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Dairy Farming -
Recording hours worked is so important for **minimum wage compliance**

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New Zealand's minimum wage is set to rise to $20/hr in April of 2021, so now is the time to make sure that you are staying compliant with how you're paying your staff and avoid ending up in the cowpat.
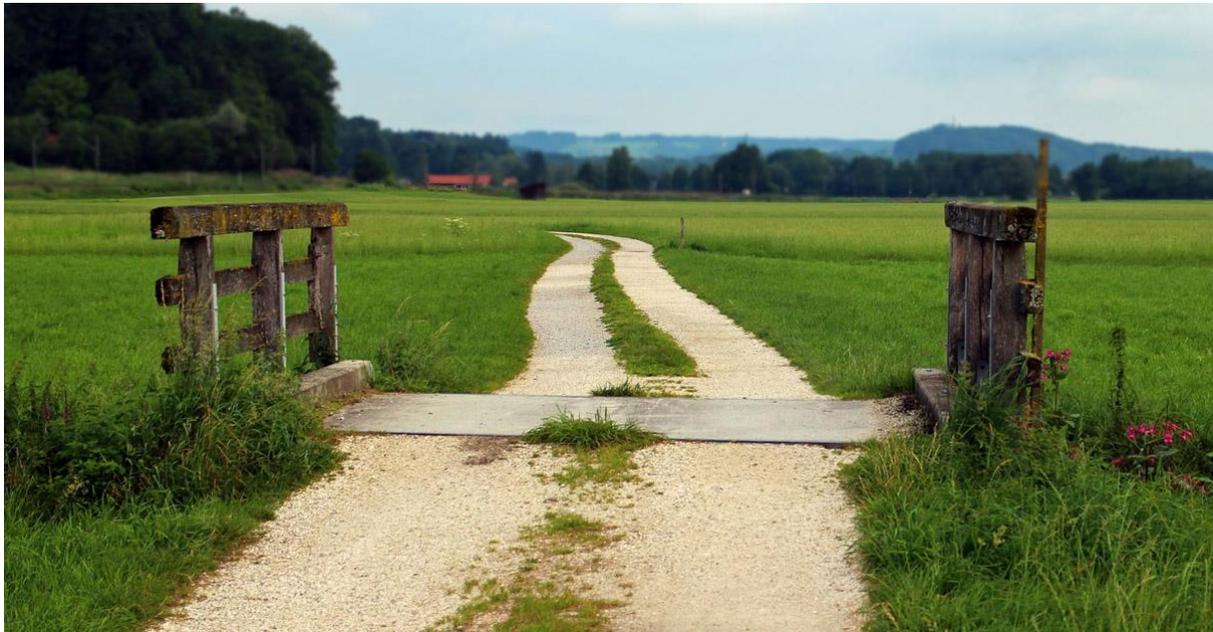
If you aren't taking the proper steps to ensure that you're doing right by your farm employees, you could end up with tens of thousands of dollars in penalties and even lose your right to employ certain workers.

In an industry like dairy, staff retention is always tricky business with one estimate saying that up to 60% of dairy staff leave within their first year. It can be hard to keep track of who is in and when – especially when relying on old fashioned timesheets and self-reporting.

Then, if they realise that they forgot to write something down each week, it could push them over the edge of that minimum-wage threshold and end up with disagreements, legal issues and even owing them backpay.

Beyond the hourly workers, many farm workers and managers are salaried. These folk work long hours and are the ones who make sure that everything is ticking along on the dairy farm the way it should be.

At $20/hr minimum wage, you're talking a yearly salary of $41,600 for 40 hours a week. With the Employment Relations Authority (ERA) requiring employees hours to be averaged out over a fortnight at the most, it could get dangerous quickly.

Say you have someone on a $50,000 a year salary. If they work 100 hours over two weeks, instead of 80, suddenly you're breaking minimum wage laws.

All of this is to say, it's complicated, difficult and very very important.

The best thing that you can do to prevent finding yourself in hot water is to make sure that you have good record keeping of who is working and exactly when they clocked on or off the job.

The Friday hand-in of pen and paper timesheets is notoriously unreliable especially as workers are all over the farm from this end to that. Even getting employees to email you or submit times via SMS/text only adds to admin pains as you have to get all the info into a manual spreadsheet.

You need a reliable way to keep track of when everyone from farm hand to manager is coming in and out. It needs to provide reporting of hours and times for each person and even what they are working on. And it needs to be able to function in a shed that's miles from the office.

TimeDock's purpose-built time clock is designed to work out of the box as a robust time and attendance tracker that connects to a web-based dashboard, synchronising time-punches and hours worked in real-time.

It reports on each and every person who signs in and out with the swipe of a card, and all it needs is a Wi-Fi connection or a data-connected sim card.

It provides info on when people sign in and out and even estimates what they've cost you each week as it goes along.

We developed TimeClock for exactly the problem that this post has explored. It will help you ensure that each and every person on your payroll is paid right, and you have peace of mind.

Don't let the rising minimum wage catch you out. Contact our team to find out more about how TimeDock helps your farm and business meet minimum-wage compliance.