

## The milk run

ROD ORAM'S excellent article "Milking the water issue" highlighted the issue of clean rivers in saying "all of a sudden this week, dairy farming became a big election issue". Corporate dairy farming is a major cause for concern and your typical Kiwi family dairy farm has little time for mega-conglomerates. Ironically, this is the Year of the Family Farm, the very farms being snapped up by wealthy overseas corporations with the result they are now unaffordable for our young farmers. However, corporate dairy farming is not the sole culprit in degrading freshwater (62 per cent of our lowland rivers are unfit to bathe in). Councils discharge untreated town sewage into rivers and coastal waters, and forestry clear-felling practices cause tonnes of sediment and debris to pollute rivers and destroy fragile fish spawning streams. My local Motueka River suffers from both.

Freshwater abuse is a national problem and national disgrace, which National has failed to address. Indeed it seeks to weaken the RMA, further degrading our rivers and streams to the point of no

return. If New Zealand continues on this greed-not-green path, will there be any clean, full rivers left for our children?

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