

Media Release

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Innovative Education Project Launched by Pare Hauraki Iwi and Hauraki Plains College

Five Hauraki iwi who own the largest single dairy farming unit in Hauraki joined with the Hauraki Plains College today to launch a significant new education initiative at their Pouarua Dairy Farm near Ngatea on the Hauraki Plains.

Project Papatuanuku (Mother Earth) as the project is called, aims to educate secondary school students in practical farming methods on peat land and the associated science and technology as well as research into increasing productivity while at the same time gaining NZQA qualifications from the college. It is applied real world education on the farm.

This collaborative partnership began today when the iwi shareholders, farm directors and managers were welcomed with a powhiri at the college and was followed by a special ceremony and blessing at the farm by elders of the iwi landowners. They explained the cultural significance of Pouarua Farm and the surrounding landscape to the students and staff of the college who would be working on the land this year.

“Our focus is on allowing us to exercise kaitiakitanga over our natural resources, ensuring they are managed sustainably for future generations”, said Mr John McEnteer, a Director of Pouarua Farm Limited.

“Long term we want to encourage a centre of innovation and learning connected to the science technology and business of farming peat land more productively, benefiting our iwi members who have invested in this land as well as benefiting the general community. This is part of our Treaty of Waitangi Settlement and we are here forever” he said.

Approximately 50 Year 12 Primary Industry and Maori Cultural Studies students are involved in this initial stage of the project which explores how previously peat mined land might be made into a more productive dairy unit or potentially using the land for other uses.

Head of Primary Industries at the College, Sarah Koch, said she was really excited about being involved in Project Papatuanuku. “It is real hands on learning for students as they grapple with the issues of the land”.

“We have around 3,000 native tree seedlings planted and have been exploring bee keeping as one possibility. We hope to involve community people and expert educators such as soil scientists,” she said.

Background

Pouarua Farm Limited is owned by five Pare Hauraki iwi - Ngāti Maru, Ngāti Paoa, Ngāti Tamaterā, Ngāti Tara Tokanui and Te Patukirikiri who purchased the former Landcorp property in 2013 as part of their Treaty of Waitangi Settlement. There are four directors of this company. They are the Hon John Luxton (Chairman), Rick Braddock, Paul Majurey and John McEnteer.

The Pouarua farm is a large 2,200 hectare dairying operation running approximately a 5,000 cow herd spread over eight farm units just north of Ngatea on the Hauraki Plains. The farm is managed by Landcorp under a share milking agreement.

Hauraki Plains College with a student roll of 720 this year is located at Ngatea on the Hauraki Plains. It has a leadership role in supporting students to pathway from primary to secondary school in the Hauraki Plains area as part of the government's Investing in Educational Success (IES) Initiative called Communities of Learning. This project is a further IES initiative, the Teacher Led Innovation Fund. Ngaire Harris is the Principal.

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Photos Attached:



Pare Hauraki Iwi representative Waati Ngamane, Director John McEnteer and Hauraki Plains Students Launch Project Papatuanuku on Pouarua Farm, 10 February 2016.



Rocky King from Hauraki Plains College welcomes Waati Ngamane representing the Pare Hauraki Iwi at Hauraki Plains College, Ngatea 10 February 2016.