

DAIRYNZ Position Description

Scientist

Position

Position Title: Scientist

Direct Report: Nil

Budget: Nil

Management Position: No

Reports to: Senior Science Manager

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

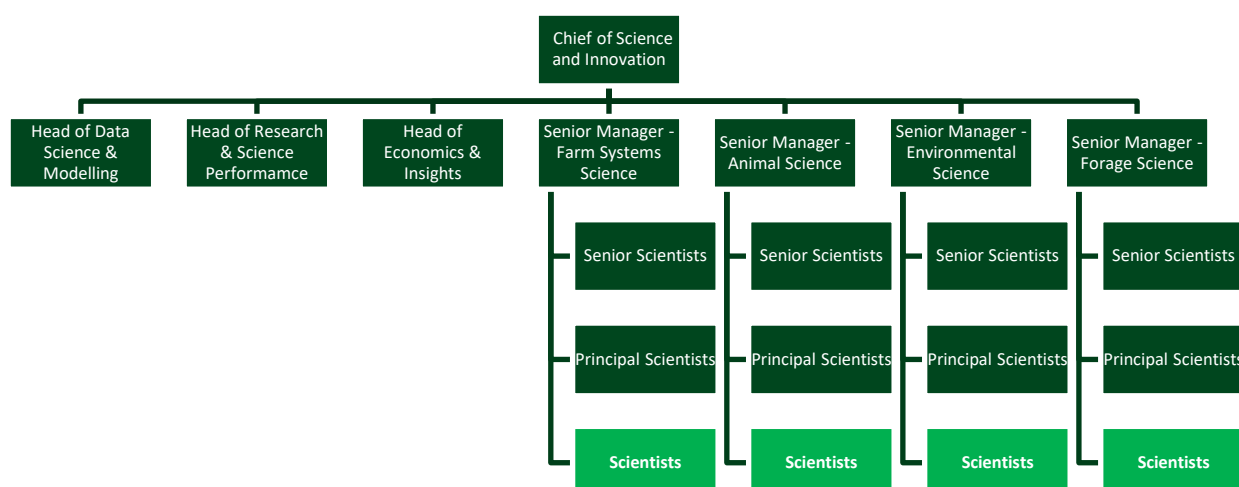
To contribute to the increased sustainability, profitability, and productivity of New Zealand dairy farms through the design and delivery of scientific research, systems knowledge, and knowledge transfer.

Working within a matrix framework with other teams and business units across the organisation, this role delivers high-quality research and contributes to programmes, projects and other activities across DairyNZ.

The Scientist is responsible for delivering defined research projects or workstreams, mostly in collaboration with other internal or external scientists, and under the guidance of a senior or principal scientist. Translates findings into practical, applied outcomes that support farmer decision making and on-farm change.

Operating within a dynamic, levy-funded model, the role maintains a strong focus on farmer value, ensuring work is aligned to the DairyNZ strategy and sector needs and delivers meaningful impact.

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:
Research	- Strong understanding of research methodologies and technical expertise within a specialised discipline. - Apply scientific thinking to real-world farm systems, ensuring research is relevant and grounded in practical application - Depending on the role and project or programme needs, contribute to on-farm, pasture-based and/or animal research delivery, including trial preparation, protocols, ethics, and working with farm, technical and regional teams. - Contribute project ideas aligned to DairyNZ strategy and emerging farmer and sector needs - Assist with securing research funding, by supporting the development of funding proposals and research concepts aligned to priority areas - Builds trusted relationships with internal and external partners. Works collaboratively across teams and disciplines. - Plan and deliver defined research projects or workstreams, with increasing independence over drafting budgets and

	reporting of progress and status (to internal and external audiences), ensuring outputs are achieved to time, quality, scope and budget • Use contemporary research methods to conduct research focused on the New Zealand dairy sector, building understanding of New Zealand pasture-based dairy systems through applied research delivery and analysis • Manage, extract, clean, quality control, aggregate, visualise, and analyse data using appropriate data management systems, programming languages, and statistical techniques (e.g. Snowflake, SQL, R, Python), including preparing and uploading datasets to support robust scientific analysis and reporting. • Author and contribute to relevant project reports, management papers, scientific publications and sector articles • Translate research findings into practical outputs such as tools, guidelines, and recommendations for farmers, contributing to the development of industry knowledge and best practice for New Zealand dairy farming • Contribute to the use and management of research datasets to generate insight and support research outcomes • Maintain scientific excellence through ongoing learning, including reading, writing, analysing, networking, synthesis and reflection • Build capability in new tools and methodologies (e.g. R, data platforms, emerging technologies such as AI) • Comply with DairyNZ Animal Ethics Policy, Animal Welfare Act and all legislative and DairyNZ requirements for operations of trials and experiments • The Scientist role builds the foundational skills, systems understanding and delivery experience required to grow scientific influence, leadership and strategic contribution over time at DairyNZ • May supervise interns or students (honours, Masters and even PhD).
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Research Project Management	• Take responsibility for planning and delivery of research activities or project(s), supporting Project Leads with planning, budgeting, delivery, timeframes, risks, stakeholder engagement and reporting. • Take ownership of project delivery within defined scope, including managing timelines, risks, issues and stakeholders • Assist Project Lead with identification and management of other organisations' delivery and work effectively with collaborators and subcontractors to support quality delivery • Contribute to team effectiveness and share technical knowledge with others
Co-development, Extension and Technology Transfer	• Demonstrate a high level of understanding of farmer and stakeholder needs and New Zealand dairy farming systems • Maintain a strong connection to farmers and the sector, including engagement outside formal projects, recognising that direct farmers and stakeholder engagement is a core part of scientific credibility and impact at DairyNZ, and to build understanding of real-world challenges • Contribute to effective transfer of knowledge to farmers and industry through active integration of research and extension, including: ○ Attending, presenting, and contributing to conferences (in New Zealand and overseas), field days, industry events and farmer engagement activities ○ Authoring articles for dairy sector press, DairyNZ channels (website, Inside Dairy, Talking Dairy podcast) and other dairy industry initiatives ○ Contributing to partner farm networks, communities of practice, communities of interest • Develop an understanding of how science supports future dairy farm needs, not just current issues

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. • Contribute to a culture of applied, farmer-focused science that delivers real-world impact
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Key relationships

Internal	External
Direct Manager	
Science team	Dairy farmers
Science Support teams	External consultants and rural professionals
Project leads	Research providers (PROs, private agencies)
Solutions and Development, Regional teams and Area Managers	Subcontractors and contractors
Other DairyNZ teams and business units	University academics and students
Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee	Regional and national government

Qualifications and experience

Essential	Preferred
PhD in relevant field	Understanding of the fundamentals of the New Zealand dairy sector and the context NZ dairy farmers operate in
Proven ability to undertake specialised scientific research	Experience in project leadership/management
Dairy farm systems knowledge or demonstrated ability and commitment to develop an understanding of the fundamentals of pasture-based dairy systems	Proven ability to write manuscripts for peer-reviewed scientific journals
High levels of technical accuracy and precision	Experience with R (statistical package)
Excellent written, oral and interpersonal communication skills	Demonstrated strategic planning skills
Self-motivation, drive and initiative	
Good organisational skills with ability to prioritise tasks	

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.