



# Agribusiness in Schools

DELIVERING AGRIBUSINESS TO NZ SECONDARY SCHOOLS

## Industry Spotlight: Grace Burmeister

### BNZ Agri-Partner helping farmers with change through financial advice and support

The strength of our rural communities is built on the expertise, knowledge and dedication of those in primary industry roles. Within this collective of the proficient and agri-educated is Grace Burmeister who resides in Taranaki as an Agribusiness partner at the Bank of New Zealand.

In addition to having a wealth of knowledge surrounding the wellbeing of farmers and their operations, Grace has built a strong reputation for her commitment to supporting farmers by combining financial literacy with her exceptional people skills.

*“ I work directly with all kinds of agribusiness farmers. Dairy farmers, sheep and beef right through to forestry as the main account manager. The variety of people that we get to rub shoulders with day to day is really unique. We could be having lunch with the Prime Minister one day and the next day be on farm in the milking shed with clients. ”*

Grace’s natural ability to engage with such diverse clientele allows her to understand their unique challenges and tailor her support accordingly. Her commitment goes beyond the business as she truly cares about the wellbeing of farming communities and recognises that they are the backbone of our country’s most vital resource: food.

*“ I think it’s important for people to understand that the primary industries are the part of the economy that never stops and never fails to provide. ”*

The primary industries play a crucial and often underappreciated role, working tirelessly to provide some of our most essential foods without pause. Grace collaborates directly with the individuals who support the primary industries, working both within the sector and alongside its people. She highlights that appreciating the importance of these industries helps us recognise the effort and strength of those who sustain them.

Grace’s role as an agri-partner offers a rewarding blend of hands-on experience and corporate responsibilities. She appreciates this balance and believes it’s what makes a career in agribusiness so fulfilling.

*“ Typically I try to do about 40 to 50% on farm whether that be annually catching up with farmers, doing farm drives, and the other 50% I might be in the office doing admin, organising meetings with accountants, lawyers and real estate agents. As a farm kid myself I enjoy the combination of working outdoors and indoors. ”*



Growing up on a dairy farm, Grace’s passion for agriculture was nurtured from an early age, gaining valuable first-hand experience and a strong connection to her farm-based communities. This foundation was strengthened through her agribusiness studies in secondary school, which provided her with essential industry knowledge.

Grace further advanced her expertise at Massey University, where she studied agri-commerce majoring in farm management. Combining her upbringing with academic excellence, she is well-equipped to understand the operational aspects of farming, allowing her to support farmers effectively and contribute meaningfully to the primary industries.

*“ I always wanted to get into banking. As a kid in primary school, we did an activity around depositing and banking. And I loved that. Even though it’s not my actual role now, I suppose that was kind of where my love for banking started. It’s super unusual knowing what I wanted to do so young. ”*

The primary industries faces economic challenges including fluctuating commodity prices and market uncertainty. Grace helps farmers navigate these pressures by assessing their unique circumstances and tailoring solutions to support their needs.

*“ Low payouts and commodity prices will continue to be a challenge for farms so it is my job to work alongside farms to structure their debt and needs no matter the farming cycle we are in ”*

Grace finds her role as an agri-partner highly fulfilling, as it enables her to support farmers in achieving their financial objectives and key milestones.

Through her work, Grace remains committed to supporting the primary industries by helping farmers improve financial performance to ensure long-term sustainability and success. She encourages those aspiring to a career in ag to be open-minded and confident as they explore new opportunities.

*“ The best thing you can do when you’re starting out is, don’t say no, because it might close a door that might not reopen again. ”*