



‘Seeking OHS solutions in precarious dairy employment’

Rupert Tipples

Funded by Lincoln University Research Fund

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Faculty of Commerce
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Canterbury.**

Dairy cows and irrigator, Canterbury, N.Z.

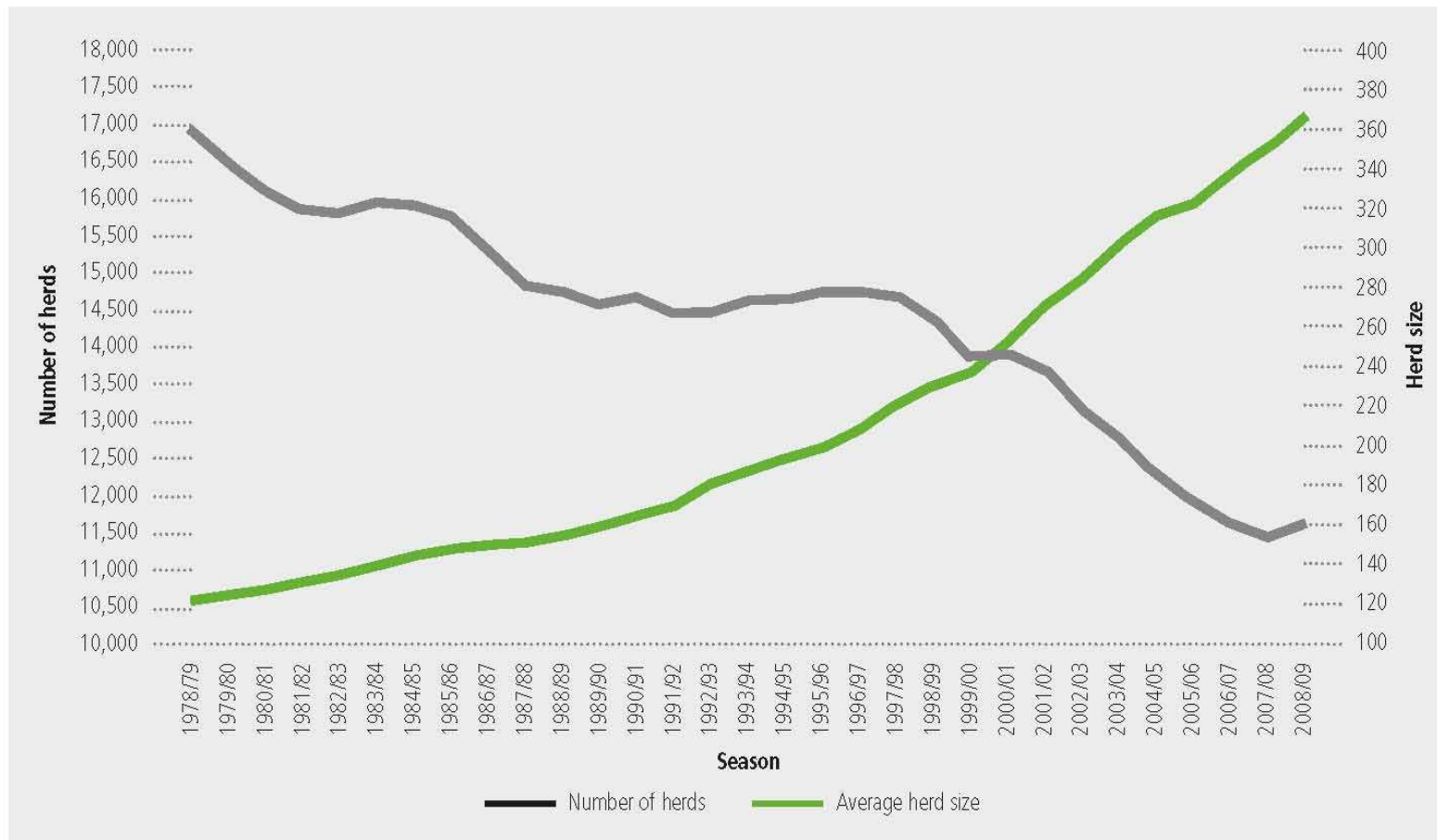


Dairy farming in New Zealand

- **Dairy exports 31 March 2009** = \$ 11,323 million
(MAF, 2009) = 27% (tme)
- **Major Occupation Dairy Farming** = 24,795
(*Census of population, 2006*)
- **Produced by 4.1 million cows, in 11,618 herds**
- **Sustaining NZ milk production/productivity is vital for the NZ economy**

Less herds, more cows (LIC, 2008-9)

Graph 2.1 Trend in the number of herds and average herd size for the last 30 seasons



NZ Dairy farming history

- **Butter and cheese become major exports in 1880s**
- **Primarily family businesses**
- **Vehemently opposed to organized labour**
- **1913 Wharf strike – Massey's Cossacks**
- **1936 Agricultural Workers Act – agreeing to statutory orders only for price guarantees**
- **Dairy farmer employers kill Farm Workers Assn. in 1980s by refusing any kind of membership rules/fee deduction**
- **Now no farm worker reps to help resolve farm labour crisis, only Young Farmers Assn.**

Outcomes sought in the *Strategy for New Zealand Dairy Farming 2009/2020*

- **Talented and skilled people are attracted to, and retained by the industry (Outcome 2)**
- **Industry reputation enhanced locally and globally (Outcome 4)**
- **Achievement of shared goals through genuine partnership between industry and government and the wider community (Outcome 5)**

...but not meeting expectations (self diagnosis, *Dairy InSight, 2007*)!

- **Not attractive compared to other industries**
- **Hours are long**
- **Staff turnover high**
- **Accident rate third worst in terms of injuries per person employed**
- **Required to live on-farm => social isolation**
- **Lack of rural support networks**

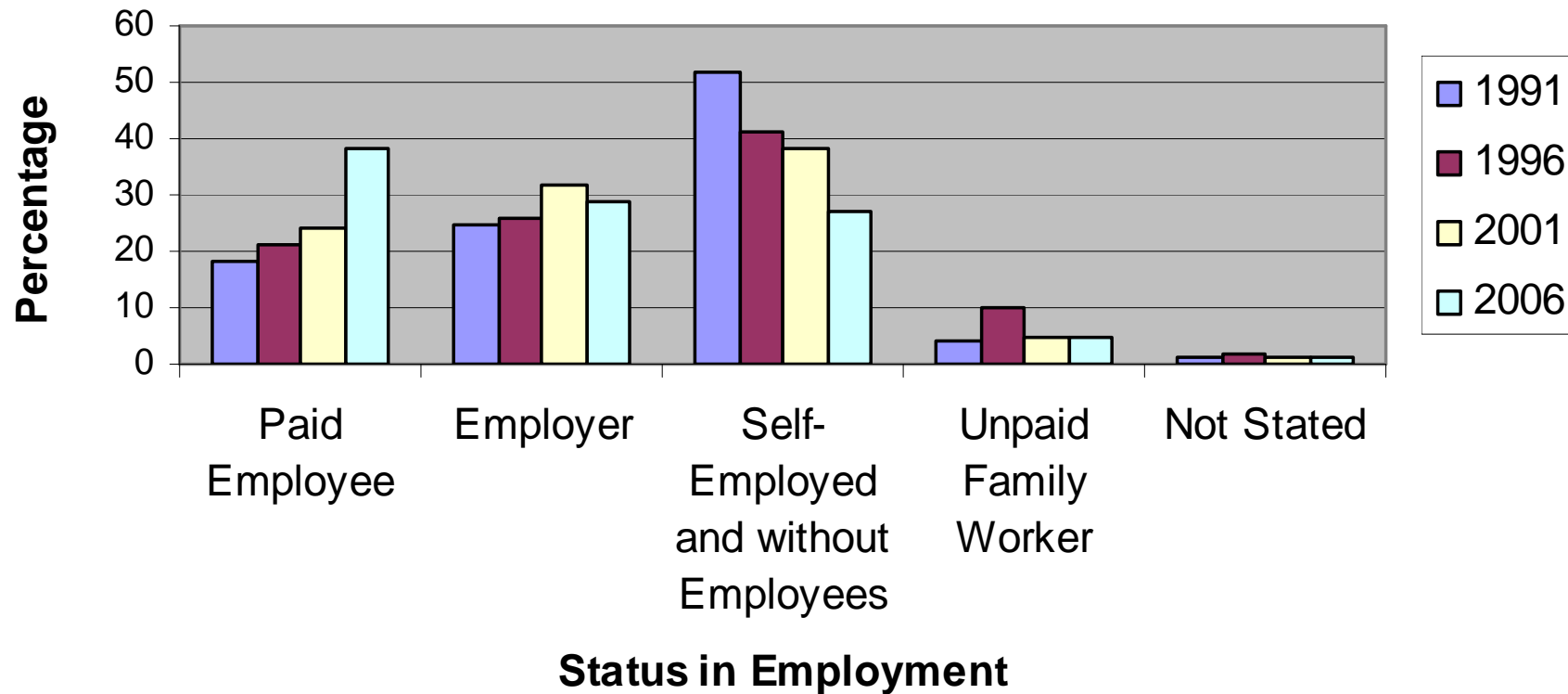
Current occupational structure of dairy farming (Censuses of Population and Dwellings 1991- 2006)

- **Census was only useful labour time series**
- **Key trends, capped by Census 2006 data**
- **Main occupation: dairy farmers/workers:**

1991	28,134
1996	29,976
2001	26,328
2006	24,795

Dairy staff by Status in employment

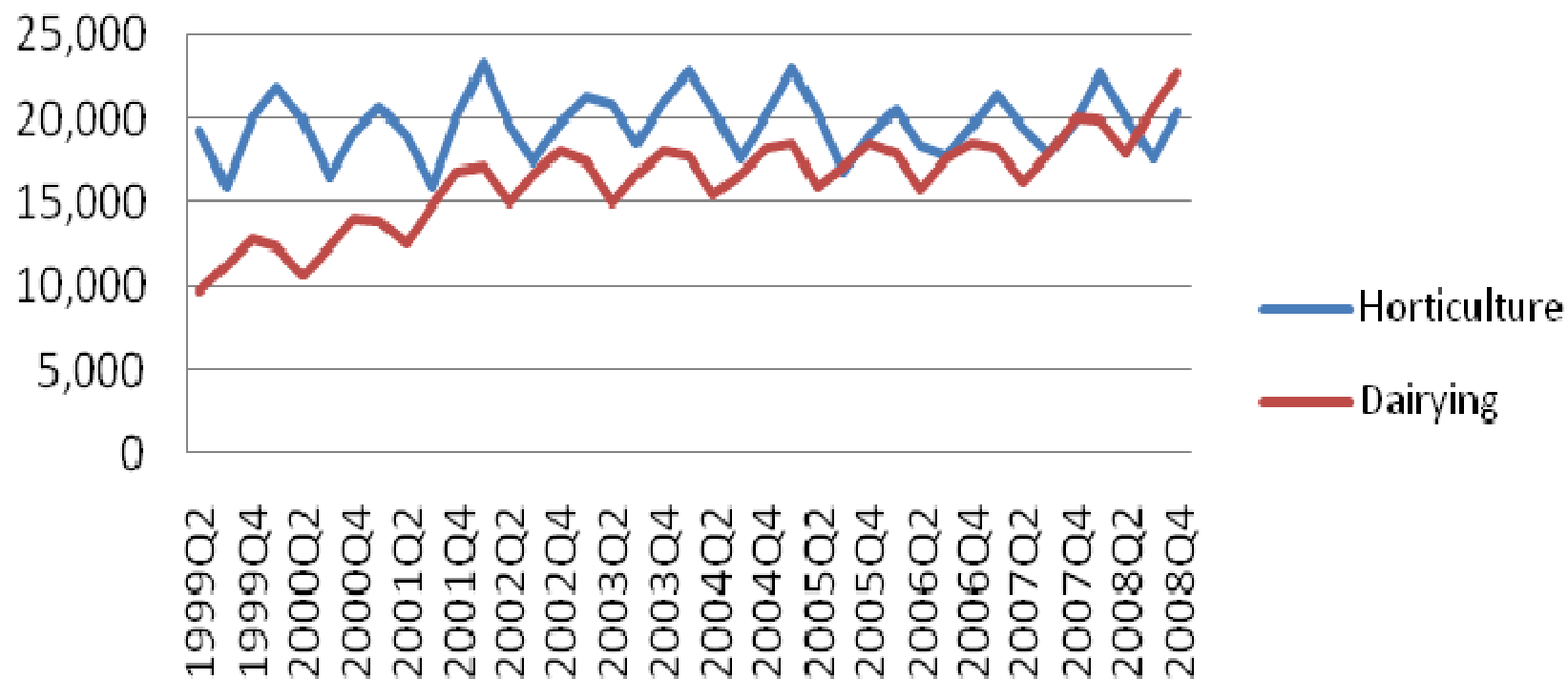
Status in Employment by percentage Dairy farmer/dairy farm worker population



A research question:

- **How is dairy farming coping with more cows, more farms and more land in grass for dairy farming, but a lot less people working in dairy farming?**

Number of dairy farming and horticulture workers, 1999-2008, LEED data



Migrant abuse story sparks flood of calls

Workers, support organisations and media turn up heat on farm employment

By GRAEME STILWELL
THE phone has been ringing hot in the home of Timaru's ethnic affairs advocate Kate Elsen.

For almost a month the Timaru Multi-Ethnic Council publicity officer has been fielding inquiries from migrant farm workers, a New Zealand farm workers' support organisation, a national radio station and a national magazine.

Mrs Elsen has been the centre of attention following a series of articles in last month's issue of *Country Country*, which alleged ongoing issues relating to the employment of migrant workers on New Zealand farms.



— Rachael Breckon

Interviews
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Filipino workers expected here by July

By HOWARD KEENE

FILIPINO dairy workers to relieve the shortage on New Zealand farms are expected to arrive in the country after 1000 man Hayden Creek Recruitment Agency, a Philippines IPS Recruitment Agency, said he had secured about 180 workers so far and more applications were coming in.

Provided they obtain work permits the coming in of the new recruits will be a boon for the next milking season.

"We were very strict with the experience level because obviously a lot of people did not have the opportunity to get

He said he was particularly looking for workers who had machine milking experience. "We saw a couple of 24-side herds on phone cowbuds, which would surprise some applicants owned a few cows which supplied milk for their families and friends while there were some bigger farms supplying towns."

A lot of people we interviewed had had experience in the Philippines, but hands-on experience was a crucial attribute. Mr Creed said that while Mr Creed is not sure if dairy workers from that number of

Farm training numbers to rise

The Chronicle

Agriculture trainers expect declining numbers last year will pick up again as farmers move into a recovery

He said agriculture needed more operation managers, and the training organisation also wanted to help existing managers become more effective in decision-making and critical thinking, and develop people

These factors affected the industry's ability to invest in staff, he said. About 29 per cent of 23,643 training agreements were for training at New Zealand Qualifications Authority levels four and five, and three training enrolments were up. Bryant said the increase in training was an area AITO asked to concentrate on.

More qualified and experienced staff were needed in the dairy industry, he said. "We need to improve our training and qualifications to help provide a more qualified workforce to improve productivity, efficiency and cost effectiveness, he said."

Migrants under pressure

The Press

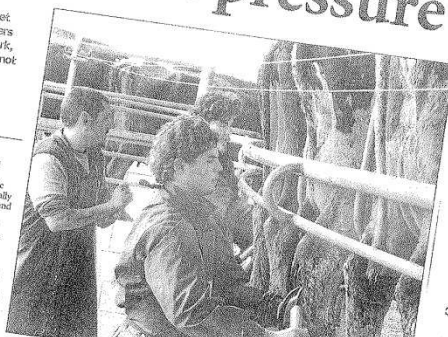
It is hard to get New Zealanders to do farm work, and it is often not seen as a career profession, unfortunately.

Kerry Maw
Race Relations NZ

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Recruitment drive on for Filipino workers to meet dairy shortfall

YOUNG Waimate man with a record of recruiting workers, is on his way to New Zealand

ing, willing and eager to learn, up-and-coming farmers are now harder to find than ever before, Assistant herd managers have been listed on the NZIS Skilled Shortage List for some time.

In the long run, we aim to help you build strong working relationships with our new farmers in order to stabilise your staffing and ensure your growing workforce.

ing into a long-term worker who will want to stay in the farm. We will take care of the entire process for you.

IPS LTD, phone 0800 327-696 or 0800 327-696 or 0800 327-696

Otago Daily Times

Published on Otago Daily Times Online (<http://www.odt.co.nz>)

Migrant workers 'loyal, trustworthy, committed'

By Ruth Grundy
Created 20/08/2009
When Dutch woman and travelling school owners of the ve
It was May 2007
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Otago Daily Times

Published on Otago Daily Times Online (<http://www.odt.co.nz>)

Migrants seen as crucial for dairying

By Graeme Stilwell
Created 19/08/2009 - 09:00

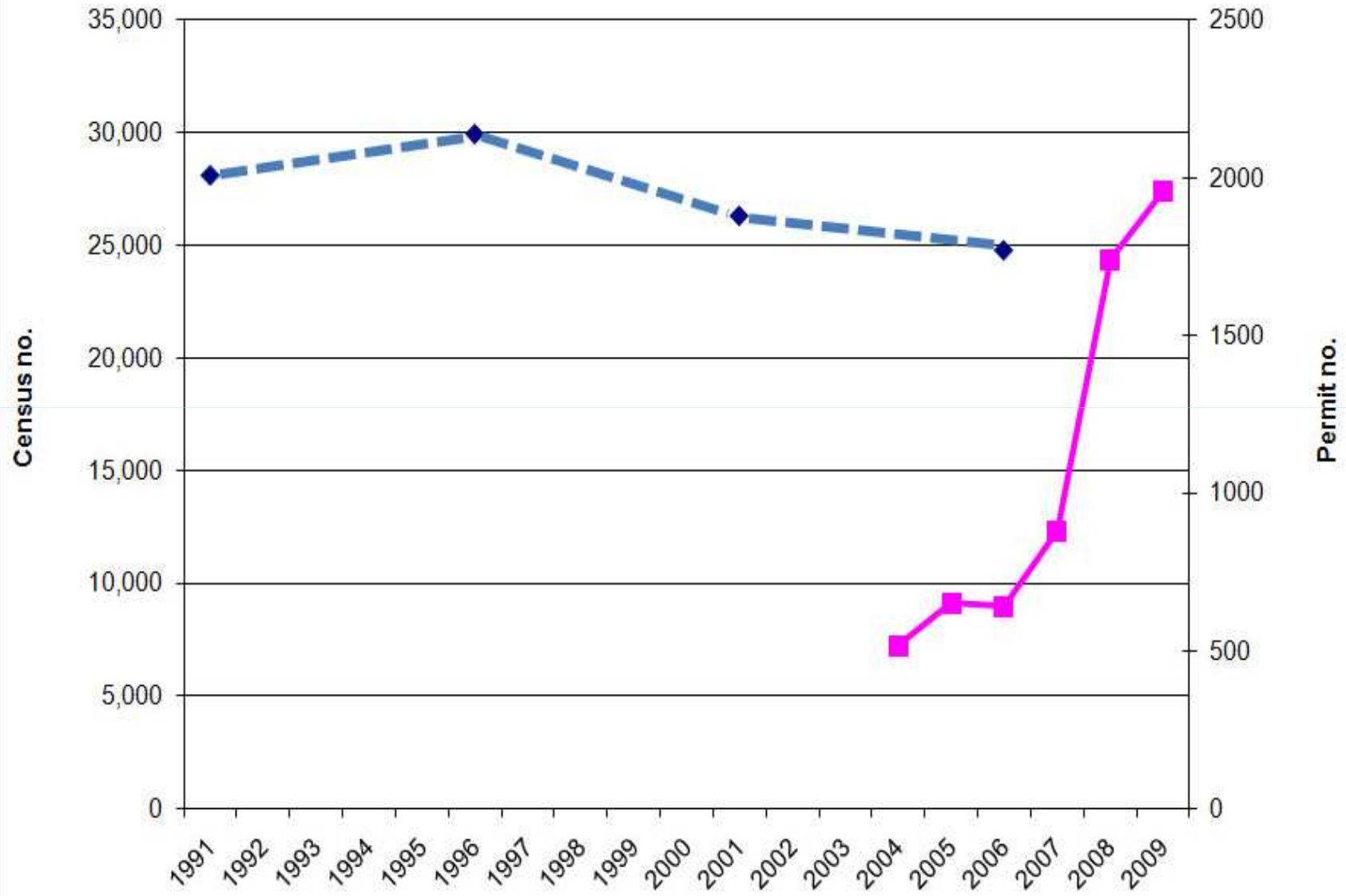
Dairy industry seeks 3000 new workers



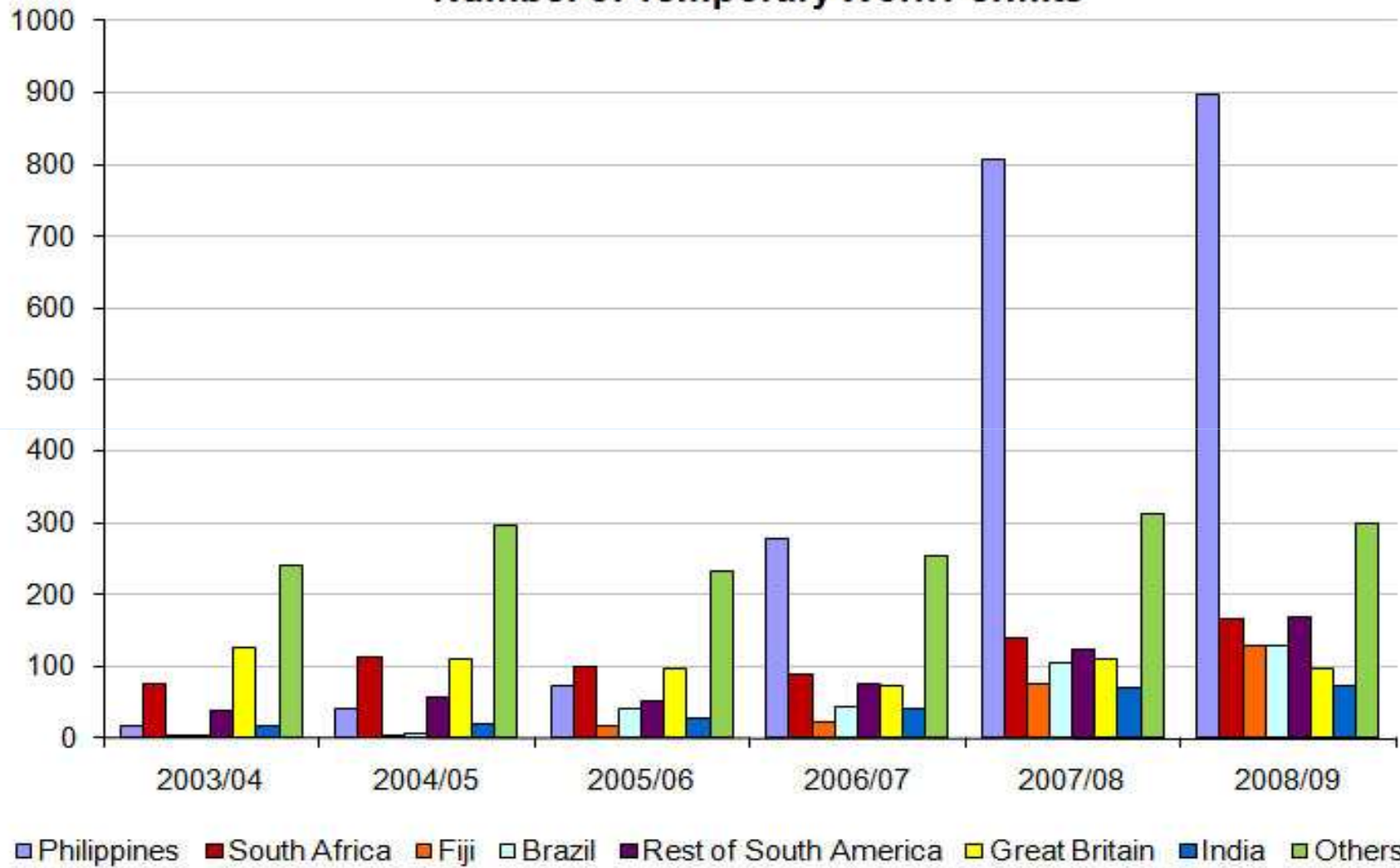
THE PRESS, Christchurch

LINCOLN UNIVERSITY

Census Numbers vs. Total Permits



Number of Temporary Work Permits



Migrant workers, Canterbury, N.Z.

Filipino

Fijian Indian



Unattractive hours of work

- **Highlighted by OAD research**
- **Nothing new! Doig reported 65% dairy farmers working an average of 70 hours p.w. in busy periods (1937-8), permanent employees 65 p.w.**
- **% working >70 hours p.w. increased 1991, 1996, 2001 to reach 32%, but then fell to 27% in 2006**
- **Industrial norm 40 hours p.w.**

Time, stress and distress (OAD milking research)

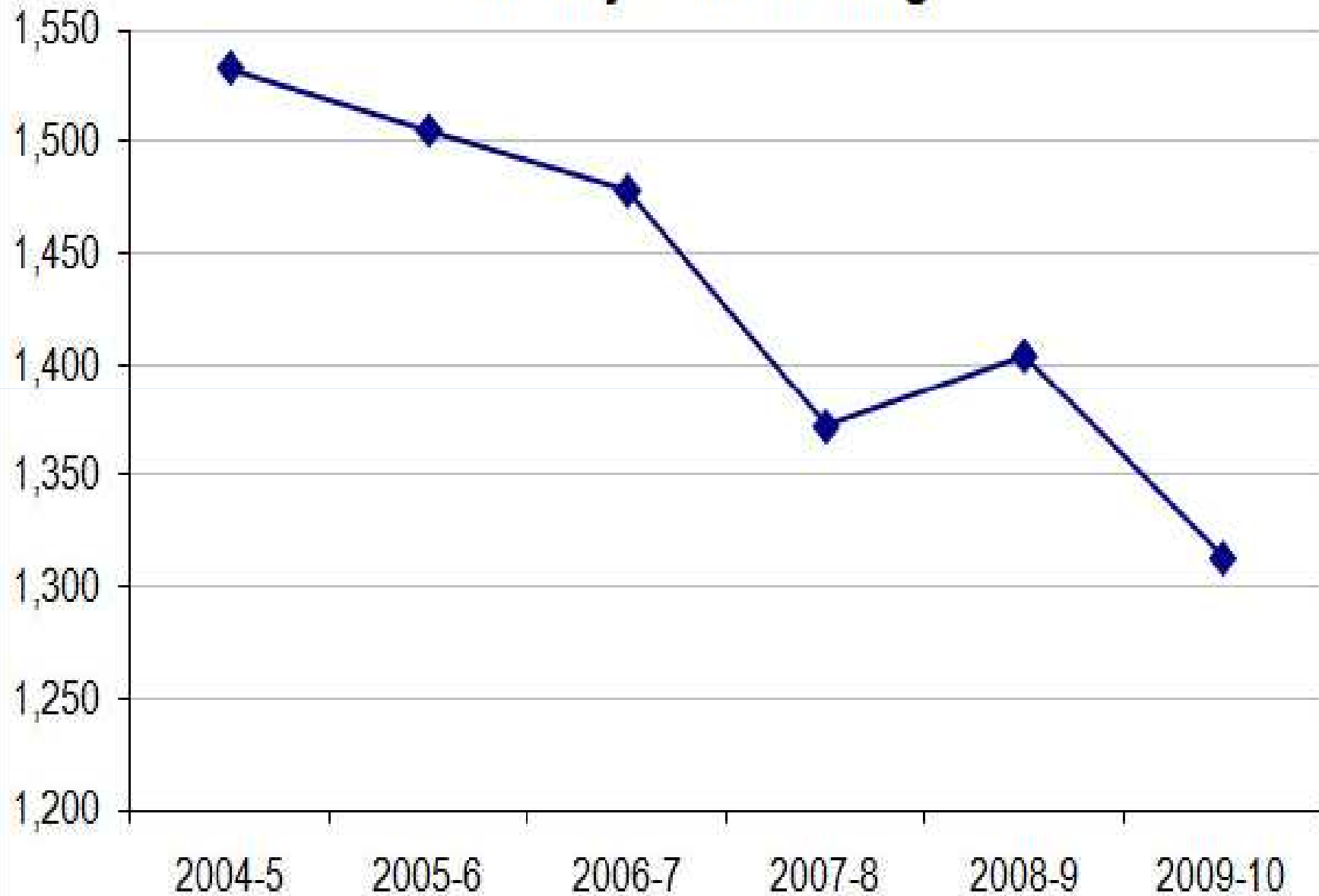
More time gave:

- More sleep, feeling more rested, making better choices**
- Less rush, less stress, with same routines**
- More flexibility when and how to do things**
- Bigger blocks of time available, jobs completed, more job satisfaction, & a safer farm environment**
- Better quality family life, better relationships**
- Opportunity for sport, hobbies, community involvement. (Verwoerd and Tipples, 2007)**

Dairy safety and health

- **All active accident claims for ‘Agriculture’ will cost ACC \$NZ 57,388,000 for the financial year ending 30 June 2010**
- **Dairy farming accidents were 41% of that (\$NZ 23,557,000) for 48% of farm workforce**
- **The proportion of active claims from dairy farming has been increasing at approx. 1% per year since 1 July 2004 (\$NZ 18,857,000)**
- **Farmers are very resistant to OHS initiatives they have not been party to (Lovelock *et al.*, 2008-9)**

New Entitlement Claims to ACC for Injury Accidents in Dairy Cattle Farming



Cases of Tucker's Precariousness

Responses to 15 characteristics

	Dairy Employer	Dairy Employee	Call <i>Teli</i>	Centres <i>Meso</i>
True	1	5	7	12
False	12	5	5	2
Uncertain	2	5	3	1

Research Agenda

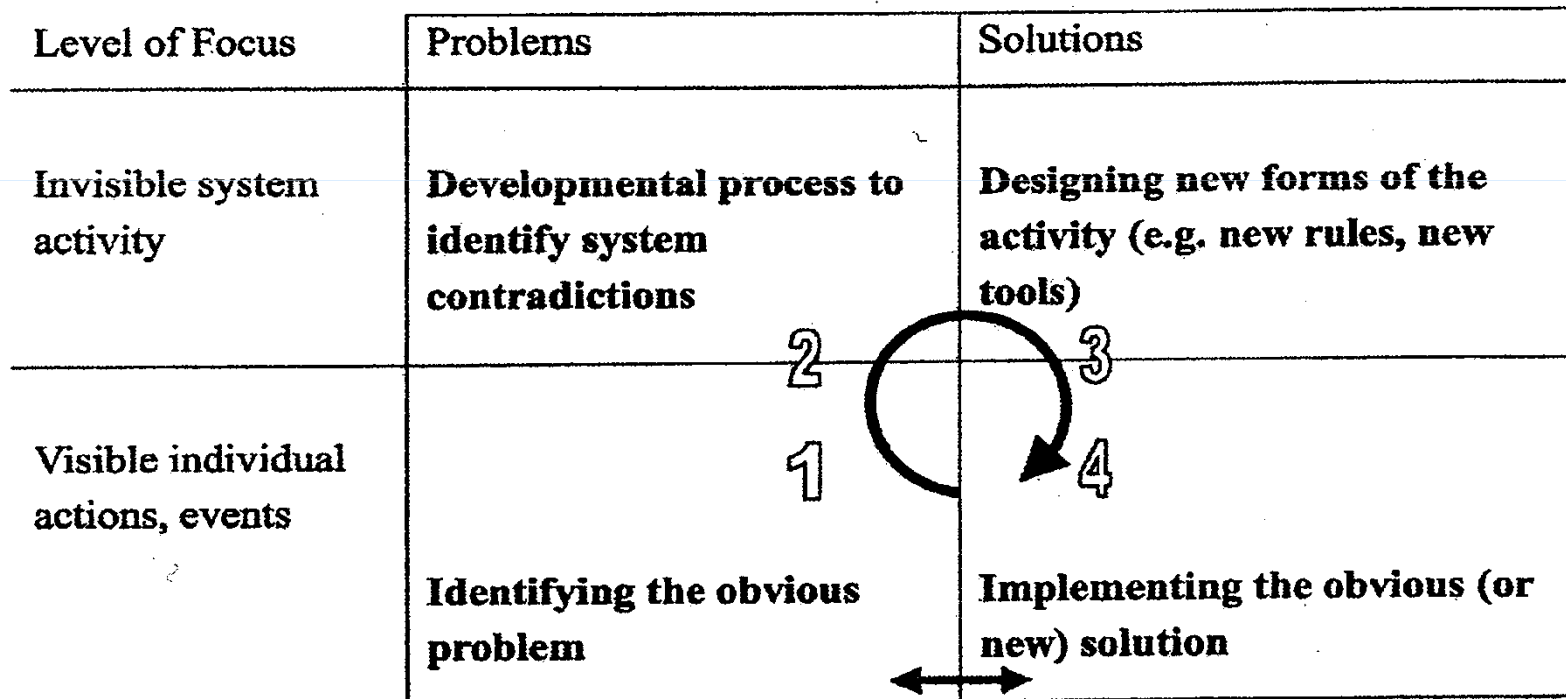
- 1. Investigation of work time, overwork, and fatigue in dairy farming; injury connections – barriers to attraction and retention of ‘good’ employees in dairy farming**
- 2. Precariousness and job stability – investigating dependence on a migrant labour force and the degree of precariousness**
- 3. Does migration legislation and administration make migrants’ situations more or less precarious?**
- 4. Time as a vital non-renewable resource, and statutory compliance**
- 5. Dairy farms as ‘greedy organizations’ - implications for work-life balance for family and employees?**

The possible solution

An inter-disciplinary approach based on a Finnish ‘change laboratory’ process (Engestrom, 1987,...):

- **Developmental Work Research (DWR)**
- **Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT)**
- **The ‘pure business’ model of policy development (NZ)**

Managing change using an expansive learning cycle (Hill *et al.*, 2007)



Questions for a dairy expansive learning cycle

- **What do they agree should be the purpose of the system (e.g. *Farmer: income, growing wealth, ROI, lifestyle; dairy employees: interesting work, income, rural life*)?**
- **Who is the subject of this system (e.g. *dairy farmers, sharemilkers, contractors, dairy workers, consultants*)?**
- **What are the official rules (e.g. *tax laws, Fonterra's specs, health and safety, environmental*), and unofficial (e.g. *expectations of long hours - 'that's the way we've always done things in dairying'*)?**

Expansive learning questions cont.

- **What is the division of labour? Who does what, on/off farm?**
- **Who is actually the community of practice of this system (e.g. *dairy farming community, Agriculture ITO, rural community, farm consultants, Fonterra, DairyNZ*)?**
- **What tools are used in this system (e.g. *milking, TAD/OAD*)?**
- **Where do government agencies fit in the model? What are the outcomes from the activity (e.g. *increased productivity, attraction and retention of talented people, a safer and healthier industry, long term sustainability of the industry*)?**

The End



Milking in a rotary milking shed



Overcoming staffing problems

- **Apparent since late 1990s**
- **Personal involvement since 1998**
- **‘Psychological contracts in dairy farming’ (Tipples & Hoogeveen, 1999)**
- **‘People make the difference’ (MAF, 2001)**
- **‘Future dairy farm employment’ (IERA, Ballarat, 2004; *Dairy InSight*, 2004)**
- **‘Social impact of OAD milking’ (PERA, Yeppoon, 2005; LU, 2005)**
- **‘The Human Face of OAD Milking’ (*Dairy InSight*, LIC, LURF, 2007)**
- **Trying to raise finance for a *Fatigue in dairy farming study* (LURF, 2009)**