

The Survey of Rural Decision Makers is a biennial survey of New Zealand's primary sector conducted by Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research since 2013. In 2021, there were 6700 respondents representing commercial and lifestyle farms, forests and growing operations from Cape Reinga to Rakiura.

Aspirations for the land

Respondents were asked to describe the aspirations for their land using 3–5 short phrases.

This was an open-ended question, and respondents could write absolutely anything. We read through all 3,580 answers from farmers, foresters, growers, and lifestyle block owners.

We found that many responses emphasised a **RETURN ON INVESTMENT** in the land:

“ Best production using technologies and systems to ensure optimal growth rates involving beef and sheep breeds that we like. ”

“ Our aspiration is that our land will provide us with food security and an additional income stream. ”

Others emphasised the land owner's aspiration to be good **ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDS**:

“ To keep the land in good condition for future generations. We have been lucky to be the guardians of this land for the past 30 years and we are passionate about it. ”

“ A gate keeper for the next generation that leaves the land in a more sustainable and environmentally better place than when I bought it. ”

Still others focused on their farmer **IDENTITY AND RURAL LIFESTYLE**:

“ ... it is the means towards our way of life. We identify as farmers, nearly all of our needs (physical, financial, emotional, mental, spiritual) are met through farming our land, outside, every day. ”

“ Great being my own boss. Been able to make my own decisions. ”

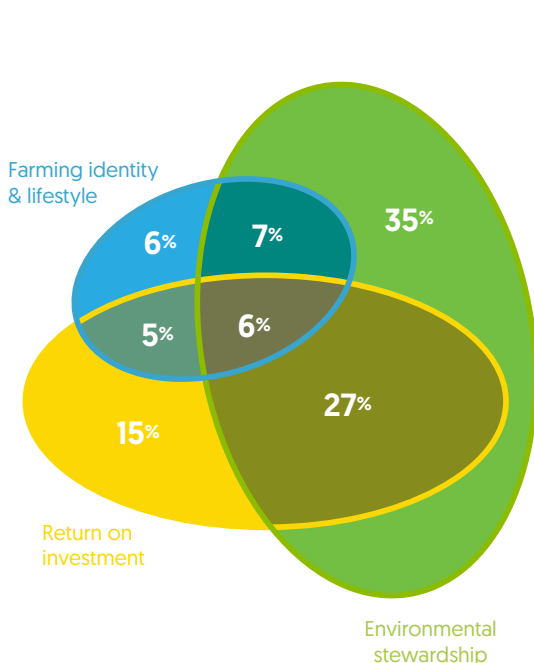
And some of responses covered **MULTIPLE THEMES**:

“ Look after our farm for future generations, Be a good custodian environmentally, run a profitable sustainable dairy farm, have a good happy life. ”

“ Farm sustainably, while staying solvent. To be able to enjoy rural living, be able to pass the family land to future generations. ”

Overall:

COMMERCIAL FARMERS,
FORESTERS AND GROWERS



LIFESTYLE BLOCK OWNERS

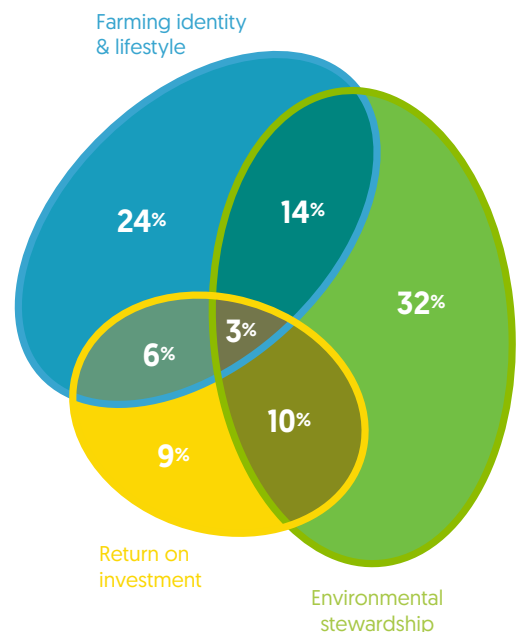
Farming identity & lifestyle
seek to preserve farming identity & lifestyle



Environmental stewardship
aspire to have better environmental stewardship



Return on investment
achieve a higher return on investment



What else you had to say!

To have healthy land and native bush and more trees and less pests like possums and clean water and less weeds and less slips.

Farm as though you will live forever.

I am a 4th generation farm and we would like to pass it on better to the next generation if they are keen. We see ourselves as guardians of the land.

Provide a suitable return on investment while contributing to healthy biodiversity and being a positive contributor to our catchment's ecology.

Run a profitable dairy farm with healthy stock. Improve infrastructure on farm to make it easier to run.

I am a partnership investor. My primary objective is to diversify our investments.

To produce high yielding and high return crops.

Be sustainable. Be profitable. Enjoyment. Location.

This is my home, the family has farmed here since the 1870's. I like being on the land and working with the livestock. I would like to find ways of making it economically viable to support a family.

Family connection to the land is 114 years. Would like to see it passed on as a working unit.

Reversing past land degradation by planting trees in a continuous cover mixed species forest with native retirement areas incorporated.

I love the land and feel that I am the steward of the land. I would like to enhance it and preserve it.

Self-sufficient. Grow our own kai.

A beautiful farm, not intensively managed but making some profit, medium tech, integrating native flora and fauna.

I want to run an environmentally friendly/sustainable and profitable dairy farm.

The aspiration is to protect the property from subdivision and to replant the whole property in native species.

It's a business. It is expected to make a profit. We have been doing it for 66 years.

Paying the mortgage is a large motivation and we like to have a tidy well-kept highly productive farm.

Enjoy farming livestock, enjoy seeing stock do well, enjoy outdoors and physical side of job, enjoy working with animals.

I love farming! I get a lot of energy out of farming, watching the stock grow and the farm doing well.

Capital gains and revenue from carbon.

Working with animals and the land is the best job in the world.



The Survey of Rural Decision Makers is designed to build a better picture of decision making at the farm level, tackling topics that cannot be easily addressed in official statistics or directly by organisations. It is a valuable resource for policy makers, regional councils, industry groups and businesses.

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Further results will be added to our website as they become available: www.landcareresearch.co.nz/srdm-2021



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