

CITY GIRL TO AGRIBUSINESS MAJOR OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND FROM SCHOLARSHIP

writer **PETER WHITE** // photographer **ALAN STEVENS**

A chance meeting was the game changer for CELINE WALTERS in deciding on a career in agribusiness.

In her final year at Tauranga Girls' College, Celine went to a talk on the opportunities offered by agribusiness by the University of Waikato's Professor Jacqueline Rowarth.

She went in thinking she had nothing to lose and came out completely focussed on a new career.

Now in her fourth year of a Bachelor of Management Studies majoring in Agribusiness and Marketing, Celine admits that being a city girl made for some challenges.

"It has been a big stepping stone but you catch on pretty quick and learn it from a different perspective. Coming from the city you do see it differently and see more opportunities," she says.

Sustainable dairying and environmental issues are her high priorities as she moves into the sector.

"We are, as farmers in society, coming to a point where we do have to change what we are doing to provide for the next generation and the generation after that.

"So how do we produce food more efficiently without being detrimental to the environment and continue that lifecycle for the future generations?"

Celine wants to work in the dairy sector to improve the communication of environment information and research to farmers.

She has benefitted from a DairyNZ scholarship over her last three years of study at Waikato.



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CELINE WALTERS

"The pastoral care is really helpful and Susan Stokes from DairyNZ is really supportive and ensures you are on the right track.

"She really makes sure you are not too over-committed and gives you support throughout the entire journey."

Summer internships are part of the scholarship. Celine has worked part-time at DairyNZ for two years writing environmental research into farmer-friendly language.

"In the past year I have also worked on the environment team doing a research paper into environmental information diffusion to farmers and how to improve that from a DairyNZ organisational perspective. That led to a part-time job at DairyNZ in their communication team."

Celine is benefitting from network opportunities. She is the student representative for the Waikato branch of the New Zealand Institute for Primary Industry Management (NZIPM) and was the co-ordinator of the Waikato Rabobank Agri-leadership programme, which she says gave her some of the best networks possible – meeting people like Traci Houpapa and Pamela Storey.

Celine studied Maths, English, Biology, Chemistry and Business Studies in her last year at Tauranga Girls'. She would love to see more school leavers consider the rural sector as a career.

"There is the greatest amount of opportunities in dairy. It's not just farming, which I thought it was coming in. It involves law, marketing and accounting and science. Don't restrict yourself to just thinking about the practical component."

KEY FACTS



- **CELINE WALTERS** IS CURRENTLY STUDYING A **BACHELOR OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES MAJORING IN AGRIBUSINESS AND MARKETING** AT THE **UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO**.
- SHE HAS BENEFITTED FROM A **DAIRYNZ SCHOLARSHIP**, WHICH INCLUDES **SUMMER INTERNSHIPS**, OVER HER LAST THREE YEARS OF STUDY.
- **CELINE** IS PARTICULARLY FOCUSED ON **SUSTAINABLE DAIRYING AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**.



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