

# **Taking an Integrated Approach to Farm Planning:**

## **Module 1: Completing a basic farm plan**

# Completing a basic farm plan

The Foundation for Arable Research provides some resources for **Farm Environment Plans** for arable farmers. **ProductionWise**<sup>®</sup>, an integrated online farm management system, is also freely available to FAR levy payers. Having a farm plan is important. It brings together core information about your business in one place. This basic farm plan template is the first step in your farm planning process.

You will already know a lot of the information, but it is important to have it written down. It could:

- simplify audits
- help you meet regulatory and market requirements
- and be easily accessible for others to refer to, if needed.

The basic farm plan provides a template where you can pull together information about your farm, including your vision, catchment challenges and values.

## Step 1: Know your farm, obligations, and goals

This is your story. It's the place to pull together the core information about your farm business and the key features of your farm system. When regulated freshwater farm plans become operational in your region, you will be able to reuse some of this.



Years covered by this plan:

Farm name:

Owner/s:

Leaseholder:

Manager:

Phone for main farm contact:

Email:

Mailing address:

Location of property:

Which iwi and hapū / rūnanga has rohe over the land your farm is on?

Regional or unitary council:

Catchment(s):

Total Lease Area (ha):

Total Farm Area (ha):

NZBN:

Effective Farm Area (ha):

Existing consents and expiry dates/ audit grades/ existing certification:

Land titles (if known):

Water management zone (and sub zone):

Ground water management zone:

Farm system type(s)/ Livestock classes:

Livestock numbers (if applicable):

*For example: 300 MA cows, 70 R2s, 70 R1s, 10 R1 bulls, 10 MA*

Birth dates (i.e calving, lambing - if applicable):

*For example: Planned start of calving (PSC) 20 July*

Production total:

*For example: milk solids, head of livestock sold/slaughtered*

Crop area and yield (including fresh vegetable, fruit, grapes):

Planting and harvesting dates:

Supplement bought-in:

Supplement made on-farm:

Once you're recorded core information about your farm business, you can set out the vision for your farm.

**What are your:**

- values?
- goals?
- vision?

Have a look at your catchment's challenges, values and context and think about what role your farm could play regarding these. What are the priority contaminants in your catchment, or the sites and species of cultural and community significance located in your catchment?

**For example:**

**Vision:** 'A profitable, environmentally friendly business that produces top quality meat for our community and has a future economically, environmentally, socially and culturally.'

**Values and goals:**

- High standards around animal welfare
- Biodiversity enhanced and protected
- Land Management Units managed according to their potential within recognised risks such as soil type, degree of slope, proximity to waterways
- Have a happy family who enjoy rural work and living
- Be profitable
- Be open minded to new ideas and technology
- Be part of our community in sharing of ideas and practices.

Vision:

Values and goals:

Catchment context, challenges and values:

Knowing your farm and writing down this knowledge can help identify any gaps and risks that might be present and can form a base for the rest of your farm plan.

1. Are you part of any locally, regionally, nationally significant social and/or cultural landscape?
2. List your farm resources according to land management units<sup>1</sup> and/or named paddocks – what are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, risks for each unit?
3. What are the uses for the land management units and how are they managed?
4. What soils are in each unit?
5. What infrastructure do you have and how is it maintained?
6. What are your fertiliser nutrient budgets?
7. Have you begun assessing your freshwater ecosystem health and wellbeing to prepare for developing a freshwater farm plan?
8. Have you developed an intensive winter grazing plan, if needed?
9. Where are your freshwater resources, flow paths during wet weather?
10. What soil types do you have on your farm? Where are the erosion prone areas?

Photos can also be a great way to show information about your farm and to highlight any of the work you are already doing. Some of this information may also be easier to record on maps, making it easier to identify potential actions.

Have a think through these questions and answer them here:

<sup>1</sup> A land management unit (LMU) is defined as: "A homogeneous block of land that responds in a similar way under similar management." [Fertiliser.org.nz](http://Fertiliser.org.nz)

## Farm Mapping

A map is an easy way to identify your farm features and helps create a clear picture of where your different resources and potential risk areas can be found. Some of the key features you should include in your maps are:

- Property boundaries (including any leased land)
- Waterways and any fencing and planted riparian areas
- Identified areas of cultural or community significance
- Significant natural areas
- Critical Source Areas
- Potential areas of intensive winter grazing (IWG)
- Soil erosion control planting or works
- Effluent, irrigated and frost protection systems and application areas
- Drainage systems and areas
- Water-take bores and surface water abstraction points
- Waterbody crossings
- Stock-holding areas and other livestock related infrastructure
- Other infrastructure such as silage pits or fertiliser bins and airstrips
- Farm accessways.

Consider being consistent with your use of colour for identifying features (e.g. dark green for permanent/ non-grazed vegetation, yellow for physical infrastructure, blue for waterways).

These maps can be used for some of the other Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) farm planning module templates and can help you identify and manage risks regarding specific areas of your farm's activities.



## Notes

**Notes**