

Taking an Integrated Approach to Farm Planning:

Module 2: People

People

The wellbeing of you, your family, and your staff is important. Your people are your best resource, so it makes sense to value and invest in the farm team.

Employment and Wellbeing

Are you familiar with the key principles of the Good Farm Plan for Employment and Wellbeing?

1. All employment obligations are met
2. Staff are fairly remunerated for the work they do
3. Staff actively participate in the farm business
4. Staff have up-skilling development opportunities
5. The wellbeing of staff and their whānau is actively considered.

Health and Safety

1. Farm risks are identified and managed
2. Staff and visitors feel confident and safe.

These principles are discussed in more detail in the *Good Farm Plan* [here](#).

This plan can be used in conjunction with other Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) modules to form a whole-of-farm plan, or you can use it to supplement your already existing farm plan (such as one you might have as part of your industry assurance programme).



Mental health and wellbeing

Mental health and wellbeing are important for you and your staff. It's good to think about the different opportunities you have to check-in with everybody – including yourself and your own family.

There are support networks that you and your staff should also be aware of, such as Rural Support Trusts, support networks for international staff and access to medical health facilities.

- **Rural Support** – contact your local Rural Support Trust for help or advice on 0800 787 254
- **Farmstrong**
- **DairyNZ Farmer Wellbeing**
- **Mental Health Foundation** including links to your local **Mental Health Crisis Team** – or call 0800 611 116
- Take a test at depression.org.nz to see how you're feeling.
- **The East Coast Rural Support Trust** created an informative guide called 'Feeling Down on the Farm' for approaching rural mental health.
- You can also call:
 - Lifeline – 0800 543 354 or free text 4357 (HELP)
 - Youthline – 0800 376 633 or free text 234
 - Samaritans – 0800 726 666

Step 1: Know your farm, obligations, and goals

What is the vision for the farm. What are the key parts of this vision, and the values and goals regarding people and wellbeing that you want to set to achieve this?

Values and goals:

1. What are the goals that your staff have, and how do you enable them to achieve these goals?
2. What are your employment obligations? Have you documented the recruitment process, have written employment agreements in place and enable all hours worked and holiday pay to be recorded?
3. Do your staff know their role on farm and what is expected of them?
4. What personal development opportunities are there for your team?
5. Do you have a Health and Safety plan in place that is easily accessible for staff, and does that include clear policies and procedures for managing the safety of people on-farm?
6. Do you regularly check the mental wellbeing of your team, yourself and family?
7. What Personal Protective Equipment do you provide and how do you ensure your staff use it?

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.

Have a think through those questions and record what happens in your business here:

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.

Staff members (name and position)	Responsibilities

Steps 2 & 3: Assess and Develop

Based on your vision, the values and goals you have identified, and the information you have just recorded, what are the risks and opportunities for employment and wellbeing for your farm?

This risk assessment matrix helps set out how to highlight areas of your risks:

	Impact				
	Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Significant	Severe
Very likely	Low-medium	Medium	Medium-high	High	High
Likely	Low	Low-medium	Medium	Medium-high	High
Possible	Low	Low-medium	Medium	Medium-high	Medium-high
Unlikely	Low	Low-medium	Low-medium	Medium	Medium-high
Very unlikely	Low	Low	Low-medium	Medium	Medium

Once you have identified the risk, identify any existing actions already in place to manage this risk and whether they are still appropriate. Do these existing measures do enough to mitigate the risk? If needed, identify new actions to supplement or replace the existing actions. It is also important to record who is responsible for managing these actions and the date these need to be reviewed or completed by.

This action plan will help manage your risks and maximise opportunities. Use any maps you might have (including any maps you may have pulled together in your basic farm plan) to record where you are implementing any actions. Take photos of the current state to use as a reference point and to highlight any improvement.

Note that you are likely to have more risks than this table provides space for. There is an additional actions table that you can use to make sure all your risks and actions are identified.

For example:

Risk identified	Rating	Existing actions	New actions (if needed)	Due date	Responsible person	Evidence
Staff housing needs to be kept to a good standard—currently not meeting healthy home requirements.	Medium/ high	<p>Checking UV filters on drinking water annually.</p> <p>Checking and testing smoke detectors monthly.</p>	Install heat pump in lounge.	<p>January of every year.</p> <p>1st Monday of every month.</p> <p>May 2023.</p>	<p>xxx</p> <p>xxx</p> <p>xxx</p>	<p>Inspection</p> <p>Inspection</p>
All Personal Protective Equipment needs to be kept in working order.	High	Check all Personal Protective Equipment is in good condition and is accessible for all staff.		1st Monday of every month.	<p>xxx</p> <p>xxx</p> <p>xxx</p>	Site inspection
New employees arrive on farm who are unfamiliar with Health and Safety processes.	High	<p>Health and Safety clause is included within contract.</p> <p>Induction in first week, which includes showing new employees around farm and telling them about health and safety procedures.</p>	Implement an employee participation scheme to improve health and safety.	<p>Prior to new employee starting work.</p> <p>First week of employee starting work.</p> <p>February 2023.</p>	<p>xxx</p> <p>xxx</p> <p>xxx</p>	<p>Contract filed.</p> <p>Completed induction paperwork.</p> <p>Regular health & safety meetings, elect employees as health & safety representatives.</p>

Risk identified	Rating	Existing actions	New actions (if needed)	Due date	Responsible person	Evidence

Step 4: Monitor

The use of performance measures to track and record progress helps with deciding actions and reporting progress. Record what worked well, what went wrong and why? Take photos to keep record and monitor progress.

Action	Notes
What did you achieve that you were proud of?	
Have all the staff taken their annual leave?	
Did you/your staff get off farm for workshops, catchment meetings, etc	

Step 5: Review

It is important to review and update your farm plan regularly – this is a living document. Reviews are a ‘snapshot’ of your operational issues and should be used to improve implementation. This is a good opportunity to involve farm staff to help identify challenges and find new solutions. What, if anything, would you change and why?

Question	Notes
Are we doing the right thing?	
Are there better ways to achieve the same results?	
Were there enough time, money, and people to get the job done?	

Notes

Useful links/information

Employment and Wellbeing

Employment New Zealand has several useful tools on their website, including an **employment agreement builder**. They also have guidance including an employer self-assessment checklist, developing workplace policies, and assuring ethical and sustainable work practices.

You can check a potential employee's eligibility to work for you through Immigration New Zealand's **VisaView** tool. To access VisaView, you need a **RealMe** account. If you have created a RealMe account for another purpose, you can use that for VisaView.

For New Zealand and Australian citizens, a birth certificate or valid New Zealand or Australian passport can be provided as evidence.

Federated Farmers provide employment and legal guides for a variety of employment related scenarios.

You may also wish to make your employees aware of the **Rural Employee Support Hub** which has advice and support for New Zealand rural employees.

DairyNZ has resources for '**being a good boss**', which are applicable across all rural employers. Their resources highlight how being a good boss can help retain good staff.

Beef + Lamb New Zealand has an online **Employment Hub**, which is a one-stop shop for farm owners and managers to assist them as employers.

Horticulture NZ also has resources for employers including specific guidance for developing seasonal employment agreements and **seasonal worker accommodation**. They also have resources on **RSE & labour updates**.

Health and Safety

Worksafe has a wealth of knowledge relating to support health and safety at work, including industry specific guidance for **agriculture, horticulture, worker accommodation, and wine**. Their '**keep safe, keep farming**' toolkit is particularly useful.

Worksafe also has specific policies for things such as **safe use of tractors**, and **crush protection devices on quad bikes**.

Employment New Zealand has advice relating to health and safety duties for employers.

DairyNZ provides information and resources for creating a health and safety policy, including health and safety templates and checklists.

Beef + Lamb New Zealand provides health and safety guidance on their website, including a **farm safety management plan**.

Horticulture NZ has health and safety resources specifically for horticulture businesses.

Farmlands provides free SafeFarm safety software to shareholders and SafeVisit for all farmers (through FarmIQ) to help make health and safety management easier and more effective.