

Position Description

Date: September 2026 **Ref:** 2081

Position | Tūranga: Internship - Heat stress in dairy cattle

Responsible to Tō kaiwhakahaere:	Science Team Leader, Natalie Parlane and Senior Scientist, Karin Schütz,
Group Tari:	Ethical Agriculture
Function Wāhanga:	Ethical Agriculture
Team Tīma:	Animal Health and Behaviour
Location Wāhi:	Hamilton
Employment Type Momo Mahi:	Fixed Term – 12 weeks
Korn Ferry Grade Taumata Korn Ferry:	12

Organisational context

The Bioeconomy Science Institute Maiangi Taiao is New Zealand's newest public research organisation, formed through the merger of AgResearch, Plant & Food Research, Manaaki Whenua - Landcare Research, Scion, and the New Zealand Food Innovation Network. Our purpose is to drive innovation and commercial outcomes in the bioeconomy, using research and technology to support enduring economic growth and resilience, a healthy environment and beneficial social outcomes for New Zealand. We pursue opportunities to lift innovation, commercial outcomes, and adoption of advanced technology to drive economic growth across New Zealand. Through world-leading science, we drive innovation across agriculture, horticulture, forestry, aquaculture, biotechnology, and manufacturing. We protect and enhance ecosystems, strengthen biosecurity and climate resilience, and develop cutting-edge bio-based products and technologies.

We honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi and embed te ao Māori throughout our transformation journey. As we come together, we are committed to learning and growing together through inclusive, equitable, and culturally responsiveness ways of working. All roles contribute, in ways relevant to their work, to giving effect to our Te Tiriti commitments through partnership, participation, protection and equity.

Role purpose | Te Take o te Tūranga

Heat stress is an increasing challenge for dairy production, affecting animal welfare, behaviour, productivity, and resilience to changing environmental conditions. This internship will contribute to research investigating the role of relative humidity in the heat stress response of dairy cattle and improve understanding of how cattle respond to challenging climatic conditions.

The student will gain hands-on experience in animal-based research, including the use of innovative technologies to monitor physiological and behavioural responses to heat stress. Working alongside experienced researchers, the student will assist with on-farm experimental set-up, data collection, data management, and preliminary analysis, contributing to research that aims to support the development of practical strategies for improving animal wellbeing and productivity.

Accountabilities | Ngā whakaritenga

The project will investigate the role of relative humidity in the heat stress response of dairy cattle. The role would consist of:

- Help setting up experiment on-farm
- Test and set up technology to measure stress response (e.g. device to measure sweating rate, infra-red thermography, acoustic sensors on collars)
- Data collection (e.g. sweating rate, behaviour, infra-red thermography, rumen temperature)
- Organisation of data in Excel
- Preliminary analyses using Excel and/or statistical programs such as R

About you | Ō Pūmanawa

We are seeking a motivated student who:

- Is currently enrolled in an undergraduate or postgraduate programme in Animal Science, Agricultural Science, Veterinary Science, Biology, Environmental Science, Data Science, or a related discipline.
- Has an interest in animal health, welfare, behaviour, livestock production systems, or agricultural research.
- Experience with dairy cattle is desirable but not necessary. The work will involve working in close proximity to cows and spending time on-farm.
- Is comfortable working both outdoors and with technology, including collecting, recording, and managing research data.
- Has good organisational, communication, and problem-solving skills, with the ability to work independently and as part of a research team.
- Has experience with, or an interest in learning, data analysis using Excel and/or statistical software such as R.

Information And Records Management | Te Whakahaere | Ngā Mōhiotanga Me Ngā Putu Raraunga

- Ensure that information and records are maintained, created, and disposed of in compliance with relevant statutory, regulatory, and Institute policy requirements, documenting business transactions and activities securely and following established policies and procedures.

Health, Safety, And Wellbeing | Hauora, Haumaru Me Te Oranga

- Contribute to a positive health, safety and wellbeing culture by taking reasonable care for their own health, safety and wellbeing and that of others; complying with legislative requirements, organisational

policies and standard operating procedures; reporting hazards, incidents, near misses, and safety observations; and promoting psychological wellbeing through open communication and the early recognition of stress, fatigue, and mental health concerns.

Organisational objectives | Ngā Whāinga Tōpūtanga Katoa

- Actively develops and applies the cultural capability relevant to their role and contributes to giving effect to the organisation's Te Tiriti o Waitangi Framework
- Ensures that all information created or received during your work is managed as per the Institute's Information Management policy. This includes naming, storing, classifying, and ensuring it is available to other employees.
- Takes responsibility to understand and apply Institute policy, processes, systems, and procedures daily.
- Commits to accurate and timely information sharing and recordkeeping as per set organisational standards.
- The accountabilities set out above are not exhaustive. Therefore, it may be necessary for you to undertake other reasonable accountabilities as required, which are within your abilities.