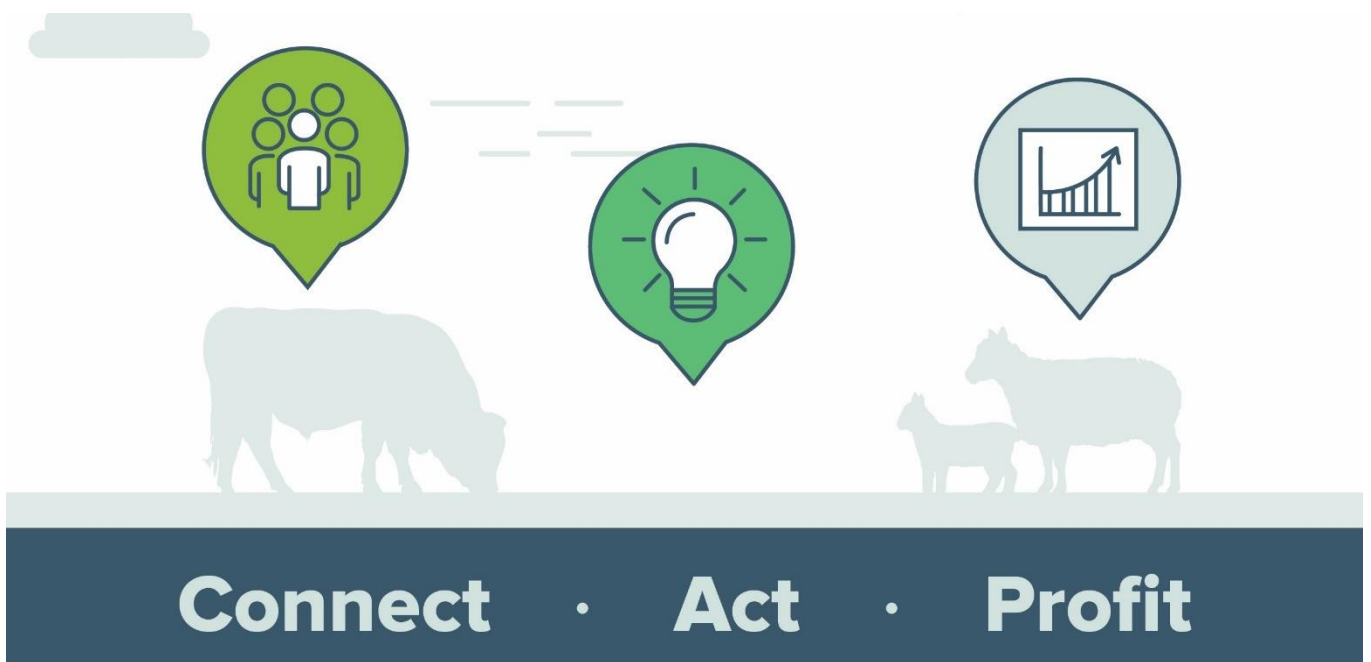




Handbook

Guide to help connect, form
and facilitate an Action Group



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1. Welcome

Welcome to RMPP Action Network – developed by Red Meat Profit Partnership (RMPP) with input from sheep and beef farmers and rural professionals around New Zealand. The RMPP Action Network was born out of the Extension Design project, involving 75 pilot farmers from across New Zealand. This project started in October 2015 and will continue through until July 2018. Armed with the knowledge RMPP gained on this project, an extension model was developed and this underpins RMPP Action Network. We are now ready for RMPP Action Network to be rolled out nationally to the red meat sector and achieve its aim of giving farmers the confidence to put their ideas into action on-farm.

This handbook has been developed to help guide those involved in connecting, forming and running Action Groups. It outlines the different roles within the process, the steps required to set up a successful group, how to develop an Extension Plan and Farm Action Plans as well as how to manage invoicing and payments. It was primarily developed to support facilitators having undertaken RMPP Facilitator Training. We also invite others to read this document thoroughly to understand how you can get involved with RMPP Action Network and the benefits from collaborating with our industry.

Throughout this Handbook we refer to the Knowledge Hub (www.knowledgehub.co.nz). Located on the Beef + Lamb New Zealand website, the Knowledge Hub has brought together a range of resources provided by B+LNZ and new modules developed by RMPP. This material from industry experts helps farmers get the information they need to confidently make more informed decisions. It includes short 'how to' videos, fact sheets, presentations by experts and a whole lot more. It's a great opportunity to refresh knowledge, a useful tool for training staff and will help farm businesses understand the application of some of the farming fundamentals.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) along with other resources and information can be found on the RMPP Action Network website (www.actionnetwork.co.nz), otherwise please get in touch with our team on 0800 733 632 or info@actionnetwork.co.nz if you require further support.

We look forward to having you on board!

Red Meat Profit Partnership Team
Dec 2017

Key points to remember are shown in blue boxes throughout this handbook.

Things to do as a member of an Action Group are shown in green boxes throughout this handbook.

2. What is RMPP Action Network?

RMPP is a Primary Growth Partnership programme that is working to help the red meat sector increase productivity and profitability. Funded by meat processors, banks, Beef and Lamb New Zealand and The Ministry for Primary Industries, RMPP works with farmers and sector businesses to develop, test and introduce new ideas, new technology solutions and new ways of working.

RMPP Action Network is a new initiative designed to help farmers connect with other farmers and the expertise they need to confidently make changes in their business.

Research into best-practice and lessons from the RMPP Extension Design Project has shown that change happens on-farm when well-facilitated, small groups of farm businesses come together with a shared focus. Where the group is farmer-centered and pulls in the expertise to help farmers, this provides participants with the confidence to take action on-farm.

The RMPP Extension Design project was designed to help farmers connect with other farmers and expertise.

What makes RMPP Action Network different?

- **Farmer Led** – they determine the structure and rules of their group and how they spend their funds
- Farm businesses form into **small groups** (seven to nine businesses per group)
- Operate with a **shared vision/focus**
- **Planned** and have some base **structure** – ground rules, Extension Plan, individual Farm Action Plans
- **Well facilitated** - encouraging, focusing and supporting the exploration and adoption of new ideas
- Drawing on **expertise** – relevant experts and information at the right time, that suits the needs determined by the group
- **Supported** – by people and information
- Building the **confidence** in individual group members to take knowledge and turn it into **action on their farm**, in a way that is relevant for them. This will continually increase confidence in bringing new knowledge and learning back into a group setting and, at an industry level, provide continuous improvement and growth.

Groups must be farmer led

The Extension Model developed by RMPP sits at the heart of the RMPP Action Network and can be found in **Section 4 – What are the roles in RMPP Action Network?**.

For further information about the Extension Model refer to the [Extension Best Practice Guidelines](#) found at www.knowledgehub.co.nz.

3. How does it work?

RMPP Action Network is made up of farmer Action Groups, with seven to nine farm businesses in each group. An Action Group will:

- be made up of seven to nine farm businesses with a shared focus
- be allocated \$4,000 (excluding GST) per farm business which is pooled for use by the Action Group
- be able to use the funds for the facilitation of activities as well as cover the costs of experts to work with the Action Group.

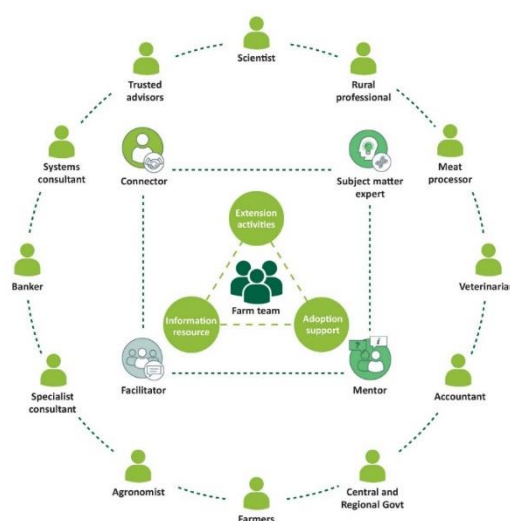
Each fund will be managed by the Action Group and the funds can be used until the end of June 2020. In year two of its operation, each farm business will be required to contribute \$800.00 (plus GST) towards the cost of running their Action Group. These funds will be allocated to the respective Action Group to fund ongoing Group activity.

4. What are the roles in RMPP Action Network?

The extension model developed by RMPP is the foundation from which RMPP Action Network was built. With the farm team at its centre, the model incorporates the four components of effective extension programmes;

- **Recognition of different roles in the extension system** These roles are key in the successful delivery of extension activities, information and support/follow-up
- **Well-developed information resources** will be most useful to farm teams when they are written in farmer-friendly language and help digest technical concepts and information into practical, 'how to' explanations.
- **Effectively facilitated extension activities** provide farm teams with the opportunity to learn about a topic. There is a broad range of potential activities such as workshops, farm walks or field days. Generally, a combination of activities will be required over time.
- **Adoption support** enables farm teams to properly implement and monitor changes.

More detail can be found in the [Extension Best Practice Guidelines](http://www.knowledgehub.co.nz) at www.knowledgehub.co.nz.



The following table outlines the roles (people and systems) involved in the RMPP Action Network process.

The icons below are used throughout the handbook to indicate which parts are relevant to each role. The narrative provides context and significance of the roles.

The following four key roles are critical for supporting change on-farm.



Connector

The Connector role brings individual farm businesses together to form an Action Group. They may also identify the most appropriate subject matter expertise once an Action Group has formed.



Facilitator

The Facilitator role is important for helping identify the topics to focus on at both an Action Group and individual farm business level. Facilitators help run extension activities. They also are integral to adoption support (as identified in the Extension Model), helping to identify what is needed to help farmers make changes on-farm.



Subject Matter Expert

Subject Matter Experts deliver specialist information and advice via extension activities, information resources and through adoption support.



Mentor

Mentors have a particular role in adoption support to help build confidence in farmers within the Action Group to make changes on-farm.

When involved in an Action Group, a person may take on more than one role. For example, a connector might become a facilitator once an Action Group is formed. A facilitator may step into the expert role for an extension activity and ask another person to step into the facilitator role for that time. In addition, one organisation can play several roles via the same or different individuals.

If an individual is playing the part of more than one role within a group, they need to communicate to the group which role they are performing (or the 'hat' they are wearing) at that point in time, e.g. if a farm consultancy business is facilitating an Action Group, they may have a colleague who is a Subject Matter Expert who can deliver an activity for that Action Group. It is important that group members understand which role each individual is playing at any one time, so expectations are aligned between all parties.

For more detailed information on the roles and their operation, see the [Extension Best Practice Guidelines](https://www.knowledgehub.co.nz) on www.knowledgehub.co.nz.

4.1 The Farmer-related roles



Farmer

Farmers are at the core of RMPP Action Network. They determine the structure and rules of their Action Group and how the Group spends its funds.



**Primary Contact
Farmer**

Primary Contact Farmers are like the 'captain' of a sports team. They represent the Action Group and are responsible for being the point of contact between the Facilitator, the Action Group and RMPP. They are also responsible for submitting the Extension Plan and approving/declining invoices.

The **Primary Contact Farmer** is like the 'captain' of a sports team, representing the Action Group and will be responsible for:

- being the point of contact between the Action Group, the facilitator and RMPP
- submitting the Group Extension Plan
- approving or declining all invoices for the Action Group
- resolving any disagreement over amounts charged by the Facilitator and Subject Matter Expert
- establishing and managing the Action Group's expectations with Facilitators and Subject Matter Experts.

4.2 RMPP Action Network-related roles



RMPP

RMPP provides the structure and support for RMPP Action Network, such as handling queries, facilitator training and ongoing support, paying invoices and managing the evaluation process.



**Action Network
Management
System**

The System (ANMS) supports the successful set up, delivery and tracking of Action Group activity and invoicing.

Where you see the Action Network Management System icon in this handbook there will be steps to complete online.

5. What are the Criteria & Requirements?

5.1 Farmers



Working in an Action Group of seven to nine other farm businesses creates a positive environment for individual farmers to confidently express ideas, gain feedback from experts and take action on-farm.

Farmers will work in an Action Group of seven to nine farm businesses

To be eligible to participate in RMPP Action Network, a farmer must:

- Own or manage a commercial red meat production system in New Zealand
- Commit to working alongside other farmers in a group environment
- Consider making some on-farm changes.

In some instances, farming businesses may comprise multiple blocks/farms. The eligibility of a person to represent a farm business and join an Action Group is based on a unique farm management unit.

Where multiple blocks/farms scenarios exist, provided each block/farm is

- managed as an independent unit, and
- runs its own financial budget, then

the person who directly oversees the management of the block/farm can join an Action Group as a farmer participant representing that farm business unit. This will allow a \$4000 (exclusive of GST) allocation towards the group's pooled fund.

Farmers are also welcome to have others from within their farm team participate in the Action Group. Note: the group will determine the allowable attendee numbers at the group formation stage.

Ideally at least two people from each farm team will participate in an Action Group

By participating in RMPP Action Network, each farm business agrees to:

- Develop a Farm Action Plan, which outlines what will be done on-farm to achieve their objectives, and use all reasonable endeavours to meet those objectives
- Actively participate in the Action Group and act reasonably and in good faith throughout

- Adhere to the Action Groups' 'ground rules', which will be agreed during the first few meetings.

Each farmer will complete their own Farm Action Plan

Once an Action Group has been formed, the facilitator will assist in the development of an Extension Plan for the Action Group. This will outline the key objective of the Action Group, the goals they are wanting to achieve and the difference that meeting these goals will make to their businesses.

5.2 Connector



The Connector is the role that initiates the RMPP Action Network process with the farmer. Their role is to bring individual farm businesses together and to identify the potential common purpose for an Action Group – a shared challenge or opportunity they want to address.

If you wish to understand more about getting involved in RMPP Action Network as a connector, more information on what it will involve can be found at www.actionnetwork.co.nz or in the [Extension Best Practice Guidelines](#), www.knowledgehub.co.nz.

The Connector brings farm businesses together.

They can play an ongoing role connecting groups and facilitators with relevant information and expertise.

5.3 Facilitator



The role of Facilitator is crucial within RMPP Action Network and need to meet certain criteria.

Before getting started, a Facilitator must:

- Complete the RMPP Facilitator Training Programme. Refer to www.actionnetwork.co.nz for more information
- Successfully register with RMPP Action Network, in the online system, as a Facilitator as part of an Action Group.
- Agree to meet the requirements of the Facilitator role description including the Code of Conduct.

Once an Action Group has been formed and is ready to get started, there are a number of key responsibilities for the facilitator. These include:

- Leading the Action Group in the development of their Extension Plan
- Facilitating the Action Group to complete its activities as set out in the Extension Plan
- Planning, organising and communicating progress of the Action Group's activities back to RMPP
- Facilitating positive relationship management within the Action Group
- Ensuring compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 in relation to any Action Group events or activities

Working closely and in conjunction with the Primary Contact Farmer, the facilitator needs to:

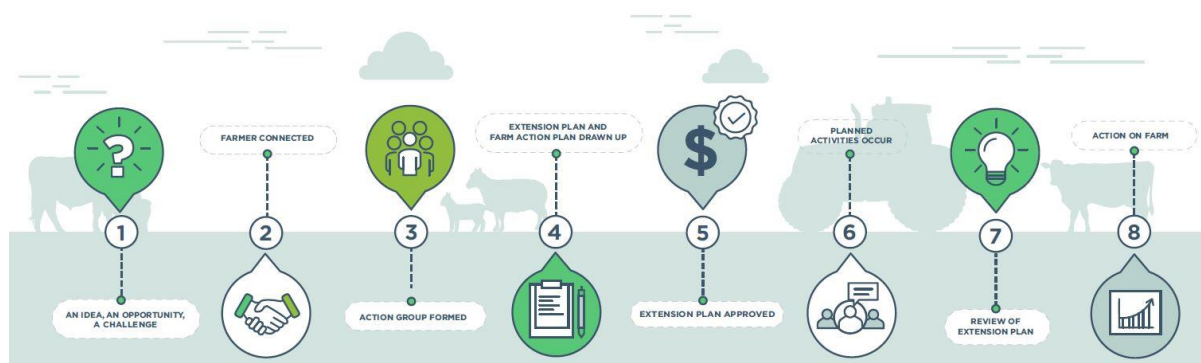
- Indicate to RMPP that activities have been completed
- Provide feedback to RMPP on how the Action Group has been going/tracking
- Share good news stories with RMPP

Facilitators are entitled to have their costs and expenses covered by the Action Group's budget, as long as those costs and expenses are specified in the Action Group's Extension Plan. An important point to note is that any costs incurred by the Facilitator prior to approval of the Extension Plan by RMPP will only be covered if they are detailed in the Extension Plan as an Activity and have been negotiated and approved in advance by the Group.

Further information on how to be an effective facilitator can be found in the [Extension Best Practice Guidelines](#) or www.knowledgehub.co.nz and is covered as part of the RMPP Facilitator Training Programme.

6. What is the RMPP Action Network Process?

The RMPP Action Network process follows the 8 steps illustrated in the following diagram. The icons, for the steps represented, are referenced throughout this handbook for ease of identification.



- 1 The process begins with the current state – Farmers face challenges and the demands of ongoing change, and often have plenty of ideas to meet these. But the ideas sometimes require some external expertise and support in order to work out whether they are worth implementing. RMPP Action Network has been created to give farmers the confidence to turn those ideas into action.
- 2 After initial enquiry and farmer identification by a Connector, a farmer is invited to connect into an Action Group through the ANMS.
- 3 Once connected, the Action Group will establish their area of common focus and their operating foundation i.e. develop their ground rules.
- 4 They then develop an Extension Plan which is submitted for consideration to RMPP by the Primary Contact Farmer.
- 5 The plan must be approved by RMPP before the extension activities can start and have funding becomes available.
- 6 Once an Action Group is up and running, each participating farm business will be required to develop a Farm Action Plan, which will detail the activities they intend to undertake to meet their own farm business goals.
- 7 Group Extension Plans and individual Farm Action Plans will be reviewed, and new plans refined and submitted for the subsequent year.
- 8 The aim of being involved in an Action Group is to give farmers the confidence to put their ideas into action on-farm. This should spark new ideas and opportunities and the cycle begins again.

6.1 How does the management system support the process?



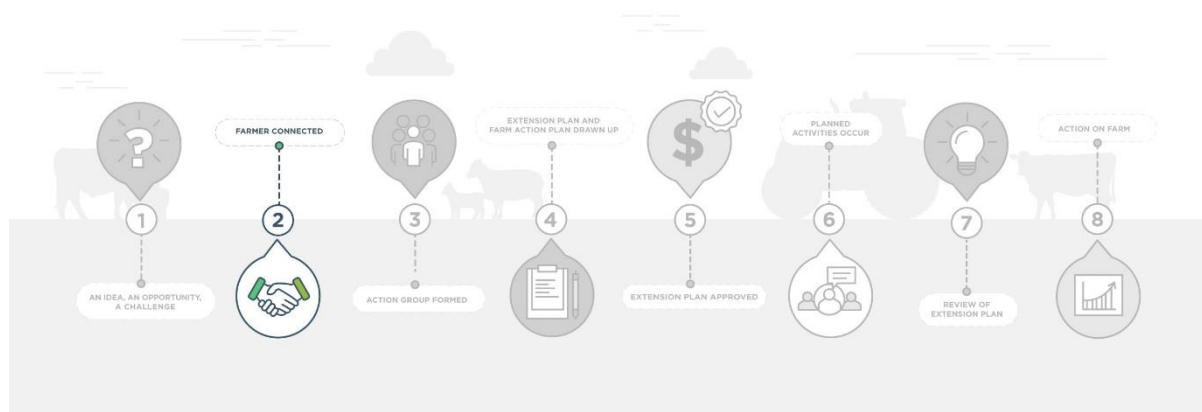
Setting up an Action Group, the development of Extension and Farm Action Plans, and the management of funds is managed through the RMPP Action Network Management System (ANMS). This is a user-friendly system contained within the Beef + Lamb NZ website, alongside the Knowledge Hub. It is open to users when they register or are invited to join an Action Group. The typical approach to connecting and forming a group in the ANMS is as follows:



All Farmers, Connectors and Facilitators must register in the System. If you are a first time Connector or Facilitator you will need to register and agree to the Terms and Conditions before you can create a group and contribute to the development of an Extension Plan.

- Login in to your B+LNZ account at www.beeflambnz.com
- If you do not have an account, select Login/Register at the top of the page and complete the “Create new account” form.
- Once logged in, select “My dashboard” from the drop-down menu under your name.
- Click “Join RMPP Action Network” to enter your details.
- Click “Create Group” or “Create Another Group” to create a group and invite others to join.

6.2 How do Farm Businesses connect?



The Connector brings individual farm businesses together and helps identify the common purpose for the group – a shared issue or opportunity they want to address.

The Connector may also:

- help identify the most appropriate Subject Matter Expert to support the group or have an individual farmer address the issue/opportunity
- work with a Facilitator to develop an Extension Plan for a group
- encourage action on-farm
- stay with the group over time (or leave the group once it is established).
- check in with the group at times to monitor progress and get a general feel for what's working well and what is not.

There are several ways a group can connect together:

- A Connector recruiting and mustering a group and managing this process – typically with a facilitator in mind/involved. In most cases, the Connector will arrange this (preferred approach)
- Farmers getting together to form their own group – they may or may not have a facilitator in mind
- Facilitators performing the Connector role
- Farmers registering individually (not currently associated with a group and not sure where to get started).

1. Connectors looking to set up an Action Group should cast the net wide. For example, you could advertise that you want to start an Action Group in company newsletters or local papers. Or, if you know of one or two farmers who are interested, speak to them and ask them to recruit a few extra people.
2. Hold a preliminary meeting. This will help generate or gauge the level of interest in forming an Action Group. This could be an informal gathering over lunch or dinner or come at the end of a field day or seminar.

3. At the initial meeting, record the names and contact details of those attending so you can follow up potential membership.
4. Outline the opportunities that exist for Action Groups via RMPP Action Network. As a Connector you might facilitate a discussion of these opportunities by asking small groups to talk about **what are some of the big decisions they will have to make over the coming 12 months? What are they finding challenging?** Use this as a way of starting to gauge whether there is a common purpose amongst the farm businesses present.

Discuss opportunities by asking questions like:

- What big decisions will you need to make over coming 12 months?
- What are they finding challenging?

5. Follow up those who are keen, with the aim of getting seven to nine farm businesses involved. RMPP's recommended approach for farmers is to work with a Connector (i.e. rural professional) to create a group and then invite farmers to join the Group.

Prompt them to keep thinking about the on-farm decisions they are finding challenging or getting stuck on at present and to give consideration towards what their Farm Business goals are, as a means of helping determine the focus/objective for the Action Group.



To register a group on the System and to invite farmers, the following farmer details will need to be entered:

- farmer's name
- email address

Upon entering these details, an email invitation will be sent to farmers inviting them to join the Group. They will be prompted to log into their B+LNZ account, accept the invitation and RMPP Action Network Terms and Conditions.

If they don't have a B+LNZ account, they will be prompted to create one and provide their details.

7. What happens in the first meeting?



The first meeting of an Action Group is crucial. As the group intends working together over an extended period, it's important that at the first meeting the Facilitator invests time to negotiate and agree the purpose with the group, as well as establish ground rules for how the Action Group will be run. This will ensure the Action Group has a strong foundation from the beginning. It is about starting everyone on the same page and the farm businesses buying into the focus and expected behaviours of their Action Group.

At the first meeting invest time to negotiate and agree the purpose of the Action Group, and establish ground rules for how it will run.

Facilitators should run through the following six stages (the “Six Pack”) at the first meeting of the Action Group:

Stage	Purpose	Prompts
1. Get to know each other	Members introduce themselves and their business. Set the expectation that the Action Group will have open and honest discussions. Share stories.	<i>What decisions are you getting stuck on at present?</i> <i>What decisions are you finding hard at the moment?</i> <i>How much did that cost?</i> <i>How much was that worth?</i>
2. Start with purpose	Remind the Action Group of the opportunities that exist through RMPP Action Network.	<i>What should Action Group members expect from their facilitator?</i> (see following page)
3. Ground rules	Establish ground rules for the Action Group.	<i>How do you want to treat each other?</i> <i>How do you want to work together?</i>

	Gain agreement, then record them and revisit at the start of each session.	
4. Get people moving	Explore the focus/objectives for the Action Group – use information from the first stage.	<i>What do you want to focus on?</i> <i>What would help with your tough decisions?</i>
5. Respect difference	Ensure that all members of the group contribute to the discussion. Ensure reflection time is built into the day.	<i>Would anyone else like to add to the discussion?</i> <i>Who has a different idea?</i>
6. Close with purpose	Check in with each business in the Action Group. Talk through the costs of running the Action Group, including funding from RMPP and Action Group contributions.	<i>What do we need to do before the next activity?</i> <i>Who are the key people who will assist the facilitator?</i>



What should Action Group members expect from their Facilitator?

Accredited Action Group Facilitators will have agreed to the Facilitator's Code of Conduct (based on the International Association of Facilitators Statement of Values and Code of Ethics, 2004).

1. The focus is on the Action Group and members – not what the Facilitator might think is important. If you, as a Facilitator, have expertise not otherwise available to the Action Group, and feel the Action Group must have this in order to be effective, you should offer it, after explaining the change in your role from Facilitator to Subject Matter Expert.
2. As a Facilitator, you will discuss any possible conflict of interest, personal bias, prior knowledge of the Facilitator/Subject Matter Expert organisation or any other matter which may be perceived as preventing you from working effectively with the interests of all Action Group members.
3. Facilitators work to ensure there is an environment of respect and safety where all farm businesses can participant in the Action Group freely.
4. Facilitators will maintain confidentiality of information within an Action Group.

7.1 How do Extension and Farm Action Plans get developed?



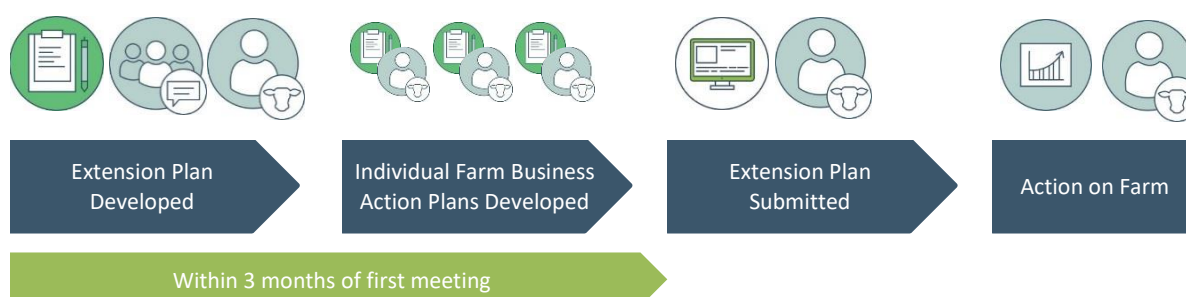
Creating an Extension Plan



Once the Action Group has formed, identified their common area of focus and established their ground rules, they take the step of turning this into their Group Extension Plan. This is submitted by the Primary Contact Farmer to RMPP for approval and commitment of funding.

The Facilitator plays an important role in guiding the Action Group through developing a relevant and meaningful plan.

Creating Farm Action Plans



Once an Extension Plan is approved each individual farm business must develop a Farm Action Plan that aligns with the Extension Plan goals, then outline what relevant actions they will undertake on their own farm.

Giving prior thought and planning towards the Farm Business Action Plan, in particular farm business goals, is encouraged and will help the group formation and Extension Plan development process.

7.2 How does the Extension Plan get developed?



The Extension Plan will be developed to capture the overall Action Group objective, the goals that the group will work towards to meet that objective, the difference achieving these goals will make on-farm, and a 12-month plan of activities to work towards achieving those goals.



Ensure a planned and focused approach is taken within the group and good disciplines applied.

The Extension Plan is crucial as it will ensure a planned and focused approach is taken within the Group and good disciplines applied, as well as allowing RMPP to track Action Group progress over time.

When developing the Extension Plan, the Facilitator should:

- reflect on the focus/objective for the Action Group, and the goals needed to achieve this
- draft this into the Extension Plan template.

Remember when planning activities there are different levels of change to consider:

Outcome: what is the intended outcome of the activity?

Practice change: for the outcome to occur, a change of practice is needed – what is the change of practice?

KASA changes: What Knowledge, Attitudes, Skills and Aspirations are needed for the practice change?

Activities: What activities will engage the group and create opportunities for learning – KASA change?

Resources: What resources do you need to run these activities?

The development of the Extension Plan should reflect the extension model, i.e. thinking about activities, information, resources and adoption support and follow-up.

Extension Plan components:

- Objectives
- Specific Goals
- On-farm benefits
- Activity Plans

The key criteria of the Extension Plan are:

1. The objective for the Action Group

Each Action Group needs to discuss and decide on an objective for their Group. This is the focus or purpose of the Action Group based on an area of common interest, common challenge or opportunity.

2. Goals to help achieve the objective

The goals are to help break down the objective into manageable bits of work. SMART goals are encouraged, i.e. **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic, **T**imely.

3. The difference this will make on-farm

A statement about the difference the planned objective, goals and activities will make on-farm for members of the Action Group. This is useful for farm businesses to have thought through as it should link to their Farm Action Plans.

4. A twelve-month plan of activities, resources and estimated costs

A list of activities to achieve the goals and objective for the Action Group are important. Those activities planned first will have more detail than later ones. As part of this list, the type of activity should be identified (e.g. meeting on-farm; field trip), along with any expertise needed.

The organisation of experts and mentors etc. in conjunction with the Action Group is required. New goals can be added to the Extension Plan as the Action Group progresses.

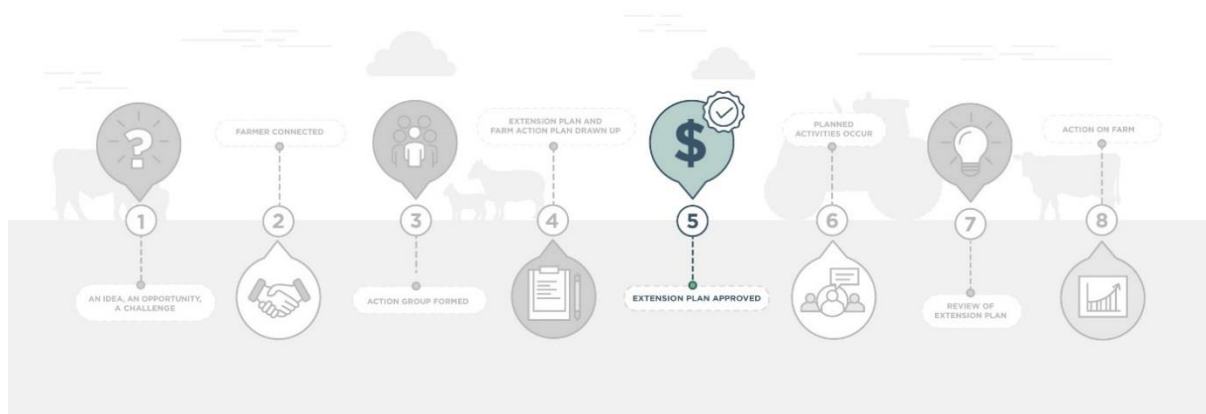
An estimate of costs needs to be provided. A balance of 60 percent facilitation, 40 percent expertise costs should be aimed for across a year.



Once the Extension Plan has been written:

- Start talking to Action Group members about the Extension Plan and their Farm Action Plan – get them to start drafting this.
NOTE: The Farm Action Plan needs to be completed within three months of the Extension Plan being approved, and must include the mandatory KPI information
- Complete the Extension Plan in the System for approval
- Advise the Primary Contact Farmer when the Extension Plan is completed for their review and subsequent submission to RMPP for approval.

7.3 How does the Extension Plan get approved?

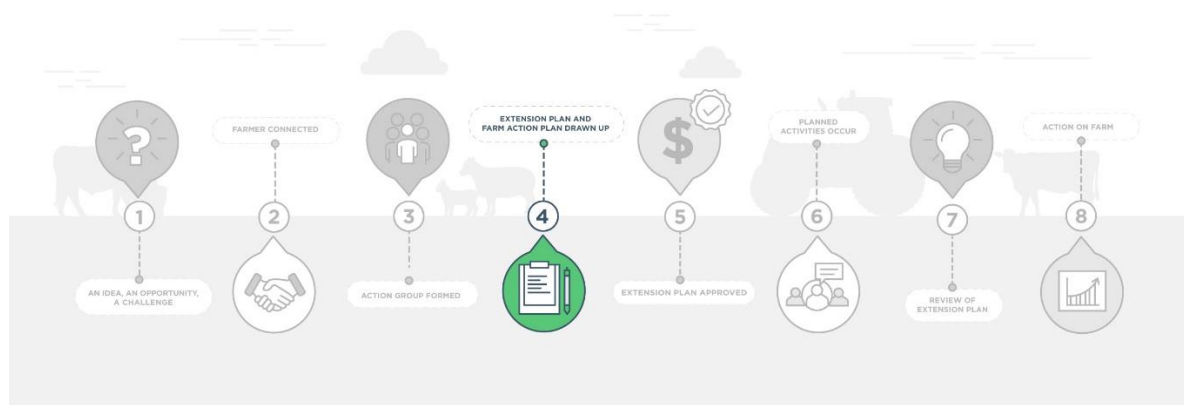


Once a plan is submitted it will go to the RMPP Extension Team for review and approval. If the plan doesn't meet all the criteria, RMPP will engage with the Facilitator to talk through issues and/or recommended refinement. These criteria include:

- How clear is the purpose of the Extension Plan?
- How clear are the goals in the Extension Plan?
- Are the goals SMART (**S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic, **T**imely)?
- Is there a statement on what the on-farm change will be?
- How do the activities relate to the purpose and goals? Is there a clear link?
- Are there details on the Facilitator costs and Subject Matter Expert costs?
- Does the first activity relate to developing the Extension Plan? Are the costs within reasonable limits?

Once developed, the Extension Plan is by no means 'set in stone'. The ability will remain to add to the plan during the annual cycle to ensure that the activities and goals remain relevant to the objective, as well as a review at the conclusion of 12 months to ensure everything remains valid and achievable.

7.4 How does the Farm Action Plan get developed?



The Farm Action Plan links what the Action Group activities and outcomes are with the goals and activities of each individual farmers' business, i.e. why they are participating in the Action Group and what they will get from participating in the Action Group. This ensures each farmer has clearly defined goals and a set of activities they will work towards on-farm.

The key criteria of the Farm Action Plan are:

1. Goals from the Extension Plan

The goals from the Action Group Extension Plan form the first part of the Farm Action Plan. These can be copied from the Extension Plan.

2. The farm business goals

The farm business goals should relate to one or more of the Extension Plan goals. These will reflect what the farm business wants to achieve from participating in the Action Group.

Some high level or well refined goals should be given thought prior to the first meeting that focuses on forming the Action Group. These goals will help guide the Action Group discussion around developing a common focus for the Group. After the development of the Extension Plan, the individual farm business goals may undergo further refinement and alignment with the Extension Plan goals.

3. Key Performance indicators (KPIs)

Understanding how a farm business is performing is critical to making decisions on how to improve performance. RMPP have identified a set of top level measures which are recommended as the starting point for calculating KPIs within a farm business. **It is compulsory for farmers participating in RMPP Action Network to calculate their current performance for the following KPIs:**

- Earnings Before Interest Tax, Rent and Managers-salary (EBITRM)
- Farm Working Expenditure Ratio
- Net Production

There are other KPIs a farm business may choose to track in addition to these. Discussions with the Action Group, Facilitator and Subject Matter Experts might be helpful when developing the Farm Action Plan.

RMPP have developed a series of online calculators to ensure the calculating of KPIs is consistent and the entering of information easier. RMPP have also developed a learning module around benchmarking and KPIs, along with a booklet to aid the understanding and support the calculating of these.

The resources are available on the Knowledge Hub.

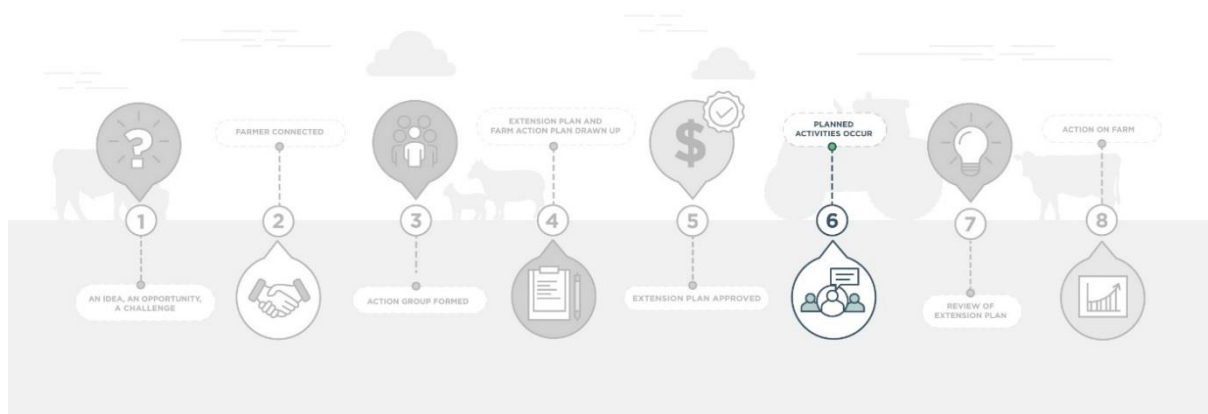
The online KPI calculators are available for use through “My Dashboard” on the B+LNZ website.

4. Actions

The final part of the Farm Action Plan is to record between three and eight actions that the farm business will undertake over the next 12 months as a means of achieving the goals for the business and helping achieve the Extension Plan goals.

Some farmers maybe interested in, or have already taken their business planning to another level. RMPP have developed a Business Planning tool that is available for use through “My Dashboard” on the B+LNZ website. This is supported by a Business Planning case study that is available in the Knowledge Hub.

7.5 What happens after the Extension Plan is approved?



Once an Extension Plan is approved, funding becomes available and an Action Group undertakes their activities as planned.

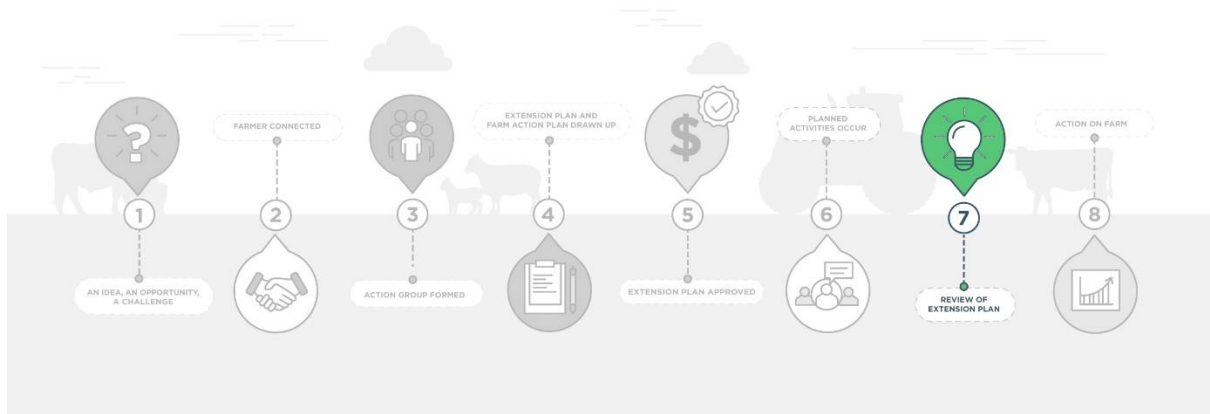
As activities are completed, the Primary Contact Farmer must mark them as complete, indicating that the activity took place as planned and to the Action Groups' expectations. This is done in the Extension Plan within the Action Network Management System. Invoices will only be actioned once this process has been undertaken.

For details related to submitting invoices and payment, please refer to section 8: How does invoicing and payment happen?

It is at this stage that all the relevant roles are in action, working and learning together. The Extension Plan should be reviewed and updated as activities occur or if the group decide that different activities are needed or some changes need to be made to what has been planned.



7.6 When do the plans get reviewed?



At the end of each Action Group's operating year, they will review their current Extension Plan and develop a new plan for the next year. This will involve reviewing progress, their focus and objectives, then mapping out a new plan for the year ahead.

This plan will need to be submitted to RMPP for consideration and review each year.

Any ongoing changes will also require submission to RMPP.

Just like with the Extension Plan, farmers will have the ability to review and refine their Farm Action Plans as work progresses to ensure that they remain relevant to the objective and goals of the group.

At the end of each anniversary year, farm businesses will need to review the previous year's activity, then develop a new Farm Action Plan for the year ahead. At this point they will also re-run the KPI calculators and input the results into the new Farm Action Plan, along with new targets for the year ahead.

7.7 What happens on-farm?



The farm business implements the planned actions they intend to undertake on their farm as per their Farm Action Plan.



Regular checking in with farmers, getting the Action Group to track the changes individual farm businesses have made, offering support and ensuring they are seeking outside support from Subject Matter Experts and Mentors is encouraged, as this assists with building trust and confidence.



8. How does invoicing and payment happen?



Invoices must be made out to Red Meat Profit Partnership (RMPP)

And include:

- The words “tax invoice”
- Your name (or trade name) and address
- Bank account details for payment
- Date invoice was issued
- Invoice Number
- GST Number (if appropriate)
- Action Group Number
- Primary Contact Farmer Name
- Description of work undertaken, the activity (Extension Plan Activity Number) it relates to and cost (excluding GST)
- Details of any disbursement (excluding GST)
- GST and total amount payable.



Invoices can be emailed to rmpp@actionnetwork.co.nz or posted to:
Red Meat Profit Partnership (RMPP)
PO Box 715
Wellington 6140

On receipt of an invoice a copy will be sent to the Group’s Primary Contact Farmer for review and approval before being processed for payment by RMPP.

A separate invoice **must** be raised for each Action Group. Invoices will not be paid if they contain costs for multiple Action Groups, or do not include the information outlined above.

IMPORTANT: If the invoice does not include the group number and activity that the services relates to, IT WILL BE RETURNED.

Payment will be made by direct debit on the 20th of the month following receipt of the approved invoice to RMPP.

8.1 What costs can be invoiced?

The following costs may be invoiced as part of an Action Group:

- The actual costs and expenses that have been charged by the relevant Action Group's Facilitator, Mentor and/or Subject Matter Expert that are specified in the relevant Action Group's Extension Plan
- Reasonable third-party costs (such as venue hire and catering)
- Reasonable disbursement costs related to the running of a farm learning tour in regions outside of the local area of the group and/or individuals within the group, e.g. a farm to farm tour involving minivan hire to get between farms, lunch and dinner catering if appropriate (e.g. a planned dinner with speaker).
- Time and disbursements incurred by Facilitators prior to the commencement of the Action Group – as long as they are detailed in the Extension Plan and discussed with and approved by the Action Group.

8.2 What costs are excluded?

The following costs cannot be invoiced as part of the RMPP Action Group:

- Any costs incurred by a farmer as a result of their participation in RMPP Action Network, such as travel costs to or from an RMPP Action Network event, farmer time or on-farm costs related to an RMPP Action Network activity.
 - This would also include the costs associated with getting to a remote event (i.e. regionally remote farm learning tour)
 - Travel costs for getting to the tour (i.e. flights and/or mileage) are excluded
 - Accommodation and meal costs, outside of any planned activity, are excluded
- Any costs incurred by a Facilitator in respect of any activity in which the Facilitator was also a Subject Matter Expert.
- Any costs incurred by a Connector.
- Subscriptions (software, magazines etc).
- Capital costs.

9. How are Action Groups evaluated?



Both Farmers and Facilitators will be asked to provide feedback as part of being involved in RMPP Action Network. This is to give RMPP insight into the effectiveness of Action Groups, facilitation and the use of expertise and to identify areas for continuous improvement.

There are three areas the evaluation will offer insight:

1. How are Action Groups performing?
2. Is RMPP Action Network effective?
3. What areas can be improved?

There are several forms of feedback. For most, the main form of feedback is through completing on-line surveys. Each Action Group will need to fill out a survey:

- At the time their Extension Plan is approved and the Action Group officially starts
- Six months after the official start of the Action Group
- 12 months after the official start of the Action Group
- 18 months after the official start of the Action Group
- 24 months after the official start of the Action Group.

Another form of feedback is through case studies where, with permission, successes are shared beyond an individual Action Group. Facilitators and Farmers may be asked to identify case studies from time to time.

Additional evaluation data will be collected from the KPIs recorded in the Farm Action Plan for each farm business participating in an Action Group. These figures will help RMPP determine the impact of RMPP Action Network in terms of profitability and productivity. All data collected will be presented in aggregated form and so individual farm business will be anonymous.

As part of the RMPP Facilitator Training Programme there will be adoption support provided. This will include valuable feedback and insight, through the form of one-on-one observation, activity reflections from Facilitators after every third activity, interviews and surveys.

10. What are the Health & Safety obligations?

10.1 Facilitators



Facilitators are responsible for ensuring that all Action Group activities comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 and any other applicable regulations.

More information on the obligations of Facilitators in relation to health and safety can be found on the Worksafe NZ website – <http://www.worksafe.govt.nz/worksafe/hswa>.

10.2 Farmers



The only circumstance in which farm businesses will hold health and safety responsibilities within RMPP Action Network is if they host events at their property or workplace. In such circumstances, farm businesses have agreed to:

- Comply with their obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 and any applicable regulations
- Adopt and implement a health and safety policy
- Provide visitors with a health and safety briefing.

Facilitators are responsible for ensuring that farm businesses are aware of these responsibilities prior to any event taking place.

11. What about Professional Indemnity?

RMPP recommends that all individuals being paid for their services in RMPP Action Network hold an appropriate level of Professional Indemnity insurance. It is designed for professionals who provide advice or a service. If you are getting paid for your professional advice or opinion then you have a duty of care to those you are providing that advice and you need to make sure you are covering yourself.

If someone alleges that you've made a mistake, overlooked a critical piece of information, misstated a fact or they have misinterpreted you in the course of your work, and this results in a financial loss to those with whom you are providing advice, then they may take legal action against you to recover these losses. Whether or not the allegation is true, Professional Indemnity Insurance seeks to protect your assets and your reputation should this occur. This means you can continue in your business without the stress of financial or reputational ruin should a claim arise.

Please contact your insurance company for more information.

12. How can RMPP provide support?

Support from RMPP is available for all involved in RMPP Action Network.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and other information can be found on the RMPP Action Network website (www.actionnetwork.co.nz), otherwise please contact RMPP with any queries you may have.

Telephone: 0800 733 632

Email: info@actionnetwork.co.nz

It is expected that all individuals involved in RMPP Action Network act reasonably and in good faith to meet the objectives of their Action Group to ensure the greatest possible chance of success. However, if a dispute arises within an Action Group, RMPP recommends that the Group, led by the Facilitator, must first attempt to resolve any concerns, issues or conflicts. As a last resort, complaints about the operation of an Action Group can be made in writing to RMPP and sent to the email address above.

RMPP partners

