

# Taking a break will be key this summer

With weaning in full swing for many and Christmas now fast approaching, the busy period is certainly upon us.

Christmas time for sheep and beef farmers especially doesn't generally mean putting your feet up for a few weeks, it's often a hugely busy time on farm. However, getting away for a few days and enjoying family time, or just a bit of time off the farm,

will be so important for many this year.

It's often not until we sit down and reflect on the year gone by, that we realise what we have achieved and how far we have come in our own cyclone recoveries.

This year has been extraordinary for so many of us and I can't stress enough how important a break, and a few days of down time will be. I really do encourage you all to try and find that gap and take a break when you can.

The rain that we have been



Don Cameron

experiencing over the last week has been a bonus for many. We should see a good flush which will have benefits for finishing lambs and keeping some reasonable moisture levels in our soils for a little longer than we perhaps expected.

NIWA's seasonal climate outlook for November 2023 – January 2024 predicts an 80% chance of El Niño continuing through Autumn.

They still predict that rainfall for the north and east of the

North Island is most likely to be below normal, and temperatures in the east of both islands are likely to be above average. Planning for a dry summer and early autumn is still a very sensible approach. I always enjoy chatting to farmers, and it has been sobering to speak to a number of our cyclone impacted farmers recently.

Many are still waiting for conditions to suit heavy machinery coming in to fix tracks, culverts and fence lines. There is still a lot of critical works to done, and we are glad that the Tararua on Track fund can go

some way to support this work.

Thursday's Cyclone Recovery Expo at the Dannevirke A&P showgrounds which Jane Tylee and her team at Tararua Rural Support Trust have put together, will be another effort to further support our cyclone impacted farmers with free fencing materials, support from rural providers, services and more.

The Tararua District Cyclone Recovery Team and I will be onsite, and we look forward to catching up with our farming community there. Until then, as always, take care.

## Mayoral Relief Fund – grants still available

As we head into the Christmas period, Tararua Mayor Tracey Collis would like to remind Tararua residents that the Mayoral Relief Fund remains open for individuals, businesses, farmers and community organisations who have suffered hardship due to damages caused by Cyclone Gabrielle.

Individuals can apply for grants of up to \$1000. Community groups, farmers, businesses - including sole entrepreneurs, and marae are able to apply to the fund for up to \$2000.

A key priority for the fund continues to be supporting the wellbeing of individuals and families who have faced hardship due of the cyclone, especially where people are uninsured or under insured.

Financially this can be a challenging time for many, and considering many in the district are still carrying big costs directly caused by the cyclone, we encourage those impacted people to have a good look at applying to the fund, if they haven't done so already.

The Mayoral Relief fund has been generously supported by donations contributed both locally and from all over Aotearoa.

To apply, head to [www.tararua.govt.nz/support](http://www.tararua.govt.nz/support) and click the 'Mayoral Relief fund' link to find the online form. Alternately you can download an application form and drop it into any of our Council offices.

For anyone needing assistance to apply, feel free to phone Council on 06 374 4080 (North), or 06 376 0110 (South).

## Building back better on Weber Road

It's not every day a 17-year old gets to work on a complex roading project. Kyran Pinfold and Alex Thomas have been working for Dean Earthmoving on a retaining wall on Weber Road as part of the roading recovery.

The site, about 22km along Weber Road from Dannevirke, has had temporary repairs over the years after being repeatedly damaged by storms and was further impacted by Cyclone Gabrielle. But when you drive past now it's clear this is no temporary fix – the retaining wall that Kyran and Alex are working on is designed and engineered to last 50+ years.

The wall is 4m high and about 30m long, with tieback anchors buried 12m deep. Tararua Alliance Project Manager Blake Hedley says the project epitomises what roading recovery is all about – building back better.

"In an engineering sense,



Alex Thomas (left) and Kyran Pinfold (right).

this is a high complexity site. The old crib wall had failed and after being patched up several times it was time for a permanent solution. I would like to acknowledge the expertise and hard work of the contractors who are making a lot of the emergency work possible. The

Tararua Alliance works with local contractors as much as possible and sometimes has to go further afield to get the expertise we need. Tony Valentine of RDCL in Waipukurau did the geotechnical engineering and Dean Earthmoving are constructing the wall. The Alliance oversees the

work and site supervision - it's a team effort."

Kyran has been a labourer with Dean Earthmoving for about three months after leaving school and doing some fencing work: "Alex started here in the holidays and told me about it. I messaged Mitch to see if I could do a few weeks then I asked him for a full-time job."

"There are some long days but these guys are fun to work with. I've left school and am getting to work with all this big machinery. I could be shovelling one day or helping test the rods another day."

Kyran says the team teach him as he goes. He has aspirations for working in Australia at some point and this experience is setting him up well. "When I've got all my tickets and I'm ready I'd like to go overseas."

All going well the retaining wall is expected to be completed in early December.

## Rural Support Trust books in schools

Supported by the Evergreen Foundation and the Ministry of Education, Tararua Rural Support Trust have been delivering packs of books carefully curated to support children in understanding and navigating big emotions after Cyclone Gabrielle.

The 11 books cover a range of ages and stages and include the acclaimed Aroha's Way series and 'Pearl in a Whirl – how one fluffy cat braved the floods', written by Hawke's Bay author Catherine Robertson, and based on the true story of survival of a Puketapu based family's cat, during the cyclone.

Books have been delivered to 75 cyclone affected schools across Hawke's Bay, the East Coast and Tararua including Norsewood, Weber, Pongaroa and Makuri Schools. With Kumeroa and Alfredton Schools due to receive their books in the next couple of weeks.

The aim of the books is to support



young people and parents through these challenging times. They were selected because they foster emotional intelligence, resilience, and empathy and explore diverse characters and their experiences, allowing students to gain valuable insights into their own feelings and those of others.

## Tararua on Track Fund Allocated

Tararua farmers and growers now know the outcomes of funding decisions from the \$1 million Ministry for Primary Industries supported Tararua on Track Fund.

All \$1 million has now been allocated with all successful applicants receiving further information on the funding process. We would like to thank all applicants for their patience over this time.

The panel is continuing to work with farmers and growers that have work still to be completed to meet the deadline.

The Tararua on Track fund was open for both uninsured, critical repairs that have been completed since Cyclone Gabrielle, as well as works that are able to be completed by the deadline of 31 December 2023.

