

Manuka honey invests in the Bay

Building staff in operations

The New Zealand Manuka Group is investing for growth and adding staff in its Opoitiki and Bay of Plenty operations.

The company now has about 100 people in its team in the Bay. Management is based at its Awakeri honey packing plant while the manuka oil and honey extraction, and agar and bio-media production from pterocladia seaweed, is handled at Opoitiki.

NZ Manuka chief executive Karl Graddon affirmed the company's confidence in the local community.

"In the past year alone our top-line revenue has almost doubled and we are now looking to employ 29 new staff by 2017 to support this growth," he said.

Group general manager operations and logistics Robin Jay said the company had recently invested in a new honey extraction plant.

"Our stage one building is capable of handling and processing up to 30,000 hives per year, while our stage two building is expected to add a further 1300sq m to our operations base in Opoitiki."

NZ Manuka said it was committed to the region and had contracted Bay of Plenty



GROWING: The NZ Manuka team at Opoitiki. The company hopes to employ 29 new staff by 2017.

PHOTO/SUPPLIED

companies for the main building work.

"We are dedicated to building a future based in the East Cape," Mr Jay said. "Our extraction facilities are now being centralised so all honey produced from East Cape

hives is processed in Opoitiki, and our Whangaparaoa site is being developed into a dedicated beekeeping base."

NZ Manuka was established in 2011 by Phil Caskey in partnership with local iwi landowners. Mr

Caskey is a pioneer in the manuka honey industry and remains a key shareholder but has moved to a new role driving strategic growth projects.

"Phil is focusing his attention on our strategic growth projects

and is continuing to be an industry champion for fair distribution of wealth back to the landowners of manuka blocks," Mr Graddon said. More than 90 per cent of product is exported, with China and Australia the two largest markets.

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• EVENTING

THUR 31 MARCH
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Eivers Farm, Te Teko

• TREKKING

SAT 16 APRIL
Taupo Le Trek

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SUN 3 APRIL
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Mokoia Drive, Rotorua

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Offer workers the best roster

Dairy farmers recruiting staff for next season are encouraged to consider their options for managing the working week.

With farm recruitment underway nationwide, DairyNZ and Federated Farmers are encouraging farmers to attract the best people by offering the best work

environment. Federated Farmers Waikato president Chris Lewis says during recruitment is an ideal time to look at staff rosters.

"The average New Zealand farm has two or three staff and one particularly common farming issue regarding work/life balance is a good roster."

The Workplace Action Plan, launched by Federated Farmers and DairyNZ, suggests dairy farm employees on a well-designed roster should normally work no more than 50 hours/week and no more than 10 hours/day.

"It's a simple thing but having a good roster gives employers an edge in the recruitment process if they can show potential staff what their working hours will be, because at the end of the day, we are all competing for the best people," says Chris. "Being able to show candidates what their weeks will look like and their days off is an advantage."

DairyNZ developer Cam Camilleri says more than 900 farms have signed up to use the new Roster Builder tool.

"It can be customised. It takes less than five minutes to set up a roster and it's simple to try different rotations. Getting the best from employees and keeping them motivated is crucial — even more so in light of current financial pressures," he says. The Roster Builder simplifies and automates the farm roster process.

For more information, visit dairynz.co.nz/rosterbuilder and dairynz.co.nz/wap

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