

## **Farmside Satellite Broadband Connects with New Zealand's Farming History**

**New Zealand's premier rural satellite broadband provider, Farmside, has announced a silver sponsorship of the New Zealand Young Farmers national organisation.**

Associating Farmside, New Zealand's leading satellite broadband provider, with NZ Young Farmers was a logical decision, according to Farmside sales and marketing manager, Nick Carter.

"One of the primary principles of the Young Farmers organisation is connecting people, and of course that is what Farmside delivers – an efficient means of keeping farmers throughout New Zealand connected with each other, with their communities, and with online information sources," Carter said.

Farmside sees the relationship as such a good fit that it is likely to be a long term one for both partners.

"We see the sponsorship of New Zealand Young Farmers as a long term investment in rural communities and the wider rural economy," he commented.

Richard Fitzgerald, CEO of NZ Young Farmers, agrees with Mr Carter about how vital it is for younger workers in rural communities to be electronically connected.

" We have a strong belief in the importance of technology and being connected online for our members, on email, through social networking sites like Bebo and even on sites like TradeMe which are just as popular in rural New Zealand as they are in the city, " Fitzgerald said.

Fitzgerald points out that up to 95% of NZYF members have an internet connection, but a high proportion are still on dial up internet services, which are often frustratingly slow.

"We believe that the speed of internet service is just as important as being connected, and that's another reason we are so enthusiastic about this partnership with Farmside. Wherever possible we want to encourage our members to move to broadband to ensure they get full benefit from being online.

"Social support and personal development are crucial roles within the rural industry because young entrants to the rural industry are often single and live on-farm, so issues such as isolation can become major problems if not addressed.

"Addressing the issue of isolation has a flow-on effect for the rural sector, with reduced staff turnover and higher productivity resulting from better employee stability and contentment."

The NZ Young Farmers organisation also addresses social issues through its network of clubs around the country, which meet regularly and provide opportunities for young farm workers to get together, exchange ideas, get support, learn new skills and make long term friendships.

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### **About Farmside**

New Zealand's leading rural broadband provider, Farmside provides satellite based communications services nationwide via the IPSTAR two-way satellite system. In addition to rural broadband, Farmside also provides mobile solutions, computer and networking equipment.

### **About New Zealand Young Farmers**

NZ Young Farmers has been part of the fabric of New Zealand agriculture for more than 75 years, providing a foundation of contacts, information and support that enriches rural communities. The organisation has a network of 64 clubs around the country and membership of 900. Each club has its own identity and community spirit, backed by the national organisation.

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