

**Initial Farm Training  
and  
Government Funding**

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**For Kellogg Rural Leadership Programme**

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## Executive Summary

The aim of this report is to look at present initial farm training and decide whether it is preparing the trainees for work on a commercial farm.

As farming profits reduce, farmers no longer have the time or money to spend putting time into the initial training of employees. Consequently there is a need for this to be done elsewhere.

There is a variety of trainings available and most are drawing heavily on government funding. Their strengths and weaknesses are weighed up.

I have tried to look to the future in farming and the skills that the farmer will want in his employee.

This then allows me to recommend a training scenario that would provide these suitable farm workers.

The government makes a lot of funding available to trainers that are training to the NZQA (New Zealand Qualifications Authority) standards. I am dealing with training up to Level 4. This is clearly a lucrative business looking at the number of training providers, and the new providers, who are wanting to take their place alongside the existing ones.

The NZQA course has a very good and current theory component but the practical component is not what is required by today's or tomorrow's farmers/employers.

This practical is designed to be best taught through a Polytechnic type institution in a class situation. It is broken into small units which individually do not allow trainees to see the overall picture which is essential when farming.

The institutions doing most of the training these days have large numbers, as with government funding, **numbers equate to money**.

Unfortunately it also means that a lot of the learning is by watching as opposed to learning by doing.

As these training institutions have trouble sourcing enough practical work, a lot of time is spent in class situations and trainees only get out on the farm to take snapshots of the farming year.

Farming is not like that, as dealing with livestock or crops sees work progress from one day to another in a logical progression. Therefore trainees in an institutionalised training neither see these progressions nor have to live the outcome of their actions.

However that is not to say that some of their trainees do not transfer into the workforce very satisfactorily, but, there are better and less costly types of training systems that could be put in place.

Although we will see farming emphasis change into the future, the requirements of the junior employee will not change drastically.

He will still need to be able to tend and understand the stock. he will also need to be able to do the repairs and maintenance of land, fencing, machinery, plant, buildings etc. Most of the changes in training will be in the understanding of things like Quality Assurance, safety, and recording type issues among others.

An ideal type of training incorporates a high proportion of practical done in a farming situation, so that the trainee is exposed to the day to day workload, challenges and management decisions.

Smedley Station Cadet Training Farm achieves this by having a limited number of trainees on a large hectarage working with farm workers in a commercial situation. The graduates of this system are sucessful. This is judged by the numbers of farmers trying to source the graduates and the competition to fill the ten places annually. The reliance on government funding is nil as it is farmed successfully and the profit totally funds training and living costs of the trainees.

As this type of training is successful and the management is dynamic enough to keep the training relevant to the times why don't we set more up.

At this moment in time the opportunity is there to do so.

The government owns large tracts of land administered under Landcorp.

Many of the larger farms are suitably sized and geographically placed to very suitably fill the roll of a training farm.

Because of the present political situation, Landcorp holdings may go out of government ownership. Would it not make sense to select several suitable properties now and invest in the future by converting them to training farms.

⇒ This cost would be minimal when compared to the investment the government makes in initial farm training at the moment.

⇒ The initial investment would be the main one as on going government funding could be restricted to subsidisation of the theory component.

⇒ The management expertise and experience is available to handle all stages.

⇒ The standards, aims, and procedures of successful training systems would be able to be incorporated to ensure success.

⇒ **The farming and training could be largely self supporting.**

It is now time to look closely at present training systems and their success in relation to the funding received. It becomes clear that success of present systems is variable and present measurements of success may not be the best. Changing to the above system allows training to be judged by the people who it matters most to - the employer.

## **Introduction**

The **aim** of this study is to clarify the problems New Zealand farmers are facing (and will continue to face) in trying to source suitable staff.

There is an acute shortage of well trained manpower out there to do the farmwork.

Government and Industry sources are funding a training system that is more a “numbers equates to funding” and success is judged by the way the “trainee is passing the course”.

Success should be judged by how well the trainee integrates into the industry following his training.

**This report will be looking at**

⇒ **The present available training, - the strengths and weaknesses of it.**

⇒ **Farming direction into the future.**

⇒ **Farmers requirements of the farm worker.**

⇒ **Concluding with recommendations for training into the future.**

Due to financial and social constraints farmers are no longer taking on inexperienced staff, and are looking to someone else to do the initial training.

Are the graduates of the available training systems what is needed now and into the new century?

The answer for the present is mainly no. Although the training is following NZQA accredited lines the trainees do not make the transition into the workforce well. The future trainees under the present system will fare no better.

While I can and will draw conclusions on the present, it requires a crystall ball to predict what the Ag Industry will be doing in the future. I am reasonably conservative in my predictions as I see logical progressions from where we are, rather than radical leaps.

I have limited my report to **initial training** (but not particularly dairy) - the school leaver wanting to work on the land.

### Present Available Training

**I have a favourite example.**

**An employee is out mustering and has a major problem with a mob of stock that smashes a fence through into the wrong paddock.**

**I believe the employee that farmers require must be able to, in the above case, Ride home, gather up the gear needed to repair the job and load it onto a vehicle. Get back out to the job and do the repairs and put the stock where they were meant to be. This should all have been done safely.**

**He should be able to understand why it happened and be able to report to his employer what has been done to remedy the situation.**

**A lot of the graduates coming out of our training institutions with the NZQA accredited course units marked off individually may have ticked off.**

the trainee

- can repair non-electric fencing.
- can start a tractor and drive it on flat country.
- start a chainsaw and make cuts.
- can handle and move stock.
- can communicate information in a specified workplace.
- can use strategies to solve measurement problems.
- knows how to protect health and safety in the workplace.

**This all reads up very well, but there is nothing in the NZQA recording system which says he can run them all together and do the above job. This is the weakness with the unit training system.**

#### **NOTE**

**The accredited NZQA course theory component is very good but the trainer/farmer has to deal with the practical component too.**

**This has not been put together for the commercial farming trainer but is set up for a polytechnic or class type situation.**

Teaching new people skills is a burden (financial and time) that most farmers can no longer afford or want. Therefore most training is now done for profit by professional trainers. This training requires money.

This money can be generated privately or by the Government and by fee paying trainees.

The range of training available varies from: -

#### ***A***

⇒ Private with no formal theoretical part.

This is the farmer employing a school leaver and helping him to become a useful farm worker.

**There is no Govt funding.**

#### ***B***

⇒ Private with a formal theory component.

This is the likes of Smedley Station or private farmers who encourage participation in National Certificate courses. (Smedley is more formalised in its practical training).

Most of the cost is born by the farm or farmer.

**Some funding is available for the training as long as it is NZQA accredited.**

**This is where the funding source and disbursement becomes messy.**

#### ***C***

Rural polytechnics, Agricultural Training centres.

**These are funded by fee paying students and also funded by the Govt through the Ag ITO or the UTTA (Universal Tertiary Training Allowance) which is how Universities are funded.**

This training is very organised but is not always integrated closely enough with the seasons and workings of a commercial farm.

## **D**

Polytechnics.

These supply a variety of courses to suit trainees' abilities.

They work to NZQA specifications usually to Level 2 or Level 4. - Now to Diploma Level!

**These are funded as for "C". Numbers are very important.**

These are theoretically based.

## **E**

There are various organisations who are providing (or are considering providing) the theory component to the NZQA accredited National Certificate in Agriculture course. Some see they can add value but most are doing it because the Government trough is fairly deep and it adds profit to their organisation. Some comments on this will be made later.

## **F**

TOPS courses or Training opportunity schemes.

**These are usually 'taster' type courses, government funded, nicely profitable, which will hopefully lead the participant on to other courses.**

I will not deal with these again.

## Strengths and Weaknesses

**A** - Private with no formal theoretical part.

This used to be very common 20yrs ago. As farmers profit reduced due to decreasing returns and the termination of subsidies, the first thing to go were staff which were not producing economic returns. Farmers turned to employing either capable staff or/and less staff.

### **Strengths** of this system

- ✓ The main strength is the fact that these people are part of a commercial farm, they have to be there. They have to get up and work when needed.
- ✓ In some of these cases where it is a smaller farm, the young people taken on are living with the farmer's family, which provides some stability. - This can also be a weakness.
- ✓ In the above situation the trainee is involved one on one with the farmer so does see a lot of the management decisions being made.

### **Weaknesses**

In the last two strengths above

- \* The trainee is dependant on the farmer being capable in most fields and that he passes this knowledge on.
- \* Living within a different family situation does not always work.
- \* Most people taken on in this situation are done so on the larger stations. They are generally taken on for specific purposes eg fencing, stockwork etc. **It is not unusual on these places to find shepherds who can not strain a fence wire up, or shear the wool off a few stragglers.**
- \* Generally there is little if any communication of management decisions and the trainee is just a cog in the machine.

Therefore their "training" is very limited and puts constraints on their future opportunities. What they know or get to know is very narrow. These jobs are ideal for

young workers who have been through other training. It gives them a chance to specialise and to have a lot of fun with their peers.

## **Strengths and Weaknesses**

**B** - Private with a formal theory component.

This breaks into two categories as we have:-

1/- Private farmers who with encouragement from the Ag ITO, take on trainees with part of the employment package being that they do some formal theory training.

This is very common in the Dairy Industry not so much with Sheep and Beef.

### **Strengths**

- ✓ The biggest plus for this type of training is that it is hands on.
- ✓ The trainees are on the property and take part in all the successes and challenges that are farming.
- ✓ They can see the theory work relates to what they are doing.
- ✓ Trainees are getting paid for the work they are doing.

### **Weaknesses**

- \* The quality of the training depends on the quality of the trainer. This does vary.
- \* The trainer/farmer does not always encourage the trainee to do the theory work.

**The practical component of the NZQA accredited course is not designed to suit the commercial farm trainer.**

**2/- Smedley Station and Cadet Training Farm** is a trust, government owned but administered under its own Act of Parliament. It is a private training institution.

This is a commercial farm that uses all the farm surplus to fund the training side of the business. All farming decisions are made on a commercial basis with training working in with the farm running. As a registered Private Training Institution there is an income tax waiver.

The National Certificate in Agriculture (Level 4) is achieved here in two years.

### **Strengths**

- ✓ There is a focus on the farming year (It is a commercial farm)
- ✓ It is independent and the trainees pay no fees so therefore is not governed by bureaucratic dictates or outside pressures.
- ✓ It focuses on a small number of trainees and gives them concentrated tuition and experience on most aspects of farming over a two-year period.
- ✓ The training is **not** structured in units, and has things related to the next, just like it does commercially.
- ✓ As the training progresses trainees have to make more decisions themselves and take responsibility for the outcomes - just like in the workforce.
- ✓ The training also focuses on work ethic, personal presentation and acceptable behaviour in our rural environment.

This is a successful training system. This success is judged by the continual demand from farmers for the end product and those same farmers keeping coming back.

Also by the continual high number of potential trainees applying to be part of the course.

## **Weaknesses**

- \* **The practical component of the NZQA course is not designed to suit commercial farm trainers.**
- \* Smedley is the only survivor of this type of system. It has survived due to its size initially. Similar setups from 25yrs ago have either disappeared or gone down the road of government funding, with fee paying trainees where numbers equate to money.
- \* Not enough trainees are going through this type of system.

Lack of returns for our primary products limits funds available for training.

## Strengths and Weaknesses

**C - Rural Polytechnics, Agricultural Training Centres.**

This format is becoming quite strong.

Numbers equate to money.

These places are doing a larger part of Ag Training as time goes on. They have hooked into the government funding system and are supplying more and varied courses as they see opportunities arise. These include things as up market as “diplomas” and as narrow as equine courses. All courses are to NZQA requirements.

### **Strengths**

- ✓ These places can provide a very good introduction to agriculture especially to those who have had little agricultural exposure.
- ✓ They have the finance to have experts in many fields allowing specific tuition on a variety of subjects.
- ✓ They cover the theory component of the NZQA courses in depth.
- ✓ Trainees get time to take part in field days etc.

### **Weaknesses**

- \* Because numbers at these institutions are the key to funding, screening of applicants does not become important until over ceiling numbers.  
This means that there is a large variation in abilities on these courses with some there to just “eat their lunch”
- \* Although these places give as much work experience as possible and say the training is “hands on” it is limited. Understanding farming requires taking part day in and day out, realising that one decision made, leads on to other decisions. That planning ahead is continual and necessary.
- \* **These trainees do not have to live the outcome of their decisions.**

## Strengths and Weaknesses

### **D - Polytechnics**

Attracts a variety of potential farm staff generally at the lower end.

Courses are again structured through the NZQA system and are funded by govt and trainee.

Courses range from basic to polytech diploma level.

#### **Strengths**

- ✓ It gives keen people an opportunity to get into agriculture.
- ✓ Theory is strong.

#### **Weaknesses**

- \* More than other places - numbers are money, so a wide range of abilities within the groups.
- \* There is a difficulty in sourcing enough good practical work to balance with the class work they do. This means that they see the work in a fragmented way and not as farming is - all tied together.

Because of the polytechnic situation there is an inability to instil or enforce a work ethic which is so important.

### Summary of Strengths and Weaknesses

The present NZQA accredited system satisfactorily covers the theory requirements for initial training, but does not necessarily give the trainees the practical skills the employer will want.

- \* The organisation and planning of New Zealand's initial "accredited farm training" has been taken over (hijacked) by a large proportion of educationalists mainly out of the polytechnic system, so therefore lines up with their available resources.
- \* The delivery of the accredited training is being done by a mix of accredited individuals or institutions with a variety of reasons for doing so. (Unfortunately pecuniary gain becomes a major consideration within some systems.)

(A representative of Woolpro, a branch within Wools of New Zealand, informed me in early October 1999 that they were looking at becoming a provider as it would add profit to the business.)

It would seem that education of school leavers attracts large amounts of Govt funding which those who know the system can access.

#### **Ag ITO**

Initially the Agriculture Industry Training Organisation (Ag ITO) was set up to facilitate education and training across the agricultural sector.

Skill New Zealand (formerly ETSA) is the Govt body who has supplied the funding for the Ag ITO. The ITO has to apply for funds along with other providers.

Unfortunately the Ag ITO has since been limited to working with trainees who are paying PAYE.

Therefore more and more of their efforts are channelled into the areas like -

- shearing training and woolhandling
- Agrichemical applications (Growsafe)
- Production Management
- Farm Business Management etc.

Around 20% only of the Ag ITO funding of close to 9 million is put towards the early training of our farmers. The rest is targeted at the service industries or the management end of agriculture.

In the Ag ITO's 1998 annual report they state that "there is a lack of access to top quality training for those who wish to make a career in agriculture and that this must be addressed as a priority."

This is a fine sentiment but while they are limited to working only with people paying PAYE - it is just a sentiment.

With that limitation, their early training options are really only for farmers who employ a school leaver. As already explained there are less farmers able to take these trainees on due to limitations on money and time.

### **Polytechnics and Rural Training Centres**

Supply lots of good theory. Practical experience can be limited to "snapshots" of the farming year.

Although the funding bodies supply money on the basis that the accredited course is provided, does it have strict enough standards in place to ensure that those teaching it have the knowledge, skills and understanding of the industry to passed on.

*The essential point being missed by those who are putting the accredited system together is that although theory knowledge is essential to the initial training, farming has been, and will be into the future a practical occupation.*

***Therefore the predominant part of the initial training should be just that - practical.***

## **Farming Direction into the Future**

This is crystal ball stuff as already mentioned but there are some very good indicators which let us know what is going to be needed.

Returns from traditional farming and marketing are decreasing on a per hectare basis.

### **Land**

- \* Obviously the overriding limiting factor is availability of land. There is no more so we have to work with what we have.

### **Productivity**

- \* There will be increases in the size of holdings as the viability of the poor-to-medium ability farmers erodes, forcing them off their land.
- \* Productivity per hectare will have to increase.
- \* Productivity per labour unit will have to increase.
- \* Utilisation of available resources - eg. feed, water, will have to improve.

### **Markets and Marketing**

- \* We are now, and will become more, market led in our production. It will dictate when and what it wants.
- \* There will be a more direct relationship between the producer and the consumer.
- \* Commodity prices have trended down for many years. This leads New Zealand agriculture to focus on niche marketing with emphasis on our purported “clean green” image.
- \* Organic farming is in vogue and Genetic Modification (GM), if the public can be persuaded, could help in making this option more of an option. A lot of R&D money is being channelled into GM research presently.
- \* Consequently I see either a wider diversity of products grown on a farm, or a greater targeting of specific markets or product.

## **Personnel**

- \* Due to the need for larger size farms to maintain viability, we may see less individually owned properties and more corporately owned. These will have managers on.
- \* Farm Business Managers will have to keep abreast of available technology, and be able to sift it for usefulness.
- \* They have to have the communication skills to organise their marketing.
- \* They have to be educated enough to handle the multitude of Contracts and QA schemes etc and to work them to their advantage
- \* They have to have skills in man management.
- \* As holdings will be larger there will be a need for an ability to handle staff.
- \* There will be more use of contractors for particular jobs.
  
- \* ***Above all there is still the need for a person to do the stock work and the general maintenance, which is core to running a successful business. No matter which direction farming goes in, these people will be needed.***

A proportion of these will move through to become the business managers of the future as they have the stocksense and the on farm experience to know what is possible and realistic within the constraints of time and the property.

### **Required abilities in the future junior farm worker**

The base requirements will not be any different from now.

- ⇒ A stock handling ability.
- ⇒ An understanding of animal husbandry and health. Able to recognise problems and have some idea as to how to deal with them.
- ⇒ An understanding of field husbandry
- ⇒ An understanding of animal feed requirements
- ⇒ An understanding of electric fencing, water systems etc
- ⇒ the ability to do fence repairs and water system repairs
- ⇒ A competency in handpiece work, drenching, vaccination, weighing systems etc.
- ⇒ A basic knowledge in mechanics, and an understanding of basic farm machinery and the maintenance required to keep them going and safe.
- ⇒ The ability to understand the written word, and to write it, so that records can be kept for the employer, and for markets and regulation purposes.
- ⇒ A respect for the land and especially for the property employed on.

#### \* A good work ethic-

The employer needs to know that his worker is going to be there on Monday morning and is ready to start work at the desired time.

#### \* Is responsible-

He is able to size up situations and make appropriate decisions. The employer needs to know that the job is finished to a satisfactory conclusion in terms of the farm's requirement and safety etc. He has the ability to report not only what he has had responsibility for but also on what he sees over the fence.

**The employer needs to know that the employee can cover the contingencies which may occur during work time.**

### **Recommendations for Successful early Training**

⇒ Have an Industry Representative Board, made up of successful people from the industry, who are also responsible to the industry. This Board sets the requirements and the standards for Agricultural Training and informs the appropriate government funding authority. This Board should not have ties to training institutions.

(In the Govt White Paper, Tertiary Education Review. Policy Direction for the 21st century. Nov 1998. The Govt obviously recognises the present lack of an even standard of tertiary training provided by its tertiary providers. It plans to set up a Quality Assurance Authority to ensure that standards are met by all providers. The QAA expertise will not be in every field and this is where the Industry Representative Board could supply the required standards.)

⇒ The above Board oversees **one** body which is in charge of **all** available agricultural training funding. Funding is only allocated when the set standards are met.

⇒ Field officers who understand firstly farming and secondly the training system, in place to advise -

-the trainer how to achieve compliance with training standards.

- the funding body when compliance has been reached.

**These Field officers would interpret the success of the training by how trainees will be, or are accepted into the workforce, not on how individual teaching goes on within the system.**

⇒ The training should include as much practical as possible and should be linked to a commercial farming enterprise so that trainees are involved in the continuity that is farming. They have to live the consequences of their actions.

Distance learning is a very successful way of supplying the theory component. Obviously theory content would be constantly monitored by the Industry Board to ensure quality and relevance.

⇒ A two year course is necessary to allow enough time to teach good farming practice and the theory to Level 4.

⇒ The most successful way to train potential farmers is having training institutions with certain attributes -

**1 - Commercial farms in their own right**

- trainees are exposed to commercial decision making.
- so can they can help support training without large funding requirements.

**2 - They are big enough to carry a number of trainees.** This number needs to be ascertained carefully as the trainees need to have enough work to ensure that they are exposed to a commercial type operation. Having a certain number allows for economies in living costs, training expenses etc.

**3 - Where numbers do not equate to money.** - But money is available to pay for the theory component and relevant experts to back it up. It is also available for subsidisation of trainees to extra curricula courses like shearing schools, and field days etc.

Too many trainees on too smaller area means that practical training takes on a “**learning by watching**” as opposed to a “**learning by doing**.” The former is prevalent in much of today's training in the larger institutions.

**4 - Having trainees working with tradesmen who are competent in their field.** This ensures a working competency is learnt as well as a work ethic.

Smedley Station would be a successful working model of the above (although it works with no Government Funding)

The next few pages will be devoted to a recipe for a successful training farm.

## **Requirements for a Training Farm**

### **Size**

#### **Size is everything**

The bigger the size - the more cost effective the training farm becomes.

An absolute minimum “at the moment” of 1000su per total workers (trainees and staff)

### **Soil, Climate and Contour**

Safe farming conditions are required as income needs to be relatively assured because of the fixed costs of training. eg. Summer and Winter stock finishing ability.

Country suitable for cropping - greenfeed especially. Maybe cash cropping.

A variety of contours is an advantage for training purposes as this allows trainees to take part in intensive and extensive farming operations.

### **Leisure**

There is a need for access to leisure pursuits to keep young energetic minds occupied during non working hours. These could include being next to hunting areas, rivers or the sea. **This should not be underestimated.**

### **Type of Farming**

To cover common farming systems in New Zealand.

- SHEEP -- breeding, lamb finishing, wool production.
- CATTLE -- breeding and finishing.
- DEER -- breeding, finishing and maybe velvet production.

Other options which add value to training but are not absolutely necessary are

- DAIRY COWS -- for home supply and pig rearing. This also adds to the animal husbandry, feed budgetting and requires a degree of discipline.
  - HORSES -- For stock work. Breeding and training maybe. This, like the dairy cows adds animal husbandry plus the discipline to start earlier to prepare the horse for work.
- Also - a large number of young people on motorbikes is unrealistic both physically and financially.

## **Requirements of the farm**

Diversity of country.

Room to improve farm performance.

Reasonable fertiliser history.

Development needed - eg. fencing

land clearing

Good Farm access - because of enthusiasm and energy you need to be able to work regardless of weather.

Reasonable locality - to be able to take advantage of markets,

- to be able to attend relevant field days etc.

- to attract the right staff.

## **Buildings (minimum)**

Accommodation in a suitable style for the number of trainees.

Cookhouse for above.

Lounge/ Lecture room/ Board meeting room/ library all in one.

Woolshed which has one stand to two trainees.

Various building to house the stables, workshops etc.

Good staff houses.

## **Trainee numbers**

One cook could cook for twelve people. Over this would require a cooking partnership.

Staff to Trainee ratio needs to be 1 to 3 to 1 to 4.

For a 2yr training 6 to 10 trainees would be suitable per annum depending on the size of the farm.

Some factors need to be taken into account -

A mini bus can carry 11 plus a driver.

Different building codes are used for buildings housing over 20 people.

Management becomes more of a challenge as numbers increase.

## **Staff required**

Experienced farm workers who can pass their knowledge on to, and relate to young people are essential. These staff will work **with** the trainees not direct them.

These staff need to be capable in a variety of farming fields as farming has no demarcation lines and trainees need to be aware of that.

Good salaries and conditions are essential to attract and retain the right staff.

Married staff tend to be most suitable, as they are generally more experienced and stay in positions longer.

Experience and expertise will be required in the fields of :-

Stock

Vehicles - Includes tractors, trucks, 4wds motorbikes,-use of, and repairs and maintenance.

General - Fencing repairs and erection

Building repairs and maintenance

Yards R&M etc.

Cooking - and health, hygiene and care.

**Management** will require skills in Farm management

Man management

Farm education

Bureaucracy management

Publicity management

**Additional costs to set up** Because it is a training farm are

Hostel

Cookhouse

Good killing facility

Extra farm vehicles including a bus.

Good houses and facilities for staff.

**Challenges to be met when setting up a training farm.**

- Number one is getting suitable land and funding.
- Setting up a successful management team with the expertise in this field.

There would be a lot of work required in -selection criteria.

- rules and regulations
- aims
- gaining public acceptance.

- Attracting suitable applicants.
- Attracting suitable staff
- As this would be an institution with no history it is necessary to set very high standards both in the work field and the living area so that graduates abilities are recognised and appreciated.
- Keeping costs to zero or a minimum for the training. This allows all to apply for the training. More applicants than places means that standards and quality will be good.

Apart from the first point these could be achieved by attaching a new training farm to an existing successful one like Smedley Station and carrying through their name, rules, regulations, aims etc.

### **Time to act is now**

A lot of the present training up to and including Level 4 is not supplying the requirements of the farming industry now, nor will it into the future.

Presently the government is funding a very money-hungry system, and yet it is still producing farm workers who are not always adequately trained.

The training required, involves more practical involvement on a continual basis in the day in and day out running of a farm. This gives the trainees a better appreciation of what is involved.

The way to achieve this is to model training on a farm as described in the previous chapter.

Landcorp Farming Limited presently has 122 farming blocks which cover 391,651ha. It is assumed that some, or all of these may be used in the settlement of Treaty of Waitangi claims. It would be a good time at the moment to sort through these land holdings and earmark several for training farms.

Long term, having three in the North Island (2 more) and two in the South Island which could graduate between 35 to 50 onto either university or onto farms would go along way to alleviating labour and management needs now and into the future.

As the government could retain ownership of the land the only cost would be in the setting up.

This would reduce the cost to the government of initial agricultural training over a period of time, as, if the farms are selected wisely enough, they could be fully self supporting. (Trainees exposure to commercial farming is essential.)

Government funding would be sourced to subsidise the theory requirement.

This would be as a percentage of EFTS under the present funding system.

To set the standards and aims for these farms, and to sell the concept in the various districts, using Smedley Station's name as the model could work well.

The expertise and willingness to manage putting this into effect is there and available.

