

FOCUSSED ON FARMING

A LOVE OF DOGS AND HORSES writer PETER WHITE photo KOROU DIGITAL AGENCY, WAIROA

Shepherd **GALAXIE WAIHAPE** just loves working with animals in the great outdoors.

She believes young women have every chance of succeeding in farming with the right attitude. "I am only half the size of the guys out here and I can do just as good as they can do," she says.

The 20-year-old loves being out on a horse with her dogs working the steep terrain of Mangapoike Station, which is located between Wairoa and Gisborne.

Galaxie, who is of Ngati Pahauwera descent, was not from a farming background but always wanted to be a farmer.

"It was all I wanted to do but I had no clue about it, nothing at all. I just knew I wanted to be involved in farming somehow, so I worked hard at school because I knew that would be a big help to try and find some training," she says.

"I got my NCEA Level 2 then left and worked to get some savings before applying for the Growing Future Farmers (GFF) course."

The two-year GFF cadetship enables graduates to get a GFF Essential Farm Skills industry recognised certification aligned to the Certificate of Agriculture, Infrastructure and Machinery (Level 3).

Galaxie did her training at Mangapoike Station. She loved honing her skills – driving a tractor, shearing and mustering sheep, and using Cloud-based software.

"When I first started, I was still trying to grow up and become independent so it was pretty scary at the start. Once I broke out of that being so shy and quiet, it became really easy. I felt like I grew and took on every challenge and opportunity to learn.

"The GFF course gave me a chance to get better at different things and learn what's involved in farming, while you are doing it. Every day, learning stuff was pretty exciting."

For Galaxie, it really is a labour of love working the land and solving the many challenges that come up daily.

"You know when you are really passionate about something, you can't sleep at night. That is the sort of buzz I went through once I had my dogs well-enough trained to take out. I have amazed myself how much I have learned in such a short space of time.

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GALAXIE WAIHAPE



"What really inspired me when I first started was seeing another cadet (who stayed on at Mangapoike like me after he did his training) riding with his dogs. Once I reached that point, it was unreal to be able to do that myself. It was so cool.

"The dog work and being out on a horse is quite satisfying."

In Year 12 at Wairoa College, Galaxie took Science, Geography, Maths, English and Social Science. Her advice for school leavers is to just go for it, you have got nothing to lose.

"Attitude is number one. You have to try your hardest and also love what you do at the same time."

KEY FACTS



- **GALAXIE WAIHAPE** WORKS AS A SHEPHERD ON **MANGAPOIKE STATION**, BETWEEN **WAIROA** AND **GISBORNE**.
- SHE COMPLETED A **TWO-YEAR GROWING FUTURE FARMERS CADETSHIP**. SHE ACHIEVED AN **ESSENTIAL FARM SKILLS** INDUSTRY RECOGNISED CERTIFICATION ALIGNED TO THE **CERTIFICATE OF AGRICULTURE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND MACHINERY (LEVEL 3)**.
- **GALAXIE** STUDIED **SCIENCE, GEOGRAPHY, MATHS, ENGLISH AND SOCIAL SCIENCE** IN YEAR 12.



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