

# Dairy sector quickfacts

PEOPLE, ANIMALS AND ENVIRONMENT

NEW ZEALAND DAIRYING

## PEOPLE

THE VALUE OF DAIRYING  
IN NEW ZEALAND

People employed in the dairy sector (2018)<sup>1</sup>



**46,000 EMPLOYEES**

## NUMBER EMPLOYED<sup>2</sup>

On-farm



**34,000**

Processing and  
wholesaling



**12,000**

**58%** of dairy herds are run by owner-operators<sup>4</sup>

**13%** of dairy herds have contract milkers<sup>4</sup>

**29%** of dairy herds are run by sharemilkers<sup>4</sup>

**58%** of all sharemilkers are 50/50 sharemilkers<sup>3</sup>



## ENVIRONMENT



**98.0%**

of waterways have dairy  
cattle excluded<sup>5</sup>



**99.8%**

of 36,328 stock crossing points have bridges  
or culverts<sup>9</sup>

**550b m<sup>3</sup>**



New Zealand's annual rainfall (equal  
to about 220 million Olympic-sized  
swimming pools)<sup>7</sup>

**4.8b m<sup>3</sup>**



of water is used on dairy farms  
(97% for irrigation)<sup>8</sup>



Riparian management plans  
developed for

**52%**

of dairy farms  
with waterways<sup>5</sup>

Average emissions from a  
New Zealand dairy farm<sup>10</sup>

**60%** Methane



**15%** Carbon dioxide

**25%** Nitrous oxide

**22.5%**



New Zealand biological emissions are  
attributed to the dairy sector<sup>10</sup>

## REFERENCES

- <sup>1-2</sup> NZIER Report “How does the dairy sector share it’s growth?” ([www.nzier.org.nz](http://www.nzier.org.nz)).
- <sup>3</sup> New Zealand Dairy Statistics 2018-19 ([www.dairynz.co.nz/dairystats](http://www.dairynz.co.nz/dairystats)).
- <sup>4</sup> New Zealand Dairy Statistics 2018-19 ([www.dairynz.co.nz/dairystats](http://www.dairynz.co.nz/dairystats)).
- <sup>5</sup> The Sustainable Dairying: Water Accord Year 5 ([www.dairynz.co.nz/wateraccord](http://www.dairynz.co.nz/wateraccord)).
- <sup>6</sup> See the full Animal Protection Index at <https://api.worldanimalprotection.org/> and read the 2014 media release at <https://www.worldanimalprotection.org.nz/news/new-global-index-shows-new-zealand-world-leader-animal-welfare>.
- <sup>7</sup> Collins, D, Zammit, C, Willsman, A, & Henderson, R (2015). Surface water components of New Zealand’s national water accounts, 1995–2014. Prepared for the Ministry for the Environment. Retrieved from [www.data.mfe.govt.nz](http://www.data.mfe.govt.nz).
- <sup>8</sup> Higham, C. 2017. Water use on pastoral dairy farms in New Zealand: An analysis of measurements, predictions, and water footprinting. Doctor of Philosophy, Institute of Agriculture and Environment, Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand.
- <sup>9</sup> The Sustainable Dairying: Water Accord Year 5 ([www.dairynz.co.nz/wateraccord](http://www.dairynz.co.nz/wateraccord)).
- <sup>10</sup> Key drivers of GHG emissions on New Zealand dairy farms, DairyNZ.