

TE WHAKAAHUATANGA MAHI

Position Description

Kaiārahi Ahuwhenua / Māori Agribusiness Specialist

Position

Position Title: Kaiārahi Ahuwhenua / Māori Agribusiness Specialist

Direct Report: N/A

Budget: N/A

Management Position: N/A

Reports to: Pou Ārahi – Head of Māori Engagement and Strategy

Career Level: Specialist

Revenue: N/A

Delegated Authority: N/A

Te Aronga o DairyNZ - Purpose of DairyNZ

Our Purpose: ***Te whanake anamata angitu mō ngā pāmu kau o Aotearoa - Progressing a positive future for New Zealand dairy farming.***

Our Vision: ***To make the levy the best investment of every New Zealand dairy farmer.***

Our Values: ***Pono - Credibility, Pākiki - Curiosity, Māia - Courage and Kotahitanga - Connected***

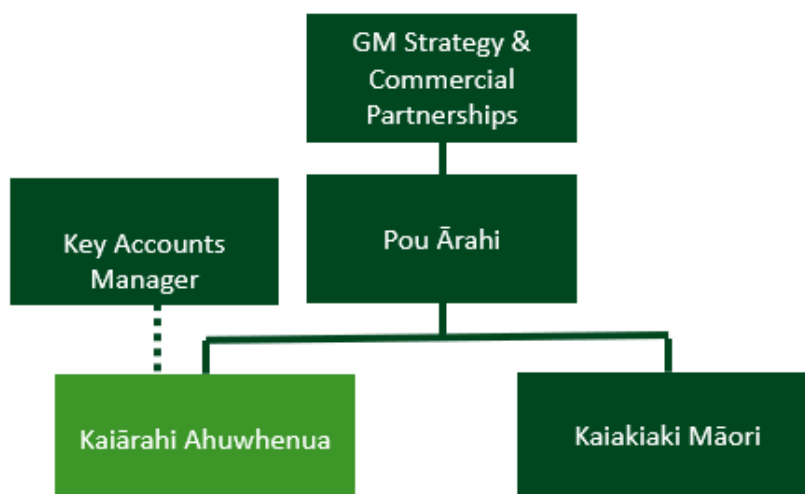
That's why we exist for farmers, working along them and others to leverage our collective strength and create purposeful change.

Te Whāinga o te Tūranga - Purpose of the position

At DairyNZ, we recognise the valuable contribution Māori make to the dairy industry, our levy base, the dairy workforce, and our shared vision for a sustainable, enduring sector. Guided by our Māori Engagement and Partnership Strategy, we work alongside Māori agribusinesses through a values led, tikanga based approach, celebrating excellence with the Ahuwhenua Trophy competition, connecting farmers with DairyNZ's expertise and networks, supporting strong farm performance, and ensuring dairy farmers have access to the mātauranga needed to keep their businesses agile, resilient, profitable and successful. We support capability building through our Māori internship programme and engagement activities.

The Kaiārahi Ahuwhenua plays a pivotal role in leading meaningful outcomes for Māori levy payers, farm businesses, farmers, and rural communities. Well-connected in the Māori agribusiness sector, you will provide leadership on Māori levy payer and farmer engagement across the regions, support our regional team leaders, guide DairyNZ's service priorities, and champion Māori dairying interests. On-farm, you will lead the adoption of best-practice approaches that strengthen business governance, on-farm performance as well as grow recognition of DairyNZ's value to Māori dairy levy payers, agribusinesses and farmers across the nation.

Team organisation chart



Key Position Deliverables

Key Performance Requirement:	Key Indicators:
Knowledge and competency in te ao Māori, te reo me ōna tikanga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic understanding of te reo Māori supported by a good understanding of tikanga Māori. • Understanding the importance of whenua, whakapapa, and hītori, as well as the role of kāwanatanga structures (e.g., ahuhenua trusts, companies, incorporations) to Māori agribusiness. • Confidence in participating in Māori settings such as pōwhiri, hui, wānanga, and tangihanga. • Basic understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and its application within te ao Māori, Māori land, settlement entities, and both local and central government contexts. • Commitment to developing Māori capability and contributing to an organisation that values and celebrates te ao Māori in its work.
Farm Business Technical Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience working with Māori agribusinesses and organisations (e.g., Ahuwhenua Trusts, Incorporation, Māori farm owners etc.). • Good understanding of the Whole Farm Dairy System, recognising that all aspects of the farm operate as interconnected components rather than isolated parts. • Willingness to learn and, with training and support, confidently use DairyBase as a diagnostic and benchmarking tool to improve Māori dairying performance. • Apply a working knowledge of agribusiness governance principles and practices for managing a dairy farming business, with the ability to support best practice and advance Māori capability to operate successfully within the dairy industry.

Strategic Planning and Project Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide leadership for Māori agribusiness projects and initiatives, from planning through to delivery, ensuring alignment with regional plans, the Māori agribusiness strategy, and DairyNZ commitments. • Collaborate with internal teams, industry partners, and rural professionals to design and deliver products, tools, and services that meet the needs of Māori levy payers and farmers. • Lead the collection and use of sector insights to inform decision making, track progress, and report against the Māori agribusiness projects and initiatives. • Lead DairyNZ's sponsorship and support of the Ahuwhenua competition, including promoting and recruiting Māori dairy farm entrants, as well as potential applicants for the Young Māori Farmer competition. • Support the Ahuwhenua committee, judging team, field days, media requirements, and all activities associated with the 93-year-old competition. • Develop plans and pursue opportunities to support farm entrants and young Māori farmers beyond the Ahuwhenua competition awards. • When required, assist the Project Leads, Pou Ārahi and/or other internal staff in developing business cases and/or applying for external funding that supports Māori agribusiness projects and initiatives.
Relationship and Network Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build and maintain strong, trust-based relationships with Māori levy payers, farmers, external stakeholders, internal teams, rural professionals, and adoption networks to deliver on targeted projects, regional plans, and engagement strategies for Māori dairy farm businesses. • Work collaboratively and effectively with the Pou Ārahi, Kaiakiaki, and other internal and external partners, contributing to shared goals and sector outcomes for Māori dairy farm businesses. • Establish and strengthen connections between DairyNZ and relevant external providers, companies, and organisations to expand influence and collaboration opportunities. • Ensure DairyNZ maintains an influential presence, effective farmer networks, and strong partnerships across the national Māori dairying sector. • Support the Key Accounts Manager in building and managing relationships with large Māori levy payers, ensuring their needs and perspectives are well represented. • Represent DairyNZ in Māori and industry forums, fostering constructive engagement, enhancing sector partnerships, and advocating for Māori interests in the dairy industry.
Facilitation and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect Māori in dairying with tailored capability development opportunities, education pathways, and learning providers to strengthen skills and knowledge across the sector. • Apply behaviour change principles to drive improvements in farm performance and grow leadership capability within Māori dairy businesses.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate purposeful meetings and wānanga that result in clear actions, measurable outcomes, and shared accountability. Build governance capability by fostering self-reliance, confident decision-making, and effective leadership at all levels. Enable targeted business performance gains that contribute to the long-term sustainability and success of Māori agribusinesses.
Product and Service Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the Māori Strategy and Partnership team to deliver authentic, empowering actions that advance DairyNZ's Māori Engagement and Partnership Strategy. Achieve engagement and capability plan targets in line with Māori agribusiness and regional plans through kaupapa driven farm assessments, targeted extension, and tailored support. Deliver relevant products and services to Māori by applying deep knowledge of dairy farm systems, the Whole Farm Assessment approach, and effective behaviour change processes. Collaborate with developers and extension staff to design and implement targeted engagement strategies that meet the needs of Māori farmers. Identify and share on-farm innovations with relevant DairyNZ staff to encourage sector-wide learning and adoption. Contribute technical content for internal and external publications to share knowledge, promote best practice, and highlight sector achievements.
How We Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role model DairyNZ values and principles: Pono (Credibility), Pūkiki (Curiosity), Māia (Courage), and Kotahitanga (Connected). Adhere to company policies, guidelines, and relevant legislation. Actively contribute to a collaborative, "one team" organisational culture and promote continuous improvement. Maintain a safe and healthy workplace by following industry best practice, taking prompt action to address hazards, and protecting people, property, and the environment. Support and promote DairyNZ's Health, Safety, and Wellbeing policies, procedures, and employee participation.

Key Relationships

Internal	External
Pou Ārahi - Head of Māori Strategy and Partnerships	Māori Levy Payers - Decision Makers (Chairperson/Trustees/Owner Operators)
Key Accounts Manager - Farm Solutions and Policy	Māori Dairy Farmers - Operations Staff
Kaiakiaki - Māori Development Advisor	Ahuwhenua Trophy Management Committee and Project Team
Regional Team and Regional Area Managers	Māori Agribusiness Advisors from Industry Partners e.g., Fonterra, Beef + Lamb, Ministry for Primary Industries, Miraka etc.
Strategy and Commercial Partnerships Business	Primary Sector Rural Professionals

Unit	
Programme and Project Leads	
Farmer Events Team	
Dairy Training Team	
DairyBase Team	

Qualifications and Experience

Essential	Preferred
A tertiary qualification in agribusiness, primary sector business, environmental or agricultural science; or at least 5 years' practical experience in one of these fields.	A postgraduate qualification in agribusiness, primary sector business, environmental or agricultural science, Māori and Indigenous Studies, and/or extensive (10+ years) practical experience in the agribusiness sector.
Basic understanding of te reo Māori supported by a good understanding of tikanga Māori.	Proficiency in te reo Māori and a strong, applied understanding of tikanga Māori.
Proven ability to facilitate and present scientific information, with extension experience and strong leadership, influence, and persuasion skills.	Demonstrated success in designing and implementing extension programmes that deliver measurable improvements at farm or business level.
Thorough understanding of the varied challenges across New Zealand's dairy sector, including economic, environmental, and cultural factors impacting Māori agribusinesses.	Deep sector expertise with a proven ability to anticipate future challenges and opportunities in Māori agribusiness, including policy shifts, market trends, and climate impacts.
Established relationships with iwi, hapū, Māori land trusts, incorporations, settlement entities, and Māori agribusiness leaders across multiple regions.	Strong, trusted relationships with iwi, hapū, and Māori agribusiness leaders nationwide, with a track record of co-developing initiatives and influencing strategic decision-making at governance level.
Experience managing multiple projects or workstreams simultaneously while maintaining quality, timelines, and budgets.	Proven history of delivering high-quality work, on time and within budget.
Strong organisational and time management skills with the ability to work in a team environment both internally and externally of DairyNZ	Demonstrated ability to lead high-performing teams, mentor others, and foster collaborative partnerships across organisations and sectors.
Excellent oral and written communication skills	Recognised ability to communicate persuasively across diverse audiences, including governance forums, policymakers, and international stakeholders.
Proficiency in Microsoft Office Suite	Strong digital capability, including use of data analysis, reporting, and collaboration tools to support decision-making and stakeholder engagement.

Full clean driver's license and the ability to travel, sometimes outside of the region you reside in.	Willingness and proven ability to travel extensively and represent the organisation at national forums.
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Job Specific & Technical Competencies	
Category	Descriptor/Evidence
Te Reo me ōna tikanga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comfortable meeting and engaging with Māori stakeholders. • Be able to provide cultural competency support to Regional Teams where and when appropriate. • Provide advice and recommendations into all regional plans and any targeted delivery/tools/services to Māori levy payers & farmers.
Business & Systems in a Māori Dairying Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to engage with Māori agribusinesses on sound governance and decision-making, recognising the roles of farm management, advisors, and trustees/board members in effective dairy business systems. • Capable of supporting these stakeholders to align operational decisions with both best-practice dairy business systems and kaupapa Māori values. • Understand various Māori land holding and managing entities and legalities and the implications of this to Māori dairy business development and management. • Understand the significance of kaitiakitanga to Māori agribusinesses and landowners. • Understand the Whole Farming system model, with ability to provide recommendations and feedback to Māori agribusinesses and key decision makers. • Understand and be able to describe the 5 farm systems, key parameters and performance trends against industry benchmarks and targets to Māori agribusiness and decision makers. • Interpret a cashflow budget, profit and loss statement and balance sheet, and calculate key indicators for Māori agribusinesses and decision makers e.g., Trustees, operation and farm business managers as well as 50:50 sharemilkers and lower order sharemilkers • Recognise key people, capability development and performance management principles and requirements including legal obligations, e.g. pay rates, time off, safety, etc.
Presentation & Facilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is effective in a variety of formal presentation settings: one-on-one, small and large groups, with peers, direct reports, and bosses; is effective both inside and outside the organisation, on both cool data and hot and controversial topics. • Commands attention and can manage group process during presentation and discussion • Can change tactics midstream as context requires.
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively seeks to collaborate. • Collaborates when appropriate to do so and can demonstrate successful collaborations. • Influences with ability to generate cohesion and inspire collaboration within areas of influence.

Rural Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the rural community and keeps up to date with the economic, political and environment issues affecting our farmers • Understands all parts of the farm systems • Understands practical solutions that support farmers
Composure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is cool under pressure; won't become defensive or irritated when times are tough; is considered mature; can be counted on to hold things together during tough times; can handle stress; is not knocked off balance by the unexpected; doesn't show frustration when resisted or blocked; is a settling influence in a crisis.
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning, organising and/or monitoring one's own work or the work of others to ensure achievement of desired results.
Motivating others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivates and empowers Māori agribusiness decision makers and farmers by understanding individual drivers, fostering shared ownership, and creating a positive environment where people feel valued and engaged.
Adult Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the theory and practical expertise to design and deliver adult learning opportunities/events. Uses proven adult learning techniques. Keeps up to date with best practice methodology.
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engages stakeholders through effective and adaptable communication, creating opportunities for discussion and idea sharing. Demonstrates empathy by understanding others' perspectives, anticipating reactions, and sharing relevant personal insights. Addresses contentious issues professionally and without defensiveness.
Customer Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies and addresses underlying customer needs, implementing best practices to enhance service. Works with DairyNZ experts to design customer focused services and processes, records and analyses feedback, and coaches' employees to build strong relationships. Creates an environment where staff are empowered to prioritise customer experience.

Career Level Competencies – Specialist

Competency	Descriptor/Evidence
PROBLEM SOLVING	Uses rigorous logic and methods to solve difficult problems with effective solutions; probes all fruitful sources for answers; can see hidden problems; is excellent at honest analysis; looks beyond the obvious and doesn't stop at the first answers.
INTELLECTUAL HORSEPOWER	Is bright and intelligent; deals with concepts and complexity comfortably; described as intellectually sharp, capable and agile.
INTERPERSONAL SAVVY	Relates well to all kinds of people – up, down and sideways, inside and outside the organisation; builds appropriate rapport; builds constructive and effective relationships; uses diplomacy and tact; can diffuse even high-tension situations comfortably.

**TIMELY DECISION
MAKING**

Makes decisions in a timely manner, sometimes with incomplete information under tight deadlines and pressure; able to make a quick decision.