



English as a Second Language in Southland – Project Summary

An initial scoping study on how to support the adoption of good wintering practice in Southland when English is a second language for farm workers.

BACKGROUND

The English as Second Language Project was submitted to Thriving Southland by three Catchment Groups in November 2021. A study was completed in March 2022 to scope and better understand the Southland international farming community's communication needs, specifically on how best to support the adoption of good environmental wintering practices.

RESEARCH METHOD

- » A qualitative question session (catchment workshop) with workers who use English as a second language
- » Discussions with other stakeholders in Southland who have spoken to or support farm workers who use English as a second language
- » Interviews with key Southland farming stakeholders

FINDINGS

The catchment workshop participants felt they had a good understanding of wintering practices. However, they felt not everyone in their Filipino community had this good understanding.

What works well:

- » working closely with the farm owners/dairy grazing owners
- » having a clear understanding of “why” good practice needed to be applied
- » being trained in the day-to-day wintering management
- » having the ability to ask questions of ‘kiwi bosses’ so they feel supported
- » enjoying coffee and cheese rolls after each day's break shifts, to build relationships and confidence to then ask questions

What barriers exist:

- » lack of communication and cultural understanding between some Kiwi Farmers and their Filipino workers (key barrier)
- » lack of simple clear training from the 'kiwi boss'
- » the New Zealand accent can be fast and difficult to understand
- » limited understanding of kiwi farming when they start (some haven't farmed before or not farmed in New Zealand)
- » significant travel distance to wintering blocks
- » workers only having a limited influence on decision making on farm (e.g. management of cows but not wintering crops or locations)
- » off farm stresses, including long separations from their family because of COVID-19, agencies placing workers with kiwi farmers without checking the fit, challenges with applications for residency visas, and the uncertainty of whether they will need to leave NZ

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

- » help farm owners learn how to give simple clear instructions and positively support their workers, to improve communication and cultural understanding, and help build strong Farm Teams
- » clear and simple pictorial resources for wintering to help improve the communication between kiwi bosses and workers so the whole Farm Team can understand and support what is happening on farm
- » help farm owners and 'kiwi bosses' spend time with their workers to understand the different cultural nuances and build trust and confidence within Farm Teams. For example, the Filipino society is hierarchy based with strong values around respect. This includes no swearing, and it can be confronting to hear regular swearing in the relatively 'loud' NZ culture

NEXT STEPS

The Lower Oreti, Waihopai and Mid Oreti Catchment will continue to work with their international farming communities and local stakeholders and agencies to find ways to help develop and support the continued uptake of Good Management Practices on farms across Southland, and build stronger, more diverse Farm Teams and Community Catchment Groups.

**IF YOU HAVE A GOOD IDEA OR WOULD LIKE TO BE INVOLVED,
PLEASE CONTACT THE CATCHMENT GROUPS**

www.thrivingsouthland.co.nz/catchment-groups or their Thriving Southland Coordinator:

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THANK YOU TO ALL THOSE WHO WERE INVOLVED AND SUPPORTED THIS PROJECT

**The Lower Oreti, Waihopai and
Mid Oreti Catchment Groups**

