



Report **04.394**
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Committee **Rural Services and Wairarapa**
Author **Dave Cameron, Regional Land Management Officer**

Farm Environment Awards

1. Purpose

To inform the Committee of milestones achieved with the Farm Environment Awards, and to indicate future initiatives.

2. Background

The Farm Environment Awards were introduced in October 2001. This followed a presentation to this Committee from the Waikato based National Farm Environment Award Trust. A Memorandum of Agreement was signed between the Trust and Greater Wellington Regional Council, acting as Award Operator, to run the Awards.

The National Trust has recently held elections to establish a Board of Control to oversee the running and governance of the Awards. Jamie Strang the Judging co-ordinator for Greater Wellington has been elected to the Board. To date seven Councils have participated, namely Waikato, Bay of Plenty, horizons (Manawatu-Wanganui), Wellington, Canterbury, Otago and Southland.

In 2004, Wellington awards were presented under six categories:

- Nutrient Management
- Habitat Improvement
- Growing the Business
- Harvest
- Best Sheep and Beef Farm
- Best Dairy Farm

The Supreme Award was presented to the property that was judged best overall when all categories were considered.

3. Summary of Entries

A summary of the entries received over the last three years is listed in the table below.

<i>Award Category</i>	<i>Entries received 2002</i>	<i>Entries received 2003</i>	<i>Entries received 2004</i>
Best Sheep and Beef Farm	11	11	11
Best Dairy Farm	3	5	3
Harvest	-	4	4
Total	15	20	18

On reflection, the number of entrants is unlikely to increase significantly in future years. Organisers and sponsors are more than happy with these levels as it provides sufficient numbers for a very creditable competition and is seen as providing a sustainable competition in the medium term.

4. Summary of Expenditure

A budget allocation of \$20,000 has been approved for each of the last three years, and has been included in the LTCCP for the next ten years. The National Trust allocates a further \$9,000 per annum to assist with administration costs and the awards ceremony.

A summary of expenditure for the last three years is listed in the table below.

<i>Expenditure Category</i>	<i>2001/2002</i>	<i>2002/2003</i>	<i>2003/2004</i>
Advertising & Promotion	4,465	5,095	4,000
Wages & Reimbursements	9,760	6,679	8,712
Photocopying & Postage	1,876	3,641	3,190
Maps & Stationery	888	1,968	1,875
Catering & Hireage	2,424	2,275	3,748
Staff Costs	5,260	9,571	10,118
Revenue – National Trust	-9,000	-9,000	-9,000
Cost to GW	15,673	20,229	22,643

Staff costs have increased as result of staff being involved with preliminary and finals judging, and an increase in work contracted internally to Technical Services. This latter work is offset through a reduction in the use of consultants.

5. Sustainability Showcase

The National Trust had been pursuing the notion of a National Farm Environment Award. This idea was replaced with a new concept, the National Sustainability Showcase. It was held in Hamilton in June 2004 and will be an annual event, probably moving round each of the regions participating in the awards. It provides an opportunity to showcase the regional winners in a public forum that includes politicians, sponsors, and organisers.

6. Lifestyle Farm and Small Block Category

Over the past two years organisers of the Awards within the Wellington region have been promoting the concept of a lifestyle farm or small block category. Approval has been granted to run a pilot programme to include this new category. It will run solely in Wellington, recognising the high number of lifestyle farms and small blocks within our region, particularly in relation to the other dominant land uses.

Criteria for this category are currently being worked on, however it is likely to include

- Titled: Akura Conservation Centre - Lifestyle Farm/Small Block Award (Akura will put \$1000 worth of trees forward for the prize)
- If the entrant falls into this category they are not eligible for the BFEA Supreme Award.
- Maximum size - up to 40ha.
- Reserve the right to limit the number of entries

7. Communications

Publicity has been extensive over the last three months, involving radio and newspaper articles on the awards ceremony and the field day held at the Kershaw property at Martinborough.

In the intervening period between now and the launch of the 2005 awards in October 2004, monthly articles will be provided for local newspapers to maintain the profile of the awards.

Additionally a Communication Plan for the entire year is being worked through. This will ensure that maximum exposure for the Awards is gained through a variety of media.

8. Recommendation

That the report be received and its contents noted.

Report prepared by:

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