

# Just the Job

## Information Sheet

### Job title/s

Farm worker / Milking assistant

### Job description

- \* Assisting with milking
- \* Cleaning equipment
- \* Moving and feeding cows
- \* Helping out with maintenance around the farm

### Qualifications required

No formal qualifications required, but a liking for animals helps particularly cows! You need to be able to get on with other people, and pay attention to hygiene and safety precautions especially in the milking shed.

You have to be able to get up early!

### Training costs

These vary as Agriculture ITO training is subsidised by the industry and some employers will cover the remaining costs – if you pass!

Some introductory courses are free, while more advanced courses cost a few hundred dollars. Remember you will be learning while you earn

### Location of job

Lifestyle is a big attraction of working on a farm. It's a lot of outdoors work, usually with early starts before a break for breakfast. You can be working on dairy farms anywhere in New Zealand, from Northland to Southland.

### Career path

Starting as a farm hand or dairy assistant, you will move up to assistant herd manager, herd manager, farm manager, or, if you save up to buy your own herd, you could move into sharemilking, where you share the costs and the profits of producing milk with the owner of the land.

Many farm owners started out that way, and you can still buy your own farm by working your way up through sharemilking. You could also invest in farm ownership with other people, sharing the cost of the land.

### Salary range

This varies hugely. Full time wages in the first year or so range from \$14-\$16 an hour, but often your salary package can include things like housing, electricity, meals or meat that makes it easier to save.

Once you move up the ladder, and if you are good at your job, your salary can climb quickly. As a sharemilker, of course, your income depends on how well you farm, and the price of milk.

### Other careers this profession could lead to

- \* Farm adviser
- \* Corporate farm manager
- \* Consultant
- \* Retailing
- \* Research
- \* Contracting

Farming is big business these days and successful farmers need a lot of skills. Companies such as Fonterra need people who know the business, and can offer a wide range of exciting careers.

**How to increase the chances of successfully entering this industry**

Farmers are often looking for relief milkers – people to help out when their regular milking team is having a break.

Ask farmers about opportunities to help out. You can also enquire about farm cadet schemes.

Pre-employment courses are available at places such as Taratahi and Telford polytechnic.

**Other places to source information about this job**

Dexcel – [www.dexcel.co.nz](http://www.dexcel.co.nz) – has a lot of information about getting started in dairying.

So does [www.fencepost.co.nz](http://www.fencepost.co.nz).

Keep an eye on the papers for rural jobs, and make sure you've got an updated CV and good references.

And ask your Agriculture ITO training adviser plus see [www.agricultureito.ac.nz](http://www.agricultureito.ac.nz)