

OUTDOORS AND ON THE FARM

NOT A JOB BUT A LIFESTYLE

writer **SARA CARBERY**

photographer **STEVE SELWOOD**

“Dairy farming is so much more than waking up early and milking cows,” says 23-year-old **JAMES BEATTIE**. **“Not only is it about feeding cows and growing grass, it’s also about stewardship of our land and producing sustainable milk that literally feeds the world.”**

Growing up a city kid in Christchurch, James had no idea what a career in agriculture would look like, but he knew he wanted to study something that had lots of variety and good job prospects.

“I sat down with a teacher I trusted, and we talked through various tertiary options and the Bachelor of Commerce (Agriculture) at Lincoln seemed most suited to me.”

The variety of courses covered by the degree includes soil science, plant science, marketing, farm management, animal science, law, crop science, economics, soil management, environmental studies, and an on-farm practical work-placement.

After graduating from Lincoln, James worked for Fonterra. This was “an awesome opportunity” to learn and develop professionally, he says, but being desk-bound was not for him.

“I quickly realised that I wanted to be working with my hands, outdoors and with animals. Dairy farming ticks all those boxes.”

Eager to learn, James quickly worked his way up from farm assistant to herd manager, before taking on the second-in-charge role at Lincoln University’s dairy farm.

He loves the variety of his job, which includes pasture management, feed budgeting, irrigation, milking, animal health, fencing, tractor operating, rearing calves, record keeping, general maintenance and more. “Every day is different and there is always a new challenge to tackle.”

In his final year at St Thomas of Canterbury College in Christchurch, James studied Level 3 English, Statistics, Physical Education, Geography and – most usefully – Economics.

“Understanding the global dairy market and how global dairy supply impacts demand – and vice-versa – and how that impacts the on-farm milk price that farmers receive in New Zealand is important.”

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James’s goal is to one day own his own farm, but for now he is happy to be learning as much as he can.

“It is really cool being able to work in this industry and know that there is plenty of opportunity to make a career for yourself, earn good money and create wealth, making farm ownership a realistic goal.”

If you are interested in a career in dairy farming but did not grow up on a farm – do not be put off, says James.

“You can learn on-the-job and employers are always keen to teach you what they know.

“There is also a growing need for technology on-farm, making it a great career for young, technically savvy people,” he adds.

“Dairy farming is hard work but it’s incredibly rewarding and I feel proud to be working in this industry.

“It’s more than a job; it’s a lifestyle.”

KEY FACTS



- **JAMES BEATTIE HAS A BACHELOR OF COMMERCE (AGRICULTURE) FROM LINCOLN UNIVERSITY.**
- **HE IS CURRENTLY SECOND-IN-CHARGE AT LINCOLN’S OWN DAIRY FARM, WHERE HE PERFORMS TASKS SUCH AS IRRIGATION, MILKING, FENCING, TRACTOR OPERATING AND REARING CALVES.**
- **IN YEAR 13, JAMES STUDIED ENGLISH, STATISTICS, PHYSICAL EDUCATION, GEOGRAPHY AND ECONOMICS.**



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