

**Thursday 14 November**

**Media Release**

## **Farmstrong launches tales and tools for getting through tough times**

The stories of farmers impacted by severe weather events in 2023 have been captured by Farmstrong in a bid to give others in the primary sector more tools to get through tough times.

More than 30 farmers, growers and industry leaders were interviewed as part of the series that has been pulled into a book, website and resources to support those going through the recovery process from the weather events. The book and accompanying website titled '*Getting Through*' were officially launched in Wellington today.

The launch was attended by Minister for Mental Health and ACC Hon Matt Doocey and *Getting Through* contributor Hawke's Bay deer farmer Harry Gaddum.

Farmstrong Programme Director Gerard Vaughan said there is a wealth of knowledge that farmers and growers can tap into and use as a roadmap to move forward following tough times.

"The main take out from these resources is a hopeful one. As awful as these events are, farmers and growers do find a way through. A long-haul recovery, however, is a marathon not a sprint. That's why people's mental and physical wellbeing has to be a priority, despite the upheaval."

Vaughan said the tools and insights from *Getting Through* are relevant for anyone facing tough times.

"There are practical mental skills that people can draw on to help them manage the 'emotional rollercoaster' of a recovery. We know that different things work for different people. That's why Farmstrong's call to action is always 'Find out what works for you and 'lock it in'" added Gerard.

*Getting Through* was made possible with the support of Ministry for Primary Industries, Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora and Rural Support Trust.

"The *Getting Through* project demonstrates the ability of the organisations in the rural wellbeing space to work together effectively. I look forward to hearing more feedback about these resources and hope that our rural and even not so rural communities find them really useful".

Copies of the book can be requested via emailing [info@farmstrong.co.nz](mailto:info@farmstrong.co.nz) and the website can be accessed via <https://gettingthrough.farmstrong.co.nz/>.

Farmstrong is a nationwide, rural wellbeing programme that helps farmers and growers manage the ups and downs of farming. Last year, 15,500 farmers and growers attributed an increase in their wellbeing to the programme. Farmstrong was founded by Rural Insurer FMG and the Mental Health Foundation and launched in 2015. ACC are an important strategic partner of Farmstrong.

## ENDS

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## Getting Through Contributors

<b>Wairarapa/Wairarapa Times Age</b>	Sam and Sarah Johnston	Masterton, Wairarapa
	Roger and Mel Winchester	Masterton, Wairarapa
	Georgie Moore	Tinui, Wairarapa
	Sarah Donaldson	Rural Support Trust - Wairarapa
<b>Hawke's Bay/Hawke's Bay Today</b>	Jonathan Bell	Rural Support Trust - Hawkes Bay
	Stewart Burns	Twyford, Hawke's Bay
	Junior Taulago	Patoka, Hawke's Bay
	Harry Gaddum	Mangatahi, Hawke's Bay
	Gareth Holder	Pakowhai, Hawke's Bay
	Craig and Gill Wilson	Puketapu, Hawke's Bay
	Patrick Crawshaw	Patoka, Hawke's Bay
	Brydon Nisbet	Puketapu, Hawke's Bay
<b>Northland/Northern Advocate</b>	Krista Franklin	Dargaville, Northland
	Amber Carpenter	South Auckland/ Northland
<b>Taranaki/Taranaki Daily News</b>	Kane Brisco	Taranaki
<b>Gisborne/Gisborne Herald</b>	Vicki Crosswell	Rural Support Trust - Gisborne
	Rob and Marie Burke	Ormond, Gisborne
	Jamie and Mary Graham	Manutuke, Gisborne
	Jamie Simpson	Te Karaka, Gisborne
	Ian and Helen Burgess	Pehiri District, Gisborne
	Hamish and Amanda Cave	Ngatapa, Gisborne
	Diesel and Caroline Coop	Hangaroa, Gisborne
	Hamish and Becs Thatcher	Gisborne

## About Farmstrong

Farming is a job with a unique set of challenges. Many are hard to predict or control. They range from climate events like drought and flood to fluctuations in commodity prices, changing government legislation and new technology.

Along with these external factors, come the demands of running any business – financial and production planning, managing cash flow, hiring and managing staff, succession planning etc. These pressures aren't going to disappear so it's vital that farmers develop the skills and resilience to cope.

Research shows many farmers are great at looking after their equipment and stock, but, like other NZers, they can neglect their own wellbeing. As an industry, we can't afford to let these pressures reach the point where they damage productivity and affect the lives of families. Farmstrong is an initiative to help farmers, growers and their families to cope with the ups and downs of farming by sharing things they can do to look after themselves and the people in their business.

In 2023, 15,500 farmers and growers increased their wellbeing thanks to Farmstrong.