



'It's In The Diary' – Making Wellbeing A Priority



Lisa Kendall runs her own hire-a-farmer business serving farms in and around Karaka in South Auckland. She has other irons in the fire as well – she's raising East Fresian sheep and hoping their milk will find a niche market in Auckland's flourishing café scene and supermarkets.

After studying at Lincoln she moved back north and lives in a renovated barn on her parents' lifestyle block with her partner who works in the city. "Often there's a stereotype where the man does all the farming and the woman does the housework. It's the other way round for me," she laughs.

Her job brings plenty of variety – from tractor work and fencing to livestock management and pony exercising. "I really enjoy being outside on the land working with the animals, being my own boss and having a job that challenges you every day."

Farming in a traditionally male-dominated industry isn't always easy. "One guy called and asked me to cut down some trees. I turned up in my ute and had two chainsaws and a pole saw in there and he asked me if I could use all that! I said: 'It'd be surprising if I turned up and I didn't know how to use it!'"



She says the hardest parts of her job are working alone all day and managing the workload. "It can really get to you and I don't think people realise until they are feeling a bit down that what would've helped them all along is if they were chatting to people and taking time to go out with their friends."

These days she keeps a diary that helps her prioritise time. "I really plan out my week so I have break times and get off the farm. That's the key to staying well."

Getting involved in the local community helped get her off the farm. "I've been volunteering at Riding for the Disabled. It's relaxing and it makes me feel good to know I'm being helpful to people. Giving back like that has a big impact on your wellbeing."

Last year, Lisa entered the NZ Young Farmer of the Year competition. She ended up making the finals and finishing fourth – a terrific first-up effort. The scrutiny of competition and the media attention that came with it taught her valuable lessons about managing stress.

"After some sleepless nights I learnt to relax and not worry about the things I couldn't control. To do a great job tomorrow and be productive, you need a good night's sleep and a fresh mind. That was a great lesson."

She also learnt to be less demanding of herself. "I think a lot of rural women compare themselves with other women in a way that just adds pressure. I'd say don't compare yourself to other people, just focus on what you can manage and be proud of what you do."

Lisa says heading to the Farmstrong website for tips and advice helped her get through the tough times. "I think Farmstrong is fantastic. Focusing on the Big 5, especially taking time to enjoy the small things we often overlook when we get busy, really helped me when I let things get on top of me. It made me realise I'd forgotten the things I really loved about farming and the reasons I got into it in the first place."

"Almost everyone has things that stress them out. I think the key is, don't be shy to ask for help and let those closest to you know what's going on."



Lisa's top wellbeing tips



1 Getting time off

"I make sure my time off really is time off by driving somewhere far away. That way I know I can't rush out and do some work if I have a few spare hours. I head to a friend's or to the beach."

2 Staying connected

"Connecting with others is about getting beyond your comfort zone. Organisations like Young Farmers or Rural Women are great for that because you make a commitment to turn up. They offer a chance to do something that's helpful and productive but also different and relaxing."

3 Managing fatigue and burn out

"After some sleepless nights in the lead-up to the Young Farmers final, I learnt to relax and not worry about the things I couldn't control. For me it's also about diarising my week and putting break time into my schedule."

4 Staying Active

"If you start the day doing some exercise, I think it helps your brain work better and you start your day knowing you've already achieved something good."

5 Eating Well

"Neglecting to eat makes you feel tired, affects your work and makes you grumpy as well. I really focus on making my lunch the night before so that I've got something healthy to eat and a reason to take a break."

Founding Partners



Strategic Partners



Official Media Partners

