



Rabobank

*Media release
September 11, 2014*

Rabobank appoints environmental sustainability specialist

Rabobank New Zealand has announced the appointment of environmental sustainability specialist Blake Holgate.

Rabobank head of business development New Zealand, Karen Kenny said Mr Holgate brought considerable resource management expertise to help Rabobank clients achieve their business and sustainability goals.

Ms Kenny said Mr Holgate's appointment – to the position of rural manager Sustainable Farm Systems – was among a range of initiatives the bank was undertaking to assist clients and the wider agricultural sector meet the challenges of maintaining competitiveness while adjusting to current and future environmental regulation.

“With our exclusive focus on food and agribusiness globally, Rabobank is in a unique position to share with its clients the knowledge, tools, worldwide network and financial solutions to help farmers produce more, in a more sustainable manner,” she said.

Ms Kenny said, with the development of increasingly complex and diverse water quality regulations under the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management in New Zealand, Mr Holgate's brief was to help clients and Rabobank's rural managers understand nutrient and water management strategies that would maximise long-term on-farm efficiencies and competitiveness.

“Rabobank sees its role as working with clients to understand their current status and, where farmers are unsure about how to meet current or future environmental regulations, to assist with knowledge and financial solutions to help them make the transition to financial and environmental sustainability,” she said.

“Hailing from a sheep and beef farming family, Mr Holgate has a genuine passion in this field and he also has a unique set of skills to provide insightful and practical information that will help enable farmers to develop farming systems that are both sustainable and profitable.”

Mr Holgate, who previously practised as an environmental lawyer and has an MBA from Otago University, said Rabobank was taking a proactive approach to raising awareness of environmental sustainable farm systems and options with clients.

“The issues for farmers in response to the NPS are challenging and complex and Rabobank recognises that this is a very long-term issue,” he said.

Based in Dunedin, Mr Holgate will work across Rabobank's New Zealand network.

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Rabobank New Zealand is a part of the international Rabobank Group, the world's leading specialist in food and agribusiness banking. Rabobank has more than 110 years' experience providing customised banking and finance solutions to businesses involved in all aspects of food and agribusiness. Rabobank is structured as a cooperative and operates in 41 countries, servicing the needs of about 10 million clients worldwide through a network of close to 1600 offices and branches. Rabobank New Zealand is one of the country's leading rural lenders and a significant provider of business and corporate banking and financial services to the New Zealand food and agribusiness sector. The bank has 32 branches throughout New Zealand.

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