

# Getting to where she wants to go

## Primary Industries Trades Academy (PITA)

Tayla is in year 12 at Wairarapa College and wants to study agricultural science at university. Tayla grew up on a beef and sheep farm outside Masterton and knows that she wants to take the knowledge she has and make it her career.

Last year, following a successful application and interview Tayla was selected to join the Primary Industries Trades Academy (PITA) at Taratahi Agricultural College. She studies one day a week at Taratahi to learn the theory of farming and a work experience placement to a farm where she had to roll up her sleeves and learn on the job.

Tayla is now in her second year of the programme and through her work on the farm is learning about building relationships, how to succeed as a team and is being treated like any other farm worker – like an adult. Tayla is learning real life skills.

The Primary Industries Trades Academy at Taratahi allows Year 11 and 12 students to come onto campus one day a week and learn on the job. Taratahi operates as a farming business where students really feel like they are contributing as if in the work place. At the same time, their efforts and learning are contributing to gaining NCEA Level 2 with a Primary Industries Vocational Pathway – without them buckling under the pressures of the classroom which often leads some students to drop out altogether. Attendance at the PITA is structured to minimise disruption to normal secondary school activities and to maximise tertiary and work placement opportunities.

Tayla's interest is beef and lamb and she says that she is not afraid of handling big cattle nor does she shy away from the tough jobs like fencing. Tayla knows that she has to prove she can do the basics if she wants to further her career with tertiary study and specialise.

"I like that the programme is practical" says Tayla, "and I like that I can learn outside the classroom."



*I enjoy being outdoors  
and working on the farm.  
My path is Green.*

Tayla is getting a solid foundation at Taratahi and it is raising her confidence encouraging her to pursue agricultural education at a higher level.

“This is about practical application and combining qualifications with skills. We encourage our students to see their destination as employment and we inspire them to achieve this. It’s as much about having the right attitude as well as aptitude. Farms become their classrooms and every placement becomes the opportunity for a future job or study,” says Dr Donovan Wearing, CEO at Taratahi.

“Learning in a Trades Academy gives students real life skills and qualifications and using the Vocational Pathways young people can choose their study options and see how it relates to

future job or career options. Students can get relevant qualifications and a Vocational Pathway which will set them up for their next steps, whether it’s into tertiary study, industry training or employment.”

Tayla has younger siblings and she knows she is setting an example to them that if you work hard and focus on a certain career path you can get to where you want to go.

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More than 4,200 senior secondary schools students, from 264 schools are currently enrolled at a Trades Academy this year, in 22 Secondary-Tertiary Programmes throughout New Zealand. Using the Vocational Pathways, students can plan their options from learning to earning.

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