

Job Information Form

Job Opportunity:	Farm Manager
Business Name:	Matawai Deer Park
Region:	Matawai, Gisborne
Reports to:	Owners, Charles & Jane Rau
Property Summary:	<p>Matawai Deer Park is a family-owned farming operation, in the rural community of Matawai, 1 hour north of Gisborne, on State Highway 2. The farming operation is made up of two 400ha properties. The main Matawai Deer Park surrounds the Matawai township, and a second lease block is 2km away.</p> <p>The operation runs a diverse livestock system of sheep, beef, and deer, with each stock class making up approximately one third of the overall farming mix. Across both properties, they manage 2,000 Romdale ewes and 500 head of cattle, these are finishing bulls and steers. Around 80% of the cattle are beef breeds, with the remaining Friesian-cross cattle purchased as weaners.</p> <p>The deer operation is a key focus of the business, particularly velveting, supported by 50 years of established genetics. The farm winters 1,100 deer, including 240 breeding hinds, with the balance made up of mixed-age stags. All deer are run on the Matawai property.</p> <p>Environmental stewardship is a strong priority for the business. Waterways are being fenced off and they are establishing riparian plantings, the farm received an Environmental Farm Award last year. They utilise FarmIQ for recording and reporting purposes and are FAP approved.</p>
Position Overview:	<p>As Farm Manager, you will oversee the day-to-day operations and overall management of both properties. While deer experience is preferred, full training will be provided if required. The owner lives off-farm but maintains regular weekly calls and meetings and provides support around stock policies and fertiliser decisions.</p> <p>The role requires a high level of stockmanship and a capable team of six working dogs. You will be responsible for planning feed and pasture management, implementing stock rotations, and ensuring strong animal health practices across the farm.</p>



The farm undertakes its own cultivation work, typically 8–10 hectares, so previous experience with general agricultural operations is beneficial. You will need to be comfortable working autonomously, planning daily operations, and using FarmIQ to support accurate recording and reporting.

Support is available from a full-time fencer general, who works across both properties, but lives on the lease block, and there is potential to engage a GFF cadet if you are open to mentoring.

Skills, Experience, and Attributes Required:

- Lead the day to day management of sheep, beef, and deer operations, must have a high level of stockmanship, be quiet and calm.
- Plan and coordinate stock rotations, feed budgets, and seasonal priorities.
- Maintain high standards of animal health, welfare, and stock handling.
- Oversee fencing, general farm maintenance, and infrastructure development.
- Support velvet production systems and ensure compliance with NZFAP standards.
- Manage and mentor staff, fostering a positive and safe team culture.
- Work closely with the owners on planning, budgets, and farm performance.
- Uphold strong environmental and community values.
- Ability to work autonomously and take responsibility of day-to-day farm operations.

Staff Structure:

Owner
Farm Manager - TBC
Fencer General
GFF cadet (negotiable)
Father is a keen dog trailist and goes to farm for mustering once a week to help out.

Career Opportunities & Benefits:

- Hands-on experience managing a diverse livestock operation (sheep, beef, deer) with exposure to velveting, cattle finishing, and high-performance sheep.
- Farming a mixed land unit system.
- A modern farming operation with a close relationship with their agents and processors.
- Potential to support and mentor a GFF cadet.
- With 100 paddocks, there is excellent scope for pasture and stock management.
- The farm is velvet-focused, boasting over 50 years of carefully developed genetics and exceptionally quiet deer.



Partner Work Opportunities:

- Matawai offers a welcoming environment with a good local school and a tight-knit community on the farm's doorstep.

Work available in Gisborne and there is casual work available locally on drystock and dairy farms.

Lifestyle Information

Accommodation:

Accommodation is located on the Matawai property and features well-maintained grounds. The home is warm and tidy, offering three bedrooms, an ensuite, a walk-in wardrobe, an office, and spacious lounge and dining areas.

Farm Location & Community Information:

Matawai is a welcoming rural community, offering a good primary school, a Wrightsons store, and a local café, with a self-serve service station nearby. The township is conveniently located just one hour north of Gisborne on State Highway 2.

Schooling:

Matawai Primary School is Year 1 to 8, it is a well-regarded school and boundaries the property. High schooling is available in Gisborne, there is a bus available. There is a pre-school at Ormond, with local families working together and taking turns to transport the children

Farm Information

Farm Area (total/effective):

800ha total, 400ha each block

Contour:

Matawai – 40ha of river flats, rest medium contour
Kortes one third is hard hill country rest medium country

Soil Type:

Pumice soil, light soil

Rainfall:

1800ml per annum

Subdivision/Fences:

Mix of conventional fences, deer fences and electrics.
The farm is well sub-divided with 150 paddocks across both farms.

Woolshed & Other Buildings:

3 woolsheds
There are two 4-stand woolsheds – with night pen capacity and covered yards
There is also a 2-stand woolshed which is mainly used for dagging.
3 sets of cattle yards, with weight systems for both sheep and cattle.
Well-appointed Deer shed.
Implement shed



Water:	Mostly dams for water, on the river flats there is a water system. The water ways on the river flats are fenced off with riparian planted areas.
Machinery:	2 tractors, 4 quads, two 2-wheelers and side by side. The farm has all their own cultivation, cropping gear.
Tracks:	The properties are well tracked with good access over both farms.

Farm Policy & Systems

Production System	Semi Intensive
Stock Policy - Breeds/Number:	<p>Sheep, cattle and deer.</p> <p>Sheep – the 2000 Romdale ewes, they are run over both properties and is a high performing flock.</p> <p>Cattle – 500 finishing/trading Steers and bulls, (80% are beefies).</p> <p>Deer - 1100 head of deer, 240 hinds, the rest are velvet stags. There are 50 years of established genetics, they are very quiet deer.</p>
Maternal/Terminal Policy:	<p>Maternal – Romdale.</p> <p>Terminal - Black Faced Ram - 5 & 6 yr old ewes.</p> <p>50 Hereford cows – these are on owners' property closer to Gisborne.</p>
Sheep – Mating/Lambing/Weaning Dates:	<p>Terminal – Ram out 20 April.</p> <p>Maternal – Ram 8 May.</p> <p>Ram out mid-May with the Hoggets on the Matawai property.</p> <p>All weaned pre-Christmas, shear early January.</p> <p>First lambs go April, with them all gone by the end of May.</p>
Cows – Mating/Calving/Weaning Dates:	<p>Angus and Hereford cross bulls/steers brought in as weaners in March and April, 80% beef cattle.</p> <p>Some Friesian cross brought in just prior to Christmas.</p>
Deer – Mating/fawning/Weaning	<p>240 breeding hinds.</p> <p>350 4 year velvet stags.</p> <p>The rest are yearlings, 2 & 3 year velvet stags and replacement hinds.</p> <p>Fawning – November start.</p> <p>Stags out end of February – mating April.</p> <p>Ideally if you have a velvet ticket would be beneficial, but happy to support you to get this.</p>
Animal Health Practices:	Have a strong Animal Health plan set up with the Farm Consultant who is also a vet.



Cropping Policy:

8 ha swedes.

Pinch period for feed is usually July/Aug/Sept this is when they utilise the crops.

Photos



Map



