

a2™ FARM
SUSTAINABILITY
FUND



2026 Guidelines



Contents



Overview

The a2™ Farm Sustainability Fund offers financial awards to contracted a2 Milk™ dairy farms. These awards support projects that deliver a positive impact on farm, and within their local communities.



Funding Available

A total funding pool of \$800,000 NZD (excluding GST) is available.

Funding awards are available up to a maximum of \$35,000 NZD (or \$30,000 AUD) per project, excluding GST.

Awards will be made based on the assessment of proposed projects against the key priority areas, and essential and desirable criteria by the Investment Committee, who will make funding recommendations for projects that support The a2 Milk Company's sustainability objectives:

- Support our people, consumers and communities to be healthy and safe to thrive; and
- Protect nature and the planet for future generations.

Process

Farmer develops project idea.

Farmer submits application for funding.

Application goes through eligibility check by a2MC team.

Application assessed by Investment Committee who make funding recommendation.

a2MC communicate with farmer on outcome of application.

Successful applications receive a letter of offer.

Letter of offer returned signed to a2MC.

Project commencement and initial 80% payment of award.

Project completion and final report submitted by farmer.

Final 20% payment of award.

Eligibility and Key Priority Areas

Eligibility

Eligible to apply for funding

- Open to current contracted a2 Milk™ dairy farms in Australia and New Zealand.
- Projects must have an expected outcome against one or more of the key priority areas.
- Projects must have a measurable impact on one or more of the key priority areas, and applicants must detail how they intend to measure impact.
- Projects that require regulatory approval must have obtained approval prior to application.

Not eligible for funding

- Projects that are required as a condition of any resource consent/s.
- Projects that require, but have not been awarded, a resource consent.
- Land purchase.
- Projects that are required under regulation or statute.
- Monoculture eg. pine plantation.
- Projects that include corrective action raised during an audit.

Prior to an application progressing to the assessment stage, the a2MC team will conduct an eligibility check against the above points. If further information is required, the a2MC team will directly contact the applicant before a decision is made on whether the application may or may not be shared with the Investment Committee.

Key Priority Areas

The a2 Milk Company has identified key priority areas that align with the company's overarching sustainability goals. Applications for funding in The a2™ Farm Sustainability Fund must be projects that have an anticipated positive outcome against one or more of the key priority areas.

Key Priority Area	Project examples
Reduce on-farm GHG emissions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Replacement of non-renewable powered machinery with renewable powered machinery.• Operational efficiency improvements.
Improve resilience or adapt to climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shade and shelter provision.• Infrastructure development such as standoff or feed pad.
Improve animal health and wellbeing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enrichment provision such as cow/calf brushes.• Improvements to winter grazing management.
Improve soil health and soil carbon sequestration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exploring nitrogen-free fertiliser options.• Adoption of mixed species pasture.
Reduce effluent run-off and enhance water quality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Effluent capture and reuse.
Increase water use efficiency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grey wash systems.• Soil moisture monitoring to determine irrigation schedule
Increase on-farm natural and indigenous biodiversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Native plantings and setting aside land.• Improvements to water quality via sediment traps and riparian plantings.
Adapt farm management systems to environmental challenges and opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Modifications to irrigation systems.• Investment in software or technology.
Control and protect against invasive species.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pest exclusion to protect planted areas.• Spraying invasive plant species.
Build sustainable communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• On-farm educational spaces.• Community access to nature areas on farmland.
Enhance employee health, safety and wellbeing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Upgrades to staff areas on farm that are not minimum requirement under employment law.• Investment into wellbeing initiatives such as resilience programs.
Support people development opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training opportunities for employees to improve knowledge and expertise.• Providing farm access and education opportunities to the local community.

Assessment Criteria

Applications are assessed by the a2™ Farm Sustainability Fund Investment Committee, who make funding recommendations to The a2 Milk Company.

The Investment Committee comprises members who are external to The a2 Milk Company and hold relevant expertise and credentials.

The Investment Committee consider the following criteria during their assessment:



Essential criteria

Alignment with The a2 Milk Company sustainability objectives.

The application must identify how improvements will be objectively measured and achievements reported.

Project alignment to one or more of the key priority areas of the Company.

An ongoing commitment to maintain and upgrade the project in future years.

Inclusion of a comprehensive project plan and budget, including all funding sources.

The project must meet all planning approvals, including relevant region requirements.

Improvements proposed by the project must have a sound technical basis.

Preference will be given to applicants who clearly demonstrate:

The project must be technically and financially feasible, with a strong probability of success.

- An objective rationale for how and why their project will result in an improvement;
- How the improvement(s) will be measured once the project is completed;
- A commitment to ongoing monitoring after completion.

The application must identify how improvements will be objectively measured and achievements reported.



Desirable criteria

How the project may support broader farm sustainability objectives.

The involvement of others in the project, such as other farmers, local environmental groups, or the wider community.

How information about the project is intended to be shared outside of the farm.

How to Apply

Apply for an a2™ Farm Sustainability Fund grant through The a2 Milk Company's website powered by SmartyGrants.

Application steps:

1. Register through the SmartyGrants link for your region.
2. You can begin your grant application and return to the form at any time.
3. Complete your application online by selecting 'Review and Submit' and submitting your form.

Project budget

Before working on your budget, consider the following:

- Cost estimates should be credible and realistic, and supported by quotes;
- Each item has to be specific, avoid using terms such as 'miscellaneous' or 'other activities'; and
- For each item, include a short description and provide details of calculations used to arrive at the amount budgeted.

Filling in the budget table:

• Item Description Column

List the resources required to carry out the project.

• Funding Requested – Column A

Enter the price of the items to be funded. Please note – total funding requested must not exceed the amount of the grant e.g. \$35,000 NZD (or \$30,000 AUD).

• In-Kind Contributions – Column B

Enter the cost of the items that are being funded by external sources, if any, including labour.

Make sure to

- Complete the application form in its entirety. Incomplete sections may result in an unsuccessful application.
- Ensure to include 'before' photographs and maps that help to illustrate the location of the project for the application where relevant.
- Quotes must be included to support items and/or contractor work within the project budget.

Successful applicants

Each successful applicant will receive a letter of offer to sign and return. Concurrently additional information such as bank account details will be collected.

Funding will be transferred to the applicant's nominated bank account following receipt of the signed letter of offer. Funding will be provided at 80% of the award at project start and 20% at project end. Grant recipients are required to invoice The a2 Milk Company for 80% of the award prior to 1st July, and the final 20% after the final report has been accepted.

As a condition of receiving a grant, recipients will be required to complete a final report. The report needs to include measures of improvement described in the original application, as well as other results, before-after photos, and grant expenditure.

Key Dates



Funding Conditions



Applicants must be contracted a2 Milk™ suppliers.



Only one application can be submitted per supplier farm.



Applicants must meet all regional and national standards, laws, regulations and other mandatory guidelines.



Funding must be allocated only to activities detailed in the funding application, unless otherwise agreed with The a2 Milk Company.



Funding is provided on a one-off basis and does not include ongoing maintenance.

80% of the funding will be paid on receipt of the signed letter of offer and 20% on acceptance of the final report.



Funding is available for long-term projects but each funding application is for one year only and does not secure or imply funding in subsequent years.



Refurbishment, upgrades to and/or extension of existing infrastructure, and initiatives to deliver better environmental outcomes are eligible.



Funding is not available for any projects that are required to meet a legal/regulatory requirement.



Recipients must provide receipts or other relevant evidence of where expenditure of grant money has been allocated.



Recipients agree to the use of third parties in measuring environmental performance.



Recipients must abide by reporting requirements as outlined above. Recipients must submit high resolution photos and/or video footage of the project as part of their project reporting.



The Investment Committee and The a2 Milk Company reserves the right to refuse any application.



The information requested in the attached application form will be used for assessing applications. All information will be maintained according to strict privacy laws under which The a2 Milk Company and the investment committee operate.



Funding awards are available up to a maximum of \$35,000 NZD (or \$30,000 AUD) per project, excluding GST. Under special circumstances the Investment Committee will consider higher awards.

The total award pool is \$800,000 NZD.



Recipients must acknowledge the funding from the a2™ Farm Sustainability Fund on all published or promotional material arising from the project.



Successful applicants must provide permission to The a2 Milk Company to use information about the project, progress updates, the final report and any other information deemed relevant in external communications.

Frequently Asked Questions



Can my business / farm submit more than one application?

No, only one application per supplier farm will be considered.



Can I submit my application after the closing date?

Late applications will not be considered for funding.



When can I expect to start and when do I need to have my project completed?

Applicants are advised on the outcome of their application approximately 8 weeks after the closing date of the funding round. If successful, grant funds must be spent on the project budget items by the final report date, even if a project is ongoing.



Does my farm / business need an NZBN / ABN to receive a grant?

Yes, a NZBN or ABN is required.



Are staged projects over multiple years accepted as an application?

Staged projects are accepted; however, the applicant must submit a new application for each year, and it is not guaranteed the subsequent stages will be awarded a grant each year.



Who assesses the applications?

Applications are evaluated by an Investment Committee comprised of industry experts in regenerative agriculture, soil health, animal health and wellbeing and farming systems.



If successful will I receive the full amount applied for?

The Investment Committee may decide to only partially fund the project for a number of reasons. This will be detailed in the letter of offer and it is up to the applicant whether to proceed with the grant.

Glossary

Desirable Criteria

are aspects that the Investment Committee looks for within an application that will improve the probability of an application being funded, however are not necessary for success.

Essential Criteria

are aspects that must be covered in an application, and if not the application will not progress past the eligibility check process.

Key Priority Areas

are environmental, social or animal related objectives identified by The a2 Milk Company to support the company's overarching sustainability goals.

SmartyGrants

is the grant administration platform used by The a2 Milk Company to manage Farm Sustainability Fund applications.

Sustainability Objectives

are measurable steps taken to achieve a sustainability outcome and/or goal.



a2™ Farm Sustainability Fund 2026

Project Details

* indicates a required field.

Project Overview

Tell us about your farm, including current sustainable practices and your long term sustainability aspirations for the farm.*

Our family purchased Blue Sky Farm in 2023 and have spent the last year upgrading fencing, completing necessary repairs and getting to know the land in all seasons. The farm covers 100 ha with an additional 30 ha lease block on mostly flat land with neighbouring bush blocks to the east and west of the property. We milk 225 cows in a 24 side herringbone, and rear all our calves with the non-replacements going into a local dairy beef supply network from 8 weeks of age.

We have a philosophy of creating little waste and circularity where possible, repurposing what we already have. An example of this is removal of old concrete fence posts and reusing for infrastructure around the dairy. We also installed in shed feeding to minimise waste and reduce the need to take feed bins to the paddocks which was also destroying grass cover.

However, our family has aspirations for the farm to produce more with minimal impact to our surrounding environment. We recognise the significance of the bush blocks our farm sits between and the native flora and fauna relying on these areas. Our vision is for the farm to be harmonious with the bush blocks and not negatively impact them.

Project Title *

Wildlife corridors stage 1

Project Start Date (dd/mm/yyyy) *

03/07/2026 

Must be a date.

Project End Date (dd/mm/yyyy) *

28/05/2027 

Must be a date and no later than 31/12/2025.

Provide an overview of your proposed project, including why it is important to your farming business and long term sustainability aspirations.*

We intend to fence and plant two wildlife corridors across the farm connecting both bush blocks. Using a mixture of native and exotic species. This will require approximately 2km of fencing and planting.

The project is important to us as a first stage in our journey to supporting the neighbouring bush blocks to flourish.

The wildlife corridors will also improve the aesthetics of the farm, which gives our family and staff a sense of pride. We believe that by supporting local wildlife, particularly bird life, this will control unwanted insects, as the local ecosystem is in balance. We also wish to increase shade and shelter provision for our cows in paddock.

Tick one or more of the key priority areas your project is expected to achieve.*

- Reduce on farm GHG emissions
- Improve resilience or adapt to climate change
- Improve animal health and wellbeing
- Improve soil health and carbon sequestration
- Reduce effluent run-off and enhance water quality
- Increase water use efficiency
- Increase on-farm natural and indigenous biodiversity
- Adapt farm management systems to environmental challenges and opportunities
- Control and protect against invasive species
- Build sustainable communities
- Enhance employee health, safety and wellbeing
- Support people development opportunities

Example Project Application

Form Navigation

1. Eligibility
2. Group Details
3. Project Details
4. Outcomes and Monitoring
5. Budget
6. Supporting Documents/ Declaration

Review and Submit

At a minimum projects must have an outcome against one key priority area.

Collaboration

Please list any individuals, groups, or organisations that will collaborate with you on this project. Next to their names, indicate their contribution (e.g. technical support, advice, networking, labour). *

The Plant Specialists: nursery, plant species selection, planting advice, planting contractors, spraying and maintenance for 3 years post planting.

Down South Vets: secondary advice to ensure plants are non-toxic to cows.

Family & employees will contribute to fencing and planting labour as needed.

Must be no more than 200 words. E.g. Local Council - Site prep; Landcare Group - Project management; Men's Shed - Provide nest boxes

Proposed number of people directly involved in this project: *

8

Must be a number.

If third party consultants and/or contractors are not involved, please detail your credentials that will support this projects success.

N/A

Activities

In the table below, please list the project activities and their expected completion date.

EXAMPLE:

- Activity description:** 'Planting of native species including an initial pre-spray treatment to prepare the site'.

Please fill in a maximum of 5 activities.

Note: this description outlines the activities involved and is not a budget line item.

Activity 1

Description of activity *

Place order of plants at nursery

Expected completion date (dd/mm/yyyy) *

03/07/2026



Must be a date.

Activity 2

Description of activity *

Site preparation, including mowing and pre-spraying

Expected completion date (dd/mm/yyyy) *

30/07/2026



Must be a date.

Activity 3

Description of activity *

Planting with The Plant Specialists

Expected completion date (dd/mm/yyyy) *

24/10/2026



Must be a date.

Activity 4

Description of activity *

Fencing off wildlife corridors

Expected completion date (dd/mm/yyyy) *

31/10/2026



Must be a date.

Activity 5

Description of activity *

The Plant Specialists to come to farm to conduct monitoring, checking survivability and for pests

Expected completion date (dd/mm/yyyy) *

19/12/2026



Must be a date.

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Review and Submit

a2™ Farm Sustainability Fund 2026

Outcomes and Monitoring

* indicates a required field.

Impact

Describe the expected outcomes of your project, these will be the results and consequences of the project being completed. *

Increase biodiversity
Provide habitat for birds and insects
Increase shade provision for cows
Carbon sequestered from plantings

Must be no more than 300 words.

How will you measure and report on project outcomes and achievements? (e.g. plant survivability, soil tests, animal health indicators etc) *

Plant survivability %
Conduct 15-minute bird count before project commences, once completed, and then at 6 monthly intervals ongoing.
Visually assess if cows use area along wildlife corridor for shade and/or shelter when bringing in for milking from adjoining paddocks.

Must be no more than 150 words.

Please describe how you will maintain the project benefits into the future. (e.g follow up activities, facilitation of community days) *

The Plant Specialists will be engaged for three years to continually monitor plants, spray as needed and identify any plants that may need replacing. If plants do need to be replaced we will do this at yearly intervals.
We will monitor the fencing and repair as necessary if impacted by invasive species or plants.

Must be no more than 150 words.

Please provide any additional information that will support your application

Our family has spotted various lizards and geckos when walking alongside the bush blocks and we are engaging with a local rare species group to identify if there are any Jewelled Geckos. As our son has spotted one but we are not yet 100%. If there are then this reinforces our commitment to ensuring safe passageways between the bush blocks for animals.

Must be no more than 150 words.

What additional and related developments would you seek to undertake in the future as part of a whole farm systems approach?

As we aim to minimise wastage, aside from connecting the bush blocks we would like to explore how we can reuse water within the dairy and are looking at products that clean effluent water (and suppress methane) for use as yard washdown.

Must be no more than 150 words.

Are there any other sustainability projects occurring on the farm?

We have put in a submission for another grant with our local council to install solar panels on our dairy, as although the grid in New Zealand is majority renewable energy we wish to generate our own renewable power.

Must be no more than 200 words.

Example Project Application

Form Navigation

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Review and Submit

Reporting on impact delivered by the Farm Sustainability Fund is of high importance to the a2MC, and so projects must have measurable outcomes.

a2™ Farm Sustainability Fund 2026

Budget

* indicates a required field.

In the table below, enter your proposed budget.

- Enter each budget item on a separate line.
- Include the quantity (with units) and rates (price per unit) for each budget item in the description.
- Funding Requested** – enter the price of the items to be funded.
- Cash Contributions** – enter the amount of cash you will be contributing to the project, if any.
- In-Kind Contributions** – enter the price of the items that are being funded by external sources, if any.
- If your business/farm is registered for GST, base your budget on GST exclusive pricing.
- If your business/ farm is not registered for GST, base your budget on GST inclusive pricing.

Please note - total **Funding Requested** must not exceed the amount of the grant - \$35,000 (ex GST),

To add a funding item, click on the + 'plus' button. To delete a funding item click on the - 'minus' button

Are you registered for GST? *

Yes
 No

Project Budget

Project Budget

Minimise

Item Description	Funding Requested (ex GST)	Total Cash Contribution (ex GST)	In-Kind Contribution (ex GST)
Wire	\$1,100.00		
2000 plants & guards	\$14,000.00		
100 hours The Plant Specialists	\$5,000.00		
3 years monitoring by The Plant Specialists, at	\$750.00		
24 hours hire of post rammer at \$150ph	\$3,600.00		
200 fenceposts at \$20 each	\$4,000.00		
Glyphosate	\$400.00		
Vet advice	\$250.00		
Project management at \$100ph			\$2,000.00

Budget Totals

Total Funding Requested (ex GST)
\$29,100.00

This number/amount is calculated. What is the total financial support you are requesting in this application?

Total In-Kind Contribution (ex GST)
\$2,000.00

This number/amount is calculated.

Total Cash Contribution (ex GST)
\$0.00

This number/amount is calculated.

Total Project Cost (ex GST)
\$31,100.00

This number/amount is calculated.

Example Project Application

Form Navigation

- Eligibility
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Review and Submit

Don't forget to attach all quotes and detail of proposed expenditure.

If your project includes on-going yearly costs, such as plant maintenance, include these.



For any general and farm enquiries, please contact:
farmsustainabilityfund@a2milk.com

The a2 Milk Company Limited
Level 17, 51 Shortland Street
Auckland 1010 New Zealand

thea2milkcompany.com