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**Media Release**

## **Farmstrong playlist putting a spring in rural steps**

A Farmstrong playlist is putting a spring in rural steps this summer. The playlist, hosted on I Heart Radio, features tracks nominated by Farmstrong's network of farmers and growers.

One of those contributors is Cambridge dairy farmer Marc Gascoigne. Marc said there's evidence that listening to music can contribute to improved wellbeing.

"Running a successful farm or orchard involves plenty of planning and decision making. It's no surprise that people feel fatigued from being 'mentally busy'. Sometimes the head is so full of plans, worries and what ifs that the brain starts to feel overloaded."

Marc said the answer is to carve out a little time each day and do things that distract from that mental chatter so you give the mind a chance to revive and that a bit of good music is a great way to do this.

The Farmstrong playlist is a couple of hours' worth of music chosen to boost the mood and lighten the load of other farmers and growers.

"Thanks to Farmstrong for putting the playlist together, there's some decent bangers in there. It helps to get me pumped up for the day walking the hills spraying weeds with the knapsack. Noone really enjoys spraying weeds but good music or a Farmstrong podcast make it a lot more positive and almost ...fun?" added Marc.

Of course, getting out walking the hills also ticks the 'Be Active' box of Farmstrong's 5 Ways to Wellbeing with Marc managing to crank out 10 kilometres of walking whilst spraying one 3.4 hectare paddock.

Farmstrong's Supporters Network, a group of farmers and growers from across New Zealand who support the work of Farmstrong, also provided contributions to the playlist.

Sarah Donaldson requested the addition of End of the Line by Travelling Wilburys and Poi-E by Patea Maori Club.

"End of the Line is a great pick me up and mantra when going through a tough time. It always makes me feel better. And Poi-E brings back positive memories of the best childhood summers, endless sun, cricket, swimming and no worries" said Sarah.

Kane Brisco of the supporters network nominate Here comes the Hotstepper by iNi Kamoze and Salaam Remi and Paul Walker nominated I am here by P!nk;

“This one makes me feel like I can take on anything” commented Paul.

Laura Murdoch requested Peace Train by Cat Stevens and Learning to Fly by Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers.

You can check out the Farmstrong playlist here - <https://ihr.fm/3V6A2gl>.

## **ENDS**

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### **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.