



Official Release

Farming Families Urged to Dig Deep for 'Heli Livestock'

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A Hawke's Bay farming family of self-confessed 'frequent flyers' has not hesitated helping the region's lifesaving air rescue service, by donating the proceeds of spring lambs.

Sarah Grayson (nee Hansen) and her young family farm in partnership on 'Marae Downs', alongside her parents Chris and Helen. As a family heavily involved in equestrian; hunting and showjumping, she admits they've had their fair share of rescues over the years.

"I got rolled on by my horse showjumping at an event at Takapau in 2022. I suffered a sternoclavicular joint dislocation and also did my ACL and MCL in my knee. I was flown to Hawke's Bay Hospital and have never been so pleased to hear the chopper. The crew were amazing - the flight was the only time in twelve weeks that I was free of pain - I can't thank them enough.

"Mum has also been picked up after breaking her neck in the early 2000's and prior to that, my older brother Daniel was airlifted - both sustaining injuries from horse-related falls. As a family, we're incredibly appreciative of the service!

"I sincerely hope other farming families get in behind to support 'Heli Livestock', if everyone donated two lambs or a cattle beast every year, that's the most cost efficient insurance you can have as a farmer. Accidents happen and you want to know the rescue helicopter will be there when you really need it."

As farmers across the region head into weaning and summer stocking, the rescue helicopter is encouraging more rural supporters to donate the proceeds from livestock sales to support the service.

Raukawa based farmers, Graeme and Judy Wedd generously donated a cattle beast recently through the scheme, raising around \$2,000 for the rescue helicopter. Their contribution has helped support life-saving missions across Hawke's Bay and it's hoped will inspire others to consider doing the same.

"The rescue helicopter is so important to the health and wellbeing of our rural population, and rural communities across Hawke's Bay all know the great job your crew do when that unexpected accident occurs," shares Graeme.

"The method of donating stock when sending to slaughter is such a simple way for farmers to support our lifesaving service. We'll be doing our best to support 'Heli Livestock' annually, and hope others will follow suit."

PGG Wrightson agent Neil Common is throwing his support behind the initiative, helping connect willing farmers with the cause.

"Generosity like we've seen from Graeme and Judy Wedd makes a real and lasting difference to the rescue helicopter service. Every donation - whether it's from the sale of a livestock animal or a personal contribution directly supports their ability to respond when someone's life depends on it."

For SRS Chief Pilot, Charlie Beetham that support is critical.

"This level of community support helps us keep the helicopter flying, our crews trained, and our equipment ready for whatever comes next. For us on the front line, it's a powerful reminder that the people we serve are standing right beside us. We're incredibly grateful to farmers like Graeme and Judy, along with the Hansens and many others - their generosity quite literally helps save lives."

Farmers interested in supporting 'Heli Livestock' can contact their local livestock agent or call the rescue helicopter team on (06) 8781630 for details on how to make a life-saving livestock contribution.

ENDS.

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