



# Fonterra - “if the CEO and board are vocal about gender equality, then others will listen”

15 March 2021

Fonterra Co-operative Group Limited is a New Zealand multinational dairy co-operative owned by around 10,000 New Zealand farmers. The company is responsible for approximately 30 percent of the world's dairy exports and with revenue exceeding NZ\$20 billion, is New Zealand's largest company. It was founded in 2001, and employs 19,000 people across the world.

Fonterra has done a lot of work to progress gender equality in the agriculture industry, and work closely with the GenderTick, the Rainbow Tick, Global Women, and Champions for Change in order to hold themselves accountable.

Fonterra regularly assess their gender pay gap, and report on it annually in their Sustainability Report, which is available publicly. They assess their gap by looking at like for like roles and at the median pay for all permanent employees. They then analyse any gaps and the factors that may explain any differences. Their People and Culture teams work closely with people managers to make sure a gender lens is applied for recruitment and salary reviews, they offer supportive parental leave packages, and they have effective sexual harassment policies and processes, which all impact gender equity.

“The messages are coming from the top” says Haylee Putaranui Fonterra’s Head of Diversity and Inclusion, “if the CEO and board are vocal about gender equality, then others will listen”. Fonterra’s board has signed up to a 50-50 male-female split at leadership level, and it’s CEO refuses to speak on panels unless they are diverse so as to have fullness of discussions “It’s things like this that seem small, but have a big impact on Fonterra’s people and customers”.

Fonterra works from a New Zealand context even though they work globally, and influence other countries who aren’t as progressive around gender equality. At the moment they have a focus on sharing women’s lived experiences to help educate and make change.