*writer* **PETER WHITE** // *photo credit* **FONTERRA**

# THE FUTURE OF DAIRYING
## RISING THROUGH THE RANKS OF FONTERRA

**"There is no company in the country that provides the breadth and depth of opportunity that Fonterra does," says ADAM WINTER.**

Adam (26) is a Fonterra co-operative business partner for the North Canterbury region, based out of the Christchurch office.

He has risen quickly up the corporate ladder at Fonterra since he began working as an intern before his final year of a Bachelor of Management Studies (Hons) degree in Economics and Agribusiness at Waikato University.

Adam joined Fonterra through their Agribusiness Graduate Programme, which has since evolved into the Fonterra Future Leaders Graduate Programme. This enhanced two-year programme brings together a range of career pathways, including agribusiness, engineering, finance, technical, data & AI & P&C, creating greater opportunities for collaboration, learning, and leadership development.

Adam completed four six-month placements in 2022 and 2023, gaining both on-farm and off-farm experience.

"I began in the service centre in the performance and insights team in Hamilton, then went to the on-farm excellence operations team. I moved to the Canterbury sustainable dairying team before shifting to Auckland and into the commercial intelligence team.

"I rolled off the programme to be a farmer support advisor for Canterbury, Tasman and Marlborough, helping farmers with their compliance and digital journeys through a Fonterra lens.

"I was able to get out in a farmer-facing rotation, then into our markets' teams and head office – and everything in between – so I got so much breadth of how Fonterra and the industry work in a short time."

Adam says the main learnings he gained from being part of the programme, that have helped him make such a successful start to his career with Fonterra, are all centred around building relationships with people.

"It is all about learning about people, working with people, managing stakeholders and getting different outcomes for different people – that is key especially when you are moving after six months of each placement.

"You have to learn pretty quickly and build your relationships quickly."

He says being adaptable was also a key skill after coming from a school and university background where learning is very structured.

"Once you finish the four placements, the adult corporate world is very different, and you have to be able to learn to organise yourself."

Adam went to Napier Boys' High School. He took Agriculture as one of his subjects from Years 9-12 – which began his interest in the primary industry – then Calculus, Chemistry, Biology, English and Economics in Year 13.

He says the Fonterra Future Leaders Graduate Programme is open to graduates from varied backgrounds.

"It probably is a misconception you need to be a farmer's son or daughter to get on it – I am certainly not. There is no one background of people. The Future Leaders programme is looking for the right people, not the right degrees.

"They are looking to employ future leaders of the company. They look a lot more holistically now."

Adam's advice for school leavers – be inquisitive, take your opportunities, build strong relationships, and be consistent and authentic in how you deal with everyone.

"You get out of it what you put in."



> "THE FUTURE LEADERS PROGRAMME IS LOOKING FOR THE RIGHT PEOPLE, NOT THE RIGHT DEGREES. THEY ARE LOOKING TO EMPLOY FUTURE LEADERS OF THE COMPANY." ADAM WINTER

## KEY FACTS

- BASED OUT OF **FONTERRA'S CHRISTCHURCH OFFICE**, **ADAM WINTER** IS A **CO-OPERATIVE BUSINESS PARTNER FOR THE NORTH CANTERBURY REGION.**
- HE BEGAN WORKING AS AN INTERN AT **FONTERRA** BEFORE HIS **FINAL YEAR** OF A **BACHELOR OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES (HONS)** IN **ECONOMICS AND AGRIBUSINESS** AT **WAIKATO UNIVERSITY**.
- **ADAM** GAINED VALUABLE **ON-FARM AND OFF-FARM EXPERIENCE** VIA THE **FONTERRA FUTURE LEADERS GRADUATE PROGRAMME**.

## ONLINE

*For more information on* **Fonterra's Future Leaders Graduate Programme,** *scan the* **QR code** *or visit* **https://careers.fonterra.com/careers/Future-Leaders-Programme**