

Meet the Team



Gavin McEwen, General Manager

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Gavin is from a Waikato dairy farming background, with a degree from Lincoln University. He has more than 20 years' experience in agricultural information technology, with experience ranging from business analysis and database design, to owning and managing businesses involved in software development and international distribution. From a pragmatic perspective, Gavin's focus is on using information technology on farm to drive productivity and profitability. As General Manager, Gavin's main objective is to bring FARMAX tools into the mainstream of New Zealand pastoral farming through collaboration and integration with others in the industry. Aligning FARMAX values and motives with industry good is something Gavin is passionate about. Gavin and his family live on the outskirts of Hamilton, complete with a cat and a border collie that reminds him of the working dogs on the old family dairy farm. They're joined by the possums and pukeko that drive him crazy eating his fruit trees. It certainly keeps him busy and in his spare time he enjoys water and snow skiing, and the odd bit of fishing, tennis and restoring their gully with native plants.



Victoria Hamlin, Product Manager

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Victoria joined us in June, 2015 as our product manager. Her role includes looking after the developments of existing and new products, working with key industry partners, and providing support and assistance on the HelpDesk. Victoria is originally from Hawke's Bay, having grown up on a sheep and beef farm, but lived in Wellington for 10 years for study and work. She then went to Victoria University where she completed a Bachelor of Arts majoring in history and political science. Prior to joining Farmax, Victoria worked for Beef + Lamb New Zealand as a farm programme co-ordinator, where she actually engaged with Farmax on various projects. Victoria loves the outdoors, particularly tramping, and enjoys spending time with her family, being a proud aunty to five neices.



Andrew Dean, Product Design Lead

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Andrew is a townie who has learned more about farming than he ever expected to over 15 years' designing software for New Zealand's farmers. He is a usability specialist with a very hands on approach to researching his users' unique needs, so he is no stranger to overalls and gumboots. During his time at LIC, Andrew designed and led the development of MINDA software. He went on to design its successors on the web and mobile, including MINDA Milk, MINDA Lookup and MINDA Calving, as well as other LIC products like MINDA Land & Feed, EZ Link and Protrack. Outside of LIC, Andrew's work has included web design for AgResearch, app design for The Warehouse and consulting for the likes of Mainfreight and Massey University. Andrew has a Bachelor of Computing and Mathematical Sciences (BCMS) and a Bachelor of Arts, both from the University of Waikato. He holds User Experience Certification (UXC) from Nielsen Norman Group, the world's leading user experience consultancy.



Jack Keeys, Technical Specialist

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Jack is involved in various projects with the team, including co-ordinating Farmax UK, accreditation and software development. Jack is also a HelpDesk assistant and will be running some of the training sessions around the country. He is currently studying a Bachelor of Management Studies (Hons) majoring in Agribusiness, as well as a Bachelor of Science majoring in Biological Sciences, both at the University of Waikato. Jack also enjoys playing a range of sports and his go-to place is the Coromandel for camping and tramping.



Thomas Botica, Technical Specialist

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Tom joined Farmax in November 2016, fresh out of Lincoln University where he studied a Bachelor of Agricultural Science. He will be involved with many aspects of Farmax, largely assisting customers on the HelpDesk and running training sessions around the country. Additionally, he will help with the various other projects and software development. Tom was born and raised in Matamata, before moving to Wellsford and then Christchurch, and is now back in Horotiu on the family dairy farm. He has worked on numerous dairy, and sheep and beef farms throughout the country. Outside of work he loves cricket, squash and powerlifting, the latter for which he is nationally ranked.



Ashley Sharpe, Software Engineering Lead

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Ashley's role involves continuing to push Farmax into the future and leverage the latest technologies to best serve New Zealand farmers. He is particularly focused on web development in the cloud and implementing a compelling experience for users. During his career, he picked up some farming knowledge at LIC prototyping new products, getting them in farmer's hands and gathering feedback. Working closely with users early on has given him a strong appreciation for leading development with user experience to ensure the right tools get built. Ashley holds a Bachelor of Science from the University of Waikato majoring in Computer Science. In his spare time, he practices and teaches the Japanese martial art of Aikido, often attending large training camps overseas to help refine his technique.



Kate Mora, Technical Specialist

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Kate joined the team in May 2018 after completing her undergraduate degree at Massey University where she studied a Bachelor of AgriCommerce, majoring in International Agribusiness. She will be involved in several areas of the Farmax business, largely assisting customers on the HelpDesk and running training courses, as well as managing a range of development projects and events. Kate originally lived in Taranaki before moving to Palmerston North to study and then to Waikato for summer work, making the shift to the Waikato permanently in early 2018. She has worked on numerous dairy farms and has experience working at a thoroughbred horse stud. Kate is passionate about music, teaching vocals and piano at university, as well as performing vocals in a band. Her spare time is spent playing guitar and piano, spending time at the gym and enjoying the outdoors.



Brenda Hodgetts, Accounts Manager

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Brenda joined the team in April 2017. Brenda is responsible for the administration and accounting functions for Farmax along with system and internal process improvements and implementations. Brenda has spent most of her working career, working within small businesses and has been a small business owner for many years. She has spent time as a dairy farmers wife and has an interest in farming in general. She has done quite a lot of 4 wheel driving over many farms in the North Island. In her spare time, she attends Zumba Fitness classes and assists with their SBA accounting business. She is often heading away in the weekend in her Motorhome to spend time visiting her family and friends.



Kendall McEwen, Marketing and Communications Co-ordinator

Kendall has worked for Farmax part time, full time and as a contractor since 2011, assisting with communications, marketing materials, design and brand development. She has a Master of Management Studies majoring in Sustainability and a Bachelor of Social Sciences majoring in Writing Studies and Social Policy, both completed at the University of Waikato. In her spare time, she enjoys squash, snowboarding and wakeboarding, and loves spending time with her younger siblings.



Paul Marshall, Software Developer

Paul is a senior software developer for Rezare Systems, but spends much of his time as a developer contracted to FARMAX. He has 25 year's experience in the New Zealand agricultural software industry, having previously worked for AgResearch and its predecessors. He first became involved with pastoral systems modelling in 1988, as lead developer of the original MAF Stockpol model which formed the foundation of today's FARMAX tools. Paul is a pro client Win32 application developer. He is also experienced with web application design and development, and with database and spatial systems. He's an enthusiast for software design that enhances usability and has a knack for converting raw scientific models into practical software applications.