

Forestry for Life



Training the key in forestry

PRUE Younger knows that attracting people to the forestry industry is just the first step to ensuring a sustainable workforce.

As chief executive of the Eastland Wood Council (EWC), Younger is a huge advocate for training, training and more training.

"In the first instance it is important to get people work-ready with the basic foundation skills and then importantly providing them with an overview of what the industry has to offer in the way of career paths," she says.

"There are several different training options available by a selection of training providers who work alongside the industry and contractors to ensure the right quantity and quality of training is available."

Many local forestry businesses offer upskilling opportunities for their workers on the job and more working in the job is being promoted.

"The EWC members and contractors can see huge advantages to working with the various training organisations to

ensure the appropriate training programmes are in place and accessible."

Retention of existing employees is an ongoing necessity too, alongside recognition of those who excel and went the extra mile.

"Ensuring there is effective training available and appropriate recognition for a job well done, bodes well for a workforce that often work in challenging environments. The more skilled people are will reflect in a safer work place."



Jasmine Kuru with sponsor Sandy Botterill, Competenz.

Industry full of opportunities

INCREASING demand for labour in forestry is behind a drive to better educate people about the employment opportunities in this diverse industry.

Eastland Wood Council chief executive Prue Younger says the forestry industry can be underestimated.

"The current perception that the wood industry is mainly suited to those students with little or no academic ability needs to be countered by highlighting and promoting the diverse range of options and opportunities from which a school leaver may choose," says Younger. "There are positions ranging from those in crews working on the hill right through to management, logistics and engineering."

It is forecast that log volumes in the East Coast region will grow from 2.3 million tonnes in 2013 to more than 3.4 million tonnes in 2020.

"That means the industry is going to require an additional 635 full-time equivalents (FTEs) by 2020, according to a Waikato

Economic Study."

Those FTE positions will need to come from both organic growth and from crews moving to the district from other regions.

"We believe migration of crews to this region will happen as opportunities present themselves, but the area we should be focusing on is organic growth. To achieve that will require effective initiatives from the industry."

Working alongside the industry is Activate Tairāwhiti. Kim Holland, who oversees the Workforce Development Project, as part of the Regional Economic Action Plan, says Activate Tairāwhiti recognises the economic contribution the forestry industry brings to the region.

"We are working with the industry to help identify what the 635 new jobs look like in terms of skill and training requirements to ensure that they are able to address the "wall of wood", and also in ensuring that the training provision matches industry requirements," says Holland.

"It is recognising and

supporting the forestry industry to recruit the 'right' people.

The doubling of the workforce also creates a multiplier effect with other indirect industries such as engineering, diesel mechanics, truck drivers."

Activate Tairāwhiti has recently completed some Labour Market Research, which includes a Forestry Industry Report and will be presented to the industry once finalised.

And EWC continues its work on a raft of initiatives. Last year, the Big Day Out proved hugely popular with ongoing efforts, including the Forestry For Life promotion.

"It is about ensuring we get the right information to the school students, the right training-delivery models and the whole community behind us as an industry as we represent a significant economic earner for the region, which is not going to go away," says Younger. "With growth, there comes opportunity, and we should be engaging more to take advantage of that."

NZ Apprentice of the Year

IT'S no surprise Jasmine Kuru is making her mark in the forestry industry at a young age.

The 21-year-old has grown up in forestry and is the third generation in her family to head to the hill.

Her father Ricky and Poppa Jack have been an inspiration for this award-winning youngster.

Earlier this year, Miss Kuru won the New Zealand Apprentice of the Year at the Eastland Wood Council Forestry Awards.

"That was a really big deal for me," said Miss Kuru. "When we won the Forestry Whanau of the Year award I said to dad, 'how do I get up here on my own?'. He said to just keep working hard, which I did for three years and finally got it."

By her own admission, she and dad are best friends.

"Every chance I get, we go up there and he teaches me ... I am so lucky to have a dad like that."

The family's Kuru Contracting business has about 13 employees.

Miss Kuru is a foreman, the health and safety officer and a machine operator.

"It is good that dad has given me so much opportunity," she says.

Miss Kuru started in the industry

at 16, doing school holiday work, and moved to full-time in 2012.

It took her two years to achieve her log-making ticket, three years on the ground doing quality control and a year on the loader, felling and stacking. Through Competenz, she has completed Health and Safety levels three and four, chainsaw use and maintenance, landing operations and log making.

"I started at the bottom and just made my way up," she says. "When I started, dad signed up to be an apprentice so I have learned a lot."

She had dabbled with the idea of being a police officer, but the odds were stacked against her with such a forestry tradition in her veins, and she wouldn't have it any other way.

Miss Kuru and partner Zak Parker, who works alongside her, have just bought their first home.

"It can be interesting with all of us working together, but we have a rule that no work comes home."

She's already dreaming of the day she can step up and own the business.

"The best thing for me is that I am always learning new techniques, making sure all our crews are safe and happy, and inspiring others."

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Forestry engineering 'lots of responsibility but fun'

CANTERBURY-born Matt Deans thought he'd be happily ensconced in the world of civil engineering . . . until he had a sneak peek at what he could do in the forestry industry.

Today, he is an Ernslaw One harvest engineer. It is a busy job that sees him drawing up a full harvest plan, sorting out consents and overseeing the installation of necessary infrastructure for the harvest, including roading, stream crossings and skid sites.

"It is a lot of responsibility, but it is fun," says 25-year-old Mr Deans.

"It means I could be walking the forestry block about a year-and-a-half ahead of the harvest. The ideal timeframe is well-advanced, and calls for a lot of tactical and strategic planning."

Each year that involves him planning between 1500-2000 hectares of forests and organising around eight harvest crews. This year has been bigger than usual though, and he already has consents in for 1300 hectares.

"It is challenging and very rewarding because your decisions effect the environmental and

economic outcomes of each block. There is real satisfaction in putting your plans into practice and working with the guys I do."

Deans grew up on a small sheep and beef station down south.

"I went to uni with the idea of doing a civil engineering degree but in that first year saw what the forestry industry had to offer and it was a great way of being outdoors while working."

That was enough for him and in 2013 he completed his four-year forest engineering degree at Canterbury University.

During his uni holidays, he worked in Timaru with forestry owner Blakely Pacific giving him the required credits.

"It was a mix of forestry management papers and civil engineering," says Mr Deans. "From my background, it suited me much more."

"The options within a forest engineering career are vast, and it offers a good work/life balance."

Long-term, he is hoping to work his way up the ladder into a management role.

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Have you thought about the scope of careers in the Forestry Industry? ...this is just a snap shot of the diversity

Forestry and Logging Worker <small>Kaimahi Waonui/Tope Rākau</small>	Forestry and logging workers plant, maintain, measure, cut and clear trees from forests. Job opportunities Good	Training usually required >1 year Trainee forestry workers usually earn Up to - \$40K per year Experienced forestry workers usually earn Up to - \$60K per year
Forestry Scientist <small>Kaipūtaiao Ngāhere</small>	Forestry scientists research forest growth, wood processing, conservation and different types of trees and how these can be used. Job opportunities Good	Training usually required 3-4 years Forestry scientists with Bachelor's degrees usually earn Up to - \$75K per year Forestry scientists with postgraduate degrees usually earn Up to - \$98K per year
Forest Manager <small>Kaimahi Ngāhere</small>	Forest managers plan and direct the planting, growth, harvesting and protection of forests meant for wood production. Job opportunities Good	Training usually required 3 years Graduate forest managers with one to two years' experience usually earn Up to - \$52K per year Senior forest managers usually earn Up to - \$130K per year

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