

# Organic farms welcome bug

## 50 dung beetles released

By DIANE BISHOP

A dung-loving beetle has been set to work on an Eastern Southland farm.

Environment Southland released more than 50 adult dung beetles on Grant and Alison Kingsbury's sheep and beef farm near Mataura last week.

Mr Kingsbury was excited about the beetle's potential on his organic farm.

"It will help us reduce parasitism in our stock which is a big issue for any organic farmer," he said. The dung beetle is a large black glossy beetle also known as the paua beetle because it is metallic blue underneath.

Environment Southland senior biosecurity officer Randall Milne said the beetle prefers to feed on cattle and horse manure but also eats solid chunks of sheep dung.

Mr Milne said this was the first field release of this particular dung beetle in New Zealand although another species had



**Pooh please:** The dung beetle also known as the paua beetle prefers to feed on cattle dung and horse manure but will also consume solid chunks of sheep dung.

been released on an organic dairy farm at Tukurau last year.

The beetle was unlikely to have any major impact until large numbers became established in about five years time.

"Everyone wants one for dog dung," he said.



**Foragers:** Mataura farmer Grant Kingsbury, left, releases dung beetles on to his property with Environment Southland senior biosecurity officer Randall Milne.  
Photos: DIANE BISHOP / FAIRFAX NZ