dairynz.co.nz

DAIRYNZ Position Description

Senior Economist

Position

Position Title: Senior Economist
Direct Report: Nil
Budget: Nil
Management Position: No

Reports to: Head of Economics
Career Level: Specialist
Revenue: Nil
Delegated Authority: Nil

Purpose of DairyNZ

Our Purpose: ***Progressing a positive future for New Zealand dairy farming.***

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

Purpose of the position

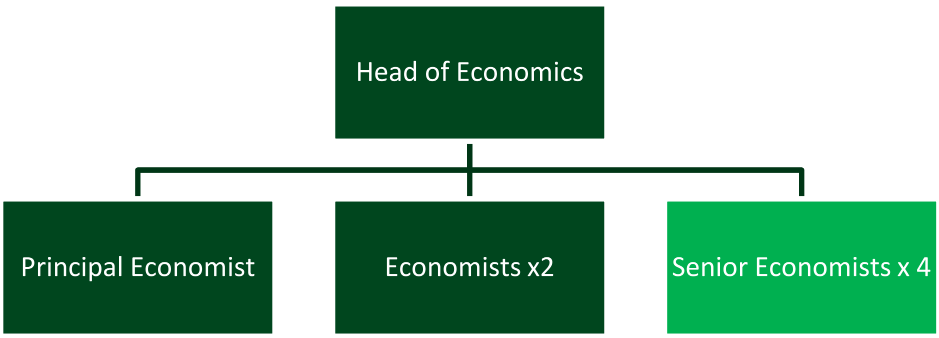
To strengthen the sustainability, profitability, productivity and resilience of New Zealand dairy farming through senior-level economic analysis, modelling, research, advice and thought leadership.

The Senior Economist provides technical leadership and strategic economic insight across projects, programmes and sector issues. The role translates complex economic information into practical advice for farmers, DairyNZ leaders, policy teams, industry partners and stakeholders.

The Senior Economist leads complex economic analysis, influencing organisational decision-making through evidence-based advice, mentoring others, and building economic capability across the organisation.

A defining aspect of the role is the ability to confidently communicate complex economic insights in practical, engaging and relatable ways that resonate with farmers, rural professionals and industry stakeholders, supporting informed decision-making and the adoption of improved farming practices.

Team organisation chart



Key position deliverables

Key deliverables of the role to be reflected in the Performance Agreement and Individual Performance Targets.

Key Performance Requirement:	**Key Indicators:**
Market research analysis and commentary	• Provide commentary and supporting analysis of economic trends influencing the dairy sector, in particular developments that influence farm-level financial performance, risk and opportunities. • Monitor, collate and analyse both external (e.g StatsNZ, Reserve Bank Economic forecasts) and internal (e.g Dairybase, Dairy Stats) data sources. • Provide analysis of industry strategies at the regional and national level, particularly those focused on value-chain competitiveness, growth, and productivity. • Consider issues and industry targets to conceptualise and assist the Economics Team develop strategy and programmes to help achieve DairyNZ goals in the economics space • Support the development of DairyNZ's economic view on priority and emerging sector issues, including farm profitability, input cost pressures, market volatility, productivity, environmental policy, land-use change and sector competitiveness. • Identify long-term economic risks, opportunities and trends likely to impact New Zealand dairy farmers and the wider dairy sector. • Prepare written commentary and analysis for publication, specifically on the Economics Dashboard to be published on DairyNZ's website.
Economic analysis	• Lead complex economic analysis, modelling and research to inform DairyNZ strategy, policy positions, investment decisions and farmer-facing advice. • Apply contemporary economic methods, quantitative and qualitative analysis, and modelling tools (including R or equivalent) to design, undertake and interpret economic research. • Provide recognised technical leadership by setting high standards for economic methodologies, modelling, assumptions, data quality, interpretation and communication, while continuously improving analytical practice. • Provide expert economic advice across multidisciplinary initiatives where economic analysis informs farmer and organisational outcomes. • Ensure economic outputs are robust, transparent, evidence-based, peer reviewed where appropriate, and fit-for-purpose for the intended audience. • Collaborate with Data Science & Modelling, DairyBase, Science, Policy and other multidisciplinary teams to integrate economic analysis with

	farm systems, environmental, biological and behavioural insights. • Be recognised as a subject matter expert in one or more strategic economic domains, providing trusted technical advice across DairyNZ.
Project delivery	• Lead the planning and delivery of economic research projects, ensuring delivery to agreed scope, quality, budget and timeframes. • Manage project resources, collaborators and subcontractors to deliver high-quality project outcomes. • Provide technical oversight and quality assurance for project outputs, including economic analysis, models, reports, publications and recommendations. • Contribute economic expertise to multidisciplinary projects, integrating economic analysis with scientific and farm systems knowledge. • Share technical expertise and mentor colleagues to build capability and continuously improve project delivery. • Ensure project reporting, regulatory and funding requirements are met.
Advocacy and stakeholder management	• Communicate sound economic advice and messages to dairy farmers and industry professionals. • Build trusted relationships with dairy farmers, rural professionals and stakeholders through credible, practical and engaging communication. • Ensure farmer, key stakeholders and internal customer economic information needs are understood and met. • Work with the DairyNZ policy team to provide economic expertise, analysis and advice on policy options. • Establish and maintain internal and external networks for information and collaboration. • Assist with the drafting and communication of messages to industry leaders and farmers. • Assist DairyNZ colleagues working with appropriate central and regional government agencies, universities and economic organisations to help develop economic views and policy positions. • Represent DairyNZ as a senior economic subject matter expert across industry forums, stakeholder groups and collaborative initiatives. • Influence farmer understanding and adoption by translating economic evidence into practical insights that support better on-farm decision-making.

Extension and technology transfer	• Transfer findings through technical reports and refereed scientific publications. • Contribute to effective transfer of knowledge to farmers through active integration of research and extension. • Attend, present and contribute to conferences and field days. • Contribute articles to dairy industry press, DairyNZ website, Economics Dashboard, Inside Dairy and other industry initiatives. • Lead the translation of complex economic analysis into clear, practical and compelling messages for farmers, rural professionals, senior leaders and policy audiences. • Present confidently at farmer events, conferences, stakeholder briefings and senior leadership forums, adapting communication style to suit each audience. • Use storytelling, relatable farm examples, visuals and practical farming scenarios to improve understanding, build confidence and encourage adoption of economic insights. • Act as an engaging ambassador for DairyNZ, building trust through authentic communication, strong facilitation and approachable delivery.
Coaching and capability building	• Act as a senior technical coach and mentor to Economists, analysts and multidisciplinary project teams. • Build capability through coaching, peer review, technical guidance and sharing best practice in economic analysis, modelling and communication. • Support the development of best-practice economic analysis, modelling, reporting and communication across the Economics team. • Promote a culture of technical excellence, curiosity, collaboration, continuous improvement and constructive challenge.

How We Work	• Support DairyNZ values and principles: Courage, Credibility, Connectedness and Curiosity. • Understand and adhere to company policies and guidelines. • Actively support and contribute to DairyNZ organisational culture of one team. • Actively support and encourage continuous improvement to drive our organisation forward. • Strive to provide a safe and healthy workplace • Role model industry safe working practices • Actively promote DairyNZ Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policies and procedures. • Support and encourage employee participation and consultation in all aspects of Health, Safety and Wellbeing management. • Comply with legislative requirements and relevant standards.

Key relationships

Internal	External
Economics team	External consultants and rural professionals
Research & Science teams	Research providers (CRIs, private agencies)
Project leads	Subcontractors and contractors
Other DairyNZ teams	University academics
General Managers	Dairy farmers
DairyBase	Government agencies and policy officials
	Banks, rural lenders and financial institutions
	Industry-good organisations and sector bodies
	Media and conference audiences, where appropriate

Qualifications and experience

Essential	Preferred
Postgraduate qualification in Economics, Agricultural Economics, Environmental Economics, Resource Economics, Agricultural Modelling or a related discipline.	Master's degree or PhD in Economics, Agricultural Economics, Environmental Economics, Resource Economics, Agricultural Modelling or a related discipline.
Proven ability to develop and apply economic models using R or equivalent analytical tools.	In-depth understanding of the New Zealand dairy sector and farm systems
Demonstrated experience leading complex economic analysis, research or modelling projects.	Experience in data science and the application of quantitative models.
Successful delivery of complex economic projects to agreed quality, budget and timeframes.	Experience contributing to policy analysis, regulatory impact assessment, investment cases or sector strategy.
Track record of communicating complex economic concepts clearly and effectively to a range of technical and non-technical audiences.	Experience influencing senior organisational decision-making through evidence-based advice.
Proven ability to translate complex economic analysis into practical advice, clear options and	Experience presenting to farmers, rural professionals, senior leaders, government

evidence-based recommendations.	agencies or industry forums.
Strong understanding of New Zealand primary industry sectors, farm systems, economic drivers and sector-level risks and opportunities.	Experience mentoring or providing technical guidance to economists, analysts or project teams.
Demonstrated ability to influence senior stakeholders through credible, practical and evidence-based advice.	Rich experience in farm accounting and analysing farm business performance.

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.
COMMUNICATION	Clearly and effectively conveys information and ideas through a variety of mediums; adjusts communication style to suit the audience; listens actively and with empathy; translates complex economic concepts into clear, concise and practical messages; fosters open dialogue and mutual understanding.
TIMELY DECISION MAKING	Makes decisions in a timely manner, sometimes with incomplete information under tight deadlines and pressure; able to make a quick decision.
STRATEGIC AGILITY	Sees ahead clearly; anticipates future consequences and trends accurately; has broad knowledge and perspective; can create competitive and breakthrough strategies and plans.
MANAGING THROUGH SYSTEMS	Can design practices, processes and procedures that allow managing from a distance; is comfortable letting things manage themselves without intervening; can make things work through others without being there.
INFLUENCING WITHOUT AUTHORITY	Builds trust and credibility to influence outcomes across teams, projects and stakeholder groups without relying on formal people leadership authority.