



Exploring positive family farm succession

A social science scoping study

NZIER report to Thriving Southland

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Key points

We explored factors that enable positive family farm succession

This report describes the factors that enable a positive succession journey for a family farm, with an additional focus on how the farm succession journey affects environmental decision-making. It summarises findings from the literature and reports the results of interviews with three farming families in Southland.

This topic appears to be a little-studied aspect of environmentally focused farm practices. We did not find any other literature that addressed it directly.

Older generations do make way for their successors to try new things

For the families we spoke to, the younger generations felt empowered by previous generations to make desired changes on the farm. In fact, both generations thoroughly enjoyed discussing the running of the farm and why some decisions were better than others. Over the decade or so of farm transfer, the younger generation gradually built the capability to make more independent decisions.

Financial constraints were identified as the main barrier to making environmentally focused changes on farm. This is particularly the case now, when farm debt servicing costs may be high and income variable.

Four key factors enable a positive family farm succession journey

We identified four factors that enable a positive succession journey for a family farm:

- **Good communication**
 - Family members should talk about farm succession openly and sooner rather than later.
 - This doesn't mean a decision has to be made immediately, but understanding each other's thoughts and expectations is important.
 - Meetings can be informal, at least to begin with. Closer to the handover, families can start keeping a record of their plans or engaging with professionals to get specific help (e.g., legal, financial or farm advice).
- **Clear vision and goals**
 - Establishing a clear vision and goals puts everyone involved on the same page.
 - Future generations can decide if the vision and goals align with theirs; this can empower decision-making regarding succession.
- **Capability**
 - The literature describes four types of capabilities required to successfully run a farm business: strategic, operational, management and financial.
 - It is important to ensure these capabilities are retained following the succession for the long-term survival of the farm.



- **Financial viability**

- Like any business, the farm ultimately needs to be financially viable after succession: for parents, children, and subsequent generations.
- Families may need to factor in housing and income for two or more generations, which might require a new farm structure, layout or farm size (e.g., purchasing or leasing property).
- Recruiting the help of professionals can help guide families through these financial, legal and social complexities.

Success means looking after the whole family

The families we talked to described what ‘success’ looked like for their farm succession journey. First and foremost was the preservation of family relationships: ensuring siblings felt fairly treated, and the generation taking on the farm wasn’t overburdened with debt. It also meant that the older generation was happy with their ongoing role on the farm, whether that was complete retirement, doing the odd job to help out, or occasionally being consulted for advice. They may wish to stay on the farm, in which case housing for both generations needs to be added to the cost of the succession.

Successful succession in our research also included a lengthy ‘apprenticeship period’, where the incoming generation had ample time to learn the ropes. This involved starting in one area (e.g. compliance or paperwork, stock management, feed, machinery) and gradually increasing their skill level and scope. This period was described as empowering by both generations.

Environmental decisions are one part of a complex process

Environmental decision-making appears to be a small component of the complex succession process which families go through. Also, there is an assumption in the literature that the next generation of farmers wants and needs to farm differently. Easy wins to promote greater pro-environmental action on farm may actually be unrelated to succession directly. They might include financial support or incentives, reducing any administrative burden, and looking at co-benefits of environmental behaviours. Further research is needed to determine whether the results found in this study stand true for most New Zealand farm families.



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1 Scope of report

Thriving Southland and its Catchment Group Coordinators have identified that intergenerational farm succession can be challenging, given this transition can involve making changes on farm. Who makes the decisions about the environmental aspects of the farm, during and after succession? Do the new generations coming into farming feel they can make environmental changes on farm, which might take things in a different direction than their parents?

Thriving Southland is interested in understanding the factors that support positive family farm succession. Partly, this interest comes from wanting to support farm families in the catchment groups. Partly, it is connected to environmentally focused farming practices. Thriving Southland wants to understand the connections between farm succession and the adoption of new practices, such as retiring pasture or restoring wetlands that had been cleared.

The aim of this project is to help the current farming generation negotiate with other generations, and identify helpful tools or methods to make this process as smooth as possible. This report explores the following questions:

- How much does intergenerational negotiation affect farming decisions (how big is the issue)?
- To what extent are intergenerational discussions linked to environmentally focused land use change?
- What tools or processes make for better intergenerational negotiation and promote on-farm change?

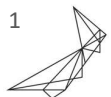
This social science project was designed to be exploratory, to give some initial indications to Thriving Southland about the literature and some actual experiences with farm succession. We hope that more work can be done to support positive farm succession in the region.

2 Method

This research draws on both primary and secondary data. We started by reviewing the literature on family farm succession, succession planning and environmental decision-making. This literature was sorted by relevance, and those studies that were rated as highly relevant were included (both New Zealand and international research). These resources are listed in Appendix A (with links) in case they are useful to the Thriving Southland team.

Next, we had a group interview with the Thriving Southland Catchment Coordinators. The purpose was to understand the topic and scope of the project and to identify family farms to participate.

Finally, we interviewed three Southland farm families who were at various stages in the succession process. For each of these families, we spoke to both generations involved in the current succession, to gain a better understanding of their succession experience. Interviews lasted between 20 minutes and 1 hour 20 minutes. All interviews were audio



recorded, translated into notes and then analysed using thematic analysis methods. This involved looking for key quotes, themes and sub-themes, and evidence as to whether our hypothesis was correct.

The literature and interview data were analysed together to provide a summary of what is known on the topic, and suggestions for how to make the farm succession process easy and positive.

3 Literature review

A lot has been written about family farm succession. A majority of the work is focused at the high level or macro-scale, for example, considering succession trends nationally or internationally. There is a smaller body of work that focuses on what is more relevant for the current research: farm succession at the family scale. This includes barriers and enablers of successful succession and 'soft skills' like good communication and consideration of sibling relationships. Among the relevant studies, the Kellogg reports cited in this report provide good information about succession at the family farm scale in a New Zealand context.

3.1 Family farm succession globally

There is debate about the ongoing success of intergenerational farm succession globally, with some researchers concluding that it is declining (Chiswell and Lobley 2015; Falkiner et al. 2017; Fischer and Burton 2014). Indeed, there are many pressures on farmers, including price-cost squeeze, regulatory pressure, land price inflation, and employment opportunities beyond the farm (Falkiner et al. 2017; Fischer and Burton 2014). This is the case in New Zealand and all over the world. The new generations of farmers will, therefore, need to farm differently from the generations before them, in particular with a greater focus on preserving the environment (Weastall 2020). This might involve changing land uses, restoring natural ecosystems, or adopting best management practices to reduce nutrient leaching, biodiversity loss, or other negative environmental impacts of the farm. These changes may generate tension with previous generations, who may have different views about how the farm should be run, and have a personal interest in the matter (Brown, Daigneault, and Dawson 2019). After all, there is a close relationship between the way a farm is run and farmer identity (Fischer and Burton 2014).

Key conclusions from the international literature:

- Around the world, family farm succession is a complex and 'sensitive' topic.
- The financial viability of family farm succession is an issue, and increasingly so.
- Ensuring equal treatment of siblings is central.
- Succession is typically a gradual process, a journey rather than an event.
- There is no single way for succession to occur; family dynamics play a huge role.



3.2 Family farm succession in New Zealand

Much of the literature on farm succession in New Zealand reaches the same conclusions as international research. Research suggests that back in 2012, little information was available to help New Zealand farmers with succession, but there are now more resources (Sclater 2017).

One assumption underlying this research is that younger farmers *want and need* to farm differently from their parents. The New Zealand literature suggests that, to some extent, this is true – younger farmers are less risk-averse, more influenced by social norms, and less focused on financial outcomes (Brown, Daigneault, and Dawson 2019). They are also more likely to adopt new technologies, convert land uses, and farm because of family tradition (Brown et al. 2019). Younger farmers are more likely to implement sustainable management plans to help with meeting environmental targets. These intergenerational differences in ways of farming and prioritisation of environmental outcomes may cause some tension around succession (Weastall 2020).

3.3 Factors affecting succession

Poor handling of farm succession can cause a raft of issues, including damage to family relationships, loss of the farm (through sale or otherwise) or poor management (Nuthall and Old 2017; Sclater 2017). The literature suggests there are three ‘succession pillars’ that enable succession and, when done well, can result in innovative solutions and a win-win situation for all involved.

3.3.1 Pillars of succession

The three pillars for enabling successful family farm succession (Duynhoven 2019) are:

- 1 Open communication
- 2 Clarity of vision for the farm business
- 3 Capability in terms of skills needed for operations, management, financial oversight and strategic planning.

Open communication

Family farm succession is not an event but rather a process or a journey, which may take more than a decade. Starting discussions early encourages transparency for all involved, around expectations about who might like to take over the farm and when (Duynhoven 2019; Nuthall and Old 2017; Sclater 2017). These conversations may be difficult because they involve consideration of retirement plans, handing over control, and talking about fairness among siblings (Falkiner et al. 2017). The discussions can be improved by engaging quality professionals with experience in succession activities, including succession planners, bank advisors or farm consultants (Sclater, 2022). The process may reveal key assumptions that each generation is holding, e.g. *Dad would never let anyone else farm the farm*, or *No one wants the farm so we’ll just sell it one day* (Duynhoven 2019, 17). They might also help the different generations understand whether they have the same vision for the farm, which can be a factor in positive succession planning. These discussions may be best initiated by the parents well before the children reach the age of deciding whether they want to take over the farm and before partners join the family. Early discussions ensure the



children understand the expectations of their parents, options, equitability and so forth (Sclater, 2022).

Clarity of vision for the farm business

Clarity about where the farm business is headed is fundamental in establishing a common goal (Duynhoven, 2019; Sclater, 2022). Even if this goal or vision changes (which is sometimes beneficial), all family members understand the tone and direction and can get behind the cause. This shared direction can inform decision-making. If a shared vision cannot be agreed upon, this is also critical as the family may wish to take a different approach, such as splitting the farm. They may also consider bringing in an external consultant to help with the discussion.

Capability (operational, management, financial and strategic)

To ensure the farm remains a successful and viable business, capability must be built or secured at every level of the farm operation (Sclater, 2022). This includes the day-to-day operational running of the farm, management, financial planning and, at the oversight level, strategically. This is one of the reasons why gradual succession is so beneficial; there is likely to be a time when the successor is the ‘apprentice’, which is critical for ensuring they are well trained for the job (Bertoni and Cavicchioli 2016). It is also a great time to ensure all necessary skills are in the mix, whether through bringing in contractors, rural professionals or otherwise. There may also be some consideration of how long the older generation wishes to stay involved in the farm, in what capacity, and whether they should be compensated for their work. They may wish to still do ‘odd jobs’ on the farm, which can provide critical support for the incoming generation.

Sibling relationships and equity

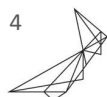
Another factor to consider in farm succession is sibling relationships. Ensuring fairness among siblings is one of the most commonly raised aspects of family farm succession (Duynhoven, 2019). Barrett (2016) notes that unless the farm and all assets were to be sold and divided, it is virtually impossible to be equal to all children in the succession situation. However, when managed well, it is possible to be fair through effective communication and transparency (Barrett, 2016; Sclater, 2022). This is where it may be helpful to engage rural professionals to discuss options for how to buy siblings out of the farm or take other actions to be equitable.

Stages of succession

One useful theory to understand the various stages of succession is Vogel’s (2006) six-stage model, as described by Falkiner et al. (2017):

- Farmer develops retirement plan¹
- Successor identified
- Gradual transfer of control from farmer to successor
- Legal transfer of property
- Successor begins to make changes on farm

¹ Developing the plan will be different depending on the ownership of the farm. A farmer’s spouse, an equity partner in a farm business, trustees and beneficiaries from a trust, or other interested parties may be involved.



- Outcomes of changes have impacts on the farm business.

This model is helpful for thinking about succession in terms of if and when any issues might arise and when help is needed. Some literature has found that succession can fall down at the first stage, as farmers either do not want to consider retirement or stay on longer than is beneficial for the farm (Falkiner et al. 2017). However, successions do not necessarily pass neatly through all six stages in sequence, so it is important not to rely too rigidly on this model. The model also does not include additional members of the family, such as the children, who are not the successors. Their input and concerns will likely need to be considered as succession plans are developed.

4 Interview results

4.1 Farm families interviewed

Interviews were conducted with three farming families, with two generations in each family. This included one dairy farm and two sheep and beef farms in the Southland region, all family-owned and -operated. One of the farms was medium-sized, and two were large in size. The families were staggered across the succession stages, with one early stage, one mid-stage and one that had completed succession. The families had also been on-farm for different numbers of generations, so they had different personal experiences with prior succession. To maintain confidentiality, no further information will be revealed about the families.

4.2 How is succession linked to environmental decisions on farm?

The aim of the research was to understand the drivers of positive family farm succession, especially the connection between succession and environmentally focused farm practices. In the interviews, we found:

- There was an initial period of ‘experimentation’ or ‘apprenticeship’, where the younger generation stepped forward and suggested new ways of running the farm, often after returning from studying or other work
- In general, the older generation was open to these suggestions, or if not provided a rationale as to why, and was always open to discussion (which often occurred with the whole family)
- In each family, the two generations appeared to enjoy discussing how the farm was run, often with a jovial tone. Some laughed as they discussed where they disagreed but were fundamentally on the same page about where the farm was headed
- The younger generation remarked that when they interrogated why the farm was run the way it was, there was a solid rationale, and they respected that they had to learn how the farm worked before trying to make significant changes.²

As one participant put it:

Environmental considerations did factor in to succession decisions.

² There is a principle called ‘Chesterton’s fence’: you should not take down a fence (make a change) until you understand why someone went to the trouble and expense to put a fence there in the first place.



It appeared that the primary barrier restricting pro-environmental change on farm was instead financial constraints. For one family, this was exacerbated by the succession itself, as an expensive exercise. However, across generations, interviewees expressed a willingness to consider pro-environmental decisions, provided the farm was making a profit. This is a longstanding finding in the farm literature that intuitively makes sense: ‘you can’t be green if you’re in the red’.

Despite our findings, the families we talked to did say they knew many other farm families where succession had not gone so well. Outcomes included where sibling relationships had fallen apart, where the farm had been split and sold, or where no succession plan had eventuated, and this pushed the farm into sale as it was too late. It may be that in these families, the different generations had different perspectives regarding environmental decision-making on farm, and that contributed to an ‘unsuccessful’ succession. Further research is needed to investigate if this is the case.

Ultimately, the families we talked to had a similar vision for the farm, good communication and a strong pool of expertise to draw on. These are key factors in promoting easy, smooth succession and are likely to mean the younger farmers do not desire to drastically change the farm (Duynhoven, 2019). Indeed, in each instance, the young farmers did not make large environmental changes upon taking over the farm. When questioned about this, they either

- did not desire to make significant changes
- made small incremental changes over a longer period.

Permanent or large changes made were driven foremost by economics and were not disputed by the previous generation. Nevertheless, interviewees assured us that had they wanted to make changes for environmental reasons, their predecessors would be open to such suggestions. They did not appear to feel guilt or worry about changing the farm. It would be helpful to talk to a broader sample of families to see whether this still holds true.

4.3 What has changed before and after succession?

The farm is run differently now than in [Dad’s] day, twice as much stock. The farm is bigger but doing the same thing.

Overall, the families we spoke with did not make significant environmental changes around the time of succession. They did, however, make other changes in terms of how the farm was run. These changes were typically driven by financial considerations but also wider system changes that enabled improvements, like genetics and technological developments. Some of these changes included:

- Higher stocking rates and expansion of farm property (leasing) to keep the farm financially viable
- Higher lambing rates and better grass options, from improved genetics
- Splitting the farm property on paper, to enable easier succession when it was to occur.

Despite these changes, both generations remarked that the incoming farmers had not significantly changed the farm in terms of the day-to-day; it was essentially the same farm business, with tweaks.



4.4 Handing over decision making

We've seen farmers who 'never had a chance' because their fathers held on too long.

[Dad] will always want to do odd jobs fixing, like the troughs.

[Dad] doesn't make farming decisions now, but he likes to [provide] input when asked.

One key concern in the literature was when the handover in decision-making occurred between generations. Some research mentioned situations where the handover was too delayed. Amongst the families we talked to, the handover was very gradual (about a decade) but consistent, while the previous generation stepped back, and the younger generation increased operational and strategic decision-making on-farm. Both older and younger generations were happy to openly discuss the running of the farm with each other, including environmental decision-making. The older generations enjoyed sharing the responsibility and having stimulating discussions about how the farm was run, while the younger farmers acknowledged that the older generation held critical knowledge and therefore respected their decision-making ability. This is wise, as research suggests that in the years after succession, farms may operate at a loss while the younger farmers are coming up to speed (Bertoni and Cavicchioli 2016). The final stages of the handover appeared to coincide with the older generation's decline in physical abilities, and thus, their desire to be physically involved diminished. This highlights the importance of starting succession early so that the transfer of knowledge can occur before the older generation needs to retire.

4.5 What next for the older generation?

Succession on paper is done but it is actually going to be an ongoing process for us for maybe 10 years.

Their whole meaning [can] all of a sudden disappear.

A central talking point was around what happens to the older generation or parents when the succession occurs. Several interviewees mentioned that when farmers move off their land they lose purpose and often their health declines. This means they tend to want to stay on farm in their existing house and ultimately, the incoming generation cannot fully move on to the farm property. As a result, the younger generation may have to lease or rent a house and property to fund their parents' retirement, which can be costly. Issues to consider early on in succession planning are who funds what and when will the incoming generation take over the farmhouse, and the majority of decision-making.

Engaging professional succession help

Accountants have said to [Dad] that whoever takes over the farm needs to have half of the farm, to make it financially viable.

[Dad] has seen a benefit of [engaging professionals]. [The farm consultant] did financial benchmarking.

Each family we talked to mentioned key professionals they talked to who facilitated and informed them about the succession process. These were predominantly lawyers, accountants and bank managers. Interviewees identified that it was important who these



people were and that they had the right knowledge and approach, advocating the best case outcome for the family. In several cases, the families came across professionals who weren't the right fit; they made sure to change who they were dealing with, facilitating a positive succession experience. One family remarked that the older generations had a *she'll be right* attitude toward succession, and the involvement of professionals provided some much-needed structure and guidance throughout the process.

Open communication

[Farm] direction was always decided with conversation between us.

Talking in their 20s, 30s is too late. [It needs to happen] before people are set in their ways.

Some people keep kids in the dark. [This] leaves them in trouble when they read the will at the end of the day.

For each family we talked to, communication throughout their succession journey was slightly different. Most did not hold formal family meetings to discuss succession leading up to it occurring; discussions were informal and happened across a variety of contexts (in the house, out on the farm). In typical New Zealand style, many of these conversations were indirect, suggestions or indications rather than outright statements about succession, at least in the beginning. This included statements like *one day this could be your decision*. This appears to be part of Kiwi culture and reflects the sensitive nature of the topic. So long as these discussions are sufficiently open and clear, they serve the purpose of aiding the succession process. The common factor amongst interviewees was a willingness and openness to listen to each other. This meant everyone felt they were on the same team and were respected.

Finding a successor

Well probably at the time [succession] just sort of fell into place.

It way always sort of implied that [son] would take over.

Interestingly, there was great variation when the families we talked to identified a successor. For one family, it was clear from childhood; one child was interested in farming and very involved, and the others weren't. It was, therefore, a matter of deciding *when* the succession started rather than *if*. In another instance, it was not clear until the children were adults and the right circumstances evolved where it became the best option. In all cases, there was never pressure to take on the farm; instead, all understood it as an option.

Future succession

[Several] of my kids are interested in farming. It doesn't mean much yet but [we're] already in these conversations.

Someone has to keep control of the [succession] situation.

[Our] parents just didn't know how to go about succession...we want to smooth the way for [the next generation].

Two of the three families we talked to mentioned how they would like succession to go for the next generation. They wanted early conversations, a robust financial structure for the handover, and spare money to make the process easier. For one family, this meant



diversification outside the farm business, so alternative succession options existed. For another, it meant ensuring they had enough savings and investments that their children wouldn't have to fund their retirement. Even though they had relatively successful successions, they were thinking about making the process easier for the next generation. One final consideration was their children's partners and their ability to potentially influence or control succession outcomes. The generation currently farming was setting up measures to safeguard the family against problems related to future partners.

Other enablers of pro-environmental action on farm

[We are] very aware of possibilities of technology and how this enables environmental improvement.

Finally, there were several factors identified as enablers of pro-environmental action on farm. As mentioned already, the first and primary factor was financial. In one case, changing accountants proved fruitful in making the business more savvy and efficient, which freed funds for more options. A second enabler was technology, such as apps and electric fencing, which have changed animal health, feeding practices, stock movement, on-farm communication between staff, and so much more. Interviewees acknowledged that easy-to-use, affordable options like this will continue to come on the market and remove barriers to implementing pro-environmental behaviour. One last enabler was education; going to university provided incoming successors with updated ideas about environmental decision-making. Farm consultants also provided new ideas for the farm business.

5 Conclusions

This research found that communication and capability were two key factors in positive experiences with family farm succession. Communication was important in establishing the expectations of both generations and creating a vision for the farm that worked for everyone. Capability involved both the members of the farm family and outside consultants or experts. As decision-making shifted from the older to the younger generation, the new farm managers needed to build their capability over time in strategy, operations, management and finance. Gaps in capacity could be usefully filled by legal, accounting, banking, and farming professionals.

Environmentally focused farm practices were not a succession issue for the families in this study. They made incremental rather than major changes and tended to discuss and agree on changes to farming practices. In addition, financial drivers tended to be more important than environmental drivers for on-farm changes.

Both the literature and interviews suggested that the family farm succession process occurs best when succession has been well discussed by all parties. This helps both generations to determine whether they agree about environmental and other aspects of running the farm. It is okay if these conversations are initially less direct to begin with, as each generation gauges their options and where the other is at. When the next generation are children, it does not make sense to ask whether they would like to take over the farm; rather, there might be indications that this is one day an option for them to consider. Indeed, it seems best these initial discussions are started by the parents, who are in the 'position of power' with regard to the handover.



One key assumption in the agri-science literature was that farmers are unmotivated to address the environmental impacts of farming (Weastall, 2020). Our findings suggest this is not true; families we talked to (both the younger and older generations) were enthusiastic about making pro-environmental changes on farm so long as they were financially viable. Of course, the succession may have an impact on the farm's financial viability, so these things are interrelated. It is, therefore, highly beneficial to involve professionals to help inform and guide the succession process to achieve optimal outcomes for everyone and the environment.

The following image provides a graphic summary of the results from this research. Family farm succession can be a long journey with a winding path. We identified four key factors that enable this journey to be successful. Once you 'arrive' at your destination (i.e. the succession is completed), there are also criteria to describe what ultimate 'success' looks like, as described here.

Figure 1 What enables a positive family farm succession journey, and what does it look like when succession works?



Source: Image created using MidJourney.



6 Limitations

This research was designed as a scoping exercise rather than an exhaustive study. The sample size is, therefore very limited and generally provides stories of successful successions. These families were identified by Thriving Southland. The families we talked to mentioned many examples in other families where succession had not gone well. It would be beneficial to talk to these families to see whether these findings still stand.

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Appendix A Key literature

Publications in the following list were identified as highly relevant to the topic of family farm succession. It is not an exhaustive list; rather, it is a snapshot of articles and reports that provide a useful starting point for understanding what is known about succession.

A.1 NZ literature

- Brown, Daigneault, and Dawson (2019) – report results of a survey considering farmer age and environmental practices, concluding that succession should lead to better environmental outcomes
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0301479718311460?via%3Dihub>
- Neal (2022)– focusing on dairy farms, provides advice for successful farm succession
https://ruralleaders.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Ross-Neal_Achieving-successful-family-farm-succession-dairy-industry_Kellogg-Report-2022.pdf
- Nuthall and Old (2017)– show that farmers’ personalities and their farming objectives affect how they approach succession planning
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1389224X.2016.1200992?journalCode=raee20>
- Duynhoven (2019) – describes the building blocks for successful succession, including different ways to approach succession
https://ruralleaders.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Paul-Duynhoven_Identifying-innovative-approaches-to-succession-planning_Kellogg-report.pdf
- Sclater (2017) – provides recommendations for successful farm succession for farming families
<https://ruralleaders.co.nz/farming-in-the-family-with-positive-succession-planning-and-governance-chris-sclater/>
- Stevenson (2013) – discusses the ‘soft skills’ involved in succession discussions
<https://hdl.handle.net/10182/6071>.
- Weastall (2020) –argues that the tension between farmers and environmental planners comes from how they know what they know, rather than farmer opposition to environmental regulation (this is a PhD thesis)
https://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10092/101488/Weastall%2C%20Lynda_Final%20PhD%20Thesis.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.

A.2 Non-NZ literature

- Bertoni and Cavicchioli (2016) – provide a review of the family farm succession research
[10.1079/PAVSNNR201611043](https://doi.org/10.1079/PAVSNNR201611043)
- Burton and Otte (2022) – discuss the impact of farmer age and life-cycle on innovation and investment
[10.1016/j.jrurstud.2022.10.006](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2022.10.006)



- Conway et al. (2017) – show how the prospect of succession puts emotional stress on older farmers, who therefore delay retirement
[10.1016/j.jrurstud.2017.06.007](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2017.06.007)
- Holloway et al. (2021) – explores the emotional side of retirement and the succession process
[10.3390/su132112271](https://doi.org/10.3390/su132112271)
- Lawton (2013)– identifies the key themes in research on farm succession, including communication, education, farm size, family dynamics, and more
<https://islandscholar.ca/islandora/object/ir:8766/datastream/PDF/view>
- Suess-Reyes and Fuetsch (2016) – discuss the research on farm succession and innovation and sustainability
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0743016716301401>.

Appendix B Scope of the project

The scope of a research project can develop out of discussions and conversations. This project started with observations from Thriving Southland, catchment coordinators and farmers that the family farm succession process can be long and difficult. A question was whether the difficulties impact the take-up of environmental practices. The concern was that younger farmers might avoid environmental changes on farm because of guilt or disapproval from previous generations. The hypothesis created for the project was:

Intergenerational tension may impede environmentally focused land use change or management decisions.

As discussed in the report, we found that positive experiences of family farm succession include discussions of new, environmentally focused practices and implementation of those practices by the new generation.

