



Good food, Good life

Synlait

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Innovative Kiwi tech, digital farming and native plantings feature in Nestlé and Synlait's renewed partnership

Nearly 40 Canterbury dairy farmers are working with their processor Synlait and the world's largest food producer Nestlé to reduce emissions and improve on-farm biodiversity.

The three-way partnership's next phase will deepen the use of digital tools to uplift farm efficiency, see up to 90,000 native trees and plants planted and enable the early deployment of, EcoPond, a Canterbury innovation that cuts methane emissions from dairy farms' effluent ponds by over 90%.

Synlait's Chief Revenue Officer Hamish Yates said the partnership's growth is a great example of how businesses can work together to make a real difference to the planet.

"Synlait has a history of pioneering sustainability. This partnership means we, and our farmers, will maintain our leadership position. EcoPond is a scientifically proven 'no brainer' and the efficiency levers are impressive, showing farmers can reduce emissions while maintaining and even improving profitability."

"It has been eye-opening to see the passion Nestlé, as one of the world's largest companies, has for helping New Zealand farmers reduce their emissions. It's a values-led approach that benefits everyone involved and the environment."

The partnership opened commercial opportunities for Synlait to work with Nestlé and is enabling farmers to improve their environmental performance. It will also help both companies meet their emissions targets.

Nestlé aims to achieve net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050 at the latest and recognises the importance of reducing emissions in the dairy sector to achieve this.

Nestlé Global Head of Sustainability Nutrition, Katja Seidenschnur, speaking on a visit to New Zealand, said that partnerships of this kind are instrumental for all parties to reach their greenhouse gas emission targets.

"Dairy sits at the heart of Nestlé's business and at the heart of our climate challenge. Addressing emissions at scale requires partnership – across the value chain and on farm. That's why we're working closely with our dairy suppliers and farmers as part of our Nestlé Dairy Plan to turn ambition into action, through practical approaches to climate, methane and regenerative agriculture."

Delivering a tangible difference for Canterbury

The Synlait farms involved in the partnership are based in Canterbury and will select from a range of emissions mitigations so they implement those that will best suit their farm's system.

Options include:

- EcoPond, a simple and effective treatment service that reduces methane emissions from effluent ponds by over 90% while improving a pond's performance.

- Farm efficiency projects – including the use of a tool that creates a digital twin of their farm and benchmarks its sustainability, profitability and production against others. The tool can also model the impact of doing things differently on a farm, or what happens when new technology is adopted.
- Native tree plantings, with up to a total of 18,500 native trees and plants to be planted on participating farms each year, for the next five years, as part of Synlait’s Whakapuāwai programme which has distributed more than 327,000 native plants since 2019.
- Becoming part of an on-farm biodiversity pilot project to demonstrate what’s possible in a dairy farming environment.
- The onboarding new emissions-reducing technology as it becomes available.

Around 30 of the farms have opted for EcoPond and are among the first farms to be treated in the country.

EcoPond Director Elliot Mercer said Synlait and Nestlé’s support has been crucial to enabling the development and early deployment of the technology.

“This backing helped move the latest version of EcoPond from a prototype into something that is now cutting emissions on New Zealand farms today. We are working toward EcoPond being formally recognised as an approved methane reducing tool by the government’s Greenhouse Gas Inventory which would be a significant milestone.”

Synlait’s Hamish Yates said EcoPond is already making a difference.

“That is one of the reasons we are excited about this technology – its effect is instant. So far, we’ve treated around 30 ponds on Synlait farms, mitigating more than 2,700 tonnes of CO2-equivalent. To put that in perspective, it’s the same as 1,250 cars being taken off the road in under a year. It’s a gamechanger and only the first of many great things to come as a result of this partnership,” concluded Hamish Yates.

You can access video interviews, B-roll and photos of a farm event held to celebrate the partnership in this [Electronic Press Kit](#).

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About Synlait

Synlait is a registered B Corp™ that was founded on disruption – giving farmers choice and pioneering sustainability. We were the first to pay farmers more for reaching best practice targets (including on sustainability) when we established, Lead With Pride™, more than a decade ago. The programme remains market leading. Farmers are independently audited before being certified and the programme’s rigorous standards go beyond New Zealand’s legal requirements for dairy farming. 82% of Synlait farmers have chosen to do the work required to become Lead With Pride™ certified which reflects the fact they are forward thinkers who go above and beyond for their animals, their communities and their environment. Synlait also runs Whakapuāwai, a biodiversity programme, that has distributed more than 327,000 plants across Canterbury since 2019. You can read Synlait’s most recent Integrated Climate Report [here](#).

About Nestle

Nestlé is the world's largest food and beverage company. It is present in 185 countries around the world, and its employees are committed to Nestlé's purpose of enhancing quality of life and contributing to a healthier future. Nestlé offers a wide portfolio of products and services for people and their pets throughout their lives. Its more than 2,000 brands range from global icons like Nescafé and Nespresso to local favourites such as Milo, Allen's and Uncle Tobys. Company performance is driven by its Nutrition, Health and Wellness strategy. Nestlé is based in the Swiss town of Vevey where it was founded more than 150 years ago.

About the partnership

Synlait and Nestlé instigated this partnership in 2024, as part of Nestlé's Dairy Plan. It is a unique three-way partnership, with farmer suppliers, to bring down the cost of emissions reduction tools and accelerate their adoption. The partnership's ultimate target is to reduce participating farms' total emissions by 50% compared to Synlait's FY18 baseline level (which is 0.92 tonnes of CO₂e per tonne of Fat-Protein-Corrected Milk). Since the partnership was first signed, Synlait and Nestlé have onboarded 39 farms, investigated emissions reduction tools for potential inclusion, delivered a successful pilot of EcoPond across 10 farms, rolled out a range of efficiency improvements across 31 farms and started the EcoPond treatment on 29 farms.

About EcoPond

EcoPond™ is a simple and effective effluent pond treatment service that reduces methane emissions from effluent ponds (one of the largest source of emissions on a dairy farm) by over 90% while improving a pond's performance. Lincoln University has completed extensive research validating the effectiveness of EcoPond™ in agricultural settings. A pilot of the technology was undertaken on ten Synlait farms in 2025 that improved understanding of the delivery system requirements to enable EcoPond's rollout to 250+ farms this year. EcoPond™ is owned by Agnition, a subsidiary of Ravensdown focused on driving innovation in the agricultural sector through sustainable practices and advanced technologies.