



# Agri Leaders Wanted

EDUCATION  
IN AGRICULTURE

## **BOOTS AND ALL**

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A future-focused social inquiry for years 7–8 students,  
debunking myths and stereotypes about the agricultural  
sector of New Zealand's primary industries

# Contents

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<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
Primary industries	3
<b>Links to <i>The New Zealand Curriculum</i></b>	<b>4</b>
Conceptual understandings	4
<b>Curriculum objectives: Levels 3 and 4.</b>	<b>5</b>
Suggested pedagogy	5
Māori world view	6
Best evidence synthesis in social sciences	6
<b>Learning sequences</b>	<b>7</b>
Lesson 1 – What’s typical?	7
Lesson 2 – Icons	8
Lesson 3 – If it weren’t for your gumboots	9
Lesson 4 – Gumboots as work boots	10
Lesson 5 – What’s in the media?	12
Lesson 6 – Business and farming	13
Lesson 7 – Farm visit	14
Inquiry	15
Resources	15

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# Introduction

## Primary industries

Primary industries are those that harvest or extract raw materials from nature. They include agriculture, horticulture, oil and gas extraction, logging and forestry, and mining and fishing. This unit focuses on the red meat industry as an example from the agricultural sector of a New Zealand primary industry.

### Agricultural sector

People working in the agricultural sector help feed the world, build a sustainable future and help find solutions to some of the world's most pressing problems, such as biosecurity risks, animal welfare and the effects of climate change.

### Future of farming

Farming in the future won't look the same as it has traditionally. Issues such as water availability, food miles, sustainability, urban sprawl and the effects of climate change will require new ways of working. Growing populations, complex global trade and a move toward sustainability will pose new challenges that all primary industries will have to respond to.

### Challenges

To meet future challenges, the sector will require researchers, consultants, veterinarians, and people skilled in design, technology, marketing, government policy, engineering, robotics and other technological areas.

### Needs

The sector needs keen, innovative people from diverse backgrounds, including urban areas. They will need qualifications across a range of subjects including science and technology, economics, maths and engineering, marketing, and human relations.

## Opportunities

While the agricultural sector will continue to generate opportunities for people without formal qualifications, much of the growth in these industries will be in highly skilled roles. This means that there will be many and varied career opportunities for students in the future.

## Stereotypes

This resource is designed to help teachers, leaders, students, and whānau explore the impact of stereotypes on themselves, their community and the future success of our agricultural sector. Students will look at the red meat industry as an example of a primary industry and visit a local sheep and beef farm. They will see that you don't need to wear gumboots or be in an agriculture class to pursue a career in agriculture.

Within this resource you will find links to *The New Zealand Curriculum*, resources to explore personal and national identity and different perspectives, roles, and responsibilities within the agricultural sector. This resource is designed for students in years 7–8 and can be adapted to suit the learners in your classroom. Not all the activities need to be completed and teachers may choose to add ideas or resources of their own to the activities.

## Purpose

Primary industries have always been important to New Zealand's economy. They will continue to be as an increasing global population requires greater food production. The sustainability of agriculture as one of New Zealand's primary industries depends upon responsible management of resources, scientific innovation, technology, and skilled workers. The agricultural sector can offer a variety of work opportunities far beyond those of the stereotypical farmer.

# Links to *The New Zealand Curriculum*

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This resource links to the NZC [learning areas](#) of health and physical education, social studies, technology, and English. The context provides opportunities to explore the [values](#) of the curriculum, especially community and participation, and innovation, inquiry, and curiosity, the [principles](#) of future focus, and to develop and observe students' [key competencies](#) when participating and contributing, relating to others, and using language, symbols, and texts.

## Conceptual understandings

By investigating common stereotypes about farming and their effects on the agricultural sector, students explore how attitudes and values in Aotearoa New Zealand are passed on, and how they can enhance or inhibit innovation within the sector.

This unit aims to:

- expand awareness about primary industries in New Zealand by engaging and informing students about the role and importance of these industries to the New Zealand economy, environment, and wider community
- identify traditional stereotypes associated with agriculture
- identify the effects these stereotypes can have on agriculture and on the wider New Zealand economy
- discourage negative stereotypes associated with agriculture and farming
- demonstrate that all students can consider careers in, and associated with, the agricultural sectors
- demonstrate the variety of career opportunities that are available in the New Zealand red meat industry and associated with agriculture.



# Curriculum objectives: Levels 3 and 4

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- **Health and physical education**

Personal Identity: Describe how social messages and stereotypes, including those in the media, can affect feelings of self-worth.

- **Social studies**

Understand how people pass on and sustain culture and heritage for different reasons and that this has consequences for people.

Understand how exploration and innovation create opportunities and challenges for people, places, and environments.

- **English**

Listening, Reading, and Viewing: Show an increasing understanding of ideas with, across, and beyond texts.

Speaking, Writing, and Presenting: Select, develop, and communicate ideas on a range of topics.

Use a range of language features appropriately, showing an increasing understanding of their effects.

- **Technology**

Characteristics of Technology: Understand how technological development expands human possibilities and how technology draws on knowledge from a wide range of disciplines.

## Suggested pedagogy

### Use the news

Students can make connections between current events and their classroom learning. Scan the media for topics that relate to agriculture and farming. By investigating local and global issues students can develop an understanding of their place in the world.

### Use experts

Every community has experts who can inspire students' thinking, provide information, and add emotional impact to events. You can choose to invite experts to the classroom or have the class visit them at their work places so that students are able to relate to different people doing different jobs in authentic contexts. Teachers can contact [New Zealand Young Farmers](#) to arrange for experts to visit their school. Remember also that an expert can be a student, whānau, or school community member.

### Take education outside the classroom

Visits to farms, research institutes and businesses can make learning come alive. Students place their learning in real-life contexts and use all their senses to learn about their local area. Local visits can demonstrate that industries related to agriculture have a place in their community, as well as throughout New Zealand.

### Use images

Images play an important role in shaping our ideas about ourselves and other people. Photographs introduce new topics and add to students' knowledge about other places and other people's lives. They can provide a forum where students share, discuss, and question their ideas. Model and discuss how to view photographs critically to see beyond the immediate image to the possible message behind it. Encourage students to hypothesise about what might be happening. Place an emphasis on addressing potential viewer bias.

### Acknowledge bias and stereotyping

Different perspectives influence the ways materials are presented, and two different, even competing, perspectives may be valid. All sources need to be examined.

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Encourage students to ask questions such as:

- Are there common stereotypes based on gender or ethnicity?
- What does the source say? What information does it provide?
- What was going on when the source was produced?
- What do you know about the historical context for the source that helps to explain the information it provides?
- Who created the source and why?
- Who was it created for?

### **Address misconceptions**

While the need to test prior knowledge is well documented, it is also important to identify any misconceptions students may have. Students' misconceptions affect their learning of subsequent concepts. They may be unable to make links to new knowledge or they may make links based on their misconceptions, which creates further confusion.

### **Social inquiry**

Social inquiry uses a flexible sequence of steps to explore a unit of learning. It uses questioning and information gathering, the exploration and analysis of different people's values and perspectives, students' reflections and evaluations, and the examination of the actions of others in context. Finally, it asks, So what? and Now what? to extend learners' thinking.

## **Māori world view**

### **Kaitiakitanga and manaakitanga**

Traditionally, the Māori world view of land has been one of sustainability and protection. Tāngata whenua (people of the land) state an undying connection to whenua handed down by the tūpuna (ancestors). Manaakitanga is often seen as applying to caring and looking after our manuhiri (visitors), when it actually

refers to all things that exist in our taiao (environment). The obligation (and challenge) is to care for and look after our environment to protect it for future generations. Kaitiakitanga looks at guardianship and protection of resources. In Māori culture land is viewed being a part of you through whakapapa (genealogy) and tūrangawaewae (your place of being), meaning what ties you to the land and what ties the land to you.

## **Best evidence synthesis in social sciences**

### **Effective Pedagogy in Social Sciences: Tikanga ā Iwi:**

The BES tells us that students learn best when four teaching mechanisms are in place.

These are:

1. **Connections:** Make content relevant to students' lives and ensure that learning experiences are inclusive and culturally aware.
2. **Alignment:** "What do I want the students to learn?" Identify prior knowledge so content is accurate and relevant, and students are able to work at their own pace and within their abilities.
3. **Community:** Establish a productive teacher-student relationship, promoting dialogue and risk taking, sharing power with students, and co-constructing knowledge and reflecting our identity.
4. **Interest:** Learning experiences need to capture and hold students' interest. Experiences need to be varied, relevant, and student-led. First-hand experiences and the use of primary resources make the learning real.



# Learning sequences

## Lesson 1 – What's typical?

*Students discuss the typical characteristics associated with certain familiar groups of people and why these can be inaccurate (due to over simplification or lack of factual basis).*

### Focus questions

- What are the differences and similarities between the characteristics you have identified for each group of people?
- Do you think you would have identified different characteristics if you lived somewhere else in New Zealand?
- Do you think someone living in a different part of the world would have identified different characteristics and if so, why?
- Why do people characterise others? Why are these characterisations not always accurate? What might be some effects of characterising others?
- What characteristics are associated with farmers?

### Suggested activity

As a class discuss what the word “typical” means. Students could share their definitions of the word before looking up the definition in a dictionary or online.

*“Typical – showing all the characteristics that you would usually expect from a particular group of things”*

Divide the class into groups of 3–4 students. Give each group three large sheets of paper and a range of coloured pens. Ask the students to draw:

- a typical New Zealander
- a typical New Zealand business person
- a typical New Zealand farmer.

Ask the groups to identify three key things that define their person and then have each group share their drawings and their defining characteristics or features. Discuss whether the students found this easy or challenging and why these characterisations may not be accurate. Students could find examples of each person online and compare these with their group descriptions.



## Lesson 2 – Icons

*Students discuss what an icon is, give examples of iconic people or objects, identify familiar local and national icons and what they represent, and bring their own examples of iconic objects to share with the class.*

### Focus questions

- What is an icon?
- What are the characteristics of an iconic person?
- Who/what are some familiar New Zealand iconic people or objects, and what do they represent?
- What are some icons related to farming and what do they represent?
- What are some local icons that represent our school, community or iwi, and where did these icons originate?
- Do New Zealand or local icons offer accurate representations?
- Can icons be misleading?



### Suggested activity

Icons can be people or objects and are used to represent something. New Zealand's iconic people have characteristics that people admire. Iconic people have achieved something significant within a popular or well-known context, such as sport.

This activity looks at how iconic people and objects can reinforce stereotypes and how farming is associated with New Zealand's identity.

Ask students what an icon is and share an example of a local or national icon. This could be a person or an object.

Generic examples of New Zealand iconic objects are gumboots, sheep, pavlova, and pohutukawa.

Examples of iconic people include Sir Edmund Hillary, Richie McCaw, and Jean Batten.

In small groups students could brainstorm icons they are familiar with and draw them. Ask students if they can group these icons in any way. Discuss how the students have categorised their icons. Some icons associated with farming are likely. Ask the students why they think objects like gumboots and sheep are New Zealand icons.

Students could discuss what particular iconic objects represent and whether this representation is accurate or misleading. Students could then bring examples of iconic objects from home to share with the class or choose an icon to represent something about themselves. Discuss the challenges of finding something that accurately represents a person and the limitations of this.



# Lesson 3 – If it weren't for your gumboots

*Students define stereotypes and discuss why they are used and their effects.*

## Focus questions

- What is a stereotype and why are they used?
- Are stereotypes always negative?
- When are people most likely to stereotype others?
- How do you feel when someone stereotypes you?
- What effects can stereotyping have?

## Suggested activities

Gumboots are sometimes considered a New Zealand icon and the character Fred Dagg represents an iconic New Zealander.

Play students a [video of Fred Dagg performing “If it weren't for your gumboots”](#).

Ask the students what type of person they think Fred Dagg is and if he is a New Zealand icon. Students could draw a pair of gumboots and write adjectives for people who wear gumboots or things they think of that have to do with gumboots.

Discuss with the students how people often use labels or categories to describe others and how these labels can be based on characteristics such as clothing, looks, the way a person talks, or the groups they belong to.

Explain that categorising is a natural human inclination to help order and make sense of the world (for example, in science we categorise living things). However people often make assumptions about groups of people they don't even know. Discuss the assumptions that students made about Fred Dagg. Did all students have the same assumptions?

Ask students why they make assumptions and how they think it affects how they relate to others. Students could try to identify other iconic characters presented in the media that represent farming in some way and discuss how accurate they think these representations are.

Ask students if they have heard of the word “stereotype” and what it means. Relate the discussion about assumptions to the word

“stereotype” and explain that when people make assumptions about an entire group of people, these assumptions are called stereotypes.

*“Stereotype” can be defined as a set idea that people have about what someone or something is like. This idea is often wrong or an oversimplification or generalisation.*

When assumptions and stereotypes influence our attitudes, our ability to make a fair judgement is impaired. This is also known as “bias”.

Ask students to look at the drawings they made in the first lesson and the words they recorded about gumboots. Students could then discuss how they have used stereotypes, how accurate these were, and how it might make a person feel to be stereotyped.

Students could write about their own experiences of being stereotyped.

Role play can help students to discover how often stereotypes are used and the effects stereotyping can have. Create scenarios that assign stereotypical characteristics to certain groups of people and how this may negatively affect individuals. (Choose scenarios that are relevant to the students in your class.) Following each role play students can discuss how being stereotyped feels and the negative effects it can have.

## Scenario examples

- A student is really tall for his age but does not enjoy sport. Other students assume that he will be good at basketball and hassle him when he can't play very well.
- A boy who excels at dance is teased by others in his class.
- A new girl to the class comes from China and is learning to speak English. The rest of the class struggles to understand what she says and they mimic her accent.
- A student in a wheelchair is excluded from a game of soccer.
- A girl who plays rugby is hassled by the rugby-playing boys in her class.

## Lesson 4 – Gumboots as work boots

*Students recognise that gumboots are worn in a variety of workplaces and that what people wear does not necessarily reflect the work they do.*

### Focus questions

- What are primary industries?
- What stereotypes are associated with agriculture and farming?
- Where have these stereotypes come from?
- What impact do stereotypes have on agriculture and farming?
- What might change people's ideas about farmers and farming?
- What are the differences and similarities between farming and other agricultural activities within the primary industries?

### Suggested activity

Ask students in groups of 3-4 to record all the different types of jobs where gumboots are worn and then share their ideas with the class.

Explain that gumboots are worn by people in many different jobs. Examples include surgeons, firefighters, construction workers, miners, and farmers. You could find images of each online to share with the class.

Primary industries are defined as industries, such as agriculture, mining, forestry, horticulture, and fishing, that harvest or extract raw materials from nature. Within these industries different activities are carried out and a wide range of products are produced.

Explain to students that gumboots are often associated with primary industries, including farming and that primary industries are important to New Zealand's economy.

Discuss what is meant by primary industries and ask the students to identify the differences between particular primary industries.

Take a look at the [Futureintech](#) website to find out more about jobs within the primary industries.

Have students individually complete a KWL chart on farming to record their prior learning and wonderings.



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What I <b>know</b>	What I <b>want</b> to know	What I have <b>learnt</b>

This could be done in workbooks, on computers or on mobile devices. Ensure students retain a copy to refer to later in the unit.

In groups the students can then share and brainstorm further all they know about farming. Their ideas can be recorded on a large piece of paper. Once students have shared their ideas, discuss ways in which these ideas could be organised. Students may suggest grouping ideas based on types of farming, farming jobs, location, or products. Once the categories have been agreed, ask the students to group their ideas.

Discuss with the students why farming is important to New Zealand. Discuss ideas and consider farming in your local area. Students could complete their own research to find out why farming is important to New Zealand. They might identify products that are sold overseas and the types of farms that are most successful.

Once students have gathered and shared information on the importance of farming, discuss common stereotypes of farming. Consider the stereotypes the students can identify and discuss the effects these could have on farming.



# Lesson 5 – What's in the media?

*Students identify stereotypes and bias in the media and influences on the accuracy of articles and stories presented in the media.*

## Focus questions

- What are current local issues within the agricultural sector and farming?
- What effects does farming have on local people and the environment?
- Does the media use stereotypes when presenting stories about farming or farmers and what are the effects of this?
- How do we know that information presented in the media is accurate?

## Suggested activity

All forms of public media influence how students perceive the world around them.

This homework task encourages students to look critically at what they see in the media and apply strategies to judge its accuracy.

Ask students to collect news clippings, links to videos and podcasts, and notes from television programmes or news broadcasts that mention farming.

Ask them what they understand about the article, podcast, video or programme. Have them identify the use of emotive language and stereotypes and the accuracy of the content.

Ask students to share their media articles or clips and their conclusions about the perspectives presented in them. As a class develop a rating system, such as a 1-to-5 star-rating to rate each other's articles for accuracy. Discuss the importance of being critical of the information we see and hear in the media. If stereotypes are identified, discuss their effects.

When preparing for a visit from a farmer or a business person, students could compile a list of questions they could ask these people about the articles they have gathered.



# Lesson 6 – Business and farming

Students talk with local business and farming experts and identify similarities and differences in the types of work they do.

## Focus questions

- What does the day-to-day work of a business person involve?
- What does the day-to-day work of a farmer involve?
- Are there similarities in these types of work?

## Suggested activity

Invite two guest speakers to talk to your class, one a farmer and one a business person who works in the agricultural sector. If there is space available split the class into two, so that both speakers are with a group at the same time and then switch speakers. Take a photo of each speaker showing their clothes and footwear.

Before the speakers arrive, ask the students to write the answers to these questions on a piece of paper with their name on it and hand in their responses.

1. What does the day-to-day work of a businessperson involve?
2. What does the day-to-day work of a farmer involve?

Introduce the speakers to the whole class and then divide them into two groups and settle them in their separate areas. Have the students and speaker sitting at the same level, (for example, on chairs in a circle). Allow 15 minutes for each speaker to talk about their work and its different aspects, with additional time for students to ask questions.

Once the speakers leave, return the students' responses to the questions asked before the talks. Ask them to consider any changes they would now make to their initial responses. Have them discuss whether they used stereotypes in their initial answers.

Have the students complete a Venn diagram showing the similarities and differences between a business person and a farmer.

Have the students observe the examples of different clothing and footwear worn by workers in occupations in the agricultural sector. Ask them to find pictures of footwear that people might wear to do different jobs.

Discuss whether this is a form of stereotyping and the practicalities of different types of clothing and footwear. Ask the students to remember the type of clothing and footwear the speakers wore. Refer to the photos of these speakers.

Have the students consider whether the type of clothing or footwear a person wears indicates the scope of the job they do.

You could take a look at this video showing the experiences of a high school student visiting a sheep and beef farm <http://www.justthejob.co.nz/primary-industries/sheep-and-beef-farming.html>



# Lesson 7 – Farm visit

*Students visit a local farm and identify some of the different roles and responsibilities of people on the farm.*

## Focus questions

- What work roles are visible on the farm?
- How is technology used to make work on the farm easier?
- What important work is done by people off the farm?
- What wonderings do you have about the different jobs available on a farm or associated with farming?
- What issues or challenges do you think farms will face in the future?
- How do you think farming will look in the future?

## Suggested activity

Organise a visit to a local farm, which includes talking to the farmer about all the different types of jobs done on the farm and the other experts that are needed to run a farm effectively (for example, veterinarians, mechanics, rural bankers, and scientists.)

Ask the students to look out for the different types of work done on the farm, the footwear worn, and how technology is used in each of these jobs.

Ask the farmer about why they make the

choices they do – what influences how they run the farm:

- the products they use (marketing, media, family influences)
- scientific research (improving animal welfare, maximising output)
- technology (differences in farming now compared with farming in the past and what to expect in the future)
- people involved in farming who don't actually work on farm (for example, designers).

After visiting a farm the students can record and share their ideas about the focus questions.

## Extension activities

Ask students to design footwear that could be used for a particular farming job.

Share the [“Just the Job”](#) website and the [primary industry career videos](#) to show different perspectives, roles and responsibilities throughout the primary industries. Talk about the use of technology and innovation in farming and the type of people who work in this industry. Discuss the stereotypes the class first used when talking about farming and what they have discovered since. Ask students how the agricultural sector might be affected negatively by stereotypes using the following table:

Stereotype	Who is affected	How they are affected	Impact on the Industry	Impact on Aotearoa New Zealand
Most farmers are male	Females interested in farming	They may feel less confident about becoming farmers or working in the industry. They may not choose the school subjects needed to get a job in the industry.	Fewer people interested in farming as a career; skill shortages in the farming sector; female unemployment in rural areas; loss of talented workers.	Inequality in farming Farming could become less productive and less innovative due to lack of diverse perspectives.



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## Inquiry

Challenge students to complete their own inquiries into job opportunities that exist within the red meat industry (sheep and beef).

Set students the following task:

Create a promotional package to attract new workers into the red meat industry. This package needs to include information on the type of farm, location, products produced, jobs available, technology used and the skills needed for each job. Students need to include information about people who work in the industry, not just on farms – people such as vets, scientists, marketing personnel, technology specialists and so on. Students can identify potential barriers for job seekers in the industry, explore the impact these barriers may have on individuals or across the wider sector, and identify ways that these barriers could be overcome.

Students could work in pairs or small groups to complete this inquiry and could present their learning as a video, television advertisement, magazine article or poster.

Now what?

Students could consider the importance of the agricultural sector to their community and what the future of this sector might look like. They could investigate this local industry further and find out how it remains sustainable by balancing production and care for the environment.

## Resources

- [http://ssol.tki.org.nz/Social-studies-years-1-10/Teaching-and-learning/effective\\_teaching\\_in\\_social\\_studies/Social-inquiry/Approaches-to-Social-Inquiry](http://ssol.tki.org.nz/Social-studies-years-1-10/Teaching-and-learning/effective_teaching_in_social_studies/Social-inquiry/Approaches-to-Social-Inquiry) – *Approaches to Social Inquiry*, part of the *Building Conceptual Understandings in the Social Sciences* (BCUSS) series
- <http://socialinquiry.ssol.tki.org.nz/> – Create Your Own Social Inquiry Planner
- <http://agrication.co.nz/> – Find out more about education in agriculture
- <http://www.justthejob.co.nz/primary-industries/sheep-and-beef-farming.html> – Follow a high school student as they spend time on a farm to learn more about jobs in sheep and beef farming
- <http://www.futureintech.org.nz/103/sector/primary-industries> – Types of jobs available within the primary industries
- <https://primaryito.ac.nz/> – Information for students interested in primary industry training
- <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/funding-and-programmes/other-programmes/future-skills/growing-our-future#championvideos> – Career opportunities and innovation in the primary industries
- <http://www.getahead.co.nz/the-lowdown/the-facts/sheep-and-beef/>
- <http://schools.natlib.govt.nz/resources-learning/high-interest-topics/new-zealand-primary-industry> – National Library Service to Schools – New Zealand Primary Industry
- <http://sciencelearn.org.nz/> – Science Learning Hub