



Wide ranging farm experience triggers Joe's interest in agribusiness

Working in a range of roles on family farms triggered Joe Ward's interest in agribusiness.

Joe, from Havelock North, a 2021 MIA Undergraduate Scholar, is in his third year at the University of Canterbury studying towards a Bachelor of Commerce with a double major in finance and strategy and marketing and entrepreneurship.

"Most of my family is involved in the primary industry including farming, processing and exporting. So I have always worked on the farm every holiday," says Joe. "I get involved right across the board whether it be crutching, drenching or stock work and wherever I'm needed.

"This past summer I also got involved with marketing. My uncle is running a high end, high margins beef programme, and I really enjoyed the challenge of trying to add value to our premium product.

"As part of that, I was writing up the history of the family farms and telling our red meat story. I was also doing environment planning and genetics tracking, following up the results after processing, for things like marbling and weight gain, to support planning for the next breeding season. I really enjoyed all of that and I definitely see myself in an off-farm career in the sector."

The MIA awards six undergraduate scholarships annually providing \$5,000 a year for each year of study and four post-graduate scholarships of \$10,000 for each year of study. They are aimed at students considering a future in New Zealand's red meat sector. The MIA also runs a mentoring programme for its scholars, including a networking and educational event each year in Wellington.

"The scholarship is a huge financial help and also a huge opportunity," says Joe, who is considering going on to do a Masters in agribusiness. "Both the mentoring opportunities and just having the MIA connection on my CV, I think will be a massive help in helping me get started on a career in the industry."