



**Rabobank**

*Media Release  
February 23, 2012*

## ***Clarity for Clearwater – Rabobank Farm Managers Program***

Establishing a clear pathway for sustainable business management and growth was a key focus for Southland farmer, Hayden Clearwater, when he enrolled in **Rabobank's Farm Managers Program**.

Originating from eastern Southland, Hayden manages the family's 280 hectare sheep and cattle farm near Tukurau as well as running a successful mobile crutching business.

With a strong track record of business growth, Hayden took the opportunity to enrol in Rabobank's Farm Managers Program and – as a result of the course – said he'd gained the confidence to drive his farm business goals and ideas into realities through careful planning and time management.

"Since taking on the management of the family farm and running my crutching business with nine employees, I wear two hats business-wise – I'm on the farm in the day, then on the phone at night," Hayden said.

"I've always had ideas but wasn't sure how to get there. Now I have the confidence to move forward with focus, rather than chipping away day to day."

The Rabobank Farm Managers Program, which is now in its seventh year, is modelled on the bank's highly-respected Executive Development Program and aims to strengthen the operational and strategic skills of tomorrow's farm managers, covering topics around leadership, business planning, financial and economic management, and succession planning. It is open to all progressive young farmers from across Australia and New Zealand from a range of agricultural commodities.

Applications for the 2012 Farm Managers Program are now open.

Hayden said: "We're always pretty flat out with running the property and the seasonal nature of the crutching business really ramps up at certain times of the year".

"I definitely got a lot out of the focus on time management in the program – we assessed how we really spend our time each day, then worked out where the balance needs to be so you're not bogged down in little tasks and keep your eye on the bigger business goals and find a more sustainable way of doing things," he said.

"I have taken a step back as a manager and now I'm working on the business, rather than in it."

Another key learning was around succession planning, Hayden said.

"As a family, we know we'll be addressing the overall succession of the farm at some point and the program certainly highlighted what we need to do to get us to the point we want to be at for the long-term," he said.



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"I also found the confidence to address these issues head-on with a proper strategy and financial knowledge to take action."

Announcing the opening of applications for the 2012 Farm Managers Program, Rabobank group executive Neil Dobbin said strong business management and leadership skills are becoming increasingly essential in order for primary producers to succeed and grow their enterprises.

"This is why Rabobank's farm business management programs fulfil such an important role in supporting the development of Australian and New Zealand agricultural businesses," Mr Dobbin said.

"These highly-regarded programs provide a unique opportunity for progressive farmers and primary producers to enhance their commercial management skills, develop market driven production strategies and explore options for sustained business growth."

Applications for the 2012 Rabobank Farm Managers Program are open until 27 April. Only 36 applicants will be offered places on the program which will be held at Clear Mountain Lodge in Brisbane 18- 22 June.

Producers interested in an application form or any further information on the Rabobank Farm Managers Program should visit [www.rabobank.com.au](http://www.rabobank.com.au) or contact Rabobank business programs manager Nerida Sweetapple on 02 8115 4139 or email [bmp@rabobank.com](mailto:bmp@rabobank.com).

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