



Former city dweller Sam Burrows started a career in farming after a four day taster course at Taratahi Agricultural Training Centre in Masterton

Taratahi gives a taste of rural life

By BARBARA GILLHAM

SAM Burrows may have grown up in a city but farming now is definitely in his blood. Born and raised in Hamilton, Sam admits he always had a love of the outdoors and a career working outside was something he always wanted to do.

It was while he was in the seventh form at Hamilton Boys High last year that he seriously began to consider a career in farming. Working for a few months on a farm owned by a friend's family, prompted him to look at possible study and training options.

It was this search that led him

to enrol on a four day "Taster Course" at Taratahi Agricultural Training Centre in Masterton last September, a course Sam recommends to anyone thinking of a career in farming.

"I made my mind up by the end of the second day of the course that this was the career for me. It was a fantastic course and gave me the chance to get some 'hands-on' experience, meet other students meet the tutors and see what it would be like living and studying at Taratahi as a fulltime student."

This year, Sam came back to study fulltime and is currently completing the Taratahi Certificate in Agriculture Level 3 course and the National

Certificate in Farm Skills (Work ready) Level 3 course. His particular interest is in dairy which he believes offers a better future and good lifestyle. When he has completed his training Sam hopes to travel and work overseas but says he will eventually settle in New Zealand, probably in the Waikato, an area he loves.

The Taratahi Taster Courses are run during the school holidays over four days and aim to give students the experience of what agriculture is all about and help them decide if this is the career path they really want to head down.

Taratahi provides as many agricultural activities during the four days as possible and students will experience tractor driving, ATVs,

milking and calf rearing, fencing, horse riding, chain saws and stock work, as well as a lot of fun filled after hours activities.

Catering for up to 50 students on each Taster Course, participants stay on campus in the halls of residence.

At the end of the course, if participants decide this is the career for them, they can then choose to come back to Taratahi as a full-time student studying the Taratahi Certificate in Agriculture Level 3 Course, as well as the National Certificate in Farms Skills (Work ready) Level 3 course as Sam did. Students have the option of specialising in either dairy or sheep and beef.

Taratahi is New Zealand's

largest agricultural training centre and is unique in the world of agricultural training as they have thousands of hectares of land that is farmed on a commercial basis.

Taratahi has three main campuses; Wairarapa, Taranaki and Hawke's Bay which is run in partnership with the Eastern Institute of Technology.

Taratahi's communications officer Kim Holden said that "many of our full-time students say the Taster Course was a great way to discover if agriculture was truly the career for them.

To secure a place on the next Taster Course during the school holidays starting Monday July 5, phone 06 378 2116 or email kim.holden@taratahi.ac.nz