

Red Dairy Cow Conference 2026 Itinerary

With the Red Breed, We Succeed

March 2nd to 15th 2026

Package One – Conference Pre Tour

NZD \$3,035 per person twin share | NZD \$595 single room supplement

Package Two – Conference Only

NZD \$1,437.50 per person twin share | NZD \$470 single room supplement

Package Three – South Island Post Tour

NZD \$4,280 per person twin share | NZD \$790 single room supplement

Extra night Queenstown if required (room only)

NZD \$170 per person twin share | NZD \$170 single room supplement

See below for more details, including full itinerary and what is included in each package.

www.reddairyconference2026.co.nz
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Package One – Conference Pre Tour

Arrival Day – Sunday 1 March | Arrive Auckland

Own arrival arrangements into Auckland International Airport today. Clear customs and transfer to your hotel, located by Auckland Airport with a complimentary shuttle service available. Rest of day and evening at your leisure.

Overnight at Heartland Hotel Auckland Airport

Day 1 – Monday 2 March | Auckland – Hamilton

Lunch, Dinner

Meet your English-speaking NZ Agricultural guide who will be with you the duration of the tour. At 8.30am we depart south to the Waikato region where 58 percent of land use is pastoral farming producing more than 25 percent of New Zealand's milk supply.

Visit a farm in Ohinewai - Rosemoor Ayrshire. The stud was established in 1969 when Roger was gifted a registered heifer calf. Today the stud has 140-150 registered Ayrshire cows run on 88 effective hectares. Annual production of 350-370 kg ms per cow however this changes depending on the season and the weather pattern. The herd genetics are based on the traditional New Zealand Ayrshires, with some modern overseas sires used.

Next visit a property in Te Aroha, Kaihere Milking Shorthorns. The herd was founded in the 1920s. At Kaihere they milk 150 cows with a split calving pattern on a 50ha milking platform. All young stock is retained and finished to slaughter. Lunch on-farm.

This evening check into our hotel with a welcome dinner.

Overnight Distinction Hotel Hamilton

Day 2 – Tuesday 3 March | Hamilton – Rotorua

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Following breakfast depart Hamilton and visit a property in Ohaupo, Kiteroa Stud. Established in 1961 by Wally Kite and is farmed today by Zane (son) Marie and family. Today the farm runs 190 purebred Ayrshire cows averaging 480-510 kg ms per cow annually. Kiteroa Stud uses outcross bulls from NZ or overseas genetics over top cow families and their sons. The stud has bred top sires of Bonapart, Bo Pepperoni, Bonny Governor and Bonny Blue Silver who have produced many top daughters on Production and Type.

Visit the Ayrshire farm of Vince Steiner and family. The Brookview herd was established in the 1970s by Vince Steiner who is a 50/50 herd owner sharemilker. Their herd is a total of 550 milkers, with 260 Ayrshire and balance being of Holstein, Jersey and Brown Swiss. Their breeding focus is to chase great cow families and develop them further. Brookview is well renowned in the industry having won the Premier Exhibitor banner 11 times at New Zealand Dairy Expo.

Next visit with the Baxter family. In 1990, Peter and Heather Baxter founded 'Shardville Ayrshires' focusing on breeding top-quality Ayrshire cattle. They carefully select superior Ayrshire semen to enhance the milk production and confirmation of their cows, emphasising functional udders. Their son, Jamie, along with his partner Caitlyn, runs Stenvale Ayrshires. They've gained acclaim in the show circuit, clinching the Supreme Champion Ayrshire title at the 2024 New Zealand Dairy event with their cow 'Stenvale Burs Gem'. Looking ahead to the 2025 season, Jamie and Caitlyn aim to buy the herd and operate as 50/50 sharemilkers on the farm. Lunch on-farm.

Continue through the Waikato and over the Mamaku Range to Rotorua known as the 'thermal wonderland'. This is a region of thermal activity, Māori culture, and forestry.

This evening immerse yourself in Māori culture at a local village with dinner.

Overnight Distinction Hotel Rotorua

Day 3 – Wednesday 4 March | Rotorua – Taranaki

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

An opportunity today to see how important tourism is to the New Zealand economy and to learn about Māori culture and development. Visit Te Puia – the Whakarewarewa Thermal Reserve and the Māori Arts and Crafts Institute where you will see the Māori carvers at work and then explore the Māori buildings. As you are guided around the Reserve you will see boiling mud pools and the mighty Pohutu Geyser. There will also be the opportunity to see the rare "Kiwi bird" – New Zealand's national symbol.

Continue to New Plymouth with lunch on the way and visit Miraka dairy factory. Miraka is the world's first dairy processing company to use renewable geothermal energy, giving one of the lowest manufacturing carbon emissions footprints that there is globally.

Arrive in New Plymouth this afternoon and check in to your hotel. Dinner in the hotel this evening.

Overnight Devon Hotel New Plymouth

Day 4 – Thursday 5 March | Taranaki – Palmerston North

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Taranaki is a well-established dairying region along with many sheep and beef farms in and around the hill country. Visit properties in Stratford and Kaponga today.

Farmed by Ross & Joanna Soffe since 2012, Wee Brae Farm is 200ha, milking 350 dairy cows on a 140 ha milking platform. The herd contains 80 milking shorthorns, with the balance made up of Holstein Friesian, Crossbred, Ayrshire and Guernsey with an annual production of 140-150,000 milk solids.

Next we visit Sanrosa Stud. Gordon and Jonathan Glentworth farm 120 effective hectares, milking 270 cows with an annual production of 600 kg of milk solids. Milking through a 50 bale rotary, they feed 1-1.2 kg of concentrate per milking during the season. The herd is made up of 85% Ayrshire and 15% of Crossbreds and Friesians. The herd is mated to a selection of the best Ayrshire genetics from NZ and Scandinavia. The Kaponga Sanrosa Stud was established in 1977 and Gordon is a two-time president of Ayrshire New Zealand and has chaired its marketing arm, Semayr Breeding Services for more than 20 years. Gordon is a Senior Judge and Traits other than Production (TOP) inspector.

Continue to Manawatu, home to many rural communities and the leading region for agri-food education and research in New Zealand. Check into the hotel this afternoon.

Overnight Copthorne Hotel Palmerston North

Day 5 – Friday 6 March | Palmerston North – Depart or continue Conference

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Depart the hotel after breakfast and travel a short distance to Bunnythorpe.

Northbrook was founded over 90 years ago, and today farmed by David & Johanna Wood and family. On Northbrook they milk 280 cows on a 124 ha milking platform, with production averaging 100,000kg/ms. Northbrook bulls are often selected for the NZMSA Red Breed Genetics scheme.

Next, we visit the Feilding Saleyards for a guided tour with a local farmer. Learn the fascinating history of selling livestock, one of New Zealand's oldest traditions dating back to the 1800s. Wander through the 300 sheep pens and watch the auction in action, while seated in the state-of-the-art cattle rostrum and view the latest computer technology on hand.

This afternoon, visit the Fonterra Research & Development Centre. They have been at the forefront of pioneering advancements in dairy technology, driven by their unwavering commitment to delivering sustainable value from New Zealand's world-renowned milk. They focus on all ages and stages of life while also tackling some of our biggest sustainability challenges and ensuring we produce high quality safe dairy nutrition.

Return to the hotel with some time at leisure. Conference program starts this evening.

Overnight Copthorne Hotel Palmerston North

NZD \$3,035 per person twin share | NZD \$595 single room supplement

Included

- Transport in air conditioned coach
- Twin share accommodation in good quality 4 star hotels
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary
- Professional New Zealand Guide with Agricultural background
- All arrangements for farm and technical visits and meetings
- Attractions including Te Pa Tu Māori Village, Te Puia – Whakarewarewa Māori Arts & Crafts Institute
- New Zealand Government Goods and Services Tax at 15.00%
- Additional transfers separate from the group

Not Included

- Travel insurance
- Meals not itemised above
- Items of a personal nature such as beverages, laundry, telephone

Package Two – Conference Only

Day 5 – Friday 6 March | Palmerston North

Dinner

Participants arrive at Palmerston North.

Meet and greet participants

Transfer to hotel with time to refresh.

This evening attend the Conference opening dinner with Country reports.

Overnight Copthorne Palmerston North

Day 6 – Saturday 7 March | Palmerston North

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today is a full day of conference.

There will be morning and afternoon tea breaks with time to mingle along with lunch. Followed in the evening by the Gala dinner as a buffet style meal with drinks included this evening.

- New Zealand and international Speakers
- Business Meeting
- Lunch
- Afternoon program – finish 4.30pm

Evening - Gala dinner

Overnight Copthorne Palmerston North

Day 7 – Sunday 8 March | Palmerston North

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Following breakfast, depart to farm visits:

Visit brothers Brian and Geoff Hill located in Rongotea Village. View their Wakefield herd, established in 1932. 175 cows being a mix of approximately 80% Ayrshire genetics and the remaining balance mostly Holstein-Friesian. The farm is run on a relatively low input system with all supplementary feed being produced by the owners as part of their wider farming operation.

Next, visit the Tocker Brothers herd, where Zac and Russell low order share milk on their 380-hectare family farm at Tiakitahuna, with one third of the farm being on the Manawatu River floodplain. They milk 720 dairy cows on a traditional NZ spring calving low input grazing system. Quarter of their herd are of Ayrshire and milking shorthorn breeds. They also run a dairy beef system of 300 head and another 300 head of heifers for dairy herd replacement.

Lunch on the farm, then return to the conference room for formal business meetings of the International Red Dairy Breeds Federation

Finish approx. 4pm

Closing buffet dinner

Overnight Copthorne Palmerston North

Day 8 – Monday 9 March | Palmerston North – Depart or continue Post Tour

Breakfast

Transfer to the Airport.

NZD \$1,437.50 per person twin share | NZD \$470 single room supplement

Included

- Transport in air conditioned coach & water
- Twin share accommodation in good quality 4 star hotel
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary
- All arrangements for farm and technical visits and meetings
- New Zealand Government Goods and Services Tax at 15.00%
- Airport transfer at end of conference

Not Included

- Travel insurance
- Items of a personal nature such as beverages, laundry, telephone
- Additional transfers separate from group

Package Three – South Island Post Tour

Day 8 – Monday 9 March | Palmerston North – Christchurch

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Fly from Palmerston North to Christchurch this morning. Known as the "Garden City," Christchurch offers a captivating blend of natural beauty and innovative urban regeneration. The vibrant city centre showcases a harmonious mix of historic architecture and modern developments, a testament to the city's resilience and creativity following the 2011 earthquake.

This afternoon, visit Glenmore Farm, home of Donald and Anne Green. They milk around 1700 cows – two thirds Ayrshires and the rest a mix of crossbreds, Friesians and Friesian cross. The farm is supported by a 140ha lease block located eight kilometres away.

Dinner in your hotel this evening.

Overnight Hotel Ashburton

Day 9 – Tuesday 10 March | Ashburton – Twizel

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

This morning, visit a Red Cow Farm owned by Mark and Jenny McDonald. A 600-cow Milking Shorthorn farm in Mid Canterbury, New Zealand. Mark has been breeding Milking Shorthorns since 1987, making him one of the most prominent breeders of red cattle in New Zealand. Travel via Geraldine and Fairlie, and over Burkes Pass into the McKenzie basin. Sightseeing stops include Lake Tekapo, Church of the Good Shepherd and the Sheepdog Memorial site.

Dinner in your hotel this evening.

Overnight Distinction Hotel Twizel

Day 10 – Wednesday 11 March | Twizel – Queenstown

Breakfast, Lunch

This morning visit High Country King Salmon. Discussion with the manager around the farming of the Salmon. Travel through the Kawerau Gorge to Queenstown, set on the shores of the crystal-clear Lake Wakatipu, surrounded by the dramatic Southern Alps. Lunch and wine tasting enroute. Enjoy the evening at leisure in Queenstown.

Overnight Copthorne Hotel & Resort Lakefront Queenstown

Day 11 – Thursday 12 March | Queenstown – Te Anau***Breakfast, Dinner***

Majority of the day is at your leisure to explore Queenstown. There are many activities that can be pre-booked (at your own expense) that include:

Shot Over Jet, Bungy Jump, Skyline Queenstown Gondola & Luge, Onsen Hot Pools, Remarkable Helicopter Flight, Winery Tours, Queenstown Gardens.

Later in the afternoon depart for Te Anau. Dinner in the hotel this evening.

Overnight Distinction Luxmore Te Anau**Day 12 – Friday 13 March | Te Anau – Doubtful Sound*****Breakfast, Lunch***

A day to discover magnificent Doubtful Sound. Travel by coach a short distance to Lake Manapouri followed by a catamaran cruise from Pearl Harbour to the West Arm. From here you board a coach for a trip over Wilmot Pass to Deep Cove where you embark on another very comfortable catamaran for an unforgettable cruise on Doubtful Sound taking in the beautiful alpine scenery. Travel back over the Wilmot Pass to West Arm and return across Lake Manapouri and then by coach to Te Anau. Dinner at your leisure this evening.

Overnight Distinction Luxmore Te Anau**Day 13 – Saturday 14 March | Te Anau – Queenstown*****Breakfast, Dinner***

Travel back to Queenstown this morning. We will visit the historic gold mining town of Arrowtown. The remainder of the afternoon is at your leisure in Queenstown. This evening embark on a cruise across Lake Wakatipu on the T.S.S. Earnslaw steamship, for a farewell BBQ dinner at the Walker Peak High Country Station.

Copthorne Hotel & Resort Lakefront Queenstown

Day 14 – Sunday 15 March | Queenstown – Depart

Breakfast

Transfer to the airport for your flight home.

NZD \$4,280 per person twin share | NZD \$790 single room supplement

Included

- Transport in air conditioned coach & water
- Domestic flight Palmerston North to Christchurch
- Twin share accommodation in good quality 4 star hotels
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary
- Red Dairy Breeder Guide
- All arrangements for farm & technical visits
- Attractions including Doubtful Sounds Wilderness Cruise, T.S.S. Earnslaw, Winery lunch and wine tasting
- New Zealand Government Goods and Services Tax at 15.00%

Not Included

- Travel insurance
- Meals not itemised above
- Attractions not itemised in inclusions
- Items of a personal nature such as beverages, laundry, telephone
- Additional transfers separate from the group

Extra night Queenstown if required (room only)

NZD \$170 per person twin share | NZD \$170 single room supplement