

Ken Dodds completed an Honours degree in statistics at the University of Otago in 1981, followed by a PhD in statistical genetics in 1986, supervised by Bruce Weir at North Carolina State University. Since then Ken has worked for AgResearch, who are now part of the Bioeconomy Science Institute.

At AgResearch Ken has not only provided statistical design and analysis for animal genetics and reproduction, but also driven a number of key developments in analytical methodology that have had a major impact on New Zealand industry. He also has been instrumental in the adoption and implementation of a variety of new analytical procedures that have had a significant impact on research output by others. These include linkage and linkage disequilibrium mapping, and genome wide association studies, which have been instrumental in identifying a number of major genes of commercial impact to New Zealand. Perhaps most importantly has been Ken's adaption, extension, and development of the statistics of parentage assignment, and mixed model analysis for the estimation of breeding values. Many species have benefited from his work but especially the New Zealand sheep, deer, salmon, and forage industries.

Ken has been involved in a wide variety of collaborations in both New Zealand and overseas and with a diverse group of researchers. Perhaps under-recognised has been his contribution to many summer interns, masters, and PhD students over a long period of time. More recently he has taken a more active role as a formal supervisor of several statistical PhD students. Google scholar tells me Ken has over 14,000 citations, with an h-index of 53 and an i10-index of 174.

In 2022 Ken was awarded the Jones Medal by the Royal Society Te Apārangi. The Jones Medal recognises a lifetime achievement in pure or applied mathematics or statistics, and was given to Ken for his work developing and applying statistical methods for genetic data analysis that enable the use of low-cost genotyping in primary industries and ecology. Ken was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society Te Apārangi in 2024.

Today it gives me great pleasure to add recognition from the New Zealand Statistical Association (NZSA) of Ken's sustained contributions to statistical genetics and its commercial application within New Zealand industries. I propose that we honour Ken as a Life Member of NZSA.

*John Haywood
NZSA President
9 December 2025*