



Internationally recognised research into the biological, medical and agricultural aspects of growth and development

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NATIONAL RESEARCH CENTRE FOR  
GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

A Centre of Research  
Excellence

A Healthy Start for Productive Lives



## Introducing the NRCGD

The National Research Centre for Growth and Development (NRCGD) is a Centre of Research Excellence (CoRE) bringing together developmental, biomedical, animal and population scientists from across New Zealand to address the question: what makes the best start for a healthy life?

Through our high-quality research into growth and development we seek a better understanding of the biology of the early-life period, and of its impact on life-long human health and livestock performance.

We actively support the application of our findings in the clinical, agricultural, public policy and education sectors, to help bring economic and social benefits to all New Zealanders.



## The Centre's research

Environmental influences before, during and shortly after pregnancy can subtly alter an individual's development in ways that affect life-long health and potentially the health of the next generation as well.

In humans these changes can appear as increased risks of developing conditions such as obesity, type 2 diabetes and heart disease later in life – conditions that are of growing concern in New Zealand today. In farm animals the same changes may have downstream effects on health and production characteristics.

Through our research we aim to gain a better understanding of the effects of early-life environmental influences on the growth and life-long health of the individual. We provide new insights into the biological processes that regulate development and influence disease risk, and new ways to measure their social and economic costs to New Zealand.



## How our research benefits New Zealand

Our research is providing a better understanding of the ways in which early-life events affect long-term health outcomes. The application of this new knowledge will lead to changes in public health policy and to better clinical practices for **improved health and well-being** for all New Zealanders.

For farmers, our research is contributing to better livestock management practices for **improved productivity** in the pastoral industries that are the cornerstone of New Zealand's economy.

We also use our research as the basis for innovative **educational and outreach programmes** that reach thousands of young New Zealanders each year, increasing scientific literacy and participation, and providing a route to increased health awareness in our communities.