

FROM CITY LIFE TO COUNTRY LIFE

RURAL GRADUATE OPPORTUNITIES AND SUPPORT



SCHOOL LEAVERS CAN COME INTO FARMING WITH ANY RANGE OF SKILLS AND WILL FIT IN SOMEWHERE.

MADDIE LYNCH

writer **PETER WHITE** // photograph **JOANNE McCLOY**

MADDIE LYNCH is proud to be one of eight graduates selected for this year's intake of the Grassroots Dairy Graduate Management Programme. The 21-year-old is working on a dairy farm near Ashburton but her pathway to get there is not your typical rural upbringing story.

Maddie attended Samuel Marsden Collegiate School in Wellington. In Year 13 she took Biology, English, German, Photography and Statistics. She was not specifically looking at dairy farming as a career but had always been interested in animals, the environment and science growing up, so decided to do a Bachelor of Agricultural Science at Massey University.

In her first year studying, in 2021, Maddie worked on a dairy farm for the practicum work and loved it. She knew that was what she wanted to do, despite not having worked with cows before. Her move to Ashburton through the graduate programme was quite a step outside her comfort zone in Wellington but she has adapted well to her new world.

"With the programme, I do four hours of modules each week and it runs from February to November. The modules cover quite a range like animal health, to personal goals, farm and personal finances, and pasture management. It is super helpful, particularly for me coming from the city, with the on-farm learning as well as the modules that broaden my understanding of farming systems," says Maddie.

"The programme is really important. It can be really hard as a graduate finding roles so it takes the stress out of finding a really good employer. It also helps you to network which is really, really important in any industry but especially the ag industry. It helps you to really flourish in the industry and grow your career faster than others may do."

Maddie loves her life as a dairy farmer. The combination of working outdoors and seeing the sun rise every morning – plus the rewards of working with animals and seeing your hard work pay off in terms of production – are winning factors for her.

"I just love cows. They are like big dogs. I love going up to them and giving them a good scratch and a pat. My passion for the industry has grown ever since I moved here. It is such a rewarding job.

"There is plenty of variety as well. You are not just working with animals. You could be working in the office doing finances or pasture management, that requires a lot of maths, and there is problem-solving in the job every day."

Maddie encourages young females to consider a career in farming. Yes, it can be daunting and is hard work, but she says the rewards are great and it is exciting being one of the females leading the way in the industry.

"School leavers can come into farming with any range of skills and will fit in somewhere. You might be good at maths or good practically – you can be catered for in farming and really grow from there."

KEY FACTS



- **MADDIE LYNCH** GREW UP IN WELLINGTON AND NOW WORKS ON A DAIRY FARM NEAR ASHBURTON.
- DESPITE GROWING UP IN A CITY, **MADDIE'S** INTEREST IN ANIMALS, THE ENVIRONMENT AND SCIENCE LED TO HER COMPLETING A BACHELOR OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE AT **MASSEY UNIVERSITY**.
- SHE IS ONE OF **EIGHT GRADUATES** SELECTED FOR **THIS YEAR'S** INTAKE OF THE **GRASSROOTS DAIRY GRADUATE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME**.



For more information on the **Grassroots Dairy Graduate Management Programme**, visit www.dairygrads.co.nz and for more information on **career options within the dairy sector**, visit www.godairy.co.nz
Visit www.massey.ac.nz for more information on **agricultural study options** at the university