

Manawatū Agri highlights

It is no surprise that Manawatū is recognised internationally as the agrihub for Aotearoa. Home to a bright pool of talent including world class scientists, researchers and agri experts coupled with three crown research institutes and a network of start-up incubators, Manawatū has all the right ingredients to revolutionise food production.

With the shared ambition to be one of the top three agritech ecosystems in the world, CEDA and Sprout are excited to share and celebrate some of the highlights and achievements happening in the region over the last quarter.



Team Melt members (L-R) Akashdeep Beniwal, Dian Muñoz Lintz, Summer Wright and Natalie Ahlborn.

Team Melt win Innovation Track competition

'Team Melt,' a group of Massey University PhD students from Palmerston North's food and research centre Riddet Institute, won the 2021 QING Innovation Track competition in the Netherlands.

The competition asked for teams to demonstrate an idea that shows climate adaptation in food systems. Team Melt had the vision to deliver an alternative dairy product that engages consumers increasingly

concerned with the environmental and health impacts of food by developing a low-dairy mozzarella cheese using dairy protein from oils from plants.

The members of 'Team Melt' have complimentary research backgrounds specialising in different areas of expertise leading them to be extremely effective and achieve collaborative success.

Not only did this innovative idea take the winning title the team also presented their project at the Pre-Cop #All4Climate Italy Summit in September 2021.



Shauna Brady, Levno Sales Manager walking through the Levno app with Customer John.

Levno named as fastest growing agribusiness

Leaders in farm data and monitoring [Levno](#), were named as New Zealand's fastest-growing agribusiness in the [Deloitte NZ Fast 50 index](#) in October, recognising businesses that have shown significant growth over the last three years determined by revenue growth percentage.

Launched in 2012, Levno started as a team of two offering farmers increased visibility of their on-farm fuel usage. They have now grown to a team of over 60, and leaders in on-farm monitoring.

Check out more on [Levno](#) here.



Kioumars Chamkhar (right) is the founder of Map & Zap and John Morris (left) is Business Development Manager at AgResearch.

Map and Zap accelerate to achieve the vision of more sustainable weed control

Kioumars Chamkhar, founder of Map&Zap and his support team at AgResearch have been working closely with the team at Sprout to achieve the vision of more sustainable weed control through a weed identification and laser technology system. Made up of a team of bright scientists and technologists, Map and Zap have an in-built AI driven system to detect weeds, targeting their exact location, killing them much earlier and stopping them from spreading.

Research found that the annual cost of invasive weeds to the agricultural economy in NZ

was \$1.65 billion in 2014. However, this is an underestimate and subsequent reviews have found, due to limited research and data, that the cost is likely to be much higher. Agriculture urgently needs environmentally friendly tools to get weeds under control. AgResearch was awarded just under 1 million dollars of funding from MBIE to carry out core R&D for the system.

Map and Zap secured a spot in the 2021 [Sprout Accelerator](#) and went through an intensive process with the Sprout team to accelerate the path to market.

The next stage for Map and Zap is to secure investment and complete the product development programme.

Hear more from the team at Map and Zap [here](#).