

# Industry Spotlight: Brooke Maddison

## Adapting to Opportunity in the Primary Industries.

Brooke Maddison is building a career at the cutting edge of New Zealand's primary industries, combining agronomic knowledge with digital innovation to help growers make more efficient decisions on farm.

Brooke's path into agri-technology has been shaped by a hands-on and ag-rich education as well as a willingness to embrace new challenges.

Interest in agriculture and horticulture began at Ōtūmoetai College in Tauranga, where Brooke studied agricultural science throughout her secondary education. Practical projects, like managing a small garden plot and visiting local growers on field trips, connected classroom learning to industry practices and opened her eyes to the possibilities within the sector.

Such early exposure led Brooke to pursue a Bachelor of Agribusiness at Massey University in Palmerston North. Studying closer to home offered financial and personal flexibility, while providing access to a strong agricultural programme. Even then, the breadth of career options felt overwhelming.



"My theory was trial and error. Figure out what you like, what you don't like, and take opportunities as they arise."

Internships during her studies helped build confidence and industry literacy, eventually leading her to her first full-time role with Zespri. Starting in the innovation team, Brooke supported research projects focussed on production practices and sustainability outcomes.

After several years, Brooke stepped into a sustainability role within Zespri to broaden her skillset. Work in this space centered on greenhouse gas reporting and data analysis. While technically valuable, the experience also helped Brooke recognise the importance of interaction and problem solving in maintaining her motivation.

A move to Christchurch marked the next turning point. Keen to remain connected to the agricultural sector, she explored opportunities across

the South Island before joining CropX Technologies through existing industry connections. The company specialises in agronomic technology solutions, combining hardware, software and data insights to support on-farm decision-making; placing Brooke at the intersection of agronomy and technology.

Her current role in customer support is both varied and fast-paced. Working within a small team means learning on the job and adapting quickly to new challenges, particularly when supporting growers with both hardware and software queries. Despite the complexity, she finds satisfaction in helping customers navigate unfamiliar technology.

“I think the reward comes from helping people. If I can get off a call and know I had the right answers for them, that’s rewarding.”

Adaptability has become a consistent theme throughout Brooke’s career. Industry change and organisational shifts have reinforced the importance of staying open to new experiences. She believes this mindset is essential in a sector shaped by external pressures and rapid innovation.

Looking back, Brooke also sees value in stronger awareness of career pathways during secondary and tertiary education. Many roles within agriculture and horticulture remain largely invisible to students, particularly those growing up outside rural communities.

“Sometimes you don’t even think about certain roles until you’re talking to someone working in the industry.”

Brooke believes that better exposure can help young people understand the full agricultural supply chain and recognise how their own strengths might align. Whether in innovation, sustainability, technology or customer engagement, meaningful opportunities exist well beyond traditional perceptions of farming.

Brooke’s story highlights the importance of practical learning experiences, industry connection and curiosity. Agricultural and horticultural education continues to play a critical role in supporting New Zealand’s future workforce, helping students discover diverse career pathways that contribute to the resilience and success of our primary industries.

