


**Submission points for proposed immigration Changes**


9(2)(b)(ii)



Please see our submission below this is our best attempt to put something down on paper we are not lawyers etc, that do this day in day out but valued members of our community that are just trying to do the best for our family and all the other contractors and staff we employ over the year.

If there was a chance to speak I would be prepared to do so.

s 9(2)(g)(i), s 9(2)(a)



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## SUBMISSION POINTS ON DAIRY FARMING.

I would like to raise the following points regarding the Labour and the Chronic shortage of labour for our dairy farm in Taupo and why we depend so much on our great staff we have now.

1. **Shortage of kiwi applicants** - Where a large percentage of applicants that do apply are totally unsuitable and unemployable. Please see attached our recent job adverts. Note their work history is of a transient nature with minimal skill and lack of attitude appendix 2 (some in the past have had including no driver's licence, which is vital in a rural situation). Our industry cannot risk employing an unsuitable person with lack of respect, who played 'the system', owners and their families (please see my example that has happened to our family appendix 1). In farming, staff live and works near farming families, which is different to other industries and there is a risk and a deep apprehension of taking staff on of this nature. And what happened to our family and other staff I will not go through that again.
2. **Chronic shortage of adequate /competent staff** in respect to our region Taupo and the Central Plateau because our local cow numbers have increased from 149000 in 1998 to 268000 in 2016 that's 79%. Taupo population has done the following according to statistics NZ
  - Since 1998 the Taupo district population was approx. 32000. It's going to peak around 2018 then reducing to approx. 30000 in 2043.  
<https://figure.nz/chart/CLaMLJ4sqPsSQMCU-2z9pRduQsAs52vmb> - Appendix 3
  - Since the 2006 Census An increase of **486 people**, or 1.5 percent. Its population ranks 30th in size out of the 67 districts in New Zealand. Taupo District has less than one percent of New Zealand's population. **9,030** Māori usually live in Taupo District.

As you can see the people aren't here and aren't projected to be here in 2043 population will reduce!!! Our farm employs 1 person per 200 cows if this was the case across the central plateau we need 595 people to meet the growth up to 2016. Only 486 people moved to the district and not everyone wants to be a dairy farmer it's not for everyone.

I tried to obtain the unemployment rate for taupo and how many people were classed as a dairy farm worker but they (MSD) said I was not allowed that information!! Why not what are they hiding.

3. **Issue with Policy of the 12 month standown** - Totally impractical unacceptable and not humane for the immigrants and unfair for farmers too. Some examples of this
  - training – there is little to no incentive to train staff if they are only on a 1 year visa, and as far as I'm aware PITO can't take migrants here on only a 1 year

visa. This will result in an extremely significant decline in skill level within our businesses. As a result, the skill level of the NZ workforce will also decline, without being able to retain the skilled workforce we have developed we will lose the ability to mentor and teach New Zealanders.

- A stable workforce supports both NZ and migrant employees. As a farmer, I am often happy to hire New Zealanders who are sometime in difficult situations and may need extra mentoring and support. However, this requires us to have a stable workforce around them to enable us to give the extra time and resources it does require.
  - Business productivity will drop which is contrary to the Governments stated policy to double exports by 2025 <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/about-mpi/our-strategy-2030-growing-and-protecting-new-zealand/the-export-goal/>.
  - If an employee has stayed with you for three years then has the 12 month standown it is impractical and unacceptable to both parties. I feel it should be continued under a sponsorship agreement on case by case basis. Farmers have invested in great resource to train staff by year three, along with creating efficiencies in the business which come through having a greater skill level. In my case I would be happy to have a trainee but to do this the education system needs to be improved. The old apprenticeship system worked well then it got wrecked by PITO, they are hopeless in my mind.
4. **South Island criteria for residency** – North and South need total parity because we see a total exodus of all immigrants to South Island currently compounding our problem.
- I feel this is discrimination because a migrant had the unfortunate luck to be employed in the North Island and enjoyed their time there, set down roots and was a valued part of the community, they are not eligible to be recognised for their contribution to the community as their counterparts in the South Island have been?
5. **Housing** - Due to nature of dairy industry not everyone can be given individual accommodation to live in and are required to share accommodation – immigrants are more open, comfortable, and conducive with sharing. For example
- by not allowing families with principal applicants, it discourages investment in farm infrastructure to house families and encourages more shared accommodation. Farm housing is an important aspect of attracting kiwis to farming and by offering shared accommodation, the attraction to farming will be substantially less, once again harming the ability to attract New Zealanders into farming roles.
  - 9(2)(b)(ii) [REDACTED]
  - 9(2)(b)(ii) [REDACTED] Since then we have invested over the past 9 years added 3 houses to our farm at huge investment for us to try and attract staff. It hasn't really helped attract New Zealand people of a good standard.
  - There is one thing I hate more than anything is when a person applies for a job the first question is how big the house is. This shows to us and has been proved that they are not really interested in the job just looking for somewhere to live. Shows up big time in their attitude and work standards / ethic




6. **Rapid Dairy Expansion** - We know from what we are seeing that the rapid expansion of dairy industry (see note 2) has outpaced the education and supply of adequately skilled resident/citizens. There is not enough been done at school level to promote agriculture in New Zealand. There are a few schools starting to do something for example St Pauls collegiate in Hamilton but it is going to take a lot more than a few schools. But it is a start.
7. **Investment to make farming more attractive** - As farm owners we have improved our business to make it more attractive to employees –
- In technology for us auto calf feeders, computerised cowshed
  - rosters (more time off and remuneration),
  - Major investment in improving living accommodation /housing,
  - In modern plant and machinery to create efficiencies within our business to add to quality of life and elevate the need for manual operations.
8. **Low Skilled** - There is no place in dairying for 'low skilled' workers who have a poor attitude. Dairying is dynamic in its nature and we need and require total focus in an environment where there is potential risk to health and safety.
- The responsibility & liability which has increase substantially over the last 20 years. The lack of room for error in the environmental, milk quality and H&S among others doesn't lend itself to having low skilled employees. However, I am willing to have a trainee but you need to have a skilled, settled staff around them so you can put in the time to teach time refer note 3
9. **Experience & accredited employer scheme** – In Our experience is Filipino' s are technically skilled and have a positive attitude when they arrive. Their skill warrants longer than a one year visas- we would welcome an accredited scheme if it enabled us to get longer length visas for our staff – thus simplifying the employment process of migrant workers. This would save a lot of time, money, and resources (immigration staff and us).
- As we are significant employers of migrant workers it would welcome the adoption of this scheme.
10. **Dairy farming is not as seasonal job** – and should not be classified in the proposed changes as this because we are dealing with livestock you need continuity.
- Dairy farming's work patterns do change within the season, however, the hours worked are becoming more consistent through the year and peaks are reducing and technology, farm systems and farm infrastructure continue to be improved. Traditional periods of lower hours such as autumn or winter are now when farm maintenance and improvements are undertaken, and employees take annual leave and training. Additionally, while cows may not be milking through the winter, cows are often wintered on the farm creating a substantial amount of work in feeding and animal health.

**In my personal option - Without migrant workers the whole dairy industry (and other industries) would be devastated, we are seeing already seeing the consequences of the proposed changes if this was to be implemented it would have dire consequences – we encourage continuity and longevity in our businesses. If these changes where implemented would damage my business, the dairy sector and my community, the proposal shows a lack of understanding of the issues facing**

regional NZ, and suggest that population / Immigration problems which are present in cities, particularly Auckland, might be allowed to dictate policy around the rest of New Zealand.

Appendix 1, 2 and 4 withheld 9(2)(b)(ii)



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Appendix 3

figure.nz

# Population estimates and projections for the Taupo District, New Zealand

1998-2043, June years, number of people

Source: Statistics New Zealand

