

MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

Stock Water Reticulation benefits to be presented

The benefits of hill country stock water reticulation are to be presented this month during the New Zealand Agrifood Investment Week, at the Central Districts Field Days.

The seminars are the result of a recent study carried out by AgFirst and funded by the Ministry for Primary Industries and Beef + Lamb New Zealand. The study involved 11 case study farmers from across New Zealand, focusing on farmers who had installed systems in the last decade and the systems had been running for at least 18 months. Reticulation systems involve the installation of water tanks, pumps, pipes and troughs on hill country to replace streams and dams for stock water.

The study, a priority action identified within the Manawatū-Whanganui Economic Action Plan under the Accelerate25 programme, considered the financial benefits of installing such systems, with analysis revealing farmers on average experienced an Internal Rate of Return of 53%, which is a significant return on investment.

Head of the farmer led Primary Sector Group who have been charged with implementing actions listed within the Land Use Optimisation opportunity of the Action Plan, Shelley Dew-Hopkins, finds these results helpful in encouraging farmers to install reticulation systems.

“When discussing stock water with the farming community there are many who are considering installing these systems,” she says

“The results really speak for themselves, and I would encourage farmers to have a chat to those who already have systems in place, talk to suppliers and come along to the seminars in March so they can make decisions on the best systems that will suit their property.”

While the impact on the bottom line was the primary focus of the study, other benefits were also identified. These ranged from an increase in stock performance for all of the case study farmers, increased stock numbers, to better animal welfare including lessening the impact of drought. Environmental benefits were also observed with a number of farmers fencing off waterways and additional subdivision and water allowing other areas to be protected including dams, wetlands and native bush.

AgFirst consultant Phil Journeaux believes the results stack up as “all of these benefits will lead the farmer towards a more sustainable stock water solution.”

Rangitikei based case study farmer William Morrison agrees.

“While we have seen economic benefits from installing stock water reticulation on our farm, the environmental benefits have also been substantial,” he says.

“For some, the idea of installing a system and fencing off waterways can be scary. However it doesn’t need to be, it just requires a different type of planning which considers both environmental and production aspects. The result is the pressure on our waterways is reduced, improving water quality and enabling us to better prepare for drought.”

The findings from the study, along with practical solutions for water reticulation, will be presented at the ASB Innovation Hub, Central Districts Field Days on March 16 and 17. These seminars, supported by the Accelerate25 programme, will also cover the planning process around development/installation of a stock water system, comment from one of the case study farmers, and possible government assistance for group schemes.

“The seminars are targeted at farmers, rural professional and financiers,” says Phil Journeaux.

“They are a great opportunity to share information and experiences, look at innovative solutions and discuss the potential to increase productivity, profitability and sustainability.”

The Seminars on livestock water reticulation on hill country will be held at the ASB Innovation Hub, Central Districts Field Days on Thursday March 16 from 10.45am – 12.00pm and Friday March 17 from 1.00pm – 2.30pm. To find out more about the seminars visit www.accelerate25.co.nz or pre-register with Erica.vanreenen@agfirst.co.nz.

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Editors notes:

The full report on the Economic Evaluation of Stock Water Reticulation on Hill Country can be found at <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/news-and-resources/publications/>

[Accelerate25](#) is an implementation programme which aims to grow our regional prosperity and economic potential between now and 2025. As part of this programme, in August 2016, the [Manawatū-Whanganui Economic Action Plan](#) was launched, with business, iwi, local and central government now working together to implement the opportunities and actions identified.

To find out more about the Accelerate25 Manawatū-Whanganui Economic Action Plan visit www.accelerate25.co.nz. You can register for updates via our bi-monthly Growing Our Region e-newsletter, and follow us on Twitter @accelerate_25 to stay informed on latest developments.

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