

Prepared for:



# NextGen Dairy Farmers pilot programme

Evaluation report

July 2025



# Contents

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Executive summary.....	3
Introduction .....	6
<b>Part A: Pilot outcomes and impact .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Overview of NextGen.....</b>	<b>8</b>
The NextGen programme.....	8
How the NextGen pilot was delivered.....	8
<b>What the pilot achieved.....</b>	<b>11</b>
Early outcomes in employment and retention.....	11
Student skill development during the pilot .....	12
System-level shifts that the NextGen concept is beginning to make .....	18
<b>Where participants said could be better.....</b>	<b>22</b>
Programme organisation.....	22
Training content and delivery.....	24
Recruitment.....	28
<b>Part C: Implications.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Conclusion and recommendations .....</b>	<b>34</b>
Conclusion .....	34
Recommendations for years two and three.....	34
<b>Considerations for expansion .....</b>	<b>36</b>
Considerations for scaling the NextGen programme to other regions.....	36
Considerations for adapting the NextGen model to other sectors .....	37
<b>Appendix A: Logic model.....</b>	<b>39</b>

# Executive summary

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## Context

The Next Generation Dairy Farmers Pilot Programme (NextGen) is an industry-led, co-funded initiative designed to support Year 12 and 13 secondary school leavers into employment in the dairy industry. The first pilot of NextGen supported four school leavers in Canterbury to complete the programme from December 2024 to June 2025. It consisted of the following key components: taster days and recruitment, application and screening, three-week pre-employment training, six-month farm placement with weekly training days, and ongoing pastoral care from a Learning Advisor.

The evaluation of the NextGen pilot used a mixed-method approach (surveys, interviews, and financial modelling) to assess both participant outcomes and the programme's longer-term sustainability.

## Key pilot results

Feedback from pilot students and employers indicated that the NextGen model worked as intended, particularly in participants' engagement and retention:

- **100% completion and retention.** All four students in the pilot completed the programme successfully and are continuing to work in the dairy industry. At the time of writing, three remained on their original host farms, while one has secured a new placement because no vacancies were available on their initial farm.
- **Strong career commitment.** Across the board, students see dairy farming as a long-term career. Comments like "100%," "definitely," and "loving it" came up when asked if they saw a future in the sector. Some had already started to think about long-term career development.
- **Ongoing appetite for training.** All students named areas they want to develop further, and those who stayed on their original host farms have enrolled in a CalvingSmart course with Dairy Training to prepare for the upcoming season.
- **Strong employer endorsement.** Although a typical dairy farm operates with a small team (3-4 employees) and hosting a trainee each season can be financially challenging, two of the four employers have already expressed interest in being the host farms again next year. This signals that the programme provides enough support and on-farm value for these employers to be willing to absorb additional costs and training efforts.

Although most students had little to no prior dairy experience, all showed strong growth over the course of the pilot. When employers were asked to compare the NextGen students to a typical new employee after six months (on a 0–10 scale, with 5 being average), they rated students above average across all four key competency areas:

- Technical competency: 7.0
- Work attitude and reliability: 8.3
- Communication and teamwork: 6.7
- Wellbeing practice: 8.3

Interviewees believed several aspects of the programme had contributed to this growth: targeted training sessions built specific technical and soft skills required to be a high-performing dairy farm assistant, while being under the umbrella of an education programme, with its exposure to a range of

topics, helped foster a mindset of learning, not just doing. NextGen also placed a clear emphasis on what it means to be a good working professional, that is, being reliable, trustworthy, and open to feedback. These messages were reinforced throughout the pilot via formal training, informal conversations, and pastoral care. The programme also drew on Farmstrong’s wellbeing model to promote practical self-care in a rural context. Employers strongly valued this focus, as it was something they often didn’t feel equipped or inclined to do themselves.

In addition to these skills, students across the pilot cohort also highlighted the relationships they had built in the last six months, with farm trainers, each other, and even beyond the programme (e.g., joining Young Farmers). These relationships not only enhanced their learning but also built a sense of belonging to the industry.

With a constructive outlook, interviewees also raised areas they felt could be improved in future years. Many of these aren’t unexpected for a new initiative, but they highlighted valuable insight into where the NextGen pilot could be sharpened up for future rounds.

- **Programme organisation:** As a first-year pilot, the programme naturally experienced a few teething issues in this area that participants expect will smooth out as the NextGen model becomes more established. This includes more upfront planning, such as providing a training calendar for weekly training days. Communication with employers could also be improved by establishing a more consistent check-in rhythm, while still allowing flexibility to suit individual preferences.
- **Training content and delivery:** Advanced topics (e.g. effluent or pasture management) were useful for context but shouldn’t be overemphasised within NextGen. Instead, there is value in deepening foundational skills earlier in the programme, particularly milking and vehicle skills. Employers also emphasised the importance of having experienced, practical trainers who could strike the right balance between quality and application. Both students and employers also advocated for a better system to support learning and assessment beyond the training days.
- **Recruitment:** A key barrier to wider participation within the pilot, especially from employers, was the lack of visible, proven outcomes. Sharing stories from this year’s host farmers and students could serve as powerful recruitment tools. There is also potential to tap into existing rural networks, such as rural media platforms and sports or social clubs.

## Early signs of system-level benefits

The pilot also demonstrated that the NextGen model has started tackling broader industry challenges:

- **Breaking down entry barriers.** Some employers admitted they typically wouldn’t hire school leavers and highlighted that the sector as a whole could be reluctant to take on training responsibilities. The NextGen structure, however, created a level of support and scaffolding that made it feel worthwhile for them to take a chance on someone younger and “greener”.
- **Helping the right young people to grow and thrive.** The recruitment and onboarding process helped the most promising candidates enter the sector – those who showed genuine interest, potential, and commitment. The combined effect of all the different components of NextGen created an enabling condition for them to grow.
- **Filling in the critical gaps in pastoral care.** Several employers described NextGen as “unique” in this regard. One employer shared that they likely wouldn’t have participated without this component, while another reflected on how difficult it could be to support a young person

entering farm life alone. The programme helped share that responsibility, rather than leaving it all to the employer.

- **Fostering long-term training capability in the industry.** Students who benefited from the training developed confidence and a willingness to pass on what they had learned. These early reflections suggested that NextGen was responding to the current culture around training new entrants, planting seeds not just for capable workers, but for future mentors and leaders in the dairy sector.

While the pilot operated at a small scale, outcomes observed during the pilot pointed to several core strengths in the programme's design and delivery:

- **The training content was high quality,** prioritising industry-led content while also meeting formal qualification requirements to ensure the training has a clear structure.
- **The structure and concept encourage learning.** It created the right conditions that make young people feel safe and confident to try, make mistakes, and grow in the dairy industry.
- **The delivery team was adaptive and committed.** The team brought deep industry insight and has already made noticeable adjustments between year one and two delivery.

These foundational elements provided **a strong base for sustaining and growing the pilot's early outcomes and impacts.** Importantly, realising this potential not only requires the delivery team to continue responding to feedback, but it also depends on one critical factor: **financial viability.**

## Financial sustainability

Current financial modelling suggested that even with full TEC funding and farmer contributions, delivering two cohorts (16 students) in one region would still result in a \$58,300 funding deficit. If TEC funding is not available, as may occur in the second pilot year, the funding deficit increases to nearly \$200,000.

In the long term, the modelling showed that by increasing in scale (i.e., delivering to more students), the programme can achieve **economies of scale** with revenue increasing more quickly than costs for every additional NextGen student. The modelling indicated that with four cohorts and full TEC funding, the programme can achieve break-even. However, this scenario requires the programme to first continue building momentum and demonstrating consistent, measurable outcomes over time.

In the short term, therefore, more urgent action is needed to reduce costs and / or increase revenue to address the funding gap, without compromising the quality demonstrated during the pilot, or placing additional financial pressure on students or employers. This could include:

- **Securing increased financial and in-kind support from stakeholders** (e.g., DairyNZ, Fonterra, Ngāi Tahu, MBIE, MPI, and local businesses) with a compelling case based on the pilot's outcomes and industry benefit
- **Optimising delivery processes** and reducing costs where appropriate
- **Advocate for a temporary increase to the current TEC funding cap and rates** for Dairy Training.

Overall, the pilot has strongly demonstrated the potential of the NextGen model to address critical workforce challenges in the dairy sector (and the wider primary industry), especially around attraction, retention, and capability-building. With its robust design and strong operational foundation, the programme shows significant potential to sustain and expand its observed impact – as long as it can find a financially sustainable pathway forward.

# Introduction

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## Context

The Next Generation Dairy Farmers Pilot Programme (NextGen) is an industry-led, co-funded initiative designed to support Year 12 and 13 secondary school leavers into employment in the dairy industry. The pilot of NextGen included four students from Canterbury and began at the end of 2024. It involved a three-week pre-employment training course, followed by six months of on-farm employment with weekly training sessions and ongoing pastoral care and support.

## Overview of the evaluation work

In October 2024, Scarlatti was contracted to monitor and evaluate the progress of the NextGen pilot towards achieving the intended learner, employer and industry outcomes. The overall **objectives** of the NextGen pilot evaluation were to:

- Demonstrate the outcome of the programme, including NextGen students' and employers' experience and attitudes towards the programme
- Understand the barriers that prevented potential students and employers from participating in the programme, and the enablers that supported those who did
- Provide an assessment on the financial sustainability of the NextGen model.

The evaluation used a **mixed-method approach** (surveys, interviews, and financial modelling) to deliver on the above objectives. A logic model was developed to inform the understanding of the NextGen model and guide the design of the data collection tools (see Appendix A on page 39). The data collection activities were spread across the lifetime of the pilot to align with the timing of delivery, allowing real-time progress monitoring and enabling timely feedback to the pilot delivery team. The findings presented in this paper bring together evidence from the following data sources:

- **Four NextGen students** (through pulse checks and end of the programme interviews)
- **Six NextGen employers** (through pre- and / or end-of-the-programme interviews)
- **Ten non-NextGen participants** (through a survey and two short interviews with those who did not sign up after attending a taster day, or signed up but dropped out)
- **Learnings from similar programmes** (through desk research and short interviews)
- **Ongoing discussion with the pilot delivery team and Food and Fibre Centre of Vocational Excellence stakeholders.**

## About this document

This final evaluation report presents findings from the evaluation of the 2024/25 NextGen pilot. To keep the language consistent and easy to follow, we use the following terms throughout this report:

- **"Students"** refers to the young people participating in the NextGen programme, whether they are in training or employed on-farm
- **"Employers"** refer to host farmers, farm trainers, and business owners who provide on-farm placements and training support.

A

## Part A: Pilot outcomes and impact

This part draws on participant feedback to examine what the pilot has delivered and achieved, what could be strengthened going forward, and where the concept of NextGen is making an early impact.



# Overview of NextGen

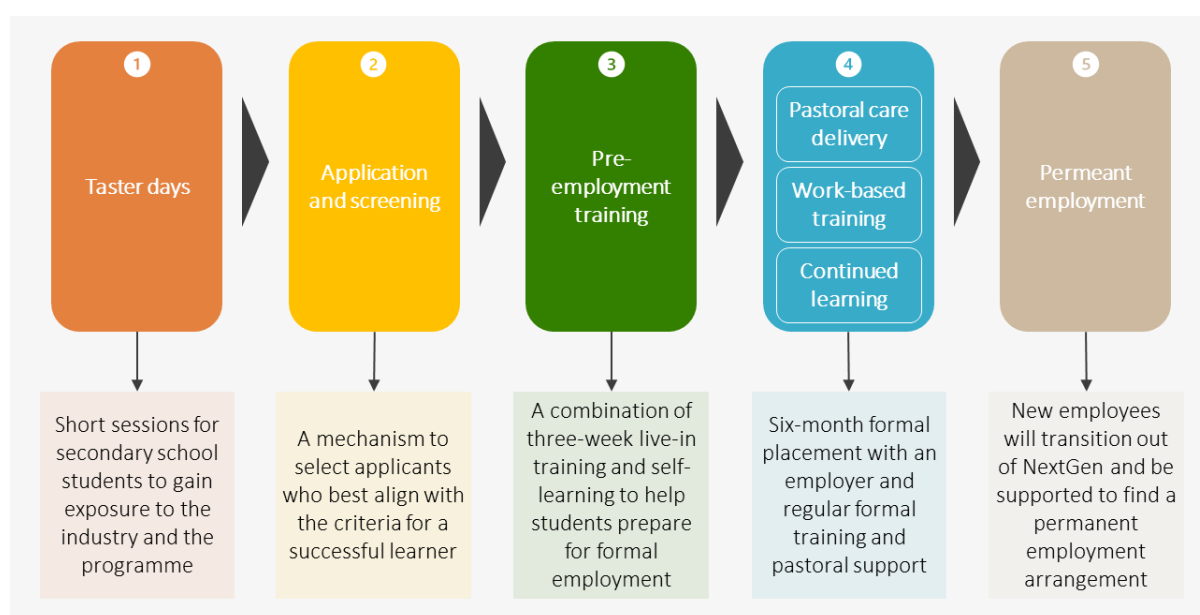
The section provides an overview of the NextGen programme design and its 2024/25 pilot delivery.

## The NextGen programme

NextGen was an initiative jointly funded by Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), and Food and Fibre Centre of Vocational Excellence to support the New Zealand dairy industry in having the right people, at the right time, with the right skills. The NextGen pilot was delivered by Dairy Training Limited (Dairy Training) and focused on equipping secondary school leavers, as one of the many new entrant sources to the industry workforce, with the foundational technical and soft skills to thrive at an entry-level in the dairy industry.

The NextGen programme was designed to be delivered through the following key components:

Figure 1 Key components of the NextGen programme



These components were co-designed with an employer network to ensure the programme’s commitment to being industry-led. The details of each component were further refined through the development and delivery of the pilot.

## How the NextGen pilot was delivered

### Pilot phases and timeline

The first pilot of NextGen supported four school leavers in Canterbury to complete the programme from December 2024 to June 2025. Figure 2 below outlines the timeline and key phases of the pilot year, and Table 1 provides a detailed summary of how each component was delivered.

Figure 2 NextGen pilot timeline (2024-2025)

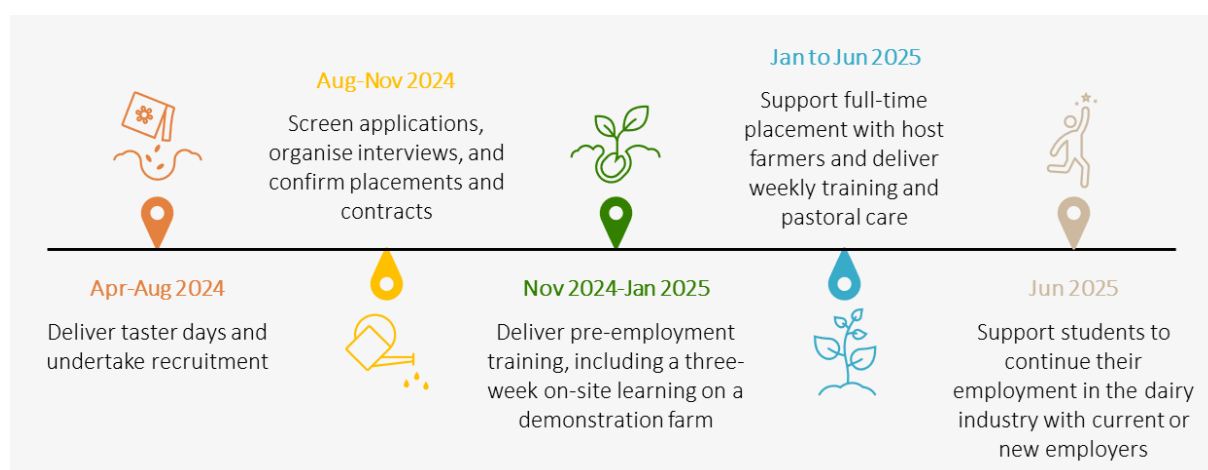


Table 1 Delivery of key NextGen components during the pilot year

	NextGen component	Pilot delivery (2024-2025)
1	Taster days and recruitment	<b>Three taster days</b> were delivered in April, July, and August 2024, attracting <b>68 secondary school students</b> . Each was held on an operating dairy farm so that students could engage and interact with animals, technology, employers, employees, and other industry stakeholders. Applications to the pilot opened from mid-June 2024 and closed on 30 August 2024.
2	Application, screening, and matching	<b>Sixteen applications</b> were received and screened against a pre-determined list of criteria, with <b>seven applicants</b> being offered a position. A series of interviews were arranged between these applicants and potential employers to explore mutual interest and compatibility. During this process, three participants withdrew due to changes in personal circumstances, and the remaining <b>four</b> formalised their participation in the pilot by signing a training contract with Dairy Training and an employment contract with their host employer.
3	Pre-employment training	The four students began their pre-employment training on 25 November 2024. Three weeks of the training were delivered in person on a demonstration farm between 2 and 20 December 2024, where students lived on site full-time. This phase included a mix of on-farm learning and self-directed study, with assessments continuing into the new year.
4a	Work-based training and continued learning	From 13 January 2025, students started <b>full-time employment</b> with the host employers. Alongside learning on farm, a <b>dedicated training day</b> (7.5 hours) was held every Wednesday during this period to support students to continue developing and refining their foundational skills. These trainings were rotated between host farms and delivered by a mix of external facilitators and Dairy Training tutors, covering both technical and personal development topics.
4b	Pastoral care	Throughout the farm placement, pastoral care was delivered to the four students via an experienced <b>Learning Advisor</b> as they transitioned from secondary school graduates to full-time dairy farm assistants. This consisted of <b>weekly contact</b> through training sessions, newsletter, and check-ins, as well as <b>face-to-face progress meetings</b> with both the student and their employer.

	NextGen component	Pilot delivery (2024-2025)
5	Permanent employment	A graduation event was held on 25 June 2025 to celebrate the four students' <b>successful completion</b> of the NextGen programme. At the time of writing, three students continued their employment with their host employers, and one started employment on another dairy farm in the area due to having no vacancy at their original placement.

## Roles and responsibilities

The delivery of the NextGen pilot relied on close collaboration and coordination between different roles. The following outlines the core responsibilities of each key player during the pilot.

- **Learning Advisor.** An individual with experience delivering another similar industry pathway programme was appointed as the Learning Advisor to provide pastoral care to the NextGen students during pre-employment training and work-based training. They acted as a consistent point of contact for both students and employers throughout the pilot.
- **Employer.** The four employers and their wider farm team were actively involved in the pilot through their core role of supporting students' training on farm, such as setting up weekly learning goals with them during the initial stage of their placement. They also participated in additional pilot activities such as trainer–trainee communication workshops during pre-employment training.
- **Training provider / trainer.** Formal training sessions during the three-week on-site pre-employment training and the six-month formal placement were delivered by a group of experienced trainers in their respective fields. This consisted of a mix of external facilitators and Dairy Training tutors.
- **Pilot delivery team.** A group of four individuals (including the Learning Advisor) from Dairy Training made up the main delivery team for the NextGen pilot. They managed delivery logistics, liaised with employers and trainers, developed training content, and oversaw students' development.

## Formalisation of the training component

In parallel to delivering the pilot, the pilot delivery team also worked on strengthening the programme's long-term foundations. Five micro-credentials have been developed, or are in development, to provide structured learning for both pre-employment and work-based training and support the programme's eligibility for ongoing funding. At the time of writing, the pre-employment training has been approved by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) as a level 2, 20-credit micro-credential called 'Introduction to Dairy Farming' (ID #128973-1). The remaining four are designed to be level 3 courses and will cover the fundamentals of pasture management, animal health, machinery and infrastructure, and life skills. In the 2024/25 pilot, a draft curriculum that aligned with these components was created in collaboration with the employer network as a substitute to guide the delivery of training and assessment of students' progress while the formal micro-credentials were being developed.

## What the pilot achieved

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*This section details the outcome of the NextGen pilot, the skill development of the pilot cohort, and the emerging impact of NextGen at a system level.*

### Early outcomes in employment and retention

Early signs suggested that the NextGen model was working as intended, particularly when it came to participant engagement and retention. The following section presents four key indicators that provide a snapshot of what the pilot has achieved.

#### All students completed the programme and continued working on farm

All four students who participated in the pilot completed it successfully and are now continuing their journey in the dairy industry. This is a notable result considering their diverse backgrounds, with a couple having no prior exposure to farming at all. At the time of writing, three students remained with their host employers, and one secured an employment opportunity on another dairy farm in the area, as vacancies were not available at the end of the season on their host farm. Despite this, the student's employers were actively involved throughout the transition, introducing their own contacts and helping to screen potential employment opportunities to ensure the student continued their career with a good employer.

#### All students expressed excitement about a long-term career in dairy

When asked about how they feel about the upcoming calving season, students are both realistic and excited about this challenge, acknowledging that it will be hard, but they look forward to it. Across the board, students see dairy as a long-term career option. Even during early pulse checks, some were already clear that even if their placement didn't work out, they'd look for other places but would still stay in the sector. Now, at the end of the programme, comments like "100%," "definitely," and "loving it" came up when asked if they see a future in dairy. Some had already started to think about long-term career development:

*I would slowly work my way through the ranks. I would like to be a 2IC or a manager within 10 years and then work my way through, maybe even owning a farm at some point. Student*

Employers also shared this positive outlook and believe that these students will stay in the industry for the long term and look forward to continuing to work with, and support, them. One commented, "[The student's] a real hard worker, super positive, real nice kid."

#### All students showed interest in further training and skill development

Training was one of the main reasons students signed up for NextGen, and it remains a top priority. Every student named specific areas they want to learn more about. All three students who stayed on their host farms enrolled in a CalvingSmart course with Dairy Training to prepare for the upcoming season. The student who transitioned to a new farm, not knowing where they would end up at the time of the interview, also expressed interest in finding a similar course locally. Hoof trimming emerged as another shared interest, with some already doing the job and wanting to deepen their skills.

*I actually enjoyed hoof trimming and told them that I want to take a course next year on hoof trimming, so that's something they can get me into, or I can just apply myself and just use my own money for it. Student*

This desire to grow was shaped not only by the formal training through NextGen, but also by what students observed and experienced on farm. All students praised their employers for being willing to teach them and saw this support as a key reason for their positive experience and motivation to keep learning. One student said that being placed on a farm that valued training was a major reason they decided to join the programme in the first place.

## Half of employers are interested in participating again next year

Two of the four employers are interested in being the host farms again next year. For them, it's not just about helping someone new into the industry; it's also about growing capability on their own farms in the long term. One acknowledged that while having two junior staff may add some pressure, they believed that the structure of the programme can help prepare them and set them up to succeed. In fact, they also saw it as a valuable next step for their current student.

*It will effectively be [the student's] job to train the new person coming in, and that's the best way to learn, by training someone else to do it. Employer*

Another saw the programme as a much-needed way to open up farming for those without industry connections and is happy to keep supporting it. The employer from the third host farm supported the concept but wasn't looking to take on a new student right away. In their case, the success of the current placement meant there was no immediate staffing need, but they saw the potential to participate again in future once the student is more developed.

The positive retention results and students' strong interest in further learning reflected the growth they have experienced during the programme. To better understand this development, the following section explores how students progressed in key skill areas, and how the programme supported that growth.

## Student skill development during the pilot

A core goal of the NextGen pilot is to support, and potentially accelerate, the development of young people entering the dairy industry, equipping them not just with practical skills but also with the confidence, communication, and work habits needed to succeed on farm. This matters not only for the success of individual placements and buy-in for the wider dairy employer community, but also for building a capable, future-ready workforce that can thrive and grow in the long term.

To understand how students progressed more objectively, the evaluation team asked the host employers, who have experience working with new dairy entrants in the past and worked most closely with the students during the pilot, to rate their development across four key areas. These were **technical competency, work attitude and reliability, communication and teamwork, and wellbeing practices**. Ratings were on a scale from 0 to 10, with 5 defined as the expected level of a typical new employee after six months in the industry. This provided a useful benchmark for gauging how well students were tracking.

Students also completed **self-ratings** across a set of more specific skill and behaviour areas, reflecting on how much they felt they had improved since the start of the programme.

The diagrams below provide an overview of employer and student ratings. Overall, employers rated the students **above average across all four areas**, which is a strong endorsement of their development through the pilot. Students also reported **significant personal growth** and high levels of confidence in their own progress. This section explores each of these development areas in more detail.

Figure 3 NextGen employer assessment on student development in key areas<sup>1</sup>

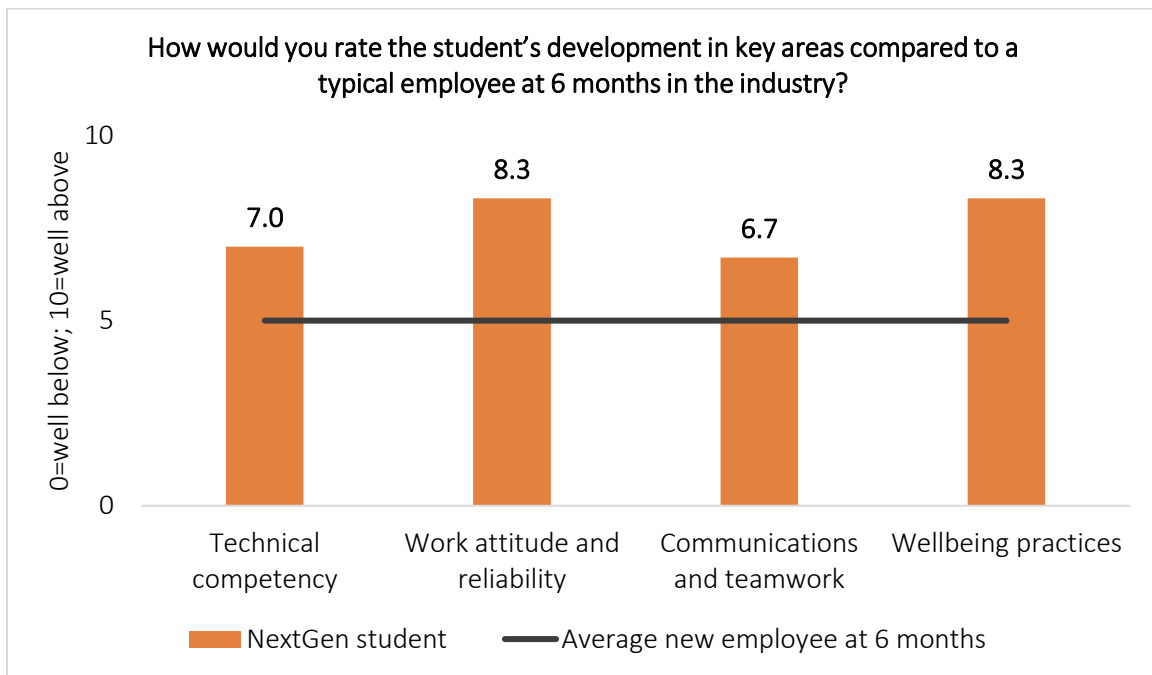
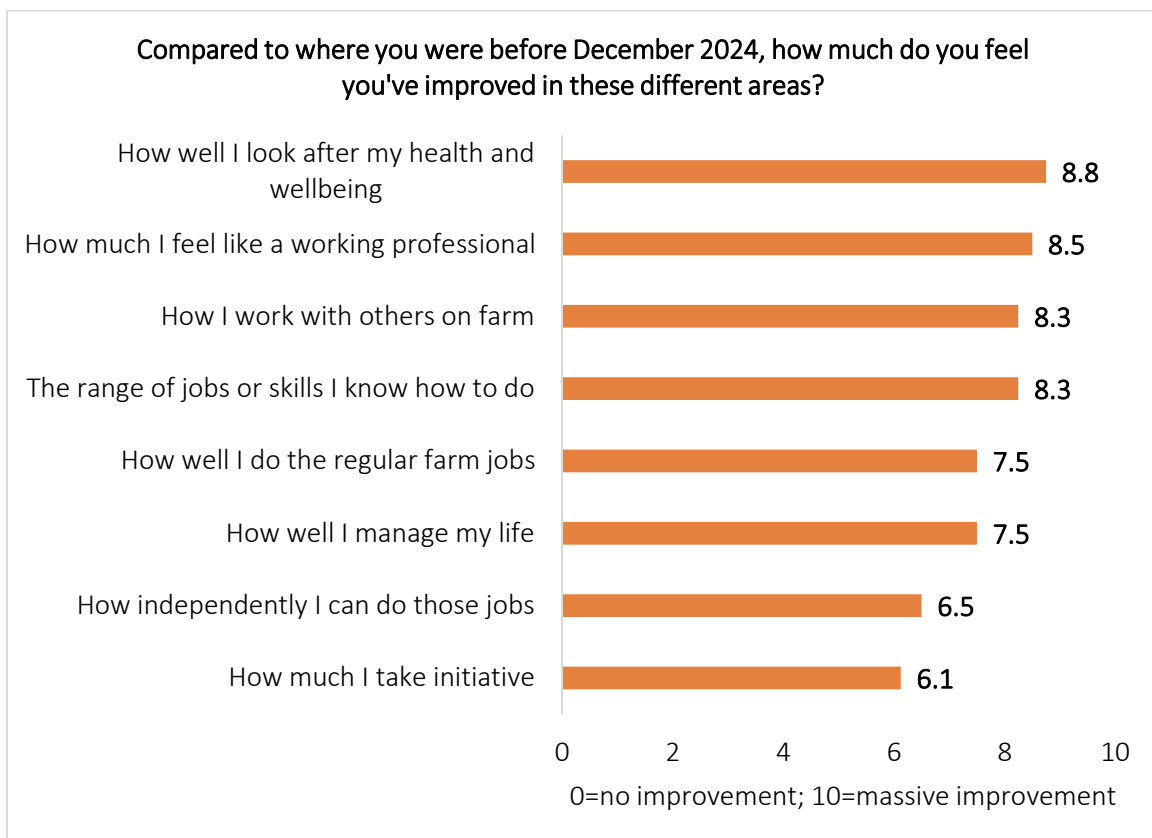


Figure 4 Student self-ratings of improvement in key areas<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Based on data from three NextGen employers

<sup>2</sup> Based on data from all four NextGen students

## Technical skills

Employer rating	Student rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Technical competencies</b> (how well do they perform as a dairy farm assistant, including the range of things they can do and the quality of completing the routine tasks?): <b>7.0</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well I do the <b>regular farm jobs</b>: <b>7.5</b></li> <li>• How <b>independently</b> I can do these jobs: <b>6.5</b></li> <li>• The <b>range of jobs</b> I know how to do: <b>8.3</b></li> </ul>

Students made significant progress in their technical capabilities on farm over the six-month programme. While they steadily improved their ability to complete day-to-day tasks, what stood out to employers the most was their **ability to learn and how they approached learning**. Compared to other employees who tend to learn by watching and repeating, NextGen students were seen to be showing curiosity about why things are done a certain way, having a deeper understanding of certain topics, and being able to make connections between farm tasks.

*We had really capable backpackers who picked things up really quickly, but they picked it up by watching and repeating. They don't pick it up by learning. They don't understand why they are doing it and the connection it has between different tasks, whereas [student name] can join the dots. Employer*

As an example, one employer noted that he liked to “push” the student to think through things a bit more and use their initiative (rather than defaulting to him for answers), acknowledging that this might make the student sometimes a bit uncomfortable. He was impressed that the student never said no and was always willing to step up, which he believes is a more important technical quality for a new dairy farmer. The student also acknowledged this dynamic during the interview, appreciating that it was because the employer “*knows I would succeed*” and “*sees it in me.*”

Students themselves were proud of the specific skills they had learned or improved. Some examples include:

- **Milking efficiency.** Two students highlighted they had reduced milking time (e.g., from 2 hours 15 minutes to 1.5 hours for 600 cows by testing different cupping methods)
- **Running the shed independently,** including plant and vat washes
- **Identifying mastitis and lameness,** which some acknowledged as still challenging but improving
- **Tractor driving and feeding out.**

These skill growths were also noted by a tutor who worked with them during both the pre-employment training and again towards the end of the programme. The tutor shared with the pilot team that it was clear some students have “*really progressed*” in their capability since they last saw them.

At the same time, students were realistic about their current limits. For example, they put slightly lower ratings on their ability to perform tasks *independently* (6.5) compared to the *quality* of their work (7.5) and the *range* of their skills (8.3). They further noted that despite the improvement compared to the beginning, there are still many tasks they had only done once or twice and wouldn't yet feel comfortable doing them alone. This self-awareness further demonstrated a healthy learning mindset where NextGen students actively identify areas they want to continue improving.



## How has the NextGen pilot contributed to this?

The three-week live-in training prior to placement gave students who had no prior experience a foundation before they began full-time farm work, and the weekly on-farm training days helped extend their skills throughout the season. One student, based on a farm system that differed from the others, said they “*still learned a lot,*” and highlighted that topics like hoof trimming were something a new employee like them wouldn’t normally have had the chance to try if they hadn’t done the course through the pilot. Another student reflected on how the pilot helped them prepare for tasks like fencing and calving, which otherwise would have been learned reactively, rather than in advance:

*If I were learning about it on farm, it would be on the day that the calves are born, instead of beforehand. Student*

Some employers also specifically credited students’ ability to ask questions and see the bigger picture in the design of the NextGen. They felt that being under the umbrella of an education programme, with its exposure to a range of topics, helped foster a mindset of learning, not just doing.

## Soft skills

Employer rating	Student rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Work attitudes and reliability</b> (how well are they transitioning to being a working professional, and taking in feedback?): <b>8.3</b></li> <li>• <b>Communications and teamwork</b> (how well do they communicate with you and others on the farm, and fit into the team?): <b>6.7</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How much I <b>take initiative</b>: <b>6.1</b></li> <li>• How much I feel like a <b>working professional</b>: <b>8.5</b></li> <li>• How I <b>work with others</b> on farm: <b>8.3</b></li> </ul>

One concern with hiring school leavers in general is reliability – will they turn up on time, be responsible, and take work seriously? Employers in the NextGen pilot reported that students exceeded expectations in this area. They were described as **reliable, professional, and open to feedback**, some demonstrating more **maturity** than typically expected of a 17- or 18-year-old.

One employer gave this example of how well the student handled feedback:

*[The student] is not offended when we’re black and white. They actually come to you and say, ‘I think I’ve done this wrong.’ This is the kind of team system we hope to run – if we make a mistake, it doesn’t matter. Let’s just fix it and learn from it. Employer*

Students’ positive attitudes also showed up during the formal training and were noticed by external trainers who worked with them. For example, one tutor admitted that they initially expected the group to be disengaged, saying they went in thinking, “*I have to deal with 18-year-olds. How is this gonna go? They are gonna grunt and not engage!*” But instead, they left the session impressed by how curious, respectful, and interactive the students were. Another tutor who worked with students one-on-one on multiple occasions also reported being able to build a great rapport with them.

Where students appeared to have faced more real-world challenges was in **communication and fitting into their farm team** in the early stages, but this is also the area where progress was particularly visible to the employers. One employer shared how their student initially interrupted conversations and struggled to understand timing and tone in a group environment, but has since improved significantly. For this new season, despite having formed a new team, this employer felt hopeful that the student

would adjust faster to the new dynamic this time. Across the board, students also rated themselves highly on how well they work with others (8.3), acknowledging how much they've grown in these areas.

In another case, one student started shy and reserved but has since grown in confidence and communication, something both they and their employer noticed:

*It was more personality than anything, and [the student] has come out of their shell more, and the communication and everything have been up there. Employer*

*I was not great at the start... I'm not an extremely social person. It was a new environment and everything, but I've definitely grown into it and now [we have really good relationships]. Student*



### How has the NextGen pilot contributed to this?

While some employers acknowledged that the students' reliability and attitude are more of a reflection of their personal characters, there are clear ways the pilot supported growth in this space. The design of NextGen placed strong emphasis on what it means to be a good employee (e.g., reliability, trustworthiness, and openness to feedback) and the importance of these qualities can shape students' reputation and affect the opportunities available to them. These messages were drawn from research and consistently passed on to students through formal training sessions, pastoral care, and informal conversations. The emphasis on daily reflections, weekly goals, and close contact with the Learning Advisor throughout the placement also helped reinforce these positive habits and traits.

In addition, the application and screening process within the pilot helped ensure that students with the right values and mindset were offered places.

## Life skills and wellbeing practices

Employer rating	Student rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wellbeing (how well are they adjusting to the overall lifestyle and taking care of themselves?): <b>8.3</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How well I manage my life: <b>7.5</b></li> <li>How well I look after my health and wellbeing: <b>8.8</b></li> </ul>

Students made noticeable progress in managing their lives living rurally and as an "adult". One of the most mentioned outcomes in this area by students was **financial literacy**. They described learning how to budget, understand taxes, set up KiwiSaver, and start saving. Even those who had some money management experience beforehand said the programme helped them strengthen their understanding, and they now take pride in being financially independent.

*My finances are going great. I was already pretty good with money, but now I know how taxes and insurance work. Student*

Students also showed growth in wellbeing-related habits. Many mentioned improving their sleep routines, cooking more nutritious meals, doing meal prep, and making time to look after themselves, especially during busy or stressful periods. A few commented that they were now using tips from the sleep workshop regularly and felt better prepared to manage long workdays.

*I use a lot of the stuff from the sleep course, like hot showers before bed. Makes me feel more ready to sleep. Student*

*We got a watch that can track sleep and health. That was very useful. Student*

Employers also noticed the changes students have been making in this space. Several spoke positively about students taking responsibility for their own health and wellbeing, showing up clean and rested, and knowing when to set boundaries when it comes to health and safety (e.g., recognising when they were too tired to drive farm vehicles – an area they tend to be most excited about – and making the call not to).

While there were still moments when students had to learn “the hard way” (e.g., one student came to work with just a muesli bar on a heavy day), each of these instances was seen as a learning moment, as employers reported that students took feedback well and adjusted quickly. They also emphasised how important it is for young people to build these habits early, especially with the long hours and demanding calving season ahead.

*The programme stressed these things pretty well, but some things just had to be learned. [The student] has adjusted pretty well, especially considering where they were when they first came out to where they are now, a big and fast difference. Employer*



### How has the NextGen pilot contributed to this?

Wellbeing and life skills were a core focus of the NextGen programme, and this is where the pilot’s impact has been most clearly felt. Students described the pilot’s workshops and one-on-one finance sessions as game changers, giving them confidence in managing money. The programme also draws on the wellbeing model developed by Farmstrong, which emphasises practical self-care in the rural setting. Students appreciated this focus and mentioned skills and tools such as meal preparation, yoga, and sleep trackers as things they were actively using.

Employers strongly appreciated having the pilot focus on this aspect, especially the dedicated pastoral care support from the Learning Advisor as well as the wider delivery team to look after students’ wellbeing during this crucial transition period of their lives, as this has been something they often didn’t feel equipped or inclined to do themselves.

*That’s the piece that we won’t want to do. I’ll be honest and say that. We have families, and we don’t want to have to go and be a parent to another child. Employer*

## Connection

While not a formal focus in the programme’s skills framework, another meaningful outcome the students across the pilot cohort highlighted is the relationships they’ve built in the last six months, with farm trainers, each other, and even beyond the programme.

Students formed strong, personal bonds with their employers. Some students reported having weekly catch-ups with their trainers to discuss their progress, and one shared how their trainer would text to say they were proud of them. One student described having dinner with their trainer’s family and spoke lovingly about the relationship they have with their kids and pets.

Students also felt welcomed and supported by their farm teams, both professionally and socially. One shared a story of team camaraderie that turned an ordinary task into an enjoyable one:

*Sometimes work didn’t feel like a “professional environment” because it almost felt like I was hanging out with the team, having a laugh while doing something. We were changing the rubberwear in the shed, in itself it can be a pretty tedious job, but we had [the whole team] out there just laughing, going through it, and we did it in four hours. it was a much better experience, and we did it way quicker. Student*

Within the cohort itself, peer connection was also strong. Students stayed in touch during non-training days through a group chat, sharing photos of what’s happening on their farms. They would also sleep

over at each other's places before training days to save on travel time and catch up over dinner. One student, who was unsure about forming friendships within the cohort and said "*maybe, maybe not... I think it's hard*" during the pre-employment interview, later reflected at the end of the programme that they had become close with the others and regularly hung out on days off. All students felt positive that these relationships were something they would like to continue.

*The day before the course, we went out to the Gentleman's club and had some food and played some pool. We will stay in touch.* **Student**

Beyond the programme, a few students also mentioned joining their local Young Farmers group and looking forward to getting involved more once they have more time. This indicated that the students start to embed themselves socially and professionally in the industry.

These relationships not only enhance learning but also build a sense of belonging. For young people new to rural life, this can be just as important as any technical, soft, or life skills.



### How has the NextGen pilot contributed to this?

The structure of the NextGen programme played an important role in fostering these connections. For example, the employer interview process helped ensure strong matches between students and trainers. As one employer noted:

*[The NextGen team] can see the different personalities of the farmers and the students and marry them up really well.* **Employer**

The cohort model encouraged peer connection, with students travelling together, training side by side, and staying in regular contact between sessions. Throughout the programme, students were also encouraged to participate in broader industry activities, such as visiting process plants, attending the South Island Agricultural Field Day, and contributing to the recruitment of future cohorts (e.g., through taster days). Exposure to settings contributed to a sense of being part of something bigger among the students.

## System-level shifts that the NextGen concept is beginning to make

Looking across the results demonstrated in the pilot, there are clear signs that the NextGen model is beginning to address some of the larger, systemic challenges in attracting and supporting young people into the dairy industry. This section highlights four areas where the NextGen model appears to be creating changes that go beyond individuals and remove longstanding system-level barriers.

### Breaking down entry barriers into the dairy industry

While it's still early, there are strong indications that the concept of NextGen is doing more than just placing students on farms and upskilling them; it is opening the door for young people who can otherwise feel closed to newcomers.

Even though they are familiar with training people, some employers admitted they typically wouldn't hire school leavers, and prefer more mature individuals with life experience who are seen as better equipped to pick up tasks or learn on the job – even if they're only staying for a short time. This preference pointed to a deeper challenge that is still prevalent among the current dairy farm owners and managers. Employers interviewed pointed out that **the sector as a whole can be reluctant to take on training responsibilities** (even when they support the idea of building a new generation of farmers in principle) and sceptical of gateway initiatives like NextGen, largely due to their own confidence in being a trainer and past experience where training outcomes were over-promised and under-delivered.

*There aren't many farmers that will try something new straight off the bat without anyone – their neighbours – to go, 'yeah, I gave that a go'. I've talked to heaps of farmers about the programme, everyone thinks it is a great idea, but they're still not willing to put their hands up. I don't know what they think they need to take on someone and train them. You don't need to be a superstar to train someone. Employer*

Within the pilot cohort, one employer was clear: “I don't think we would have employed [the student] without the programme structure.” This indicated an important mindset shift, where the programme structure created a level of support and scaffolding that made it feel worthwhile for employers in the dairy industry to take a chance on someone younger and “greener”. One employer shared that a team member had reflected on the pilot, saying it was “quite cool to see that the NextGen programme's bringing those school leavers with no experience straight in,” because when they had tried to apply for dairy farm jobs themselves, they “didn't have any experience and just didn't stand a chance to get in.” Similarly, another employer reflected on their own path into dairy and how limited the options were without existing experience or connections:

*Looking back, I would have liked to have got to farming earlier than I did, but there weren't many pathways like this if I didn't have experience or know someone on a farm. Particularly for kids in town, if you don't have experience, people won't even look at you. Employer*

Students echoed these same insights. For some, the greatest value of the programme was simply that it gave them a way in. One was frank with his motivation, “I kind of used the course to find a job in the industry, the skills and knowledge were a bonus.” Based on what they've heard and experienced, they could tell it was difficult to enter the industry, especially coming from a non-farming background.

*Everything [has been valuable] ... If you don't have a gateway into dairy farming, it's very hard to get into it. If I didn't have this course, it'd be pretty hard to find a dairy farming job. Even just that starting point helped a lot. Student*

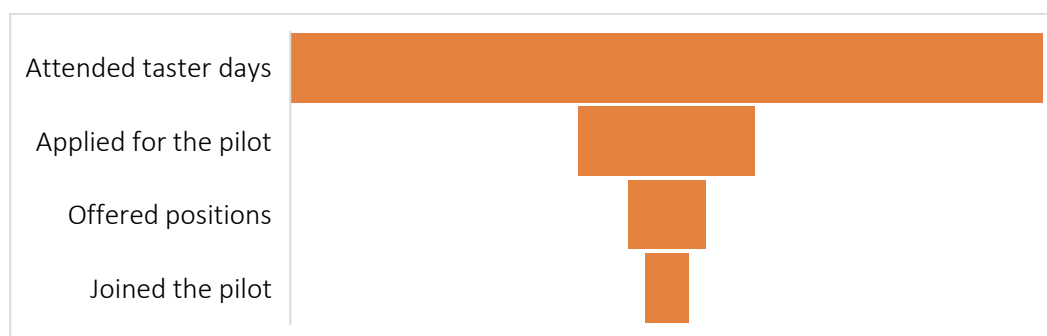
## Helping the right young people to thrive in the industry

Beyond creating a pathway into the industry, the programme, through its screening, interview, and onboarding process, is helping the **most promising candidates** enter and thrive, that is, those who show genuine interest, potential, and commitment to dairy. One employer noted:

*If we could get 20 people [like the student] into the industry, how good would that be? Employer*

Dairy Training's initial Feasibility Study for this programme envisioned the recruitment stage of NextGen as a type of 'drafting gate' for students, providing them with a reality check on the nature of dairy farming and giving interested students the opportunity to determine whether it was a suitable fit for them. Feedback from taster day attendees confirmed that recruitment activities such as taster days provided a positive experience for them while giving them a good sense of what the programme would entail. The progression of applicants through different stages during the pilot (as shown in Figure 5) also indicated that the process worked as intended.

Figure 5 Progression of students through different phases of the NextGen pilot



The growth in student capability was widely noted by both employers and students themselves. Skill development was visible across multiple areas, not just in technical tasks, but also in attitude, teamwork, and adaptation to rural life. However, because NextGen is designed to have a range of components, rather than a task-based course, it can be difficult for students or employers to pinpoint which element made the biggest difference – is it structured training, students’ personal qualities, or the learning that naturally occurs on the job? In reality, these developments often reflect **the combined effect of all these enabling conditions**, and it was the programme model that brought those conditions together: the screening process ensured that students arrived on the farm with the right mindset and value, placement with reputable, supportive employers meant students could navigate the often-challenging early stages of their careers in a nurturing environment, and the reinforcement of good qualities and habits as working professionals and exposure to a wide range of systematically structured technical topics helped prepare them for what was coming, contributing to both readiness and retention.

### Filling in the critical gaps in pastoral care

Participants consistently recognised the value of the pilot’s support model in helping students navigate the transition into full-time work and rural living, something often missing in the dairy industry. The dedicated pastoral care, provided by an experienced third-party professional, was especially valued by employers. Several described the NextGen concept as “unique” in this regard, with pastoral care setting it apart from other industry initiatives. One employer shared that they likely wouldn’t have participated without this component, while another reflected on how difficult it can be to support a young person entering farm life alone. The programme helped share that responsibility, rather than leaving it all to the employer.

*That’s how we lose people in our industry – because we don’t provide any pastoral care for young people. They don’t know how to cook. They don’t know how to communicate. They don’t know how to do all of those everyday things, and they come and live on a farm where they’re isolated... They’re potentially further away from their family. So, if we want them to be successful, we need to provide that. And I think that that’s a really great thing. Employer*

Some employers also highlighted that **who** provides the care matters too. The programme staff in this space were seen as going above and beyond, not just professionally capable, but personally invested and well-suited to supporting young people in this transition.

*They are really good, and I think roles like theirs and who’s in it are key. They bring something extra, not necessarily an extra invested interest because they are not their kids or anything, but they are special people who go above and beyond. And they have the right background [in education] and know how to manage teenagers. Employer*

## Fostering long-term training capability in the industry

There are promising early signs that the NextGen pilot is building a foundation for a new generation of **capable, motivated, and growth-oriented** dairy farmers. Students spoke with genuine enthusiasm about their future in the sector and showed a strong appetite for continued learning and upskilling. This mindset was also evident when they were asked what advice they'd give to others considering the programme. They shared:

*Don't be afraid to ask questions, even the stupid ones. Student*

*Always listen to people. They're not trying to be mean; they're trying to help you. Student*

Moreover, one student was excited by the prospect of helping train a new member if their farm takes on another student next season, acknowledging it would be a challenge, but also a valuable learning opportunity for both of them.

The positive attitude toward learning and supporting others demonstrated by the pilot cohort lays important groundwork for building training capability across the industry over time – where **those who have benefited from training see the value of it and also have the confidence to pass it on**. These early reflections suggested that NextGen is responding to the current culture around training new entrants, planting seeds not just for capable workers, but for future mentors and leaders in the dairy sector.



### Opportunities for future monitoring

As the NextGen concept continues to take shape and contribute to long-term industry capability, there is value in assessing whether these encouraging early signs of impact are sustained and scaled. To do so, the NextGen delivery team can continue to undertake some key monitoring and evaluation activities in future areas:

- Participating student and employer experience
- Student retention and progression
  - % of students completing the programme each year
  - % of students intending to undertake future training
  - % retained in the dairy industry 6- or 12-months post-programme (in comparison to industry benchmarks). Consider forming a NextGen alumni network and conducting regular yearly check-ins to track their career progress.
- Programme attraction and conversion
  - # of applicants received, offers made, and participants placed each year
  - Reasons students dropped out during this process
  - # of employers recruited each year and % of new / returning employers
  - Channels employers heard about the programme
  - Employer motivation / barriers to participating in the programme

## Where participants said could be better

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*The section details the areas where participants suggested improvement to help inform the ongoing refinement of the NextGen programme for the Dairy Training delivery team.*

While the pilot delivered strong results in student development and overall engagement across the board, interviewees also raised areas they felt could be improved in future years. These include aspects of programme organisation and communications, training content and delivery, and attraction and recruitment. Many of these suggestions aren't unexpected for a new initiative, but they highlighted valuable insight into where the NextGen pilot could be sharpened up for future rounds.

### Programme organisation

Interviewees recognised that challenges related to programme organisation are common teething issues in a first-year pilot, and it was recognised that the programme team has already taken steps to address many of them. As the NextGen model becomes more established, interviewees believed these areas will be naturally smoothed out and create a more positive experience for future students and employers.

### There is a need for more forward planning around weekly training days

Several early challenges stemmed from a lack of advanced planning and short-notice communications, especially around Wednesday training sessions during farm placement. For example, there were a few cases where late changes or cancellations left students confused or unprepared. Some said that reminder texts sometimes came through after they'd gone to bed. This can be particularly challenging when equipment is needed or when it affects overnight plans (e.g., students may already be travelling to stay at each other's place where they thought the session would happen).

Both students and farmers said they would benefit from a **clearer, earlier understanding of what was coming up**, including what topics were being covered, where the training was held, what (if anything) they needed to bring or prepare, and for farm hosting the training, what needed to be set up. A shared suggestion was to provide a **term-long training calendar** upfront.

*A bit of forward planning, having an outline of what will be covered, when and where. But I appreciate that the programme has been developed on the go, and it will change next year.*  
**Employer**

One student also added that when training was hosted on their farm, they'd like to be directly looped into planning conversations since they are often responsible for setting things up in the morning, rather than receiving instructions only through their trainer, who sometimes may not have the full details.

That said, there was optimism that these growing pains would ease as the programme matures. For example, it was noted that later in the programme, additional information (e.g., meeting times in the morning) was added to the newsletters sent to employers and students a couple of days in advance in response to their feedback. As one farmer put it, *"everything's moving in the right direction, [it's] the first year, we're never gonna get it perfect"*.



### What does this mean for NextGen going forward?

- **Create and share a training calendar** with students and employers at the start of placement, with planned topics, locations, and key requirements. Consider using a **live** format (e.g., Google Calendar or shared document) so information can be updated and highlighted, and additional details can be added closer to the time (e.g., exactly what time to meet)
  - Similarly, a timetable of pre-employment training is also beneficial to have in advance.
- **Clarify the role of different communication tools** in advance (e.g., newsletters for full details; text reminder is just a prompt but shouldn't be relied on).
- **Loop in students more directly** when the training session is on their farm to ensure better preparation as well as build ownership.

## Communication with employers could be more frequent and tailored

During the pilot, several approaches were used by the pilot team to keep employers informed and make sure both sides involved in training NextGen students were aligned. This included **weekly newsletters** about the Wednesday trainings and **individual check-ins** from the Learning Advisor throughout the placement to discuss the pilot and / or students' progress. These check-ins happened either in person or by phone, depending on what worked best for the employer.

While most employers were positive about these communications they had with the pilot team, there was an appetite for **more frequent and consistent individual check-ins**, especially in the early and middle parts of the programme, to help maintain alignment on expectations and student development. Preferences for communication format for these check-ins varied between employers. Some preferred phone calls they could take while working, while others valued in-person visits, as long as they were scheduled in advance (two to three weeks' notice was considered reasonable).

*The check-ins probably could have been a bit more. They were quite frequent to start with, but then dropped down a bit. It could be a weekly or fortnightly check-in through a five to ten-minute call, plus once a month face-to-face catch-ups. Can get less near the end. [Learning Advisor] was still always there if we needed anything, but could have a structure set. **Employer***

For the weekly training updates during the farm placement, the consensus was that a newsletter delivered through **email might not be the best approach**. Some employers admitted that they only skim-read them or sometimes forgot to read them altogether, echoing similar feedback from students. One employer suggested exploring alternative platforms like a WhatsApp group to make it easier for host farms to receive updates, ask questions, and share tips in real time.

*Communications from the programme had been good in terms of coordinating things and getting updates on students' learning. I've been scanning through the newsletters sometimes, but the issue is you get too many notifications or emails daily, too much stuff. **Employer***

Feedback from an employer at the beginning of the pilot also reflected that regular updates on students' activities and learning were lacking during the pre-employment training, suggesting that these communications should **begin earlier** in the programme.

In addition, employers interviewed also generally welcome the idea of getting together a couple of times during the programme and connecting directly with each other in a social setting (e.g., a BBQ after work). While this already occurred between some employers in the pilot who were geographically

close, it would create a more dedicated platform for them to share their experiences as trainers working with NextGen students.



### What does this mean for NextGen going forward?

Even within this small pilot cohort, employers had different preferences on how often and how they wanted to stay in touch with the programme. The key takeaway is that communication needs to be **more intentional with room to adapt**. This is especially important given that attracting employers as a new initiative has already proven to be challenging, so any system needs to work in a way that demonstrates the quality while also feels supportive and manageable to them.

- **Set a baseline check in structure with employers.** The programme could offer a baseline check-in rhythm to all employers at the start (e.g., monthly visits with fortnightly calls in between), while in practice, allowing employers to negotiate and tailor the format and frequency to suit their preferences. This provides consistency without being overly prescriptive. Key touchpoints, especially in-person meetings, could then **be included in the shared calendar** to help everyone plan ahead.
- **Clarify the role of different channels.** A quick stocktake of the communication channels in use could help the team clearly outline the purpose of each (e.g., WhatsApp for quick updates, phone for check-ins, and visits for deeper conversations) and share this information with participants at the start.
  - **Reconsider the format of weekly updates.** It was clear that an emailed newsletter was not the most effective way to deliver updates. Explore alternative formats (e.g., a WhatsApp group chat) that better match the communication habits of farmers and students.
  - **Extend weekly updates to include the pre-employment training period.**

## Training content and delivery

Participants also shared reflections on the training content and delivery during pre-employment training and farm placement. These insights pointed to the ongoing need to keep training practical and relevant to on-farm realities – a core part of NextGen’s goal of staying industry-led. However, it was noted that refining this part of the programme might be more complex. Some elements are tied to the requirements of TEC-approved micro-credentials, which introduce constraints around what needs to be covered and how. **Navigating this balance** will be key as the programme evolves.

### The broad range of technical topics is good, but it’s likely to have reached a limit

The trainings were valued by students and employers. The breadth of topics helped students begin to understand the bigger picture of farm systems, not just the tasks in front of them. Employers appreciated that students were exposed to *“more than just how to put cups on cows.”*

That said, feedback also pointed to a potential ceiling. Given the six-month timeframe, there’s only so much that someone with little prior experience can absorb before diminishing returns set in.

*I don’t think they want to put anything more in. Nothing more. Employer*

This was especially true for **more advanced topics** such as irrigation, effluent management, and pasture management. While exposure to these areas was seen as useful for building that bigger picture awareness and future reference, many felt these areas shouldn’t be emphasised too heavily, or given an expectation that students could practice them on the job. These tasks often fall outside the responsibilities and skill range of someone six months into their job, and therefore, employers were often hesitant to let students give them a go. Without opportunities for hands-on practice, it was harder for students to apply and retain what they had learned.

*That was something we pushed back on a little bit - don't try to squeeze too much into the six months of learning in terms of that theory, because they are not going to have the opportunity to implement it all. Employer*

*I asked them a few questions after the Body Condition Scoring training. They haven't clicked on it as such, but at least they know what Body Condition Scoring is for. It's to give them an understanding, but that probably stops there. Just knowing we need to make sure the cows are in excellent condition at this stage is good enough. Employer*

One employer also suggested a more **tailored or tiered approach** by grouping students by skill level or experience, which could be worth considering in future rounds when there are a larger number of students. This could ensure everyone is exposed to the full range of topics as intended, but the depth in some topic areas could be better matched to where the students are actually at.



#### What does this mean for NextGen going forward?

- Keep the current breadth of topics, but **avoid expanding** it further.
- Identify the **advanced topics** (or specific tasks or skills within the topic area) to introduce at a surface level, and frame them clearly as awareness-building, not core competencies.
- As cohort numbers grow, consider **grouping students** in some topic areas sessions based on their skill level to tailor the depth.

### More focus can be devoted to foundational skills

While the range of topics was seen as reaching a limit, both students and employers felt that there was scope to deepen foundational skills earlier in the programme, especially in **milking** and **vehicle training**. These areas make up a large portion of a new dairy farm assistant's job, and building competence in them early helps develop both confidence and capability (i.e., seeing the progress from not being able to milk a cow by themselves to running an entire dairy shed).

*[The student] was only here for a few weeks, and the course wanted them to do some farm walks, while they were still learning about the shed set up and milking. Too much information to try to get into their head. Need to focus on getting those basic foundation skills really well [embedded] before adding other stuff. For example, I don't try to chuck a new person in a tractor straightaway; they have to earn their right by proving that they have the right mindset to do everything else first. Employer*

Students echoed the importance of milking, with a couple suggesting that the first month should be firmly focused on all aspects of milking. One elaborated that it was not just how to cup cows, but also **what to observe**: checking teats for signs of mastitis, monitoring cow behaviour around in-shed feed, managing cow flow and spacing when using the backing gate, etc. They noted that this type of content was important because getting things wrong, like mismanaging the backing gate, can have significant animal welfare and cost implications.

*We were told about the backing gate during training, but didn't get to see it in person. That should be covered. You can squash a bunch of cows, and that's a lot of vet costs. Student*

On this note, the student also suggested the need for more emphasis on **why tasks matter**. For example, not just showing how to do plant and vat washes, but understanding the consequences of getting them wrong.

Vehicle training was another area where depth was seen as critically important, both in terms of **basic functionality** and **safety**. One employer felt that more time could be spent on foundational mechanics

around two-wheels, such as how to brake safely and effectively, and deal with a flat battery using a kickstart. One student strongly advised **not to simplify** the training on health and safety when it comes to vehicles, saying all of them learned a lot and, in his case, was even able to teach more experienced staff on some aspects. They pointed out:

*Motorbikes and vehicles cause the most deaths on dairy farms, apart from getting crushed by animals. The course covered a lot of Health and Safety and how to deal with emergencies, such as bike checks, rules and regulations on the road, and PPE. I don't think this part is too advanced at all. Student*

Two other areas employers felt could be built in as foundational life and career skills were **career progression** and **CV development**. One employer emphasised the motivational value of helping students understand the longer-term pathway in dairy: from entry-level roles to farm manager or contract milker, and the income and equity potential at each stage.

*There's no joy waking up at three in the morning unless you know you're going to get somewhere. Employer*

He believed that if this pathway were explained earlier and more clearly, more young people might see dairy as a long-term career. Another employer recommended more support on building a robust CV and presenting oneself to future employers. He acknowledged that not all students would stay in their first role, and some might need to begin job hunting well before the end of the programme. Helping them stand out in a competitive hiring environment was seen as essential preparation.



#### What does this mean for NextGen going forward?

- Examine current training content and prioritise foundational skills areas (e.g., milking, vehicle skills) in the first few weeks.
- Include content on **career pathways and financial potential in the dairy industry** to help students see the bigger picture and inspire stronger commitment.
- Include **CV and interview preparation** in the second half of the programme to prepare students. This will be a useful life skill regardless of whether they stay in their current role.

### Specific practices students are taught should reflect real-world farm conditions

A couple of employers pointed out that some of the practices students were taught were too idealised and not always aligned with how things operate on real farms under time and resource constraints. As one of them put it, these methods reflected a “*dream world*” scenario:

*[The student] was taught a probably slow and inefficient way of doing something, and now I'm trying to get that out of them. On farm, you're under time pressure. In real life, you've got to get home and eat dinner, otherwise you'll be there until midnight. Employer*

This employer acknowledged the value of teaching correct technique but stressed that students also need to learn how to apply these efficiently, which is critical for working in fast-paced farm environments. He further noted that this indicates the importance of **selecting trainers with practical, hands-on farm experience** who understand the balance between quality and application.

One student also highlighted the value of making training content more based on real-world challenges, such as **navigating through team dynamics**. They suggested that future cohorts would benefit from more practical conflict resolution and communication training, especially focused on speaking up as a junior team member:

*You're never gonna be on a perfect farm... It'd be helpful to learn how to bring things up when you're new and feel like you're less experienced or not worthy. Student*



#### What does this mean for NextGen going forward?

- **Select trainers with real-farm experience** who can teach how to apply skills under practical conditions / constraints, without compromising safety or animal welfare.
- **Add training on workplace communication techniques**, especially conflict resolution and how junior staff can speak up appropriately.

### There needs to be a more effective way to support learning after training sessions

Students suggested that learning support outside of course time could be improved. The current system, which involves distributing multiple pages of **printed handouts** per session, can be seen as overwhelming and impractical, especially for learners who don't learn best through reading or paperwork. Two students suggested making them digital with more interactive or visual formats to support learning. One pointed out that just reading instructions doesn't help much with tasks that require physical technique:

*You can tell me how many MLs to give a cow, but how do I actually do it? Where do I put it in? I wouldn't have known to tip the bottle upside down when drawing it into the syringe; I would've just dipped it in and ended up with air bubbles. Student*

Students also described challenges using the Cloud Assess platform and completing **assessments** after hours, especially if they were tired from long hours, had poor internet, or faced reading difficulties (e.g., dyslexia). A few suggested setting aside dedicated time during training days to complete paperwork and assessments (e.g., half a day every few weeks). While this approach could provide more structure and support, it's also worth noting that **taking initiative and undertaking self-directed learning** is one of the qualities the NextGen programme hopes students could develop. Completing "homework" such as the assessments was not only a requirement for the training delivered through NextGen to meet the criteria of being recognised micro-credentials, but also intended to help students build habits they would need long term, rather than relying on constant reminders or structured time.

Another issue noted by the interviewees was the difference between what was taught in training sessions and what students were able to do on farm. One student suggested **a more coordinated approach where farmers were informed** in advance about what was being covered in class, so they could support or reinforce those lessons practically. For example, if the classroom topic is irrigation, the farm trainer could walk the student through their own irrigation system that week, rather than having students rely on learning worksheets based on generic farm systems. This would also support students in meeting assessment criteria that require on-farm application.

A skills document was developed by the pilot team, with input from the steering group, to guide students' competency development during this pilot. It was also used during the Learning Advisor check-ins for the Advisor, the student, and the employer to assess students' progress together. While this tool was seen as useful, it was reported that its application could be improved and increased. One employer suggested a few areas that could be considered:

- In the marking rubric, revisit how "Achieved" was defined (e.g., doing a task with **minimal** supervision, instead of "under supervision")
- Add a "Not applicable / not yet" column. This could help avoid the impression that students are behind or lacking if opportunities to perform certain tasks haven't come up yet. It could also prevent trainers from prematurely ticking things off just to avoid leaving boxes blank.
- Consider an online system so it would be easier to fill it in, and they could access and review it at their own pace.

*An online and easier version to do it, and people continuously have access to it. I may be able to do it Friday afternoon every week, and the student can look over it during the weekend and come to me with questions. **Employer***

It's worth noting that some of the feedback (e.g., adding a NA/NY column) has already been actioned.



#### What does this mean for NextGen going forward?

- **Explore more engaging options for assessments and learning materials** (such as AI assessment tools), prioritising interactive, visual, or video-based content where possible.
- **Identify when or which topic areas will require employer support on input.** Consider flagging these in the training calendar.
- **Consider a hybrid approach to assessment / paperwork:** set clear expectations for independent learning from the beginning (including the "why") and reinforce it throughout the programme, accompanied by occasional dedicated time during training.
  - Plan alternative ways to support students who face barriers such as digital accessibility and learning disabilities.
- **Review the skill document** based on feedback from the pilot cohort employers.

## Recruitment

Alongside reflections on the training delivery, interviewees also shared what they saw as barriers to getting more potential participants, especially employers, involved in the NextGen programme. While those who participated were largely motivated by **strong personal aspirations**, they acknowledged that the process had its challenges. In particular, it was difficult to bring employers on board without evidence of how the programme would work, and the timing of recruitment created mismatches between student and employer availability. These are areas the pilot team can learn from to support stronger uptake in future rounds.

### Build NextGen's reputation by telling the pilot cohort's stories

The fact that NextGen is a new initiative means it lacks evidence to reassure potential employers of its value. Employers interviewed suggested that potential farmers could be hesitant to take on NextGen students because they didn't know what to expect – what kind of students they would get, and how this would work for their farm logistically. During the pilot recruitment, this uncertainty was compounded by the fact that the details of the NextGen model were also being developed at the same time, making it difficult for the team to provide timely and definitive answers to employers' concerns.

Without a proven track record or compelling responses, it was difficult to justify investing both time and money into training and supporting a high school graduate. One employer admitted that although he ultimately took part, this uncertainty about the return on investment was his biggest concern:

*If we were tight on money, we wouldn't have gotten the student, and I think this is the main reason why most people aren't interested... The change would be if the student turned out to be good and we knew we were going to have them for longer, that would be worth it. Otherwise, they might leave after the programme ends, which is the end of June and right before calving, or they may not be good enough to make it through to calving. Employer*

Interviewees from the NextGen pilot, as well as learnings from similar programmes in other industries, all stressed that the basis of any promotion and recruitment approach is to have **evidence** of what's happening and working. Across the board, NextGen participants suggested that sharing the experiences of farmers who trained students in this year's pilot can serve as powerful testimonials to attract new employers. At the same time, showcasing this cohort of students' growth and achievements through the programme, especially how pre-employment training prepared them before they started full-time farm placement, could help farmers understand the return on their investment.

*It's about selling the success stories of these students; that's what will get other farmers on board, because farmers follow farmers. Employer*

Employers also emphasised the need for clear and detailed information on logistics to be prepared before approaching farmers in the future. Explaining upfront what is involved (e.g., contract, costs, timelines, level of involvement needed from employers) can reduce confusion and hesitations.



#### What does this mean for NextGen going forward?

- **Develop a clear and compelling value proposition.** This should highlight what employers see as key points of differences of NextGen, such as: **practical training** curriculum that are specifically designed to prepare students before employment across technical, soft / life, and wellbeing skills; a focus on **retaining kiwi talents** in the industry and nurturing them to become the next generation of dairy farming managers / owners; and the **dedicated pastoral care** to support placement success.
- **Document student and employer outcomes from the pilot** to demonstrate these values.
- **Prepare answers to common questions** based on the pilot's experience, such as a checklist and step-by-step guide on what needs to happen from the employers' side.
- **Adopt a multi-channel communication plan** to communicate the value propositions and evidence. This could be in the format of:
  - **Dedicated sub webpage under Dairy Training or DairyNZ (or a stand-alone nextgendairy.nz domain).** This webpage could house downloadable training plans, skill lists, video or written profiles of graduates and host farmers, and the pilot evaluation results.
  - **Targeted social media promotion (via a dedicated @NextGenDairy handle or existing Dairy Training accounts),** such as LinkedIn for corporate employers and sector partners sharing case studies and return on investment articles, Instagram and TikTok for potential students sharing reels from taster days and "life on farm" clips, and Facebook targeting farmers and parents sharing photos and stories.
  - **Sector-partner newsletters and events,** such as an article in DairyNZ's Inside Dairy.
  - **Free webinar series** to talk about the programme and answer questions. These can be recorded and uploaded to the NextGen webpage.
- **Exploring longer employment models** to reduce the perceived risk of investing in someone short-term.

## Recruit earlier to better align employer and student timelines

Employers suggested that the late recruitment of farmers during this pilot (which happened during winter) posed significant challenges to the programme. Farmers just had their team freshly formed by the time they heard about the NextGen opportunity, and they were also too busy with calving and weren't available to talk about the programme in more detail. Employers emphasised the need to reach out to potential farmers early so that they could factor this in when they build their team for the new season. One employer specified that marketing and recruitment could start in late January, also prompting the farmers to talk to their current team and understand their plans for the next season.

*I think potentially what needs to happen in terms of the advertisement and getting farmers on board is that it happens before the 1st of June, so that when they plan out their staff for the season. They can go: OK, we can get this person in January; that means we've just got this gap to fill between now and then. Employer*

This delay in pilot employer recruitment also caused a knock-on effect for students. The pilot team recognised that students who signed up after taster days may have been "led on a bit" when there were no farmers ready to take them on yet. A few students also withdrew during this waiting period.

Encouragingly, this lesson has already been acted on. For the 2025/26 season, employer recruitment was brought forward, with invitations already sent out at the beginning of the year.

In addition, several interviewees also pointed out that sometimes farmers didn't realise they had a staffing gap until later in the year (e.g., October). There is a potential for the programme to run two rounds of recruitment in the future (or keep the second round as a backup). They further explained that the first round should be early to engage farmers who have the financial ability and are willing to commit to a new hire almost a year in advance, while the second round to capture farmers who identify a gap in their team after the busy season or require more time to plan for the integration of a student into their operations.



### What does this mean for NextGen going forward?

- **Engage farmers before they confirm teams** (e.g., Feb–Mar) to give them time to consider how a student might fit into their staffing plan.
  - **Keep a second recruitment round as a backup** option if early recruitment doesn't meet target numbers.
- **Coordinate employer and student timelines and monitor progress.** While it's unlikely that a perfect sequencing could be achieved in recent years (e.g., opening student applications only once there is a sufficient number of confirmed employers), as the programme still tries to build its reputation, both recruitment processes can be better paced and coordinated.
- **Identify ways to keep potential candidates engaged during the recruitment and waiting period,** such as:
  - Providing interim group activities and more frequent communication.
  - Enrolling them into online / blended micro-credentials that are eligible for TEC funding, and students can study at their own pace.
  - Exploring a temporary group employment contract under Dairy Training that allows these candidates to receive a training wage and rotate through short farm visits or community projects during this period.

## Engage the right targets

The pilot targeted corporate farming businesses as they tend to have more capacity and resources to take on new entrants. However, the corporate structure also posed its own challenges as it often involves different decision-makers who need to be consulted for different matters in order for this to happen (e.g., contracting process, sorting out housing and an extra vehicle). During the pilot delivery, this dynamic was also reflected when some farms required approval before they could host the Wednesday training sessions.

The sharemilking structure that many corporations employ also means that the hiring decision lies with individual sharemilkers. It was evident from the pilot recruitment that sometimes, even if the corporate representative believed strongly in the value of the NextGen concept, without the evidence of the programme's outcome or the direct engagement, it was difficult to convince those who actually need to do the training or make the hiring decision for each farm to participate.

In relation to this, other important considerations regarding whom to engage emerged from the pilot:

- **Team environment.** Some farm teams primarily consist of overseas workers who speak little English and may not be able to provide an ideal learning environment for the students. This needs to be considered when approaching farms for student placement.
- **Student eligibility.** A number of taster day participants were ineligible due to age (e.g., Year 11 or younger), though this engagement may still build future interest. A couple of others were restricted by visa issues. Feedback from taster day attendees also raised a question about whether school leavers (those who have already graduated or dropped out) are eligible.



### What does this mean for NextGen going forward?

- **Engage the right decision makers** from larger farming corporations. Involving individuals in these businesses who are directly responsible for hiring and making sure they share the NextGen philosophy is crucial to speed up the recruitment process.
- **Clarify eligibility and strengthen screening for student and farm suitability**, such as a checklist of key requirements (e.g., student work rights, necessary farm conditions).

## Diversify recruitment and promotion channels

While word of mouth, especially through the real stories of this year's pilot cohort, will remain the most powerful recruitment tool, interviewees suggested that future recruitment could benefit from a more deliberate and varied approach to outreach.

Both student and employer recruitment faced challenges this year due to limited pre-existing networks. Anecdotal evidence reported by the pilot team indicated that the absence of contact details of key personnel from schools to approach made it difficult for them to reach the right individuals, and they could only rely on generic cold emails. This resulted in the first taster day attracting only ~20 students across two days. These initial difficulties, however, helped the team build an effective contact database for future use. During the recruitment for the 2025/26 cohort, the Dairy Training delivery team contacted teachers and career advisers they knew from the pilot recruitment, and did so much earlier, by sending a thank-you email in December to flag upcoming recruitment activities and following up at the start of the year with date reminders. This earlier, more targeted communication generated noticeably stronger awareness and engagement among schools and teachers. Employer recruitment followed a similar pattern. Instead of working solely through corporate representatives, the team now targets contract milkers who make ultimate hiring decisions directly by visiting these corporate farming entities and delivering in-person presentations.

The team also noted that the format of taster days matters. Sessions that are practical and interactive, such as during the Mid-Canterbury taster day, where students powered a smoothie machine by pedalling bikes, attracted greater interest than more technical presentations. Sign-up rates were also reported to be higher when parents received clear information during these events.

Leveraging existing community channels, such as career expos and school career events, has further boosted student engagement. This principle also applies to employer recruitment. One employer strongly advocated for grassroots outreach through popular **rural-oriented media platforms** (e.g., Rural Delivery, Country Calendar, The Once A Day Farmer YouTube channel) and **rural sports or social clubs**, which are often hubs of local farming communities (e.g., sponsoring small events for the clubs to gain visibility and initiate conversations). Partnering with other **rural community organisations** (e.g., charitable farmers or food networks) was suggested as another potential way of tapping into existing networks of farmers who might share similar values with NextGen.

This promotion strategy of utilising channels already popular in rural communities has also been employed in pathway programmes from other industries, such as participating in rural radio or podcasts to promote the programme and involving students as volunteers at local events.



#### What does this mean for NextGen going forward?

- **Develop and maintain a list of champions** who are supportive of the programme (e.g., effective school contacts, community leaders) to build a strong outreach database.
- **Experiment with alternative outreach strategies** suggested by interviewees to build a diversified recruitment plan that is more sustainable.

## C

# Part C: Implications

This section summarises the evaluation findings and short-term recommendations for the next steps of the NextGen programme. It also provides considerations for the potential expansion of NextGen to other regions or sectors.



## Conclusion and recommendations

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*This section summarises the next steps for the NextGen programme based on the evaluation findings.*

### Conclusion

The findings suggested that the NextGen programme has established a strong foundation through the development of the pilot. While the scale of the pilot was small, the early outcomes and feedback from those involved have indicated key strengths in the programme's core model and its delivery:

- **The training content is high quality**, prioritising being industry-led while also meeting formal qualification requirements to ensure the training has a clear structure.
- **The structure and concept encourage learning**. It creates the right conditions that make young people feel safe and confident to try, make mistakes, and grow in the dairy industry.
- **The delivery team is adaptive and committed**. The team brings deep industry insight and has already made noticeable adjustments between year one and two delivery, which is an encouraging sign for continued responsiveness.

Therefore, there is real potential for NextGen to deliver lasting value both at the individual level and more broadly across the dairy sector, if the NextGen team continues to respond to feedback and refine the design as they have through the pilot. There is also a need to continue exploring ways to reduce delivery costs and / or diversify funding sources to financially support its continuity and potential expansion.

### Recommendations for years two and three

The following recommendations summarise short-term opportunities to strengthen the NextGen programme and build on the foundation laid in the pilot year. **More details on these areas of improvement can be found throughout the report.** We note that a number of these suggestions have already been implemented or are planned by the delivery team.

- **Strengthen programme planning and structure**. A **calendar** should be developed prior to the start of the programme to give employers, students, and trainers more clarity on what to expect across the year. In addition to training schedules, this could also include key pastoral care moments (e.g., progress meetings with both student and employer) that could potentially be arranged with individual employers at the start of the placement. There is also scope to extend the farm placement to 12 months to cover a full season and reduce the perceived risk for employers of investing in someone on a short-term basis. Most employers and students expressed **openness** to a longer placement when asked during the evaluation.
- **Refine training curriculum and resource design**. The training content itself could benefit from a stronger focus on foundation skills and real-world applications, while post-training learning could be reinforced through more engaging and practical resources. There is also potential to trial new assessment formats that are more aligned with students' learning preferences.
- **Improve how the programme communicates with employers and students**. Clarifying the roles of different communication channels could help reduce confusion and increase the use of each one. Explore alternative formats for weekly updates instead of emails to increase engagement.

The frequency of communication with students during the application and screening process could be increased to keep them updated and engaged during the waiting period.

- **Continue to evolve recruitment strategies.** Participants noted the challenges around recruiting employers and emphasised the importance of engaging the right students and employers who are aligned with the programme's values. This could include experimenting with alternative channels such as rural sports clubs, community networks, and rural charitable initiatives. The enthusiasm of the current cohort also presents an advocacy opportunity to support these students and employers in sharing their stories. This can serve as a powerful peer-to-peer recruitment tool.
- **Fill the short-term deficit created in the absence of TEC funding.** As detailed in the financial sustainability analysis, this deficit could be nearly \$200,000 for the 2025/26 season. The team could use the next couple of years to streamline the delivery process, test the realistic maximum number of cohorts that can be sustained in a region, seek financial and in-kind support from industry and government organisations, and advocate for an increase in TEC funding.
- **Monitor key indicators and maintain a learning mindset.** The Dairy Training delivery team should continue monitoring NextGen participants' experience (e.g., through a short survey or interview at the end of the programme) and key attraction and retention metrics, such as recruitment conversion rate, programme completion rate, and long-term industry retention rate. These findings will provide valuable insights into how the programme is tracking, what needs to be adjusted, and provide more evidence to be used in attraction and funding applications. Importantly, the pilot team's adaptive approach to the delivery was a strength noted during the pilot. Continuing with this learning mindset will be key as the programme grows and evolves.

## Considerations for expansion

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*This section provides considerations for the potential expansion of NextGen to other regions or sectors.*

### Considerations for scaling the NextGen programme to other regions

Currently, NextGen is focused on the Canterbury region, with a deliberate decision to keep the initial cohorts small. As the programme builds momentum and expansion into other regions becomes a possibility, several practical steps could help maintain quality and ensure the model continues to deliver positive outcomes. In addition to continuing some of the recommendations outlined for next year (e.g., monitoring completion and retention rates), the following considerations are specific to regional expansion:

- **Adapt the recruitment model to suit the local context.** Messaging and outreach channels should be tailored to each region. This could begin with identifying key local school contacts, rural professionals, and organisations who can champion the programme. Consider leveraging existing networks or events to tap into. For example, in Southland, groups like Thriving Southland already had established networks that could be used for promotion and employer recruitment.
  - Where possible, the programme team could consider **identifying respected local advocates early**, introducing them to the programme and pilot outcomes, and supporting them to speak about the programme at local events or gatherings. These voices can help plant the seed and build trust in the community.
- **Structure programme team with local delivery capability and central oversight.** The pilot showed that close pastoral care was crucial, and this relied on people with the right technical background, industry knowledge and experience, and physical proximity to build the personal connections. A suggested model is to retain a small central programme team (e.g., at least one programme manager and one coordinator) responsible for coordination and quality control, but have region-based Learning Advisors who know the local context and can visit students in person.
- **Prepare for greater employer interest.** In the pilot, all employers were vetted and / or known to the delivery team. As awareness of the programme grows, demand from more employers is likely to follow. Therefore, more deliberate screening will be needed for host farms to ensure that all placements offer the kind of supportive environment that has contributed to the success of the pilot cohort (i.e., offer positive and safe work culture, good housing and physical environment, and a willingness to support young learners). Additional employer induction or training may also be necessary as more people are being brought on board.
- **Start with adjacent regions.** Expansion into geographically closer regions may reduce the complexity and travel costs associated with the initial setup. These areas may also share employer or school networks, making it easier to extend the recruitment channels.
- **Build financial resilience.** Continue to explore ways to keep the programme financially viable at a regional and national level. This could include continuing to seek in-kind contributions locally, increasing scale to achieve economies of scale, and introducing student fees.

## Considerations for adapting the NextGen model to other sectors

If other primary sectors are interested in adopting the NextGen model, there are several lessons from the pilot that could support adaptation:

- **Align the programme timing with the industry calendar.** The dairy farming calendar shaped key timelines in the pilot (e.g., recruitment prior to June, before farmers typically form their team for the season; training delivery prior to calving to equip students with essential foundational skills). Other sectors will need to identify the right entry point (e.g., before hiring decisions are made) and ideally undertake the primary training outside of peak workload periods.
- **Take time to set up and iterate.** The pilot phase of NextGen was itself a process of co-designing the programme components, building relationships with employers, and adjusting the training curriculum and materials. The pilot team acknowledged that the coordination of many activities has proven more time-consuming than initially expected, such as rescheduling training sessions due to changes in trainer availability and securing endorsements and approvals for micro-credentials. In particular, **the choice of where to host the residential training** was one of the key early learning experiences for the pilot delivery team. The three-week training during this pilot year was hosted on a demonstration farm, which offered excellent facilities and top-notch animal-welfare standards, but also surfaced some challenges:
  - **Ethics approval and health-and-safety paperwork.** For approval, the demonstration farm required a detailed plan weeks before the training timetable was able to be finalised, including items such as which paddock would be used each day, where medications (if any) would be stored, and how students would access them. This was more complicated and took much longer than the pilot team expected. Demonstration farms also tend to have tighter limits on animal use (i.e., they are not suitable for trainings that have many hands-on components) and carry a greater reputational risk in the event of unintended outcomes.
  - **Location trade-off.** A near-town site has a higher chance of coming with proper classrooms, reliable Wi-Fi, and more comprehensive first-aid support, yet an off-town rural base would give urban learners a more authentic experience of farm life, such as no quick trips to the supermarket and limited internet access (hence more peer interactions).
  - **Accommodation cost.** Because final enrolments were unknown, three houses were booked for the pilot pre-employment training, but only two were used, resulting in unnecessary expense.

One idea suggested by the pilot team is to use demonstration farms solely for showcasing best practices, and then run the hands-on activities on nearby farms that can offer students more opportunities to work with animals. There is also scope for programmes that require accommodations to either secure numbers early, budget for a holding fee, or include a late-cancellation buffer.

A key strength of the NextGen pilot was having a **dedicated team** with a positive ‘can-do’ attitude and clearly defined roles. This allowed them to tackle these challenges and enabled different workstreams to progress simultaneously. Most importantly, any provider wanting to adopt the NextGen model should approach their first year as a learning phase and actively

capture insights to improve future delivery. They should also consider building in more time or a contingency plan for certain admin processes.

- **Use the pilot phase to build your value proposition and evidence base.** One of the key barriers to employer uptake during the NextGen pilot was the lack of evidence about its effectiveness due to being a new initiative. Plans should be in place from the outset to collect strong evidence, including programme outcomes, student and employer experiences, and stories of impact, to support future promotion, funding applications, and employer recruitment. This evidence could then be communicated to potential participants and industry stakeholders through a multitude of communication channels, as suggested in the section on page 28.
  - **Highlight pastoral care as a key feature.** The dedicated pastoral support was highly regarded by NextGen employers as a unique selling point, and its importance was recognised by employers from other sectors that the evaluation spoke to. This aspect could be emphasised early on for promotion, as it addresses a universal challenge in primary industries and can be a strong drawcard for employer and participant engagement.
- **Clarify what makes a good student and a good training employer.** Strong personal qualities and a good fit between the student and host farm lay the foundation for success. Other sectors should clearly define the desirable traits for young, entry-level workers who can meet employers' expectations, and the attributes that make an employer a good fit for supporting early-career learners. Be prepared to screen for these characteristics during recruitment.
- **Work with a reputable training organisation.** Dairy Training's credibility with employers in the dairy industry was an advantage to NextGen. For any adaptation, it's critical to partner with a training provider that is well-respected in the target industry and able to understand both training and employer needs.
- **Learn from others.** Proactively reach out to providers that have delivered similar programmes, learn from their experiences, and reuse their proven resources (e.g., employer agreements, marketing templates). This knowledge-sharing shortens set-up time, avoids known pitfalls, and can demonstrate sector collaboration to potential funders.

# Appendix A: Logic model

Figure 6 below presents the evaluation framework (logic model) developed for NextGen in collaboration with the delivery team.

Figure 6 NextGen Dairy Farmers pilot programme evaluation logic model

