

SCIENCE AND PASSION TAKES CHARGE writer SARA CARBERY
photo ALAN STEVENS

FROM THE CITY TO THE FARM



“I’M WORKING WITH ANIMALS THAT WEIGH NORTH OF 300 KILOGRAMS, SO BEING CONFIDENT WITH HANDLING THEM IS ESSENTIAL IN MY WORK.”

SHOBANA REDDY

Having grown up as a city girl, being around large animals is one of the things **SHOBANA REDDY** enjoys most about her role as research technician with DairyNZ – and it was one of the biggest challenges she faced when she started the job one year ago.

“I’m working with animals that weigh north of 300 kilograms, so being confident with handling them is essential in my work.”

She also loves working in an environment that is constantly changing and evolving. “It definitely keeps things interesting.”

Shobana says every day is different and what she does depends on what trials are going on. “It ranges from feeding calves and sampling for blood, urine, milk etc, to harvesting grass and analysing data. As a research technician, we regularly collaborate with scientists to undergo the operation of trials.”

Passionate about delving into how things function, and what makes up the living world, Shobana naturally gravitated toward science at school.

In her final year at Hillcrest High School in Hamilton, she took English, Calculus, Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

The most useful subjects have been Chemistry, Calculus and English. “I found that what I learned from Chemistry and Calculus gave me a great

foundation for their corresponding subjects at first-year university level. Also, English gave me an opportunity to practise my academic writing.”

In hindsight, Statistics would have been helpful, she says.

“Taking Statistics would have given me a good base knowledge for data processing and analysis.”

While she was studying toward a Bachelor of Science at the University of Waikato, majoring in Chemistry, and Molecular and Cellular Biology, Shobana applied for a DairyNZ summer internship that incorporated mātauranga Māori.

“That intrigued me as I had not seen the combination of the two worlds before, so I was very interested in being a part of it.”

Before being accepted into the internship programme, she had little to no knowledge of the dairy industry.

“What drove me to apply was my eagerness to learn new things, the opportunity to put what I had learnt from uni to practical use, and I was just keen to gain work experience.”

The internship gave her a lot of insight into the opportunities that DairyNZ and the dairy industry have to offer and led to a fulltime role when she graduated.

Now 23, Shobana’s goal career-wise is to eventually complete a masters and PhD and become a scientist. “I hope to be running my own trials someday.”

Her advice to school leavers is to not be scared to take any opportunities that come your way.

“Trial and error is an important part of growth. Always be curious and ask questions, especially if you don’t understand things. And apply for as many scholarships as you can!”

“Also, try your best to figure out what you are passionate about, so you can work towards building a career around it.”

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

KEY FACTS



- **SHOBANA REDDY** HAS A **BACHELOR OF SCIENCE** FROM THE **UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO**, DURING WHICH SHE COMPLETED A **DAIRYNZ SUMMER INTERNSHIP** THAT INCORPORATED **MĀTAURANGA MĀORI**.
- HER **SUMMER INTERNSHIP** LED TO A **FULLTIME ROLE** AND SHE NOW WORKS AS A **RESEARCH TECHNICIAN** WITH **DAIRYNZ**.
- **SHOBANA** STUDIED **ENGLISH, CALCULUS, BIOLOGY, CHEMISTRY AND PHYSICS** IN HER FINAL YEAR AT HIGH SCHOOL.



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