KIWI VALLEY FARM PARK
WEST AUCKLAND • EST. 2001

LEARNING · COMMUNITY · CARING FOR ANIMALS

Volunteer Guide

Everything you, and your family, need to know about volunteering on the farm.

KIWI VALLEY FARM PARK

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A note from the owner

Welcome to Kiwi Valley.

Our volunteers are at the heart of what makes this place special. For more than thirteen years, young people and families have chosen to spend their time here, and my husband, Eric, and I feel privileged to inherit that and want to keep it going.

We put this guide together so you know what to expect. If you're a parent wondering whether Kiwi Valley is the right place for your child, we hope these pages give you a good sense of how we look after our volunteers, our animals and each other. And if you're about to start volunteering yourself, welcome. We're glad you're here.

Natalie
Owner, Kiwi Valley Farm Park

Welcome to Kiwi Valley

Whether you love animals, enjoy being outdoors, want to learn about farming, meet new people, or just try something different, there's room for all of that here.

Our volunteer programme is about learning, not replacing paid work. You'll get real, hands-on experience and be part of daily life on the farm. You don't need any experience to start, and our team will support you as you go. Ask as many questions as you like.

Volunteering here isn't a job. There are no minimum hours, no fixed days, and no expectation that you'll come every week. Life gets busy, and we understand that.

Getting started

Anyone aged 12 or over can volunteer. If you're under 18, a parent or guardian will need to complete the forms with you.

1. **Read this guide**
   It explains what to expect and how we keep everyone safe.

2. **Complete your forms**
   The Volunteer Agreement and Emergency Contact Form are needed before your first day. The Getting to Know You Form is optional, but it helps us get to know you.

3. **Book your first day**
   We welcome two new volunteers a day, so we can give you a proper welcome and a short safety briefing. Book your first day. After that, use our regular sign-up to choose your next day. From your second visit, you'll be issued a Kiwi Valley volunteer shirt to wear on site.

You'll also find all of these on our website, kiwivalley.co.nz, under Volunteer.

What we care about

A few ideas guide how we run things.

- **Kindness.** To the animals, to visitors, to each other, and to yourself when something doesn't go to plan.
- **Belonging.** Everyone here has something to contribute.
- **Curiosity.** Ask questions, and ask again if the first answer didn't make sense.
- **Stewardship.** Leave things a little better than you found them.

What volunteering looks like

It looks a little different for everyone, depending on the day, the season and your interests. Here are some of the things you might do.

In the Animal Nursery

You may spend time around rabbits, guinea pigs and other small animals. Staff will show you how to check on them and what a healthy, comfortable animal looks like. Over time, and always alongside our team, you may help visitors meet the animals gently.

In the stables

You'll be introduced to horses at a pace that matches your experience and confidence. Early on that might mean watching, learning each horse's name and personality, and learning to move safely around large animals. As staff get to know you, you may be shown how to groom and, when appropriate, help get a horse ready to meet visitors. Nothing here is rushed, and nothing is expected of you until a staff member has said so.

Around the farm

You might tidy paddocks and walkways, do some gardening, or help keep shared spaces welcoming. If you're 15 or older, you may also help with feed once you've been shown how. If you enjoy practical work, you're welcome to spend time alongside our farm maintenance team, learning proper tool use and taking pride in a job well done.

Sharing the farm with visitors

During school holidays and weekends you may help welcome school groups or be part of a birthday party, introducing children to an animal under a staff member's guidance. Many volunteers tell us these become their favourite memories.

Helping newer volunteers

As you spend more time with us, you may find yourself helping a newer volunteer settle in. It's one of the clearest signs that someone has become part of the community.

> Every one of these happens alongside a staff member, and only when both you and the staff member are comfortable. You're never expected to do something you haven't been shown, don't feel confident about, or simply don't want to do that day.

If you're using your time here as a stepping stone towards further study or a first job, in farming, veterinary science, conservation, hospitality or something else, we're glad to support that and happy to provide a reference once we've got to know your work. But you don't need a career plan to belong here.

Caring for animals

Our animals are central to everything we do.

Until you've been shown how and a staff member is confident you're ready, you won't be asked to handle, move, feed, medicate or restrain an animal on your own. This isn't about doubting you. It's about keeping every animal and every volunteer safe while you learn.

If you notice an animal that seems unwell, distressed, injured, or without water, please tell a staff member straight away, even if you're not sure it's serious. We'd always rather hear about something that turns out to be nothing.

Please never chase, tease, frighten, restrain or handle an animal roughly, even in play. The trust our animals have in people has been built over many years, and every volunteer helps protect it.

Welcoming our visitors

Families choose to spend a day with us, and you'll often be one of the first friendly faces they meet.

If a visitor asks a question you can answer, such as directions or something about an animal you've got to know, please do. If someone needs help you're not sure how to give, like a safety concern, a complaint, an injury, or something about riding or handling an animal, find a staff member rather than take it on yourself. Some situations need a staff member's training and authority, and knowing when to hand something over is good judgement.

Working alongside our team

You'll always be volunteering alongside our team. Staff are responsible for the day-to-day running of Kiwi Valley, including animal welfare, visitor safety and responding to anything unexpected. If you're unsure whether something is yours to help with, ask.

Some of our volunteers have been part of Kiwi Valley for many years and know the farm incredibly well. Thank you. Even so, staff remain responsible for the decisions that keep animals, visitors and volunteers safe, so please keep checking in with them before taking action yourself.

At the start of each visit we'll usually chat about what's happening that day and what you might like to be involved in. If something doesn't appeal, if you need to leave early, or if you decide not to come on a particular day, that's completely okay.

Volunteer safety

Your safety matters as much as the animals' and the visitors'. This section covers what you can expect from us, what we ask of you, and what to do if something goes wrong.

What you can expect from us

- **A safe place to volunteer.** We look after the buildings, fences, paths, equipment and animal areas, and fix or block off anything that isn't safe.
- **Clear information.** Before you do something new, a staff member will show you how, explain any risks, and stay with you until you're confident.
- **Supervision.** A staff member is always nearby, and you'll never be asked to work alone.
- **First aid.** Trained staff are on site, and first aid kits are kept at reception and in the first aid room.
- **An emergency plan.** On your first visit we'll show you what to do and where to go in a fire, earthquake or other emergency.
- **Clothing and protective gear.** If a task needs gloves, a mask or other protection, we'll provide it and show you how to use it.
- **A listening ear.** You can raise any safety concern, big or small, and nobody will be in trouble for doing so.

What we ask of you

- Take reasonable care of yourself and the people around you.
- Follow the reasonable instructions staff give you around animals, equipment and visitor areas.
- Wear closed-toe footwear (gumboots are ideal) and clothing suited to the weather and the work.
- Wear a hat and sunscreen, drink plenty of water, and tell a staff member if you feel dizzy, unwell or too hot.
- Wash or sanitise your hands after handling animals and before eating.
- If a task needs gloves or a mask, wear it as you've been shown, look after it, and tell a staff member if it's damaged or doesn't fit.
- Lift only what you've been shown how to lift, and ask for help with anything heavy or awkward.
- Stick to the tasks you've been shown. If you're not sure, ask first.
- Tell a staff member if you notice a hazard, such as a broken fence, a wet floor, damaged equipment, or an animal that seems unwell.
- Tell us before you start if you have a health condition, allergy or medication that could matter in an emergency.
- If you have a fever, vomiting, diarrhoea or anything contagious, please stay home and let us know before your shift. Come back once you're well, which means 48 hours clear after vomiting or diarrhoea. This matters most if you're helping with food or young visitors.
- We don't give out paracetamol, ibuprofen or any other medicine, and our first aid kits don't hold any. If you have your own prescribed medication, such as an inhaler or adrenaline pen, keep it with you.

You can always stop

If something feels unsafe, you can stop what you're doing, step away, and tell a staff member. You don't need to explain, and you won't be in trouble.

If you feel tired, stressed or overloaded, tell us. You can slow down or stop.

If someone makes you feel unsafe

If anyone, including a visitor, volunteer or staff member, makes you uncomfortable, upset or unsafe, tell a staff member. It will be taken seriously.

Things volunteers don't do

To keep things clear and safe for everyone, there are a few things we ask all volunteers not to do, no matter how confident or experienced you feel:

- Work alone, without a staff member nearby
- Handle cash or take payments from visitors
- Operate vehicles, machinery or power tools
- Give medication to any animal
- Carry out veterinary or farrier-type tasks
- Handle chemicals or cleaning products
- Enter higher-risk animal areas without a staff member present
- Manage horses or larger animals on your own
- Supervise visitors or enforce rules
- Respond to an incident yourself. If something happens, your job is to find a staff member straight away

None of this is about doubting you. These are things our staff are trained for, and keeping that line clear keeps everyone, you included, safe. If you see one of these jobs being done, please keep a safe distance and stay out of the way.

Coming, going and looking out for each other

When you arrive, say hello to a staff member and let them know you're here. When you head home, let them know you're leaving. We'll make a note of both. This isn't about tracking your time. It's so that, if anything unexpected happened, we'd always know who is on the farm and where to find everyone.

During the day, a quick word with a staff member when you move to a different part of the farm, take a longer break, or leave for lunch means someone always knows where you are. If you'd like someone to walk over with you, just say so.

If you feel unwell, upset or overwhelmed, tell any staff member at any time. You don't have to explain. Staff will also check in with you during the day, so don't be surprised if someone asks how it's going.

If you've booked a day and your plans change, a quick message lets someone else have the spot. We can only have a limited number of volunteers on the farm each day, so it really does help.

In an emergency

- If there's a fire alarm or an announcement, stop what you're doing and follow a staff member to the nearest assembly point.
- In an earthquake, drop, cover and hold where you are, then follow staff once the shaking stops.
- If someone is hurt, find a staff member straight away. In a life-threatening emergency, staff will call 111.
- If you're hurt, even slightly, or you have a near miss, please tell a staff member so we can look after you and fix what caused it.

Your say in how we do things

If you have an idea about how we could make the farm safer, or you'd like to be part of a safety conversation, tell any staff member or Natalie. If you have a concern and don't feel it has been dealt with, you can also contact WorkSafe New Zealand on 0800 030 040.

Making your time here work for you

Everyone who volunteers here is different, and so are the things that help a day go well. Some people like a clear plan at the start of the day. Some like to know where the quiet spots are. Some of us have a health condition, take regular medication, or like a bit of extra help with communicating, getting around or finding our way. All of that is welcome here.

If anything would make your time here more comfortable or safer, please tell us, whether that's before your first day, on the day, or months down the track. You can mention it to a staff member or write it in your Getting to Know You Form.

For some volunteers we'll also suggest a short support profile. It's a separate one-page form where you, and anyone who supports you, can tell us what helps, what to do if you're having a hard time, and who we should call. Filling one out is entirely your choice, and you can change it whenever you like.

We'll always talk with you directly about what you'd like to do here. If there's someone you'd like us to include in those conversations, tell us who.

Your information

What you tell us in our forms, including health, medication, emergency contact and support information, is used for one reason: to keep you safe and make your time here better.

It's shared only with the staff who need it to look after you, and with emergency services if we ever have to call them. We keep it securely and we don't use it for anything else. If you come to us through an agency or support organisation, we'll only share information with them when you've agreed to it (or, if you're under 18, when your parent or guardian has).

You can ask to see what we hold about you, or ask us to correct it, at any time. Just talk to a staff member or email us.

Young volunteers

Many of our volunteers are teenagers, and we take real care in how we support younger members of our community. You need to be at least 12 to volunteer with us.

If you're under 18, we'll ask a parent or guardian to read through this guide with you and give their consent before you begin, along with any medical, allergy or emergency contact information we should know. We may also ask a parent or guardian to stay contactable, or to collect you at agreed times, depending on your age and the activities involved.

If you're under 15

On top of the things no volunteer does, New Zealand's health and safety rules set out what young people can and can't do around workplaces, and we follow them. Here is what that means at Kiwi Valley.

YOU CAN	YOU CAN'T
Help with animal care, such as grooming, checking water and visiting the animals, with a staff member right with you	Be in or help with areas where feed or other goods for sale are being prepared or made
Help out in retail and public areas, such as welcoming visitors alongside staff	Help with machinery, tractors or power tools
Join a guided tour, or help with a school group or party alongside staff	Drive or ride on any farm vehicle, or on a trailer or attachment
Do tasks that suit your age, skill and strength	Lift heavy loads or do any task that could harm your health
Do light gardening and tidying	Be in areas where hazardous chemicals are being used or mixed

If you're under 15 and you're not sure whether something is okay, ask a staff member first.

We're proud of how many young people have grown in confidence and skill through their time here, and we look forward to being part of that with you.

Questions, feedback and support

If you ever have a question, a concern, or simply want to talk something through, find a staff member. We'd genuinely rather hear from you.

This goes for parents and guardians too. If you have a question about what your child will be doing or how they're settling in, we're always happy to talk it through.

Get in touch

PHONE
09 837 2952

EMAIL
info@kiwivalley.co.nz

ADDRESS
308 Henderson Valley Road, Henderson Valley

Volunteer promise

We promise to

- Welcome you as a valued member of our community.
- Support you as you learn, at a pace that suits you.
- Keep you and our animals safe, and take any concern you raise seriously.
- Never ask you to do something you haven't been shown or don't feel comfortable doing.
- Respect your time, your other commitments, and your choice to volunteer when it works for you.
- Recognise the contribution you make.

We hope you'll

- Bring curiosity, kindness and patience.
- Treat our animals, visitors, staff and fellow volunteers with respect.
- Ask when you're unsure, rather than guess.
- Let us know if something isn't working.
- Come when you're able, and know that's always enough.

There is no minimum commitment, no set roster, and no obligation beyond what you choose to give.

Once you've read this guide, we'll ask you (and, if you're under 18, your parent or guardian) to sign our **Volunteer Agreement**, which sets out the details of your participation.

We can't wait to meet you.
See you on the farm.

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