

CREATING SECTOR RESOURCES

DAIRY GOES DIGITAL

writer **SARA CARBERY** // photo **ALAN STEVENS**

Growing up in a family that “lived and breathed agriculture”, REBECCA REITH was exposed to many sectors of farming from a young age, but her introduction to the dairy sector didn’t come until she was 15, when she helped out in a milking shed.

Now 26, Rebecca works for DairyNZ in their solutions and development team, with a focus on responsible dairy projects.

“I get to meet and work with some amazing people who are all doing some really epic things for the industry,” she says, “including the climate change team, which involves farmers, policy makers and scientists who are all working to ensure New Zealand’s dairy industry remains both profitable and sustainable! It’s a really diverse group.

“I get to see so many different sides of the industry, which keeps me interested and very proud to be working in the dairy industry.” Rebecca describes her role as that of “a recreator”.

“My role is to create digital resources that communicate and connect all DairyNZ’s knowledge and data with farmers in a way that is practical, relatable and easy-to-use.”

A degree in agricultural science at Massey University equipped Rebecca with the skills she needed to embark on a successful career in agriculture, even though it wasn’t her first choice when she left Rangī Ruru Girls’ School at the end of Year 13.

She had always wanted to be a vet – “mainly because I loved science and working with animals” – but didn’t get selected to continue with veterinary after pre-vet studies. “At the time it was very disappointing,” she says, “but something I don’t regret giving a go.”

Passionate about art, Rebecca took Level 3 Scholarship Painting and Printmaking in Year 13, alongside English, Statistics and Biology, “to keep my options open when it came to university”.

“I don’t believe there is a particular subject that has proven to be the most useful. I believe gaining a broad skillset such as planning, public speaking, listening, computer literacy, learning how to study and structure reports and essays has been the most useful. If you have those basics, as well as a sound knowledge base in areas of interest (such as biology), you will be well set-up to take on anything.”

The biggest piece of advice she wishes she had told herself when she was leaving school is it’s okay to say you don’t know.

“No one expects you to know everything or have all the skills just yet. Be open to new ideas and ways of doing things; you can learn something new from everyone.”

Her other piece of advice is to put yourself out there and see if you can do some work experience with companies or in roles you think you may be interested in.

“This will allow you to start building relationships that will be helpful throughout your career, as well as narrow down the options if you are still really unsure what you may like to do.”



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KEY FACTS



- **REBECCA REITH** IS A **DIGITAL RESOURCE CREATOR** FOR **DAIRYNZ** IN THEIR **SOLUTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT TEAM**, WITH A FOCUS ON RESPONSIBLE DAIRY PROJECTS.
- SHE HAS A **BACHELOR OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE** FROM **MASSEY UNIVERSITY**.
- **REBECCA** RECOMMENDS FOCUSING ON DEVELOPING SKILLS IN **PLANNING, PUBLIC SPEAKING, LISTENING, COMPUTER LITERACY AND LEARNING HOW TO STUDY AND STRUCTURE REPORTS AND ESSAYS.**



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