

Welcome to issue 32 of the Network for Women in Forestry (NWIF) newsletter. If you would like to subscribe to receive the newsletter directly please email sonya@blackburnegroup.co.nz. **This newsletter is for you, Women in Forestry, and we welcome your feedback and suggestions for future content.**

Farming Leadership Mould is Slowly Breaking

By: *Charlie Mitchell*

While farming plays a key role in this country's economy, women have been far from prominent in its leadership roles. It is possible however, to be a woman of influence among the farmers and growers, as two of the country's prominent female leaders in the sector explain.

Jane Hunter, Hunter's Winery

Jane Hunter's reputation precedes her. The managing director of Marlborough winery Hunter's, she has been dubbed "the first lady of New Zealand wine", received an OBE in 1993, and was made a Companion to the New Zealand Order of Merit in 2009.

Last year she joined an elite group of 25 inducted into the NZ Wine Hall of Fame and is the only woman.

Her leadership in the wine industry came about by circumstance rather than design.

Hunter's winery was founded in 1979 by Ernie Hunter, an Irishman who later married Jane.

Ernie was in charge of the day-to-day running of the business, while Jane, a trained viticulturist, worked and managed the vineyard.

But tragedy struck in 1987 when Ernie, the key driver of the company's success, was killed in a car accident.

Jane was suddenly encumbered with enormous responsibility: should she stay, or should she take the advice she was given to sell up and take the money?

Defying all expectations, she continued operating the business.

Jane's sudden elevation to a key position in the notoriously patriarchal wine industry had the potential to ruffle some feathers.

But she says people were generous, despite the "frightening" amount of responsibility she had to take on. There were lots of times I felt it would be easier to sell and go.

While other women struggled to gain traction in the wine industry, Jane had nothing but positive experiences and unanimous confidence in her abilities, through good times and bad, panned out with Hunter's winery now a global success.

"When I took over from Ernie, people could have been quite difficult about a woman taking over. But even in the United Kingdom, which was a hugely male-dominated wine industry, I've had nothing but help and a lot of respect."

Jeanette Maxwell, Federated Farmers National Board Member

As of 2012, less than 15 per cent of people on agriculture boards were women. And it took Federated Farmers, New Zealand's most influential farming advocacy group, 112 years to elect a woman to their national board.

Jeanette Maxwell wasn't planning to make history when she joined Federated Farmers at a provincial level.

Maxwell runs a beef and lamb farm in Canterbury in a partnership with her husband. After leaving her career as an advertising artist to become a vet nurse, she became involved in farming because she "married the farmer".

She was elected to the board in 2011 as the meat and fibre chairwoman, and stood down last month as required at the end of her three-year term.

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She says the biggest barrier to having women in agriculture leadership roles was a lack of confidence in their skill sets. "Men will go on and fill their toolbox while women will wait until their toolbox is full. I did the same thing and waited until I had done leadership training."

As a mother of three, Maxwell says she couldn't have taken on the role without the support of her husband and father-in-law to help look after the children and work on their sheep and beef farm.

She broke the mould in two aspects - one just by being the first woman on the board, but also by getting Federated Farmers involved in mental health, a problem largely unaddressed in rural communities and which has a disproportionate effect on men.

As the board's health and safety spokeswoman, she drove a campaign called "When Life's a Bitch", which united groups - including the Dairy Women's Network and Rural Woman New Zealand - to dispel the stigma about mental health in the rural sector.

That campaign, along with the mental health group work, prompted the John Kirwan campaign on mental health to devote a section of its website to rural mental health and wellbeing. While no longer a board member, Maxwell represents Federated Farmers on these mental health groups.

In an industry with a proud, albeit conservative history, Maxwell might have expected some backlash as a woman of influence.

But she says there was no hostility, just indifference and the industry's gender bias is now changing.

In 2012, Maxwell was joined by fellow member Katie Milne, who has another year to go on her three-year term.

Maxwell says while there are a lot of women farming, most keep their heads down. But more are now starting to come through the lobby group's ranks at a provincial level.

"There has to be the one who's brave enough to take the first step, then once we're there, we're going 'come on, join me. It's not so bad after all.'"

Source: www.stuff.co.nz, Stuff News, 9 July 14

Unrecorded Casual Employment Costs Employer

By: Alan Knowsley

The Employment Relations Authority has upheld a personal grievance claim for unjustified dismissal, unpaid wages, unpaid sick leave, unpaid bereavement leave, unpaid holiday pay and compensation.

The employer claimed the employee was a casual but no employment agreement was ever signed and the employee worked regular hours, almost full time each week.

He was never paid any holiday pay, sick leave or bereavement leave and was short paid his wages. He was also not paid the minimum wage. Unpaid wages of \$9,200 and compensation of \$7,000 were ordered. The imposition of penalties for failure to pay minimum wages and keep proper records was deferred to see whether the employer complied with the orders made.

If you have any employee, you must have a signed written employment agreement. Any casual employment must be clearly set out in the agreement.

Source: Rainey Collins Lawyers, In Brief Newsletter, 6 August 14

UPCOMING FICA EVENTS

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
24 Sep	Logging Costing for Profitability Workshop	Taupo
8 Oct	Logging Costing for Profitability Workshop	Nelson
7-8 Nov	FICA AGM & Conference	Napier

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