



## Aide memoire: Example Freshwater Farm Plan

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Security level: Classification

Actions sought from ministers	
<i>Name and position</i>	<i>Action sought</i>
To Hon Andrew HOGGARD <b>Associate Minister for the Environment</b>	Note & discuss with officials
CC Hon Penny SIMMONDS <b>Minister for the Environment</b>	For noting only

Appendices and attachments
1. Example Freshwater Farm Plan

Key contacts at Ministry for the Environment			
<i>Position</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Cell phone</i>	<i>First contact</i>
Principal Authors	Pippa Auld Michael Edmondson		
Responsible Manager	Gina McGrath		
General Manager	Sara Clarke		✓

## Example Freshwater Farm Plan

1. Attached is an example Freshwater Farm Plan (FW-FP). This example is based on a real FW-FP for a 401-hectare mixed cropping, dairy grazing, and sheep and beef operation in South Canterbury. It has been developed with input from the farmer and a farm planning expert.<sup>1</sup>
2. We consider this example FW-FP would meet certification requirements and support a straightforward audit. A farmer would also likely be able to rely on this example to meet relevant regional plan requirements and intensive winter grazing rules (and therefore not require a consent for such activities).
3. As noted in *BRF-4056: Initial briefing on freshwater farm plans*, the FW-FP regulations do not require farmers and growers to use a specific template when writing their FW-FP.
4. This example shows how the farmer could identify and set practical actions to address on-farm risks to freshwater based on the specific catchment needs (as set by the relevant council), and the farm's landscape and activities.
5. In this example, most actions reflect a farmer taking a typical risk-based approach to managing freshwater risks for this type of farm. Additional actions address the relevant council's focus on reducing nitrogen load in area, managing issues related to an over-allocated catchment, and meeting other regulatory requirements (such as intensive winter grazing rules).

## Background

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### **MfE is engaging with industry to support existing industry farm plans and IAPs to match FW-FP requirements**

6. We are working with industry organisations to simplify how farmers enter farm data for FW-FPs. Approximately 16 organisations have (or intend to provide) a FW-FP template or align their existing programmes/templates to FW-FP requirements for their farmers and/or growers. We estimate that at least 10,000 – 12,000 of the approximately 34,000 farmers and growers nationally (currently required to have a FW-FP) can do so through their existing industry plans.
7. The dairy sector will have good available support (and templates) to develop their FW-FPs through their milk processors. Synlait is on track to be fully aligned with FW-FP certification requirements in early 2024. Fonterra is also adapting their plans to align with FW-FP requirements. Westland Milk, Open Country Dairy, Tatua and Miraka are working to deliver a tailored FW-FP option for their farmers.

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<sup>1</sup> The administrative details and other identifying information has been removed or altered in the example to protect the privacy of the farm operator. Permission has been given by the farm operator to use and share all information included in this plan.

8. For horticulture, representatives from both NZGAP and Sustainable Winegrowers New Zealand<sup>2</sup> will be working with us to support industry assurance programmes (IAPs) to adapt their existing verification services to meet FW-FP certification and audit requirements.<sup>3</sup>
9. Industry support for developing FW-FPs in the red meat sector is still developing. However, Farm Assurance Programme Plus (FAP+) will be fully aligned with FW-FP requirements by early 2024.

### **Support is in place to reduce FW-FPs costs and streamline development**

10. Farmers who are part of industry programmes that meet FW-FP requirements are likely to face significantly lowered costs in developing their FW-FP.

9(2)(f)(iv)

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Ministers have upcoming choices

regarding the degree and timing of farm plan development support they wish to see funded through the FW-FP programme

12. Additionally, we (with MPI) are supporting catchment groups working to provide farmers and growers support to develop FW-FPs. For example, catchment group King Country Rivercare is running workshops with local sheep and beef farmers. In these workshops each farmer is developing their FW-FP using a straightforward digital template.
13. We expect approaches like this to greatly lower the cost of developing a FW-FP for farmers who may otherwise look to a rural advisor or consultant for support.

### **Next steps**

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14. We'd like to meet with you to discuss this example, and some early choices you have on FW-FPs (as outlined in BRF-4056).

### **Signatures**

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Sara Clarke  
**General Manager –System Enablement**  
**Date 26/1/24**

Hon Andrew HOGGARD  
**Associate Minister for the Environment**  
**Date**

<sup>2</sup> Alongside representatives from the red meat, dairy, and farm assurance sectors

<sup>3</sup> See paragraphs 24 to 26 in BRF-4056 for further details.

9(2)(f)(iv)