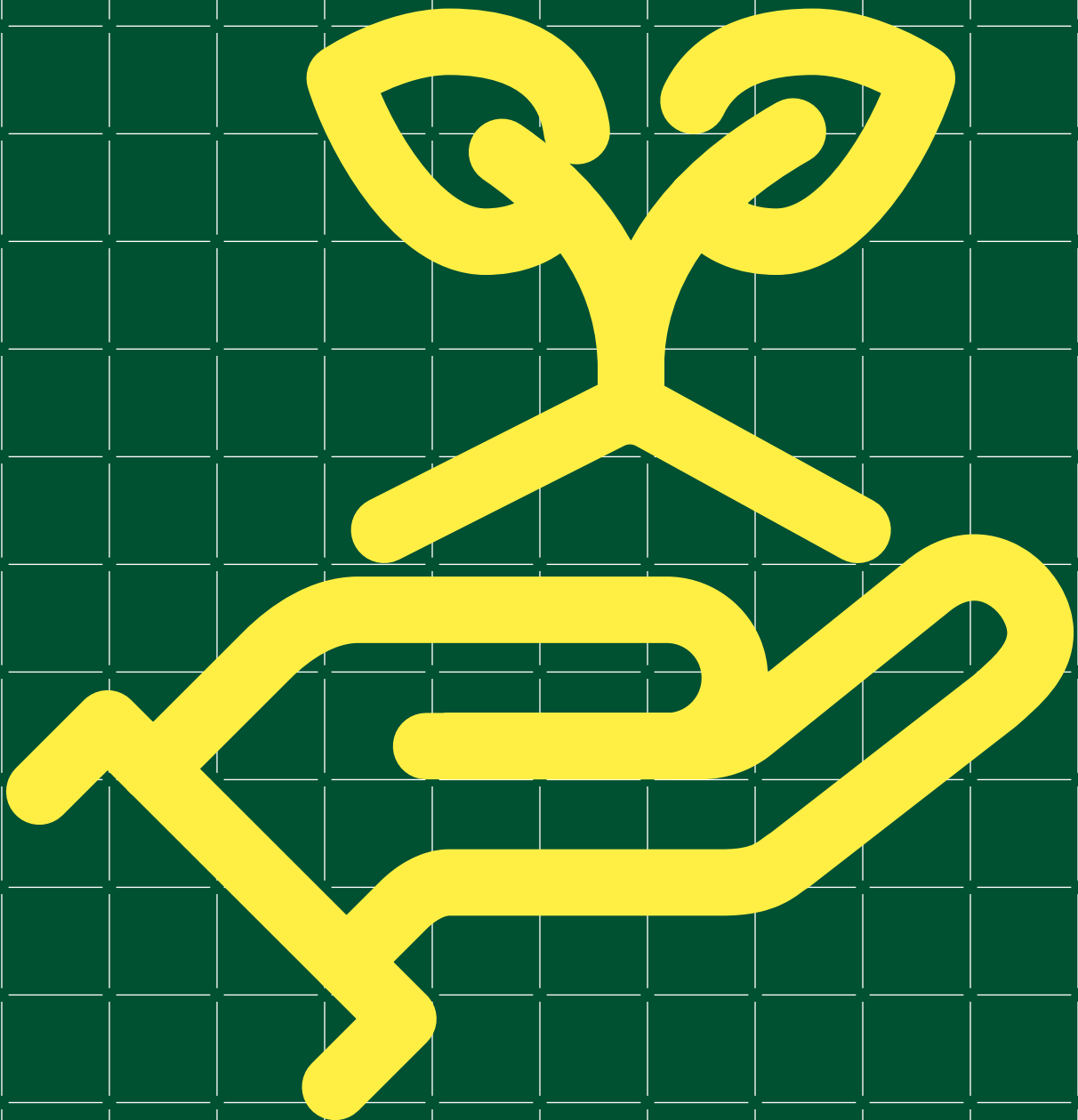




# Federated Farmers

## Mid-Season Farm Confidence Survey

January 2021





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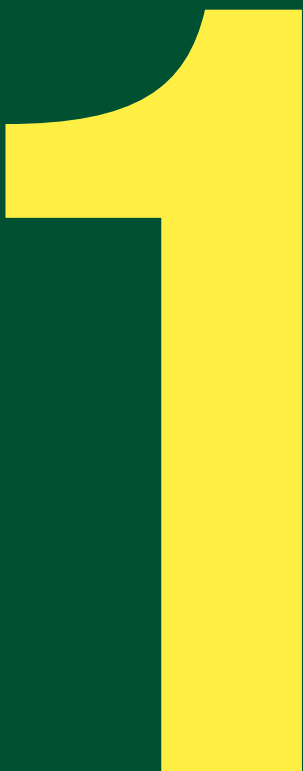


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# 1 Summary





Most Profitable Region:  
Waikato Bay of Plenty



Most Profitable Industry:  
Dairy



Most Profitable Region  
(looking ahead):  
Waikato Bay of Plenty



Most Profitable Industry  
(looking ahead):  
Dairy



Greatest Concern to Farmers:  
Regulation & Compliance Costs



Highest Priority for Government:  
Economy & Business Environment

## 1.1 Introduction

This report summarises the January 2021 Federated Farmers' Mid-Season Farm Confidence survey results. The survey is undertaken twice a year (in January and July); this study is the 24th iteration. The survey was completed for Federated Farmers by Research First, New Zealand's leading agricultural market research company.

## 1.2 Key Messages

The January 2021 survey observed an upturn in farmer confidence returning to January 2020 levels. This result was an improvement from July 2020 that had revealed the lowest level of farm confidence since the survey began in 2009. Key points follow:

- General economic conditions (current): A net 5.5% per cent of respondents consider current economic conditions to be good, a 34-point increase on July 2020's survey when a net 28.6% considered them bad.
- General economic conditions (expectations): A net 43.8% of respondents expect general economic conditions to worsen over the next 12 months, a 15-point decrease on July 2020's survey when a net 58.7% expected them to worsen.
- Farm profitability (current): A net 49.3% of respondents reported making a profit currently, a 2.6-point increase on July 2020's survey when a net 46.7% reported making a profit.
- Farm profitability (expectations): A net 18.3% of respondents expect their profitability to worsen over the next 12 months, a 17-point decrease on July 2020's survey when a net 35.5% expected it to decline.
- Farm production (expectations): A net 13.6% of respondents expect their production to increase over the next 12 months, a 2.6-point decrease on July 2020's survey when a net 16.1% expected it to increase.
- Farm spending (expectations): A net 11.3% of respondents expect their spending to increase over the next 12 months, a 24-point increase on July 2020's survey when a net 12.8% expected it to reduce.
- Farm debt (expectations): A net 28.2% of respondents expect their debt to reduce over the next 12 months, a 3.4-point increase on July 2020's survey when a net 24.8% expected it to reduce.
- Ability to recruit (experienced): A net 35.8% of respondents reported it has been harder to recruit skilled and motivated staff, a 7.7-point increase on July 2020's survey when a net 28.1% reported it has been harder.
- Greatest concerns (current): The three greatest concerns for farmers are regulation and compliance (chosen by 18% of respondents), followed by freshwater policy (16.7%), and climate change policy and ETS (13.6%). This result compares to July 2020's survey when the three top concerns were economic situation (15.6%), regulation and compliance costs (15.3%), and farmgate and commodity prices (11.1%).
- Highest government priorities (current): The three highest priorities farmers would like the Government to address are the economy and business environment (25.3%), regulation and compliance costs (12.9%), and supporting agricultural exporters (10.9%). This compares to July 2020's survey when the top three priorities were economy and business environment (36.8%), fiscal policy (12.1%), and supporting agriculture and exporters (10.3%).

## 2 General Economic Conditions



## 2.1 Overall

Since the previous survey, there has been a noticeable increase in the net percentage of respondents with a positive perception of current economic conditions. This result was a turnaround from six months ago when the perceptions were substantially negative, and confidence was at an all-time low. The January net score of +5.5 was up 34 points from July 2020 and back to January 2020 levels (Table 2.1).

Just under one-fifth of farms perceive general economic conditions as bad (down 19 points from July 2020), compared to one-quarter perceiving them as good (up by 14 points). However, continuing previous survey trends, about half of the farmers consider economic conditions to be neither good nor bad. Given the lesser economic impacts of COVID-19 than were first anticipated, this could be considered a small positive.

**Table 2.1 Current perceptions of general economic conditions for all farms**

	<b>Good General Economic Conditions Currently</b>	<b>Neither Good nor Bad</b>	<b>Bad General Economic Conditions Currently</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>July 2020 Net Score*</b>	<b>January 2021 Net Score*</b>	<b>Change</b>
<b>All Farms</b>	24.5%	55.1%	19.0%	1.5%	-28.6	5.5	34.1↑

*\*Please refer to Section 11.2 for more information about net scores.*

Looking ahead 12 months, there is an increase in positive sentiment about general economic conditions, helping to reverse somewhat the decline seen in July (Figure 2.1). Since peaking in July 2017, expectations about general economic conditions have fallen with each subsequent survey, and this reverse in trend is back to January 2020 levels.

Compared to six months ago optimists have remained steady at 7.6%, while pessimists have decreased by 15 points, equating to half of all farms. But more farms expect general economic conditions to stay the same (up 15 points) to just over one-third of farms (Table 2.2). This result is a similar level to July 2019.

While concern about the global economy and the disruption caused by the impact of COVID-19 on the world economy is still likely to be a factor in forward-looking expectations, the New Zealand economy has been resilient. It is at the same size it was pre-COVID-19<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Source: <https://www.focus-economics.com/countries/new-zealand/news/economic-sentiment/business-confidence-at-over-three-year-high-in-0>

**Table 2.2 Predictions of general economic conditions for all farms over the next 12 months**

	Improve	Stay Same	Worsen	Don't Know	July 2020 Net Score	January 2021 Net Score	Change
All Farms	7.6%	35.1%	51.4%	5.9%	-58.7	-43.8	14.9↑

Figure 2.1 shows how the net scores for predicted general economic conditions have tracked over the survey's life. The net scores have oscillated over the past eleven years, which shows that perceptions about the general economy can be volatile, but the trend since July 2017 has been clearly downward.

**Figure 2.1 Net predictions of general economic conditions for all farms (July 2009-January 2021)**



## 2.2 Industry Groups

All industry groups have seen an improvement in perceptions about current economic conditions.

Dairy farms were the most positive with a +53-point increase and just under one in four farms regard current conditions to be good. But Meat & Wool farms were the less positive and their 10-point increase from July was the most tempered of all industry groups. Arable farms were most likely to perceive current conditions as neither good nor bad (83%) -Table 2.3.

**Table 2.3 Current perceptions of general economic conditions by industry group**

	Good General Economic Conditions Currently	Neither Good nor Bad	Bad General Economic Conditions Currently	Don't Know	July 2020 Net Score	January 2021 Net Score	Change
Dairy	37.2%	49.9%	11.4%	1.5%	-27.4	25.8	53.2↑
Meat & Wool	9.7%	59.5%	29.6%	1.2%	-30.0	-19.9	10.1↑
Arable	5.7%	82.9%	8.6%	2.9%	-35.1	-2.9	32.2↑
Other	20.8%	54.7%	22.6%	1.9%	-32.5	-1.9	30.6↑

When looking ahead over the next 12 months, most farm groups expect general economic conditions to worsen. The Arable group was the most pessimistic with three-quarters expecting economic conditions to worsen and a net score of -71. Dairy farms were the least pessimistic industry group, but pessimists still outnumber optimists. But this factor increased to almost 25 to one for Arable farmers (Table 2.4).

**Table 2.4 Predictions of general economic conditions by industry group**

	Improve	Stay Same	Worsen	Don't Know	January 2020 Net Score	July 2020 Net Score	Change
Dairy	9.7%	41.0%	42.3%	7.0%	-57.7	-32.6	25.0↑
Meat & Wool	4.7%	29.1%	60.9%	5.2%	-59.7	-56.2	3.4↑
Arable	2.9%	17.1%	74.3%	5.7%	-61.4	-71.4	-10.0↓
Other	11.3%	24.5%	62.3%	1.9%	-67.5	-50.9	16.6↑

## 2.3 Regions

Five of seven regions have positive net scores for current economic conditions, and all regions have a positive net change compared to six months ago (Table 2.5).

The Dairy dominant Waikato-Bay of Plenty was the region with the highest per cent stating good general economic conditions and had the largest net change of +54 points. In contrast, Auckland-Northland was the region with the most farms stating bad general economic conditions that might be attributed to their current dry conditions. But most regions perceive current economic conditions to be neither good nor bad.

**Table 2.5 Current perceptions of general economic conditions by region**

	<b>Good General Economic Conditions Currently</b>	<b>Neither Good nor Bad</b>	<b>Bad General Economic Conditions Currently</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>July 2020 Net Score</b>	<b>January 2021 Net Score</b>	<b>Change</b>
<b>Auckland-Northland</b>	13.8%	57.4%	27.7%	1.1%	-33.6	-13.8	19.8↑
<b>Waikato-Bay of Plenty</b>	34.0%	51.5%	12.4%	2.1%	-32.3	21.6	53.9↑
<b>East Coast North Island</b>	22.8%	59.6%	14.7%	2.9%	-17.6	8.1	25.7↑
<b>Taranaki-Manawatu</b>	27.0%	52.8%	19.0%	1.2%	-25.5	8.0	33.5↑
<b>West Coast (WC)-Tasman-Marlborough</b>	29.7%	45.3%	25.0%	0.0%	-40.0	4.7	44.7↑
<b>Canterbury</b>	18.9%	56.8%	23.8%	0.5%	-29.3	-4.9	24.4↑
<b>Otago-Southland</b>	20.9%	58.8%	18.7%	1.6%	-26.7	2.1	28.8↑

Looking ahead, all seven regions have considerably more respondents expecting general economic conditions to worsen over the next 12 months rather than improving. All seven regions had very low percentages of farms expecting conditions to improve, while about half to one-third of farms expected economic conditions to stay the same.

However, all seven regions had increases in their net scores over the past six months. The largest increase was seen in Waikato-Bay of Plenty (up 22 points)- Table 2.6. Taranaki-Manawatu was the most positive region.

**Table 2.6 Predictions of general economic conditions by region looking forward**

	<b>Improve</b>	<b>Stay Same</b>	<b>Worsen</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>July 2020 Net Score</b>	<b>January 2021 Net Score</b>	<b>Change</b>
<b>Auckland-Northland</b>	4.3%	36.2%	55.3%	4.3%	-67.9	-51.1	16.9↑
<b>Waikato-Bay of Plenty</b>	8.3%	39.4%	46.5%	5.8%	-60.2	-38.2	22.0↑
<b>East Coast North Island</b>	8.8%	34.6%	52.2%	4.4%	-54.9	-43.4	11.5↑
<b>Taranaki-Manawatu</b>	9.8%	39.3%	41.7%	9.2%	-48.6	-31.9	16.7↑
<b>West Coast (WC)-Tasman-Marlborough</b>	7.8%	46.9%	43.8%	1.6%	-53.3	-35.9	17.4↑
<b>Canterbury</b>	5.8%	28.6%	59.7%	5.8%	-64.0	-53.9	10.1↑
<b>Otago-Southland</b>	7.5%	28.9%	57.2%	6.4%	-59.3	-49.7	9.6↑

## 3 Farm Profitability



### 3.1 Overall

Just under six of 10 farms reported being currently profitable similar to July 2018 levels. A further 28% are just breaking even, and only one in 10 makes a loss. Compared to the last survey, the net score for current profitability increased by 3 points to +49 (Table 3.1). The proportion of farms making a loss had stabilised and is nowhere near the low in July 2016 when 43% reported making a loss.

Higher dairy commodity prices have increased farmgate incomes. All the indicators continue to suggest demand for dairy products is likely to hold up through to the end of the season. But beef and lamb prices were more muted (down 16% on a year ago) and have been hit particularly hard by the pandemic<sup>2</sup>. Last year's severe drought impacts continue to impact production in many areas, particularly the North Island.

**Table 3.1 Current perceptions of profitability: all farms**

	<b>Making a Profit</b>	<b>Breaking Even</b>	<b>Making a Loss</b>	<b>Rather not Say</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>July 2020 Net Score</b>	<b>January 2021 Net Score</b>	<b>Change</b>
<b>All farms</b>	59.3%	28.0%	10.0%	1.7%	1.0%	46.7	49.3	2.6↑

Expectations for profitability over the next 12 months have also improved, and the net score has increased by 17 points compared to July's survey.

Compared to July 2020 the proportion of farmers expecting profitability to improve has increased slightly (up by 4 points to 16%), and those expecting it to worsen decreased (from 48% down to 34%). But just under one-half of farms expect profitability to stay the same, similar to survey results after January 2016 (Table 3.2).

The increase in net score predications of farm profitability over the next 12 months likely reflects the current high demand for New Zealand milk on the global market.

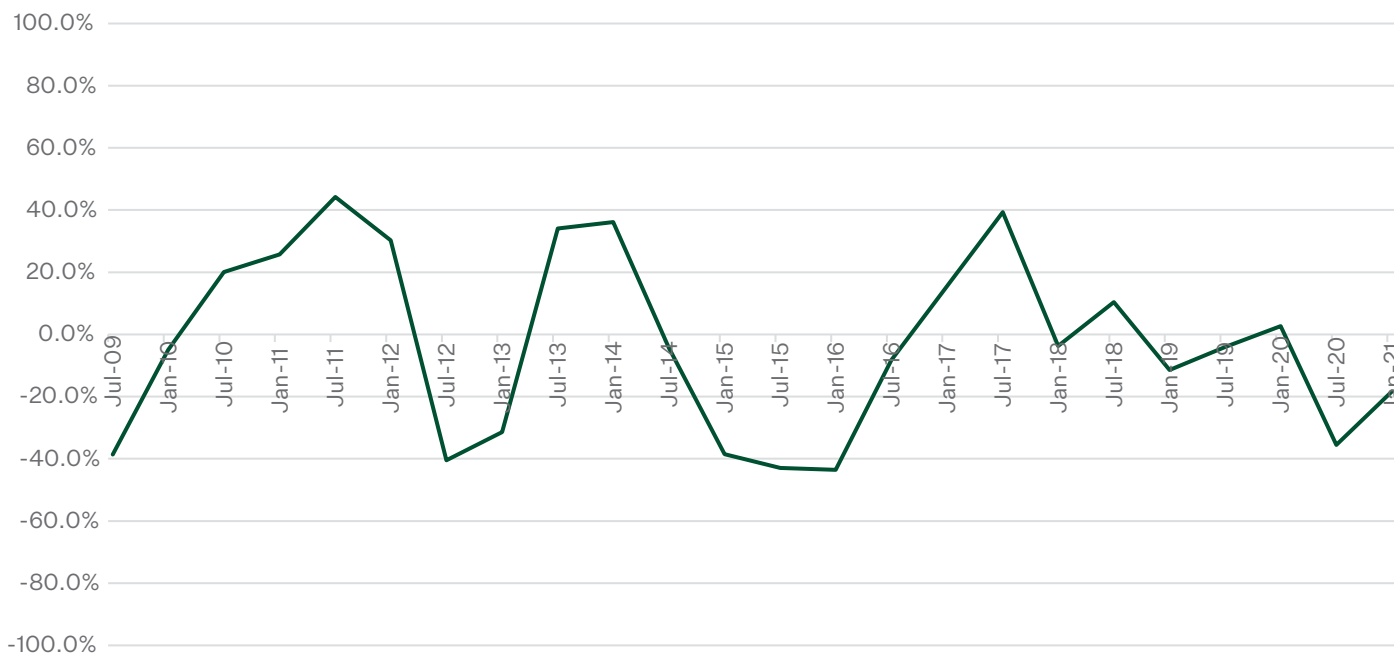
**Table 3.2 Predictions of farm profitability over the next 12 months: all farms**

	<b>Improve</b>	<b>Stay Same</b>	<b>Worsen</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>July 2020 Net Score</b>	<b>January 2021 Net Score</b>	<b>Change</b>
<b>All farms</b>	16.0%	46.3%	34.4%	3.3%	-35.5	-18.3	17.1↑

<sup>2</sup> Source: <https://www.asb.co.nz/documents/economic-research/commodities-weekly.html>

Figure 3.1 illustrates the net predictions of all farm profitability since July 2009, which, similar to economic predictions (Figure 2.1), has oscillated markedly over time, but has been trending down since July 2017.

**Figure 3.1 Net predictions of all farm profitability (July 2009–January 2021)**



## 3.2 Industry Groups

All industry groups continue to have more farms reporting making a profit than making a loss (Table 3.3). Farms making a loss are in a small minority across the board. Arable and Dairy farms have the lowest levels of farms in making a loss.

In contrast, Meat & Wool have seen a noticeable decrease in profitability from 72% in January 2020 down to 46% in this survey iteration. More Meat & Wool farms are making a loss (15% compared to 4% one year ago). Lower prices for beef and lamb (albeit off recent highs), depressed wool prices, and dry weather conditions will be weighing heavily on Meat & Wool farmers. Although it has not been as dry as last year, the impacts have lingered, and farmers know the weather is unpredictable. While Northland is dry, some South Island parts had received ample rainfall around the time of the survey (early-to-mid January).

Over the past four years, there has been a big decline in Dairy farmers reporting making a loss, down from 60% in July 2016 to 7% in January 2021. This reflects the continued recovery from the 2014-16 dairy downturn.

**Table 3.3 Current farm profitability by industry group**

	Making a Profit	Breaking Even	Making a Loss	Rather not Say	Don't Know	July 2020 Net Score	January 2021 Net Score	Change
Dairy	70.4%	20.7%	6.8%	1.7%	0.4%	50.8	63.6	12.8↑
Meat & Wool	46.0%	36.6%	14.7%	2.5%	0.2%	42.2	31.3	-10.8↓
Arable	68.6%	22.9%	5.7%	0.0%	2.9%	56.1	62.9	6.7↑
Other	60.4%	28.3%	9.4%	0.0%	1.9%	44.2	50.9	6.8↑

Looking ahead, most industry groups had a decline in profitability expectations compared to July's survey. Dairy farms bucked the trend with a 43-point increase. This likely reflects Dairy prices that continue to rise on the commodity market.

All other industry groups are leaning to an uneven balance between pessimists and optimists of about four to one as shown by their net scores going negative. This is particularly evident for Meat & Wool farms, and Other farms to a lesser extent (Table 3.4). The Meat & Wool farms' negative sentiment may reflect ongoing COVID-19 woes and tentative signs the world is emerging from the global protein shortage of recent years.

**Table 3.4 Predictions of expected farm profitability by industry group**

	Improve	Stay Same	Worsen	Don't Know	July 2020 Net Score	January 2021 Net Score	Change
Dairy	22.2%	53.5%	20.5%	3.8%	-40.8	1.7	42.5↑
Meat & Wool	8.7%	36.6%	52.5%	2.2%	-33.5	-43.8	-10.3↓
Arable	11.4%	54.3%	34.3%	0.0%	-22.8	-22.9	-0.1↓
Other	15.1%	41.5%	41.5%	1.9%	-24.7	-26.4	-1.7↓

### 3.3 Regions

Four of seven regions have seen reductions in net scores for current profitability. However, all seven regions continue to have positive net scores for profitability (meaning more farms are making a profit than a loss).

Auckland-Northland is the least profitable region, with 38% of respondents reporting making a profit and the lowest net score of +19. Auckland-Northland is one of the worst affected regions by dry weather this summer.

In contrast, the rest of the North Island (excluding Auckland-Northland) are the most profitable regions (nearly two-thirds are making a profit), reflected by their positive net score changes. Waikato-Bay of Plenty showed the most dramatic net score change (up by 22 points) and farms making a loss in that region has halved over the past six months (14% down to 7%).

The Otago-Southland region has seen the largest decrease in its net change score of -11 points that could be affected by lower global meat prices. In NZD terms, beef prices are down 16% on a year ago, while lamb prices are down by about 18%<sup>3</sup>. The pandemic has affected restaurant demand for certain types of cuts of meat. The Chinese pig herd also continues to rebuild after the swine fever outbreak, meaning pork is now more available for consumers who had to swap their meat protein source.

**Table 3.5 Current farm profitability by region**

	Making a Profit	Breaking Even	Making a Loss	Rather not Say	Don't Know	July 2020 Net Score	January 2021 Net Score	Change
Auckland-Northland	38.3%	37.2%	19.1%	4.3%	1.1%	26.7	19.1	-7.6↓
Waikato-Bay of Plenty	66.4%	24.9%	6.6%	1.2%	0.8%	37.9	59.8	21.8↑
East Coast North Island	64.7%	23.5%	10.3%	0.0%	1.5%	44.0	54.4	10.4↑
Taranaki-Manawatu	63.8%	28.2%	6.1%	1.2%	0.6%	49.4	57.7	8.3↑
WC-Tasman-Marlborough	50.0%	40.6%	9.4%	0.0%	0.0%	45.6	40.6	-4.9↓
Canterbury	58.7%	26.2%	11.7%	1.9%	1.5%	56.3	47.1	-9.2↓
Otago-Southland	56.7%	27.8%	11.2%	3.2%	1.1%	56.8	45.5	-11.4↓

Looking ahead, all seven regions are less pessimistic for profitability expectations, which is in direct contrast to July 2020, when all seven regions were feeling negative. The regions with the highest net score changes were Waikato-Bay of Plenty (+30 points) and West Coast-Tasman-Marlborough (+24), while Auckland-Northland had the lowest net score change, albeit still positive (+3.0).

The number of farms unsure about future profitability has increased markedly in some of the North Island regions, particularly Auckland-Northland and East Coast North Island. But most regions still expect farm profitability to stay the same.

<sup>3</sup> Source: <https://www.asb.co.nz/documents/economic-research/commodities-weekly.html>

**Table 3.6 Predictions of expected farm profitability by region**

	<b>Improve</b>	<b>Stay Same</b>	<b>Worsen</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>July 2020 Net Score</b>	<b>January 2021 Net Score</b>	<b>Change</b>
<b>Auckland-Northland</b>	12.8%	47.9%	37.2%	2.1%	-27.5	-24.5	3.0↑
<b>Waikato-Bay of Plenty</b>	22.4%	47.3%	26.6%	3.7%	-34.4	-4.1	30.3↑
<b>East Coast North Island</b>	17.6%	39.0%	41.9%	1.5%	-32.6	-24.3	8.4↑
<b>Taranaki-Manawatu</b>	15.3%	50.9%	29.4%	4.3%	-31.1	-14.1	17.0↑
<b>WC-Tasman-Marlborough</b>	14.1%	48.4%	35.9%	1.6%	-45.6	-21.9	23.7↑
<b>Canterbury</b>	12.6%	43.7%	38.3%	5.3%	-45.0	-25.7	19.3↑
<b>Otago-Southland</b>	13.4%	47.6%	36.9%	2.1%	-33.2	-23.5	9.7↑

## 4 Farm Production



## 4.1 Overall

The January 2021 survey shows farmers' expectations about future production have decreased slightly after rising over the previous six months (Figure 4.1). Although most farmers (59%) still expect their production to remain similar, the proportion of those expecting it to increase has decreased slightly to 27% (down one point compared to six months ago). In comparison, those with more pessimistic views about farm production have stabilised at 13%. As a result, the net score has decreased by -2.6 points (Table 4.1).

The decline in production expectations for the next 12 months may reflect the downward pressure of the past few years due to the impacts of environmental limits being set through RMA plans and policies and afforestation driven by the ETS, overseas investment rules, and the One Billion Trees programme (Figure 4.1). Dry conditions in some parts of the country may also be a factor.

**Table 4.1 Predictions of farm production over the next 12 months: all farms**

	Increase	Stay Same	Reduce	Don't Know	July 2020 Net Score	January 2021 Net Score	Change
All farms	26.5%	58.8%	12.9%	1.7%	16.1	13.6	-2.6↓

**Figure 4.1 Net predictions of farm production: all farms (January 2010–January 2021)**



## 4.2 Industry Groups and Regions

All industry groups except Arable have more farmers expecting to increase production over the coming year rather than reduce production. Dairy drives the overall drop in production expectations.

The most optimistic industry group was Meat & Wool with a net score of +18, up 11 points since July 2020. This optimism is likely to reflect a recovery from last year's drought. In contrast, the Dairy saw the largest reductions in production expectations, but remaining net positive. Arable farmers are the least optimistic group going forward, with production expected to be unchanged.

**Table 4.2 Predictions of future farm production by industry group**

	Increase	Stay Same	Reduce	Don't Know	July 2020 Net Score	January 2021 Net Score	Change
Dairy	26.0%	59.4%	13.3%	1.3%	22.8	12.7	-10.1↓
Meat & Wool	29.9%	56.5%	11.9%	1.7%	6.7	17.9	11.2↑
Arable	25.7%	48.6%	25.7%	0.0%	1.8	0.0	-1.8↓
Other	26.4%	62.3%	9.4%	1.9%	18.2	17.0	-1.2↓

All regions except Auckland-Northland have positive net scores for future farm production although most regions expect production to fall. Only the Meat & Wool dominant East Coast North Island increased its net score as farmers rebuild their herds and flocks after last year's drought. This is a turnaround from six months ago when the drought-affected region was the most pessimistic and had the biggest decline in their net score (down 22 points).

The decrease in farm production for Dairy farms is juxtaposed with their expectations for increased profitability, which is probably related to the rise in demand for milk products that are likely to hold up through to the end of the season.

**Table 4.3 Predictions of future farm production by region**

	Increase	Stay Same	Reduce	Don't Know	July 2020 Net Score	January 2021 Net Score	Change
Auckland-Northland	17.0%	59.6%	21.3%	2.1%	17.6	-4.3	-21.8↓
Waikato-Bay of Plenty	27.4%	59.8%	11.2%	1.7%	22.5	16.2	-6.3↓
East Coast North Island	32.4%	57.4%	7.4%	2.9%	3.6	25.0	21.4↑
Taranaki-Manawatu	25.2%	60.1%	14.1%	0.6%	11.6	11.0	-0.5↓
WC-Tasman-Marlborough	23.4%	54.7%	18.8%	3.1%	5.6	4.7	-0.9↓
Canterbury	23.3%	59.2%	16.0%	1.5%	9.3	7.3	-2.0↓
Otago-Southland	31.6%	58.3%	8.6%	1.6%	27.6	23.0	-4.6↓

## 5 Farm Spending



## 5.1 Overall

Farmers’ spending expectations for the next 12 months are up on July 2020 survey (+24 points) and close to January 2020 levels. While just under one-third expect their spending to increase, just over one-in-five (21%) of farmers expect to reduce their spending. But 44% of farmers still expect their spending to stay the same (Table 5.1).

**Table 5.1 Predictions of expected farm spending over the next 12 months: all farms**

	Increase	Stay Same	Reduce	Don't Know	July 2020 Net Score	January 2021 Net Score	Change
All farms	32.7%	44.2%	21.4%	1.6%	-12.8	11.3	24.1↑

The increase in spending expectations goes against the modest decrease in expectations for farm production levels. While there could be expectations of higher prices for farm inputs, the increase mirrors the improvements in confidence about the economy and about farm profitability (Figure 5.1).

**Figure 5.1 Net predictions of expected farm spending (July 2009—January 2021)**



## 5.2 Industry Groups and Regions

The overall increase in spending expectations was mostly due to Dairy farms, and 38% expect their spending to increase, and only 13% expect it to reduce. Arable farms and Other industry farm spending expectations are more delicately balanced between those expecting it to increase versus decrease. Meat & Wool was most likely to reduce spending (Table 5.2).

**Table 5.2 Predictions of expected farm spending by industry group**

	Increase	Stay Same	Reduce	Don't Know	July 2020 Net Score	January 2021 Net Score	Change
Dairy	37.8%	48.0%	12.5%	1.7%	-11.5	25.2	36.7↑
Meat & Wool	26.9%	38.6%	33.8%	0.7%	-17.8	-7.0	10.9↑
Arable	40.0%	28.6%	31.4%	0.0%	0.0	8.6	8.6↑
Other	20.8%	50.9%	22.6%	5.7%	-16.9	-1.9	15.0↑

Six of seven regions have more farmers expecting to increase spending than reduce spending, led by East Coast North Island and Otago-Southland, each with a net score increase of +29 points. West Coast-Tasman-Marlborough closely follows them (+28 points) and Waikato-Bay of Plenty (+26 points).

Auckland-Northland was the only region with more farmers expecting to reduce spending (although their net score has risen over the past six months by 8 points).

However, overall, more farmers in all regions still expect their spending to stay the same rather than increase or reduce (Table 5.3).

**Table 5.3 Predictions of expected farm spending by region**

	Increase	Stay Same	Reduce	Don't Know	July 2020 Net Score	January 2021 Net Score	Change
Auckland-Northland	26.6%	42.6%	28.7%	2.1%	-9.9	-2.1	7.8↑
Waikato-Bay of Plenty	34.9%	49.8%	13.3%	2.1%	-4.7	21.6	26.3↑
East Coast North Island	32.4%	40.4%	25.7%	1.5%	-22.8	6.6	29.4↑
Taranaki-Manawatu	30.7%	49.1%	18.4%	1.8%	-10.4	12.3	22.6↑
WC-Tasman-Marlborough	31.3%	48.4%	18.8%	1.6%	-15.6	12.5	28.1↑
Canterbury	33.0%	39.8%	25.7%	1.5%	-15.4	7.3	22.7↑
Otago-Southland	35.3%	39.6%	24.1%	1.1%	-17.4	11.2	28.6↑

## 6 Farm Debt



## 6.1 Overall

COVID-19 has put pressure on bank customers, and for farmers, the drought has also been a big factor for many farmers, which banks have had to respond to. In January 2021, 89.2% of farms have debt, down slightly from 90.3% six months ago.

Overall, there has been a slight net decrease in farmer debt expectations over the past six months, following the slight increase over the previous six months (Figure 6.1) even as banks tightened lending conditions for agriculture.

Of those farms with debt, 46% expect their debt to reduce over the next 12 months, which is up by 4.7 points compared to six months ago. Also, the number of farms expecting their debt to increase has been relatively stable (15%), while fewer farms (37%) expect their debt to stay the same (down 4 points from July 2020). The net score of -39 is down 7 points on July's result (Table 6.1).

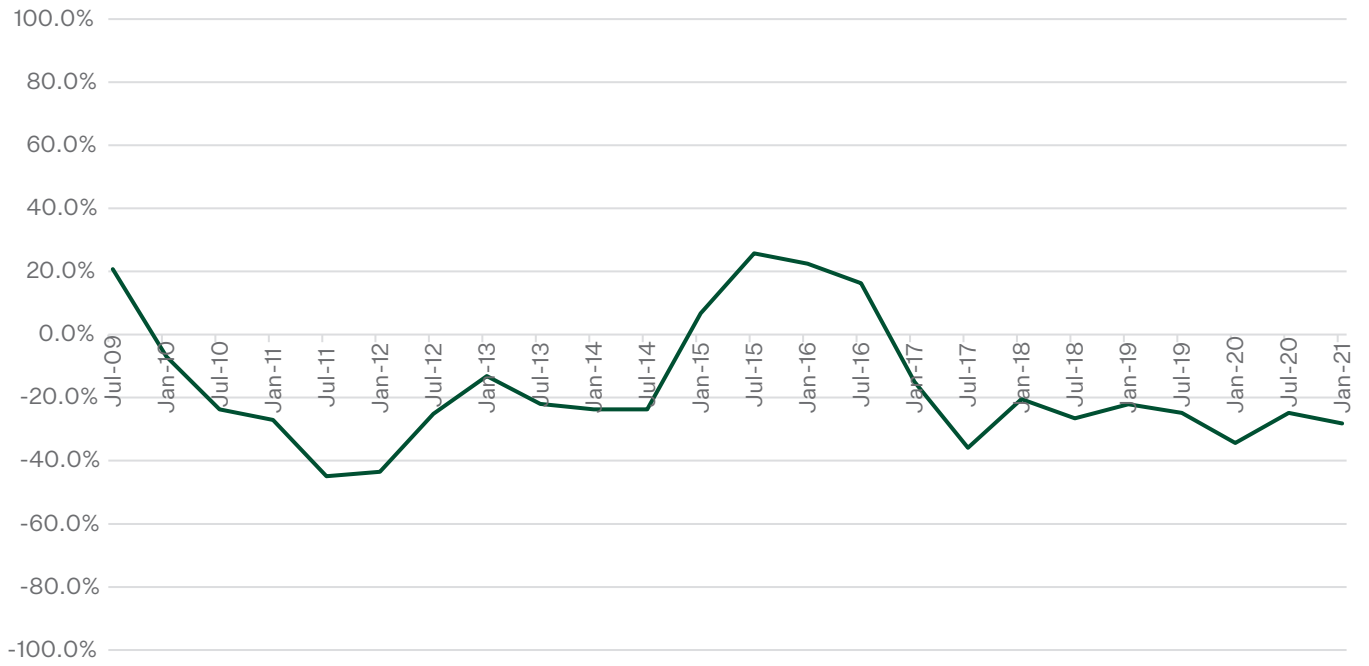
**Table 6.1 Predictions of future farm debt over the next 12 months: all farms**

	Increase	Stay Same	Reduce	Don't Know	No Debt	July 2020 Net Score	January 2021 Net Score	Change
All farms	13.1%	33.3%	41.3%	2.1%	10.2%	-24.8	-28.2	-3.4↓
All Farms with Debt	14.6%	37.0%	46.0%	2.3%		-31.4	-38.7	-7.3↓

For most of the life of the survey more farmers have expected to reduce debt than increase it, with the main exceptions being the periods following the Global Financial Crisis in 2009 and January 2015 to July 2016 during the last prolonged downturn in dairy prices, which forced many Dairy farmers to increase their debt to get through. Since then, there has been a return to the 2010-14 results where more farmers expected to reduce debt than increase it (Figure 6.1). This has been shown by Reserve Bank statistics which saw a \$1 billion reduction in total agricultural debt since July 2019, especially for dairy farmers (down \$2.5 billion since July 2019)<sup>4</sup>.

4 Reserve Bank of NZ Sector Lending Statistics (C5) and Bank Loans By Purpose Statistics (S31)

Figure 6.1 Net predictions of future farm debt: all farms (July 2009 to January 2021)



## 6.2 Industry Groups and Regions

All farm types have more farms expecting to reduce debt than increase debt. Dairy continues to be the industry group with the highest proportion of those expecting to reduce debt, and their net score is down by 2.5 points over the past six months.

Although Meat & Wool are less likely to have farm debt, they have the highest proportion of those expecting to increase farm debt in the future. For Meat & Wool farmers, this will be due to many of these farmers' need for bank support for working capital due to the lagged effect of the drought and COVID-19 effects on the world protein market.

Arable farmers bucked the trend with an increase in debt net score, implying more farmers expect to increase their farm debt than January's survey, although the change is minimal.

**Table 6.2 Predictions of farm debt by industry group**

	Increase	Stay Same	Reduce	Don't Know	No Debt	July 2020 Net Score	January 2021 Net Score	Change
Dairy	13.3%	26.9%	52.6%	1.9%	5.3%	-36.7	-39.3	-2.5↓
Meat & Wool	13.7%	38.6%	31.1%	2.0%	14.7%	-12.0	-17.4	-5.4↓
Arable	11.4%	45.7%	28.6%	2.9%	11.4%	-17.5	-17.1	0.4↑
Other	7.5%	39.6%	26.4%	0.0%	26.4%	-5.2	-18.9	-13.7↓

All seven regions have more farms expecting to reduce debt than increasing debt, with Waikato-Bay of Plenty expecting to have the largest debt reduction, followed by East Coast North Island. West Coast-Tasman-Marlborough and Canterbury were the only regions to have an upward movement in their net scores.

**Table 6.3 Predictions of farm debt by region**

	Increase	Stay Same	Reduce	Don't Know	No Debt	July 2020 Net Score	January 2021 Net Score	Change
Auckland-Northland	13.8%	31.9%	39.4%	0.0%	14.9%	-19.1	-25.5	-6.4↓
Waikato-Bay of Plenty	12.0%	27.4%	50.6%	1.2%	8.7%	-26.7	-38.6	-11.9↓
East Coast North Island	12.5%	37.5%	39.0%	1.5%	9.6%	-17.6	-26.5	-8.9↓
Taranaki-Manawatu	11.7%	30.1%	47.2%	2.5%	8.6%	-29.1	-35.6	-6.5↓
WC-Tasman-Marlborough	9.4%	42.2%	31.3%	3.1%	14.1%	-24.4	-21.9	2.6↑
Canterbury	17.0%	37.4%	33.5%	3.4%	8.7%	-24.8	-16.5	8.3↑
Otago-Southland	12.8%	33.7%	39.0%	2.7%	11.8%	-25.8	-26.2	-0.4↓

## 7 Trends in Farmer Confidence



Figure 7.1 provides an overview of farmer confidence and how it varies over time. The figure illustrates trends in farmer confidence (net scores) for five key predictors of farm performance, as follow:

1. Economic conditions
2. Profitability
3. Production
4. Spending, and
5. Farm debt<sup>5</sup>.

Figure 7.1 shows that the net scores for all five forward-looking indicators have fluctuated over time, although they have tended to move together until the last four years.

In this survey, ‘all farm’ perceptions of economic conditions, profitability, and spending have improved.

‘All farm’ confidence has improved over the past six months with an increase of 15 points since July 2020 but remains in deeply negative territory (-44 points). But the most dramatic change going forward was profitability (an increase of 17 points), although it also remains in negative territory. Farm spending is also predicted to increase dramatically (up 24 points).

The only perception to deteriorate was ‘all farm’ production that has shown a slight downturn over the past six months (down by just under 3 points). Farm debt expectations are anticipated to increase by just over 3 points.

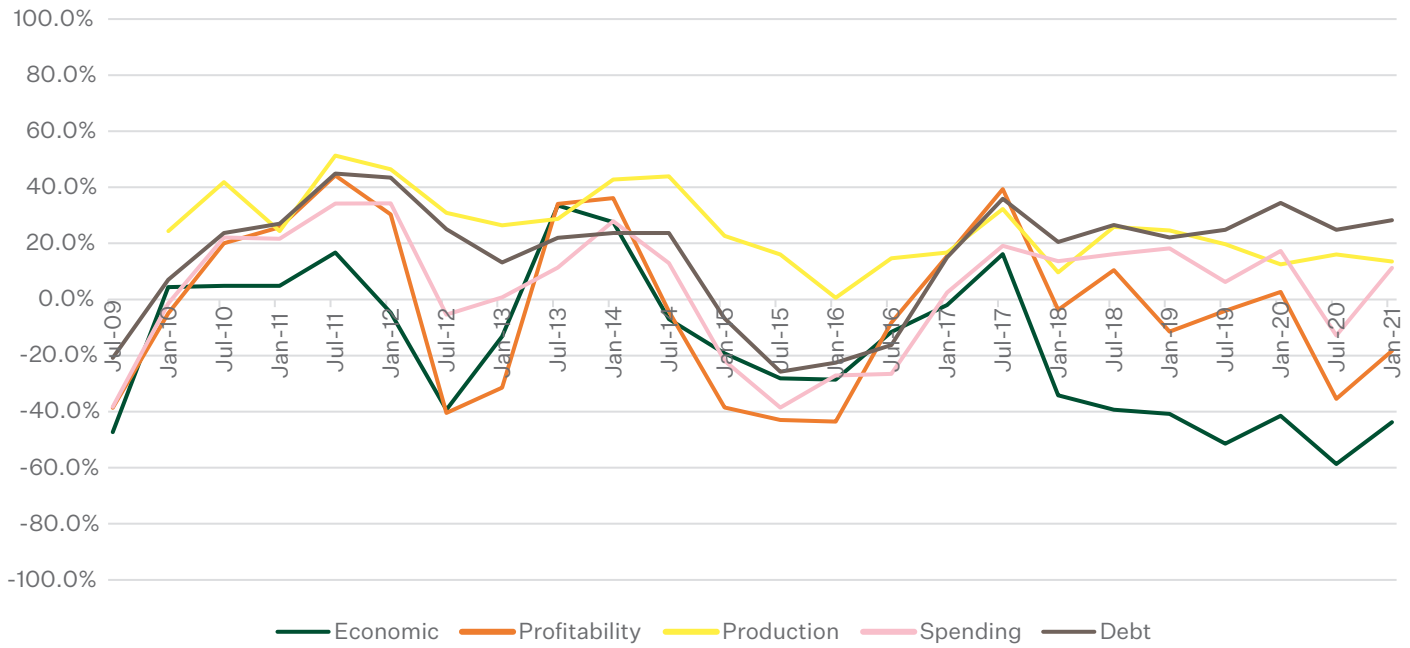
Like businesses generally, farmers expect the economy to improve, at least relative to how they were feeling six months ago. Although risks remain, the New Zealand economy has shown impressive resilience during the COVID-19, and the economy is the same size it was pre-COVID-19<sup>6</sup>. International demand for New Zealand milk may also be adding to the more positive farmer sentiment. But farmers are still concerned about government policies, especially in climate change and environmental spaces, and tightening rural lending.

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5 Note that debt has been inverted to correct for polarity inconsistency, that is: an increase in debt in a negative indication.

6 Source: <https://www.focus-economics.com/countries/new-zealand/news/economic-sentiment/business-confidence-at-over-three-year-high-in-0>

**Figure 7.1 Net perceptions of five key indicators of overall farmer confidence: all farms (July 2009-January 2021)**



## 8 Ability to Recruit



### 8.1 Overall

As in earlier surveys, farmers continue to have difficulty recruiting skilled and motivated staff. The gap between those who had found it harder and those who had found it easier increased by 8 points to a net score of +36. This increase is mainly due to a rise in those finding it ‘harder’ rather than a decrease in those finding it ‘easier’.

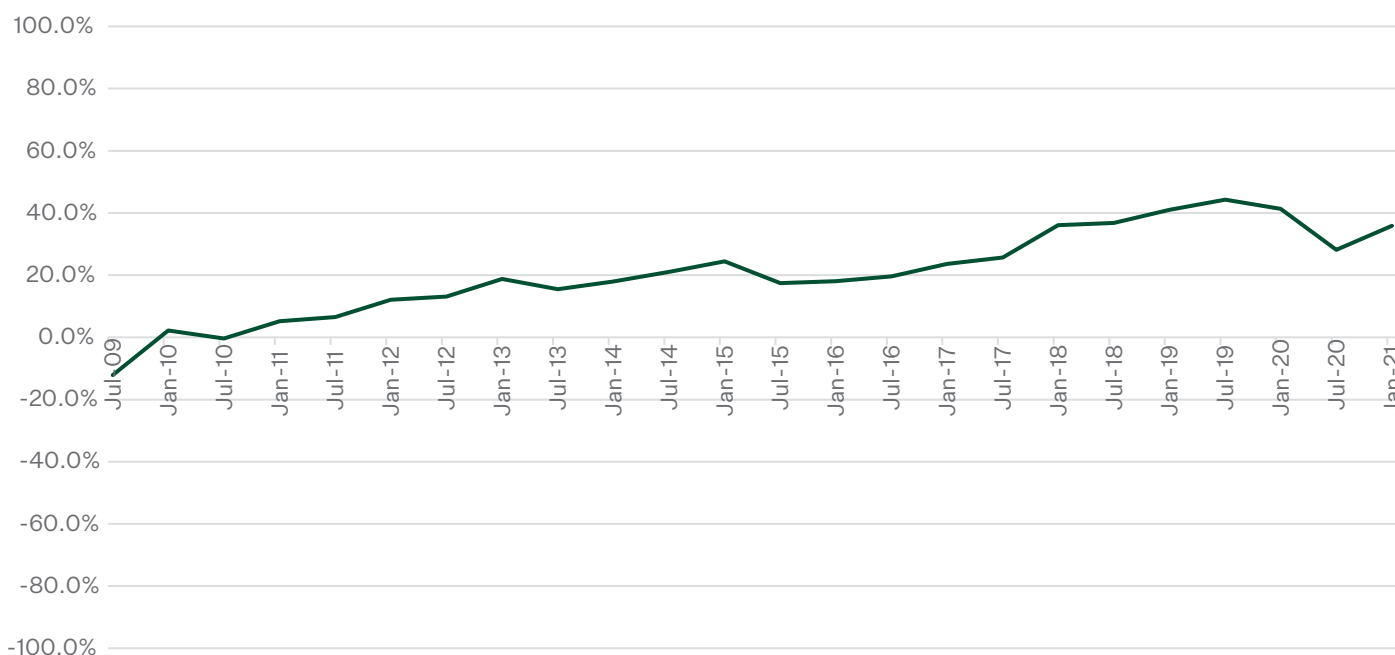
Generally, the trend has slightly increased each survey iteration (Table & Figure 8.1). Despite the recent increase in unemployment and therefore potential workers, very few farms have found it easier to recruit staff.

**Table 8.1 Ability to recruit skilled and motivated staff in the previous six months: all farms**

	Harder	No change	Easier	Don't Know	Don't Employ	July 2020 Net Score	January 2021 Net Score	Change
All farms	37.0%	33.3%	1.2%	5.7%	22.8%	28.1	35.8	7.7↑

Despite the impacts of COVID-19 on the labour market, it continues to be evident that farmers are finding it difficult to attract and retain suitable staff. Continued immigration restrictions from the pandemic are still exacerbating the problem, although some limited border exemptions have been allowed for ‘essential’ highly skilled workers (Figure 8.1). The increase in internal unemployment may offer relief if New Zealanders are willing to work in the agricultural sector. However, not many appear to be interested in remote work and the rural lifestyle.

**Figure 8.1 Net ability to recruit skilled and motivated staff: all farms (July 2009-January 2021)**



## 8.2 Industry Groups and Regions

All farms have experienced more difficulty in their ability to recruit suitably experienced and motivated staff over the past six months. Meat & Wool and Arable farms have the lowest staff employment rate (Table 8.2). Dairy farms continue to find recruiting staff the most difficult. Notably, Arable farms have seen an increase in those finding it harder by +20 points from six months ago.

**Table 8.2 Difficulty to recruit skilled and motivated staff by industry group**

	Harder	No change	Easier	Don't Know	Don't Employ	July 2020 Net Score	January 2021 Net Score	Change
Dairy	44.0%	36.6%	1.1%	5.9%	12.3%	34.4	42.9	8.5↑
Meat & Wool	27.6%	32.3%	1.7%	5.0%	33.3%	18.7	25.9	7.2↑
Arable	42.9%	22.9%	0.0%	2.9%	31.4%	22.8	42.9	20.1↑
Other	32.1%	35.8%	0.0%	11.3%	20.8%	26.0	32.1	6.1↑

Taking a closer look at recruitment by regions, all regions continue to have more respondents finding it harder than easier to recruit skilled and motivated staff (Table 8.3). All regions experienced more difficulty than six months ago, specifically the East Coast North Island and Otago-Southland regions. The other regions saw smaller changes in recruiting ease (Table 8.3).

**Table 8.3 Difficulty to recruit skilled and motivated staff by region**

	Harder	No change	Easier	Don't Know	Don't Employ	July 2020 Net Score	January 2021 Net Score	Change
Auckland-Northland	38.3%	23.4%	0.0%	6.4%	31.9%	29.0	38.3	9.3↑
Waikato-Bay of Plenty	35.3%	41.1%	0.8%	6.6%	16.2%	27.4	34.4	7.0↑
East Coast North Island	41.2%	35.3%	1.5%	4.4%	17.6%	28.0	39.7	11.7↑
Taranaki-Manawatu	35.6%	32.5%	1.8%	8.6%	21.5%	25.5	33.7	8.2↑
WC-Tasman-Marlborough	17.2%	35.9%	0.0%	6.3%	40.6%	16.7	17.2	0.5↑
Canterbury	37.4%	31.1%	1.0%	3.9%	26.7%	31.8	36.4	4.6↑
Otago-Southland	43.3%	28.9%	2.1%	4.3%	21.4%	30.4	41.2	10.7↑

## 9 Greatest Concerns



## 9.1 Overall

Figure 9.1 shows how farmers' main concerns have changed since the July 2020 survey.

In January 2021, the single greatest concern for farmers was regulation and compliance costs, with 18% of respondents identifying with this concern. This is a perennial concern for farmers and reflects both the former and current Government proposing tougher policies, especially in the environmental space. This will likely impact on-farm production and on the costs of doing business. Workplace health & safety, employment, and immigration are other compliance cost areas of concern. Dairy and Arable farmers were the most concerned industry groups.

The second greatest concern was freshwater policy (by just under 17% of respondents). The freshwater policy was a new concern added in the January 2020 survey. Arable farmers were the most concerned industry group with just under one third (31%) identifying this as their single greatest concern. This could be because Arable farmers are particularly significant water users. Many rural groups, including Federated Farmers, are worried about how the Government's proposed standards to protect waterways will make farming uneconomic in some areas.

Climate change policy & ETS (13.6% of all farms) was the third greatest concern, having trended downwards over the past year. The concern about climate change policy & ETS reflects the Government's more ambitious approach to combatting climate change and what this might mean for farming. In particular, the Zero Carbon Bill, passed in late 2019, had tough emissions reduction targets. Although the Government has decided to work with the primary industry on combatting agricultural emissions, the prospect of these emissions being included in the ETS still is real. These policies will likely impact on-farm production and their costs of doing business. There are also fears of them driving widespread land-use change, especially from sheep and beef to forestry, and what that will mean for farming and rural communities. Dairy farmers were the most concerned industry group in this survey iteration (17.6%).

The fourth concern was about farmgate and commodity prices (7.1% of respondents), which become less of a concern from six months ago (down from 11% in July 2020) due to improved commodity prices, especially for dairy. That it remains a significant farmer concern may reflect the uncertainty of commodity prices going forward but is still vastly different from 2016 when it was the biggest concern for 48% of farmers.

The economic situation was the fifth greatest concern (6.9%). However, the concern was less significant than six months ago when the disruption caused by the impact of COVID-19 on the world economy was a large factor that was weighing on farmers sentiments. Farmer's investment intentions have also increased, as demonstrated by increased spending predictions over the next 12 months.

The sixth concern was staffing (5.6% of respondents), almost double the level of concern compared to six months ago and bucks the trend from the past year when finding experienced staff was a little easier. Due to the closed borders to international staff from the COVID-19 pandemic, immigration constraints are likely to be having an effect.

While the concern about the environment has increased in the ranking to seventh place, the percentage of farmers worried (4%) has remained stable at this level since January 2018. Dairy farmers indicated the greatest concern than all other industry groups.

Debt, interest and banks have decreased to eighth place (just under 4% of respondents). Interest rates are currently low, but ongoing farmer concern likely reflects a tightening in banks' lending conditions and concerns about further tightening and higher interest rates from the Reserve Bank's bank capital decisions (which have been delayed due to Covid-19).

The political situation, weather, blanket forestry conversion, and public perceptions were the remaining areas of concern but were identified by less than 4% of respondents. It is also of note is that despite the high NZ Dollar, only 0.6% of respondents chose the exchange rate as their biggest concern.

The poor state of rural infrastructure (including roading, communications and electricity) was a new concern added to the January 2021 survey but was not identified as an area of concern.

**Figure 9.1 Top twelve greatest concerns for farmers: all farms (July 2020 vs January 2021)**

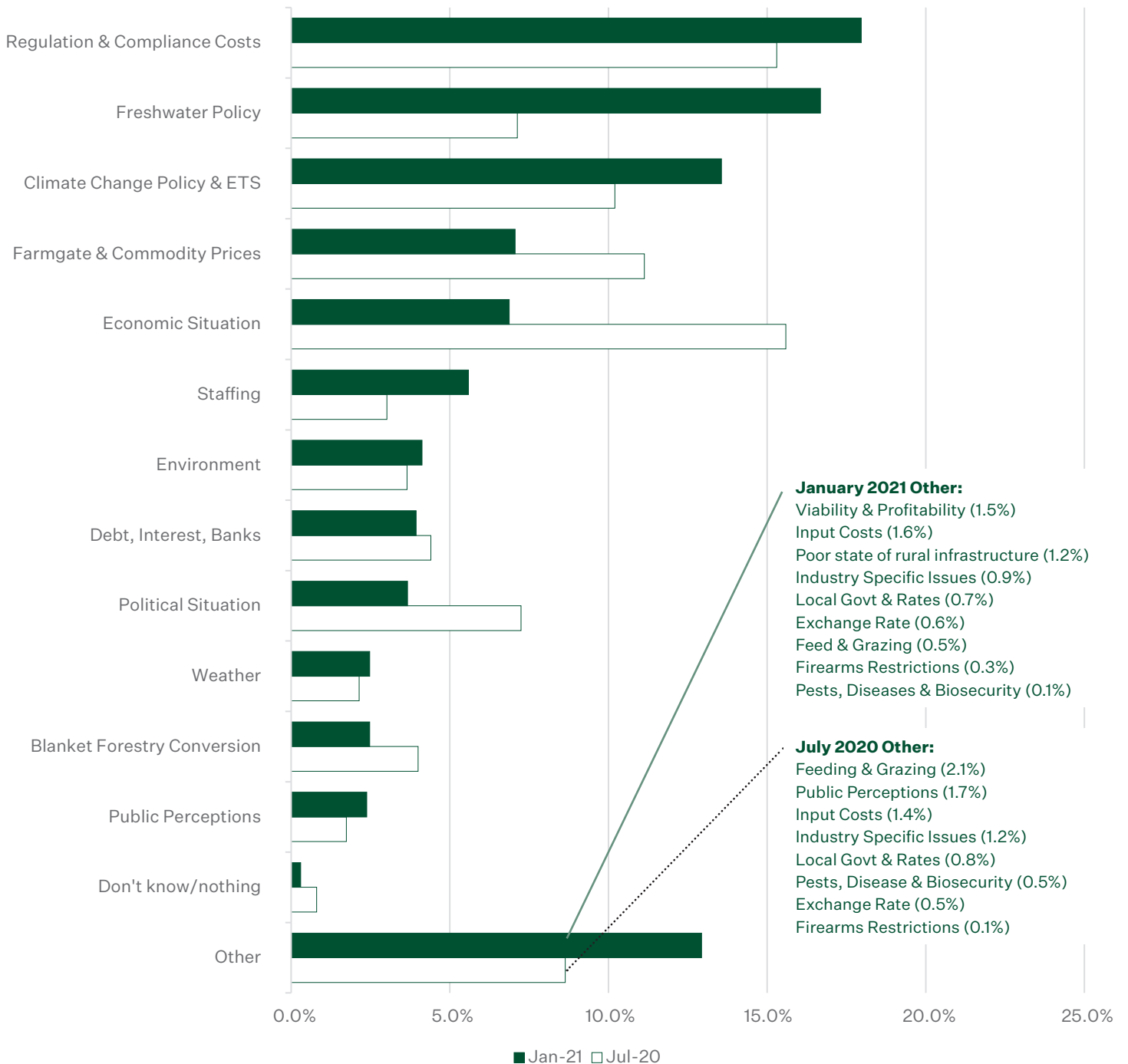


Table 9.1 shows how the top 12 issues of concern have tracked over the past three surveys.

**Table 9.1 Top twelve greatest concerns over the three most recent surveys (January 2021 to January 2021)**

Jan-20		Jul-20		Jan-21	
Regulation & Compliance Costs	20.2%	Economic Situation	15.6%	Regulation & Compliance Costs	18.0%
Climate Change Policy & ETS	17.2%	Regulation & Compliance Costs	15.3%	Freshwater Policy	16.7%
Freshwater Policy	10.7%	Farmgate & Commodity Prices	11.1%	Climate Change Policy & ETS	13.6%
Debt, Interest, Banks	8.2%	Climate Change Policy & ETS	10.2%	Farmgate & Commodity Prices	7.1%
Public Perceptions	6.0%	Political Situation	7.2%	Economic Situation	6.9%
Political Situation	5.8%	Freshwater Policy	7.1%	Staffing	5.6%
Environment	4.4%	Debt, Interest, Banks	4.4%	Environment	4.1%
Staffing	4.2%	Blanket Forestry Conversion	4.0%	Debt, Interest, Banks	3.9%
Weather	3.5%	Viability & Profitability	3.9%	Political Situation	3.7%
Viability & Profitability	3.1%	Environment	3.7%	Blanket Forestry Conversion	2.5%
Farmgate & Commodity Prices	2.9%	Staffing	3.0%	Weather	2.5%
Blanket Forestry Conversion	2.9%	Weather	2.1%	Public Perceptions	2.4%

## 10 Highest Government Priorities

# 10

## 10.1 Overall

Figure 10.1 shows how farmer perceptions of the Government's main priorities have changed since the July 2020 survey.

Like earlier surveys since January 2017, the most important Government priority identified in this survey was the economy & business environment (25%), although this has decreased by 12 points, down from 37% in July 2020. Arable and Other farms, and farms in Auckland-Northland, Canterbury, and Otago-Southland were more likely to identify the economy as a higher priority.

The second priority was regulation & compliance costs – it increased by 4 points to 13%. The Government's more activist and interventionist bent is likely to impose more regulation and compliance costs than less, especially in the environment and employment areas. Still, this priority has been overshadowed by the economy more generally in the COVID-19 pandemic era.

Supporting agriculture & exporters has become the third main priority identified by respondents, remaining stable at 10% over the past year. This was more relevant for Arable farms and farms in the West Coast-Tasman-Marlborough regions.

Fiscal policy had dropped as a Government priority to fourth place at 11%, down by 1 point. The big operating surplus delivered in the 2019/20 year will be negated by the pandemic response, which is forecast to result in massive operating deficits over the next three years and an explosion in Crown debt. The quantum and quality of government spending are perennial concerns for many farmers.

Biosecurity (6%) saw an increase of 2 points from six months ago. Biosecurity remains a priority for Dairy farms, and farms in the Waikato-Bay of Plenty, Taranaki-Manawatu and West Coast-Tasman-Marlborough areas.

Freshwater policy was a new priority added to the January 2020 survey, when only 1% thought it should be the Government's top priority. But in January 2021 this has increased to 4%. Arable farms, Other farms, and farms in Canterbury were more likely to identify this as a priority. Again, most farmers would prefer the Government to focus on the economy and prefer water policy not to put the economy at risk.

Employment & skills and housing were identified as equal priorities by just under 4% of farms, respectively. Social Issues were identified by 3% of farms. The continuing border restrictions mean Dairy farms were more likely to have issues attracting suitable staff, mainly affecting Taranaki-Manawatu and Otago-Southland farms. Housing was identified as a priority by Arable farmers and farms in Auckland-Northland, Taranaki-Manawatu and Waikato-Bay of Plenty.

Other key priorities were mainly stable or up slightly up or down January 2020.

**Figure 10.1 Top twelve perceived highest Government priorities for all farms (July 2020 vs January 2021)**

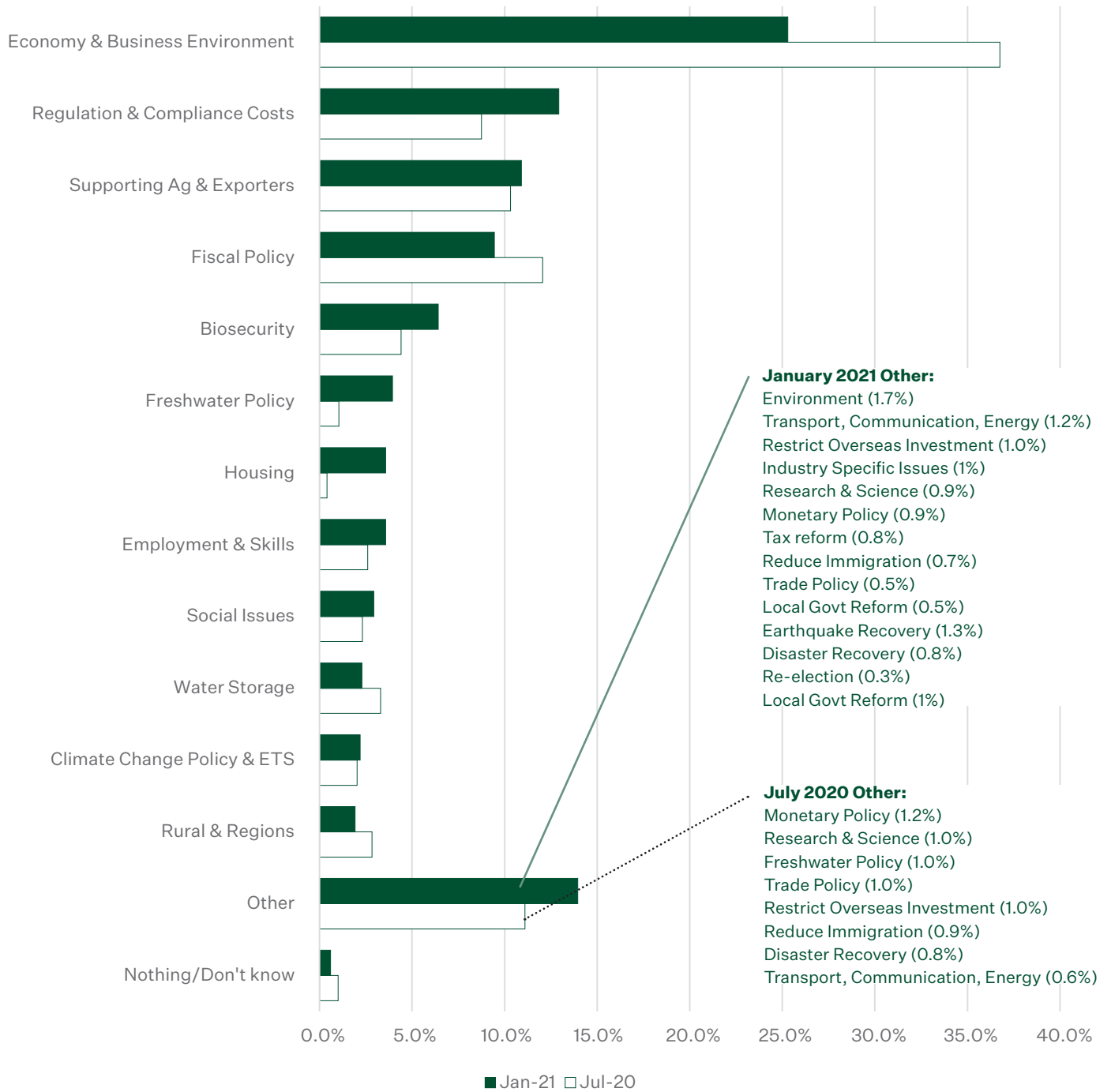


Table 10.1 shows how the top 12 priorities for the Government have tracked over the past three surveys

**Table 10.1 Top twelve perceived highest Government priorities for all farms over the three most recent surveys (January 2020 to January 2021)**

Jan 2020		July 2020		Jan 2021	
Economy & Business Environment	23.4%	Economy & Business Environment	36.8%	Economy & Business Environment	25.3%
Regulation & Compliance Costs	14.2%	Fiscal Policy	12.1%	Regulation & Compliance Costs	12.9%
Supporting Ag & Exporters	10.3%	Supporting Ag & Exporters	10.3%	Supporting Ag & Exporters	10.9%
Biosecurity	7.5%	Regulation & Compliance Costs	8.8%	Fiscal Policy	9.4%
Fiscal Policy	5.7%	Biosecurity	4.4%	Biosecurity	6.4%
Social Issues	4.4%	Water Storage	3.3%	Freshwater Policy	3.9%
Climate Change Policy & ETS	3.6%	Rural & Regions	2.8%	Employment & Skills	3.6%
Transport, Communication, Energy	3.1%	Employment & Skills	2.6%	Housing	3.6%
Rural & Regions	3.1%	Social Issues	2.3%	Social Issues	2.9%
Employment & Skills	3.0%	Climate Change Policy & ETS	2.0%	Water Storage	2.3%
Research & Science	3.0%	Environment	1.3%	Climate Change Policy & ETS	2.2%
Environment	2.9%	Tax Reform	1.2%	Rural & Regions	1.9%

## 11 About this Survey



## 11.1 Research Design

Federated Farmers have been conducting biannual Farm Confidence Surveys since July 2009. These surveys aim to measure farmer confidence over eight key issues in the farming profession and community. Members of Federated Farmers are invited to complete these surveys, which run in January and July each year.

The January 2021 survey was completed for Federated Farmers by Research First, New Zealand's leading agricultural market research company. The online survey received 1,091 responses from farmers in four industry groups over 24 provinces (condensed into seven regions) across New Zealand (Table 11.1).

**Table 11.1 Completed surveys by region compared to a recommended weighting**

	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>January 2021</b>	<b>Weighting %</b>
<b>Auckland-Northland</b>	94	8.6%	6.1%
<b>Waikato-Bay of Plenty</b>	241	22.1%	23.8%
<b>East Coast NI</b>	136	12.5%	11.0%
<b>Taranaki-Manawatu</b>	163	14.9%	15.3%
<b>WC-Tasman-Marlborough</b>	64	5.9%	5.5%
<b>Canterbury</b>	206	18.9%	19.0%
<b>Otago-Southland</b>	187	17.1%	19.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	1,091	100%	100%

Like all Federated Farmers' Farm Confidence Surveys, results must be treated cautiously. Although the sample reported here is a large one, it is a self-selected sample. Also, smaller numbers of Arable and 'Other' types of farmers mean that these industry groups' results may vary more from survey to survey than for Dairy and Meat & Wool farms.

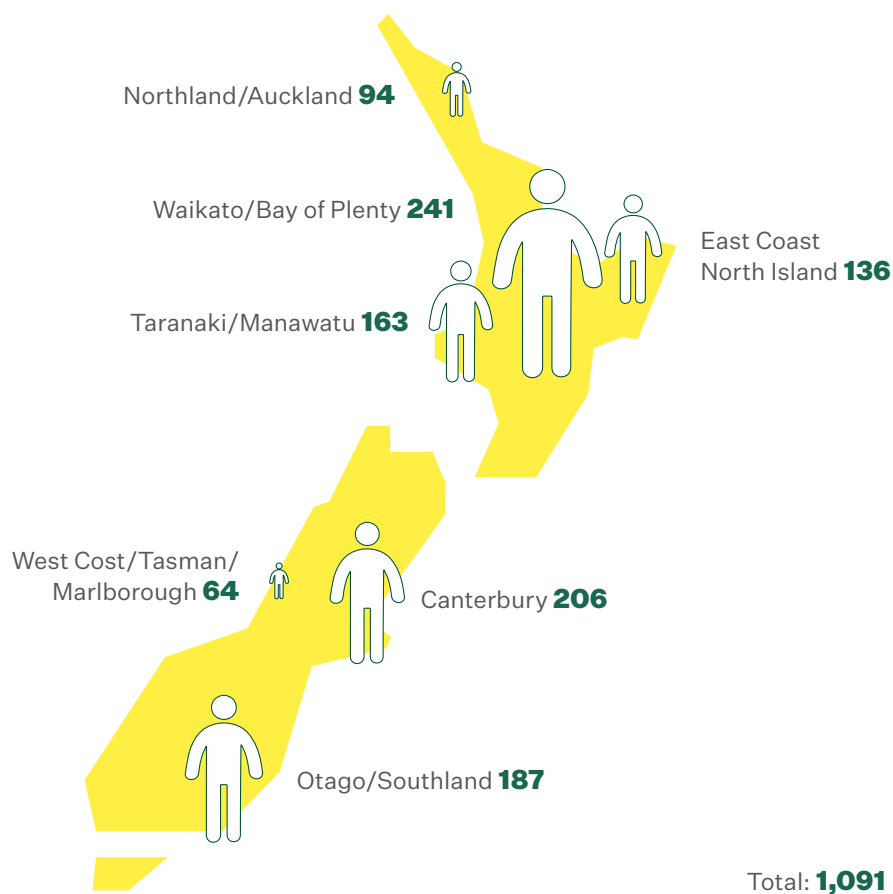
## 11.2 About Net Scores

A net score is an index ranging from -100 to +100 that measures the skew of all responses towards one of two possible 'extreme' responses to a question. Typically, and in this survey, the net Score is calculated by subtracting the proportion of 'negative' responses (e.g., decrease, worsen etc.) from the proportion of 'positive' responses (e.g., increase, improve etc.). A score of -100 describes a scenario where all responses were negative, 0 reflects that an equal proportion of people responded positively as did negatively, and +100 would mean that all responses were positive.

## 12 Appendix

# 12

## 12.1 July 2020 Respondents by Industry Group and Location



## 12.2 What is Your Main Business Activity?

	%	n
Dairy	48.3%	527
Meat & Wool	36.8%	402
Arable	3.2%	35
Other industry (incl. mixed cropping)	4.9%	53
Supporter	3.6%	39
Other	3.2%	35
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,091</b>

### 12.3 Secondary Farming Details

	%	n
Dairy	4.0%	31
Meat & Wool	71.4%	548
Arable	5.9%	45
Other industry	12.9%	99
Mixed cropping (sheep, beef, Dairy)	2.1%	16
Dairy grazing	19.9%	153
Rural Professional	4.3%	33
TOTAL	100%	767

## 12.4 Further Survey Detail

'Other' farmers include Pigs, Poultry, Horses, Bees, Goats, High Country, Rural Butchers, Horticultural Crops (such as fruit, vegetables, and flowers), and Forestry. Dairy grazing was offered as a new business activity in July 2020.

### 12.4.1 The Seven Regions Related to Federated Farmers' Provinces:

- Auckland/Northland: Northland and Auckland provinces
- Waikato/Bay of Plenty: Hauraki-Coromandel, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, and Rotorua-Taupo provinces
- East Coast North Island: Gisborne-Wairoa, Hawkes Bay, Tararua, and Wairarapa provinces
- Taranaki/Wanganui/Manawatu: Taranaki, Ruapehu, Wanganui, and Manawatu-Rangitikei provinces
- West Coast/Tasman/Marlborough: Golden Bay, Nelson, Marlborough, and West Coast provinces
- Canterbury: North Canterbury, Mid Canterbury, and South Canterbury provinces
- Otago/Southland: North Otago, Otago, and Southland provinces

### 12.4.2 Concerns for Farmers: Full List and Detail

- Blanket Forestry Conversion
- Climate Change Policy & ETS
- Debt, Interest, Banks
- Economic Situation
- Environment
- Exchange Rate
- Farmgate & Commodity Prices
- Feed & Grazing
- Firearms Restrictions
- Freshwater Policy
- Industry-Specific Issues
- Input Costs
- Local Govt & Rates
- Other
- Pests, Disease & Biosecurity
- Political Situation
- Public Perceptions
- Regulation & Compliance Costs
- Staffing
- Viability & Profitability
- Weather

### 12.4.3 Priorities for Government: Full List and Detail

- Biosecurity
- Climate Change Policy & ETS
- Earthquake Recovery
- Economy & Business Environment
- Employment & Skills
- Environment
- Fiscal Policy
- Freshwater Policy
- Housing
- Industry-Specific Issues
- Local Govt Reform
- Monetary Policy
- Nothing/Don't know
- Other
- Reduce Immigration
- Re-Election
- Regulation & Compliance Costs
- Research & Science
- Restrict Overseas Investment
- Rural & Regions
- Social Issues
- Supporting Ag & Exporters
- Tax Reform
- Trade Policy
- Transport, Communication, Energy
- Water Storage
- Welfare Reform





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