
B+LNZ Future Farms Workshop

WORKSHOP OUTPUTS

Tuesday 16th January, 2018



What we set out to do...

The purpose of the workshop was to:

- Establish the principles and vision for the B+LNZ Future Farm programme
- Review the process of identifying the finalists
- Evaluate the two primary farm candidates against the principles and vision of the programme, for reporting to the B+LNZ board

The purpose of this document

This document is provided as a ‘tracker’ or record of the workshop and its outputs. It is intended to be a catalyst for discussion and further development of the B+LNZ ‘Future Farms’ programme.

Future Farms - the Concept (1)

An overview of B+LNZ's newly launched strategy and the B+LNZ 'Future Farms' concept was provided by Richard Wakelin, GM – Farm, at the start of the Workshop.

Participants detailed opportunities, challenges, ideas and questions arising from the overview of the Future Farms programme.

Details of the responses to the Future Farms concept are provided on the following slides, with key points including:

- The need for transparency and commercial decision-making
- The need to ensure linkage to others (local, urban, schools, others sectors such as tourism)
- The communication opportunity the Future Farm provided
- The need for best practice farm management and governance
- The need to demonstrate consumer-connected approaches
- The challenges of being on show every day, and general scrutiny
- The need to ensure outreach and extension are separately resourced and don't impact (time and resources) the farming operation
- The opportunity to link outputs from other programmes and put them into practice
- The opportunity for innovative extension and engagement
- How can other issues such as succession be discussed/modelled through a Future Farm?

Future Farms - the Concept (2)

An overview of B+LNZ's newly launched strategy and the B+LNZ 'Future Farms' concept was provided by Richard Wakelin, GM – Farm, at the start of the Workshop.

Participants detailed opportunities, challenges, ideas and questions arising from the overview of the Future Farms programme

Opportunities

- Young people into the agriculture industry
- Collaboration
- Feds
- Social media
- Succession
- Tourism
- Value-added
- Social media
- Transparency
- Blog
- CEO level advisory board
- Best practice environment is like buckling a seatbelt
- Top quartile farmers do most things very well
- Integrity of thought process to arrive at decisions
- Whole farm system
- Showcase
- Inspire new generation
- Increase adoption
- Community engagement
- Full transparency
- Vision of success: tools, systems for the future of the red meat sector
- Developing sector and farmer confidence to transition if needed or wanted
- Resonate and provide confidence and pride for New Zealand agriculture for New Zealanders
- Bold leadership
- Public and government insights
- Extension
- Telling the story

Future Farms - the Concept (3)

Challenges

- Support structure
- Duplication
- Connection with consumer
- Every day is show day
- Commercial tensions and picking wins
- Relatable
- Handling the inevitable mistakes and accountability
- Links to thriving rural communities
- Tension of commercial versus experiment
- Really hard to disrupt from within. Only achieve incremental game
- Our future farm or leading farm? Trust, integrity, recognition etc.
- Unity
- Clarity on
- Bold leadership
- Environmental compliance
- Productivity and profitability with current environment
- How do we engage with the large number of farmers?
- Community engagement and public buy-in
- Integrity of the commercial opportunity
- Standard measures to report on
- Dual reporting
- Extension costs: added investment required for time, reports, measures
- Getting buy in from the wider farming community
- Relevance and integrity
- Understanding and operating within environmental limits and policy intended to maintain or where degraded, improve the health of the environment
- May limit systems and farm management
- Will inform opportunities, technology etc.
- Well-rounded human resource
- Challenges need to be the same as at the home farm
- Connect to all four B+LNZ priorities
- Lifting profitability and productivity with an environmental balance
- Who is the future farm pitched at? Is it a risk trying to please everyone?
- The pressure of 'every day is a show day'
- Perception: public, farmers, B+LNZ

Future Farms - the Concept (4)

Ideas

- Start with focusing on customer/consumer
- Must be consumer focused and aligned
- Stereotypical farmer in 1980 versus 2020?
- Personality type suited to the profession?
- How do we highlight the decision-making process?
- How the farm manager uses information put into practice e.g. Weather data and how the farmer applies it and why
- Involved locals in setting strategies re welfare, environment, health and safety, and people
- Transparency in the decision process
- Demonstrate a compromise between profit and environment etc.
- Will be a combination of perfecting the old and instituting the new
- Field days-how often?
- FEP
- Farm activities
- Community engagement
- What things would you need to do and how would you do them?
- Clear numbers in real time
- Creating sustainable products which improve human health and taste right
- Showcase successful farms giving effect to the red meat sector story. Transparent, credible, environmentally sustainable, healthy happy animals and people. Socially acceptable producing high quality and consistent product
- Must be sold well
- Rollout of RMPP
- Deliver with partners
- Layers of extension that are integrated off the future farm

Future Farms - the Concept (5)

Questions

- Where is the consumer in this?
- Value versus volume
- This practice defined by what?
- Commercially relevant versus commercially profitable
- Replicating what already exists?
- Sheep and beef?
- Class of country?
- What's missing?
- Location for staff
- Bio security status?
- Parasite status?
- The problem with vested interests that took over the Monitor Farms program
- Farming by committee
- Who's in charge?
- Timeline: 5 to 7 years
- How forward-looking are the future farms intended to be?
- How do ideas/technologies get found and introduced?
- How are the intangible issues (e.g. Succession, equity partnerships, governance, staff recruitment and development) demonstrated in a future farm?
- Commercial partnerships: genetics and crops

A 'wildly successful future' for the 'Future Farms' programme (1)

Workshop participants were asked to describe the characteristics and outcomes of the Future Farm programme if it were wildly successful. These were descriptive and could include, for example, outcomes, actions, behaviours, conversations.

Details of the characteristics of the envisioned 'wildly successful futures' are provided on the following slides, with key points including:

- Best practice systems across a range of areas, tailored to the farm
- A farm that all farmers want to visit and learn from
- A farm that attracts the best staff and treats them well
- A farm that is profitable within environmental limits, has transparent decision making and shows how to build resilience
- A farm that reaches beyond farmers and draws in the public, government etc.
- A farm that showcases good business decision-making and how data and information can be used to support this
- A farm that inspires change, tests new ideas and evolves

A 'wildly successful future' for the 'Future Farms' programme (2)

Workshop participants were asked to describe the characteristics and outcomes of the Future Farm programme if it were wildly successful. These were descriptive and could include, for example, outcomes, actions, behaviours, conversations

On-farm production

- Sustaining and building soil health, productive long-term capabilities
- Optimal farming systems and management within its unique environment

Extension

- Multilevel extension activation - needs additional resources
- It is a really cool farm to see and visit
- Increasing their role with partner engagement
- Full engagement from all levels of farmers

People

- Future farm manager and staff love their job
- Creating excellent people and staff
- Management not overloaded
- Every manager wants to be the manager

Fiscal

- Profitable
- Excellent relevance
- Everything is transparent. All costs are appropriately accounted and apportioned
- The future farm has made measurable environmental improvements. Some great tools and measuring
- Outstanding environmental credentials
- Basics done well
- Top 5% performance
- 100% transparent
- Highly profitable within environmental limits. Environmental limits = water quality, biodiversity, carbon emissions, soil
- Transparent on everything – 'squeaky clean'
- Development within financial, environmental and practical limits
- Builds economic and environmental resilience

A 'wildly successful future' for the 'Future Farms' programme (3)

Public/community

- Weekly farm walk by management is open to everyone
- Living the red meat sector - credible, transparent, sustainable, value and products of the highest quality
- A range of people: farmers, students, politicians, service industries are referencing the future farm
- Connected with their community and urban community
- More mainstream media around Future Farm and sheep and beef in general
- New Zealanders championing these farms to: government, eNGO's, urban, rural, leaders, farmers, industry
- We engage a wide non-farmer audience via innovative techniques: social media, a gaming app?
- Urban involvement: schools, open days, environmental groups
- Future Farm being used by many groups of farmers and support
- Tours: public and unannounced. Open gate/door policy

Conversations

- Narrow the urban-rural gap. Closer engagement
- Community ownership
- Attraction to industries
- Pride and satisfaction

Outcomes

- Profitability
- Business focus. Confidence
- Data to decision pathways illuminated
- Simplify compliance
- Not George Jetson
- Solution focus

Other

- Social media - transparency
- Open communication
- Drive connections e.g. Wellington
- Very open decision process - media
- Accessible information e.g. feed cover

Behaviours

- Sector language change. Commercial relevance
- Confident. Enjoyable
- Mindset change to consumer-led
- Failure is acceptable
- Inspire to change
- Relatable
- Influence widely including early adopters

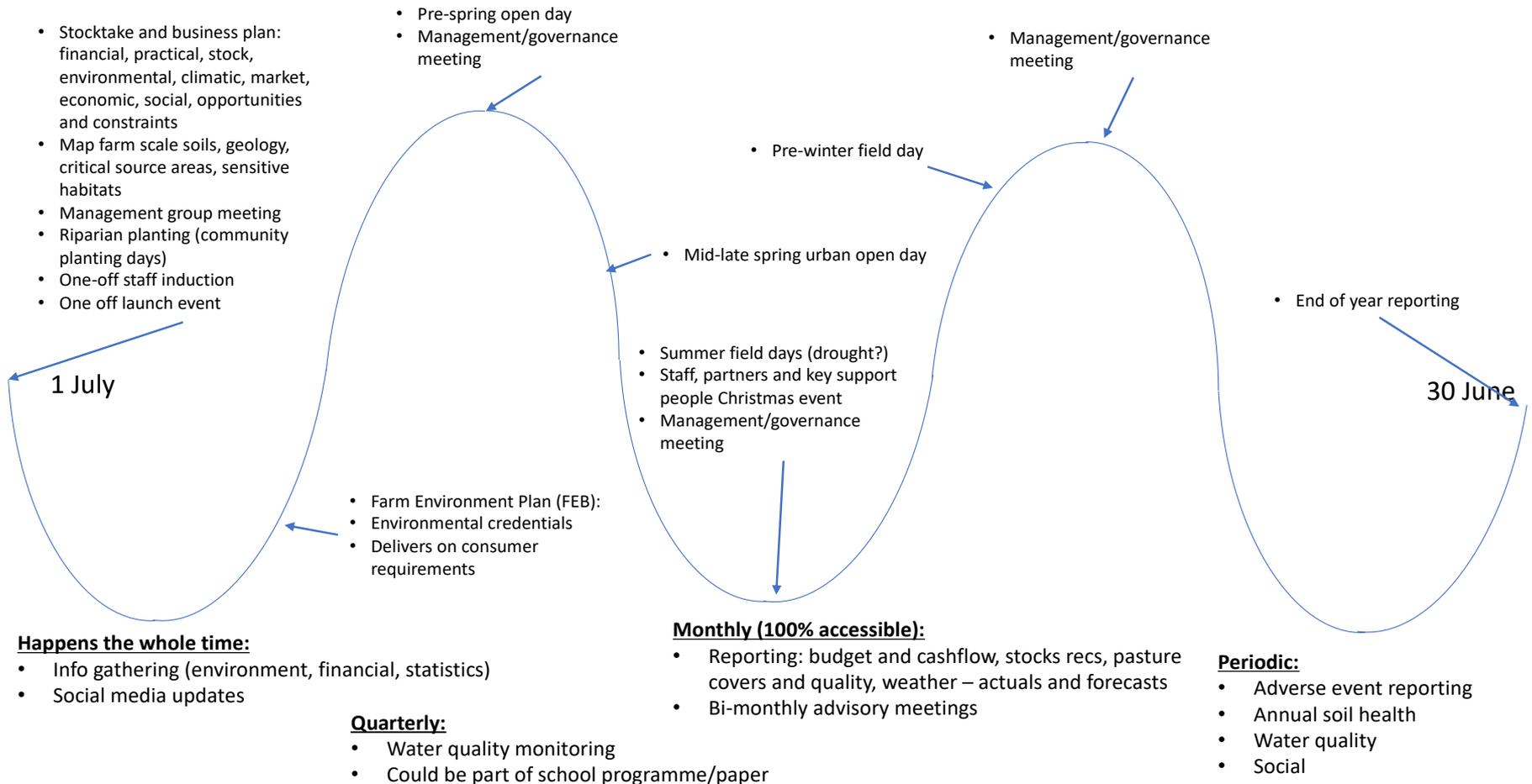
A 'wildly successful future' for the 'Future Farms' programme (4)

General

- Balance between pushing boundaries and relevance
- Longevity
- Trusted
- Independent
- Full transparency: decision-making and return on investment
- Bring up the average farmer
- Industry change
- Farmer buy-in
- Key hub
- Target for others
- Wider farmer uptake
- Younger people in agriculture
- Overseas visitors
- Keep it live
- Top 1 to 5%
- Profitable
- National/international icon - the 'go to'
- Open gate for urban people
- Best practice
- Continually evolving
- Robust discussion and debate
- Show farmers as well
- Clear and effective governance
- Who's in charge?
- Right team manager
- Meat industry participation

'A year in the life' of a B+LNZ Future Farm (1)

Workshop participants were asked to describe the activities that would need to occur through the course of a year on a B+LNZ 'Future Farm'. These could be one-off activities at 'Future Farm' establishment, or they could be activities that occur every year. Each group's annual cycle description is shown separately.



'A year in the life' of a B+LNZ Future Farm (2)

Communications:

- Annual public report
- Introduction field day
- Comms Plan
- Bimonthly update of operations with public release
- Facebook/Instagram – real time/live
- Website: social media and lice data
- Specialised sheep/beef day e.g. breaking down meat challenges
- Monthly open day e.g. pasture work or similar
- Linking with community
- Scheduled:
 - School groups
 - Farmer visits

Strategy:

- Strategy and KPI of what to achieve

Strategy:

- Baseline for operations, e.g.:
 - LEPs
 - Nutrient budgets
 - Soil test
 - Animal health

- Review suppliers

- Budget review

- Set budget

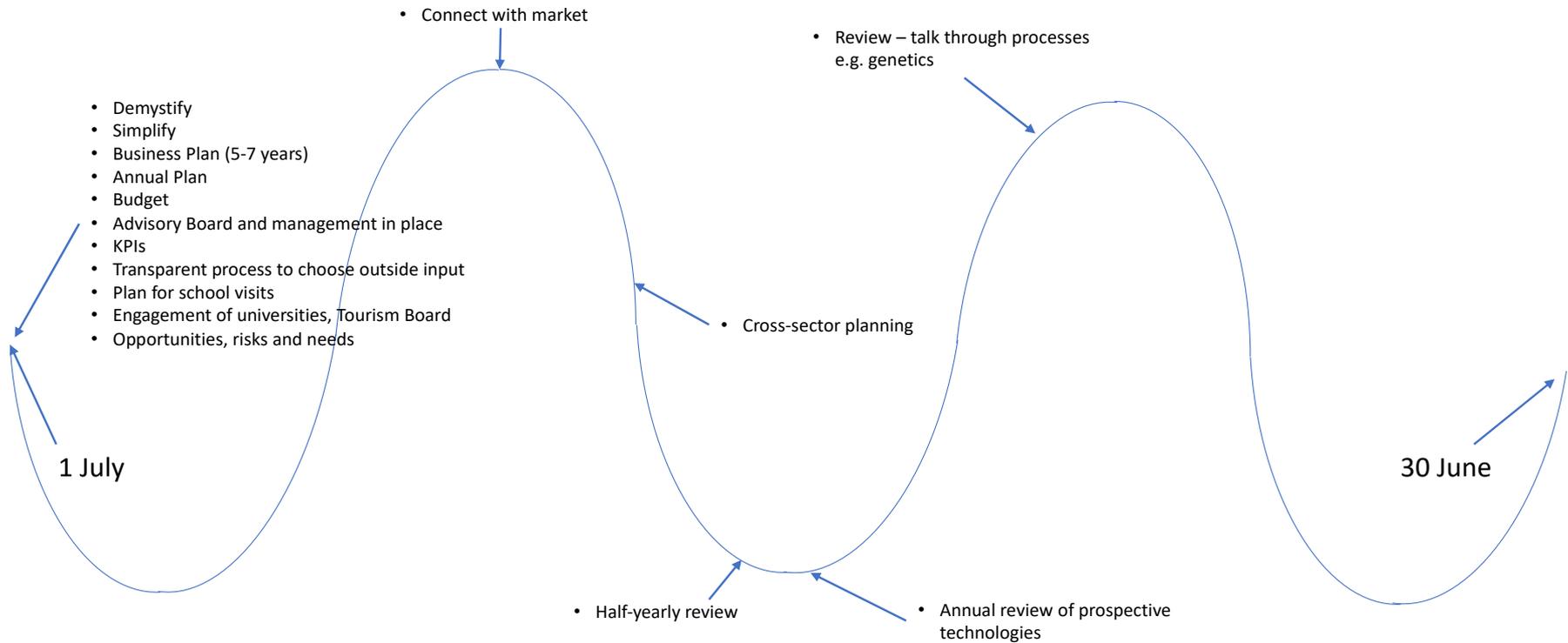
1 July

30 June

Monthly/bimontly:

- Governance meeting (monthly)
- Reporting (monthly KPIs at different levels - \$'s, environment, welfare, people))
- Performance to budget (monthly)
- Technology concepts to advisory group (bimonthly)
- H&S monthly
- People management

'A year in the life' of a B+LNZ Future Farm (3)



- Planning ongoing
- Monthly KPI reporting
- 6 monthly internships
- Weekly open meetings, including H&S
- 24/7 login to data
- Quarterly and annual reviews

What's missing (...and would limit achieving the 'wildly successful future')?

AbacusBio described the process for seeking expressions of interest from candidate farms, and the criteria against which these were considered.

Given these selection criteria, workshop participants were asked to identify any other factors that were missed (see "What's missing" below) which would be important selection criteria if the 'wildly successful future' they described, was to be achieved.

Participants were not presented with, or asked to comment on the nature of the 'transaction', with respect to any Future Farm, although some comments did come forward from the work groups during discussion.

Current selection criteria

- Property
- Scale
- Access
- Environmental factors
- Pastures
- Soil fertility
- Infrastructure
- Housing
- Genetics
- Livestock
- Ability to finish
- Connectivity
- Owner/personal factor
- Freedom to operate and Livestock

What's missing?

- Health status of stock
- Lease duration and impact/implications
- Location from an access to farm labour perspective
- Is [approaches to] succession an appropriate purpose? Why/how?
- Cultural alignment
- Catchment credentials
- Policy constraints and impact
- Distance from populations centre
- Exit [from the lease] is clear and fair
- Future wishes of the owners – transparent
- Fit with other B+LNZ activities

Candidate farm introduction

AbacusBio provided an overview of each of the two candidate farms through a video describing the farm, and document detailing key characteristics and data.

As one candidate farm was in the North Island, and one in the South Island, they are identified in this document as 'North Island' and 'South Island'.

Candidate farm assessment (1)

Participants were asked to consider the two following questions when considering the candidate farms:

- How well can the farm deliver the 'wildly successful future' the participants described earlier?
- Why or why not is this the case?

Participants also provided an overall assessment of candidate farm suitability in the form of a score, rank or comment

All groups saw the South Island candidate farm as being able to better deliver the sought outcomes, with comments varying between groups (see below).