



“Farmers have told me that we need people from the city in the ag sector, because that is what is missing.”

ANGELINA CHADRA



CAREERS IN AGRICULTURE

FONTERRA GRADUATE PROGRAMMES

writer **PETER WHITE**

photo **JOHN DAVIDSON**

ANGELINA CHADRA started on the Fonterra Agribusiness Graduate Programme in February. It is a dream come true for the 21-year-old Auckland, who made it a major goal when she began her Bachelor of Agricultural Science degree at Massey University.

The graduate programme is made up of a series of practical placements over a two-year period. The programme gives an opportunity to gain wider experience across Fonterra.

Angelina's first placement is based in Fonterra's office in Christchurch, working for subsidiary company Farm Source.

"I love the fact that I am not always in the office. I have the opportunity to go out and lead my own farm visits, even though I am quite new. I am pretty busy every single week," says Angelina.

"That's the beauty of the grad programme. You can ask anyone, anything, or if you ask to go out to visit a farm, they will say yes. It is really good."

For the first six months, Angelina is on regional rotation, under the guidance of an On Farm Excellence Technical Partner.

"A lot of my work has been in the sustainable dairy advisor area, doing farm environmental visits, talking about opportunities on farms to increase efficiencies

and reduce emissions. To grow more home-grown feed is a big one at the moment.

"It will all help me figure out, specifically, where in the business I would like to go after the grad programme."

Angelina is enjoying the chance to put her years of study to good use, out in the field and at head office.

"So much of the degree is relevant. Even if you did not do agriculture, you would get those report writing skills at uni, which I am using at the moment. Interaction skills with other people, working in groups, are valuable.

"Obviously, doing ag and working in the rural sector definitely helps in terms of farm systems and the dairy calendar. Agriculture is quite a broad degree that covers so much more than just dairy."

In Year 13 at Auckland's St Cuthbert's College, Angelina took Chemistry, Biology, Physics, History, English and Calculus.

She did scholarship classes in English, History and Biology.

So why did she choose agriculture as a career?

"I wanted something that definitely guaranteed me a job. I looked at Food Science, which they only do at Massey, but you needed Physics for that. I looked around the Massey University website and found agriculture.

"It is what our economy relies on and is the biggest industry in New Zealand. I explained to my parents that people always get sick and always need to eat. I did not want to be a doctor, so I thought I may as well help people eat."

Her advice to city kids looking at the agricultural sector as a career — it is a good place to be as a young person, because in years to come there will be big gaps in the industry to fill, when the rural professionals retire.

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KEY FACTS



- **ANGELINA CHADRA** STARTED ON THE **FONTERRA** AGRIBUSINESS GRADUATE PROGRAMME IN FEBRUARY.
- SHE HAS A **BACHELOR OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE** DEGREE FROM **MASSEY UNIVERSITY**.
- **ANGELINA** TOOK **CHEMISTRY, BIOLOGY, PHYSICS, HISTORY AND CALCULUS** IN YEAR 13 AT **AUCKLAND'S ST CUTHBERT'S COLLEGE**.

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