



Silver Fern Farms:

Creating a Multi Modal Network With Rail

Silver Fern Farms is New Zealand's largest livestock processing company, exporting premium grass fed beef, lamb, and venison to markets around the world. In partnership with 16,000 farmers, the company produces around 25% of New Zealand's total beef, lamb, and venison, operating from 14 processing sites nationwide and employing more than 6,000 people here in NZ and across the globe. Annual revenue exceeds \$3 billion across more than 60 countries.

Sustainability is central to how the business operates, with a strong commitment to integrating sustainable practices across the value chain and aiming to lead the way in responsible food production in a rapidly changing global environment.

The case study below shares insights from the Silver Fern Farms team on the role rail plays in reducing emissions while enabling strong commercial outcomes across their supply chain.

BENEFITS OF RAIL TO SILVER FERN FARMS

We operate a multi-modal freight network, using road to feed rail. This improves efficiency, lowers costs, and supports emissions reduction.

KiwiRail's role in this system is to enable freight to ports for shipment to overseas markets.



In 2025, KiwiRail transported 24% of our New Zealand meat and meat co product freight (by tonne kilometres), while contributing only 4% of Silver Fern Farms' total New Zealand freight emissions. This highlights the significant emissions efficiency of rail.

Road freight remains critical to network flexibility. However, we identify opportunities - supported by technology – to consolidate freight onto rail where commercial and emissions benefits align, accelerating delivery against our validated emissions targets.

Recent examples include:

- Containerised freight from Hāwera direct to the Port of Napier, replacing road transport.
- Containerised freight from Southern Link Mosgiel onto rail into Port of Otago. [The Southern Link Logistics Park](#) is a 40-hectare freight hub collaboration between Dynes Transport and Port of Otago to put more freight onto rail and improve transport flows in the region.

DECARBONISING INITIATIVES BEYOND RAIL

The key to achieving any long-term sustainability goals is to embed them into your strategic approach, performance indicators, and purpose.

To drive whole of business ownership, any change must deliver value for the customer, the service provider, and the commercial outcome. When those align, sustainability becomes good business.

The key is to define and lock in the long-term value proposition and back that up with transparent and trusted data. We have set full scope emissions reduction targets and have had these backed by the Science Based Targets initiative.

Silver Fern Farms' focus has been on decarbonising process heat across our processing sites, which has reduced processing emissions by more than 30%. This has primarily involved replacing ageing coal boilers.

Reducing Scope 3 emissions from farm gate onwards in our supply chain relies heavily on partnerships and our partners' ability to support us in improving transport efficiency.



Our global freight emissions have reduced by 20%*



Our New Zealand land based post processing freight emissions have reduced by 33%*



Our ocean and air freight emissions are now 22% lower*

*Absolute emissions compared to our 2021 base year.

By securing stable and reliable ocean freight capacity through our Kotahi GP Joint Venture, and rethinking our market offerings, we can prioritise sea freight over air freight to significantly lower emissions. Most of our sea freight is carried by an SBTi aligned operator, ensuring that vessel efficiency improvements, low carbon fuels, and validated emissions reduction pathways are prioritised.

Agricultural emissions are highly material in our supply chain and front of mind for customers and consumers. We have significantly invested in research, innovation, and product development through AgriZero, a joint venture between the New Zealand Government and leading primary sector companies. This is our main delivery mechanism for bringing emissions reduction tools into the hands of our supplying farmers.



THE VALUE OF SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Our Sustainable Business Council membership provides the opportunity to create greater impact by working collectively with other leading New Zealand businesses.

It also offers a forum for discussing hard to tackle sustainability challenges that are often common across different sectors. It's amazing what a different lens can bring to a real world problem.

