

# Primary Growth Partnership: Dairy Pre-Farm Gate Programme

## Executive Summary (April – June 2013)

The Dairy Primary Growth Partnership Pre Farm Gate programme is progressing on track, on budget and as scheduled. Industry co-investors' investment to date in the Dairy Pre-Farm Gate Programme is over \$16 million with MPI funding of over \$22 million.

Work undertaken in the programme's initial years are delivering tangible results and achievements. Progress of note in this quarter includes:

1. Theme 1, On-farm Innovation and Research, aims to increase the productive potential, resource use efficiency and product value behind the farm gate.
  - *Genetic gain*: The initial phase of research and modelling demonstrates that lameness phenotypic (characteristics or traits) data can now be used to develop a lameness breeding value. With further research and implementation farmers will be able to select bull semen to breed dairy cows with reduced lameness, thereby having healthier and more productive herds. The decision on the value proposition and whether to proceed with the next stage of developing a lameness breeding value is now with NZ Animal Evaluation Limited.
  - *Precision agriculture*: Protocols for the evaluation of automated mastitis detection systems have been successfully developed. Industry has worked together with technology developers to develop robust agreed methodology for performance testing of their products. This approach supports performance reporting, will allow farmers to compare products (thereby assisting their investment decision) and provide feedback into the development process. The next steps for automated mastitis detection systems are monitoring their use and encouraging adoption internationally as many products have their origins outside of New Zealand.
2. Theme 2, Building Capability for a Sustainable Future, aims to improve on-farm decisions through building industry capability and knowledge, upskilling rural professionals, development of supporting networks and attracting more people into the industry.
  - *Train the trainer*. This programme has completed the first assessment and planning modules in nutrient, effluent, animal welfare and farm business management. Codes of practice, training and tools are available and in use supporting rural professionals to assess farms and provide planning advice to farmers. This completes the first stage of delivery with on-going addition of new modules and training as well as cementing the systems in the industry.
  - *Animal Welfare Management*: Sixty veterinarians have been trained to deliver skills based training to farm staff this quarter. With their farmer interactions veterinarians have the opportunity to create a learning environment on-farm increasing the opportunity for positive change. Veterinary practices will deliver 40 workshops to farmers and farm staff using DairyNZ developed cow health and well-being training resources this winter.
  - *Centre for Farm Business Management*: Through the OneFarm website ([www.OneFarm.co.nz](http://www.OneFarm.co.nz)) nine webinars have been produced and delivered covering topics such as farm succession, financial literacy, smart phone technology and rural valuation. The registered users section has over 490 participants with webinars averaging 220 views each. These along with short courses provide continuous learning in farm business management to farmers, rural professionals, students and agribusiness. The Centre also provides the industry with underpinning research and capability development.