

AT THE FOREFRONT OF PROGRESS

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PASSIONATE ABOUT FARMING

“Just because you weren’t brought up on a farm doesn’t mean that you can’t go farming!” says 22-year-old GRACE GIBBERD.

Although she grew up in Hamilton, spending time on relatives’ farms as a child sparked an interest in farming and led Grace into a career she loves.

“Being a farmer means you are an agronomist, vet, mechanic, animal nutritionist, machine operator, and soil scientist.

It also means early starts and long hours during busy times of the year, but you can’t beat working outdoors.”

After leaving Hamilton Christian School (where she studied English, Statistics, Biology, Chemistry, and Agricultural and Horticultural Science in Year 13), Grace went to Massey University to study a Bachelor of Science with a major in Agricultural Science and a minor in Animal Science.

“Uni was a great learning experience,” she says. “I enjoyed being able to study a topic that I was really interested in and passionate about. It was also

exciting – although a bit daunting at the time – leaving home and becoming more independent.”

As well as helping her financially, a DairyNZ scholarship paired Grace with a mentor during her time at university and introduced her to people who shared their insights and knowledge of the industry.

Since graduating two years ago, Grace has been working at DairyNZ’s Scott Farm in Waikato in a role that combines her love of science with her love of hands-on farm work and animals.

Scott Farm is a research farm, so Grace is involved in research work, like sample taking, data recording and animal observation, as well as farm duties such as stockwork, milking and feeding out.

“I enjoy working as part of a big team and being at the forefront of current research projects that are being conducted in the industry. It’s super interesting!”

Grace says studying an agricultural degree provided her with a strong foundation of knowledge that she uses every day.

“It has allowed me to gain a greater understanding of the reasons behind tactical management decisions made and given me the skills to be able to contribute to these discussions.”

At last year’s Dairy Industry Awards, she was named Dairy Trainee of the Year, beating nine other finalists from around the country.

“It was really exciting to be recognised in my field and get involved with the wider industry.”

If you’re interested in a career in dairying, Grace’s advice is to not let your background dictate what career paths you think you can and can’t do.

“There are plenty of options for study and learning if you want to get into dairying, whether that’s an agricultural degree at university or on-the-job training through Primary ITO courses.”

As one of New Zealand’s largest employers, the dairy sector needs motivated and passionate people to work as dairy farmers, agri-business professionals and agri-scientists.



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GRACE GIBBERD

KEY FACTS



- **GRACE GIBBERD HAS A BACHELOR OF SCIENCE WITH A MAJOR IN AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE AND A MINOR IN ANIMAL SCIENCE FROM MASSEY UNIVERSITY. SHE WAS AWARDED A DAIRYNZ SCHOLARSHIP.**
- **SHE WORKS ON ONE OF DAIRYNZ’S RESEARCH FARMS – SCOTT FARM IN THE WAIKATO. LAST YEAR, SHE WAS NAMED DAIRY TRAINEE OF THE YEAR AT THE DAIRY INDUSTRY AWARDS.**



For more information on career options within the dairy sector, visit www.godairy.co.nz and www.dairynz.co.nz/people/dairy-careers