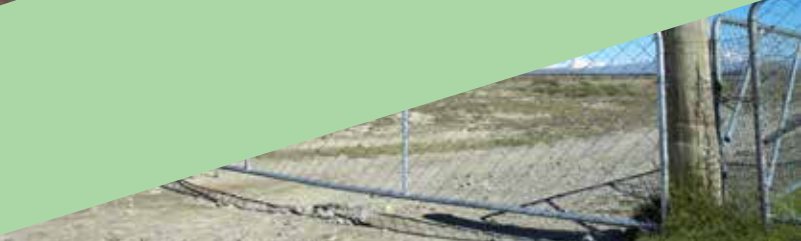




# Good Farm Planning Principles: **Towards Integrated Farm Planning**

June 2021



Integrated farm planning is intended to help you in your goals, and ultimately ensure the wellbeing of the whenua (land) for our future generations.

The integrated farm planning approach is about bringing together all the various areas – such as climate change, freshwater, animal welfare, biosecurity, and people management – that a farmer or grower should consider for their farming operation.

Taking an integrated approach will streamline compliance, reduce duplication, and provide a structured approach for farmers and growers to lift performance.

There is already a strong foundation of farm planning in New Zealand. Farm planning helps farmers' and growers' decision-making – providing a framework to identify risk, opportunities, and support good land management.

New Zealand farmers and growers are already actively protecting and restoring our natural resources. It is important for farmers and growers to highlight their good practices, as consumer and environmental pressures grow.

An integrated farm plan should be a living document. Integrated farm planning encourages farmers to develop an action plan, to act, and to review and update their goals in relation to land and farm to encourage ongoing improvement.

As further principles and requirements are developed, they will be added to the integrated farm planning framework. For example, freshwater farm plans are being developed as a regulatory tool under Part 9A of the Resource Management Act. These requirements will come under the overarching integrated farm planning framework once they are developed.

Broadly, this document outlines:

- What an integrated farm planning approach is, and how it can help you to meet your goals;
- Work underway to support farm planning, including the delivery of improved data sharing to make it easier for you to collect data once and use it for multiple purposes;
- How this all sits with any farm plan programme you may already be using.



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June 2021

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# Minister's Message

New Zealand farmers and growers operate in a complex and changing world that requires them to meet consumer, market, environmental and regulatory needs, as well as their own. I want integrated farm planning to make it easier and less time consuming to meet those needs, so farmers and growers can focus on adding value to their great products and their businesses.

This first edition of the Good Farm Planning guidance includes principles for Employment and Wellbeing management; Health and Safety; Biosecurity; Animal Welfare; and Greenhouse Gas Emissions (linked to the He Waka Eke Noa farm planning guidance).

For most farmers and growers, many of the principles won't be new. I commend the many farmers and growers that have already done a lot of work to develop their own farm plans, and work together within their catchments to improve freshwater and ecosystem health. The integrated farm planning approach intends to provide tools and support to build on these efforts and help farmers and growers continue their growth.

Last year, I launched the *Fit For a Better World Roadmap* – building on the work both primary industries and the Government have started to ensure we take the right actions, make good investments, and develop resources to help drive value growth. Integrated farm planning is an important part of that work because it provides flexibility across the diverse business structures a modern farmer may be running alongside a focus on identifying growth opportunities for their farms.

*Fit For a Better World* is anchored in Te Taiao, a uniquely Aotearoa New Zealand worldview putting the wellbeing of the natural world at the heart of everything we do. That worldview

represents a deep relationship of respect and reciprocity with nature. When Te Taiao thrives, so do food and fibre producers.

The work on integrated farm planning dovetails with other initiatives to help farmers and growers including an expanded national training programme for rural advisors. There will be more advisors to help farmers and growers with planning. We will pilot farm planning processes around the country as new regulations are rolled out and provide resources to farmers and growers who choose to sit outside industry assurance programmes.

Work is under way to improve information sharing across the primary industries and between regulators and industry assurance programmes, so farmers and growers have the most up-to-date data for their conditions.

It's for farmers and growers to consider which of the farm planning principles to prioritise, based on what matters for their business, their customers and/or specific regulatory requirements. In some areas this guide may prompt farmers and growers to seek expert advice for reassurance that their current plan is on the right track.

The vision of an integrated framework will take time and commitment from all involved, but we are now on the journey. I'm proud of our primary sector and the steps we are taking to demonstrate good farm management. They will help us keep our global competitive advantage.



– Damien  
Minister of Agriculture

# Introduction

This document is a guide for how you can use an integrated approach in your farm planning activities.

## **Ko te whenua he taonga tuku iho – the land is a treasure for our future generations**

From a te ao Māori world view, we are all part of Te Taiao – the natural world that contains and surrounds us – and have a responsibility to care for it. This view, that the land provides for the people and therefore the people must provide for the land, strongly aligns with growing consideration of sustainable land and water use in New Zealand.

This guidance provides principles for farm planning in four main areas – employee and wellbeing management; health and safety; biosecurity; and animal welfare. More guidance areas will be added as they become available, such as intensive winter grazing, freshwater, biodiversity and waste management, and the existing principles will be updated as we continue to grow in these areas.

This document refers to ‘farmers and growers’, but it acknowledges the complexities of farm and land management and governance within New Zealand. This document is intended to provide guidance via principles to those who are responsible for setting the priorities for the land upon which they farm, whether that is on the individual scale or the decision of many.

## **Why is integrated farm planning important and how does it benefit me?**

Farm planning helps in managing the different parts of a farm business, and to provide assurance of good practice to consumers and others. Successful modern farming is tied to preserving and improving the health of the land, and an integrated farm planning approach is a useful tool for farmers and growers to use to improve the health and wellbeing of the land and their surrounding community.

Integrated farm planning is not a regulatory tool, and is not intended to duplicate work already undertaken by sector groups or individuals to develop farm plans. Rather, it builds on those existing farm planning efforts to provide a single framework to incorporate regulated requirements into a wider farm planning process. Taking this holistic approach streamlines compliance, reduces duplication of information, and provides a way for farmers and growers to better identify risks and opportunities that help lift performance, both in their business and as stewards of the land.

Integrated farm planning will provide an approach to address the fragmentation that exists between current farm planning systems, provide a link in with the new mandatory planning requirements, and improve the overall quality of farm planning.

For example, mandatory freshwater farm plan requirements are currently being developed by the Government, with public consultation planned for mid-2021. When these requirements are decided they will be incorporated as another set of principles under the overarching integrated farm planning framework..

## **The integrated farm planning system will be supported by improved data capability**

Traceability and assurance processes are driving the need for more efficient data collection, reporting and management. Improved data sharing will build trust, facilitate better decision making, and generate insights across sector value chains.

Government, primary sectors, and regional councils are working to simplify data collection, storage, security and use to ensure farmers and growers receive greater value while retaining control of their data. The goal is for farmers and growers to easily share data for the purpose it has been provided, while protecting their business information and how it is used, reflecting that adequate protection of personal business information is a significant concern for farmers and growers. This includes work to develop mutual recognition across programmes so if a farmer or grower is running multiple systems they will be aligned and won't require multiple separate planning programmes.

## What do I need to do to develop an integrated farm plan?

Familiarising yourself with principles and guidance in this document is a useful first step. If you are already part of an industry assurance programme your planning materials and guidance will, if necessary, be updated over the coming year by your assurance programme provider. In many cases this will be an incremental process.

If you have still to start on the farm planning journey a range of tools and support will be available via the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI), sector groups, and regional councils to help get you started and along the way.

There is further information on what you need to do on page 17.

## When do I need to have my integrated farm plan ready?

Over the next five years, requirements to have farm plans to meet freshwater and greenhouse gas mitigation requirements will be rolled out. Starting an integrated farm planning approach now will put you in a good position to apply these new requirements as part of your general operations.

# Our Approach

Farm planning must:

- Benefit farmers and growers
- Take a whole-of-farm business focus
- Build-on existing industry assurance programmes and other farm plan initiatives
- Leverage existing primary sector knowledge
- Prioritise farm management issues
- Meet regulatory requirements for freshwater
- Contribute toward meeting New Zealand's climate change commitments
- Introduce efficiencies across the farm planning system to help farmers and growers respond to new regulatory and market requirements
- Have protocols in place to ensure data ownership and protection
- Understand the long-term aspirations of communities
- Implement a robust and credible on-farm planning system
- Be adaptable and respond to customer and regulatory needs
- Be open and transparent with our progress
- Promote continuous improvement

# Good Farm Planning is an ongoing process

This guidance includes a planning framework to assess, monitor and continuously improve the farm business..

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

This involves farmers and growers capturing a picture of the business, recording core farm data, and writing down:

- Goals (people, planet, profit, and purpose)
- Farming system (activities that occur on the farm)
- Infrastructure (built environment)
- Catchment context (land and water, and biosecurity)
- Natural resources (soils, landform, climate, and waterbodies)
- Regulatory and market requirements (local, national, and international)

## Step 2: Assess and prioritise your risks and opportunities

Based on the goals, the catchment context, natural resources, and regulatory and market requirements, a risk and opportunity assessment should be undertaken for each relevant area of the farm business (people management, biosecurity, animal welfare, greenhouse gases, freshwater) noting those most important for the farm. The Good Farm Planning Principles set out later in this guidance have been drawn up to help farmers and growers do this.

From this information, farmers and growers can focus their attention on the priority areas for action and longer-term needs. This provides the basis for the farm action plan.

Farm planning workshops, catchment groups and rural professionals can all help provide advice and support for developing a farm plan.

## Step 3: Develop an action plan to manage your risks and maximise opportunities

To develop the farm action plan, farmers and growers need to assess the range of actions that can

be implemented on farm to reduce risk or maximise opportunities.

Relevant actions that benefit multiple management areas and that avoid negative impacts between them should be prioritised.

Ideally an action plan would span a five-year period, and include budgets, timeframes, and any priorities. It should also contain measures to track progress and effectiveness over time.

## Step 4: Take action and monitor your progress

The use of performance measures to track and record progress helps with deciding actions and reporting progress.

Some primary sectors and industry assurance programmes have established performance measures and data reporting systems and provide individual farm benchmarking alongside sector performance trends.

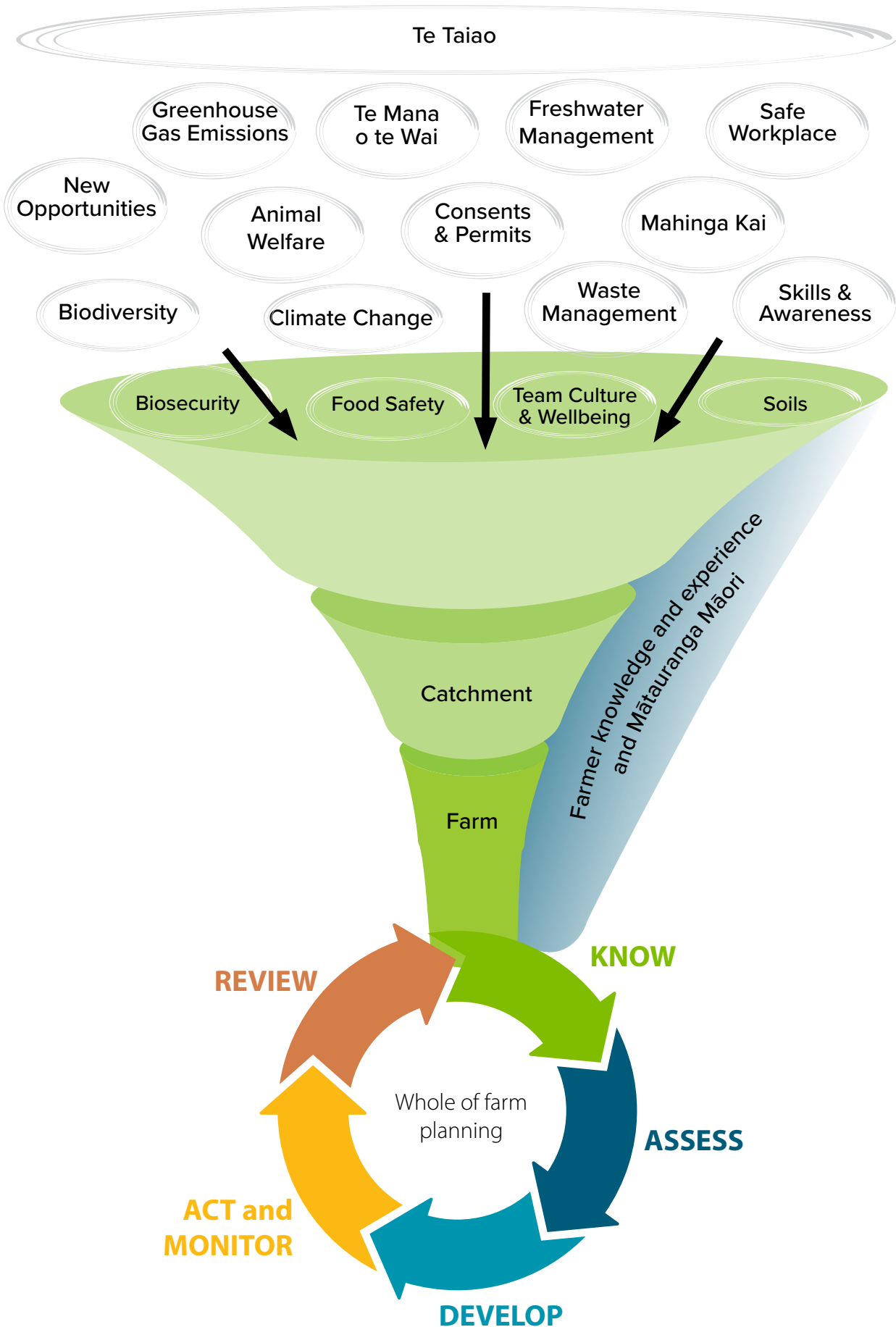
## Step 5: Review and update your farm plan: make it a living document

Regular assessment and periodic independent reviews are key tools for farmers and growers to make sure a farm plan remains on-track and relevant. Internal or self-assessment is a good opportunity to involve farm staff to help identify challenges and find new solutions.

Having an independent and recognised person periodically assess a farm plan and provide recommendations for improvement is also beneficial. External feedback, informed by data recorded against identified Key Performance Indicators, can independently validate the progress made, reassuring consumers and regulators.

# Components and Processes in Farm Planning

The diagram below provides an overview of the planning framework for integrated farm planning.





# Good Farm Planning Principles

The Good Farm Planning Principles contained in this guidance include principles for **people management** (employment, wellbeing and health and safety), **biosecurity**, and **animal welfare**.

Principles relating to **greenhouse gas** emissions have been taken from the He Waka Eke Noa Primary Sector Climate Action Partnership. Requirements relating to Freshwater **Farm Plan regulations** will also be included when released in late 2021.

Including the regulatory (Freshwater and Climate Change components) alongside voluntary areas such as people management, biosecurity, and animal welfare enables assessment of farm risk and solutions within one framework.

Additional areas of Good Farm Planning Principles will, where necessary, be incorporated over time. Adopting these Principles will provide New Zealanders and international markets confidence that farm risks are being managed. Industry assurance programmes and other farm planning initiatives already include many of the Good Farm Practice Principles.

## Freshwater and Greenhouse Gas Farm Plan requirements

All farms that meet the Freshwater farm plan threshold (including intensive winter grazing), must have a Freshwater Farm Plan. Similarly, all farms that meet the greenhouse gas threshold<sup>1</sup> must have a plan<sup>2</sup> to measure their emissions.

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### Greenhouse Gases

A quarter of farms have a written plan in place to measure and manage their greenhouse gas emissions by 1 January 2022.

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All farms have a written plan in place to measure and manage their greenhouse gas emissions by 1 January 2025.

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### Freshwater

All arable and pastoral farms of 20 hectares or more and horticultural farms of 5 hectares or more or a combination of any of these will require a freshwater farm plan. The timeframe for this will be set out in the freshwater farm plan regulations, which will be released in mid-2021.

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<sup>1</sup> Farms and horticultural properties over 80ha, or a dairy farm with a milk supply number, or a cattle feedlot.

<sup>2</sup> <https://hewakaekenoa.nz/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/GHG-Farm-Planning-Guidance-March.pdf> and <https://environment.govt.nz/acts-and-regulations/regulations/regulations-for-freshwater-farm-plans>

# Good Farm Planning Principles: People

The wellbeing of both you and your staff is important. People are both a resource and asset, and it makes sense to value and invest in the farm team.

## Good Farm Planning Principles: Employment and Wellbeing

### 1. All employment obligations are met

Recruitment processes are documented, fair and proper; written employment agreements are in place; hours worked and holiday pay are recorded; on-site accommodation is legally compliant and fit for purpose; and staff know what is expected of them as set out in job descriptions.

### 2. Staff are fairly remunerated for the work they do

The total remuneration package (wage/salary, accommodation, vehicle, training, etc.) fairly reflects the duties and expectations of the role and is reviewed annually. Performance objectives and bonuses may be a part of this. Clear communication of entitlements and expectations contribute to reduced misunderstandings, potential conflict, and unnecessary staff turnover.

### 3. Staff actively participate in the farm business

Building an inclusive team culture is important for the safe and effective operation of the farm business. People need to look out for their peers, be trained to help in emergencies, and want to feel their effort on the day is recognised and important. Encourage staff engagement through seeking their ideas and discussing future farm priorities.

### 4. Staff have development opportunities

Staff development should be appropriate for their role, aligned with business needs and be developed with them. A range of opportunities from induction through training to more advanced experiences are made available, and progress measured.



### 5. The wellbeing of staff and their whānau is actively considered

Keep communication open and notice when things are not working well. Regularly celebrate success.

If you or your staff need wellbeing support, look up groups such as your local Rural Support Trust for advice and resources.

## Good Farm Planning Principles: Health and Safety

### 1. Farm risks are identified and managed

Actively engage staff in the identification of risks and risk management and aim to eliminate risks wherever possible. Keep an accessible health and safety plan and record-keeping system. Encourage the reporting of new risks and respond appropriately to new hazards. Record any incidents and near misses and discuss ways to prevent them re-occurring.

### 2. Staff and visitors feel confident and safe

Make staff, contractors, and visitors aware of your farm's risks and how they are managed. Induct everyone in their health and safety obligations and provide appropriate training in hazard management. Visitors need to understand their responsibilities by complying with signage and instructions.

Maintain appropriate Personal Protective Equipment in safe working order, make it available and require its use. Keep farm equipment and machinery in safe working order and record any maintenance. Keep records of staff and visitor training to reduce incidents and build staff confidence.



# Good Farm Planning Principles: Biosecurity

Good biosecurity management is critical to the farm business. Whether it is growing plants or livestock, managing a property's biosecurity reduces the risk of diseases, plant and animal pests and organisms from entering the property or being passed on to other properties. Biosecurity is about protecting your business – land, produce, livestock, and New Zealand's reputation as a safe primary producer.

## 1. Everyone understands their role in protecting the property

Everyone who comes onto the property – staff, family, visitors, and contractors – can have an impact on biosecurity. Ensure they understand the importance of biosecurity and their role in managing risks. Biosecurity threats are discussed, and people are engaged in their identification and management. A culture of reporting the unusual helps build everyone's knowledge and provides early identification of possible issues.

## 2. The property boundary is identified and secure

Limiting access onto your property is your first line of defence be it people, plants, pests, products, or livestock. Boundaries are secure, and access is limited to known points with approval. Risks from the local environment and neighbouring properties are identified and mitigated. Fences are maintained to prevent unwanted livestock entering your property.

## 3. Risks from people and equipment movements are controlled

People and equipment movements are a major vector for the spread of pests and diseases. Relevant controls include: Clearly signed designated areas for visitors and their vehicles. Appropriate facilities for equipment cleaning and disinfection, and safe disposal of waste from this (clean on – clean off). Equipment entering or leaving the property is cleaned to prevent cross-contamination. Access to areas within the property is managed.

## 4. Animals and plants are managed to prevent the spread of pests and or diseases

On-farm management practices minimise the impacts when risks are present. Animal and plant health are managed to reduce susceptibility to disease. Livestock movements are recorded (NAIT), and sources of plant material (seeds, forage, plant material, compost etc) are known and recorded. Quarantine processes are used for stock during transport and when arriving on farm. Known pests and diseases are actively managed to prevent their further spread.

## 5. New or emerging Biosecurity threats are identified, contained, and reported

Catching incursions early helps to limit their impact. Maintain awareness of sector and supply chain emerging threats. Report and record unusual observations – early detection and containment helps to limit the spread of any incursions.

# Good Farm Planning Principles: Animal Welfare

New Zealand's reputation for strong animal welfare practices helps secure access to international markets. Animal welfare is described as what an animal experiences, how it performs, or whether it lives in keeping with its nature.

The Animal Welfare Codes set the regulatory framework for the management and care of farm animals.

## 1. Animal health is monitored and recorded

Measure and record key indicators such as weight changes, injury, diseases, birth rates, and animal behaviour to improve animal welfare and productivity. Observe and record livestock health and any interventions to help identify when specialist interventions or vet services are needed and when it is safe to transport stock.

## 2. Animals have adequate nutrition and water

Put in place a feed budgeting strategy to ensure seasonal and climate driven feed deficits are well managed and timely decisions are made around stocking policy. Ensure animals have access to good drinking water and that any nutritional deficiencies are accounted for. Start planning for the new intensive winter grazing regulations which come into effect in 2022, including a review of current practice in relation to future land use constraints, winter feed and stock numbers.

## 3. Animal shelter is suitable for adverse environmental conditions

Lack of shade or shelter can compromise animal health and welfare. Farm climate risks need to be understood and mitigations put in place to manage these. Young or nursing livestock may need additional shelter or warmth. Monitor seasonal weather outlooks alongside changes in weather patterns. Have an emergency plan in place for inclement weather conditions.

## 4. Animal handling facilities are safe and fit for purpose

Farm animal handling facilities should be fit for their intended purpose. Sheds and yards should minimise distress and injury to animals and people, be well maintained, and able to be operated safely. Undertake regular inspections of sheds, loading ramps and yard safety and integrity. For upgrades seek advice from experts as to the latest requirements.

## 5. Animals are safely and confidently managed

An understanding of animals and their behaviours, and the capacity to confidently manage them is critical for good stock husbandry. An affinity for animals and a calm disposition improves animal wellbeing and contentment.

## 6. Animal transport meets welfare expectations

Transportation of livestock must meet regulatory and animal welfare code requirements. This includes stock being fit enough to travel, not lame, with no ingrown horns or mastitis, not sick or diseased or in late pregnancy and tagged to meet NAIT regulations. Safe transportation should also avoid overcrowding and overheating of animals. A veterinary certificate may be required to transport any animal in doubt.

# Good Farm Planning Principles: Greenhouse Gases

He Waka Eke Noa, the Primary Sector Climate Action Partnership, aims to equip farmers and growers to reduce emissions, maintain or increase sequestration and adapt to a changing climate. The Good Farming Practice Principles for greenhouse gas emissions were developed to guide each farm to understand its emissions profile and what contributes to it, explore opportunities to reduce it, and keep good farm records.

By January 2025 there is a requirement for all commercial farms over 80 hectares, along with all dairy herds and feedlots, to have a written plan to measure and manage their agricultural greenhouse gas emissions.

## 1. Know your farm's greenhouse gas emissions

Knowing what your greenhouse gas emissions are and where they come from is the first step towards reducing them. He Waka Eke Noa has a target of all farmers and growers knowing their farm emissions levels by December 2022.

## 2. Identify opportunities to reduce your farm's greenhouse gas emissions and capture carbon

There are many opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and capture carbon; the potential will depend on the type of farming operation and current practices. Further information can be found in the He Waka Eke Noa Greenhouse Gases Farm Planning Guidance.

## 3. Choose your actions

Each farmer or grower will know which of the opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions are appropriate to their operation, and whether they will involve simple changes to current farm management practices, or more significant action. Based on this knowledge, each farmer/grower will choose which actions to take, as part of optimising their farming operation. There is no fixed amount by which each farmer/grower has to reduce emissions, and choices will depend on farm-specific opportunities and costs.

## 4. Keep records, monitor and review

Record keeping is essential to inform future decision-making and allow easy verification of farm emissions, which will likely become a future requirement.

# Good Farm Planning Requirements: Freshwater

Freshwater Farm Plans (FW-FPs) are being developed as a regulatory tool under Part 9A of the Resource Management Act. Over time, these Freshwater Farm Plans will form a regulated module of an integrated farm plan.

These freshwater requirements are part of a wider programme of freshwater management reforms that were passed by the Government in 2020 – the Essential Freshwater package. This will help to align farm-level, catchment-level, regional and national requirements, building on the work many farmers and growers are already doing to identify and reduce the freshwater and ecosystem health risks and impacts of farming.

FW-FPs will reflect the catchment context the farm sits in. Through the FW-FP, farmers and growers

will identify risks the farm practices pose to the catchment and will develop an action plan to avoid and/or minimise these risks.

Government, with input from experts in farm planning, Māori advisory group, Environmental NGOs, and local government, is currently developing the regulations for mandatory certified FW-FPs. Further information and a discussion document on this framework are planned for mid-2021.

## Intensive Winter Grazing Requirements

The National Environmental Standard for Freshwater (NES-F) includes regulations on intensive winter grazing. These regulations will come into force on 1 May 2022 and include three pathways for undertaking winter grazing:

1. Meet the permitted activity standards included in the regulations; or
2. Have a certified FW-FP which certifies that the effects of your winter grazing are no more than if you met the permitted activity standards in the regulations; or
3. Apply for a resource consent.

The regulations were intended to come into force on 1 May 2021. However, in return for a commitment from the farming sector to make immediate improvements, the Government deferred the regulations until May 2022. Rules preventing the expansion of intensive winter grazing still apply.

An Intensive Winter Grazing Module has been published which contains guidance, practical

advice, and mitigation options to improve practice and benefit freshwater quality and animal welfare. The guidance sets practice expectations, including for winter 2021 while the regulations are deferred.

The module has been developed by MPI and the Ministry for the Environment, with input from councils, and industry representatives. Regional councils and industry bodies will work together with farmers to implement the module and deliver positive change on the ground.

If you have a plan which covers intensive winter grazing, you can continue to use your existing plan, but you should make sure it is updated to reflect the expectations set out in the module. If you do not already have a written plan for your intensive winter grazing, you are encouraged to develop a plan using the template included with the module or any industry template or guidance.

The module can be found on the MPI website here: [www.mpi.govt.nz/funding-rural-support/environment-and-natural-resources/protecting-freshwater-health](http://www.mpi.govt.nz/funding-rural-support/environment-and-natural-resources/protecting-freshwater-health)

# Existing Farm Planning Initiatives: Industry Assurance Programmes

Industry assurance programmes are important to the successful delivery of the Good Farming Planning Principles through integrated farm planning. Many programmes now support their farmers and growers to develop and implement farm action plans, report relevant measures, monitor Good Farm Planning, and drive improved practice. Most provide templates and checklists to aid with decision-making, and some have advisors available.

Some examples are referenced below showing variation exists between and within industries.

## Dairy – Dairy Tomorrow Strategy

Dairy Tomorrow is the dairy sector's strategy for meeting the challenges of today and the future. As part of this, the sector has committed to achieve all farms implementing and reporting under a certified sustainability plan by 2025. Instead of having one industry assurance programme for the dairy industry, each dairy company has its own system. There is however a common monitoring and reporting framework, including a set of minimum standards.

Five dairy companies have farm-plan programmes in place.

### ■ Fonterra – Tiaki Sustainable Dairying programme

- Supports farmers to meet regulatory requirements, including farm environment plans, at no additional cost through their sustainable dairy advisors. Farmers must also meet a set of minimum standards to supply milk.

### ■ Synlait – Lead with Pride

- Lead with pride is a certification process where farmers are financially rewarded for certification (ISO/IEC 17065). To become certified farmers must meet best-practice standards for milk quality, environment, animal health and welfare, and social responsibility.

### ■ Miraka – Te Ara Miraka

- Te Ara Miraka is a programme based on meeting standards. The standards are founded on five pillars: People, Environment, Cows, Milk Quality and Prosperity. Farmers can gain a 20c/kg milk-solids premium by

meeting 30 standards which include 13 mandatory ones. Farmers are provided with support from experts to help them achieve the standards.

### ■ Westland – Farm Excellence

- FarmEx ensures that suppliers meet a broad range of minimum standards across a range of areas: people and risk management, stock exclusion and waterway management, land and nutrient management, animal welfare, water use, effluent systems and management, and farm presentation. The standards are set to exceed regulatory requirements.

### ■ Tatua – Tatua 360

- Tatua 360 ensures that Tatua farmers are meeting their long-term commitments to maintain responsible and sustainable farming practices. It is based on 5 pillars; People, Milk Quality, Animal Care, Farm system, and Environment.



## Horticulture – Good Agricultural Practice

The horticulture sector adopts Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) schemes to promote the safe and sustainable production of fruit and vegetables in New Zealand. Certification to one of the schemes is necessary for supplying many local, and international markets. GLOBAL G.A.P. and NZGAP are the main schemes.

Both schemes have comprehensive add-ons covering Social Practice that covers the People Principles set out in this document. NZGAP also has an Environmental Management System add-on.

The GAP assurance programmes ensure that horticultural growers are meeting both regulatory obligations and the markets' requirements.

## Red Meat Sector – Farm Plans and NZ Farm Assurance Programmes

Beef+Lamb NZ's vision emphasises sustainable and profitable farmers, thriving rural communities, and farmers being valued by New Zealanders. Beef+Lamb NZ wants to help all commercial sheep and beef farmers to have a farm plan by 2025.

Beef+Lamb NZ's former Land and Environment Plan (LEP) programme has been central to improving farmers' awareness of the benefits, and uptake of, farm environment planning. This programme has now been embedded in an environment module, within a wider farm plan, and was launched in March 2021.

The new Beef+Lamb NZ Farm Plan addresses changing farmer needs along with emerging policy requirements. The environment module includes specific chapters on soils, freshwater ecosystem health, biodiversity, climate change adaptation, greenhouse gas mitigation, and forage cropping (including winter grazing).

As well as Beef+Lamb NZ's Farm Plan and associated resources, the Red Meat Sector has developed the NZ Farm Assurance Programme, NZFAP, and NZFAP+ which underpin the Taste Pure Nature origin brand as a global brand platform underpinning exporters'

marketing. The programme is administered by New Zealand Farm Assurance Incorporated (NZFAI) and is independently audited as part of meat-processor requirements. NZFAP+ is currently a voluntary module which includes more detailed standards for environmental management, people, and biosecurity.

Deer Industry New Zealand and the NZ Deer Farmers Association are committed to assisting all deer farmers having a current active farm environment plan and endorse good farm management principles. All venison processing and exporting companies are also members of NZ FAI and deer are included in NZ FAP and FAP+.

# Rural Professionals

Rural professionals can help with the development of a farm plan. Rural professionals also work with industry assurance programmes and farm planning initiatives.

Regional council staff can provide relevant advice and information on addressing specific farm and catchment issues such as soil erosion, biodiversity, pest management, understanding catchments and potential environmental constraints, and highlighting future resource management or regulatory challenges that may impact management or investment decisions.

As part of the integrated farm planning approach, all partners have agreed to work to develop a national rural professional certification system. This will provide confidence for farmers and growers seeking reliable, independent advice.

Adopting sustainable farm practices as part of integrated farm planning is already making a difference in how New Zealand farmers and growers tell the world our sustainable production story. Planning and reporting on what you do helps to build the evidence base to support the 'farmgate to table' story and build consumer confidence.



# What do I do next?

## Farmers and growers who have a farm plan as part of an industry assurance programme

Over the next 6 months industry assurance programmes will assess their programmes against the new integrated farm planning framework and identify areas where updates may be necessary. Industry assurance programmes will then progressively update their modules over time as appropriate, and support farmers and growers to implement changes in their own farm plans.

This guide is for your general information and will help you assess and focus on areas within your business where further action may be required. Industry assurance programmes will also develop new materials to support you with your planning process.

Many industry assurance programmes are already starting to incorporate greenhouse gas emissions into their programmes to reflect the He Waka Eke Noa commitments, so this is likely to be one of the early changes you will see.

You can expect to see changes from your industry assurance programme roll out towards the end of 2021, and into the start of 2022 including freshwater farm planning requirements once these are released. In some cases, the updates may initially be run as pilot programmes for testing by a smaller group before widespread roll-out during 2022. Industry assurance programmes will provide more information as it becomes available.

## Farmers and growers who have a farm plan but are not part of an industry assurance programme

If you developed your farm plan through a catchment group, another primary sector farm planning initiative, a regional council programme, or through a rural professional, getting back in contact with them is a useful first step.

There are regulatory requirements for farm planning that you will need to work into your existing plan, such as having a written plan for greenhouse gas emissions and the future freshwater farm planning requirements. It's therefore advisable to start the process of reviewing your existing plan to ensure it covers all the elements identified within integrated farm planning.

MPI and industry groups will make sure there is technical guidance material available this year for farmers or growers who wish to update their own farm plans, including providing resources through catchment groups and primary sector farm planning initiatives, and directly to rural professionals.

## Farmers and growers without documented farm plans and not in an industry assurance programme

This guidance document is a great starting point if you do not yet have a documented farm plan. It provides a step by step process to develop a farm plan.

You should also reach out to professional services to get the right support to develop your plan. These could include:

- your local catchment group or council land management advisor;
- a relevant industry assurance programme;
- a primary sector farm planning initiative;
- a rural professional.

You can also talk to other farmers or growers in your area about the process and their tips for how to develop a plan for your whole business.

MPI is developing an integrated farm planning template and further farm planning materials to support you with your farm plan, which will be available by July 2021. MPI will also work with existing catchment groups and primary sector farm planning initiatives to ensure enough support will be available to you to help you with your farm plan.

# Useful resources

He Waka Eke Noa – Primary Sector Climate Action Partnership – <https://hewakaekenoa.nz>

Intensive Winter Grazing Module – <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/funding-rural-support/environment-and-natural-resources/protecting-freshwater-health>

Freshwater Farm Plans – <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/funding-rural-support/environment-and-natural-resources/protecting-freshwater-health>

Primary Industries Advisory Services – <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/funding-rural-support/farming-funds-and-programmes/productive-and-sustainable-land-use/primary-industry-advisory-services>

Your industry body may also have further information on farm planning on their websites:

DairyNZ

<https://www.dairynz.co.nz/environment/farm-environment-plans>

Beef+Lamb New Zealand

<https://beeflambnz.com/farmplan>

Deer Industry NZ

<https://www.deernz.org/onfarmQA> and [https://deernz.org/sites/dinz/files/DeerFact\\_DeerQA\\_Web.pdf](https://deernz.org/sites/dinz/files/DeerFact_DeerQA_Web.pdf)

Horticulture NZ

<https://www.hortnz.co.nz/compliance>

Foundation for Arable Research

<https://www.far.org.nz/articles/310/farm-environment-plan-templates>

## Case study 1

# Successful Farm Planning – Woodhaven Gardens



Woodhaven Gardens is a 1000 hectare family-run commercial growing operation located on the fertile plains of the Horowhenua. It produces and distributes quality vegetables for both domestic and export markets.

Woodhaven is an example of a grower who uses multiple modules of the NZGAP Integrated Farm Plan. NZGAP certification has provided them with a pathway to meet market requirements plus local and central government regulatory requirements across food safety, environment, and social practice.

They are subject to audit by one independent auditor who can audit to this integrated standard. The registration and reporting to markets and regulators is centralised via NZGAP and their auditor AsureQuality. Woodhaven have a combination of in-house capability and a range of advisors to provide technical support across their business, including with their Integrated Farm Plan.

This case study demonstrates the efficiency benchmarking and recognition:

- NZGAP GLOBALG.A.P equivalent is fully benchmarked to the GLOBALG.A.P. standard and to the NZ Food Act 2014.
- The NZGAP Environment Management System (EMS) is benchmarked to the regulatory requirements in Horizons Plan Change 2 and other Regional Plans, e.g. Tukituki, Environment Canterbury, Gisborne and to the Good Farming Practice Principles 2018 and will also be benchmarked to Section 9A of the Resource Management Act
- The NZGAP Social Practice add-on is benchmarked to GLOBALG.A.P GRASP and NZ Labour laws.

The following table summarises the standards they are certified to and the regulatory and market outcomes met.

Standards/Modules	Regulatory Outcome	Market Outcome
NZGAP GLOBALG.A.P. equivalent	Food Act registration and verification	NZGAP and GLOBALG.A.P certification
GLOBAL G.A.P GRASP	NZ labour laws	NZGAP Social Practice certification and GLOBALG.A.P GRASP certification
NZGAP EMS add-on	Horizons Plan Change 2 Farm Planning	NZGAP EMS certification



## ▶ Case study 2

# Planning for success – Longbeach Farm

Rick and Diana Bourke, along with their daughter Sara Russell and her husband Stuart as 50/50 sharemilkers, achieved Synlait's Lead with Pride Gold Elite certification for their Longbeach farm in 2017.

They run a 280-hectare, 730 cow dairy farm in coastal Mid-Canterbury with young stock reared on farm.

Longbeach was one of the first farms to achieve the standard. At first achieving Gold Elite status was seen as a novel concept, but once it was obvious it could provide a premium milk price and help them set up systems and identify efficiency gains it was a must do.

Within the Lead with Pride pillars there are a number of standards and expectations, relating to milk-quality, environment, animal health and welfare and social responsibility. Achieving some of these does come with a capital cost in improving infrastructure and technology on farm, but the investments have been planned so they all made sense financially. Profit and efficiency have always been high on the farms' priority list, but so are other farm management areas such as animal and environmental performance.

There has always been a strong environmental component to the Lead with Pride programme, and this year Synlait has further developed its greenhouse gas pillar providing farmers with a framework and multiple actions they can take to reduce greenhouse gases.

Animal health and welfare are a big focus on the farm and the Lead with Pride certification process is very much aligned to Longbeach Farm's values. The process has also helped them learn more, where measuring and monitoring has been a key factor.

The social responsibility pillar has a major focus on staff, and health and safety of people on farm including contractors. It is vitally important systems are in place on farm and the programme checks this.

Preparing for audits used to be stressful but the development of dedicated Lead with Pride software has helped immensely. Keeping lots of different bits of paper in a box has been replaced with uploading receipts and invoices, photos and screen shots or other documents as evidence, and putting them into the areas they relate. This makes it easier for both the farm and the auditor.

The goal posts do move with the Lead with Pride programme as expectations from markets, the public and regulators change. Synlait talks annually to its suppliers about new expectations for the coming season, and this approach allows for feedback on how to best achieve them, ensuring it is practical for all involved.

# The Integrated Farm Planning Steering Group

The agricultural and horticultural sectors are committed to supporting farmers and growers throughout New Zealand, to run sustainable and profitable businesses.

A steering group comprising senior representatives, from the primary sector, regional councils and the Ministries for Primary Industries and the Environment are working together to help farmers and growers meet consumer, market and regulatory needs, through a unified approach to farm planning that:

- Focuses on practical solutions for farmers and growers
- Looks to remove duplication and harmonise requirements across industry schemes to save farmers time and money
- Reflects the long-term aspirations of communities
- Builds on but not limited to existing primary sector and regional council farm planning and assurance programmes
- Considers all parts of farmers and growers' businesses
- Combines voluntary good practice with consumer, market, and regulatory needs

- Shares knowledge to support change and encourage the adoption of new practices and technologies
- Improves the ability for farmers and growers to use and share data as needed
- Lifts the quality and consistency of farm planning nationally

## Steering group representatives:

Federated Farmers

DairyNZ

Deer Industry NZ

Horticulture NZ

Beef+Lamb NZ

Foundation for Arable Research

Federation of Māori Authorities

Ministry for the Environment

Ministry for Primary Industries

Regional Council representatives

# Integrated Farm Planning Steering Group's Commitment to Farmers and Growers

Underpinning commitment	Timeframe	Who will be involved?
Primary sectors will prioritise their Good Farm Planning areas for action, aligning these with sector strategies and work programmes, and community priorities	June 2021	Primary sectors and Steering Group
Work together to harmonise farm planning activities to make it easier and less time consuming for farmers, and to reduce costs and duplication	Ongoing	Government, primary sectors, Regional Councils, and Steering Groups

## Aligning existing farm planning programmes with integrated farm planning principles

Action	Timeframe	Who will be involved?
Work with industry assurance programmes, other farm planning initiatives and catchment groups to incorporate the integrated farm planning approach and Good Farming Planning Principles into their programmes and initiatives; support the uptake of regulatory farm planning requirements, e.g. intensive winter grazing, freshwater and greenhouse gas emissions	June 2022 Annual review and update on progress	Industry assurance programmes and other farm planning initiatives with support from primary sectors, Regional Councils and Government
Work together to support farmer and grower adoption of the integrated farm planning approach and Good Farm Planning Principles through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Recognition of industry assurance programmes and other farm planning initiatives for supporting farmers and growers to meet regulatory requirements;</li> <li>■ Support of industry assurance programmes and other farm planning initiatives, including pilots with farmer and grower groups and opportunities for shared knowledge between programmes.</li> </ul>	Dec 2021 Ongoing	Government, primary sectors, Regional Councils, and Steering Groups
Communicate progress against the implementation of these commitments.	Annual	Primary sectors, Regional Councils and Steering Groups



## Providing tools to encourage the uptake of farm planning

Action	Timeframe	Who will be involved?
<p>Work together to support farmer and grower adoption of the integrated farm planning approach and Good Farm Planning principles through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Training and certification programmes for rural professionals (e.g. freshwater) to lift the quality and reliability of advice; and</li> <li>■ Delivering tools for improved support monitoring and recording, including enabling data-sharing, information provision and data recording platforms.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Primary sectors (where relevant), Regional Councils, and Government</p>

# Notes



