



## **Southern Institute of Technology; Tai Poutini Polytechnic and Primary ITO - Media Release**

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### **Introducing collaborative agriculture training initiative for the South Island**

Southern Institute of Technology (SIT) is joining Tai Poutini Polytechnic and Primary ITO on a training initiative that aims to get agriculture learners in jobs more quickly by offering training options.

The collaboration builds on a pilot West Coast programme which started earlier this year. It allows students to share their time between tertiary education providers, shifting their training focus depending on work opportunities.

The initiative is a great fit for the new Te Pūkenga model, putting learners at the centre and seeing training providers work together to explore new ways to benefit employers and the community.

The collaboration with SIT is also supported by the Hokonui Runanga, further extending the collaborative weave. The expansion of the pilot was announced in Southland earlier today.

Tai Poutini Polytechnic Board Chair – Rebecca Keoghan says it’s fantastic to expand the West Coast programme to the south and welcomes SIT’s involvement in the partnership.

“We knew this pilot programme would likely draw interest from other providers and we’re pleased to expand the concept beyond the West Coast. We are all focused on outcomes for learners as the aim of the initiative is to help get students into full-time employment in the agricultural industry.

“By working together, we can offer learners a seamless transition between work and study. If they are studying at a polytechnic and find a job, they can start right away without losing momentum. Likewise, if the job they’re working on ends, they can continue their polytechnic training.”

Primary ITO Executive General Manager Andrea Leslie says the key difference to other programmes is that learners can seamlessly move between learning at a polytechnic, to on the job, or back to the polytechnic without disrupting their studies.

Traditionally, learners at polytechnics are full-time or part-time students, while trainees and apprentices learn mainly on the job with industry training organisations (ITOs).

“This is a real improvement to what we’ve seen in the past where people can fall through the cracks if they either move into fulltime work – or even if they lose their employment.”

SIT Board Chair Alison Broad says that SIT is excited about the potential of this joint initiative. SIT now operates the Telford Campus which has been identified as a key asset to primary industry. Telford will be a significant asset to learners and employers and to the development of the new initiative.

“We are also mindful of the significance of our partnership with Ngāi Tahu. We are very pleased that they are supporting this initiative and also working with us on further collaborations.”

The NZ Certificate in Agriculture (Level 3) programme involved in the pilot is module-based, with each part designed as manageable “chunks” of learning which can be done in the order that best



suits the learner. As an example, a new worker starting out on a dairy farm in the summer might choose to learn about milking and milk quality, and then move into other issues like calving and feeding during other times of the year.

**For more information contact:**

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