

# AGRICULTURE, HORTICULTURE AND FORESTRY

## VERY HIGH EFFICIENCY AND A FOCUS ON ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE

The trend to dairying has seen dairy numbers grow to a regional milk herd of 127,000 in 2006. The independent and innovative cooperative, **Westland Milk Products**, based at Hokitika, has 390 suppliers and 330 shareholders from Karamea in the north to the Glaciers in the south supplying more than 40 million kg's of milk solids a year. Westland has modern, flexible manufacturing facilities which produce quality dairy ingredients to over 40 countries throughout the world.

- A temperate, productive climate with good sunshine and plenty of rainfall has proven ideal for the increase in dairying
- Many sheep and cattle farms have intensified their activities
- Existing land has been converted and undeveloped land cleared for dairying
- In the decade ending 2006, milk production had increased an average 8% per year
- In the 2006/07 season the average herd of 340 cows was producing 113,000 kg's of milk solids a year

**Beef cattle and sheep** have been farmed for more than 100 years. Different forage crops have been trialled for West Coast farming systems; locally grown crops such as maize, silage and brassica are proving successful.



The **West Coast Regional Economic Development Strategy** identifies horticulture as a significant area of development, particularly in northern Buller where there is affordable land, frost-free microclimates and a good road link. Subtropical crops such as black passionfruit, tamarillos, feijoas,

limes and blueberries grow here. Flowers and bulbs are exported. Fresh herbs are grown for medicinal use or oil extraction.

**The Coastwide Growers' Association** was formed in 2001 with the aim of promoting sustainable horticulture development and encouraging liaison between growers.

Development West Coast invested over \$2 million in **Cranberries New Zealand Ltd**, near Westport, to help develop a new export crop. Research showed the local marshland soils (pakihī), high in organic matter and its capacity for water retention, would be ideal for growing and harvesting cranberries. Not only will low quality land be utilised for the project, but up to 50 full-time equivalent jobs could be generated for contract growers over the next ten years.

## FORESTRY

The timber industry continues to be one of the region's largest employers.

Indigenous timber is still produced from logs sourced from forests managed under sustainable yield management plans. The natural aesthetic qualities and hardness of the predominantly sourced indigenous timbers, such as **red beech** and **rimu**, are sought after for architectural and interior design and furniture.

West Coast **radiata pine** is known for its high quality characteristics and planed and sawn timber is used in building construction.

State owned enterprise, **Timberlands West Coast** (Timberlands), owns the cutting rights to the Crown's West Coast plantation forests which are spread over 27,500 hectares up and down the Coast. 85% of the land utilised by Timberlands is owned by Ngai Tahu.

Timberlands holds an internationally recognised FSC certificate (Forest Stewardship Council) and its forests are managed in an environmentally sustainable manner.



### Coastwide Growers Association

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**Timberlands West Coast**  
[www.timberlands.co.nz](http://www.timberlands.co.nz)

**Coastwood Furniture**, a family owned Greymouth based business manufactures dressed timber into medium to high end furniture product for sale throughout New Zealand. Approximately 30% of this furniture is constructed from West Coast **red beech** supplied by **Forever Beech Ltd.**

**International Panel and Lumber (IPL)** are a Greymouth based business employing 100 staff manufacturing plywood which is sold throughout New Zealand. IPL is currently expanding with the investment into new plant and machinery to increase production and sales.

- More than 200,000 cubic metres of logs are processed annually
- More than 110,000 cubic metres of timber and plywood are produced annually
- Around 60% of New Zealand's timber products are exported as far afield as China, Vietnam, Germany and United States