

Farmstrong – grounded in farmer experience

WHAT IS FARMSTRONG?

Farmstrong is a rural wellbeing programme designed to help farmers manage the ups and downs of farming. The main idea is that the most important asset on any farm is the farmer. Farmstrong's goal is to support farmers to take action to improve their health and wellbeing. It provides farmers with practical strategies, tools and resources to live well, farm well and get the most out of life.

WHY DO WE NEED FARMSTRONG?

Research shows that farmers are often great at looking after their stock and equipment, but many are not so good at looking after themselves.

THE FARMSTRONG RESEARCH PROJECT

An online survey to inform the development of our rural wellbeing programme and establish the key information needs of farmers was completed in late 2014. The findings have helped shape our strategy and resources.



WHO WAS SURVEYED?

400 FARMERS

(315 randomly-selected FMG clients. The rest were farmers who filled out the survey after hearing about it via our media release).

WHO RESPONDED?

50% were beef/sheep farmers

46% were dairy farmers

81% were owners or part owners

64% were male

NATIONWIDE
Northland to Southland

EXPERIENCED
65% aged 50 years and over



THE **NUMBER ONE** ISSUE:

WORKLIFE BALANCE AND GETTING MORE TIME OFF THE FARM.

NEARLY HALF THE FARMERS

47%

WANTED TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS TOPIC.

OTHER KEY TOPICS IDENTIFIED BY FARMERS FOR FARMSTRONG TO FOCUS ON

- How to manage tiredness and fatigue **35%**
- How to get the best out of employees **34%**
- How to manage stress **31%**
- Techniques to stop worrying about work all the time **29%**
- Understanding legislation relating to farming and technology **33%**
- **30%**

FARMER INSIGHTS INTO MANAGING TIME OFF/STRESS

Through the survey, extensive verbatim comments were collected on the things farmers said they did to help them manage the ups and downs of farming. We will share these farmer insights, tips and advice in our programme resources, because farmers told us they were interested in what other farmers are doing. Our research also told us that farmers make changes in the way they farm based on advice from other farmers they trust and respect.

Examples of feedback

“ Learn to empower your staff to take over and trust them. Male dairy farmer, 70 years and older, Waikato/Counties

Go and help someone else. It's very refreshing to find out most people worry about the same things. Male beef/sheep owner, 60-69, Canterbury

A farmer's health is pivotal to the ongoing success of the farm. Male, dairy farm owner, 50-59, Hawkes Bay



KEEN INTEREST IN FARMSTRONG

There was a high level of interest —

88% of farmers surveyed wanted to be involved in the rural wellbeing programme in some way.

BEST WAY TO INTRODUCE FARMSTRONG IDEAS TO THE RURAL COMMUNITY

Farmers' preferred means of delivering the programme was through local farm discussion groups. They also suggested linking in with existing rural events, such as Dairy NZ and Beef & Lamb field days and meetings.

Launching Farmstrong

Farmstrong's official launch is 3 June 2015.

The aim is to make a positive difference to the lives of at least 1,000 farmers in the first year.

The research project has informed the development of resources for Farmstrong. Key wellbeing research and literature has been summarised into topic areas that will be available on our website Farmstrong.co.nz.

PLEASE VISIT THE WEBSITE, where you can download a full copy of the online survey research report. On the website you can also find out more information about the things we are doing this year and how you can get involved.