

Making it happen

Report on Farmstrong's first year, June 2015 to June 2016.



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A WORD OF THANKS

The Farmstrong team would like to thank everyone who has participated in and supported Farmstrong during its first year.

About Farmstrong

Farmstrong is a rural wellbeing programme for farmers and growers to help them Live Well to Farm Well. Our aim is to help farmers, their teams and families stay in great shape and get more out of life and work.

Why does NZ need a rural wellbeing programme?

The ups and downs of farming present many challenges to the wellbeing of rural communities. Farmers and growers told us that they have systems in place to look after their land, stock and equipment, but not much to help themselves to stay in good shape.

How does Farmstrong help?

Farmstrong launched on 3 June 2015 to share practical ways to improve wellbeing on the farm. Farmstrong:



shares relevant research and science for improving health and wellbeing on the farm



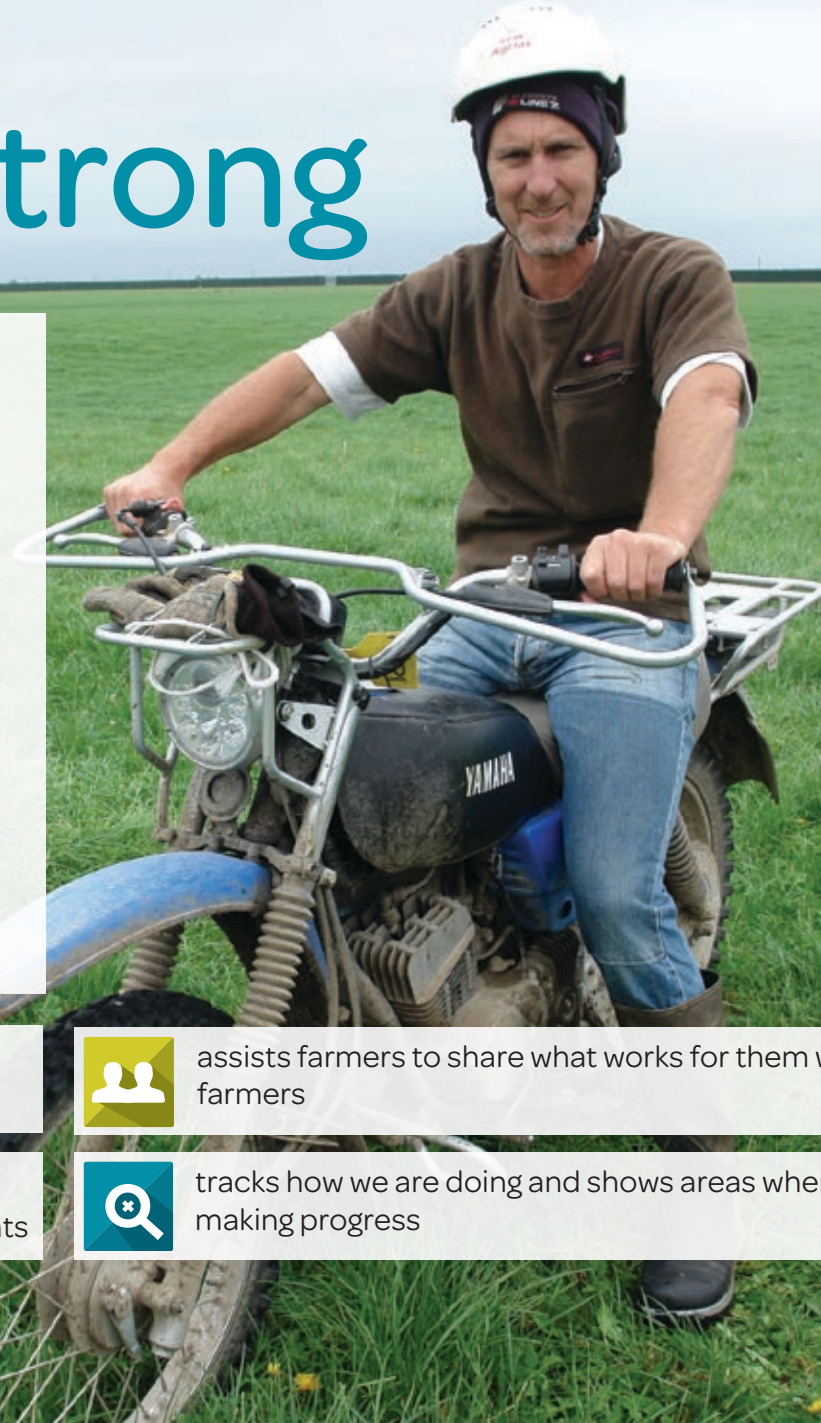
assists farmers to share what works for them with other farmers



supports and creates events, tools and resources that help farmers, employees and farming families make improvements



tracks how we are doing and shows areas where we are making progress



What farmers told us

When Farmstrong was just an idea we listened to over **400** farmers and growers about what the biggest challenges and barriers were to their wellbeing. **47%** said the biggest challenge was getting time off the farm to achieve a work-life balance.

We also asked what topics they were most interested in to improve their wellbeing.



35% wanted to know how to manage tiredness and fatigue



29% how to stop worrying about work all the time.



31% how to manage stress



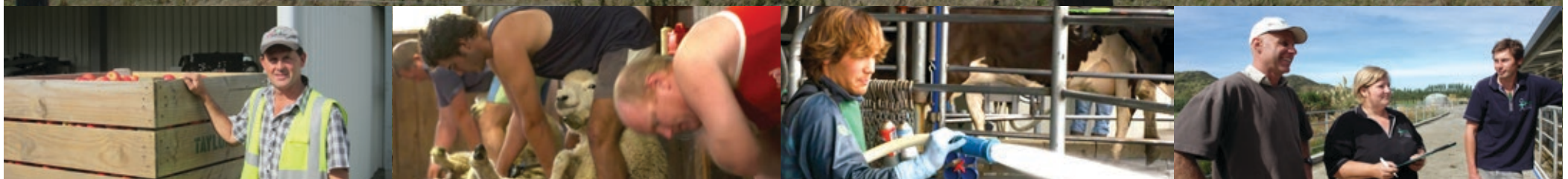
34% how to get the best out of employees

Other things farmers told us

Farmers said they were keen to discover the practical things that other farmers did, so they could see if they would work for them. They also said that we needed to be online and at the events that farmers are already going to.

What we made happen

These insights shaped what we supported in our first year. These were: a website and social media platforms to share online information and farmer stories, tools and resources. We attended national and regional agricultural events and partnered with a rural music and comedy tour to give farming families a break. We also launched two key initiatives: the Farmstrong Challenge and Healthy Thinking workshops.



“ If I don't look after myself, I can't look after my family, our team, our farm. ”



The core idea behind Farmstrong

Farmers and growers are the most important asset on the farm. Investing in your wellbeing, so you have some to draw on during challenging times, helps you to farm well during the ups and downs. If you don't take time off for wellness, you will eventually be forced to take time out for illness.

How can you do this?

Small, daily habits such as having breaks and time off, sleeping well, eating well, spending time with family and friends, physical movement and exercise and using healthy thinking strategies to deal with difficult situations, all collectively contribute to increase your wellbeing. Every bit helps. Farmstrong can help you find out the things you need to work on and what works best for you.

Acknowledgements

Farmstrong acknowledges the important role that the Movember Foundation played in providing funding early on when Farmstrong was still an idea. They were a catalyst for the Mental Health Foundation and FMG to become the founding partners of Farmstrong. In 2015, NZX Agri came on board as a media partner and ACC joined as a strategic partner.

Founding Partners



Strategic Partners



Co-Funding Partner



Official Media Partners



Website

We averaged **1,000** new visitors to the website each week, with a total of **51,451** visitors during the year. On average people spent **1 min 22 seconds** on the site with **22%** being repeat visitors.

The most regularly visited pages were 'Are you sleep deprived?', "Farmstrong Challenge" and "Committing to get fit".

2,452 people spent **5 minutes** or more on the Farmstrong website.

farmstrong.co.nz

»» 1,000

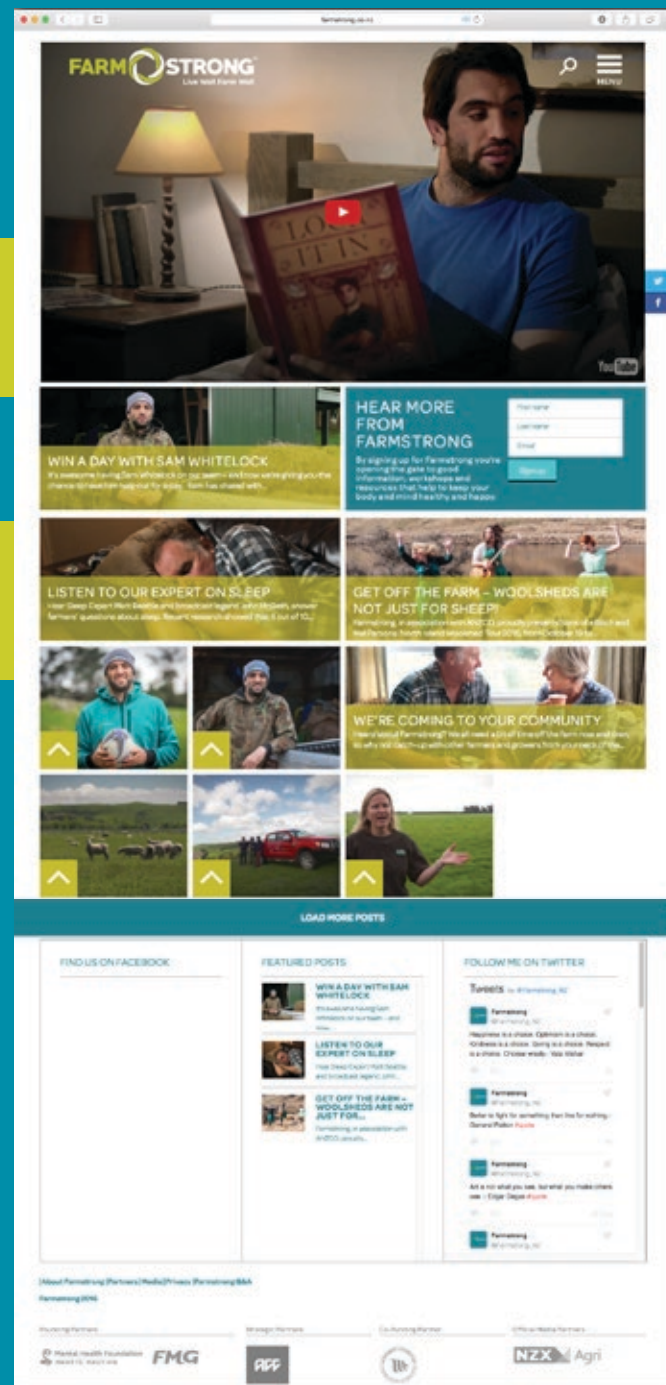
NEW VISITORS EACH WEEK

»» 51,451

VISITORS DURING THE YEAR

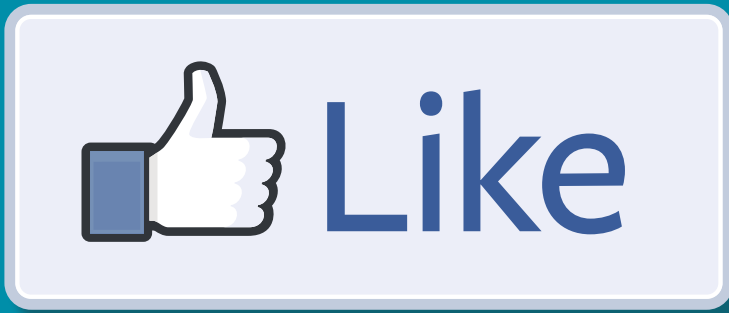
“ I’ve used strategies from the website to help others in our community and as a starting point for a conversation with some people that I normally wouldn’t have had. ”

“ The website has given us discussion points as a couple to make sure that we are looking after ourselves. ”



Social Media

A key part of Farmstrong is building two-way conversation with farmers and their families using social media. Activities on Facebook and Twitter include regular reminders, competitions and giveaways for Farmstrong events and merchandise, question and answer sessions to shape the development of Farmstrong resources and quick tips on key topics such as healthy thinking, taking breaks, exercise and sleeping.



“ Being good at social media means their messages and timely reminders are accessible and easy to share. Go Farmstrong!! ”

The collage displays six Facebook posts from Farmstrong with the following engagement metrics highlighted in callouts:

- Post 1 (Top Left):** 14,208 People Reached, 313 Reactions, comments & Shares. Content: Eastern Bush Share Milkers Angela Coleman and James Deane...
- Post 2 (Top Right):** 18,118 People Reached, 170 Reactions, comments & Shares. Content: We had a great night at the FMSO stadium Wairoa with the winners of Father's Day competition yesterday...
- Post 3 (Middle Left):** 17,552 People Reached, 246 Reactions, comments & Shares. Content: Treat your dad to a day off the farm and some desert rugby...
- Post 4 (Middle Right):** 11,840 People Reached, 193 Reactions, comments & Shares. Content: It's no secret, farming is a tough job - especially on the body...
- Post 5 (Bottom Left):** 1,350 Post Likes, 283 Photo Views, 967 Other Clicks. Content: Angela credits Farmstrong as her inspiration to be proactive about her and her family's physical and mental health...
- Post 6 (Bottom Right):** 531 Post Likes, 211 Photo Views, 312 Other Clicks. Content: TAKE YOUR DAD TO THE RUGBY. Get more likes, comments and shares...

“ Farmstrong helps people talk about these things and realise they are not alone in any of the struggles they're having out there. ”

Farmstrong has



6,205
FACEBOOK FANS



1,101
TWITTER FOLLOWERS
@Farmstrong_NZ

“ Facebook posts are great. ”

Facebook Promoted Posts

Top tips on starting difficult conversations. #MenStartTalking
Ask how you can help. People will want support at different times and in different ways. So just let them know you are there when they're ready.
Give them time. Some people might prefer a text or email rather than talking on the phone or face to face. This means they can get back to you when they feel ready.

#MenStartTalking

Not getting enough sleep? It could be your bed.
While we can't all just buy a new bed, you can make your existing one more comfortable by investing in quality pillows, bedding and underlays. Also consider a new foam topper for your mattress - there are loads out there designed for different sleeping habits and can particularly help those who often wake up stiff and sore. #sleepwell

Farmstrong is giving North Island farmers the chance to win 'A mini break off the farm' - with flights, accommodation, transport and \$100 to spend along with a double pass to the Sons of a Bitch + the Parsons, South Island Wood Shed Comedy show in Blenheim, 20th - 22nd April.
To enter, simply tell us below who you would take with you and why they deserve a mini break off the farm - before Sunday 19th April 2016. T&Cs apply.
If laughter is the best medicine - then those ladies are the doctors you called for...

Win a mini break off the farm

Farmstrong @Farmstrong_NZ
Whether he's on the farm or field, Sam is keen to share his strategies on managing pressure & looking after yourself

Find out what works for you then lock it in.

Check out farmstrong.co.nz for more from Sam.

13 RETWEETS 15 LIKES

5:56 PM - 12 Aug 2015

Top mention earned 140 engagements

Tim Parsons
@TimmyMoo · Sep 2

@Farmstrong_NZ time to get off farm and clear head. With @Fonterra watching on pic.twitter.com/w7VQGQnkIX



“ Taking time out, eating better and getting good sleep are great small, easy changes that are easy to put into your daily life. ”

Resources



Farmers stories on the practical things that work, a bit on the science of wellbeing and why it is important, plus a practical self-check tool, underpin our approach to producing Farmstrong resources.

The following resources were produced and can be viewed and downloaded from Farmstrong.co.nz.

- Print resources on “Give Yourself a Break” and “Sleep Well”
- Podcast answering farmers questions on sleep
- Five farmer video stories on what they do to keep in good shape
- Two topic videos on “Give Yourself a break” and “Focus on Fitness”
- Five videos on Healthy Thinking (an online teaching resource)
- Print material from the Healthy Thinking workshops
- One video on “Knowing Your Numbers” about health checks.



Healthy Thinking Workshops

Being able to manage your emotions, particularly with the ups and downs of farming, is a skill that can be learnt.

Farmstrong, in partnership with Dr Tom Mulholland from the Healthy Thinking Institute, rolled out a series of workshops around the country to share tools that can be used on the farm to help you be a healthy thinker.

In total **31 workshops** were attended by **1,122** farmers, growers and rural professionals.

»»» **23** were between **2-3 hours**, attended by **962**.

»»» **8** were **two-day workshops** attended by **160 farmers**, many of whom went on to become local supporters sharing Farmstrong messages, tools and resources with other farmers.



THE FARMSTRONG CHALLENGE



“ Farmstrong and Fit4Farming have helped my dad become a happier person and I am very thankful for all their help. ”

“ Cycling and exercise helps with making decisions on the farm. ”

“ The big benefit of being fit and active is that it clears the mind. When I'm out riding, I have time to think about what I want to achieve. It gives you a fresh outlook. ”





“ They have motivated me to exercise more regularly which takes my mind off work stress. ”

The aim of the Farmstrong Challenge was to encourage as many rural New Zealanders as possible to become active by walking, running or cycling. We invited people to pledge and record their kilometres over a **12 month period**.

The Challenge collectively achieved **1,003 people** travelling **633,216 kilometres**. Many joined one of the **105 teams** created as part of the Challenge. The Fit4Farming team, a core group of **20 famers** led by

Ian Handcock cycled for **16 days** from Ngatea in the North Island to Invercargil in the South. Riders joined them along the way including at the six event days they hosted where over **600 famers** and their families participated in walk, run and cycle events.

The idea for the Challenge and the rural cycle tour came about through a partnership between Farmstrong and Fit4Farming.

“ We implemented a team exercise programme. Everybody has joined in and I believe mentally we're seeing better coping with this ongoing drought. ”



Agricultural Field Days

We took Farmstrong to where farmers go. The various field days attended were: Mystery Creek (2015 and 2016), Canterbury A&P Show, (2015), Southern Agricultural Field Days (2016 Waimumu, near Gore), Central Districts Field Days (2016 Fielding) and the Northland Field Days, (2016 Dargaville)



“ At the event days people share their stories and talk about the issues on their mind. It helps them open up. We've all got a story to tell and the more we connect with others, the easier it is to manage stress and fatigue. ”



At National Fielddays:

- 376 people competed in the two-minute cycle challenge
- 70 took up the opportunity to get a health check (48 men and 22 women)
- Each person was given advice and a copy of their results to pass on to their doctor
- 485 played Mindball
- 462 received a 10-minute neck and shoulder massage.

Woolshed Music and Comedy Tour

Our messages of taking time off, connecting with others and having a laugh came to life through our sponsorships of musician Mel Parsons with actors Amelia Dunbar and Emma Newborn who transformed working woolsheds into show spaces for an unforgettable night of music and comedy in the country.

22 woolshed shows across the South Island were attended by 3,150.

“Top class show. The comedy hit the nail on the head with these country people. Bloody good.”

“It was a lovely mixture of really good music and comedy. Coming to a woolshed and seeing a show like this was good fun.”

“Amazing show. For a farming audience it was ideal.”



Media Coverage

30 media outlets and publications ran 659 Farmstrong stories in TV, radio and print.

Our partnership with NZX Agri was an important contributor to achieving this wide coverage.



Even All Black takes time out

By [Name] [Date]

It's not just the All Blacks who are taking time out of their busy schedules to support the Farmstrong programme. The national rugby team's captain, Richie McCaw, has been spotted at a Farmstrong event, showing his support for the initiative.



Support amazes cyclists

By [Name] [Date]

The support for the Farmstrong programme from the cycling community has amazed organizers. Cyclists from various clubs have participated in the programme, showing their commitment to the cause.



The bitches are back at a wool shed near you!

By [Name] [Date]

The 'Bitches' are back at a wool shed near you! The Farmstrong programme has provided a platform for women in the industry to share their experiences and expertise.



Fit4Farming helps with family time

By [Name] [Date]

Fit4Farming has helped many farmers find time for their families. The programme provides a structured approach to fitness that can be integrated into a busy farming schedule.



A healthy mind in a healthy body

By [Name] [Date]

A healthy mind in a healthy body. The Farmstrong programme emphasizes the importance of mental health alongside physical fitness for farmers.



Woolshed trio shout about Farmstrong

By [Name] [Date]

Three farmers from the woolshed have shared their positive experiences with the Farmstrong programme. They praise the support and resources provided.



Helping to manage the ups and downs

By [Name] [Date]

Helping to manage the ups and downs of farming. The Farmstrong programme offers strategies and support to help farmers cope with the challenges of the industry.



Changing lives for farmers

By [Name] [Date]

Changing lives for farmers. The Farmstrong programme has made a significant impact on the lives of many farmers, providing them with the tools and support they need to succeed.



st important ou. FARMSTRONG Live Your Farm Best. 10 NEWS

Impact results first year

Within **five months** of launching **32%** of farmers had recall of Farmstrong and our messages (random telephone survey of **400** farmers Nov 2015)

Farmers and Growers Participation Rates

In our first year, around **5,500** farmers and growers participated in Farmstrong.

“ The Farmstrong message is vital. It gets people talking and thinking. You need that strong commitment to keeping yourself well because the farming environment can be bloody challenging. ”

“ Now I use the Healthy Thinking tools in my day-to-day farming activities. It helps me deal with things and move on to the next challenge. ”

YEAR ONE IMPACT

A random survey of farm owners and growers revealed that those who participated in Farmstrong had higher levels of improvement in their “ability to cope with the ups and downs of farming” compared to those who hadn't. On average there was **38% improvement** for Farmstrong participants.

Results also showed that the more you participated in Farmstrong, the more you benefited. In a four month, post-workshop, follow-up, **71%** of farmers who attended a two-day Healthy Thinking workshop reported improvements in “their ability to cope with the ups and downs of farming.” This was almost 50% higher than a random sample of farmers answering the same question.



A Results-Based Approach

Farmstrong uses a Results-Based Accountability Framework to report on progress. This is designed to measure the quantity and quality of the work done and the impact it had, so we can tell if farmers, their teams and families are better off.



Impact results **first year**

CONTINUES

“ After doing the workshop I came back and passed on the tools to the guys who work here. It gives you the knowledge to talk about these things in a roadside conversation. ”

“ Excellent concept. It has made a huge impact on our family life. Have had a renewed enthusiasm in farming since completing the Farmstrong Healthy Thinking workshop. ”

“ You have better relationships with the people you work with and you find you are actually listening to them rather than barking at them. ”

Farmer to Farmer

Farmers who attended the two-day workshop, in a four month follow-up survey, reported sharing Farmstrong and Healthy Thinking messages with 3,800 other people.



Plans for our next 12 months

- Increase our reach in rural communities through resources featuring new Farmstrong Ambassador Sam Whitelock.
- Continue to share practical tips, advice and farmer stories, distributed via web, social, print and news media.
- Keep interested parties up to date through a bi-monthly e-newsletter.

Central to all our communications will be our invitation and call to action to “find out what works for you and lock it in”, visit Farmstrong.org.nz

- We will also grow participation in Farmstrong via promotions and competitions such as “win Sam for day” or ‘tickets to the North Island rural comedy tour’.
- Drawing on the science of wellbeing produce tools and resources on topics that farmers and growers are interested in and that are relevant to the farming calendar
- Share our tools and resources at National and Regional Field Days and rural forums
- Support community initiatives that increase social connection, physical activity and time off
- Seek interest for Healthy Thinking and other topic workshops
- Explore opportunities with potential partners to collaborate
- Continue to track and measure progress using Farmstrong's nine wellbeing dashboard measures

“I've been really impressed with what Farmstrong's achieved in its first year, so when the opportunity came up for me to get involved I jumped at it.”





farmstrong.co.nz

Founding Partners



Strategic Partners

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