

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

*July 2, 2014*

### **First farm environment plan template approved**

Environment Canterbury announced today its approval of the first farm environment plan template under the proposed Land & Water Regional Plan.

The template was developed by Synlait Milk Ltd as part of its “Lead With Pride” certification programme focusing on dairy farming best practice and sustainability. To become accredited, suppliers are independently audited by AsureQuality and need to demonstrate top performance in activities covering milk quality, animal health and welfare, social responsibility and environmental management.

Acknowledging the quality of the template, Environment Canterbury Chief Executive Bill Bayfield said Synlait Milk had met all the requirements of Schedule 7 of the proposed Land & Water Regional Plan.

“We hope the farm environment plans that come from this template are valuable both for farmers and for Synlait,” Mr Bayfield said.

“The Plan is a primary delivery mechanism of the Canterbury Water Management Strategy. It is therefore reassuring to see in this template a methodology that will enable development of plans identifying actual and potential environmental effects and risks to properties, addresses those effects and risks, and has a high likelihood of appropriately avoiding, remedying or mitigating them.”

Synlait Managing Director John Penno says he is delighted that the farm environment plan within Lead With Pride has been recognised as meeting the standard set by Environment Canterbury.

“It means suppliers working within our programme are now able to cover off their responsibilities under the proposed Land & Water Regional Plan as well as meet our standards for best practice leadership in food safety and sustainability in a one-stop-shop system,” Dr Penno said. “It comes at no charge to them and they receive a financial reward once they become certified.”

Under the proposed Land & Water Regional Plan, a farm environment plan will need to be produced in any circumstances where an application for consent to farm is required.

“There are several situations where a consent will be required at different times in future, depending on how at risk water quality is in the zone where the property is located,” Mr Bayfield said.

“Irrespective of the rules, we encourage all farmers to prepare farm environment plans. They will help identify environmental and business risks and planning for their management. International markets are increasingly demanding proven sustainability, and farm environment plans are one way to demonstrate this.”

Under Schedule 7 of the proposed Land & Water Regional Plan, farm environment plans can be prepared either by landowners themselves or via industry-prepared templates and guidance material.

Minimum content is specified, and all farm environment plans must include an assessment of the adverse environmental effects and risks associated with the farming activities and how those effects and risks will be managed, including irrigation, application of nutrients, effluent application, stock exclusion from waterways, offal pits and farm rubbish pits. Farm environment plans must be audited.

For more information on the proposed Land & Water Regional Plan, go to [www.ecan.govt.nz/lwrp](http://www.ecan.govt.nz/lwrp)  
For information on Synlait Milk’s Lead With Pride programme, go to [www.synlait.com](http://www.synlait.com)

### **More information**

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