



Smedley Station and Cadet Training Farm



Developing the very best future farmers since 1931

Introduction

Smedley Station is one of the best farm training establishments in New Zealand.

Situated in Tikokino, 40km west of Waipukurau in Central Hawke's Bay, the 5,054 hectare Station (3,186 effective) is made up of three blocks - the Main Station, Ridglands and Onepoto. It ranges from flat to steep hill country and carries approximately 27,000 stock units including sheep, breeding cattle, bull beef and deer.

Josiah Howard, the original owner of Smedley Station died on the 5th January 1919. He gifted his property to His Majesty the King without restriction, but in the confidence that the Government of New Zealand would use the property as a foundation or endowment for the purpose of agricultural education. On the 24th of October 1919, the Howard Estate Act was passed providing that Smedley Station be held by Public Trust in trust for the Crown, as a permanent endowment for the purposes of agricultural education.

The first intake of five cadets arrived at Smedley Station in 1931 and over the years the number taken on annually has been increased. Now 11 cadets enter Smedley each year for the two year cadetship.

Cadets receive practical instruction and training in all phases of farm operations carried out on Smedley Station as well as the theory behind agricultural science and technology.

Smedley Station offers a unique training experience for young cadets looking to further their agricultural education as they work towards establishing a career in the rural sector.

"Smedley was an amazing place to start my career in agriculture and the theory side of things set me up very well to go onto Lincoln. I was able to build on what I had learnt at Smedley and develop a better understanding of farm management looking at budgets and figures and putting them into real life situations. The comradeship and lifelong friendships as well as the hard work and learning made for a great experience. We learnt a range of skills that not every farm offers including working with deer and velvetting, breaking in horses and training our own dogs, just to name a few"

Ben Galloway, Cadet 2013/14



Our Training Programme

The Smedley training programme is practically based with a balance between traditional and modern farming practices delivered. Throughout their two year cadetship, cadets undertake a diverse programme from traditional stockmanship including training their own dogs and breaking their own horse (second year) to learning the latest advancements in farming technologies and core business components. This ensures graduating cadets are skilled in all aspects of farming operations.

The station employs a full time experienced training manager to oversee the cadets' practical and academic training. In addition to this, specialist tutors and industry leaders are welcomed throughout the year to deliver specialised training, workshops and lectures. Therefore cadets receive the very best in agricultural education in conjunction with the latest in farming techniques and industry developments. Cadets learn in a small group environment as well as receiving one-to-one mentoring.

“Cadets have to spend time in the workshop and killing house, train their own dogs and break in their own horse as well as do all the mustering on horseback. But they also learn about new technologies such as our feed master system as well as participating in on farm porina and progeny trials. The cadetship has a large theory component which is growing more intensive, and is a reflection on farming as a whole. The industry is changing quickly and we want to expose cadets to as much new technology as we can while they’re learning.”

Tom Goodger, Training Manager

The academic part of the Smedley programme is delivered by the Eastern Institute of Technology (EIT) Tairāwhiti Campus. Upon completion cadets are awarded a Certificate in Agriculture Levels 3, 4 or 5. In addition, Rabobank funded bursaries may be awarded to graduating cadets going on to undertake agricultural diploma and degree courses at either Lincoln or Massey Universities.

Operating as both a commercial farm and a self-funded training facility, the practical and theory based training is structured around the farming calendar so that training is relevant to what cadets are doing on the farm at the time. Cadets commence their cadetship mid-January.

The Station bounds the Ruahine Forest Park where recreational activities such as tramping, hunting and fishing opportunities abound. Cadets are taught four-wheel-driving and gun safety by industry leaders.



“From the start of October right through to December I would receive at least one call a week from farmers across the country trying to source Smedley cadets to work on their farms. This speaks volumes of the calibre of young farmer’s that graduate from the Smedley training programme and how highly their skills are regarded within the industry.”

Terry Walters, Station Manager 2002-2015



“Our staff have practical hands-on experience over a wide range of tasks whether it’s building a cover on the yards or harvesting our own velvet. Our workshop manager can build or fix just about anything and who better to learn fencing from than a former world champion fencer who can also butcher and drive a digger. We teach our cadets that to be a successful farmer you need to be adaptable and have the ability to turn your hand to whatever situation you are faced with.”

Rob Evans, Station Manager

“We provide nutritious and fulfilling meals that sustain the cadets both physically and mentally for a busy day on farm. Where possible we source and use local produce including our own homekill, wild pork and venison that the cadets have processed themselves. Cadets are welcomed into the kitchen to learn basic food hygiene and meal preparation.”

**Arthur Samuels and Kerry Cartmel,
Station Cooks**



Station Managers,
Rob and Jenn Evans

Our team

Former cadet Rob Evans and his wife Jenn have managed Smedley Station since August 2015, continuing on in more recent years from Terry Walters (2002-2015), Jerry Jeromsen (1991-2002) and Graham Lunt (1971-1991).

Rob grew up on a farm at Culverden in North Canterbury before moving with his family to Ohingaiti near Taihape in 1991. He boarded at Whanganui City College before being accepted into Smedley for the 1998 intake. Rob was also a former New Zealand junior rugby player until injury forced him to retire. Jenn grew up on a dairy farm in Waikite Valley and moved to Flemington, Central Hawke’s Bay in 1990. Before taking up their role as managers Rob and Jenn’s farming career has been centered around Central Hawke’s Bay. They have three school aged children.

Having been a cadet 1998-99, Rob has firsthand experience of cadet life on Smedley Station.

Rob and Jenn are fully supported in their role by the full time training manager, three block managers, a maintenance/fencing manager, workshop manager and two station cooks. Staff are highly skilled, experienced and well regarded within in their roles.

Over and above the day to day running of Smedley, the station engages the services of a professional farm consultant, the Howard Estate Advisory Board has an active role in advising on Station matters, and the Public Trust provides governance and corporate support.

Staff are actively encouraged and supported to pursue professional development opportunities ranging from industry accreditation to completing diploma and degree courses.

“Smedley Station is an iconic Central Hawke’s Bay institution. Whenever possible we deal with local businesses and use local contractors. It’s not uncommon to see our cadets and staff helping out other local farmers in times of need or assisting at community events such as dog trials and the A&P show. Our cadets are grounded and respectful for it.”

Rob Evans, Station Manager



How to apply

Applicants must be above 16 and under 20 years of age and studying in at least their third year of secondary education. Application packs can be downloaded from Smedley's website www.smedley.ac.nz. Applications generally close the end of July each year (check date on website).

"A farming background is not essential however out of a wide range of qualities sought two must stand out - a passion for farming and they must be a team player."

Pat Portas, Howard Estate Advisory Board Chairman

Two open days are held at Smedley Station each year. Anyone intending to apply for a cadetship is strongly recommended to attend. Parents are also welcome. The dates and times of the open days are advised on Smedley's website.

Approximately 80-100 applications are received annually from across New Zealand for the 11 cadetships. Those applicants selected for an interview are interviewed at Smedley Station by the Howard Estate Advisory Board. Interviews are normally held at the start of September each year.

Do I have to pay to attend Smedley?

No. Smedley is a self-funding training facility. Cadets receive a small educational bursary while training.

Can females apply?

Yes. Smedley has had a number of female cadets graduate over the years. Cadets are selected on their own merits regardless of whether they are male or female. Separate accommodation and bathroom facilities are provided within the main hostel for female cadets.

Do I have to play rugby?

No, however one of the most important attributes of a Smedley cadet is being a team player. Being part of a rugby team, whether you play or not, carry the water or cheer from the sidelines encourages commitment and team comradery.

Do I need to bring my own dog and horse?

Smedley breeds its own horses and supplies a team of working horses. Cadets may break in a horse in their second year. A huntaway is required at the start of the second year, followed by a heading dog when ready.

"Learning respect for the land and farming in harmony with the environment is an important aspect of the cadet's education. Smedley Station has an ongoing programme of planting and retiring native bush areas into QEII National Trust covenants. The station won the East Coast Ballance Farm Environment Awards in 2013 and the Silver Fern Farms Hawke's Bay Farmer of the Year in 2009."

Pat Portas,
Howard Estate Advisory Board Chairman

"We don't hand cadets ready-to-work dogs and horses. The cadets know if they put the time and effort in to train them right, they'll reap the rewards. It's about learning to take pride in your work. We also encourage cadets to enter competitive fencing, shearing and dog trialling events. It's not about winning, but applying self discipline and striving to be the best you can possibly be."

Rob Evans, Station Manager





Roles of the Howard Estate Advisory Board and the Public Trust

Smedley was bequeathed by Josiah Howard in January 1919, to his majesty the King, without restriction, but in confidence that the Government of New Zealand would use the property as a foundation or endowment for the purposes of agricultural education. The original Howard Estate Act was passed in October 1919, providing that the lands be held by the Public Trustee in trust for the Monarch, as a permanent endowment for the purposes of agricultural education.

In 1927 an amendment was passed to the Howard Estate Act establishing the Howard Estate Advisory Board. The functions of the Board are to advise the Public Trust on matters concerning the administration and management of Smedley, the expenditure of money and to perform such other functions and duties as are conferred on it under the Howard Estate Act.

The Board comprises of six members appointed by the Governor-General on the nominations of the Hawke's Bay organisations of: Federated Farmers, Hawke's Bay Secondary School Principals' Association, Rural Local Bodies and Chambers of Commerce, Urban Local Bodies and Chamber of Commerce, Agricultural & Pastoral Societies; and The Smedley Ex-Cadets' Association.

Smedley Station is the largest farm administered by Public Trust.

Smedley Station is a registered charity.

Management:

Station Managers
Rob and Jenn Evans Ph: 06 856 5725
smedley.stn@xtra.co.nz

Training Manager
Tom Goodger Ph: 06 856 5890
smedley.tutor@xtra.co.nz

Howard Estate Advisory Board:

Smedley Ex-Cadets Association (Chairman)
Pat Portas Ph: 06 855 8330

Agricultural & Pastoral Associations
James Parsons Ph: 06 858 6441

Federated Farmers
Shaun Baxter Ph: 06 376 2744

Rural Local Bodies & Chambers of Commerce
Hugh Pearse Ph: 06 858 4253

Hawke's Bay Secondary School Principals' Association
Russell Dever Ph: 06 837 3844

Urban Local Bodies & Chambers of Commerce
Michelle Monteith Ph: 027 328 3353

Howard Estate Advisory Board Secretary
Vicki Winlove Ph: 06 858 8031

Public Trust:

Farms Project Manager
Tony Shea Ph: 06 974 6121

Ex-Cadets Association:

President
Paul Robottom Ph: 06 856 6636

Ex-Cadets Association

The Smedley Ex-Cadets Association is an integral link between the history of the Station and present day community. The aim of the Association is to provide a link for past cadets to maintain contact with each other and build networks across New Zealand and abroad. Membership covers a vast array of year groups and members are regularly invited to meet through events such as dog trials, an AGM and reunions.

The Smedley Foundation Trust

The Smedley Foundation Trust is a registered charity with the aim of receiving and administering donations made to Smedley to support the training of

New Zealand's best future farmers. Trustees are elected by the Howard Estate Advisory Board and Smedley Ex-Cadets Association while the Public Trust acts as a custodial trustee.

There are many ways ex-cadets, friends of Smedley and corporates can support the Foundation: cash donations (donations over \$5 are tax deductible), bequests, gifts in kind, scholarships, loans (lend the Foundation a capital sum, interest free for a period of time and the Foundation will earn income tax free), family trusts (include as a beneficiary and make tax free distributions) or establish your own charitable trust to support a range of causes and the Smedley Foundation could be one such cause.

To make a donation or for more information on how to support the Foundation, contact the Farms Project Manager.





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