

Thomas Sun – pursuing a career in food science

MIA scholarship recipient Thomas Sun is considering a future career in new product development in the red meat sector.

Thomas, from Palmerston North, is in the first year of a Bachelor of Food Technology honours degree at Massey University. He has a long-standing interest in the origins of food and focused on science-based subjects at high school so he could pursue studies in that area.

“My father is the son of a farmer and also studied agriculture and animal nutrition at university, my mother has a science background and my sister is a vet, so there is a strong interest in science, animal welfare and food production in our family,” says Thomas.

“I have always been interested in the origins of food and the farm to plate concept. I’m fascinated by the range of foods you see in a supermarket and the concept of producing food on a mass scale and the process that goes into creating a longer shelf life for foods.”

Thomas, who is also fluent in Mandarin, is one of the latest recipients of an MIA undergraduate scholarship. His is one of six offered every year, with an award of \$5000 per year for each year of study. Part-time or vacation work in the meat industry may be offered.

He opted to study physics, chemistry and calculus, with the aim of pursuing a degree related to food science.

“I’m particularly interested in working in new product development,” he says. “My chemistry teacher told the class about the MIA scholarship and that made me look into the red meat sector and become aware of the many career opportunities.

“New Zealand is a world leader in the red meat sector and I am keen to get experience in the industry while I am studying, to help shape my future career decisions.”