

THE AHUWHENUA TROPHY ROUND UP

SEPTEMBER 2014

BNZ
MĀORI
EXCELLENCE
IN FARMING AWARD 2014
DAIRY



»» A GREAT NIGHT FOR MĀORI AGRIBUSINESS



Te Rua o Te Moko Ltd, winner of this years Ahuwhenua Trophy

The awards dinner for the 2014 Ahuwhenua Trophy BNZ Māori Excellence in Farming Award for Dairy has once again highlighted the excellence of Māori agribusiness and the high regard in which leading business people and politicians hold it.

Nearly 900 people including whānau from this year's finalists, past finalists and a wide range of agribusiness leaders, consultants, politicians and media were present to see the Chairman of Te Rua o Te Moko Ltd of Taranaki, Dion Maaka presented with the trophy by the Governor General Sir Jerry Mateparae. Dion Maaka was also presented with a replica of the trophy by Hon Nathan Guy and received the winner's medal from the Chief Executive of the Bank of New Zealand, Anthony Healy. The Trust also receives about \$40,000 in prizes donated by sponsors.

The other finalists were Putauaki Trust – Himiona Farm and Ngāti Awa Farms – Ngakauroa Farm, both of whom are located near the Bay of Plenty town Whakatane.



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COLLABORATION MEANS SUCCESS

The chairman of Te Rua o Te Moko Ltd, Dion Maaka says their success validated the decision by the owners to combine their land to establish a viable dairy farm. Te Rua o te Moko is an amalgamation of four Māori Trusts representing at least 1000 landowners. Dion Maaka says bringing the blocks together marked the beginning of a new era for the landowners and has given them an exciting vision for the future. He says the new farm provides a much better return for the owners.

Te Rua o Te Moko Ltd is situated close to the town of Hawera and runs 500 kiwi cross cows on a 170ha effective milking platform. It is a highly successful operation, which is now into its fifth season and is producing 190,000 kgMS. A farm training operation is also run in conjunction with the farm.

The Chairman of the Ahuwhenua Trophy Management Committee which runs the competition, Kingi Smiler says Te Rua o Te Moko Ltd was a shining example of how Māori are collaborating with small trusts cooperating to create larger more economically viable enterprises which serve their owners, their communities and New Zealand better.

"A feature of this year's competition is that all the finalists were an amalgam of smaller entities which had put aside their individual interests for the greater good of their whānau. This collaborative approach began

81 years ago when the Minister of Māori Affairs Sir Apirana Ngata encouraged Māori to work in this way.

Today the collaborative approach is now gaining greater momentum and as we see in this Ahuwhenua Trophy event, resulting in some outstanding achievements," he says.

Kingi Smiler says Māori agribusiness has now become a powerhouse of the New Zealand economy and has truly come of age. He says the proof of that is that every day, Māori trusts and incorporations are being besieged by an army of consultants, advisors and investors wanting to be a part of the action.

"One of the reasons for this is that trusts such as Te Rua o Te Moko Ltd, the other finalists and a large number of Maori farms have lifted their game and have become highly successful multi million

dollars businesses. Today they can benchmark successfully with all farms – not just Māori farms. They are adopting all the technologies that modern day farming has to offer without compromising the value of kaitiakitanga so

that future generations can enjoy the benefits of their taonga tuku iho".



BNZ SUPPORT

BNZ head of agribusiness, John Janssen, says that by amalgamating smaller land holdings Te Rua o Te Moko is able to drive growth until now only achieved by larger land owners.

"Every year the Ahuwhenua competition highlights and shares innovative farming business practices driving growth in the agribusiness sector, and this year is no exception."

"Amalgamation of landholdings highlights the power of mahitahi to achieve scale and resources needed to reach the next level."

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ENTER AND LEARN SAYS PREVIOUS WINNER



Farm consultant and Te Awahohonu Trustee, Bob Cottrell says his Trust has benefited hugely from entering and then winning the BNZ Māori Excellence in Farming Award – sheep and beef in 2013.

Tarawera Station won the award that year, but it also entered another of its farms – Gwavas station to get some outside advice and feedback on just how this operation was performing.

Bob Cottrell has been involved as a consultant for many previous winners of the Ahuwhenua Trophy and says while winning is great, the real benefit comes from have top rural professionals do an audit of your farm. This he says means that you get an accurate and independent view of your performance.

In the case of Tarawera, Bob Cottrell says the advice they got confirmed that the strategy that they were embarking upon – designating Tarawera as a ‘breeding’ property Gwavas as a ‘finishing’ property was correct. He says as a Trustee he found the Ahuwhenua ‘audit process’ invaluable and would recommend that others enter the awards and gain this knowledge.

Bob Cottrell says Tarawera Station entered the competition on a previous occasion and didn’t win, but going through the process was invaluable and meant when they entered it for the second time they had the benefit of the previous audit.

He says since winning the award in 2013, they have had a number of groups visit the station to learn more about their operations and he says they have also had some valuable feedback. While entering the competition does mean extra work for both staff and Trustees, Bob Cottrell says it’s worth the effort and says the Ahuwhenua Trophy is an excellent vehicle for raising the profile of Maori agribusiness.



Time to Enter for 2015

The quest to find the top Māori sheep and beef farm is on with the official launch of the 2015 Ahuwhenua Trophy BNZ Māori Excellence in Farming Award – sheep and beef taking place at the annual conference of the Federation of Māori Authorities to be held in Whanganui on September 26–28.

The Chairman of the Ahuwhenua Trophy Management Committee Kingi Smiler is inviting whanau, Trusts and Incorporations to enter the competition. He says that previous entrants, finalists and winners have all said that the experience of entering has been hugely beneficial to them.

Entry forms and full details for the 2015 competition are now available on the Ahuwhenua website.

www.ahuwhenuatrophy.maori.nz

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EXTENSIVE MEDIA COVERAGE

Media coverage of this years Ahuwhenua Trophy BNZ Māori Excellence in Farming Award for Dairy - the launch at parliament, each of the field days and the final awards - have received extensive media coverage. All the events featured in the major farming magazines and in local newspapers as well as radio and Māori television. The launch at Parliament was seen as the catalyst for getting the media interested in the Ahuwhenua Trophy and the Young Māori farmers of the year. The profile obtained by Ahuwhenua also prompted many journalists to take a wider interest in Māori agribusiness and the contribution that it makes to the New Zealand economy.



Special time for Hon Dr Pita Sharples

Dr Pita Sharples has congratulated the organisers of the Ahuwhenua Trophy BNZ Māori Excellence in Farming Award for Dairy saying the event has become an important calendar event for the sector. Speaking at the Awards dinner, Dr Sharples making his last appearance as the Minister of Māori Affairs said the capacity crowd of nearly 900 people made the event a very special occasion.

"The spotlight this year is on the innovation that is occurring in Māori dairy farming. This innovation in dairying can trace its genesis to one man who established a thriving farm in the Far North using his own hand made tools. He produced butter, which he sold to sailors and other locals and in the space of five years his butter was selling for more than double its original price. These transactions are the earliest record of the sale of dairy produce in New Zealand. Who was this entrepreneur you might ask? Another cousin. His name was Rawiri Taiwhanga and he was the country's first commercial dairy farmer that had the same industrious spirit that has propelled tonight three finalists to centre stage," he says.

Dr Sharples says currently meat and dairy exports from Māori farms earn \$3.4 billion of which dairy accounts for \$1.3 billion. Dr Sharples says the Ahuwhenua Trophy recognises the contribution of Māori exports to the New Zealand economy.



YOUNG MĀORI FARMER

Twenty-four year old Wiremu Reid is the 2014 Young Māori Dairy Farmer of the Year. He was presented with his award at the Ahuwhenua Trophy Awards dinner in Tauranga in June. He says he was "humbled" to have won the competition and describes the other finalists as "very, very impressive."

Wiremu Reid says he has his heart set on owning a farm by age 30 and says winning the competition has been a positive step towards his goal. The fourth generation dairy farmer grew up in Whangarei and moved south with his partner Bettina Tolich in 2009. Since then the young couple have been building up their equity hoping to reach farm ownership by 2020.

"I'm confident we'll get there. Ultimately we want a run off, or a lease block, with conversion possibilities; but for the short term we would like somewhere to graze our own stock," he says.

When he entered, Wiremu was working on Stephen and Janet Pope's 650-cow farm at Otapiri as a lower order sharemilker. He and Bettina have since started their first season 50/50 sharemilking 1150 cows in Ranfurly with the support of Wiremu's parents.

The runners up for the award were 50/50 sharemilker Joshua MacDonald from the Waikato and Herd Manager James Matheson from Gore.

*Top: Wiremu Reid and his partner Bettine Tolich with the trophy.
Bottom: Finalists in the 2014 Young Māori Farmer of the Year.*



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MPI SHOWCASES AHUWHENUA AT NATIONAL FIELDDAYS

MPI Communications Adviser, Krissy Moreau put the Ahuwhenua Trophy on the map at National Fieldays in June. As part of MPI's display at the event, Krissy had a special screen display made up to highlight the benefits of the Ahuwhenua Trophy. Also on the MPI site were copies of the latest newsletter, all of which help raise the profile of the awards and Māori Agribusiness generally.

FURTHER HONOUR FOR WINNERS

The winner of the Ahuwhenua Trophy BNZ Māori Excellence in Farming Award for Dairy, Te Rua o Te Moko and the Young Māori Farmer of the year have been given special recognition by Federated Farmers. Aaron Hunt representing Te Rua o Te Moko Ltd and Wiremu Reid, the Ahuwhenua Young Māori Farmer of the Year, were presented with 'Cream of the Crop' awards at the Federations Annual Conference in Palmerston North recently. The Awards were presented to the pair by Bruce Wills, President of the Federated Farmers, just before he stepped down after three years in the role. Aaron and Wiremu each received specially engraved miniature silver cream cans. About 200 people were present at the Federations annual dinner and Bruce Wills and other farming leaders expressed their delight at seeing the pair receive their awards. Before the dinner Aaron, Wiremu and his partner Bettina had the opportunity to meet with the Federations leadership team and other agribusiness leaders who attended the conference.



Above: Aaron Hunt and Wiremu Reid with their 'cream of the crop' awards' Below: the President of Federated Farmers Bruce Wills with Wiremu Reid; Right: Bettina Tollich, Wiremu's partner, Wiremu Reid and Aaron Hunt.



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THE RISE AND RISE OF MIRAKA

The Māori owned dairy company Miraka says the 2013/14 year has been a record year in many areas. With prices for Whole Milk Powder being close to USD5000 per metric tonne for the majority of the year this has resulted in record revenues close to USD200 million and production of over 37,000mt of milk powder for the year. Its Chief Executive Richard Wyeth says that these record prices have been exceptional but they are not sustainable and there will be a 'softening' in the current season.

The next milestone in the Miraka story is the development of its consumer business with the commissioning of the new UHT plant. At present it has two processing lines capable of producing 60 million litres of milk into 250ml Tetra portion packs ready for Chinese consumers.

SAVING THE OLD KUMARA

A Senior Lecturer in Horticulture and in Māori Resource Management at Massey University is saving a unique collection of old kumara varieties, which date back to the late 18th century.

Nick Roskrige has taken on the role of preserving these old breeds of kumara and growing them in plots in the Manawatu and Hawkes Bay. He says in the 1960's a kumara researcher by the name of Doug Yen sent the kumara plants to Japan where they were preserved in a special germ plasma bank. Then in the 1980's the Japanese handed these back to a Māori Trust in New Zealand to continue the work of preserving the collection.

The kumara are now in the hands of Massey University and Nick Roskrige says that is a good place for the collection for now as there are people there who know about the kumara and can deal with any problems that might arise in their preservation.

Nick Roskrige says the kumara in the collection date back to the first contact between Māori and Europeans in 1769 when



Nick Roskrige with kumara grown in the Manawatu

whalers started arriving on the shores of Aotearoa. He says none of these kumara are pre European.

The pre European kumara were very skinny, long narrow, finger like but these ones superseded them because of their better yields," he says.

Nick Roskrige describes the trial as 'ethno-botany' – in other words preserving plant species directly related to the indigenous people.

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