

Chairman's Corner

Welcome to the First 'Hands On' for 2009.

This update will provide a new list of trustees and while we welcome two new faces to the Board, the contribution from retiring trustees Ian Pirani and Grant McFadden will be a hard act to follow.

We will also comment on the annual report, which has been a first for us, and update you on the brilliant DVD programme that is ongoing on our website where each of our category winners are profiled along with the sponsor supporting that category.

Recognition by the business community of the sponsorship programme that Ballance provides to the Awards has been a recent highlight.

The Trust is, as ever, extremely pleased to see another Ballance Farm Environment Awards season get underway. Increasingly farmers who support this programme are being recognised as leaders for the sectors they represent. The two-way feedback and ideas that are unearthed through the judging rounds provide an exciting glimpse of an agriculture sector that has not lost its way. Instead we see an industry that is exciting to be a part of, innovative in its approach and mindful of the impacts that resource use will have.

The past season's drought across many parts of the country appears to have had lingering effects. However, the eternal optimist that I am (as many other farmers must also be) allows me to hang my hat on a weatherman's prediction of a very wet period in February this year, which will bring relief for me months ahead of last year.

I hope that you and your families had a most enjoyable festive season, and I trust you enjoy reading this edition of "Hands On".

Jim Cotman
Chairman

New Zealand Farm Environment
Award Trust



Annual Report Now Available On-Line

The 2008 annual report for the New Zealand Farm Environment Award Trust (NZFEA) shows it has been another successful year for the Ballance Farm Environment Awards programme.

This programme, the flagship for the NZFEA Trust, has received considerable praise for its achievements in promoting sustainable and profitable farming in New Zealand.

Over the last year the NZFEA Trust has launched a number of initiatives designed to strengthen the awards programme even further, while continuing to build brand recognition.

A full copy of the 2008 annual report is available from NZFEA Trust's website at www.nzfeatrust.org.nz



Ballance Farm Environment Awards Honoured At Sponsorship Event

The Ballance Farm Environment Awards fell under the national spotlight again in November when principal sponsor Ballance Agri-Nutrients was named as a finalist in the 2008 NZ Herald Sponsorship Awards.

Recognising and acknowledging "New Zealand's most outstanding sponsorship campaigns", these awards are open to organisations that have been "active locally, nationally, or internationally in sponsoring Sport, Art, Cause, Media or Special Projects over the past 12 months".

Ballance Agri-Nutrients was nominated for its sponsorship of the Ballance Farm Environment Awards and featured in the Radio Network Best International Or National Cause Sponsorship section.

While the eventual winner of this section was Westpac for its sponsorship of Westpac Rescue Helicopters, the Ballance Farm Environment Awards still garnered significant kudos for making the finals.

The awards were presented in front of a large audience at a black tie dinner at the Auckland Museum Event Centre.



Trustees Announced For New Zealand Farm Environment Award Trust

At the annual meeting of the NZFEA Trust, the following trustees were elected:

Chairman:

Jim Cotman, Waerenga

Deputy Chairman:

Peter Cummings, Lawrence

Treasurer:

Peter Nation, Hamilton

Trustees:

Max Enersen, Christchurch

Bruce Fraser, Whakatane

Dougal McIntosh, Wanganui

Peter Mourits, Mount Maunganui

Martin Wallace, Morrinsville

Chris Smith, Invercargill

Greg Glover, Hamilton

John Bourke, Katikati

Greg Glover and John Bourke were the new trustees elected to the NZFEA Trust. Ian Pirani of Katikati and Grant McFadden of Christchurch both retired from the Trust and did not seek reelection.

Contact details for the trustees can be found on the NZFEA website, www.nzfeatrust.org.nz

Sponsors Recognised Via Regional Award Winner DVDs

Last year the NZFEA Trust made a commitment to film all the finalists in the Ballance Farm Environment Awards programme throughout New Zealand.

From this, DVDs were produced of the winners of each sponsor category.

These have been posted on the website, www.bfea.org.nz

The DVDs can be accessed by visiting the website, and clicking on the menu item, 'Regional Award Winners'.

These DVDs provide recognition for valued sponsors and excellent coverage of the commitment that farmers are making to sustainable and profitable farming in New Zealand.

If you require any additional information relating to the DVDs and how the coverage may be used for promotional purposes, please contact the General Manager of the NZFEA Trust, David Natzke on 07 834 0400.



www.nzfeatrust.org.nz

Second Dairy Leaders Forum Another Success

Following on from the success of 2007's inaugural event, the Building Dairy Environment Leaders Forum 2008 has again proved a winner.

Convened by the New Zealand Farm Environment Award Trust on behalf of Dairy NZ and held last year in Nelson in early December, the event brought together almost 40 farmers selected for their performance in competitions like the Ballance Farm Environment Awards and the Westpac Dairy Excellence Awards.

The aim of the forum is to develop an active network of highly effective regional dairy farming leaders that are equipped to lead and engage on environmental matters within, and on behalf of, the dairy industry.

It began with a field trip to marine farms at Havelock where the issue of water quality was a hot topic. The next day delegates attended a seminar with a wide range of speakers from Dairy NZ, Massey University, Fonterra, Synlait, the NZ Farm Environment Award Trust and the Reserve Bank of New Zealand.

Feedback from the delegates was excellent and the event was described as a well worthwhile, highly informative and very entertaining experience.



Entrants All Set For 2009 Competition

Entries for the 2009 Ballance Farm Environment Awards have closed and the first phase of judging has already been completed in some regions.

The 2009 competition has drawn a very good line-up of entries and the strong level of the interest is very pleasing given the tough conditions that have prevailed throughout the country.

Entrants must be congratulated for 'giving it a go' in what has been a very challenging year for farming and horticulture.

Award-winners will be announced from late February this year.

NZFEA Trust Leaps To Defence Of Key Sponsor

The New Zealand Farm Environment Award Trust and Ballance were quick to respond to a recent attack on Ballance's sponsorship of the Farm Environment Awards.

In a self-serving piece of grandstanding, a competitor in the fertiliser industry suggested that Ballance, a major fertiliser company, should not be sponsoring the awards.

New Zealand Farm Environment Award (NZFEA) Trust chairman Jim Cotman said the attack was way off the mark.

"As a farmer I recognise the comments as those of a competitor seeking publicity to push a different product and I dismiss them as such. As chairman of NZFEA Trust though, I see the comments as ill-informed and badly misdirected."

Mr Cotman said Ballance supported the awards because the company believes in what the awards are trying to achieve – the promotion of sustainable and environmentally-sound farming practices.

Ballance Chief Executive Larry Bilodeau said the awards fit closely with Ballance's core values, "and we are extremely proud to continue sponsorship of these."

"For us, the key to the Ballance Farm Environment Awards is the impact it has had in promoting farming sustainability. We get to see New Zealand ingenuity at its best, where many solutions are found through innovation and commitment."

"We're not trying sweep any environmental issues surrounding fertiliser use under the carpet. By putting our name to the Farm Environment Awards, we are fronting up and demonstrating our commitment to making a change. Through the BFEA and other Ballance initiatives, we are actively working with the farming community to ensure our products are used appropriately."

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“The regional councils support us in this because it is their mandate to protect their local environment. Just talk to farmers who have been part of the awards process and they will tell you how much an impetus it has been in helping them make their farming more sustainable.”



Jim Cotman

Chairman

New Zealand Farm
Environment Award Trust

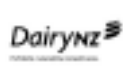


Larry Bilodeau

Chief Executive

Ballance

NZFEA Trust Partners



National Partners



Regional Partners

