



Claude Shepherd

Rural Sales Consultant, Barfoot & Thompson, Kerikeri

- #1 Salesperson, Barfoot & Thompson, Kerikeri, 2013-15

- \$177 million in rural sales across 30 properties, 2014-16

With over a decade's experience in rural real estate sales, and more than 23 years as a dairy farmer, Claude is the natural choice for vendors and purchasers who want an agent who understands them and their business, and knows the true value of the properties he's selling.

"Being an ex-farmer with a strong knowledge of soils, climate and productivity gives confidence to vendors and purchasers that they are in good hands and getting the right information," says Claude. "I like talking with purchasers about their needs, and then matching them with the best properties."

Covering the Northland region, Claude spends most of his time on the road, assessing properties and speaking with farmers and others in the sector, including rural lenders and farm advisors.

His focus is properties that are at least 40 hectares, especially large-scale dairy and beef operations, and from 2014 to 2016 he sold 30 properties worth more than \$177 million.

Claude's extensive network includes rural lenders and farm advisors, whom he speaks with regularly about upcoming sales and market trends.

"Lenders and investors know that I will not only do all I can to ensure they get the result they want, but also handle any reluctant sales sensitively and professionally."

Through the NZ Realtors Network, too, Claude has robust relationships with key agents in different parts of the country, especially McDonalds Real Estate in Taranaki.

"I believe the Network's connections are as strong, if not stronger, than some of the national firms. Simply because Network members aren't in direct competition, so we're happy to refer clients."

Looking ahead, Claude sees considerable scope for the NZ Realtors Network's rural sales experts to collaborate on likely developments in the sector, taking into account political and economic factors.

"I certainly see strong opportunities over the next few years, with many corporate clients looking for sizeable acquisitions. The Network's combined market presence is formidable, and our experience means we know how to handle potentially contentious sales and acquisitions with discretion."

