



Joint Media Release - Lincoln University/Miraka MOU

The future of farming – a new direction

Lincoln University and Taupō dairy company Miraka have jointly announced the signing of a '100-year' Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on 15 December 2020. The partnership, the first of its kind in New Zealand, will provide a real-world farming context to test innovative new farming practices. Research areas will include Aotearoa-specific regenerative agriculture approaches, emerging agroecosystem and livestock production science, new technologies, and mātauranga Māori (Māori world view) approaches to land management.

“The aim of the partnership is to build resilience within the New Zealand farming community,” says Richard Wyeth, CEO of Miraka. “Over the coming years, farmers will continue to face significant challenges, including adaption to changing climate conditions and regulation. By partnering with leading thinkers such as Lincoln University, we are taking an active role in finding solutions for the next 100 years of farming,” he says.

As a specialist land-based university, Lincoln University continues to play an important role in shaping a more productive, ethical and sustainable future for New Zealand.

“We are committed to building collaborative partnerships to achieve innovative solutions to some of the world’s pressing land-based challenges,” says Lincoln University’s Acting Vice-Chancellor Professor Bruce McKenzie.

Leading several initiatives is Professor Pablo Gregorini, head of Lincoln University’s Centre of Excellence for Designing Future Productive Landscapes. The Centre is part of a suite of research activities that address some of the grand challenges confronting society.

“What’s exciting about this long-term partnership is that it allows Lincoln University students and academics to test innovative and multi-dimensional ideas in a real-world context on Miraka farms,” says Professor Gregorini. “We’re working on some pretty groundbreaking research that could lead to significant improvements in future farming, as well as social and cultural ecosystems. By working with Miraka we can show tangible outcomes to the agricultural sector and urban communities as a whole, helping to drive real mindset and practical changes,” he says.

Lincoln University’s Assistant Vice-Chancellor Māori and Pasifika, Dr Dione Payne, sees this partnership as progress towards the University’s plan to support Māori businesses and the Māori economy.

“This arrangement demonstrates our desire to partner with Māori leaders of innovation and excellence in the primary industries, qualities that Miraka have demonstrated since they first began operating. We are excited for the taura (students), rakahau (research) and korero

(discussion) that will emerge from this partnership with Miraka and hope we can mutually support Māori aspirations moving forward.”

Miraka’s ambition is to become the world’s most sustainable dairy company. Building relationships with research leaders like Lincoln University is a significant step towards this goal.

“We’re excited to be involved in cutting-edge research, innovation and leadership thinking,” says Murray Hemi, Miraka’s Kaitiaki and General Manager of Environmental Leadership. “By bringing new knowledge to our farming community we will make a safe transition to resilient, ethical and sustainable farming practices that restore the land for future generations for the next 100 years.”

The new partnership builds a strong existing relationship between Lincoln University and Miraka and will cover a wide range of research themes and workstreams across the University.

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About Miraka

Located 30km northwest of Taupō, Miraka uses renewable geothermal energy to generate over 300 million litres of premium milk products each year. Miraka is owned by a group of Māori trusts and sources milk from over 100 farms in the Central North Island region. The company’s founding shareholders include Wairarapa Moana Incorporation and Tuaropaki Trust

Miraka’s industry-leading Te Ara Miraka Farming Excellence Programme financially incentivises Miraka farmers to achieve world-class standards in sustainable land and water management, animal welfare and premium quality milk.

About Lincoln University’s Research Centre of Excellence – Future Productive Landscapes

Web link: [Research Centre of Excellence – Future Productive Landscapes](#)

You tube video: [LU Centre of Excellence – Designing Future Productive Landscapes](#)