

SUMMER 2011

# Seasons



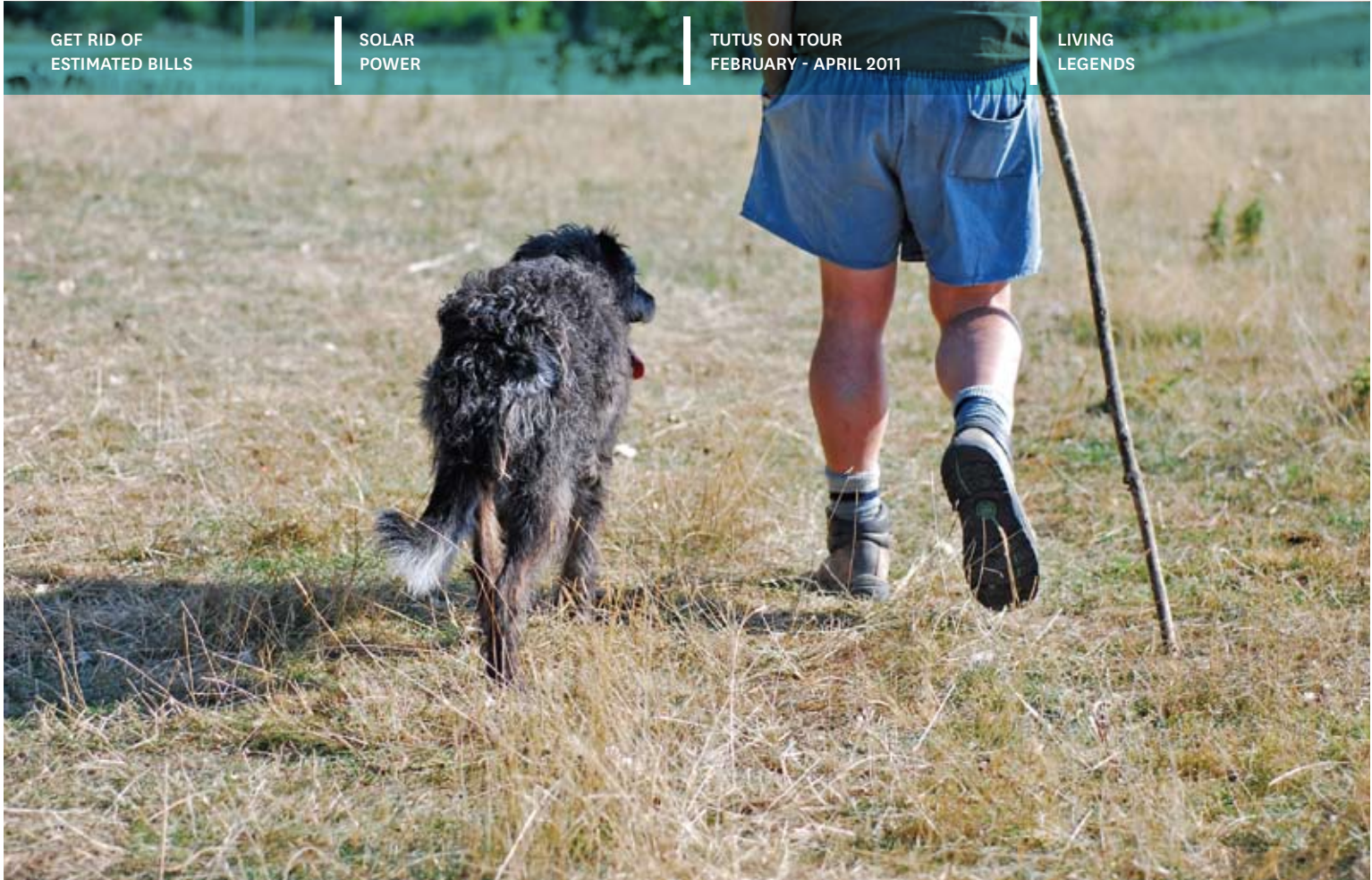
meridian

GET RID OF  
ESTIMATED BILLS

SOLAR  
POWER

TUTUS ON TOUR  
FEBRUARY - APRIL 2011

LIVING  
LEGENDS



# Getting rid of estimated bills

We do our best to read your electricity meter as often as possible. However, there are many reasons why you may get an estimated account.

If we have to estimate your account it will be based on your previous electricity usage with seasonal variations taken into account. If you receive an estimate, it's a good idea to check it against your meter reading. If there's a big difference you can provide us with your own meter reading by calling **0800 496 777** and we can update your account.

There are many reasons your bill may have to be estimated. These include:

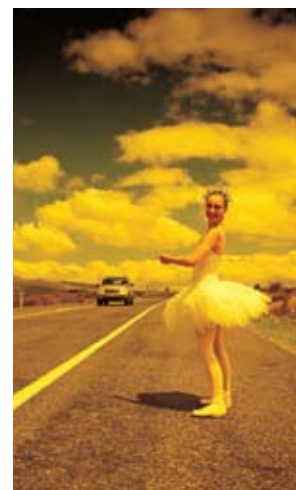


Reason	Example	Possible fix
No access	Meter is in a locked shed	Consider providing us with a key.
Blocked access	Bushes have grown over the meter box	Make sure the reader can easily gain access to the meter box by removing any overgrown bushes, trees or other obstacles around it.
Meter not accessible	Track too muddy	Make sure you let us know the easiest way for the meter reader to get to the meter. The meter reader won't always be in a four wheel drive vehicle.
Remote meter not providing reads	If you turn off your mains switch, your meter won't send us back reads	You can either call us with your own reading off the meter, or you can switch the power back on for the days your reading is scheduled. You will see on the back of your bill each month your next scheduled reading date, or you can call the Agribusiness Team on <b>0800 496 777</b> to get the date.

# The Ballet hits the road

*Royal New Zealand Ballet dancers are getting ready to don their tutus and travel the country as part of their much-anticipated Tutus on Tour.*

The tour takes place every two years and sees the Royal New Zealand Ballet sharing what they do with as many New Zealanders as possible. The company divides in half, with one group heading south and the other north. Over six weeks, they're on the road visiting more than 40 towns and cities from Kaitaia to Invercargill. It's the ultimate 'Tiki Tour' with the dancers



performing in community theatres, town halls and school gymnasiums in almost every part of the country, meaning people outside the main centres will get to see the show. This year's programme features *Verdi Variations*, a sparkling classical Russian ballet piece complete with exquisite tutus and tiaras, and *Pinocchio*, a fun story-ballet telling the tale of a wooden puppet who yearns to be a real boy. For more information on Tutus on Tour dates and locations in early 2011 see [nzballet.org.nz](http://nzballet.org.nz)

# CalRENEW-1

## Our first solar project in California completes its first six months of operation

Always looking to be at the cutting edge of clean technology innovation, the Meridian team has identified that electricity generated from the sun is almost at the stage where it will be competitive with other forms of electricity generation.



An aerial photo of CalRENEW-1, USA

Acting on this assessment, we've purchased Cleantech America, a San Francisco-based solar Photo Voltaic (PV) development company (since renamed Meridian Energy USA). We have also financed the construction of a five megawatt solar PV farm in Mendota, California, which has been commercial since April 30 2010.

The facility has operated as planned and has provided important design and operating experience for future solar power plants. To ensure that our people have as much exposure as possible to solar PV markets, we intend to bring the skills and experience gained in supplying electricity generated from the sun to a grid system back home.

## Rewarding you this season

All rural Meridian customers are automatically entered into our quarterly prize draw, so that means you could be our next winner. You get one entry for each month you've been a Meridian customer – the longer you stay with Meridian, the more chances you get to win. This season, you can win one of 20 picnic sets, perfect for helping you enjoy the end of summer. Prizes will be drawn 1 March 2011. Full details and terms and conditions are on our website [meridian.co.nz/yourfarm](http://meridian.co.nz/yourfarm)



## Field Days

It's almost time to get off the farm to check out the annual Field Days being held throughout the country.

Meridian will have stands at the following Field Days:

### Central District Field Days

17 to 19 March 2011 – Manfeild Park, Feilding, sites J29 and J30.

### South Island Agricultural Field Days

30 March to 1 April 2011 – Lincoln University Farm, Lincoln, at the CRT village and RD1 tent.

### National Agricultural Field Days

15 to 18 June 2011 – Mystery Creek Events Centre, Hamilton, Site G30.

We have five three-day double passes to give away to Central District Field Days this year. Simply email [seasons@meridian.co.nz](mailto:seasons@meridian.co.nz) with 'CDFD' in the subject line and we'll put you in the draw to win. Please include your name, address and telephone number with your entry. Prizes will be drawn on Friday 11 March 2011. Full terms and conditions are available on [meridian.co.nz/yourfarm](http://meridian.co.nz/yourfarm)

We love meeting our customers face to face so come in to the Meridian tents, pick up some of our giveaways and meet the team!

## *Proud to support our local rowers*



Four ecstatic Kiwis awarded bronze medals in the mens' four. Jade Uru, on the right, is a graduate of the Meridian Ratas.

Last October's World Rowing Championships at Lake Karapiro put the spotlight on New Zealand rowing. Our Kiwi rowers finished third out of 49 countries, proving New Zealand has some of the best rowers in the world.

This is no fluke. New Zealand has a well-structured rowing development programme starting in our schools which forms a formidable foundation for the sport's success. As a proud sponsor, Meridian has had a long association with rowing in the South Island. Lake Ruataniwha near Twizel is part of our hydro generation operations and is often host to many provincial and national rowing events.

Meridian also supports the Regional Performance Centre South (The Ratas squad)

which encompasses Southland, Otago and Canterbury. The Ratas will be defending their title as top-performing squad at the 2011 National Championships on Lake Ruataniwha and will also be racing at the Provincial and South Island Championships throughout the summer.

The Meridian South Island Secondary School Championships at Lake Ruataniwha will provide a competitive outing for school athletes before they head north to race in the Maadi Cup nationals on Lake Karapiro.

Also racing in the National Championships will be our World Junior Champion four Jenny Storey, Eve McFarlane, Bea Heaphy-Hall and Grace Prendergast; World Pair-Oar Champion Hamish Bond; and brothers Storm and Jade Uru. All these athletes have an association with The Ratas. Keep up the good work guys: we're proud of you!

## *Project Hurunui Wind Farm Information Centre opens*

Meridian's Project Hurunui Information Centre opened in November 2010 in Amberley. The centre is part of our commitment to engage with the local community about the wind farm proposed for development between Omihi and Greta Valley in North Canterbury.

Since Meridian announced Project Hurunui in March 2010, we have consulted with the local community surrounding the proposed wind farm site through open days and one-on-one meetings.

Wind Development Manager Alan McKinney says, "To ensure that the community is fully informed about both the benefits and possible impacts of the proposed wind farm, we've been operating the information centre and have held additional information days in January. We expect to lodge the consent application for the wind farm in early February and encourage anyone with an interest in the project to visit the information centre.

"We know that a wind farm, like any proposal for new or different ways of using land, has impacts on a community. For this reason our aim is to engage with local

people as comprehensively as possible."

The information centre is located at 1 Bank Street and is staffed by Meridian representatives on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 11.30am and 5pm. It features maps showing the wind farm layout, a time-lapse simulation of the project, photo simulations showing what the wind farm would look like from different locations, and information sheets about the wind farm and wind energy in general.

For more information on Project Hurunui please visit the information centre, or go online to [meridianenergy.co.nz/ourprojects/project-hurunui](http://meridianenergy.co.nz/ourprojects/project-hurunui)

# Is solar power an option for you?

Over the past few years solar panels have become cheaper and more efficient in their performance. This makes them an attractive option for home, farm and business owners seeking a renewable energy source.

Solar panels convert sunlight into electricity when sunlight passes through panels of glass onto a semiconductor material, usually silicon wafers. When sunlight hits the semiconductor it causes electrons to be released. The free electrons create an electrical current that generates electricity.

Solar panels are only truly effective where they have enough sunlight of sufficient intensity to work. Solar panels are not right for every house because the orientation of the home will also affect its ability to collect sun rays.

The best way to know if solar panels could be an option for you is to talk to a Right House consultant. Alternatively, check the National Institute of Water & Atmospheric Research's online calculator at [solarview.niwa.co.nz](http://solarview.niwa.co.nz). The calculator gives an estimate of the available solar energy at a particular location when you type in an address.

A solar panel system of between 8m<sup>2</sup> and 10m<sup>2</sup> can produce about 1kW of power when operating effectively. This is a typical domestic size and will generate between 10 and 20 per cent of an average home's electricity requirements.

The cost of a basic solar panel system begins at \$10,000 - \$12,000 (1kW system). The cost is affected by the number or size of the array (number of solar panels) installed.

To obtain a quote for your home or farm you can contact a Right House consultant on **0800 744 489**.

## Meridian helps celebrate conservation and 'Rugby Legends'

To celebrate what promises to be New Zealand's biggest year of rugby, an exciting new project is being launched. *Living Legends* is a community conservation project that is managing 18 native tree-planting projects throughout New Zealand during the Rugby World Cup.

Each planting project is being managed in conjunction with provincial rugby unions and will be dedicated to a regional 'Rugby Legend' selected by each union. The Rugby Legends will be past or present players who have made a significant contribution to rugby in New Zealand, and will be unveiled this February.

The *Living Legends* project is expected to plant up to 5,000 trees per site in 2011, with a commitment to plant 10,000 trees per site by the end of the project in 2015. The plantings will all take place on public conservation land and

New Zealanders and overseas Rugby World Cup visitors are encouraged to take part.

*Living Legends* is a joint venture between Project Crimson, an environmental charity with 20 years experience in community-based native restoration projects, and The Tindall Foundation. Meridian and the Department

of Conservation are both major sponsors of the project.

We'll keep you updated about what's happening with *Living Legends*, but for more information in the meantime check out [livinglegends.co.nz](http://livinglegends.co.nz)



**Living Legends**  
Where the field meets the forest

## We'd like to hear from you

We'd like to hear what you think about *Seasons*, and what you'd like to see in future issues.

Please let us know by writing to us at:  
*Seasons*  
Meridian  
PO Box 2128  
Christchurch Mail Centre 8140

or emailing us at:  
[seasons@meridianenergy.co.nz](mailto:seasons@meridianenergy.co.nz)

## Meridian - free complaints resolution process

If you have a concern or complaint about your experience with Meridian, let us know straight away. We'll work with you to resolve problems quickly and fairly. You can contact us on **0800 496 777** or e-mail us [Customer.Relations@meridianenergy.co.nz](mailto:Customer.Relations@meridianenergy.co.nz)

If we cannot resolve your complaint, you can contact the Electricity and Gas Complaints Commissioner for a free and independent complaints service on **0800 22 33 40** or visit [egcomplaints.co.nz](http://egcomplaints.co.nz)

## Meet the team

### Introducing Agribusiness Account Manager John Bianchet

John Bianchet's grandfather owned a cow called Viola in Italy during the Second World War. "So my family does owe its survival to agriculture!" he says.

Despite John's rural background being limited to his family connection to Viola, John loves working with rural customers and says it's a privilege to be able to support New Zealand's biggest industry. "I'd rather be talking to my customers in a paddock or at their kitchen table than in an office," he says.

Born in north London, John met a "pretty Kiwi bird" and, after getting married, made the decision to return to New Zealand to raise their kids. After settling in Christchurch, John joined Meridian in 2006 as a Tariffs Analyst, where he was responsible for



assigning pricing plans to customer accounts. Coming from a sales background in London, it wasn't long before John missed face-to-face interaction with customers, so he moved into an account management role within the Meridian Agribusiness Team.

Like the rest of the Agribusiness Team, John has completed his level three Agriculture ITO Certificate in Rural Servicing. He is now working on level four which includes more in-depth information like farm financing, and is looking forward to using this knowledge to help customers lower their electricity overhead.

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## Check out *Seasons* online

*Seasons* is available to view on our website, [meridian.co.nz/yourfarm](http://meridian.co.nz/yourfarm). You can also view current and previous issues of our other regular publications including *Currents*, our newsletter for residential customers, which has information you might find handy for around the house.

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