



**Title:** “Raking”

**Description:** Raking cut grass into windrows for drying and bailing.

**Photographer:** Tansy Hutton

**Where, when:** Southland, February 2021

**Sustainability?** Storing hay or baleage for feeding out in winter is an important strategy for lifting year-round production – in natural ecosystems it’s often the winter bottle neck that constrains how many animals live in a landscape – farmers reap the summer bounty and feed it back in winter to allow more cows overall year round .

First the hay is cut and allowed to dry (a key for storing well), then raked into windrows to allow the bailer to scoop the grass up and roll it into a ball. A complementary approach is to create ‘baleage’ – that’s where the roll is wrapped in plastic for storage. The grass is not dried when making baleage, so it retains it’s sugars and protein for the animals that eat it later – the plastic wrapper stops it fermenting and retains the food value.

Hay making these days requires very expensive equipment – a single baler can cost around \$200,000. Farmers bring in contractors more and more to do these sorts of specific tasks. In one way that builds efficiency – we could all be sharing our complex and environmentally costly equipment like cars for instance. Many people think of farmers as just the families on the land – yes, like me, one of the

priveleged ones that can live there, see, smell and hear the whole farm in action. But don't forget the huge number of others like the contractors and service providers (vets, stock agents, banks, surveyors, teachers, fertiliser reps and advisers, researchers etc.) that directly keep the farm trimmed and operating. They live in small towns and neaby cities but we depend on them, and they on us. Town and country are joined at the hip.

Summer is the busiest time of year in our family, winter feed is being made and stored to make sure the stock have plenty of feed to get them through winter. I am incredibly grateful that our Sons are able to go to work with their Dad on some of those beautiful summer days though, and see just how much work is put into both the land and also into keeping the animals thriving.

**Photo notes:** *Camera: Samsung SM-G980F Settings: f/2, 1/1756 sec, ISO 25, 6 mm.*

**Digital specs:** 9,248 x 6,936 pixels (64 MP).

**Key words:** Hay, machinery, food storage, co-dependence of town & country, farming, Tansy Hutton, Ecosystems Photography, Aotearoa, New Zealand, sustainability

**Price:** \$160 (incl. GST) for use of the digital image.

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**Image Ref:** THu#008 (Please refer to this reference in orders and correspondence).

**Tansy Hutton**  
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