



Slice of Wellbeing

Hurunui District Council

Case Story #12



Introduction

Although takeout deliveries may not extend to rural areas, households in Hurunui can now benefit from an innovative wellness delivery service that offers mental health support right to their doorstep. Dubbed 'Slice of Wellbeing' pizza-style boxes, curated and assembled by Together Hurunui, are now being distributed to farms across Hurunui by vets from the four North Canterbury Veterinary Clinics in Amberley, Cheviot, Culverden, and Waikari. These packages include a variety of mental health support services, local wellness resources, Farmstrong's new Live Well, Farm Well book featuring stories shared by farmers on their well-being practices, and friendly reminders to "Take a break with a mate".

Background and Challenges

Rural isolation poses numerous challenges. Natalie Paterson, the Together Hurunui facilitator for Hurunui District Council, has found that linking farmers to wellness services is a major challenge. Local medical facilities have observed a rise in mental health consultations following a decline in milk prices. They have also received reports from young farmers struggling with financial stress. Recognising that many farmers were not seeking help, the decision was made to bring wellness services directly to the farms. The approach involved leveraging the trusted relationship farmers have with their local vet, who is a constant presence through both good and tough times.



Solutions....

- Together Hurunui collaborated with Rural Support Trust in delivering some mental health support training for the vets and clinic staff that would be passing on the packs.
- The training gave the team the confidence to go out and have conversations with our rural community around their mental health while also informing them of additional mental health services that they could refer anyone onto that they were worried about.

It's important to look after all the slices of your wellbeing. Remember to take a break & have some banter with a mate.

When we are anxious or depressed It can change the way we think, feel and act. Dealing with the tough times can be hard but you're not alone.

“ Over 14,000 people reported in 2023 that they credit improvements in their wellbeing to Farmstrong’s help and advice. Farmstrong takes a practical approach, showing people simple daily wellbeing habits and ways of thinking that farmers and growers say help them deal with life’s ups and downs. ”

Natalie Paterson, Together Hurunui Facilitator.

“ I applaud Together Hurunui and Natalie for this worthy initiative. Rural Support is here with confidential, independent, and free assistance to any farmer finding matters a bit hard going at the moment. ”

Noel McGirr, Chair of North Canterbury Rural Support Trust and former rural vet.

“ As a rural practice with strong roots in the community, North Canterbury Vet Clinics welcomed the opportunity to partner with Together Hurunui. "Slice of Wellbeing fits in well with our values and the duty of care we have within our farming and rural communities. ”

Alistair Kenyon , Director and veterinarian.

“ Any way that we can help to support our farmers with their wellbeing gets my endorsement. Rural communities like Hurunui are under-resourced when it comes to mental-health services. These packs are going out on farm to where they are needed as a real community-led, Hurunui solution. ”

Marie Black, Hurunui Mayor (and farmer).



Our Supporters



The Future...

We appreciate the slice of wellbeing packs are an impactful resource and as such we have since distributed them to Hurunui Police and our area schools to pass on when appropriate. We hope to update the packs with additional resources when they become available and include other rural services that are regularly on the farm.