

KEY POINTS FOR PRINCIPALS

First of all I would like to thank Enterprise Ashburton for putting on this day for principals. It was an amazing day and I gained so much from it. It is rare for us to be able to get out to see industry first-hand. This was amazing.

My key learning was the need to ensure that our students raise their aspirations to recognise that they need developed skills, an excellent work ethic and excellent communication skills. Too many of our students do not have all of these attributes and they will not be well prepared for the future unless we change this. The new curriculum document focuses on developing creative, enterprising young people who will be independent learners throughout their lives. These visits and the speakers have given me a very real context to bring to our discussions as a staff.

I have already spoken to the staff about what I have observed; I intend to contact several of the speakers to come to speak to our assemblies and I have written an article for Snowfed about the day. I will attach this for you to see.

Thank you again, especially to Rob for the inspiration and follow through of the idea. I really appreciated it.

Cathy Ewing
Principal
Mt Hutt College
Methven

Key learning:

Agriculture is now Agribusiness - There is a huge difference.

The integrated nature of Agribusiness = a considerable range of high-level skills are required
Integrated = includes environmental matters, especially water management and waste management.

The hi-tech nature of NZ Agribusiness. It is using/developing cutting edge technology

That N.Z. farmers are very innovative. In fact farming/agribusiness is moving ahead at a considerable pace, far more than most people would realise.

Science qualifications provide a multitude of opportunities for young people.

A career in agriculture will meet the aspirations of the Y generation very nicely indeed. They have to know that there are a good range of one year post-grad Agriculture courses available. NZ is a significant exporter of seed and blackcurrants ie NZ agriculture is a surprise package. It has greater significance to the NZ economy than many people realise.

Thank you for a great day
Francesca Black

Indeed, a very worthwhile day.

There was a lot to take out of the day. I now have a totally different picture in my head when the words 'agriculture sector' come up, and the clear message was that kids need to persevere with subjects that are going to enhance their technological capabilities. It was also very comforting to learn that NZ is extremely well placed to cope with international business opportunities in the future.

Thanks again for all your hard work.

Regards

Derek Friend

Thanks for the day I found it very informative. It was interesting to see and hear the breadth of skill required to run the agriculture sector. I see the need to push science more at intermediate and will look to do that for the future. The day also gave me insights into the resource people available for my students to speak with when they are investigating aspects of life in their local community.

I have already spoken to Andy to speak to my Canterbury intermediate principals group at our meeting in July covering aspects of Friday's message.

Thanks again it was a very worthwhile day.

Gavin Cooper

Ashburton Intermediate

I really enjoyed the day.

Probably the key take home point for me was that the future in agriculture is exciting with lots of career potential for students. Also, the real need for more food in the world and the resulting increase in importance in agriculture as it is the sector that is going to produce it.

The day was great - fascinating, well organised and generous.

Helen Vear

Timaru Girls High

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the Principal's Day Out. As a new Principal and a new Cantabrian it gave me an excellent opportunity to appreciate the importance and breadth of the agriculture industry in the region.

For me the key points were those to take back to students, in particular the importance of:

- Being a good communicator
- Go for the jobs that enable you to learn
- Work hard and take some risks – stick with the hard stuff
- The breadth of agriculture opportunities.

I look forward to a visit at some stage in the future.

Regards
James Morris
Darfield College

Thank you for the opportunity to view the ag industry up close and the thoroughly professional way it was handled. My main learning point was that the industry wanted our best and that it was not a second rate industry to join.

John Cruden
Opihi College

Thanks for a wonderful and very informative day - the time and effort that you all put in was appreciated. I want to compliment all on the way you went about working with us so we were informed and at the same time looking to Principals and schools as partners/allies rather than operating out of the blame/directive model- I.e. "you need to do this etc"

Major learnings -

Renewed and updated me on the central importance of Agric to NZ economy and the importance of the competitive and technological edges we have and need to keep. The comments around the importance of interpersonal skills and relationships as a cornerstone of key competencies for prospective employees.

The importance of students getting the message about doing the core/hard subjects - one we consistently give but parents also need to hear.

Keep up the good work.
Regards
John Hogue
Roncalli College

Congratulations on organising such an informative and progressive day. It has certainly opened my eyes to developments in the Agricultural sector, the opportunities that exist for young people, the shortage of people with suitable skills and knowledge, and the need for our students to retain a broad base to their education particularly in the Sciences.

I look forward to receiving a DVD and will certainly use it to promote the day and key messages to our students.

In terms of gaining further traction with getting more and better students to see Agriculture as a good career, I have 2 suggestions:

- if you are able to, run this sort of day and information directly to students, probably in Year 10, so they can develop their career plans early and choose suitable courses while they are at school
- Investigate the potential of New Zealand Science, Mathematics and Technology Teacher Fellowships to get more teachers involved in the Agriculture industry. This scheme is fully funded by the government so it will not cost any firm involved, and when the teacher returns to school they will influence many students for many years. I had one of these fellowships about 10 years ago and it was great. If you want to know more go to http://www.royalsociety.org.nz/Site/TeachersStudents/Funding_for_teachers/teacher_fellowships/default.aspx I believe that if progressive agricultural firms were to approach local schools with offers of positions and projects, then more of these fellowships would go to the Ag sector.

Once again, thank you so much for organising such a great day on Friday. I cannot commend you and Enterprise Ashburton enough for being so positive and proactive.

Kind regards
Kerry Stevens
Principal
Geraldine High School

Thank you all at Enterprise Ashburton for the outstanding Principals Day Out. It was a well organised thought provoking day.

The challenge is how we engage our students and make them aware of the opportunities.

The link with the Carr's is a long standing one for TBHS. We will renew and seek to visit with some key lads.

E A was generous in all that was arranged. Thank you. I always seek to undertake 3 things from such a day. This will happen.

The chance to see & do was great. Congratulations.

Regards
Kevin O'Sullivan
TBHS

Thank you for a very informative day. It certainly made me do a rethink on my views of agriculture and its associated staffing. Last year the Dux of the college chose to go on to study Ag science and Commerce at Lincoln. I tried very hard to counsel against this suggesting that she try for Medicine. I would suggest that having gained the insight that Friday offered this wouldn't happen in future.

I have also discussed the experience with the school at assembly this week. I have used the information gained to emphasise the need to gain the highest possible standard of qualifications that they can.

Personally, it makes me want to buy a farm:)

**Regards,
Mark Jones
Mackenzie College.**

What a fantastic day! I thoroughly enjoyed this opportunity to find out more about agri-business in our local region and really appreciated the considerable effort that had obviously gone into planning and organizing the day for us.

I was surprised to see the level of technology that is such a critical aspect of the industry.

There were a number of things that I took out of the day but the main thing would have to be the immense diversity of jobs that are now available in the industry and the real need for us to attract our young people into this area.

Many thanks

**Janette Packman
Principal
Waimate High School**

To the organisers and contributors of Principals' Day Out

I would like to thank you very much for such an interesting and enjoyable day on Friday. As a science teacher I found the visits very informative and will certainly pass on to my students information on careers in Agriculture. Obviously many people had gone to a lot of trouble and given up heaps of time to put on such a comprehensive and full programme. Keep up the good work. Science teachers and careers advisors would really appreciate a similar day in the future, I know.

**Sincerely
Charlotte Woods
Staff Rep BoT
Craighead Diocesan School**

Last Friday I was fortunate to be a part of a wonderful journey around mid Canterbury put on for secondary and intermediate principals in the Aoraki area. This day, 'The Principals' Day Out, was organised by Enterprise Ashburton. It was also widely sponsored by a significant number of industry partners and sponsors.

It was such a valuable day. The aim of the day was to show the educational leaders in our region the exciting career opportunities there are in the agricultural sector. It was also to ensure that we had an understanding of the skills and attributes that we need to develop in our students if they are to be productive members of the workforce in the future. And they succeeded!

The range of careers is extensive. Agriculture is an industry that produces a considerable part of the wealth of our country. We were shown first hand the innovative approaches that are being taken within agriculture to ensure that the benefits for the industry and our country are maximised. As a country we are a small player on the world stage. It is therefore clear that we need to position ourselves in significant parts of the markets.

We were shown 3 examples of industry where this is happening. We began with a visit to Five Star Beef at Wakanui, which is New Zealand's single largest supplier of chilled beef exports, particularly for the Japanese market. This was followed by a visit to the Carr Agricultural Group's robotic dairy farm in Mayfield. Then we were treated to a tour of South Pacific Seeds in Methven. All of these enterprises had a consistent message about the future. They will need employees who have skills; they will need employees who have a strong work ethic; they will need employees who have excellent communication skills. The emphasis in all of these industries was on the importance of higher level skills. The jobs of the future are in bio-chemistry, agronomy, leading edge technology, marketing. These employees will have to be highly motivated and well-educated.

This is a message that our young people need to hear. Who better to tell them than other young people who are already involved in these industries and are passionate about it. Several young people spoke to us about their careers. They had a common theme – following your passion and the importance of qualifications.

Our responsibility as educators is to help our young people develop the necessary skills; to give them resilience to carry on, even when it may seem hard; to find their passion. Developing dialogue with industries such as the agricultural industry is an important way of ensuring that we are all working in the same direction to ensure we have a bright future as a country.

So a big thank you to Rob Brawley and his team at Enterprise Ashburton; to Andy McFarlane and his team for their informative and interesting commentaries; to Ann and Mark at Methven Resort for an amazing lunch of Canterbury produce; and to the industries for their support of this day.

Gerard Manley Hopkins, a 19th century poet, described farming land viewed from above as 'landscape plotted and pieced'. As we were treated to a flight over Mid and South Canterbury in a DC3, this phrase seemed very meaningful. Below us were the multi-coloured fields - plots of land that were like a jigsaw that had been fitted together; the pattern sometimes broken by a braided river, or the movement and white of the ocean.

This was a wonderful, thought-provoking day.

Cathy Ewing

Principal Mount Hutt College