

## Farming News

# Farm students hit boards

Taratahi Agricultural Training Centre's students are nearing the end of their 12 month full-time course in agriculture, and 13 students had the opportunity recently to take part in a level two TECTRA shearing course administered by shearing expert, Mark Guthrie.

TECTRA is New Zealand's largest shearing training provider, teaching students at all levels and capabilities the skills and necessary to carry them through their farming career.

TECTRA courses cover machine and blade shearing at level two, three and four with specialist courses for advanced students in merino shearing and wool handling.

Taratahi Educational Delivery Manager Nigel Udy emphasises the importance to offer students courses like the TECTRA level two machine shearing course.

"Shearing, hand piece work and wool handling are integral parts of the skill set Taratahi's sheep students need to acquire to be competent 'work ready' employees for the sheep and beef industry."

Having had to postpone the completion of the course in May due to bad weather, the students at Taratahi were able to get dry sheep to complete the course late last week.

Students were taught the individual roles of team members in the shed, including hazards and terminology, having both theory and practical components in the four-day course.

Students were prepped on how to set up the shearing board, pen the stock safely and effectively, as well as how to assemble their hand piece correctly.

The value placed on organis-

ations such as TECTRA to teach and train generations coming into the industry is highlighted by Mr Udy.

"Having highly skilled TECTRA staff who are excellent in the technical skills as well as good tutors with industry reputation helps our students to get the most out of their time on the course."

Having more than 25 years of shearing experience and seven years training students, Mr Guthrie was emphatic about the quality of Taratahi students.

"The last few days of this course have been all about communication and team work."

"These students have worked exceptionally as a team and proven their ability to pick up and learn new skills."

Mr Guthrie travels the country teaching groups of students including Telford in

the south and others in the Far North.

"The students here at Taratahi had a high work rate, with an excellent standard of shorn sheep at the beginner level," he said.

On the final day of the course students were challenged to give their best performance as they were judged and given a grade on their shear quality, sheep turnout and sorting and handling of the clipped wool.

Nearing the close of the students' first year, Mr Udy stresses the importance of these courses within work experience.

"Once these skills have been taught to our students they get every chance possible to continue and practise these skills again and again on Taratahi's own farms as well as on a significant number of other sheep properties throughout the Wairarapa region."



On the go: Student Graham McCormack competes against tutor Russell Knight who is using the hand shears.

## Fonterra payouts lift

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