



**Agribusiness in Schools**  
DELIVERING AGRIBUSINESS TO NZ SECONDARY SCHOOLS

# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT







# Agribusiness in Schools Evaluation Key Findings

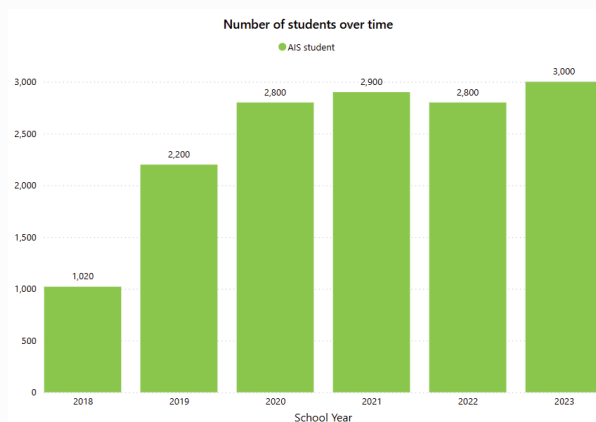


An Agribusiness in Schools Evaluation was undertaken by the Food and Fibre CoVE, in association with Scarlatti.

## Significant growth and stability:

- Over the past five years, the programme has consistently engaged around ~90-110 schools annually.
- Successful adoption of the programme, particularly given its recent introduction.
- Programme's growth is notable considering resource constraints, such as the availability of teachers.
- By 2023, there were more students participating in Agribusiness in Schools (AIS) than in Agricultural and Horticultural Science (AHS) standards.

## Student Engagement.



## Positive impact on related pathways:

### Related Tertiary Study.

- 9% of AIS students' progress into related tertiary study.
- Between 6% and 19% of students pursued tertiary training in agriculture within three years of leaving school.
- AIS students are 3.6 times more likely to be enrolled in related tertiary training than non-AIS students.

### Primary Sector Employment.

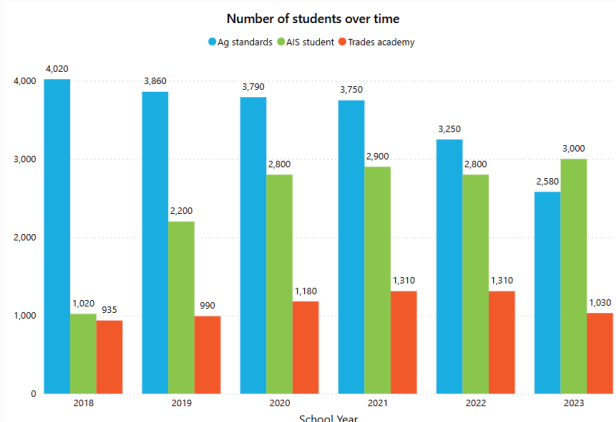
- 22% to 44% entered primary sector employment.
- AIS students are 3 times more likely to be employed in the primary sector than non-AIS students.

These results reaffirm the success of the AIS programme in promoting the primary sector as a career option and providing a pathway for students after leaving school.

### Diversity

Diversity in AIS students is also growing in terms of gender, with female students making up 44% of the AIS cohort in 2023 – the highest level since the programme was made available to secondary schools. This trend reflects the programme's success in engaging a wider demographic and positioning agribusiness as a training or career pathway to appeal to a broader range of students. This trend fosters a more

## Student Engagement Comparisons.



representative future workforce in the primary sector.

### Rural Communities

AIS has effectively extended its reach beyond traditional rural communities, engaging students who previously had minimal exposure to the primary sector. This also demonstrates its success in making agriculture accessible and appealing to a broader audience.

### Schooling Equity Index

On average, 80% of AIS students were from low to medium decile schools between 2018-2020. The schooling equity index reaffirms a reasonable proportion of AIS students, close to 60% in 2023, faced moderate socio-economic barriers to achievement at school.

## Comparison with other secondary-to-tertiary programmes:

Unlike the AIS cohort, both the AHS standards, and Trades Academy cohorts have experienced a decline in the number and proportion of students advancing into related tertiary training and primary sector employment. The AIS programme's positive trends suggest there is a strong case for what it offers and the benefits it can deliver to both student participants and the primary sector.



## Agribusiness in Schools

DELIVERING AGRIBUSINESS TO NZ SECONDARY SCHOOLS



# The Village it Takes.

**The old saying goes, 'It takes a village' and in the case of Agribusiness in Schools, it absolutely does.**

The programme has seen its fair share of trial and tribulation, faced with the hefty task of destigmatising agriculture as a 'non-academic' and often 'last resort' subject. Contrary to such harmful stereotypes, the masterminds behind Agribusiness in Schools strive to ensure a high quality of education.

Agribusiness in Schools focusses on applied science and commerce and encouraging students to take on an innovative and solutions-based approach in their thinking. The tremendous efforts made to create opportunities for future agri-experts has seen great success as can be seen from the Agribusiness in Schools Evaluation report.

Discussion of bridging the agriculture gap in schools was sparked in late 2013, at the Young Farmers Competition where parents and industry expressed a keenness to see more career pathways in agriculture. The programme was then piloted at St Paul's Collegiate in Hamilton with the help of an intimate team of agri-advocates.

Within this team is the Agribusiness in Schools

Curriculum Director, Kerry Allen, who has played a fundamental role in shaping the programme. Kerry hails from a rural upbringing, with broad knowledge and experience in Agricultural and Horticultural Science. Kerry's passion for getting the next generation into the primary sector is evident in her long-term dedication to programme and major contributions to creating opportunities for agri-students. Kerry says:

**"Our ultimate goal is to get as many schools, students and teachers into the programme. Not everyone is going to do it but the least we can do is build an awareness that it's out there."**

While Kerry and her team sit at the heart of Agribusiness in Schools, we also recognise the efforts, faith and guidance given to the programme from our wider support group of business partners.

Agribusiness in Schools found early support from DairyNZ, Beef+LambNZ, LIC, Gallagher, BNZ, Tetra Pak, Meat Industry Association, Campbell Tyson, AGrowQuip, Waitomo Petroleum, AGMARDT and Fieldays.

In the budding days of the programme, the industry guidance was crucial in providing innovative ideas, extensive support, financial contribution and the necessary consultations for what needed to be taught in schools for students to thrive in the primary sector. Kerry says:

**"Without those original business partners, the programme wouldn't be where it is...we are eternally grateful to them."**

Coming into the present day, several of these business partners continue to give the programme ample support and financial contributions. This continues bring awareness to students and educators about what the primary sector has to offer them.

To our supporters past and presently; St Paul's Collegiate School, DairyNZ, Beef+LambNZ, Gallagher, AGMARDT, Rabobank, Meat Industry Association, Fieldays, NZKGI, Fairview, GoHort, MG Charitable Trust, Network for Expertise and Waikato Farmers Trust, Agribusiness in Schools extends a most sincere thank you for your contribution to building and backing our foundation over the last ten years. We look forward to what the programme brings in the future.



*Kerry Allen addressing supporters at the 2024 Agribusiness in Schools Networking Function*



## Agribusiness Conference

### Our Fascinating Future with Food

Agribusiness teachers have been laying the foundation for future agri-experts since the conception of Agribusiness in Schools ten years ago.

To ensure this continued success in teaching the next generation, our fellow educators came together from all over New Zealand to be enlightened, inspired and engaged by some of Aotearoa's best and brightest agri-visionaries. at the 2024 National Agribusiness Conference.

Congregating in chilly Dunedin at John McGlashan College, the conference ran for a course of two days. Honing in on the concept of 'Our Fascinating Future with Food', we heard riveting conversation from Professor Miranda Miroso as she unpacked the possibilities of 'alternative foods' as well as Otago University's Professor Graham Eyres, who discussed the science of sensory perception in relation to how we view our likes and dislikes in taste.

Conference guests found the discourse to be thought provoking and refreshing given the unique approach to how we may consume food sustainably in the future. Conference attendee, Jo, says:

**"It's great to come here and be able to take something new back to my kids. I think they'd find this stuff really interesting."**

Among this myriad of teachers were also a few students on their journey

of agri-related studies, acting as a warming reminder that the interest in pursuing a career in the Primary Industries continues to climb.

Mathematics Student at Otago University, Xiaoyu Wang, attended the conference with hopes of gaining a newfound understanding on creating a sustainable future. With his own projects and ideas for sustainable foods in mind, Xiaoyu found the conference to be enlightening.

**"I like listening to experts on these sorts of things because it helps me use their advice for my own learning and projects. I have a lot of ideas for future foods too. It's cool to be able to see what might work and what needs work."**

While the conference offered ample space for our incredible guest speakers, attendees also enjoyed partaking in various interactive workshops including biltong making, beer brewing as well as a more daring 'Fear Factor-style' edible insect challenge. Keeping in line with the conference theme, watching our peers nibble on futuristic delicacies such as seasoned crickets, ants and live mealworm proved to be a highlight. Though one may

question the bizarre nature of these creepy crawlies, we cannot deny the possibility of such foods becoming our potential diet.

Taking a break from bug bites, we returned to a more familiar and beloved Kiwi cuisine. Meat! Our attendees were joined by local celebrity chef, Greg Piner, who demonstrated his intricate cuts of Silver Fern Farms' finest beef, while explaining the do's and don'ts of raising cattle.

As Day One drew to a successful close, it is evident in our attendees' feedback that the academic discussion paired with practical activities and opportunities to network made for a valuable experience.

As the sun rose over the bitter South Island, Day two of the National Agribusiness Conference commenced with warm beverages and excited chatter about the day ahead. Conference MC, Dr Craig Preston (Director of Agribusiness at John McGlashan College) announced our departure from John McGlashan College to Otago University's Department of Food Science, where Professor Craig Bunt would guide us through a step by step in making hemp balls. Easily many of



*Agri-teachers gathered on the final day of the National Agribusiness Conference.*

the teachers' favourite task of the day, where the cohort of 31 worked together to produce a worthy treat. While some flew through the measurements, mixing and moulding, others tended to move at a more comfortable pace, while paying mind to Professor Bunt's discussion surrounding the criminalisation of cannabis and and tricky stipulations around growing hemp in New Zealand.

It is important for our Agri-teachers to be a part of events such as these, in order to gain new insights, different and shared ways of thinking, and of course, trying new and exciting flavours. While the focal point has been 'Our Fascinating Future with Food', we are able to apply our discoveries surrounding this particular science into our own teaching, learning and thinking.

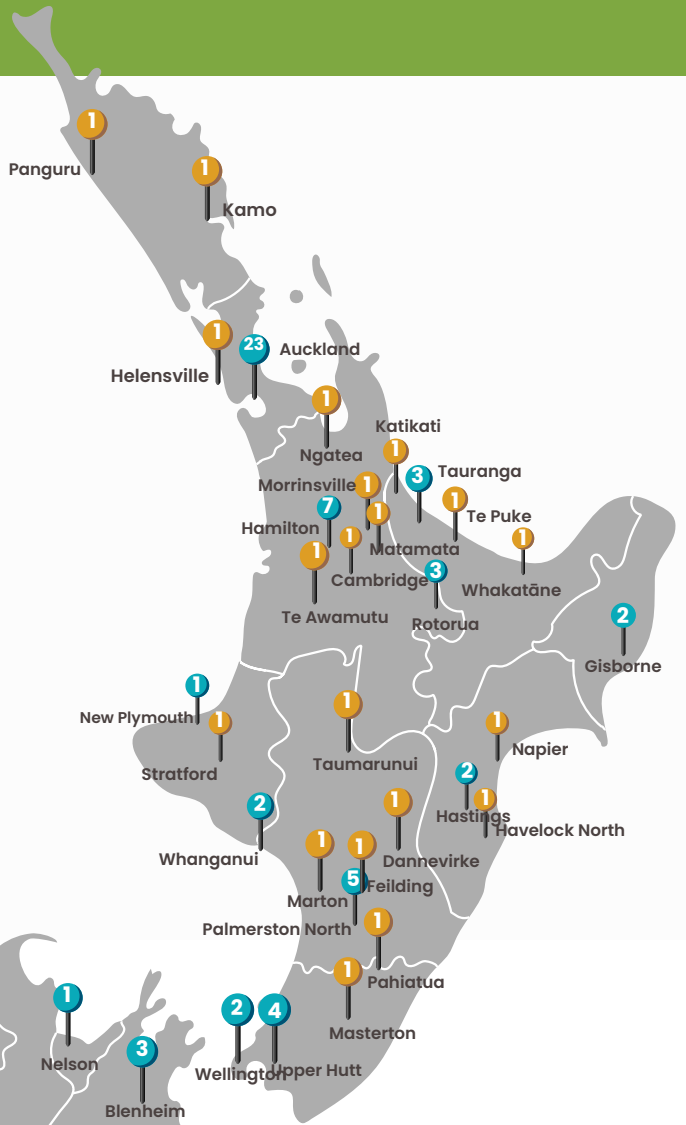
As our attendees parted ways, it was warming to see new bonds formed, newfound knowledge gained and new ways of looking at sustainable 'futuristic' living.



*Chef Greg Piner, demonstrating his cuts of meat to conference attendees.*

**125** 125 schools taught Agribusiness in 2024 - an increase of 14 schools from 2023.

**214** 214 schools have taught at least one Agribusiness Achievement Standard in the last eight years



154 teachers are members of the Agribusiness Teachers Association - an increase of 18 teachers from 2023.

**TEACHERS**  
**154**

19,528 students have studied Agribusiness over the last eight years

**STUDENTS**  
**19,528**



94

LEVEL 2 SCHOOLS

94 schools taught Level 2 Agribusiness achievement standards – 11 more than 2023.

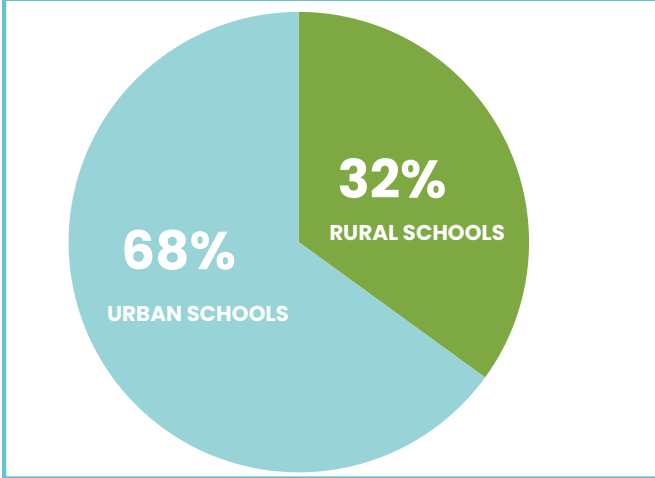


78

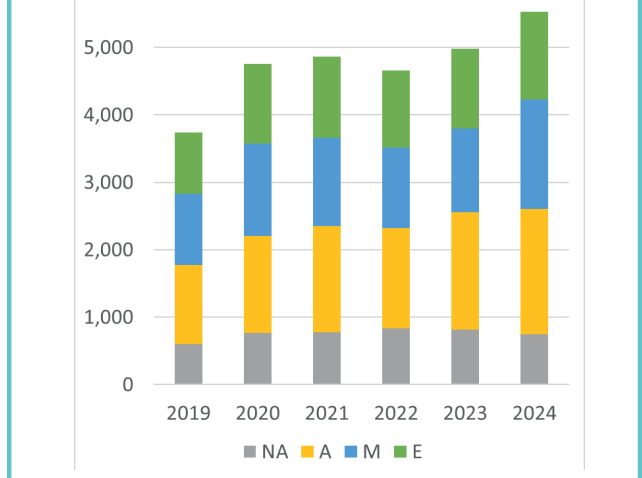
LEVEL 3 SCHOOLS

78 schools taught Level 3 Agribusiness achievement standards – 8 more than 2023.

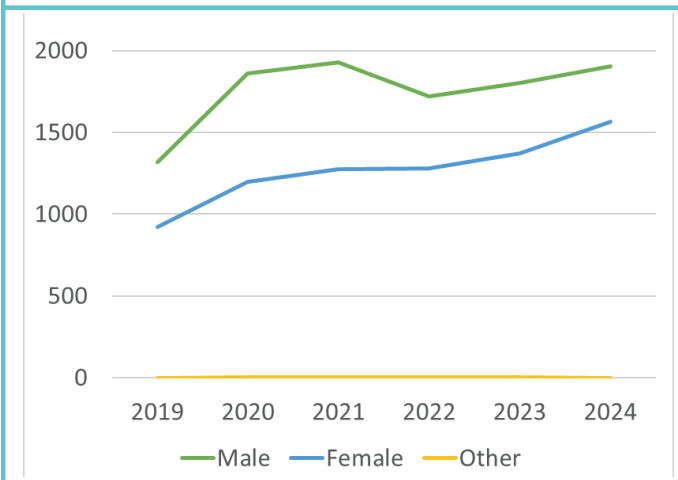
Agribusiness Schools Rural / Urban split



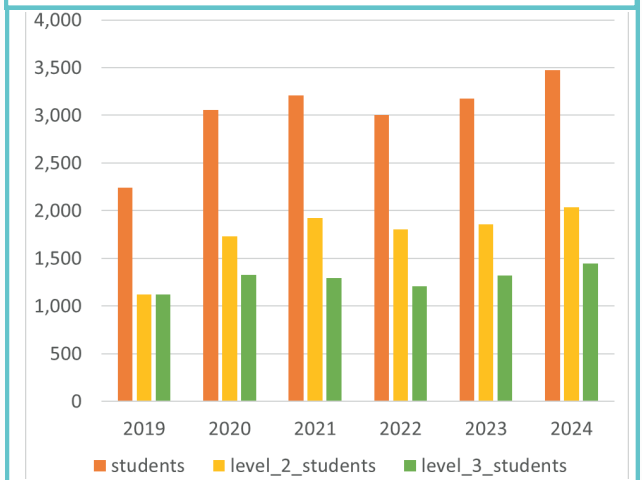
Student Achievement Grades in Agribusiness



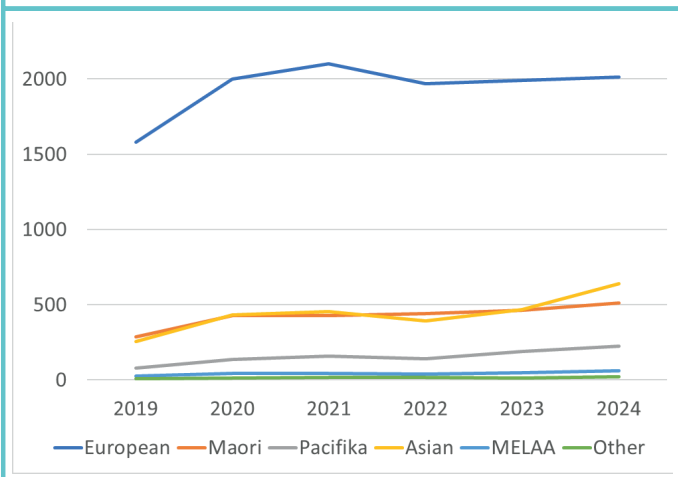
Student Gender in Agribusiness



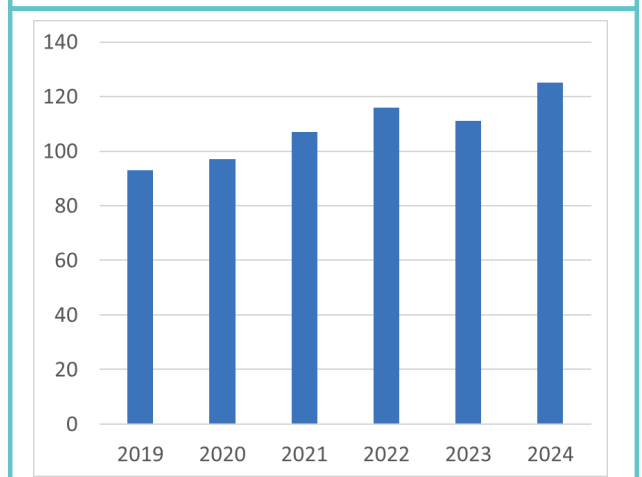
Number of Students Studying Agribusiness



Student Ethnicity in Agribusiness



Number of Schools Teaching Agribusiness





# The Future is Growing

## Fieldays 2024

Day One of New Zealand National Fieldays 2024 started off strong seeing thousands of Kiwis through the gates of Mystery Creek, as well as the usual abundance of exhibitors showcasing the latest primary sector technologies, products and advice. Of course as a programme which creates opportunities for young budding primary sector personnel, Sow the Seed made a very necessary appearance to pass on the most essential thing you can to flourishing industry workers, knowledge!

Situated in the Careers and Education Hub at Site 30, Sow the Seed and Agribusiness in Schools teamed up to give the rundown to Fieldays goes on what the primary sector has to offer them. We were both surprised and thrilled to see what these bright-eyed students had to offer us.

Though unsure of what our exhibition was all about at first, students were keen to chat with the Sow the Seed and Agribusiness in Schools team to find out. A great deal of our visitors come from a rural background and are hoping to follow in the footsteps of their older family members. Others wished to forge their own path in their primary

journey. It was great to meet potential stable hands, aquaculture workers, beekeepers and many more.

One student said: **"I'm homeschooled but the cool thing about it is that I get to help dad with our sheep sometimes... like I'll have a few hours off school and then it's out into the field. It's a good balance for me."**

Another admits not being aware of what the primary sector actually is, only to discover she's been dreaming about a role in the industry since she was 8 years old.

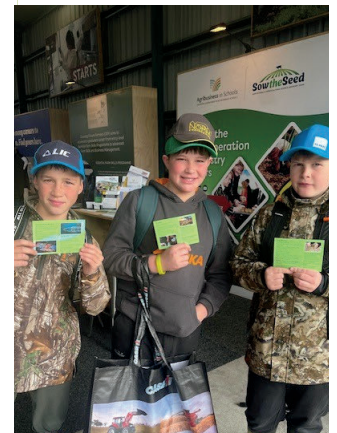


Site 30 visitors get to know what a future in the Primary Industries has to offer them.

**"I LOVE horses. I ride as much as my parents let me and my Grandad owns Baxter and Merv, 2 out in Ngāruawāhia. I really like helping out with them and I'd love to do something like that for a job when I'm older."**

Our trusty careers wheel proved to be a popular attraction with our visitors, encouraging them to have a spin and find out the many pathways they could get into.

Seeing so many of the next generation interested in what the primary sector has to offer is firm reassurance of the future of farming. It appears to be, like the next generation who will lead it - promising!



A potential aquaculture worker, shearer and crop farmer.



Students gather to find out what job they could have in the Primary Industries, with the help of the careers wheel.



## Agribusiness in Schools

DELIVERING AGRIBUSINESS TO NZ SECONDARY SCHOOLS



# Sowing the Seedlings - one child at a time

It's no secret that teachers hold the often daunting responsibility of educating the next generation.

Whatever level of education that may be, whether it's secondary, tertiary or even post-grad, the stage in life we often overlook are those early developmental years where one hasn't quite figured out what they want to do with their lives but have every concern about whether or not mum has packed cookies in their lunchbox for morning tea. This crucial time is called childhood. And while a five year old has not yet decided on what their future holds, significant milestones will be made in their primary years which may contribute to how they view certain career pathways.



Amellia Lindsay

Well-accustomed to the education system and ready to pass on her wisdom to budding young Kiwi 5 year olds, is 21 year old Amellia Lindsay who is studying Education and History, minoring in Agricultural Innovation with aspirations to complete her Masters in Teaching and Learning at Otago University. As well as being a diligent student, Amellia holds down part-time work at Fonterra as a packing operator. Her aspirations make for a great educator and Amellia wants to be just that but with a primary sector focus.

Amellia grew up rurally, taking Agricultural and Horticultural Science in high school. However, she wasn't entirely sure if she would pursue a career in the field, but it has fulfilled her aspiration to become a Primary School Teacher. She says:

**"I had a great teacher when I was younger, he encouraged me to go that extra mile... And I know that not all kids enjoy school so it's important to do things with them that make at least school time enjoyable. I think bringing Agriculture into their routines in small ways might do that for them."**



Conclusively, Amellia simply decided to 'give it a go' and minor in Agricultural Innovation. She talks about how the course re-ignited her passion for Agricultural Science and is always finding new ways to incorporate her learnings into her future career as an educator.

**"Integrating agriculture into primary education looks like teaching them a simplified version of it while they're young. At the end of the day, they're going to do what they want when they're older but who's to say that it might not be a career in Agriculture?"**

Amellia places emphasis on the importance of breaking down stigmas surrounding what qualifies one to pursue an Agricultural or Horticultural career. It's not common for agri-futures to be on display within classrooms, media spaces or communities. It's even less common to see primary sector opportunities marketed to to the same extent that other career pathways are. This is why it's important for those as young as primary



Amellia and her peers participating in a hemp making workshop at the 2024 Agribusiness Conference.

school children to know that it is a vital part of our economy and how teachers can take small steps with them now, to ensure a higher quantity of the next generation want to have a primary sector role. Amellia says:

**"You can do anything you want to do...as long as you have the drive to do it. But if you do have an interest in agriculture, don't limit yourself if you don't come from a rural background. It's for everyone."**

Amellia is one of a small number of emerging teacher trainees and as she continues her studies towards teaching the next generation, we hope to see her and many more keen new teachers inspiring our youngsters into careers in the primary sector as well as the next cohort of industry leaders.

Agribusiness in Schools is working with teacher training organisations around the country, to promote and attract primary sector education, to help fulfill the teacher shortages in Agribusiness and Agricultural and Horticultural Science.



## Agribusiness in Schools

DELIVERING AGRIBUSINESS TO NZ SECONDARY SCHOOLS



# Scholarship student thrives in Agribusiness

Like any prosperous working sector, Agribusiness is sustained not only by dedicated industry workers and extensive advocacy, but by the next generation of industry leaders readying themselves to enter into the primary sector's exciting and multi-faceted workforce.

Among these young leaders is 17-year-old Charlotte Belz. An accomplished all rounder who has entered her third year of boarding at St Paul's Collegiate School. With the support of the Donny Trust Agribusiness Scholarship, she is loving everything about school life.

**"Academically, I've been able to push myself, endorsing NCEA Level 2 with Excellence and earning my Scholars Tie for the second year in a row, which I do not think would have been possible without the constant support from the outstanding teaching staff at St Paul's. I've also been given the chance to step into leadership roles this year as a full school prefect (Head of Mission and Outreach), a Harington Boarding Leader, and a Clark House Leader, all of which have helped me grow as a person and develop so many crucial skills."**

The scholarship assists in funding boarding and tuition costs at St Paul's and is awarded to students with a stellar academic record, great interpersonal skills and a passion for the primary industries.

**"Receiving the Donny Trust Agribusiness Scholarship, and being able to attend St Paul's has meant that I've been able to learn a lot about the agricultural industry and benefit from the school's specialised Agribusiness programme. The scholarship made it possible for my parents to afford for me to attend St Paul's as a boarder and benefit from everything the school has to offer. I know they are thankful for the support, and so am I."**

Charlotte has a passion for animal care and places emphasis on how the Agribusiness programme is helping her to navigate her way towards a primary sector career, specialising in something she is passionate about.

**"At this stage, I plan to attend Massey University to study a Bachelor of Veterinary Science. My three years of Agribusiness studies will be very helpful with my aim of becoming a large animal vet."**



It is important to acknowledge the organisations that provide students like Charlotte with these opportunities as it is this support that ensures the primary sector always has fresh new faces coming to lead the future.

**"None of this would have been possible without the Donny Trust Scholarship. It has meant everything to me, allowing me to attend a school that has supported and challenged me in the best ways. The Agribusiness programme here has been a huge part of that, helping me develop my passion for the agricultural industry and shaping my plans for the future."**

Agribusiness in Schools profoundly thanks the Donny Trust for their immense contribution to remarkable students like Charlotte, as well as their unwavering dedication to agricultural education. It is these opportunities that allow the next generation to thrive in their endeavours towards the primary sector.

Agribusiness in Schools also applauds Charlotte for her progress in the Agribusiness programme and is thankful for the contributions she makes to her education to ensure a bright future for herself and the future of the primary sector, who will be lucky to have her on board.



Charlotte Belz







# Agribusiness in Schools

*DELIVERING AGRIBUSINESS TO NZ SECONDARY SCHOOLS*

