



New Zealand  
Farm Environment Award Trust

# Annual Report

30th June 2008



Ballance  
Farm Environment Awards  
*Promoting Sustainable Profitable Farming*

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# Chairman's Report



It is my absolute pleasure and honour to present the 2008 Annual Report of the New Zealand Farm Environment Award (NZFEA) Trust.

The 2008 year has seen the NZFEA Trust continue to work to meet its list of core objectives.

1. Developing and expanding the Ballance Farm Environment Awards
2. Maintaining a comprehensive Communications Strategy
3. Organising an annual Sustainability Showcase
4. Providing administrative support to the Regional Networks and organisations

Our 'flagship' Ballance Farm Environment Awards (BFEA) goes from strength to strength engaging farmers and agribusiness at many levels. The launch this year of the rebranded BFEA logo incorporating '**promoting, profitable, sustainable farming**' provides a very clear understanding of the drivers behind the awards programme and now more openly defines what the awards are about.

The General Manager of both the NZFEA Trust and the BFEA, David Natzke, will provide an overview of this years awards successes: Page 4.

Notwithstanding this I'm humbled by the tremendous support the agribusiness sponsors, our Regional Council partners, and the hard working local committees including the Regional Coordinators, Judging Facilitators and judging teams give toward achieving success at the grassroots level.

It's an inclusive process that in turn engages farmers also at the grassroots level. NZFEA Trust Treasurer, Peter Nation will present a summary of the financial performance of both the NZFEA Trust and the BFEA. The business requires top quality management to ensure strict financial reporting standards are met. Peter and David with help from Faye Shaw, manage this very well: Page 8.

The NZFEA Trust has this past year acted on the strategic directions set at last years AGM, I think, with excellent success. Clearly we needed to focus performance at the NZFEA Trust level on good governance processes and continue to develop our strategies to maintain the momentum that has been established.

Trustees have engaged in this work with enthusiasm and have taken up the challenge to fully engage in setting out the pathway for future growth.

Some clear directives are now in place that will provide good direction for our regional entities (Trusts or Committees) to participate, knowing where we are heading and how we aim to get there.

Innovative focused communication is one of the key strategies that will assist the NZFEA Trust achieve its aspirations of promoting profitable, sustainable farming practices. While sometimes it seems to us the media does not want to print non-sensational good practice farming stories, we certainly appreciate the media support we do receive from across New Zealand.

We've used media releases to stimulate interest as a matter of good practice, with some excellent stories resulting from these.

The DVD production fits comfortably into this communication space providing real-life close ups of New Zealand agriculture on its home turf.

The website development goes from strength to strength with new innovations being posted regularly to provide a good record of what's up both within the NZFEA Trust and out there on the land. Phillipa Crequer does an excellent job keeping this updated and relevant.

Of course the major channel for communication continues to be through the Ballance Farm Environment Awards programme. This includes the two-way face to face discussion with entrants, during the judging round, the award events, the winners presentations and their on-farm field day. Supporting this are the factual publications detailing why these entrants were recognised by their peers as good examples of sustainability. This all adds up to a comprehensive communication effort.

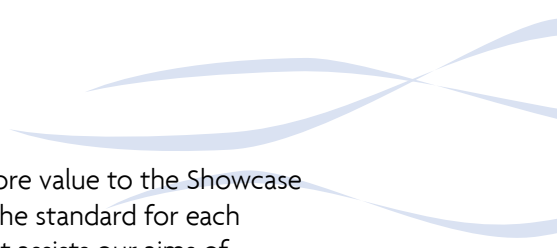
Communication between the NZFEA Trust and regional entities has been improved, with a direct link either through conference calls or email through to the Chairs of each of these Committees. This has been 'work in progress' but now that it is in place provides a very good forum for mutual governance discussions. This governance link supports the direct linkages David has through the Regional Coordinator team.

Sponsorship options within regions have been defined with guidelines set out to ensure that our recognition and value of National Sponsorship and Regional Partnership teams for the BFEA is not compromised.

The NZFEA Trust Annual Showcase, this year held in Palmerston North, built upon past successes. The DVD presentations of the Regional Supreme Award winners was exceptional! The footage, the visuals and the comments direct from the heart demonstrates that New Zealand agriculture is in very safe hands.

The NZFEA Trust made a significant investment into producing the DVD package and now has considerable top quality presentation material that will assist our promotional aims. Our website now has a feature of the category winners for all regions. This provides not only an excellent reference of top farming tips, but also a reminder of the commitment the sponsorship team make to the BFEA awards programme.

The winning DVD shot for 2008 belongs to the 'fairy' dance in Northland where farmer ingenuity was seen at its best showing one 'method' of managing emissions and effluent other than through an emissions trading scheme. The magic conjured up by Harry Potter pales in comparison to this.



The launch of the annual NZFEA Trust MAF Scholarship added even more value to the Showcase event. David Ward will be an excellent first recipient, and I believe set the standard for each following Scholarship winner. The Scholarship is provided for study that assists our aims of promoting the improvement of long term sustainability for New Zealand farmers. It will be open each year for application to the previous year's Regional Supreme Winners.

Ongoing pressures remain with agriculture in New Zealand to demonstrate that we do understand the issues that arise when working with the land. Farmers will continue to need to demonstrate that agriculture production systems they implement are appropriate. I believe that the approach the NZFEA Trust is taking that promotes and highlights the peer reviewed farmers decisions and actions provides a good benchmark to demonstrate well managed resource care.

To add weight to this, last year the NZFEA Trust grew its membership of strategic partnership agreements. While this is work in progress, the current relationships with MAF Sustainable Farming Fund, MAF Scholarship programme, DairyNZ, Fonterra and QEII Trust has provided more ability to demonstrate to a wider audience the successful agriculture businesses we have the pleasure of involving in the Awards programme. New alliances are under discussion and it is pleasing to welcome Federated Farmers as an associate organization.

A brief outline of how we have worked with each of these organizations is detailed on Page 26.

In summary, it has been a year of continued growth for the NZFEA Trust and the BFEA programme. This has been led by a growing comfort in the governance responsibilities of the Trustees. It has though placed an increasing burden on our General Manager David Natzke to manage his growing responsibilities. This he has done extremely well, often working weekends and late hours to ensure the targets are met. I'm extremely grateful for his efforts and his continued drive behind the NZFEA Trust.

This year is the two-yearly election cycle for the NZFEA Trust. Six Trustees will be elected by the regional groups to ensure good countywide representation. Four remaining Trustees will be elected by the outgoing Board. While results will be known at this AGM, at time of printing, these results are not known. I therefore take this opportunity to thank all who have served as Trustees, and will take the chance at the AGM prior to the new Board being 'elected' to personally thank you all for your input, guidance and enthusiasm, I have enjoyed the chance to serve as Chairman of the NZFEA Trust.

Jim Cotman  
Chairman

# General Manager's Report



This has been another successful year for the New Zealand Farm Environment Award (NZFEA) Trust and the Ballance Farm Environment Awards (BFEA) programme.

As reported by the Chairman, the BFEA programme is the “flagship” for the NZFEA Trust and this “flagship” has received a considerable amount of praise for what it is achieving in promoting sustainable and profitable farming in New Zealand.

One thing I find remarkable, and am very proud of, is the brand recognition the BFEA programme has throughout New Zealand. This brand recognition has been achieved, in a relatively short period of time, without a massive advertising and promotion budget; in actual fact our promotional budget is modest indeed.

However, through the efforts of Trustees, Regional Coordinators, Judging Coordinators, Committee Chairs an army of volunteers, committed sponsors and Regional Councils and partners of the NZFEA Trust, the BFEA programme is an established event in New Zealand and it is attracting a lot of attention. The NZFEA Trust and the BFEA programme are here to stay and it is now a case of growing the programme to make sure it is in every region of New Zealand.

## **The 2008 Ballance Farm Environment Awards:**

This year the BFEA programme attracted a number of entries from a range of farming, horticultural and viticulture enterprises. Entry numbers were down on the previous year and this was largely due to the extreme drought conditions suffered in some regions of the country. Those farmers whose properties suffered from drought are to be admired for going through with their entry as a lot of them commented they were disappointed how their farm looked at the time of judging.

The BFEA programme is not about esthetic qualities, it is about promoting sustainable and profitable farming. How farmers cope with drought, or in the later part of the season, floods, are decision making factors that judges will take into account when judging a property. Judges are not out there just looking for the “pretties” of a farming enterprise because as we all know, farming is a multi faceted business.

It is encouraging to see return entrants in the BFEA programme, people who have entered before and have taken into account the judges comments and have entered again to see how they are performing against fellow entrants.

Included as part of this Annual Report are testimonials from past entrants into the BFEA programme, these are detailed on Page 15.

So while we were down on numbers, we were certainly not down on quality. The calibre of entrants was very high and they were committed to their belief in sustainability and were proud of what they are achieving. To all those who entered for the 2008 BFEA, thank you for showcasing your property.

### **Sustainability Showcase:**

The Sustainability Showcase has been a feature of the BFEA programme for five years now. The Supreme Winners for the eight participating regions are brought together at a location where they are provided with networking opportunities as well as to see examples of agriculture/horticulture in the host region.

Details of the 2008 Supreme Winners are on Page 14 of this report

This year the Sustainability Showcase was held in Palmerston North. Massey University hosted a programme for the Supreme Winners on Day 1 and on Day 2 they visited the extensive and diverse farming operations of Hugh and Roger Dalrymple, the 2007 winners of the BFEA for the Horizons region.

The two days in Palmerston North culminated with a dinner which was attended by 250 invited guests. Those attending represented politics, both central government and local government, government agencies, research institutions, farmer owned cooperatives, agribusiness businesses and most importantly, the Supreme Winners and fellow farmers.

A DVD was shown to the guests of each of the Supreme Winners farming operations, the film footage made for compelling viewing and it showcased New Zealand agriculture at its best.

This year, the inaugural NZFEA Trust MAF Scholarship was launched and we were delighted to have the Minister of Agriculture, the Hon Jim Anderton, attend and announce the scholar, David Ward who, with his wife Hilary, was the 2007 Supreme Winner for the Canterbury region.



### **Communications:**

**Website:** Last year a combined NZFEA Trust and BFEA website was launched. The site has been designed so that it is accessible for the large rural community that has dial-up internet access.

Information is continually being loaded onto the site and it is encouraging to see from the statistics, the number of visits the site receives.

The website is an integral part of the communication strategy for the NZFEA Trust and the BFEA programme and it will be further developed to take into account the changing need of information. A feature will include loading the DVD footage of Supreme and Category Winners on to the site so as to get that visual exposure to a larger audience.

Website Details: [www.nzfeatrust.org.nz](http://www.nzfeatrust.org.nz) or [www.bfea.org.nz](http://www.bfea.org.nz)

**Media:** The activities of the NZFEA Trust and the BFEA programme continue to attract a considerable amount of media attention. We do generate quite a number of media releases which are generally BFEA related and these get widely covered, particularly by smaller rural/community newspapers. This is an excellent way to be able to promote the BFEA programme to a wider audience. The activities of the NZFEA Trust and the BFEA programme also feature regularly on the Farming Show hosted by Jamie McKay.

**Electronic Communications:** An avenue for further promotion of NZFEA Trust and BFEA activities is regular electronic communications to stakeholders. This is currently being scoped and will be launched presently; it is proposed that such communications will be quarterly. It will be produced so that it is easily accessible for those internet users who are dependent on dial-up access.

**DVD Production:** The NZFEA Trust has made a significant commitment and investment in its DVD programme.

For the 2008 BFEA programme, all regional finalists were filmed on their properties and they told their story of their farming operations, their sustainability goals and aspirations. It is acknowledged that this filming process captures the essence of what the BFEA programme is all about.

The challenge faced by the NZFEA Trust is getting this film coverage viewed by a wider audience. It is a significant investment for the NZFEA Trust but it is recognized that the returns will not be gained in year one, it is part of the communications strategy going forward.

#### **Sponsorships and Partnerships:**

The NZFEA Trust is grateful for the continued and ongoing support of the sponsors for the BFEA programme, naming sponsor Ballance Agri-Nutrients, Hill Laboratories, PGG Wrightson, Silver Fern Farms and Gallagher.

Added to this is the commitment of the Regional Councils in Northland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Manawatu/Rangitikei, Wellington, Canterbury and Otago regions.

These sponsors and regional partners have made a significant investment in the BFEA programme, not only in financial terms, but also in kind through the generous donation of staff time and other goods and services.


A new development has been for the NZFEA Trust to take on partnership agreements, separate to sponsorship of the BFEA programme.

There are a number of agribusiness entities that have a strong relationship with the BFEA programme but because of their business operations, may not be natural sponsors of the BFEA programme.

The NZFEA Trust has established partnerships with Fonterra, MAF and the MAF Sustainable Farming Fund, Dairy NZ and QEII Trust. It is proposed to develop more partnership agreements with businesses or organisations that have a synergy with the NZFEA Trust and who through their partnership relationship, will also add value to the overall BFEA programme.

#### **Outlook:**

The NZFEA Trust and BFEA programme have an established place in the environmental and sustainable debate in New Zealand. The NZFEA Trust has a definite advantage in that it is independent and it is not political.



The challenge facing both the NZFEA Trust and the BFEA programme is that there are other entrants into the sustainability marketplace and it is becoming very cluttered, particularly in relation to extension work.

In order to “protect” the brand of both entities, applications have been made for Trade Mark approval for both the NZFEA Trust and the BFEA Programme.

The NZFEA Trust is committed to growing the awards programme into other regions of New Zealand and seek to do so with the support of Regional Councils for the areas concerned.

To maintain the success of the BFEA programme it is essential to have to ongoing commitment and support of sponsors and partners as well as our target market for the competition, farmers, the horticulture and viticulture industries and rural communities in general.

There is a need to promote that entry to the competition does not necessitate that your property must be a winning property, sustainability is a journey and there are several elements to it.

For the 2009 competition the entry criteria has been changed to enable properties to be nominated. It is hoped that this new way of entering the competition will encourage sponsor reps and others to nominate properties they consider to be worthy of entry into the BFEA programme. This will hopefully overcome the reluctance that some people have about self application.

A further challenge facing the NZFEA Trust is to ensure that those who have come through the BFEA programme are promoted to other agencies as advocates for sustainable and profitable farming in New Zealand. This year the NZFEA Trust was successful in having a number of former entrants, category and Supreme Winners chosen to sit on various committees of the MAF Sustainable Farming Fund. A former Supreme Winner was also invited to address a MAF Policy staff conference and another former Supreme Winner was invited to be a guest presenter at the World Hereford Conference in Denmark. These opportunities serve to reinforce the value and the importance of the NZFEA Trust and the BFEA programme.

On a personal note I would like to thank the Chairman and Trustees of the NZFEA Trust for their support and a very big thank you to the Regional Coordinators, Faye Shaw and everyone else who makes a significant contribution to the operational activities of the NZFEA Trust and the BFEA programme.

David Natzke  
General Manager

# Treasurer's Report



It is again my pleasure to be reporting on the financial results of The New Zealand Farm Environment Award (NZFEA) Trust for the year ended 30th June 2008. The accounts also carry an unconditional independent audit certificate.

The NZFEA Trust has enjoyed another very good year in relation to its financial position with the continued full support of its national and regional sponsors who financially support both the Ballance Farm Environment Awards (BFEA) and the NZFEA Trust's operations.

Overall the NZFEA Trust has again returned a modest surplus while achieving all its key goals and operating costs. Furthermore, the NZFEA Trust has run another very successful year of the Ballance Farm Environment Awards.

This year the combined surplus has reduced from some \$148,077 (2007) to \$17,995. This is primarily due to the filming expenses in relation to the DVD for the BFEA at a cost of \$99,475.

Overall the net revenue has increased for the combined NZFEA Trust activities to \$615,971 for the year.

This last financial year also incorporated the farmer leader project run in conjunction Dexcel (now known as Dairy NZ) which has introduced a new successful activity for the NZFEA Trust and contributed positively to the cash flow of the NZFEA Trust.


This last financial year has seen the NZFEA Trust support some major strategic goals which included:

- a) The construction and launch of the NZFEA Trust Website (total cost \$16,750)
- b) The professional filming of every regional finalist in the Ballance Farm Environment Awards (\$99,475)

These financial commitments, which totalled in excess of \$115,000 were met from both cashflow and cash reserves as agreed to at the AGM held in October 2007. The NZFEA Trustees believed that both these key expenditure items were necessary to both grow the awards and provide ongoing national and international information tools in regard to the NZFEA Trust and the BFEA.

Both these initiatives further meet key objectives of the NZFEA Trust in the promotion of sustainability.

While the film costs were covered from cash reserves (as a one off cost) this cost is not sustainable longer term from reserves and funding must be found if this key objective is to be undertaken going forward.



The NZFEA Trust has also been fortunate to gain funding from Fonterra and MAF to support activities by the NZFEA Trust to further increase and promote sustainability within New Zealand.

In addition to the two major activities outlined above, the NZFEA Trust has also founded the inaugural Annual NZFEA Trust MAF Scholarship.

The NZFEA Trust's financial business has again been professionally managed by General Manager David Natzke and assisted by Faye Shaw.

It is worth noting in times of such financial volatility that all funds that are in the ownership of the NZFEA Trust or held by the NZFEA Trust for projects, are invested in either short term call accounts or short term investments with the ANZ National Bank. The objective is to seek a low risk return on these monies pending expenditure. Through prudent management the NZFEA Trust has enjoyed some \$32,000 additional income from bank interest which has also assisted in the NZFEA Trust's funding.

The NZFEA Trust remains in a sound financial position and is well managed.

This year I also wish to report on the large intangible investment and contributions made to the NZFEA Trust in kind. Many organisations and volunteers contribute huge amounts of time, resource and people resource to the NZFEA Trust which is neither measured nor valued. These contributions range from the use of meeting rooms, vehicle running expenses, stationery and many other contributions which the NZFEA Trust gets value from and which also reduces its direct costs of operation. I would like to therefore place on record the NZFEA Trust's thanks to the many organisations, individuals, sponsors and Trustees who contribute value in ensuring the NZFEA Trust meets its many objectives and ensures that environmental sustainability in farming within New Zealand is promoted.

The NZFEA Trust continues to grow in stature and financially which is imperative and will ensure that rural New Zealand benefits from its many activities. There are a growing number of organisations that wish to both support the NZFEA Trust and contribute financially. This places the NZFEA Trust in good stead for future years and also recognizes its enormous value to the ongoing sustainability of farming in New Zealand.

Lastly thank you for the support and professionalism of the NZFEA Trust's bankers, ANZ National Bank of New Zealand, the NZFEA Trust's accountants – Accounts on London and the NZFEA Trust's auditors, Staples Rodway.

It is my pleasure to furnish this report to the Trustees of the New Zealand Farm Environment Award Trust

Peter Nation  
Treasurer

# About the Ballance Farm Environment Awards

## **History**

The key objectives of the Ballance Farm Environment Awards (BFEA) are to encourage sustainable land management and to display to farmers that profitability need not compromise and, in the best examples, can restore and enhance environmental values.

Through feedback and profiling winners, the Awards encourage other farmers to be more proactive on their resource management by providing them with role models and practical ideas for sustainable land management.

## **What happens?**

You will be consulted regarding a suitable time for the judging team to visit. Generally these visits take half a day to a day – it depends on the scale of your farm. This is a chance to get free, independent feedback on a variety of farm management issues, so make the most of it!

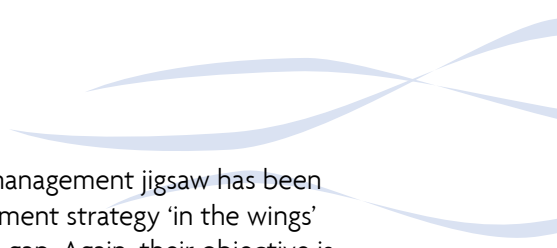
Each judging team is made up of 3-4 people. A team will generally include a farmer who has been a past BFEA achiever, plus specialists from organisations such as the regional council, Department of Conservation, QE II Trust, sponsor representatives and other farm consultancies and professionals.

If you are chosen as a finalist you will be asked to suggest a time for a farm visit by the final round judges. To try and retain consistency in the judging process, a single team “re-assesses” all the finalists.

## **What will they want to know?**

The BFEA judging process is NOT about ticking off checklists, pointing out mistakes, pouring over accounts, or putting you on the spot. The team wants to see what you're proud of on your farm. They'll look at how you are approaching your particular farming situation, the challenges you think it presents and the appropriate and/or innovative ways you have chosen to meet these challenges. They will observe how you're thinking about the whole farm system and how it's performing financially, socially and environmentally.

They will want to hear about your vision for the farm, how you intend to get there and how well this plan is understood by everyone involved. The team realises that time, money and labour constraints affect how fast you can make progress and doesn't expect all the elements of your plan to be in place. However, they will want to see how you are making steady, tangible steps in the right direction.



Sometimes the judging team may feel that a piece of the sustainable management jigsaw has been overlooked. You may already be aware of the issue and have a management strategy ‘in the wings’ but, if not, the judges may make suggestions about how to address the gap. Again, their objective is not to pick faults but to make sure you have all the tools at your disposal to keep improving.

### **It’s not all about winning**

At the end of the day, the judging process does produce a Regional Supreme Award Winner but in reality the BFEA celebrates all entrants. The judges feel that anyone who is taking steps towards sustainable farm management is a winner and that it is a privilege to be invited onto your farm. They try to make judging an encouraging, exciting and rewarding process.

Past entrants have found the awards an excellent way to benchmark progress and gain access to valuable information and people that can help them achieve their sustainable farm management goals.

### **Benefits**

#### **Farmers have said that they have gained the following benefits from entering the awards:**

- The opportunity to confidentially discuss practical farm information and business with judges.
- The whole farm is looked at, i.e. environmental, financial and social elements, not just this year’s bottom-line.
- Gained new ideas and different methods from other entrants and judges.
- Received a constructive feedback report that describes the strengths and areas of improvement for their whole farm operation.
- Extend their networks throughout the region and across different farm types.
- An Awards Ceremony and Field day.
- Helped them focus on the direction they’re wanting to head in.

### **Categories**

#### **Supreme Award**

The Supreme Winner is chosen from the ‘Best of the Best’ i.e. one from the group of finalists that is chosen to represent the region. – **\$3000 package including products and cash from all the sponsors**

#### **Categories of Awards**

##### **Ballance Nutrient Management Award**

This Award focuses on the wise use of nutrients for productivity while demonstrating excellent care for the environment around them. A very good understanding of nutrient cycles will need to be demonstrated. Nutrient budgeting will be understood and well documented. The impacts of nutrients on both surface & ground water will need to be well understood & well managed. – **\$1000 cash**

##### **LIC Dairy Farm Award**

This Award recognises the dairy farmer who demonstrates in a practical way the choices that have been made to farm for the long term. Considerations will be made around the wise use of the land, labour & capital resource available or created. Increasingly the effects of dairy farming on both surface & groundwater and its impact on soil properties are factors the judges will consider. – **\$1000 cash**

### **Silver Fern Farms Livestock Farm Award**

This Award recognises the livestock farmer (other than dairy) who demonstrates in a practical way the choices that have been made to farm for the long term. Considerations will be made around the wise use of the land, labour & capital resource available or created. Stock will be well cared for. Stock class & type will be well suited to the land contour & soil type and managed appropriately to suit those soils. – **\$1000 cash**

### **Hill Laboratories Harvest Award**

This Award recognises the farmer who is predominantly involved in growing crops, (e.g. Grain, Seed, Viticulture, Horticulture) who demonstrates in a practical way the choices that have been made to farm for the long term. Consideration will include the effect the cropping system has on the land resource. Its effect on the water resource, along with nutrient use & effect will also be considered. Some formal monitoring or measuring of effects of cropping on these resources would be a positive. Demonstration of a good understanding of weed & pest management & treatments is also required. – **\$1000 cash**

### **PGG Wrightson Land and Life Award**

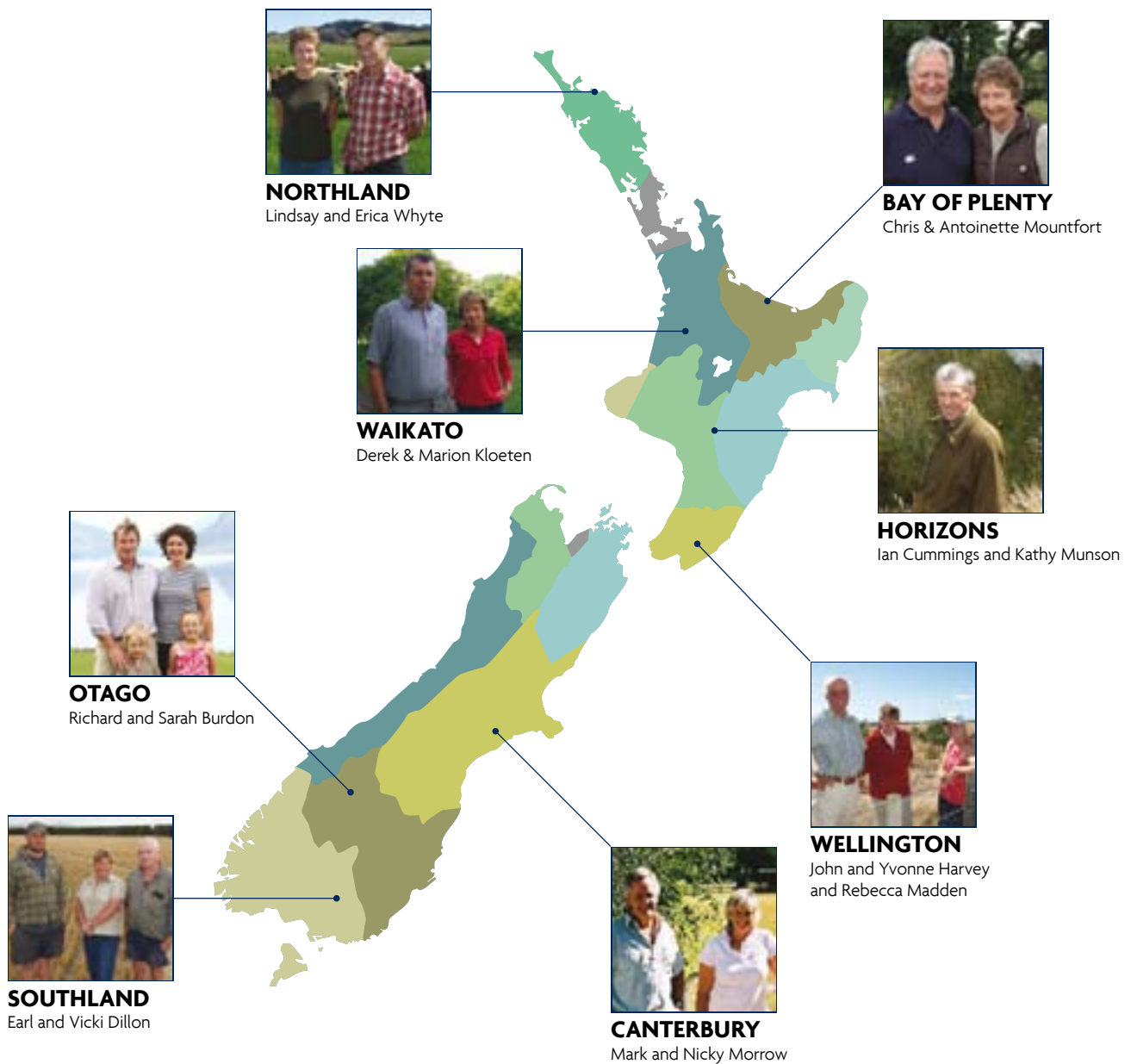
This Award is focused more on the all important 'people' side of the farming business. The personal beliefs of pride & passion for the land will be a key part of the considerations. A community spirit will be evident, along with a very good relationship with external 'advice or support' from agribusiness people. Intergenerational thinking & planning is often a feature. – **\$1000 cash/sponsor product**

### **Gallagher Innovation Award**

This Award recognises the farmer who has been innovative either in the approach to problem solving for the farm business or innovative in the approach to technology use to assist the business. There is a need for the innovation award to be recognised as part of a long-term sustainable contribution to the business and the environment. – **\$1000 sponsors product**



# Supreme Winners for 2008



# Testimonials From Past Entrants Of The Ballance Farm Environment Awards

“The Farm Environment Awards definitely increased our awareness of environmental issues, but it also reassured us we were on the right track with a lot of the things we were doing.”

Simon says the opportunity to mingle with other enthusiastic and like-minded farmers during the awards evening was another highlight for him.

“It really was a very positive experience and my advice to anyone considering entering the competition would be to go for it. You won’t regret it.”

**Simon and Mark Wilson, 2006 entrants, Canterbury Ballance Farm Environment Awards**



“The reason we entered the Ballance Farm Environment Awards was because it gave us the opportunity to learn new things. We are really pleased we did because we learnt so much from the judges.”

Stuart and Alison want to see how the recent changes on the farm work out, then they plan to enter the competition again some time in the future to chase the Supreme award.

“If you’re entered you’ve got nothing to lose and everything to gain.”

**Stuart and Alison Paton, 2005, 2006 and 2007 entrants, Bay of Plenty Ballance Farm Environment Awards**



“When you have been farming for a while you start to form a real attachment to the land and a great desire to look after it for future generations.”

Sue says she and Murray were very impressed by the professionalism and friendliness of the Ballance Farm Environment Awards team. This made entering the competition an experience she would recommend to any farmer.

“They were wonderful people to work with and I’d certainly encourage people to support the competition because it has very worthy goals.”

**Murray and Sue Johns, 2008 entrants, Canterbury Ballance Farm Environment Awards**



Glenn says he entered the Ballance Farm Environment Awards to get recognition for kiwifruit growers and to encourage others to support the annual competition.

He says it is important for the industry to show it is serious about promoting environmental sustainability.

He also enjoyed getting personal recognition for his efforts and those of his employers.

The judging process provided the opportunity to benchmark the economic and environmental performance of Riverside Orchard against other operations. "Its good to compare yourself with others," says Glenn.

"The judges also presented some very useful suggestions and gave good advice on the use of shelter plantings."

### **Glenn Roberts, 2008 entrant, Bay of Plenty Ballance Farm Environment Awards**



Richard says they were encouraged to enter the Ballance Farm Environment Awards by their fertiliser representatives and decided to give it a go.

"We were curious to see how we compared with others and see what the judges would think of what we do."

He says the judges asked questions that made them think hard about their operation. "I enjoyed that because it really stimulates the thought processes."

The outside perspective provided by the judges was enlightening and Richard says he'd recommend the experience of participating in the Ballance Farm Environment Awards to any farmer.

Richard says another benefit of being involved with the awards was the opportunity to mingle with other contestants at the awards evening. From this he has developed a network of friends he can contact to discuss ideas or seek advice.

### **Richard and Annabelle Subtil, 2007 entrants, Canterbury Ballance Farm Environment Awards**



Ian says being involved with a competition like the Ballance Farm Environment Awards proved invaluable for this "because it forces you to take a good look at the way you operate".

He remains a keen supporter of the Awards and plans to encourage his son to enter in future.

"It's a great concept and I'd certainly like to see more people entering. It should almost be compulsory because the judging process opens up your eyes to ways you could do things better."

### **Ian Easton, 2005 entrant, Horizons Ballance Farm Environment Awards**

Andre says he entered the Awards because he wanted to find out whether he was on the right track as far as best farming practices go. “And because there is always something new to learn.”

Excellent feedback from the judges and the resulting awards confirmed he was heading in the right direction.

“It gave my confidence a real boost and motivated me to forge ahead.”

While the recognition that comes with winning such awards has been good for him personally, it has also been good for Amisfield and, he says, the wine industry in general because it proves wine growers are dedicated to environmental and business sustainability.

“It makes people aware that we are serious about leaving this land in good shape for future generations.”

Andre says the support provided by his wife Susan has helped him to achieve what he has, and he urges other viticulturists to enter the Ballance Farm Environment Awards.

“I’d wholeheartedly support them because it is definitely worthwhile.”

#### **Andre Lategan, 2008 entrant, Otago Ballance Farm Environment Awards**

Mike’s efforts in tree planting earned him a PGG Wrightson Habitat Improvement Award in the 2006 Horizons Ballance Farm Environment Awards.

He was pleasantly surprised to win the award and enjoyed his experiences as a judge in the competition the following year. “I found it really interesting to see what other farmers are doing.”

#### **Mike Bourke, 2006 entrant, Horizons Ballance Farm Environment Awards**

“Some people shy away from entering the awards because they feel they might get criticised, but the judging process is not about that at all. It’s all about highlighting the positive things farmers have done and offering them ideas about how they might improve in future.”

As a former competitor, Jo says she and her late husband, Trevor got a lot out of the judging process. “It was great to be able to talk to the judges about where we were at (in terms of sustainability). We were also able to draw on the expertise of individual judges. For example, one of the judges was a forestry expert and he was able to give us some really good advice on which species of tree would suit a certain area.”

Jo’s advice to anyone considering entering the 2009 competition is to give it a go. At the very least it will prove a good learning experience.

#### **Jo and the late Trevor Lucas, 2005 entrants, Greater Wellington Ballance Farm Environment Awards**



Stephen says the judging process proved an enjoyable and educational experience, providing a valuable outside perspective on the business.

“We had seven judges here during two judging phases. They all had different areas of expertise and their questions made us think hard about what we are doing.”

He says the judging panel offered constructive feedback and useful suggestions for the future.

While winning the Harvest Award was a pleasant surprise for the Wades, “even if we hadn’t won anything, the experience was still well worth it for all of the free advice we got out of it”.

Stephen says the publicity generated by the win and the credibility that comes with winning such a respected award has certainly helped the orchard with its marketing of nursery tree stock.

His advice to other orchardists considering entering the 2009 Ballance Farm Environment Awards is simple. “Go for it.”

As for handling the judging process; “You don’t need to worry, they are all very friendly. But giving them scones probably helps”.

**Stephen and Samantha Wade, Lynwood Orchards, 2007 entrants, Northland Ballance Farm Environment Awards**



## National Partners



Ballance Agri-Nutrients is proud of its long-standing association as naming sponsors of the Ballance Farm Environment Awards. The awards have been the annual flagship sponsorship event for the company since 2003.

Ballance and the BFEA recognise the importance and synergy of sustainable land management, environmental values and farm profitability. More specifically, the awards promote best practice in whole-farm systems and role models those farmers with clear business direction and innovation. Ballance's vision, to be recognised as New Zealand's expert in agri-nutrient advice, is mirrored by award nominees who strive to be experts in sustainable farm management on a local level. This synergy and strategic alignment between Ballance, its customers and the NZ Farm Environment Awards Trust reflect our commitment as naming sponsor of BFEA.

Ballance acknowledges the benefits of profiling individual winners across a wide range of categories. Each category motivates farmers to become increasingly pro-active and innovative in their area of expertise. To this end the Ballance Nutrient Management Award focuses on the wise use of nutrients for productivity while caring for the environment.

The awards, now recognized as one of the most prestigious farming events in New Zealand, reflect an agri-nutrient sector seriously committed to promoting environmental sustainability. Ballance looks forward to acknowledging and celebrating innovation on New Zealand farms with the 2009 Ballance Farm Environment Awards.



NZ farmers have long been recognised as the world leaders of cost efficient production practices and going forward we will also need to be acknowledged as the leaders of environmentally sustainable farming practises.

The Ballance Farm Environment Awards are a great opportunity to recognise the efforts that many farmers put into protecting the environment. We encourage farmers to take part in these awards, reap the benefits of their work and share their success story with others.

As New Zealand's largest agri-serving business, PGG Wrightson is strongly committed to New Zealand agriculture – the Company's sponsorship of the Ballance Farm Environment Awards is a tangible demonstration of that.

PGG Wrightson's association with the awards started in 2005 when the company took on the sponsorship of the Habitat Improvement Award.

This award recognises 'special places' of habitat that have been protected or created to enhance the farm business. The habitat may add value by protecting stock or crops from adverse weather or may add value by adding to the diversity of the farm. It may include trees or other plantings, wetlands created or restored or unique characteristics of the land or area protected from stock or predators.

The entrants for this award have protected the unique characteristics of their property for the benefit of both their business, and their land.

Congratulations to all those who have taken part!



LIC has been a major sponsor of the Ballance Farm Environmental Awards since 2004, and before that the Farm Environment Awards Trust (2001), because it sees environmental issues as being the key to the ongoing sustainability and profitability of farming in New Zealand.

The Awards closely align with three of LIC's core values – teamwork, innovation and integrity – as it is by working together, thinking outside the square and sharing the lessons learned on farm that we will make New Zealand a truly sustainable farming nation.

LIC believes that entrants competing for these awards are creating networks that will not only benefit their careers, but also their future farming practices.

This year LIC is giving each of the eight regional winners a copy of its advanced farm mapping software, FarmKeeper, along with a six-month support contract.

LIC is also sponsoring the LIC Best Dairy Farm Award, which recognises the dairy farmer who best demonstrates long term, practical, environmental planning on their farm. This award is to the value of \$1,000.



New Zealand farmers are in the vanguard when it comes to producing world class food using cost efficient, and environmentally sustainable practices.

As New Zealand's foremost marketer, processor and exporter of New Zealand red meat products into the global market, Silver Fern Farms' understands that quality and a guarantee of health underpin the success of our industry. As such we are firm supporters of the New Zealand Farm Environment Award Trust and the Ballance Farm Environment Awards programme, and have been the proud national sponsor of the Livestock Award for the past three years.

This award recognises best practice and production across all livestock activities, encompassing the environment, production, cultural and succession practices on the entrants property.

The entrants for this award are leaders in primary protein production and are committed to supplying quality food to the world as an integral part of New Zealand's integrated supply chain offering, or as we like to call it: from 'plate to pasture'.

Silver Fern Farms applauds all past and future entrants.



Hill Laboratories has, since its inception in 1984, been committed to serving the soil and plant analytical testing needs of the agricultural industry in New Zealand. Throughout that time Hill's has had an extremely positive relationship with Ballance Agri-Nutrients and its shareholders as we work in tandem to ensure the primary industry is at its most productive and progressive.

It has been an honour to take part in the BFEA structure and do our bit in recognising and acknowledging the high performing, sustainable farmers in our midst.

Hill Laboratories is the largest private analytical testing laboratory in New Zealand, concentrating on agricultural, environmental and food & bioanalytical testing, so the aims and coverage of the BFEA sit perfectly within the driving interests of Hill Laboratories.

Throughout the 5 years we have been involved with sponsorship of the BFEA it has been wonderful to see the innovative and socially conscious efforts being achieved throughout the farming industry in New Zealand and we are dedicated to supporting and promoting those efforts into the future.



It is Gallagher's great pleasure to be supporting the Innovation Award as part of the Ballance Farm Environment Awards. Gallagher have based a major part of their business on innovation, continuous improvement together with support of the Agricultural business around the world.

Our support of the Innovation Award reflects our commitment to continuous improvement of New Zealand farming systems. Previous winners are devoted New Zealand farmers who are prepared to try new things and share success with their industry, in an effort to improve farming overall. New Zealand farmers are well known for their creativity and give it a go attitudes and for this reason New Zealand's farmers are respected worldwide for their innovation and inventive spirits.

Gallagher are proud to showcase the winners of the Innovation Awards. The display of ideas and innovation will inspire many other farmers to improve their businesses and ultimately create more profitable farming.

## Regional Partners



Environment Canterbury (E-Can) recognises the importance of encouraging and promoting best practice amongst farmers to help us meet our environmental responsibilities. The Ballance Farm Environment Awards provide a high profile platform amongst the farming community and media for championing good management practices.

It would be an impossible task to use regulation and enforcement to control the wide range of daily farm activities which can have adverse environmental effects. Examples include the issues around stock water, providing alternatives to streams, measures around small dams; fertiliser use including nitrogen and phosphate management; aerial topdressing; the siting of silage pits and compost heaps; tracking with regard to erosion; weed-spraying effects on air quality or neighbours; offal pits and rubbish dumps on farm; burning controls; farm fuel supplies; stock access lanes; bridges; riparian margins; weeds and pests and a wide range of conservation values which farmers manage and generally provide for.

We need to entrain the tremendous amount of goodwill amongst farming families towards their local environment. Engaging positively engenders responsible stewardship from the managers on site, while relying solely on the law-book would discourage this. There is increasing international recognition of the long term advantages of the “collaborative approach”.

The awards recognise contributions towards community and employee needs, as well as profitability, all assisting our responsibilities to consider social and economic factors.

*Ross Little*  
Councillor  
Environment Canterbury



**greater WELLINGTON**  
REGIONAL COUNCIL

Greater Wellington Regional Council has been involved with the Ballance Farm Environment Awards since 2002. In that time more than 100 farms have participated in the awards, including a number of lifestyle blocks.

The awards have formed an integral part of Greater Wellington's promotion of sustainable land management throughout the region and continue to provide an excellent forum for best practice to be showcased. Many of the category and supreme winners have gone on to achieve awards in other regionwide competitions. This ensures that the best of environmental, economic and social practice continues to be endorsed through continuing exposure to public scrutiny. The recent addition of the National Showcase and the Awards Scholarship has provided further value to the product.

The support of the regional community is vital for the continuing success of the awards, as is the many hours of work provided by volunteers and sponsors representatives. Greater Wellington has committed resources to the running of the awards over the next three years and looks forward to continuing its association with the farming community through this very worthwhile programme.

*David Cameron*  
Manager, Land Management  
Greater Wellington



Northland Regional Council continued to support the Ballance Farm Environment Awards in 2007/08, in partnership with the Farm Environment Awards Trust.

The key objectives of the awards are to encourage sustainable land management and to display to farmers that profitability need not compromise and, in the best examples, can restore and enhance environmental values.

Through feedback and profiling winners, the awards encourage other farmers to be more proactive on their resource management by providing them with role models and practical ideas for sustainable land management.

One of our roles is to encourage landowners to recognise the economic and social value of managing land in a way that will protect the resource and meet the needs of current and future generations. It is therefore a pleasure to continue to support the Ballance Farm Environment Awards, which acknowledge the success of land owners in achieving sustainable land management practices.

*Jason Dawson*  
Community Relations Manager  
Northland Regional Council



Some of Environment Bay Of Plenty's duties are to improve and maintain a high quality of our waterways and waterbodies. Therefore any way which we can help landowners achieve this is a better outcome for us and our community.

The Ballance Farm Environment Awards are one avenue where we can support and encourage better farming of our soils. It may mean providing technical support or secretarial assistance, which we have done in the past. Many of our environmental programme farms have entered over the past few years. Any winners provides encouragement to our field staff and an alternative to us just being regulators.

I personally lobby my fellow councillors for their continuing support for these awards. I believe that twenty or thirty years down the race we shall see thousands of New Zealand farmers following these sustainable practices.

It will be a living example to the outside world of our commitment towards a more holistic approach of land uses. ENVBOP can't not be encouraged by the enthusiasm and passion of those people involved in organizing and running these awards in the Bay of Plenty. Most of them do so voluntarily because they believe in the future of a change in farming practices.

*Malcolm Whitaker*  
Regional Councillor  
Environment Bay of Plenty



Horizons Regional Council's environmental role in promoting sustainable land use both physically and financially fits comfortably with the Ballance Farm Environmental Awards, and my Council was pleased to continue its support for the awards during 2007 and 2008.

Horizons was proud to be associated with the winning entries, who all epitomised wise land use.

The Supreme Winner for our region, Ian Cumming, was a worthy winner. He combines outstanding environmental ethics in protecting biodiversity and with managing his soils in a sustainable way.

The field day held on his property allowed fellow farmers to see for themselves that farming sustainability does not need to adversely affect the bottom line.

Horizons prefers to use a mix of education and information rather than regulation to meet its environmental aims and responsibilities. The Ballance Farm Environmental Awards are a good vehicle to promote awareness through information and education to our region's land owners.

*Garrick Murfitt*  
Chairman  
Horizons Regional Council



The Otago Regional Council sees the unique structure and aims of the Ballance Farm Environment Awards making a significant contribution to environmental outcomes in Otago's primary production sectors. The Ballance Farm Environment Awards have provided valuable opportunities for farmers to show their leadership and skill in developing and managing sustainable programmes on their properties.

Otago Regional Council Chairman, Stephen Cairns said Ballance Farm Environment Award winners and entrants consistently demonstrate lateral thinking and on farm practices that sustain their families, staff, land, waterways and stock.

The Ballance Farm Environment Awards goals fit well with Otago Regional Council objectives and we are pleased to be able to support them.

*Peter Taylor*  
Associate Director  
Strategic Communications and Education



Environment Waikato has been a supporter of the Farm Environment Awards since their inception. One of the key things we've learned from those years with the New Zealand Farm Environment Award Trust is that good environmental management is as much a state of mind as a set of good practices.

Farming is a business of problem solving, and the best farmers have found solutions that others can learn from. The Ballance Farm Environment Awards gives us the chance to help farmers to learn from the best examples of farming. At the same time our staff get the chance to learn about the practical application of environmental thinking in a farm business setting. And of course it's also good to be able to publicly acknowledge the good work these farmers are doing.

*Alan Campbell*  
Project Leader  
Community Landscape

## Strategic Partners



Fonterra became a strategic partner of the NZFEA Trust in 2008. The NZFEA Trust is delighted to have Fonterra supporting the initiatives of the Trust in promoting sustainable and profitable farming by way of the Ballance Farm Environment Awards programme.



**QEII National Trust**  
Open Space New Zealand  
Ngā Kaiārahi Papa

The QEII National Trust became a strategic partner of the NZFEA Trust in 2008. QEII covenantors are frequent winners of Ballance Farm Environment Awards, showing how environmental values can be restored and enhanced while displaying that profitability need not be compromised.



MAF became a strategic partner of the NZFEA Trust in 2008. MAF is the sponsor of the New Zealand Farm Environment Award Trust and MAF Study Scholarship which was awarded in 2008 for the first time. The Scholarship is to enable the recipient to undertake a major study topic relevant to sustainable and profitable farming as it relates to New Zealand.



The MAF Sustainable Farming Fund became a strategic partner of the NZFEA Trust in 2005. In recent years, the NZFEA Trust has been invited to nominate past entrants in the Ballance Farm Environment Awards programme to sit on the various committees that allocate funds from the MAF Sustainable Farming Fund.

# Directory

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New Zealand  
Farm Environment Award Trust

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