

An Investigation into the Aspirations, Governance and Management Challenges of Māori Farming Trusts

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This paper investigates areas for possible improvement in the governance and management of large New Zealand Māori dairy farm businesses. Building on the innovative practices of their tūpuna (ancestors) Māori are defining their own aspirations, realities and goals in the dairy farming world and their accompanying challenges, as expressed by individuals and collectives currently engaged in Māori Dairy farm businesses.

Māori strategic plans and business values place emphasis on relationships, responsibilities, reciprocity and respect. These are exemplars of a Māori world-view, which explicitly acknowledges particular historic and cultural contexts. The Māori way of doing business is described in this study as having a Quadruple Bottom Line of Profit, People, Environment and Community business objectives. More specifically, 'Māori farms often have an inverted Quadruple Bottom Line. People, Environment and their Community often come before Profit...but without Profit none of it happens.' Māori Trust farms have different strategic objectives and are not solely profit focused, but poor governance may explain why some Māori farming families fail to meet their business objectives.

Māori are genuine leaders of dairy farm environmental management, due in part to their attitudes to land ownership, business values and holistic world views. The top tier of Māori farming trusts comprises fast growing enterprises, which are rapidly improving business performance. Their expertise and governance of large corporate farms has much to offer other farming businesses.

Keywords: Strategic management, business values, large farm business, New Zealand, dairy farming, quadruple bottom line, indigenous, social capital, environment, entrepreneurship.

1. Introduction

Farm business governance is concerned with strategic leadership (to achieve the purpose or mission of the business) whereas management controls tactical and operational decision making. Governance is about effective collective decision making to enhance business performance, and is based on the process of getting advice to provide a better perspective (Tapsell and Woods 2010). Business failure is often attributed to poor governance. Māori agribusiness is being criticized for under-performance. Is this a governance issue? Māori Farming Trusts provide a unique case study into the governance of large farming businesses.

Today Māori freehold dairy farms produce 8–10% of New Zealand dairy production. Large management entities (greater than 1500ha) make up 60% of Māori land; there are 50 incorporations and 92 Trusts. The majority of Māori land quality is generally low, with lower than average natural fertility and more challenging terrain. A number of recent studies (White 1997, Kingi 2000, Te Puni Koriri 2010 and 2011, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) 2011, Clough 2011, Bird 2012) have sought to better understand how Māori freehold land is currently governed, managed and operated. These studies illustrate that the reasons for underperformance are complex.

Māori Trust farms are in business to make money, however the long-term and intergenerational ownership places considerable emphasis on both developing their people and protecting the environment in which they farm. Maintaining and strengthening one's 'cultural development and traditions' as part of farm business mission statements is perhaps unique to Indigenous peoples rather than European/Pākehā farmers.

The performance of New Zealand Māori agribusiness is not solely related to financial decisions but includes the social construct of social, environmental, cultural and spiritual objectives which at times are in competition. The aspiration is that Māori businesses such as dairy farms can be seen as value-creating, but to be effective requires leadership and communication. There is much to learn from better understanding the relational wisdom of indigenous Māori Family/Collective Business (Nicholson, Woods and Hēnare 2012).

This paper foregrounds the importance of the 'quadruple bottom-line' identified by participants, as opposed to a dominant Anglo-New Zealand business of 'profit/production-maximising'. This preliminary scoping study investigates areas for possible improvement in the governance and management of large Māori dairy farm businesses.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten people directly associated with Māori Farming Trusts and Incorporations. Those interviewed were Māori farmers (trustees, board members, beneficiary owners and managers) and rural professionals working with Māori dairy farm Trusts and Incorporations. There is considerable Māori farming activity in this area; 41 Māori Incorporations and Trusts farming 174,000 hectares of land (mostly dairying and forestry). These are farm systems in transition.

All interviewees selected were very familiar with Māori farming businesses and involved with governance and/or management of those businesses. It was considered that they would be information rich and provide illuminating insights.

The key research question was how Māori Trusts establish farm business goals/Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and how those goals are communicated to the farm management/consultancy teams and shareholders.

2. Indigenous Governance and Māori Entrepreneurship

The Māori economy has a long and flourishing history, and connections between people, and between land and people, have always been foundational to Māori well-being. The whānau, the primary social unit of Māori society, often consisted of three or four generations at any one time. Nicholson, Woods and Hēnare (2012) describe the concept of 'familiness', which denotes the distinct set of resources held within the family firm that has the potential to create competitive advantage. Māori business governance shares some tenets with family business, whereby owners value the goals of good governance in both the business and in the family: Peace,

cohesiveness, effective conflict resolution, and freedom to nurture the positive elements of heritage and pursue shared objectives and values (Aronoff and Ward 2011). Families in business together have powerful motivation to govern themselves well.

In examining Māori entrepreneurial behaviour, Tapsell and Woods (2010) proffer that where Māori innovation occurs—in farming and elsewhere—there is an interaction between the young opportunity seeking entrepreneur (Potiki) and the elder statesperson (Rangatira). The interplay between these two key members of the whānau is illustrated by the double spiral (Takarangi), a spiral of creation leading to innovations that blend the traditional with the new ideas (Tapsell and Woods 2010). The roles of the Rangatira/elder and Potiki/entrepreneur are complementary as they seek a balance between elements of chaos and stability, old and new thinking, all within the context of customary practice. Rangatira are responsible for maintaining kin identity through adversity. In this way tribal heritage and the interests of ancestors and descendants are protected.

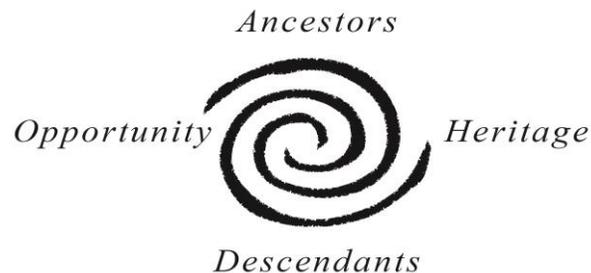


Figure 2 Takarangi (Overall et al, 2010: 156)

Tapsell and Woods' (2010) and colleagues' (Overall et al 2010; Hēnare, Lythberg and Woods 2014) emerging Indigenous entrepreneurship theory builds on the work of entrepreneurship behavioural theorists such as Joseph Schumpeter and Israel Kirzner (Henry 2007). Tapsell and Woods' (2008) linking of Kirzner's work to Personal Construct Theory (Kelly 1970, Bannister and Fransella 1971) is compelling as it puts the entrepreneur at the centre and in control of the innovation activity. Personal Construct Theory provides a theoretical understanding of the nature of learning and illustrates the importance of the learning, trust and relationships in farmer decision making, as reported by Phillips (1982, 1985).

The Māori entrepreneurial process is one of construction, exploration, experimentation, evaluation and exploitation of profitable opportunities to create something of value (as economic profit, and for people, environment and community), taking into account risk, alertness to opportunity and the need for innovation (Tapsell and Woods 2010). Māori entrepreneurs operate from a world-view that explicitly acknowledges the particular historical and cultural context (Tapsell and Woods 2010) within a continuum of self-organisation. If both partners (Rangatira and Potiki) are not interacting there is little progress and a potential for crisis. There is potential conflict between this entrepreneurship model and Māori Trust governance structures, raising questions of the appropriateness of imposing a European style governance structure onto Māori businesses.

Traditional indigenous communities such as Māori hold collectivist principles. Māori entrepreneurial activity is underpinned by social objectives to improve the wealth and wellbeing for the community, not just the individual (Henry 2007: 542). Pākehā (European New Zealanders) entrepreneurship differs from Māori entrepreneurship along the individualism–collectivism spectrum. The Māori ‘harmonious collectivists’ base their aspirations upon the community expectations of the group (Henry 2007).

This holistic view sees that spirituality, natural environments, society and culture are all interconnected processes that cannot be seen in isolation (Spiller, Pio, Erakovic and Hēnare 2011). Barrett-Ohia (2009) used a proverb to illustrate these holistic relationships: “My house has four cornerstones. When one corner is weak the whole house is jeopardized”. Such holistic and multi-dimensional approaches are based on an ethic of care (Spiller, Erakovic, Hēnare and Pio 2011). Māori values demonstrate a relational view of the world and a commitment to develop reciprocal relationships of respect and care to engender belonging. Māori businesses draw upon Māori values such as Kotahitanga (unity), Wairuatanga (spirituality), Whakapapa (genealogy), Aroha (care, empathy, charity and respect) and Manaaki (respect and kindness) in practice to endow a sense of belonging to each other and the natural world. The concept of ‘relational wealth’ or ‘social capital’ is about creating value for the entire network of stakeholders, through cooperation—a decentralised power and authority to build a consensus. For Māori, connectedness and relational wisdom are core values of the emerging Māori economy, for ‘People are the Land and the Land is the People’ (Durie 2003).

3. Historical background to Māori land tenure

In 1840, NZ Māori owned 66 million hectares of land. By 1896 this had declined to 11 million hectares of land, and by 1996 only 3 million hectares remained in Māori ownership (Gillies 2006).

It is widely acknowledged that the European arrival in New Zealand generated what Lorenzo Veracini has coined ‘founding violence’, experienced by many colonized peoples and characterized as disregard for indigenous peoples, land, social structures, customs and safety (Panoho 2006; Boast 2008).

The New Zealand government had a program of confiscating Māori land to reward militia troops and new settlers; in Waikato in 1864, 1.3 million hectares of Māori land were taken for this purpose. European buyers wanted the best agricultural land available (King 2003). As Māori land was confiscated and fragmented, Māori re-settlement was often made on lower quality land. In the early nineteenth century, Māori settlements had been built around family or hapū membership. In some regions, Māori retained only a fraction of their original land area. Often, Māori were left owning the ‘Unimproved Value’ of the land while lessees farmed it in return for statutory rentals, which were infrequently reviewed (Sanderson 2000).

3.1 Customary Māori Land Tenure

Māori belief and understanding is that land is permanent and human life is transient, as reflected in the Māori proverb “man disappears but the land remains” that describes Māori holistic values and respect for the land. Māori considered their association with land in terms of “belonging to rather than owning [it]” (Kingi 2008). Land was regarded by Māori as a communally owned collective good and was treated with respect, owing to its possessing economic and spiritual qualities (Henry 2007).

Māori society is hierarchically organized, with clearly defined roles and practices (tikanga) observed by those positioned within the different layers. The core of these layers are the whānau (extended families), which combined under common ancestry forming the central social, economic and political units of Māori society called hapū (a collective of whānau that share genealogical links) (Tapsell and Woods 2010). The whānau (extended family) usually held the rights to land.

The tribal Marae (the ceremonial courtyard) remains the focus of Māori society. Among other things, the Marae holds customary authority over surrounding land. So long as the Marae has survived, the kin group's identity to its ancestral estates is said to have endured (Tapsell 2002). The Rangatira (Elder Statesman/kin group leader) control the Marae based forums, which centre on the core cultural values of whakapapa (genealogy) and tikanga (customs, traditions and protocols of behavior), and the performative delivery, reception, exchange and use of 'treasures and learning passed down from the ancestors'. Through these lenses tribal identity is continually refocused.

Where agriculture is concerned, 'the Māori way' describes the collective will of Māori and modes of work and productivity of kinship groups (Hēnare 2011). Traditional and oral history reports prepared by Hēnare and colleagues (2009, 2010, and 2013) observe that philosophically speaking, Māoritanga refers to Māori culture-society and its four well-beings; spiritual, ecological, kinship, and economic. These map well onto the quadruple bottom-line identified in this study—Profit, People, Environment and Community—and suggest that the wisdom of tūpuna or ancestors pervades contemporary practice.

3.2 The Treaty of Waitangi

The NZ Treaty of Waitangi (1840) is the agreement, in Māori and English, that was made between the British Crown and about 540 Māori Rangatira (chiefs).

In the early stages of colonization, most of the Crown's policies had negative impacts on Māori society, including loss of land (Bassett et al 1994). Māori have for nearly 200 years attempted to gain recognition of their rights under the Treaty of Waitangi. However, before the 1970s it was not an operative document (Panoho and Stablein 2005). In 1975 the Waitangi Tribunal was established to consider claims by Māori against the Crown regarding breaches of principles of the Treaty. Since 1985 the tribunal has been able to consider Crown acts and omissions dating back to 1840. The Treaty therefore informs the intergeneration discourse of Māori and the Crown and its governments on matters to do with economic development and politics (Hēnare, Lythberg and Woods 2014).

Any discussion of Māori entrepreneurial activity (or lack thereof) must acknowledge the impact of colonization and the Treaty of Waitangi (Tapsell and Woods 2010; Overall, Tapsell and Woods 2010).

4. Farm Business Governance

Good governance, management and operational efficiency are critical to all dairy farm businesses. Large Māori family farms have corporate structures with large numbers of shareholders. The different roles of governance, management and operations need to be separate. This is how mature governance differs from 'founder-led businesses where there is no distinction between roles' (Lockhart 2011a). These roles often get confused; Lockhart (2011) argues that immediate improvements could be achieved if the Board and management roles were conducted

independently of each other. A good Board process allows differences to be addressed and bridges built both horizontally and vertically (Irving, Kolb, Shepherd and Woods 2009).

Lockhart adds that independent thought is a requisite for effective collective decision making, and argues that good governance is achieved where governance is defined as effective collective decision making resulting in exemplary company (business) performance (Lockhart 2011). The selection of directors needs to be based on how their competencies and behavioural characteristics complement each other.

Governance Boards exist for purposes other than compliance (Lockhart 2011): effective governance requires accountability between shareholders and the business (Aronoff and Ward 2011), and reporting business direction and performance would be of value to debt providers (Lockhart 2011).

Irving et al (2009) offer a model that demystifies governance by identifying its three key roles and the activities of each: the key components of governance are strategy, infrastructure and monitoring. The Board or Trustees decide the business strategy, and the key policies ensure there is adequate resourcing to achieve the strategic goals. To monitor the business, the Board/Trustees must ensure they are properly informed on the performance and state of the business.

At the 'Top End' (MAF 2011 Tier 1 farms) the Māori Farming Trusts are both professionally governed, managed and are very profitable. A good example is '**Wairarapa Moana**' <http://www.wairarapamoana.org.nz/> where the vision, strategic plan and business values are clearly stated on their website for all 3000 stakeholders.

Kapenga M Trust <http://kapengamtrust.Māori.nz/> has a clear Vision Statement and their Strategic Plan includes five points that drive the direction of the farming business:

- The retention of the land.
- Maintaining the unity within Kapenga M.
- Maintaining the authority and leadership of the Trust.
- Encourage young people to participate in the Trust.
- Promote farming amongst our young people.

The **Kapenga M Trust** was established in 1981. The Trust's 915 shareholders are of Tūhourangi descent and own a total of 1,858 ha. The 'core drivers' of the business are all about farm business management.

At the 'Top End' (Tier 1 farms (MAF 2011)) of Māori Farming Trusts there is no doubt that the business vision and values are clearly communicated to owners, beneficiaries, consultancy team/farm managers and farm staff. In contrast, many of the 'under-performing' farms have low profitability and poor cash-flow (Clough 2011, Bird 2012), and although generally conservative regarding debt, struggle to gain access to additional capital (ANZ 2014).

However it is unclear what proportion of the Māori Farming Trusts have good effective governance and management systems, nor whether it was good governance, excellent management or leadership that allowed the 'top Trusts' to perform at this high level (Lockhart

2014). The modern European corporate structures and processes, which the Māori Farming Trusts must comply, are not part of Māori culture or decision making.

New Zealand farmers and advisors tend to judge farm business success on very narrow production and profitability criteria. Capital gain is very important to most farmers but as Māori land is not sold, capital gain is not a business driver for Māori. In terms of priorities, profit is often seen as the fourth priority. Just having secured land ownership and control (post-colonialism) is in itself very important. These values and drivers of business are different from mainstream New Zealand farming businesses, but they are neither unique nor untenable.

5. Findings

Interviewing 10 well-informed respondents has provided valuable insight into the current state of Māori Farming Trusts' governance and management. Wairarapa Moana and Kapenga M Trusts are exemplars of excellent farm business governance and management.

Wairarapa Moana's Vision Statement reflects the long-term needs and aspirations for their people and families, such as community, health and well-being, educational achievements, cultural development and capability. This is a good example of 'developing social capital' to create competitive advantage (Nicholson, Woods and Hēnare 2012).

The Strategic Plan (farms, hydro and forestry) clearly sets out tasks, performance indicators and expected outcomes. The farm staff were all included in developing the "Farm Business Values statement" and the finished document is included in their individual employment contracts. On-farm manager meetings are weekly, and these are supported by group emails and the "AgHub" intranet system where managers report weekly and the farms are benchmarked within the farm business. <http://www.onefarm.ac.nz/resources/webinars/showrecent/52>

The business values focus on relationships, responsibilities, reciprocity and respect. This is an exemplar of a Māori world-view, which explicitly acknowledges the particular historic and cultural context (Tapsell and Woods 2010). The Strategic Plan is to act as a guide to how the Trust can protect the environment, and sustain, grow and preserve its history and future. The strategic plan illustrates the spiral or matrix of values 'He Korunga o nga Tikanga' as envisaged by (Nicholson, Woods and Hēnare 2012).

The Kapenga M Trust's goals meet the dual imperative of retaining the land and strengthening the cultural connections. This exemplifies the principle of Kaitiaki—being good caretakers of the land and passing it on in a better state for future generations while honouring past ancestors. Aspirations are directly linked to core values of the Trust. Aspirations seem also to be linked to the current way in which the land is used. The ideal was a balance between a viable business and the maintenance of the owners' cultural connections.

The top 'performing' Trusts have good financial returns, which are enabling them to take advantage of investment opportunities and invest in education. Such farms have high equity and are rapidly growing.

There was consensus among the interviewees that effective governance was critical to delivering the owners' aspirations. This group of well-informed rural professionals also expressed confidence in the Māori governance that they had contact with, and in the rate of improvement of that governance. It is also true that in this study 'poor governance' was given as the main reason

for 'poor Māori Farm Trustee' performance, especially the lack of farm business management skills of the Trustees.

There is however a community optimism that: "Māori farming business in general has massive potential – they've got plans, they have ambition, they want to grow and they've got governance that's improving all the time across the board—some are already excellent."

The strategic management plans of the Māori Farming Trusts prioritise the development of social capital to create competitive advantage. There is clear evidence of culture/language (Ancestral/elders) being blended with new ideas/technology (entrepreneurship) to create innovative decision making and strong business performance. Strong business performance ensures better education and welfare of descendants as well as environmental protection.

5.1 Key factors identified with 'under-performing' Māori Farm Trusts

It is important to quantify what is meant by the term 'under-performing'. In part, it is not being as profitable as the potential for that land class, in other words not having a high enough return on assets (Clough 2011). The MAF (2011), Clough (2011) and Bird (2012) studies did not judge Māori nor non-Māori farm businesses on the basis of 'Quadruple Bottom-line objectives', but on Anglo-NZ profit/productivity criteria only.

Tier 2 Māori land-owners (less profitable farm businesses as defined by MAF (2011) have weaker links to the land either because of living some distance from the land, because the land was previously leased to Pākehā farmers or for forestry, or because the owners have less agricultural and business skills and knowledge. Their aspirations are being shaped by the current or recent past use and output of the land. Culture remains of equal importance to these farmers as making money, but being viable is different from seeking good financial returns, and there is a greater possibility of conflict and trade-offs between culture, people and profitability.

The following ten opportunities for growth emerged from this scoping study:

1. The challenge of a clear vision

The better performing Trusts were deemed to have governance totally separate from the management, and to have a very clear business vision. Within these Trusts the governance team is prepared to make full use of their accountants and advisors to develop the vision and really critique those decisions they're making. The struggling Trusts don't have that clear vision or clear goals outlined. Some Trustees confuse the roles of governance (strategic management) with farm management (tactical and operational decision making).

2. The challenge of understanding Māori Governance

The strategic direction needs to be driven by Māori values. Māori agribusiness has a unique opportunity to incorporate 'whānaungatanga' to create a competitive advantage (Nicholson, Woods and Hēnare (2012). Leadership by either the Trust or Rangatira, and evidence of well-supported entrepreneurship, are core assets that separate thriving and struggling Māori businesses (Tapsell and Woods 2010).

3. The challenge of due diligence

The rural professionals interviewed believe it is important for Māori governance boards to be able to assess the implementation of the strategies used within their businesses. Trustees need to know that their substantial assets are being used efficiently. Not all Māori governance boards have the farm business management expertise to critically assess outcomes of strategic decisions. There is a poor understanding of basic dairying and the appropriate KPIs, farms are not achieving the production goals set at the time of conversion to dairying.

4. The challenge of knowledge capacity for governance

Some less successful Trustee Boards lack clear, well-informed leadership, and the Farm Business Management skills and knowledge amongst the Trustees is insufficient to ensure success. Many who are in Trustee positions are now older people who were elected on the basis of their standing within the hapū (a collective that shares genealogical links), not on their dairy farming knowledge. The lesser Trusts were either relying too heavily on consultants and advisors and not up-skilling their own expertise—either way, they were not in a position to adequately question decisions or judge outcomes.

5. The challenge of quality of leadership

Strong leadership is required to give clear direction to the business. Leaders need to fully inform shareholders/beneficiaries, management and the operational staff. Resolving Boardroom differences of opinion can be difficult for Māori (Panoho 2012).

6. The challenge of the relationship between the Chairman and the CEO

Respondent-2: “The relationship between the chairman and the CEO is the key issue in the Trust’s success as it is this group that drives the business and the decision making. This relationship is critical for the consultant too.”

7. The challenge of investing in Māori capability

Respondent-5: “It seems like being between a rock and a hard place – if you don't have the expertise, you need to get advice. If you invest too much in it then you divest the responsibility, you're never actually building the capital there yourself. Māori need to invest more time in building knowledge capability in the younger Māori people.”

8. The challenge of appointing Trustees not on skills or business acumen but on the basis of lineage

Most Māori farming Trusts appoint Trustees for ‘life’ on the basis of standing within the hapū. A smaller number of Trusts appoint Trustees on a rotational basis. Some outside Accountants are appointed to Trustee Boards, which could create possible areas of conflict of interests Lockhart (2011a). This can often mean that decision making is slow and arduous and may falter.

9. The challenge of using Dairy Farm Business Management Benchmarking and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

There was universal agreement by interviewees that all Māori Farm Trusts need to engage with the DairyNZ industry ‘Dairybase’ and benchmark.

Respondent-1: “Māori farm infrastructure is usually very good as it is seen as a long-term investment. However management decisions are a challenge. What they need is appropriate

KPI's that they can benchmark their operations against and then they can ask their adviser the questions.”

10. The challenge of using outside Farm Consultants

The Farm Consultant is a key person, especially those with farm business management skills and good facilitation expertise. Consultants who have built a sound reputation amongst Māori appear ‘over-stretched’ and unable to meet demand. There was criticism of the manner in which some consultants operate and of the dairy farm management expertise of others working with Māori.

The problem for Māori is no longer ‘do they have the resources?’ It is about how to develop those resources to get the best value for owners from the particular resources in a sustainable way. The knowledge gap has been identified as farm business management. A very poignant comment about current Māori capacity was that “We need more whānau (Extended family) working in the business but the reality is that the available pool of suitable people is very small. I believe more than 50% of Māori leave school with no qualification then that has flow on effects into all industries not just agriculture.”

6. Conclusions

There has been little research into rural business governance and the relationship between good governance and subsequent business performance has not yet been established (Lockhart 2011a). There is also very little data available on the productivity of the Māori economy. However, when comparisons have been made between Māori and other dairy farms they have focused on profitability and production, neither of which feature prominently in the Māori strategic priorities. Has the comparison really been with ‘similar’ businesses?

Māori business values focus on relationships, responsibilities, reciprocity and respect. Their strategic management plans illustrate a matrix of values (Nicholson, Woods and Hēnare 2012) and emphasise the development of social capital to create competitive advantage. Such strategic plans reflect the Māori vision and aspirations to sustain and grow the land base, provide leadership and guidance for the whānau, develop capacity and resources within the Trusts, and to perform better as businesses.

According to the Māori way of doing business; “they have ‘Quadruple Bottom Line of Profit, People, Environment and Community’ business objectives. It is very important to understand that Māori have a very long-term view of business and land ownership, ensuring that the land (whenua) will never be sold. This impacts on both strategic and tactical decisions. It changes the vision from short- to medium-term to long-term. Māori in general have a conservative view toward borrowings and debt, but these attitudes are driven by a feeling of responsibility on behalf of the whānau to protect ownership of the land. Most Māori Trust farms are located on lower land use categories and have only been established as dairy farms in recent times. Māori Trust farms have different strategic objectives that reflect their values and world-view.

A separate question is: Can the Māori Trust dairy farms be more productive and more profitable? The answer is a definite yes, and it needs to be acknowledged that the top performing Māori Trust dairy farms already outperform similar farms. Yet Māori leaders acknowledge that: “Generally speaking, Māori farming or Māori resources are under-performing” MPI (Māori Agribusiness Forum (MPI) 2013). The reality is that it is very difficult—and accentuates management challenges—for a Māori trust to deliver on the People, Community and

Environmental outcomes if Profit is poor or insufficient. What the Māori trusts need is **appropriate KPI's**, industry-wide, that they can benchmark their operations against so they can challenge their advisers with well-informed questions.

Much of this study has been related to the farm business management skills of Māori Trust Governance and Management. There are talented young Māori getting tertiary educations, and receiving Trust scholarships to support their higher level education. There should be more encouragement of young Māori to seek degree training in Agricultural Science, Agribusiness and especially Farm Business Management.

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