

# THE AHUWHENUA TROPHY ROUND UP

APRIL 2017

BNZ  
MĀORI  
EXCELLENCE  
IN FARMING AWARD 2017  
SHEEP AND BEEF



## »» Big turnout for announcement of finalists



L-R Hon Te Ururoa Flavell Minister for Maori Development, Weo Maag Pukepoto Farm Trust, Ron and Justine King Puketawa Station, Hon Nathan Guy Minister for Primary Industries.

Front L-R Aloma Shearer Chairperson Pukepoto Farm Trust and Raniera Tau Chairman Omapere-Rangihamama Trust.

More than 100 people gathered in Parliament's Grand Hall for the announcement of this year's finalists in the 2017 Ahuwhenua Trophy BNZ Māori Excellence in Farming Award for sheep and beef. These were announced by the Minister for Primary Industries, Hon Nathan Guy in association with the Minister for Māori Development, Hon Te Ururoa Flavell.

All three finalist farms are from the North Island. They are:

- **Omapere Rangihamama Trust** (Kaikohe)
- **RA & JG King Partnership, Puketawa Station** (Eketahuna)
- **Pukepoto Farm Trust** (Ongarue near Taumarunui).

Speaking at the function before the gathering which included Members of Parliament, leading business people, government officials and the finalists, Hon Te Ururoa Flavell described the Ahuwhenua Trophy as having a lot of mana given the high powered audience it attracted.

Minister Flavell says Māori don't talk enough about the good things they do. He says the Ahuwhenua Trophy is something that needs to be talked up because it is without doubt the

premier agricultural award, not just for Māori but for all of New Zealand. He says the finalists should be very proud of their achievement in making it to the finals.

Primary Industries Minister, Hon Nathan Guy who presented the finalists their medals noted that their farms were shining examples of the commitment Māori farmers have to sustainably developing their land for future generations. He says he's proud to acknowledge and celebrate the key role Māori play in New Zealand's primary industries.

"The asset base of the Māori economy is worth over \$42 billion, most of which is strongly focused on the primary industries. Māori collectively own 40% of forestry land, 38% of fishing quota, and 30% of lamb production, to name just a few examples. Right across the economy as a whole, Māori are successful players and many of their companies and entities are amongst the top performing commercial operations in New Zealand," he says. Minister Guy described the Ahuwhenua Trophy as showcasing excellence.

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# CHAIRMAN PRAISES FINALISTS



The Ahuwhenua Trophy Management Committee Chairman, Kingi Smiler says it is great to once again see three top quality sheep and beef farms selected as finalists for this prestigious trophy. All are performing very well in some of the most challenging times the New Zealand primary sector has encountered with volatile global markets and low prices together with a need to adapt to climate change. The people who run these operations are positive and confident about their future and are taking an approach that Sir Apirana Ngata, who inaugurated the competition would have wished.

He says in difficult times it is important that leaders emerge and show the way for others. Kingi Smiler says more than ever role models are needed in the Māori agribusiness space.

"There is something very special about our people in that they look for practical innovative ways to get through adversity and don't retreat into their shells and do nothing. They know that farming is about managing cycles, be they weather or market and they take account of



this when drawing up their business plans. New Zealand is fortunate to have Māori farmers because it is in their DNA as kaitiaki to manage the fragile environment and invest for future generations. This spiritual closeness to the land is vital in a modern society where consumers not only want food, they want assurance that it is done sustainably and ethically," he says.

Kingi Smiler says Māori agribusiness is in very good shape. He says the Ahuwhenua Trophy has been a major factor in lifting the profile and showcasing Māori agribusinesses contribution to the New Zealand economy.



## AWARDS DINNER

*The winner of the 2017 Ahuwhenua Trophy will be announced at a function in Whangarei on Friday 26th May. This is one of the social highlights of the year and a chance to celebrate with the finalists and meet some of the top people in New Zealand agribusiness. Tickets are limited so get in early and contact [ahuwhenuacompetition@tetumupaeroa.co.nz](mailto:ahuwhenuacompetition@tetumupaeroa.co.nz) for further information.*



Gathering at the 2015 Awards Dinner

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## ABOUT THE FARMS

# OMAPERE TARAIRE E & RANGIHAMAMA X3A AHU WHENUA TRUST

The farm run by the Trust is situated just 2km northwest of the Far North township of Kaikohe and is regarded by its shareholders as a taonga tukuiho, gifted to them over time by their ancestors.

Up until the 1950s the Omapere land had separate titles occupied by individual/whānau owners who used the land for food gardens and small dairy units. The size of individual lots became uneconomic with some lots starting to show signs of neglect. Under the Māori Affairs Act 1953 these separate titles were amalgamated under one title known as Omapere Taraire E and Rangihamama X3A Ahu Whenua Trust (ORT). During this process the Crown acquired a substantial holding in the Omapere block. After the amalgamation, it was run as a sheep and beef unit under the management of the Department of Māori Affairs.

Under new leadership in 2007 there has been a determined effort by Trustees and shareholders to purchase this land back and run their own farming operation. ORT now owns about 80% of this land and there is an ongoing strategy to continue purchasing shares until it is fully owned by them.

Of the Trust's 1,997ha total land area, 1,253ha is devoted to the sheep and beef operation, of which 902ha is effective. In the past the farm ran a combination of sheep and beef. The move away from sheep to beef has largely been driven by better returns for bull beef and poorer returns for wool, sheep and lamb.

The farm is mainly undulating country with some flats making it ideal as a finishing farm. The bulls are bought in as rising



one year olds and then sold on as two year olds. The stock are only grass fed. A manager and three staff run the farm and they report to a special farm committee comprising a consultant, a shareholder and a Trustee chosen for their specialist farm knowledge.

The farm includes the only Māori owned lake in Aotearoa – Lake Omapere. This is considered a sacred site and a taonga in its own right. On the property also is Maunga Putahi, one of the pou of the house of Ngāpuhi. This maunga also holds the oldest Ngāpuhi burial caves where only Ngāpuhi chiefs were interred. Their protection is absolutely paramount. There are many sacred burial sites and these have all been fenced off and in some cases vested in Ngā Whenua Rāhui.



Care of the environment is key in the ORT strategy and they take this and reducing their environmental footprint very seriously.

ORT also maintain strong links with their shareholders by holding six monthly meetings, and a full AGM in October at which Governance reports on the quadruple bottom line of environmental, social, cultural and economic outcomes achieved. Approval is also sought for any major changes to farm policy.

ORT is a great example of whānau working collaboratively to gain the maximum return from their land but at the same time placing equal emphasis on preserving this taonga for future generations.

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## ABOUT THE FARMS

### RA & JG KING PARTNERSHIP, PUKETAWA STATION

Puketawa Station is a sheep and beef breeding unit located at Tiraumea about 45 minutes east of Pahiataua in the northern Wairarapa. The property consists of 1108ha (900 effective) and is mainly medium to steep hill country with some rolling contours. Breeding stock on the farm comprise 3177 Romney breeding ewes plus 850 ewe replacements and 148 stud ewes. The cattle side comprises 144 mixed mainly Hereford cows plus replacements.

The farm was bought by Ronald and Justine King in 2013. The farm was in a 'tired' condition and since then the couple have worked hard to improve both pastures and farm infrastructure.

Their journey to buying Puketawa is quite remarkable. Ronald originally owned a 280 acre sheep and beef farm near the Taranaki township of Whangamomona. In 2001 Ronald and his three siblings and their partners, who were all accomplished shearers, pooled their financial resources and purchased Mangaroa Station in the Ruakituri Valley in northern Hawke's Bay.



The whānau bought Mangaroa to work collectively and build their assets, so they could eventually all buy their own large scale farms. Later, the whānau also bought Ruakaka Station in the nearby Tiniroto Valley which they also worked hard to improve and develop. Due to a combination of very hard work and great sacrifice, all the siblings now own their own farms. They are role models for the value of cooperation and determination.

Ronald's sister Nukuhia Hadfield her husband Bart, won the Ahuwhenua Trophy for the top Māori sheep and beef farm with Mangaroa Station in 2015.



The strong whānau tradition continues at Puketawa Station with Justine's father Ron Falconer living on the farm and offering his vast farming knowledge and experience, as well as playing a major role in the day to day running of the property. Justine's sister Veronica and her husband Warwick, as well as Ronald's sister Marama and husband Rob also help on the farm from time to time.

Justine is an accomplished horse woman and set up the Alfredton Riding Club, and runs many horse activities within and for the community. Ronald has retained his shearing interests and in 2015 was the manager and a judge when the New Zealand shearing team competed in the United Kingdom. He has also judged at world shearing champs, golden shears, NZ champs and many other shows around NZ. They are also both very involved with many other community and school run ventures.

The couple continue to develop and upgrade Puketawa Station and have a development plan that includes spraying gorse, planting trees and retiring areas of land to mitigate erosion. They are also involved in riparian planting and generally improving the farm and preserving the environment. Ronald and Justine take their role as kaitiaki seriously and seek to preserve the environment for their children and future generations.



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## ABOUT THE FARMS

### PUKEPOTO FARM TRUST

This small farm trust, with just over a thousand owners, is situated near the tiny settlement of Ongarue about 20 minutes north of the central North Island town of Taumarunui.

Pukepoto means little hill, but this is a misnomer because the farm is a typical hill country farm with high steep hills and gullies that drop down to feed the Ongarue and Ohura Rivers, and ultimately the Whanganui River.

The property consists of 1400ha of which just over 1000ha are farmed. About 100ha are covenanted under the Ngā Whenua Rāhui scheme. There is 62ha in plantation pine and the remainder of the unfarmed land is scrub; much of which is being retired to prevent erosion. The Trust has worked closely with Horizons Regional Council in this regard.

Currently the property winters a flock of 6000 Romney ewes and a herd of 300 mainly Angus cattle.

Established by the Māori Land Court in 1978, the original Trust was known as Pukepoto Forest and Farm Trust. In 1994 through an order of the Māori Land Court it was renamed to Pukepoto Farm Trust as they are commonly known today. Like all whenua it is significant. Through oral history passed down the Trust is proud to claim that the oldest son of Rereahu, Te Ihingarangi was born on the whenua.

The property was used as a thoroughfare for Māori from Taranaki and Whanganui and in those times it was not seen



as an ideal place to live as there was always the risk of being attacked.

Over recent years Pukepoto Trustees have worked towards lifting the performance of the overall business. Consequently subtle changes have and continue to be undertaken by the Governance and management teams within budget. The Trustees and management recognise that there is still room for improvement and continue to work with their external stakeholders who provide valuable advice, input and support.



They have worked hard to take control over their land and to improve the quality of the farming operations. New staff have been employed, better stock policies have been put in place and this has helped improve the quality of the animals and lifted the return to its shareholders.

Like all farming operations, Pukepoto works to improve its operations from both a financial, social and environmental point of view. The country is hard and the task big, but the results of commitment to succeed are now showing through and this is delivering real benefits to the whānau of Pukepoto.

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Hannah Wallace winner of the Young Māori Farmer Award for Sheep and Beef 2015

## AHUWHENUA YOUNG MĀORI FARMER AWARD

Judging for the Ahuwhenua Young Māori Sheep and Beef Farmer is now underway. This year seven entrants are vying for this award and within a month three finalists will be selected by the judging panel.

Six of the entrants are from the North Island and one from the South Island. According to the judges, the standard of entrants is high with some already having achieved university diploma whilst working on farm and others continuing to undertake training through the Primary ITO to diploma level.

The AYMF is designed to encourage young Māori to develop their skills and help them aspire to leadership roles in the agri-sector. It is also an opportunity to showcase at the awards dinner the achievements of the finalists and to develop them as role models for other young Māori men and women.

The winner of the AYMF will be presented with their award on the same night as the main Ahuwhenua Trophy awards in Whangarei on the 26th of May.

## FINALISTS FIELD DAYS

Field days will now be held at the farms of all the finalists. Everyone is welcome to attend and those of you reading this newsletter are encouraged to tell others about these and get them along. It is a wonderful opportunity to see at first hand the achievements of these great Māori farmers and perhaps a chance to pick up a good idea or two. The time table for the field days is:

**THURSDAY 20TH APRIL**

***Omapere Rangihamama Trust***

Kaikohe, Far North

**THURSDAY 27TH APRIL**

***RA & JG King Partnership, Puketawa Station***

Eketahuna, Northern Wairarapa

**THURSDAY 4TH MAY**

***Pukepoto Farm Trust***

Ongarue, near Taumarunui



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## MĀORI AGRIBUSINESS UPDATE

### MPI programme to unlock land potential

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) is committed to supporting Māori to unlock the potential of their land to sustainably increase production. The Māori Agribusiness Pathway to Increased Productivity (MAPIP) Programme, aims to partner with Māori to overcome some of the unique challenges facing Māori when developing primary sector assets that are in collective ownership.

MPI has recently partnered with Lemuel Te Urupu Trust in the Hawke's Bay and Proprietors of Kaimoho A1 & other Blocks in Te Tairāwhiti through the MAPIP programme. The purpose of these partnerships is to explore the development of over 1000 hectares in the primary industries; to ensure retention of the whenua for whānau, hapū and iwi and the next generations; clarify the trusts and incorporations long-term direction; formulate action plans and enhance implementation strategies to develop best land use opportunities which provide sustainable economic, social and cultural outcomes. MPI support includes funding for independent expertise to complete strategic planning and best land use assessment.

If you are interested in learning more about MAPIP visit [mpi.govt.nz](http://mpi.govt.nz) and head to funding and programmes then Māori agribusiness.

### Kiwifruit at Te Kaha

Two members of the Te Kaha Growers Association in the Eastern Bay of Plenty were among the guest speakers at Zespri's breakfast forum in Mt Maunganui recently. Rongo Puha and Haki McRoberts are members of the trust which is developing kiwifruit orchards in the area. They have been involved in this work for many years and the aim is to provide a better return from their land and job opportunities for their young people. The Trust has long been recognised for its success in bringing training, skills and employment to the community.



*L-R Rongo Puha and  
Haki McRoberts*

### Call for more Māori studying agribusiness

Māori Development Minister, Hon Te Ururoa Flavell has urged more students to undertake a new Māori Agribusiness major Massey University is offering as part of the Bachelor of AgriCommerce. Hon Flavell, who is also Associate Economic Development Minister, stressed the importance of understanding Māori resource issues, resource management and economic development that meets cultural expectations. He says "Māori need people who can connect our current crop of Māori agribusiness leaders to the wider industry – to ensure we are getting the very best value, achieving the best potential from our land and our resources. I'm hoping the graduates from this major will be it".

"If there's one thing I've heard right across the country, it's that the agriculture industry needs more skilled workers with the qualifications to back them up. I congratulate Massey for setting this major up and for the students who will take it up."

According to Statistics New Zealand, goods exported by Māori-owned businesses in March 2014 were worth \$543 million, up more than \$100 million from the previous year, representing 1.1 per cent of total exports.

### Supplying the right skills

Qualification director Dr Nick Roskrug from Massey's Institute of Agriculture and Environment, says the major, introduced this year, is unique in that it produces graduates with the core skills of an agribusiness graduate, but also with the cultural information to help organisations collaborate with Māori.

Dr Roskrug says students take core papers from the Bachelor of AgriCommerce as well as specific Māori Agribusiness papers like Māori Agribusiness Systems and Māori Policy in Agribusiness. He says there is strong demand for agribusiness graduates who can communicate effectively with Māori organisations, work for Māori organisations and contribute to the economy.

"This degree is still in its adolescence, but it was built with the help of the industries calling for the graduates and is a degree for not only Māori students, but any student willing to learn. Cultural concepts such as manaakitanga and kaitiakitanga are important, and graduates will be sensitive to the values captured in tino rangatiratanga – where Māori shall retain rangatiratanga over their resources and taonga," he says.

Dr Roskrug says there is an important desire for Māori to determine their own destiny relating to economic well being, to have the material wealth and income to meet their own needs, and to contribute to the wider economic growth. He says Māori are most strongly represented in the sheep and beef cattle farming sector. More than 720,000 hectares of Māori land is farmed and nearly 15,000 Māori are employed in primary industries.

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## MĀORI AGRIBUSINESS UPDATE

### Miraka launches brand new products

Miraka is about to launch two new value-add products; one aimed for the international market, in particular China and the other for the domestic market.

Taupo Pure is the premium international brand which will see Miraka produce a one kilogram sachet of milk powder aimed at busy Chinese women who want to give their children a good start to the day by providing them with a high quality milk product. This will be sold mainly on e-commerce channels including WeChat which is a very popular technology platform in China with over a billion account holders. Miraka CEO Richard Wyeth says the Taupo Pure brand will help optimise the value of its milk powder and tell the story of the beautiful region where the milk is produced such as the lake, mountains and grass fed cows. Facts he says which will appeal to Chinese consumers.



The other new product about to be launched under the Whai Ora brand is a powder based smoothie drink targeting the lifestyle consumer. It consists of milk powder blended with oats, honey, fruits and vegetables which are all sourced locally and are natural products. This is aimed at the New Zealand market, although some of the product will be sold in Malaysia and Singapore.

Wyeth says it has always been Miraka's strategy to develop consumer products based on the strong foundation of whole milk powder. He says the move is an exciting one and the Whai Ora brand will enable Miraka to talk about the Miraka story.

### Genetics breakthrough for sheep milk industry

A major breakthrough for the sheep milk industry with the news that semen from milking sheep in Europe is being allowed into New Zealand.



Peter Gatley

One of the companies involved in this latest breakthrough is Maui Milk, a large Māori owned farm with more than 4,000 ewes which has partnered with a group of Chinese businessmen to produce sheep milk products. The farm, Waituhi Kuratau, is located on the western shores of Lake Taupo. Its General Manager, Peter Gatley says genetics hold the key to ramping up sheep milk production in NZ which is still relatively low by world standards.

He says last year, Maui Milk bought one thousand straws of semen from Lacaune rams in the hope that approval would be granted and he says MPI has now done this. Peter Gatley says they have detailed plans to inseminate 4000 ewes on farm through April and May which he says is a pretty big job because every one of those inseminations involves laparoscopic surgery.

"It's not simple AI like a cow. It's a big project but we have that all nailed down and mapped day by day and provided the semen arrive safely it looks like we'll have some Lacaune genes on the ground in spring," he says.

The Lacaune is a milking sheep breed commonly located in southern France and is regarded as one of the highest yielding milk sheep breeds in the world. It is popular around the Roquefort area which is famous for sheep cheeses. But Maui Milk will not get into cheese making and will stick with producing high quality milk powders.

### Success for young Māori farmer



Brandyn Beale

Brandyn Beale has been named as the 2017 Hawke's Bay/Wairarapa Dairy Trainee of the Year. The 21 year old is currently herd manager on Mike and Jane Joho's 350 cow, 113 hectare farm at Dannevirke. So far he has won \$4,945 in prizes and is now in the national finals of the competition. Brandyn says he plans to progress to a manager's position in the next few years. He says he also wants to enter the Ahuwhenua Young Māori Dairy Farmer Award in 2018.

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