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2017 Nuffield Ireland Scholar



Dairy farmer for last five years from a beef background

The last week I have learnt a lot about being out of my comfort zone, being involved and knowledge transfer. It's been an incredible experience. Everyone is so broad and open minded. There is not a person here that I have spoken to that I haven't learnt something from. It's definitely been an eye opener.

After this is there something you want to implement back home?

I want to promote Ag. I think people are distanced from agriculture in general. So I want to start at the primary school level and start getting kids at that age involved in open farms. I think if you can just instil those memories when they are young it will stand to them later on.

Have you been to Brazil before?

I was here five years ago on my honeymoon but that was more touring than agriculture. It's an incredible country – what they are capable of doing is fantastic.

What presentations struck a chord?

The Leitissimo story really stuck with me because that is our side of agriculture. I was also glad to hear him tell us that Brazil's dairy side wasn't going to overtake the world anytime soon. Having five times the amount of land available in Brazil compared to NZ has for dairy alone is quite scary!

Also Jonadan Ma from Ma Shou Tao whose family moved to Brazil from China. His story on family structure was really impressive and something that is important to us as a family at home because we are involved in a few different businesses and I can see the next generation after us needing to be set up better otherwise it is not going to work out.

Will you tackle your project differently after this week?

My research topic is "antibiotic use in livestock and its links to resistance in humans". My initial focus was to look at it from how much people are using. Asking questions like – Are we in general our own worst enemy? And is agriculture the easiest sector to blame? But there is a lot of work being done in the pig and the poultry industry at the moment. They want to reduce their antibiotic use by 70 percent over the next few years. If it comes back to a 70 percent reduction in antibiotic use, it is going to look like agriculture is to blame. I think there needs to be a study that comes out at the same time, which shows how much antibiotics have been used in treating humans. The amount of antibiotics that are being used currently in animal production is an issue, but equally if we achieve a 70 percent reduction and agriculture continues getting blamed for human antibiotic resistance, then we need to recheck the facts and also the communication of them.

A Nuffield Scholarship is an intensive preparation for farmers and agri-professionals who are committed to life-long learning and to promoting excellence in all aspects of agricultural production, distribution, management and communication.