



From the Board Chair

As we come to the end of the academic year it is worth taking stock of how far we have travelled since launching the Food & Fibre CoVE (FFCoVE) in February.

Having established the CoVE as an Incorporated Society, hosted by the Eastern Institute of Technology (EIT), a programme of work was agreed with Te Pūkenga and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC).

Businesses in the food and fibre sector have been under considerable strain throughout the year due to staff shortages and disruptions from COVID-19. High seasonal work demands with limited access to migrant workers has stretched many. Some businesses are also confronting carry over effects to next season. This operating environment places pressure on the workforce to focus on tasks that address the here and now, often at the expense of investing in the development of skills for the future.

This is the tyranny of the urgent, requiring the FFCoVE to provide innovative solutions for businesses who operate under these conditions.

We now have eight projects underway, with a further nine initiatives under development. This suite of projects will deliver outcomes sought by Muka Tangata (the Food and Fibre Workforce Development Council) and the Regional Skills Leadership Groups which have both been established this year.

The Board has been busy developing its strategy to guide future investment priorities. This strategy will also help the Board and management foster productive partnerships with key organisations in vocational education and the food and fibre sector.

We are now well placed to support the sector to grow vocational excellence and innovation into 2022 and beyond.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Ngā mihi nui

Dr Mark Paine
Chair, Food & Fibre CoVE



Kia ora tatou and compliments of the season to you all. Wow it's hard to believe that it is so near the end of 2021, FFCoVE has been operational now for the best part of 10 months and what a busy 10 months they have been. First I would like to thank you all for being so welcoming and giving of yourselves, your experience and your time in sharing with us ideas, histories, contexts and general understanding of the Food and Fibre Sector as we have worked to stand up the FFCoVE and chart its course forward. We really appreciate this input and will do our best to honour it as we seek to positively influence vocational education and training as it applies to the food and fibre sector and beyond.

Once incorporated we established ourselves with the IRD and then eventually, we were successful in setting up banking facilities. Along the way and again thanks to Arthur Graves for his support here, we finalised the Memorandum of Agreement with Te Pūkenga which was officially signed in Gisborne on July the 5th. We submitted our first mid-year report to TEC during the August national lockdown and have subsequently submitted an updated annual plan for 2022.

Along the way we have started, completed one and virtually completed the other two of the total three foundation programmes, we talk about a part of the Taking Stock outcomes in a later article of this edition of the newsletter. We have also established many relationships, heard from and consequently aided a number of project proposers to define their projects which the FFCoVE Board has then approved for action, currently we have 12 projects underway with a number of others in the development stage.

I would like to thank all four staff, two of whom didn't start until the beginning of August and spent their first few weeks with us working from home, for a massive effort in getting us to where we are currently. I would also like to thank Mark Paine and the rest of the FFCoVE Board for their guidance and encouragement throughout this first year, it has been really appreciated. Looking toward 2022, some of the bigger projects will really start to accelerate and some of the earlier ones will come to completion. We also look forward to being part of the projects we don't even know of yet and what they might promise the food and fibre sector.

In closing I would like to wish you all a safe and happy holiday season, enjoy the break and we look forward to catching up in the new year.

Ngā mihi

Paul Hollings
General Manager,
Food and Fibre Cove



In this feature we introduce the Food & Fibre CoVE staff members. This time it is the turn of Doug Neilson, the Portfolio Manager of FFCoVE.

Where are you originally from?

I was born in Port Chalmers but moved to the North Island just before my 5th birthday. Other than a handful of years from time to time in Canterbury and Otago, I've lived in the North Island.

What are your qualifications and work experience?

In terms of ancient formal qualifications, I hold the Diploma in Purchasing and Supply and eight papers towards a Bachelor of Business Studies. On the other hand, I received an excellent education courtesy of 20 years in the RNZAF (in those days, nothing

which was recognised as equivalent to a civilian qualification). The skills and experience I gained in the military, however, have enabled me to hold down a wide range of senior management and executive positions including:

Chief Information Officer for several organisations

- Change Manager for ACC
- General Manager Information and Surveillance Services for the Institute of Environmental Science and Research
- Business representative for the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry on the Joint Border Management System project
- Principal Advisor (Information Strategy) for Ministry of Justice
- Independent consultant (information management, business development)

What is your role within the CoVE and when did you join?

I was originally seconded from EIT in September 2020 to assist Arthur Graves (in the establishment phase) with the specific task of setting up the Portfolio Office. I subsequently accepted a 0.6 FTE position as one of the Portfolio Managers.

What significant project(s) are you currently working on?

The Evaluation Framework and Taking Stock are two of the Foundation Projects which were identified in the original bid to TEC for the FFCoVE. Both are just weeks from completion. The Evaluation Framework will establish a set of baseline measures against which we will measure progress and Taking Stock will provide a view of current state which will, in turn, tell us what best practice looks like and what opportunities exist to extend those best practices wider.

The Work Integrated Learning project has already developed a model which delivers a structure across Food and Fibre in which employers and the education sector can work together to support upskilling of workers. The objective is a system which appropriately recognises formal (e.g. micro-credentials) and non-formal qualifications (including what are known as 'seals' or 'badges') alongside recognised prior learning.

What do you particularly enjoy about your job?

Every project is different. I get to meet a lot of very talented people who just want the system to be the best it can be and are happy to share their experiences and their ideas.

Where do you live in Hawke's Bay, and do you have a family?

I live in Tamatea, Napier with my wife Lyndley. We have two adult daughters (Paraparamu and Melbourne), one of which has blessed us with two grandchildren.

What do you enjoy about living in the Bay?

Napier offers a great lifestyle; community, sunshine, scenery, shopping, wineries, mostly flat, plenty of choice to fill in what little spare time I have.

What are your other interests outside work?

Family-related activities consume most of my spare time although, when the Park Island sports fields are empty, I like to fly my model airplane. Otherwise you'd find me doing a bit of woodworking or gardening.



Projects Update

Defining an Excellence Framework for Vocational Education

While the Taking Stock project is not yet complete the literature review (which was an early deliverable) is. This review was done to inform the attendant surveys and face-to-face interviews on what Vocational Education and Training excellence across the Food and Fibre sector actually looks like. The critical component in the literature review was the development of a set of rubrics based on the research team's analysis of national and international research papers on vocational excellence.

The research team said it best: "The literature review itself traverses recent international studies looking at aspects of good and excellent practices in vocational education and training (VET) across multiple jurisdictions. Cutting immediately to the chase, a plethora of definitions and descriptions of VET excellence were identified but relatively fewer attempts – and certainly no agreement – on how to robustly measure it were found". They go on to say, "A review of the literature identified several common features in terms of the 'direction of travel' for VET systems. By identifying commonalities in terms of desirable elements of VET systems – the trends and megatrends – we have been able to identify contrasts between current states or traditional approaches, and future desired states".

The team then, using world class research methods and tools, populated a set of eleven rubrics. It hoped that by developing these rubrics, they might provide a useful set of indicators for VET stakeholders here in New Zealand, potentially as an evaluation (or self-evaluation) tool to test aspects of VET processes, practices, systems, policies, and stakeholder behaviours. We have

started work on how the Food and Fibre Sector might deploy the full set of rubrics in order to get the most out of them and to use them to inform and improve VET as it applies to the sector going forward. This work will be completed early in the new year.

While we are not yet in the position to publish the work so far, we wanted to draw your attention to it and have placed an example of one of the rubrics below. This one is used to measure excellence as it applies to Provision for Learners and in this case, Underserved Learners;

Indicator	Acceptable minimum	Good	Excellent
Availability	Provision stipulates and supports the needs of disadvantaged learners.	Provision and supporting policies address the needs of disadvantaged learners.	Provision and supporting policies deliver equitable outcomes for underserved learners.
Accessibility	TVET curriculum and learning environments are accessible and inclusive to disadvantaged learners (migrants, women, ethnic minorities, and indigenous learners)	Barriers to learning addressed: financial support, transport, cost of living, learning materials, tools. Systems monitor and address poor quality practices in institutions or workplaces.	Access is fully equitable (e.g., proportionate to population, or meeting targets for groups).
Acceptability	Local and representative groups and organisations are consulted	Local and representative groups and organisations are involved in design and delivery.	Local and representative groups and organisations are active participants in VET design, delivery, quality management and learner support.
Adaptability	The teaching timetable is flexible to address the needs of learners	The curriculum is culturally relevant and tailored to the intersectional needs of learners.	Personalized interventions and flexible delivery models address the intersectional needs of learners

Other areas measured under the category Provision include: Modes of delivery, digital and distance learning, work based learning and mid-career learners. (The other two categories being People and Processes).

As we say, this work is not yet ready to be released more fully but as soon as it is it will be published in the first instance on the FFCoVE Knowledge Base, and we plan a symposium as early as practicable (possibly on-line) to discuss it further with all interested parties.

Year 7 & 8 STEM Project

In collaboration with Verb Farms, [this project](#) is designed to create AgriTech STEM kits to be used within the school curriculum to engage and inspire students into roles in agriculture and technology, particularly AgriTech. The target group is years 7 and 8 (11- and 12-year-olds) but the kits would be suitable for students from the age of 7 onwards. The model will be piloted at six South Auckland schools beginning next year.

In Other News

FFCoVE values

While we firmly remain; "Learner centred, Industry led and Government enabled", in order to guide and ground our relationships and endeavours, now and into the future, we recently agreed four values that will underpin the life of FFCoVE as we move forward. These are:

Courageous –Māia: We will challenge ideas, systems, models and practises and pursue a path of positive disruption, all the time seeking Vocational Education and Training excellence

Innovation -Auaha: We consider possibilities and encourage new ideas, seize relevant opportunities, learn from challenges, and build on our successes

Integrity -Pono: We will be transparent, responsible, honest and accountable, listening with intent and taking relevant action

Synergistic -Whanaungatanga: Valuing our relationships, we will work with others through productive and co-design partnerships by sharing knowledge and expertise to contribute towards common goals.

Knowledgebase

As some of you know, Our Knowledgebase is finally up and running and can be accessed [here](#). As projects are born, executed and completed the outcomes, learnings, models etc that are generated from these will be made available through the Knowledgebase. We will also source good articles and research pieces for this page to enable progression toward vocational excellence in the Food and Fibre sector and beyond. We also encourage you to consider writing thought pieces or even white papers that address specific training and development issues as they apply to food and fibre. We will either publish these through the Knowledgebase and/or we will make them available as LinkedIn posts.

Dates to Remember

Office closing

FFCoVE Christmas Close down lunchtime 24 December until 8am 5 January 2022

AGM

Early warning that the Food and Fibre CoVE Society Incorporated Annual General meeting is scheduled for 24 May 2022



The Food & Fibre CoVE is proudly hosted by Eastern Institute of Technology.

