Submission | Action on agricultural emissions

Whichever proposal is adopted there will be a need for practice change on farm and for those that are advising, educating and auditing.

Building the capability of these audiences to calculate, report, develop plans to reduce, and implement plans to reduce emissions is a function suited to the education, training and extension network as a collective.

Not only will the audiences need to know and understand how to go about making choices around what are the right options to reduce emissions for any particular farm, they will also need to be skilled in applying the tools to plan and implement change. The discussion document has indicated that the steps are complex and challenging, and this suggests that the development of capability will be crucial to assist farmers/growers in complying with administration requirements and effecting on-farm practice change. That supporting network will also need to be upskilled.

The speed with which practice change will diffuse through the sector will in part depend on the regulatory incentives, but to a high degree will depend on the effectiveness of the learning ecosystem that is extension, education and training, to engage with those audiences required to make practice change. No single part of this learning ecosystem will achieve the coverage required to satisfy the pace of practice change. The entire learning network will need to be engaged and aligned. Both extension/credentialled learning opportunities.

To support the policy objectives, clear identification of who the audiences are, what each audience needs to know and do, and when and where they need to do it, are critical inputs to learning products that should feed into the entire learning eco-system.

The Primary ITO is responsible for identifying skill needs for the primary sector. The Skill Needs Analysis that the Primary ITO routinely updates not only informs the design of qualifications, programmes and resources delivered through the formal learning environment that is the Industry Training System, but it can also inform design for the university system, the pre-employment polytechnic/training enterprise sector, and the extension network. Indeed, if managed well, co-development of programmes and resources by the different actors within the learning network can be more efficient and achieve greater coverage at faster pace than had the extension, education and training sectors responded independently to practice change needs.

An example of where Primary ITO has previously identified skill needs is in the biosecurity space. Biosecurity is critically important to NZ and to our primary industries, where there can be a significant impact as highlighted by the recent M Bovis incursion, which negatively impacted on the dairy industry at both a regional and national level. Because of the potential for disruption in the primary industries, Primary ITO could see that it was critical to have the right measures in place to prepare, respond to and, if needed, manage on an ongoing basis, disease or pest incursions.
In response to the needs of industry and in the absence of formal vocational qualifications for biosecurity, in late 2018 the TEC-funded micro credential *From Advice to Action* was developed by Primary ITO with industry, followed by a series of pilot programmes that were run nationwide.

Feedback from participants in the pilot programmes was strongly positive and the ITO is now working on a sustainable roll out of the programme to the primary industries.

In developing industry Skill Needs Analysis to support policy changes that require practice change, such as the greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture policy, ideally the Primary ITO would be included in the implementation design phase of the policy development process to inform the policy process of current skill capability within the sector (both on-farm and change agents’ capability to advise & educate), the realistic timeframe to fill capability deficits, and the best mix of learning products to achieve change.

Once the government has settled which proposal is to be adopted the Primary ITO would welcome an invitation to work with officials and industry to design the policy’s implementation.