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Press Release

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Taratahi to launch Primary Industry Trades Academy

Taratahi Agricultural Training Centre will be offering up to 1900 placements at their new Primary Industry Trades Academy (PITA) set to open in 2011. Secondary school students interested in a career in the rural sector will be able to access a structured programme that will familiarise them with the agricultural industry, and help them develop a training plan that meets their future goals.

PITA has been selected as one of just five new Trades Academies that make up part of the Government's Youth Guarantee programmes – the Ministry of Education made its selection from 113 expressions of interest. Taratahi, which is New Zealand's oldest and largest agricultural training centre with three campuses in the North Island, will be working in partnership with Telford Rural Polytechnic to ensure that the programme reaches every single school in New Zealand.

"As well as our main campus in the Wairarapa, we also have campuses in Taranaki and Hawke's Bay," says Donovan Wearing, Taratahi's Chief Executive Officer. "We'll be managing the residential element of the programme in the North Island, and Telford will handle the South Island – so PITA will be available nationwide."

Taratahi already works with a large number of secondary schools, providing short courses and quality resources that introduce students to a career in agriculture. Taratahi's new Trades Academy status means that it will now be able to develop these strands into a fully funded, structured programme for students in Years 11, 12 and 13.

"What's so exciting about the Trades Academy is that every individual student will be properly tracked, supported and mentored," says Stephen Carr, Taratahi's Business Development Manager. "Our tutors will help each participant to identify their skills and abilities, and empower them to visualize and plan their career."

Education Minister Anne Tolley's announcement that Taratahi is to run the new Trades Academy proves Taratahi is well and truly leading the way in the rapidly changing climate of New Zealand's agricultural training sector. This year Taratahi has already clinched ground-breaking partnerships with the Eastern Institute of Technology (EIT), Lincoln University and New Zealand's Open Polytechnic. "Demand for a highly skilled, well qualified workforce in the rural sector is rapidly increasing," says Mr Carr. "Taratahi has the depth and breadth of experience to provide quality training that meets that need."

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE