

# INTENT ON IMPROVING FARMING SOLUTION SEEKER

writer **PETER WHITE** // photographer **ANDY JACKSON**

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ASHLEY PRIMROSE



“It is definitely a dream job for me,” says **ASHLEY PRIMROSE**. The 24-year-old works as an extension partner for DairyNZ and is based in Taranaki. She moved into this particular role in September 2020, having joined DairyNZ more than three years ago.

Ashley works closely with dairy farmers and runs discussion groups around seasonal farming issues and topics to help farmers improve their farming practices.

“In the discussion groups, you try to get the farmers to learn off one another by discussing different issues on the farm and use science principles to make good decisions about what they are doing on their farms and how to improve things.

“I love my job [and] getting to deal with farmers a lot, and with my passion for ag science I can tap into some of that research. It is a perfect mix of what I enjoy doing.”

There are plenty of challenges in her role, which not only makes it interesting but tests Ashley on a daily

basis. Some of the challenges are from within the industry generally, particularly compliance changes, but Ashley says it makes it exciting as well to be part of the solution on farms.

“Sometimes you can also be dealing with tricky people but it is all part of the fun and you get that with every job. Dealing with farmers can be interesting and I definitely thought being a woman might [make it] be more challenging than it is. But it has been good and you get to talk people round and prove to them you know what you are talking about.”

Ashley grew up on a farm and attended Te Puke High School in the Bay of Plenty. In Year 13, she took core subjects of Chemistry, Biology, Physics and Calculus, plus Drama – which she says has been hugely important in her career.

“Drama was kind of my fun subject amongst those much harder subjects. It taught me a lot that I have used in my job – like how to speak well, especially with public speaking.

“I was thinking about being a vet when I was growing up but with studying agriculture, I realised there were much more opportunities to grow and do different things overseas with an agriculture science degree.”

In 2019, Ashley completed her Bachelor of Science through Massey University. She loved being with like-minded people studying and there were also people on the course who had never been on a farm before.

“If you enjoy science and animals then it is a great degree to do. I really liked all the variety and how you touch on almost every aspect of agriculture at some point in your degree. Towards the end of my degree, I did more dairy-focused production papers.”

Her advice to school leavers is to get in touch with people who are doing things you are interested in, whether studying or working.

“Doing some work experience is so important. Even going out for the day with someone is a really good way to get an idea of what it is all about.”

## KEY FACTS



- **ASHLEY PRIMROSE** HAS A **BACHELOR OF SCIENCE** FROM **MASSEY UNIVERSITY**. IN STUDYING **AGRICULTURE**, **ASHLEY** HAS SEEN THE **BREADTH OF OPPORTUNITIES** FOR **PROFESSIONAL GROWTH** AND THE **GLOBAL WORK OPPORTUNITIES** THAT AN **AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE DEGREE** PROVIDES.
- SHE WORKS AS AN **EXTENSION PARTNER** AT **DAIRYNZ** AND IS BASED IN **TARANAKI**.
- **ASHLEY** STUDIED **CHEMISTRY, BIOLOGY, PHYSICS** AND **DRAMA** IN **YEAR 13**.



For more information on career options within the dairy sector, visit [www.godairy.co.nz](http://www.godairy.co.nz) and [www.dairynz.co.nz/people/dairy-careers](http://www.dairynz.co.nz/people/dairy-careers)  
For more information on study options available at Massey University, visit [www.massey.ac.nz](http://www.massey.ac.nz)