

THE AHUWHENUA TROPHY ROUND UP

AUGUST 2019

Ahuwhenua Trophy Competition for Horticulture Launched

Ahuwhenua Trophy Chairman Kingi Smiler says it is great to have the support of Horticulture New Zealand and the various sector groups who are sponsoring and supporting the new Ahuwhenua Trophy competition for horticulture, which was launched on August 1st at the HortNZ Conference Gala Dinner by the Hon Nanaia Mahuta.

He says it was logical and timely to have a separate event to recognise the Maori contribution to horticulture. For more than two centuries, Maori have exported horticultural products – a fact not widely recognised in New Zealand.

“In the last ten years in particular, Maori have become major investors in the sector and this has resulted in good financial returns and jobs for our people. But there is still much more to do and I am sure with the positive publicity that the Ahuwhenua Trophy competition generates, this will encourage more Maori to become involved in the sector,” he says.

Kingi says it is time to celebrate the achievements of Maori working in the horticultural sector. He says the Ahuwhenua Trophy competition has the prestige which no other event in Aotearoa has and the prospect of winning this beautiful cup will surely be an incentive.

“I urge Maori leaders and rural professionals to proactively encourage Maori to enter this competition. For the finalists there is not only the prestige of winning the competition but the added benefits of high quality feedback on their enterprises. Past finalists have noted how valuable this is,” he says.

Kingi says having an Ahuwhenua Trophy competition for horticulture is very exciting and he is confident that it will be well supported by both Maori and all those in the horticulture sector.

Our thanks to our valued Ahuwhenua Trophy sponsors: Ministry for Primary Industries, Te Puni Kōkiri, Horticulture New Zealand, Te Tumu Paeroa, Bank of New Zealand, Plant & Food Research, Ballance Agri-Nutrients, Massey University, Fruited, FMG, Zespri, BDO, New Zealand Fruit Growers, Pāmu Farms, Tohu Wine and WorkSafe.

A big thanks also to sponsors of the Ahuwhenua Young Māori Farmer Award: Te Puni Kōkiri, Primary ITO, Te Tumu Paeroa and Horticulture New Zealand.

AHUWHENUA TROPHY
EXCELLENCE IN
MĀORI HORTICULTURE
AWARD
2020



L-R: Barry O'Neil President of Horticulture NZ, Hon Nanaia Mahuta Minister of Maori Development and Kingi Smiler Chairman of the Ahuwhenua Management Committee.

Kingi says the other great news is that the Ministry for Primary Industries has announced that it will become a joint Platinum sponsor with Te Puni Kōkiri. He says this generous sponsorship will ensure the financial viability of the competition and enable it to maintain the high professional standards that has characterised Ahuwhenua in recent years.

Kingi says in addition to this, MPI are also offering a \$30k prize to provide native seedlings to the winner and finalists. These are being donated by Te Uru Rākau – Forestry NZ and produced by Minginui Nursery.

This has added a new and appropriate dimension to the competition and one that will greatly be valued by all he says.

Entry Forms and further details about 2020 competition will be on the Ahuwhenua Trophy website in the next few weeks.

» PLATINUM SPONSORS



» GOLD SPONSORS



» SILVER SPONSORS



» BRONZE SPONSORS



» SPONSORSHIP SUPPORT HAS ALSO BEEN PROVIDED BY TOHU WINE, WORKSAFE NZ AND PĀMU FARMS. The Ahuwhenua Trophy Management Committee supports SAFER FARMS.



KINGS TAKE OUT AHUWHENUA TROPHY

Jubilation broke out among the whanau and supporters as Eugene and Pania King from Kirihoa Station at Matawai, north west of Gisborne were announced the winners of the prestigious Ahuwhenua Trophy for the top Māori sheep and beef farm in Aotearoa for 2019.

The Minister of Agriculture, Hon Damien O'Connor made the announcement and presented the trophy to the Kings at a special awards function in Gisborne attended by more than 600 people including the Hon Nanaia Mahuta and other dignitaries, agribusiness leaders and whānau and supporters of the three finalists.

The other finalists were Whangara Farms situated 35km north of Gisborne and Te Awahohonu Forest Trust – Gwavas Station at Tikokino 50km west of Hastings.

Eugene and Pania King are the second couple in the King whānau to win the trophy. Eugene's sister Nukuhia and her husband Bart Hadfield won the competition in 2015, and brother Ron and his wife Justine were finalists in 2017.

Eugene said they were rapt to win the award, and that it all seemed surreal and would need a few days to sink in. Pania added they felt humble to be winners of the award. She says it was an acknowledgement of the work their whānau had put in over eighteen years and in particular the last six years since they bought Kirihoa Station.

"We are proud of what we have achieved but proud of the wider whānau. We like to benchmark ourselves and set and

achieve goals to perform well. It's not just our business, it's our life," says Pania.

In the midst of the excitement, a rather pragmatic Eugene pointed out that on Sunday they would be scanning lambs and getting right back to work on the farm.

Earlier in the evening when the pair were presented with their finalist certificate, Eugene paid tribute to the men who inaugurated the Ahuwhenua Trophy, Lord Bledisloe and Sir Apirana Ngata. He says their foresight to encourage skill and proficiency in Māori farming is evident in the wider agri-sector today. He also had words of encouragement for the finalist in the Young Māori Farmer competition saying they were the future of the industry. But his final tribute was to his wife Pania:

"You are a wonderful wife – the driving force of a lot of the things we do within our whānau, our business and community. Your passion, commitment, loyalty your aroha, your hard nosed approach to things which keeps me on the straight and narrow when I get a little bit mis-mothered. Pania I love you to the moon and back," he said.



» PLATINUM SPONSORS



» GOLD SPONSORS



» SILVER SPONSORS



» BRONZE SPONSORS



» SPONSORSHIP SUPPORT HAS ALSO BEEN PROVIDED BY TOHU WINE, WORKSAFE NZ AND PĀMU FARMS. The Ahuwhenua Trophy Management Committee supports SAFER FARMS.

Praise for the Kings

Kingi Smiler, Ahuwhenua Trophy Management Committee Chairman described the Kings as a great example of a couple who set challenging goals and then achieved them. He says the King whānau worked so well together, helping each other to achieve farm ownership and now they have earned a unique place in the legacy of the Ahuwhenua Trophy.

Kingi described Eugene and Pania as outstanding role models for Māori farming saying all New Zealanders should take note of their achievements and that of their whānau. Kingi says all this year's finalists ran farming operations which are among the best in Aotearoa and for that matter the world. The farms were of the highest standard and the task of deciding a winner would not have been easy.

"This year was a great example of the standard of Māori farming in the country and it is great that we have the Ahuwhenua Trophy competition to showcase its success," he says.



This is the best says O'Connor

The Minister of Agriculture, Hon Damien O'Connor described the Ahuwhenua Trophy competition as the biggest and best night on the agricultural calendar. He says it's good to be at an event if only to be inspired by the commercial reality that Māori play in agriculture.

"This is often unrecognised, and this is one event that recognises that and there needs to be more understanding of Māori's place in agriculture across New Zealand and into the future. It is really important that we celebrate this," he says.

Damien O'Connor praised all three 2019 finalists describing them as world class. He also praised the Ahuwhenua Young Māori Farmer finalists saying they were bright young people with the determination and passion to succeed.

Minister O'Connor told guests at the awards that farming was a noble profession given that the role of farmers was to feed and clothe the world.

"But it is taken for granted by too many people who see the supermarket and the shop as the provider of these necessary ingredients. We have done very well as a country, but we have now reached the stage when we are having to look at sustainability. Our enthusiasm to grow our industry has had impacts on our environment not because we wanted to but because we didn't know any better," he says.

Damien O'Connor says water quality has to be improved and more attention has to be paid to animal welfare and the staff on farms. He says sustainability is about food from people who care to people who also care. He says Māori are especially well placed because they have the history, the values and the stories to tell consumers.



» PLATINUM SPONSORS



» GOLD SPONSORS



» SILVER SPONSORS

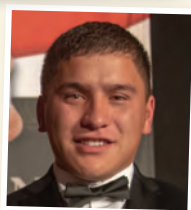


» BRONZE SPONSORS



» SPONSORSHIP SUPPORT HAS ALSO BEEN PROVIDED BY TOHU WINE, WORKSAFE NZ AND PĀMU FARMS. The Ahuwhenua Trophy Management Committee supports SAFER FARMS.

Ahuwhenua
Young Māori Farmer
winner



This year's Young Māori Farmer of the year says winning the competition has given her the confidence to go forth and be a leader in the Māori farming community.

Twenty year-old Kristy Roa, a shepherd on Iwinui Station near Tolaga Bay on the East Coast of the North Island was declared the winner of the Young Māori Farmer Award at the awards function in Gisborne in association with the Ahuwhenua Trophy award for the top Māori sheep and beef farm. She was presented with the trophy by the Māori Trustee and Chief Executive of Te Tumu Paeroa, Dr Charlotte Severne.

Kristy Roa says it was not so much about winning the competition but the journey since being announced as a finalist.

"Hopefully this will widen my networks and enable me to reach out to more people. This competition will not change me. I am the same woman just more confident and I don't think anything will change in the workplace at all. I am back into dagging sheep and getting ready for shearing next week," she says.

Kristy grew up in Hamilton where her parents own an engineering business and quite by chance decided to go into farming. She did a two year course at Waipaoa Cadet Training Trust on the East Coast before taking up her role at Iwinui Station.

The 2,100 hectare property runs 5,300 ewes, 3,700 ewe lambs, 450 cows and 1,000 trading bulls. This is her first job out of Waipaoa but her long term goal is to manage a large scale sheep and beef farm in the Gisborne area and one day own her own farm.

"While I love the outdoor life, it's the business aspect of farming that is a major attraction. Many city kids see farming as a lifestyle, whereas I see the business dimension which is pretty cool," she says.

YOUNG MĀORI FARMERS HELP SHAPE FUTURE

Brainstorming, networking, and a spot of fishing, were all part of the first Ahuwhenua Young Māori Farmer Award alumni event.

Supported by Te Tumu Paeroa and Te Puni Kōkiri, the event brought five former award winners together for a day in Wellington, to start working on a pathway and support network for the award winners.

The young farmers, along with their partners were welcomed by Te Tumu Paeroa staff with a mihi whakatau. Sharing their stories about life since winning the award, it was inspiring to hear what the young farmers have achieved so far, and hope to achieve in the future.

Ash-Leigh Campbell (NZ Young Famers), Duncan Matthews (BNZ) and William Morrison (Beef + Lamb) joined in on a discussion about the workforce and the future of farming. Later Federated Farmers hosted a session where Dr Andrew Tait (NIWA), and Martin Workman (MFE), led a discussion on the impact climate change will have on the way we farm.

A theme from discussions throughout the day included forming ideas on how to attract and retain primary sector employees. There was also a strong passion to raise the profile of Māori farming and to help support Māori be the future leaders of the primary sector.

Wrapping up the day after an afternoon fishing was dinner with the Ahuwhenua Trophy management committee and sponsors, and to finish the evening, dairy farmer Wayne Langford shared his own personal struggles, and how he found the way forward by starting the YOLO (you only live once) Farmer movement.

Te Tumu Paeroa is looking forward to working with our young farmers along with our co-sponsor Te Puni Kōkiri, in supporting their aspirations and building a stronger Māori agri-workforce. We'd also like to give thanks to the award sponsors Beef + Lamb New Zealand, DairyNZ, Primary ITO and Allflex for their continual support.

» PLATINUM SPONSORS



» GOLD SPONSORS



» SILVER SPONSORS



» BRONZE SPONSORS



» SPONSORSHIP SUPPORT HAS ALSO BEEN PROVIDED BY TOHU WINE, WORKSAFE NZ AND PĀMU FARMS.
The Ahuwhenua Trophy Management Committee supports SAFER FARMS.

Ahuwhenua Impresses Ambassador

Ireland's newly appointed ambassador to New Zealand, Peter Ryan was one of the many dignitaries who attended this year's Ahuwhenua Trophy awards. He described the event as an amazing experience and one of the highlights of his time in the country so far. He says he really enjoyed meeting the finalists for both the Ahuwhenua Trophy and also the Young Māori Farmer award. "The way Māori celebrate their culture through everything they do really shone through," he says.

Within minutes of arriving at the awards, Peter Ryan found himself talking to Māori farmers who had worked in Ireland and others with strong Irish connections. He says it never ceases to surprise him that people who are 18,000 km from Ireland are so proud of their connection with Ireland.

"We think that it's pretty special the contribution that generations of Irish people have made to New Zealand and the way that is carried pretty close to people's hearts here, but at the same time is not shouted from the rooftops. It's a very kiwi way of doing it and is so lovely," he says.

Peter Ryan says it's hard to think of any sector in New Zealand, that doesn't have strong connections with Ireland. He notes in

particular the agricultural field where he says there is real professional connection across research. He says at different times of the year workers from New Zealanders are travelling to Ireland and the Irish are coming to New Zealand.



Peter Ryan

Before the awards ceremony in Gisborne, Peter Ryan visited Whangara Station, one of the finalists in the competition. He was shown around the property by the Manager, Richard Scholefield. About a year ago it was awarded flagship status by McDonalds and is one of only 29 in the world to achieve this status. Peter Ryan just happened to be there the day they were shearing 35,000 sheep.

Peter Ryan says to understand New Zealand, you have to understand farming. "In terms of the learnings, it is most important to make sure that people here are aware of developments in Ireland and people in Ireland are aware of developments here. Anything we can do to connect more businesses and more agribusiness people the better," he says.

Beef + Lamb New Zealand Praises Ahuwhenua

The Chief Executive of Beef + Lamb New Zealand, Sam McIvor says the Ahuwhenua Trophy has been tremendously successful in not only encouraging Māori farming but in encouraging the whole farming industry to aspire to excellence.

"For me the Ahuwhenua Trophy is a great way to recognise excellence. What this competition does so well is that really digs deep down into businesses to identify what are the strong and weak points – what are the things that drive successful businesses. By their nature Māori are very proud and competitive and so I think this competition brings out the best of those competitive juices," he says.

Sam McIvor says Māori have an entrepreneurial spirit and thinks a lot of farmers could learn from that. He says while Māori take risks, they are calculated risks and this helped by the fact that they build around them a very strong team of advisors. These he says may be in farm management, financial or environmental areas.

"One of the things I have really observed about Māori businesses is the emphasis on paying off debt. Many of their entities have often had quite hard beginnings and in some cases they inherited debt and have had to borrow but they have real focus on paying off debt," he says.

According to Sam McIvor, one of the great things about the competition is that it celebrates success in excellence and that those in the competition share their knowledge, especially at the field days. He says this provides a tremendous opportunity for the rest of the farming community to learn from these world class farmers.

Māori business profits continue strong growth

Māori authority businesses' surplus before tax was almost \$720 million in 2017, a record level for figures going back to 2012 according to Statistics New Zealand.

They say the surplus was achieved on an annual income of \$3.4 billion, almost unchanged since 2016. Māori authority businesses are businesses that manage Māori assets held in communal ownerships. They range from larger farming, forestry, and fisheries companies to small land trusts.

The role of Māori business and Māori economic development is an important driver of New Zealand's economy, with strong connections to the land and sea according to Statistics New Zealand national accounts senior manager Gary Dunnet.

He says Māori authority businesses' assets grew 6 percent in 2017 to \$20.1 billion. From 2012, assets have risen by almost \$6 billion, a gain of about 40 percent.

"Māori authority businesses own an increasing share of their growing assets, an indication of greater financial strength. Shareholders' funds or owners' equity was \$14 billion in 2017, up from \$9.6 billion in 2012. They are key contributors to the Māori economy, but these figures exclude other types of Māori businesses, such as many small and medium-sized enterprises and self-employed Māori, says Mr Dunnet.

He says this is because they are harder to reliably identify and says that this is a challenge we are actively working on with partners to improve future reports, and provide more informative and complete data.

PLATINUM SPONSORS



GOLD SPONSORS



SILVER SPONSORS



BRONZE SPONSORS



SPONSORSHIP SUPPORT HAS ALSO BEEN PROVIDED BY TOHU WINE, WORKSAFE NZ AND PĀMU FARMS. The Ahuwhenua Trophy Management Committee supports SAFER FARMS.

* AHUWHENUA FIELD DAYS DRAW RECORD CROWDS *



Nearly 1000 people attended the three field days organised by the finalists in the competition. This was amazing given that the farms are a long way from the main towns. Each of the finalists welcomed visitors on to their whenua and then gave presentations about their farming operations. Later, visitors were taken on a farm tour to see at first hand how good these farms were.

Kingi Smiler says the standard of all the finalist was exceptionally high and it was not surprising that this was reflected in quality of the field days. He says the hard work and attention to detail by all three finalists was amazing and it sent

a very clear message to all those attending the events about the high quality of Māori farming and Māori agribusiness.

He says all farms and the people who govern and manage them are exemplary role models, not just for Māori but all farmers.

His comments were echoed by former all black captain Taine Randell, who is involved with Ngati Kahungunu and attended the field days. He says to describe them as good Māori farms doesn't do them justice. "They are top performing farms in New Zealand and top farms globally. The vision and excellence shown by all finalists shows just how good Māori farming is today," he says.

HOW THE FINALISTS SAW THEIR EVENTS

"The huge turnout to our field day blew me away," says Ingrid Collins, Chair of Whangara Farms.

Whangara Farms is 8,500 hectare (6,900 effective) about 35 kilometres north of Gisborne which runs 45,000 sheep and about 6,000 cattle and employs 17 full time staff. Whangara Farms is a partnership of three Māori Incorporations – Whangara B5, Pakarae A and Tapuwae Whitiwhiti meaning three major Incorporations of Ngati Konohi are under one management system.

Visitors to the field day were welcomed at the local marae which is situated a hundred metres from the beautiful east coast beach. The movie Whale Rider was filmed at this location.

Ingrid Collins, who has been Chair of the farms for thirteen years says she is very proud of the way the three Māori Incorporations have worked together to form Whangara Farms.

Bob Cottrell, Chair of Te Awahohonu Forest Trust, Gwavas Station, a 1,000 hectare finishing farm in Central Hawke's Bay was equally delighted with the turnout at their field day. The farm is close to Te Aute College and many present day and past pupils participated in welcoming visitors to the farm.

Bob Cottrell says the Ahuwhenua Trophy is an amazing competition and acknowledges that this year in particular it had been a very close race between the three finalists. He says he was glad he was not a judge because it would be very hard to determine the winner.

He says he's noticed since he was first involved in the competition back in 2003/04 that there has been a quantum leap in the support services such as banks supporting Māori agribusiness to develop.



Ingrid Collins



Bob Cottrell



Pania King

"There has also been a quantum leap in other Māori entities following other successful models to lift their performance. I think the competition is amazing and while we are all competitive and like to win, we are all supportive of Māori development right across the board," he says.

Like all the field days, the event at Kiriroa went like clockwork. After the powhiri and hearty morning tea, visitors were taken on a tour of the farm to see the property and at two stops hear presentations by the owners Eugene and Pania King.

According to Pania, she and Eugene were really stoked with the field day. She says it was quite exciting that so many farmers turned up.

"Some were friends and locals from around the district, but there were others we didn't know," she says. "We tried to think of something we would have changed if we could turn back the clock but we couldn't think of anything," says Pania

Pania admits it was hard work preparing for the field day but she says whānau, family, friends and their children all pitched in and worked hard to make the day a success.

Husband Eugene says he was ecstatic at the crowd that came to the field day. "Word of mouth is a wonderful thing and the advertising and all that certainly got a lot of people there so we were pretty overwhelmed," he says.

Eugene King says it was great to show people what he and Pania have achieved but says organising the day and entering the competition was probably a lot more involved than he'd initially envisaged. He says he'll be interested to see what the judges have to say, but as for the event and entering the competition: "I wouldn't change it for quid's," he says.

» PLATINUM SPONSORS



» GOLD SPONSORS



» SILVER SPONSORS



» BRONZE SPONSORS



» SPONSORSHIP SUPPORT HAS ALSO BEEN PROVIDED BY TOHU WINE, WORKSAFE NZ AND PĀMU FARMS. The Ahuwhenua Trophy Management Committee supports SAFER FARMS.