and some mates usually head out Tuatapere on the Friday, keeping light and noise low, catch up with each other and then get an early shoot in on the Saturday until mid-morning. A massive "de-plucking" session usually occupies part of Sunday, including other shooters from around the area.

"Our wives and partners will usually shrug their shoulders at why we do it, but opening weekend is really about more than just the ducks."



ABOVE TOP: A maimai in wait

ABOVE: Ducks succumbed to fate

LEFT: Avid shooters in action



For Dean "Deano" Officer, co-owner and manager of Ashburton Hunting and Fishing, the duck shooting season brings the usual shift in codes from hunting four legged animals to winged ones.

He sees this year as one of the better years for duck numbers, with a relatively mild season meaning multiple hatchings. Paradise ducks in particular have been prevalent and numbers getting into ripening crops high.

Deano is seeing a greater number of maimais around the region, some of variable and temporary quality perched around the ever increasing number of irrigation ponds within Canterbury. His advice to farmers wanting to improve their duck numbers around the ponds is to invest in some quality plantings.

"Often people will just plant cheap species like Toitois but they often only increase the numbers of mustelids and rats that will get into duck nests—better to spend a bit more and get some quality native plants that encourage ducks to nest there."



High country remains a hunting mecca

Despite the global financial crisis six years ago, overseas hunters' appetites for New Zealand high country game remains strong, and it is benefitting local Canterbury communities.

BY RICHARD RENNIE

Methven based hunting guide and Ruralco Cardholder Stuart Marr and close friend Ben Smith have run New Zealand Safaris for six years, with Stuart recently selling his share to Ben as demands of family, farming and aircraft engineering also have to be managed.

Stuart remains contract guiding for Ben and sees the opportunity for guided hunting remaining highly positive.

This is thanks to the region's well stocked wildlife population and the wide open spaces that make

Canterbury high country so appealing to US hunters, who liken the area to the United States 50 years ago.

Typically, Stuart's clients will come seeking a week long guided hunt to shoot a red deer and thar. But for many, the experience of being in the high country itself almost eclipses the need to claim their trophy heads at the end of the week, although it is very rare to come away empty handed. With more high country in DoC control, Stuart is often fielding calls from run holders keen to allow hunters on their private land, in return for a fee.

"It provides them with a good alternative source of income, and having hunters on private land helps take the pressure off the DoC land, leaving it open for recreational hunters."

For Stuart, the challenge lies in taking a client who may not always be in top shape into some challenging, varied country and seeing them achieve what they have come thousands of kilometres to do.

"It is probably almost more rewarding these days than getting it yourself, and quite satisfying seeing

how happy they are when they achieve what they came for."

Further south, recreational hunter and Ruralco Cardholder Warren Williams of Queenstown welcomes the proximity to Fiordland, one of the most challenging areas in the country to hunt, but one that brings access to a variety of game ranging from wild pigs to Wapiti, red deer and Chamois.

The annual Wapiti ballot is something always eagerly awaited by the hunting community across the country, and one he picked up with six mates two years ago. Warren sees Stewart Island as another hunting venue increasing in popularity, despite the tough, viney nature of the bush, there is the opportunity to hunt the elusive and quick white tail deer.

"I doubt there is anywhere in the world you can be so close to towns and cities, yet have such a challenging and varied hunting area, we are very fortunate."



MAIN IMAGE: Hunters spotting their prey
 ABOVE TOP: Hunters with their prize shot
 ABOVE MIDDLE: Stuart Marr (left) with a hunter and his trophy shot
 ABOVE: Hunters on lookout



Canterbury lures with fishing variety

Canterbury provides a vast choice for possible fishing spots to anyone keen enough to venture either to little known high country lakes, or across the low lands to rivers both large and small.

BY RICHARD RENNIE

For Brian Shimmin, co-owner of Ruralco Supplier Style Footwear in Ashburton, a lifetime's passion for fishing makes the region a nirvana for fishing options, all set in some of the country's most stunning scenery.

Brian's patch stretches nearly as far as Canterbury itself, and he is as comfortable fishing for salmon out of the southern hydro canals as he is for brown trout in small high country lakes.

Trout is his preferred catch, and ironically he has caught one of his biggest, a 15.5 pound brown in the Ohau B canal near Lake Ruataniwha, a spot usually the preserve of salmon.

The spots he names as favourites include the small Orari River that meets the sea near Clandeboye, and the Maori Lakes off the Hakatere Heron Road past the Ashburton River's south branch.

The lakes offer challenging fly fishing conditions with little more than a metre of water over weed beds, and plenty of swampy, difficult ground around the edges.

"We are quite fortunate really to have the access we do to lakes like those. You can head up there early when the nymphs are hatching early in the morning and before the wind gets up, and then be back to head to work."

He prefers sight fly casting, looking for the tell-tale ripples indicating trout feeding just below the water's surface.

While usually preferring his own company when casting, Brian has recently joined the "Grey Ghosts" Fishing Club in Ashburton. Regular club trips have included a recent venture down into Naseby, fishing into irrigation system ponds for brown trout.

Even Lake Hood just out of Tinwald offers promising fishing only 15 minutes out of town, and he recently caught a 6.5 pound trout. The options are far from exhausted for Brian, and he looks forward to head north to Lake Lillian, and beyond Lake Tennyson in the future.

"From Ashburton there are ten to a dozen lakes you can fish easily and will have anglers there, and probably another dozen hardly ever fished."

Deano Officer, co-owner of Ruralco Supplier Ashburton Hunting and Fishing New Zealand has enjoyed a varied influx of fishing enthusiasts through the store since it opened in 2009. Ashburton's central location to a wealth of interesting and varied rivers or lakes has made the 500 square metre store a "must stop" on the way to any of those locations north or south.



MAIN IMAGE: Fishing in the rural landscape at Lake Ruataniwha

ABOVE: Brian Shimmin's catch

"We've got two of the country's finest salmon fisheries nearby, and we are also finding fly fishing is having a surge in popularity recently," he says.

Foreign rivers and Hamilton Jets inject travel thrill

If a gentle amble around Alaska on a cruise boat or a dusty trip on the back of a truck through Africa all seems a bit sedentary, Duncan Storrier has the remedy for anyone needing a bit more adrenaline punch in their sightseeing.

BY RICHARD RENNIE

The Midlands Seeds director and Ruralco Supplier along with Ruralco Cardholder Warren Donald has played a key part in arranging and taking jet boating expeditions to some of the planets' most remote, exciting rivers and waterways, all powered by Kiwi technology.

Back in 2004 when work took him to South Africa and it was suggested he return at some stage to jet boat up the Zambezi. It was a challenge the veteran jet boating racer whose titles includes World Jet Boat River Racing Champion, could not ignore.

"We put the word out and in pretty short time 20 guys had put in \$1,000, enabling us to get started and ship six Hamilton Jet boats over, and there started our first trip."

It has been that original group of 20 clients who have formed the core for World Jet Boat Expeditions many trips after that – a diverse bunch that includes businessmen, a couple of Aussies and Ruralco Cardholders who are either dairy, drystock or cropping farmers, including a couple from the North Island.

Other far off locations quickly followed on the back of the Zambezi trip, including Nepal two years later, traversing the same Himalayan river systems covered by Sir Edmund Hilary, 50 years earlier, also using Hamilton Jets. Other trips since have included Mongolia, Patagonia in South America, and most recently Alaska right up to the Arctic Circle.

Duncan says the challenges within every trip differ significantly between the logistics of getting boats over, in the water and back again, to the technical difficulties of different rivers.

"The Himalayan Rivers like the Sun Kosi have some 'point of no return' rapids on it, while some of the rivers in Mongolia presented their own challenges—thanks to in-efficient sewerage systems of the towns along their banks."

For New Zealanders coming from a relatively

squeaky clean bureaucratic environment it can be a shock to encounter open corruption and bribery. But Duncan says while there have been a few hairy moments on land and on water they have never lost a boat, and their original clients keep returning for the new itineraries.

"Some trips are more jet boater trips, others like Africa are more around the cultural and wild life encounters you have along the way."

Many of the members of the expedition group are keen jet boaters themselves, and the group has refined the boat type based on the Hamilton 141 Hull and the robust Hamilton 212 jet unit.

"We have really developed what you could call an expedition version, modifying it over time so they have extra-large (200 litre) fuel tanks, with the ability to carry another 200 litres of fuel in cans – if we are setting off with five hefty farmers on board as well, we can be carrying over a tonne at the start of the day."

Duncan and his colleagues have far from exhausted their global river options, and the next trip is up the River Kwai through northern Thailand to Laos and possibly the Mekong River.

"It's been good to mix up our locations, going from Alaska to Asia, and there are plenty of other

places including Japan and India that offer some options in the future.

"It sounds daunting and there are challenges but boiled down it's a case of getting your boats in containers, getting some vehicles and trailers when you are there, and getting on with it."

BELOW: One of the Hamilton jets

MAIN IMAGE: The expedition group taking a break in their surroundings



Clothing for the New Zealand lifestyle

New Zealand is a country of wide open spaces and a casual lifestyle—in general we are not big city people.

PROVIDED BY WILD SOUTH

Don Symon, founder of Wild South Clothing, says that this is the motivation behind the Wild South brand. It is clothing for men and women created by New Zealanders specifically for the way we live. "New Zealanders spend a lot of time outdoors—for our livelihood and for recreation, and we like clothes that reflect our casual nature—clothes that can take us easily from a walk along the beach or around the park, to a café to meet a friend."

"They still get the occasional phone call asking for a pair of original "Hard Country Wear" work shorts which are only just (after 15 or so years) starting to wear out!"

Wild South is a family owned company that started in the early 1990's as a supplier of work wear to farmers. Since then it has changed its focus to casual wear and the company now has 16 stores around



New Zealand supplying men's and women's clothing. The factory and head office are based in Christchurch and a good percentage of the range is still made locally. They still get the occasional phone call asking for a pair of original "Hard Country Wear" work shorts which are only just (after 15 or so years) starting to wear out!

The clothes are designed to fit a New Zealand lifestyle—in both senses of the word. The men's shirts, for example, are a slightly more roomy fit and go up to size 3XL. "We like clothes that don't just make us look good but are comfortable to wear as well" says Don, who at 6'8" is still just a bit taller than his two sons.

"Through Wild South's longstanding relationship with ATS, they are now stocking a select range of men's and women's clothes at all three ATS stores."

The Wild South clothing brand also differentiates itself from the overseas owned chain stores in that, although there are ranges that come in for each season, there is always a merino jacket in store, for when the weather turns nasty at Christmas time—because we know how unreliable a New Zealand summer is.

Wild South Clothing's latest venture is back into ATS. The relationship is not a new one—back in the day when printed skivvies



and garment dyed rugby shirts were all the rage the Wild South versions were a popular choice in the ATS stores. Through Wild South's longstanding relationship with ATS, they are now stocking a select range of men's and women's clothes at all three ATS stores.

"We like clothes that don't just make us look good but are comfortable to wear as well."

All the essentials are covered—for men: long and short sleeved shirts in high quality 100% cotton, polo's, and jackets in merino, polar fleece or technical performance fabrics. For women—some of the best sellers from the Wild South stores including the Café sweater (as pictured), a black merino cardigan and a stylish polar fleece jacket.

Wild South clothing can be bought in any of the three ATS branches, Ashburton, Methven and Rakaia.



Savings from the sun and wind

Green is good, whether you are a farmer or live in town. Invercargill-based Awarua Synergy is hoping electricity consumers across the board will see the environmental benefits and cash savings in their new solar power systems or wind turbine systems.

BY LINDA CLARKE



The company, born out of the Bluff Healthy Homes project, has a wider aim of making homes all around Southland warmer and drier, and more energy efficient. A team of 17 consultants visit people in their homes and recommends heating options, from insulation to heat pumps.

Manager Sumaria Beaton said our solar PV and wind turbine systems currently attracting attention could be used on both farms and in household settings, including in dairy sheds. She has a solar PV system in her own home and said Southland's summer sun helped the system lower her power bills over the past 12 months.

The solar panels convert sunlight into electricity. Wire conducts the electricity to an inverter that converts the DC power coming in from the panels to AC power that can be used by household appliances.

The system is tied to the national grid and is not stored. Excess power generated from the solar panels is fed back to the power company, effectively running the power meter backwards. At night power comes from the grid, and the net amount used is what is charged. Depending on the size of the solar system, the amount could be zero.

Ms Beaton said Awarua Synergy prided itself on giving great advice and keeping abreast of developing technology. The solar PV systems were commonly being installed in homes but there are dairy farmers in the region also weighing up installing it in their milking sheds.

She said using reputable and reliable partners was key for the technology to work. The solar panels are manufactured in Korea by international company LG and the inverters by an established Christchurch company.

Solar systems were no longer just for "greenies", she said. "We certainly have enough sunshine in Southland and it's just a matter of telling people how they work."

The solar systems cost between \$9,000–\$15,000 with a payback between six and 10 years. The system installed in her own house had proven its worth, working in credit in the summer, with lower power bills overall.

"The solar PV systems were commonly being installed in homes but there are dairy farmers in the region also weighing up installing it in their milking sheds."

Our wind turbines are made in U.K by a reputable company called Kingspan. Their wind turbines have already surpassed 22 years of successful operation around the globe, with no requirements to shut down in high winds and low servicing requirements.

She said she hoped more farmers would consider the options of technology and the company was keen to see them in use commercially, making the most of Southland's sunshine hours, which average around 1,600 annually, and the Southern winds. Some farms may require a combination of both technologies, or wind maybe best suited in their environment over solar due to the consistent wind generation.

Awarua Synergy works with more farmers

promoting its Terra Lana pipe lagging. Dairy farmers are using this product to line their milking pipes, for protection from hot and cold extremes. The lagging is made from recycled and virgin wool at Terra Lana's large manufacturing plant in Christchurch.

Ms Beaton said the lagging helped control temperatures in pipes transferring milk. "It is also easy to put in on existing pipes, generating savings from heat loss." We also encourage farmers to look at other power saving technologies such as pipe lagging or LED lighting, that don't require such a large investment but can help reduce electricity costs, our expert team are more than happy to run through these possible savings on a farm visit.

The company has a large showroom at its Eye Street headquarters, where people can see working demonstrations of how the hardware and software works.

Their informative website, www.awaruasynergy.co.nz, also contains energy saving tips and advice.



ABOVE: Field Reps Emil Rahiti and Tyrone Cranston at the Southern Field Days

MAIN IMAGE: Michael Skerrett, Solar Customer



Awarua Synergy
117 Eye Street, Invercargill
Tel 03 214 2927 or
0800 WARM SOUTH

Fax 03 214 2928
synergy@awarua.org.nz
www.awaruasynergy.co.nz



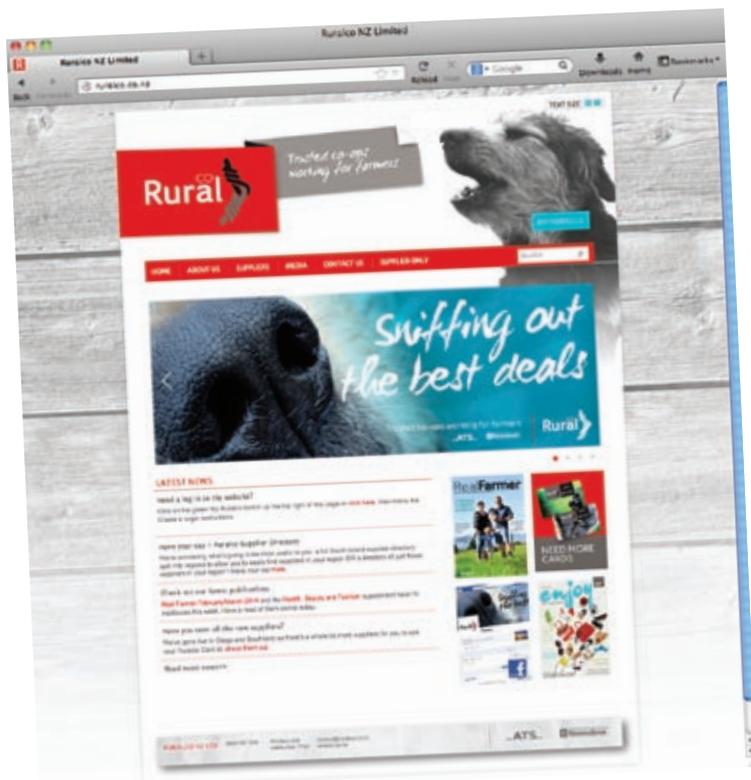
Travelling these Easter holidays?

We have been busy signing up suppliers throughout the South Island, meaning plenty more places for you to use your Ruralco Card and get the best deals and discounts wherever you're going these holidays.

You can also use your Ruralco Card to fuel up at Mobil stations throughout New Zealand and get 9¢* off per litre, so pop it in your wallet now.

To see a list of the newest suppliers to join us, visit www.ruralco.co.nz/suppliers/newsuppliers.

**Current discount as at 1 April 2014. Any change to this discount will be advertised on the Ruralco website.*



Visiting the Ruralco website

Have you visited the Ruralco website yet? Here you can view the most up to date supplier details and discounts, fuel pricing, the latest news, publications and more.

To gain access to parts of the website, including supplier discounts and bulk fuel pricing you must have a log in to the website. See the simple steps below on how to create one in less than five minutes:

1. Visit www.ruralco.co.nz
2. Click on 'My Ruralco' up the top right of the home page (image of button)
3. Click on 'Create a log in' on the left hand side of the page which appears
4. Fill in your details in the form provided
5. Click on 'Create Account'

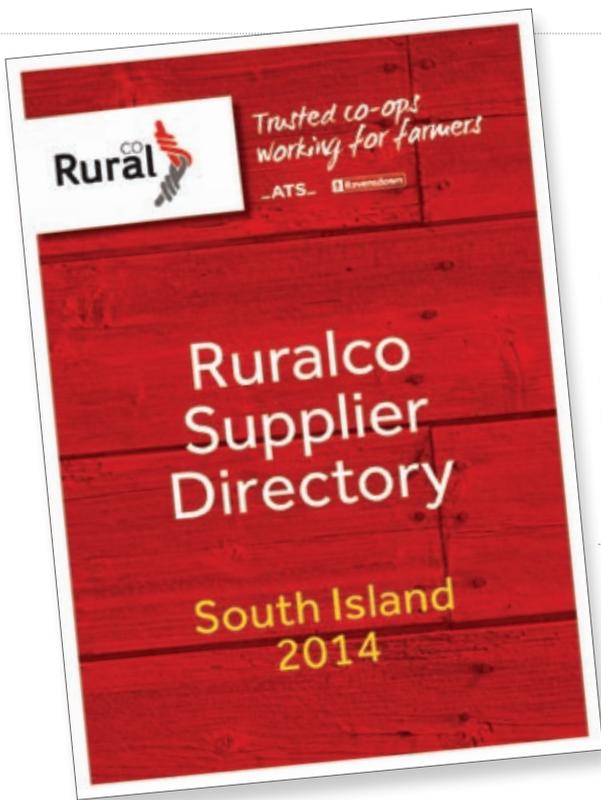
You will receive an email within the next business day from Ruralco confirming your log in has been accepted, and from then on you can start exploring all Ruralco has to offer.

Make us your homepage

If you're visiting our website frequently, why not make us your homepage? The method for doing this varies depending on the browser (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Chrome, etc) and version you are using. So next time you're on the internet, search 'change my homepage' (include browser name) in Google for further instructions.

Feel like you might be missing out?

If you think you may have missed out on special Ruralco promotions due to having opted out of email or text, get in contact with us to let us know you'd like to be added on to our mailing list. Simply call 0800 RURALNZ (787 256), or email ruralco@ruralco.co.nz let us know which list you'd like to be added to, if not both.



Supplier Directories—have your say!

As you may have seen, Ruralco has a publication called the Supplier Directory which is a complete listing of our suppliers and their contact details at the time of print.

We are wondering what is more useful to you:

A full South Island directory, split into regions to allow you to easily find suppliers near you OR a directory just of suppliers in your region?

Have your say at www.ruralco.co.nz/directoryhaveyoursay, call us on 0800 RURALNZ (787 256) or email us at marketing@ruralco.co.nz.

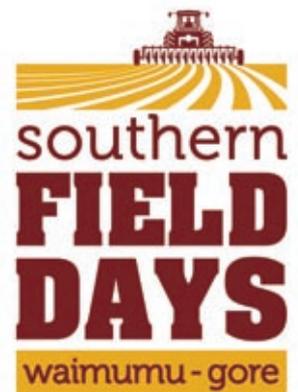
How's your Health and Safety on farm?

Today's farmers and land owners are required to actively manage all aspects of health and safety around the farm. To assist with this process Ruralco plans to provide cardholders with access to a farm safety manual and relevant training. Upon completion of training, members will be able to apply for a discount on their ACC levies.

Training dates are the 22 April and 20 May 2014 at a cost of \$550 (GST and member discount inclusive), with the course being held in Ashburton. Seating is limited, so get in fast. For more information please contact Unique Solutions on 03 423 2273, email cindy@uniquesolutions.co.nz or book online at www.ats.co.nz/farmsafety

Southern Field Days

We had a great time at the Southern Field Days joining Ravensdown on their site, and catching up with plenty of cardholders. It was great to be able to shout those who brought along their card free entry into the field days. To see pictures from event, check out page 39.



Are you storing your fuel safely?

Fuel is key for any farm, but it can also be extremely harmful to both our health and the environment if not stored correctly.

If you're not sure that your storage is up to standard, or would just like some more information, visit www.ruralco.co.nz/fuelstorage and follow the links provided.

Who would you like to see become a Ruralco Supplier?

Would you like to have a say in which businesses become suppliers? As we expand our supplier network, we are looking to sign on the businesses from each community that are most valuable to you and your family. If you know a business in your community which would make a great Ruralco Supplier, visit www.ruralco.co.nz/suppliers/suggestabusiness and let us know about it.

Which business in your region would make a great Ruralco Supplier?

Help us get it right by having your say



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Out and about

Southern Field Days

1. Enjoying a hot drink at the Ravensdown tent / 2. Ferguson Hammond / 3. Lilly McIntyre / 4. Trevor Russell, Lester Chambers, Heather Russell / 5. Lilly McIntyre and Sunny McIntyre / 6. Helen and Tom McPhail / 7. Paetyn Hays

The specialists in bulk fuel delivery



Delivering fuel when and where it's needed is something that we are serious about.

Allied Petroleum was established in 1993 and as part of the HW Richardson group, they are proud to be 100% New Zealand owned and operated. Now, twenty years on from its inception, Allied Petroleum have developed a reputation as a specialist in bulk fuel delivery to rural and commercial businesses. They've also grown from being a regional distributor to a bulk fuel supplier with nationwide delivery capability—so very well positioned to assist Ruralco Cardholders.

The company distribute bulk fuel to commercial businesses in a variety of markets throughout New Zealand including the agricultural, transport, commercial, marine and infrastructure sectors. While their activities differ vastly, Allied Petroleum's customers all have one thing in common: the need for the convenience of bulk fuel stored on site at their business location.

Brett Haldane, Marketing Manager for Allied Petroleum says "we are very mindful of our customer's productivity, and consequently delivering fuel when and where it's needed is something we are serious about."

While some fuel suppliers rely on logistics partners to undertake cartage, Allied Petroleum prefers to manage all aspects of the customer's delivery. Allied Petroleum owns and maintains a large modern fleet of trucks, and importantly, this fleet is then operated by its experienced driver team. This group of employees have great

knowledge about changing customer demand and local conditions; consequently they have a lot of input into scheduling to ensure customer's needs are met.

Allied Petroleum's team of experienced Territory Managers can offer advice in relation to good storage solutions and fuel management systems. Use of modern fuel storage equipment, with filter systems, help customers to maintain good fuel quality and avoid costly engine repair.

Allied Petroleum's Head Office is in Christchurch and regional offices are located in Hastings and Whangarei. They own and operate a growing network of unmanned fuel stops typically in provincial locations—so well positioned for primary industry businesses. Over time Allied Petroleum also became a good supply partner for rural community service stations, because their trucks were often in the same area delivering diesel to farm tanks.

Allied Petroleum also distributes quality lubricants, and is growing its involvement with AdBlue (solution for modern diesel engine exhaust treatment).

Allied Petroleum has been a long term supply partner for ATS and is now thrilled to assist Ruralco Cardholders with their fuel needs.

CONTACT DETAILS:

Tel 0800 383 566

www.alliedpetroleum.co.nz



Delivering fuel is something we're serious about at Allied Petroleum. We specialise in bulk deliveries to rural and commercial businesses, and we're proud to supply provincial service stations and fuel stops the length and breadth of the country.

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