

THE AHUWHENUA TROPHY ROUND UP

NEWS FROM THE 2011 COMPETITION TEAM
NOVEMBER 2010

»» *Tena koutou i runga i o tatou tini aitua,
o ia marae, o ia whanau kua wheturangitia.
Kei te mihi atu, kei te tangi atu. Ratou te hunga
mate ki a ratou. Tatou te hunga ora ki a tatou.
Tena tatou katoa.*



Retiring Chief Judge of the Sheep and Beef Ahuwhenua Trophy competition, John Acland, has made an enormous contribution to the status that the Ahuwhenua Trophy has achieved today as the premier accolade of Māori

farming success, says Kingi Smiler, current Chair of the Competition Executive Committee. In his role as Chair of the Meat Board in the early nineties John recognised the growing contribution and potential of Māori farming to the economy and met with Māori to explore a way in which that potential could more quickly be unleashed.

With the support of then Board members Gina Rudland and Wayne Walden he took the feedback to his board from a number of hui that reinstatement of the Ahuwhenua Trophy competition to highlight excellence in Māori Farming would be a significant first step. He gained their support and in 2003 the competition was kicked off again with a strong focus on communication to spread the word of what was achievable in terms of delivering strong performances to owners regarding economic, environmental, cultural and social outcomes. The first competition under the new banner saw 24 entries from sheep and beef farmers and attracted good attendance at field days held on the farms of the three regional winners. There was a big turnout at the dinner awards evening held in the presence of Dame Sylvia Cartwright, the then Governor General carrying on the tradition of vice regal support for the competition.

Since 2003 John has undertaken the role of Chief Judge for the sheep and beef competition during which time the standard of reporting back to entrants on their business operations strengths as well as areas for potential improvement was significantly enhanced. We owe a big thank you to John for the contribution he has made said Kingi Smiler.



We're off

The 2011 Ahuwhenua Trophy – BNZ Māori Excellence in Farming Award will be launched this weekend November 7, before an audience of over 300 at the Federation of Māori Authorities (FoMA) Annual conference to be held at Waitangi, Bay of Islands.

A warm welcome to all sponsors and supporters of this historic and prestigious competition which acknowledges and celebrates business excellence among Māori in New Zealand's pastoral sector.

Sponsors critical to Success

The chair of the Ahuwhenua Executive Committee, Kingi Smiler said that he was highly appreciative of the continuing support from all sponsors of the 2011 competition and was particularly grateful for the ongoing relationship with the competitions Platinum Sponsor, BNZ.

“Once again the BNZ has got in behind us as our Platinum sponsor. Agresearch, Beef and Lamb and Te Puni Kōkiri are our Gold sponsors while PGG Wrightson and Ballance are still with us as Silver sponsors. We also thank our Bronze sponsors the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Māori Trustee, AFFCO, Yamaha, AgricultureITO and BDO.

SPREAD THE WORD

Entries for the 2011 Ahuwhenua Trophy – BNZ Māori Excellence in Farming competition close on Friday, January 28, 2011.

For further information contact Joan Nathu email joan.nathu@maoritrustee.co.nz

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NEW CHIEF JUDGE

This year the competition has a new chief judge. He is Dana Blackburn (Ngati Rangī, Atihaunui a Paparangi, Tuwharetoa) chair of Atihau-Whanganui Incorporation (AWHI). He takes over the reins from the former Chair of the Meat Board, John Acland.



Dana was a member of the AWHI board when the central North Island incorporation won the Ahuwhenua Trophy (Sheep and Beef) in 2007, but, he says, it's first step on the Ahuwhenua Trophy journey was in 2003, the year the competition was relaunched.

"We entered initially just to get a foot in the door and to understand what was required to be a contender. Well, that introduction to the competition was an eyeopener. I was amazed by the variety and quality of expertise and information that was made available to us and hugely impressed by the calibre of people we found ourselves talking to. The Ahuwhenua Trophy seems to attract the

support and interest of people at the top of their game no matter what role they play in the wider rural sector," he said.

Dana began his working life in the banking and insurance industry but 30 years ago he decided that it was the farming life for him. He farms an 800 hectare semi intensive sheep and beef unit at Karioi, Ohakune, a property that was initially developed on family and ancestral land although it's grown over the years as further land was acquired.

Over the last decade, Dana's son, Hamish, has increasingly taken day to day responsibility for the farm leaving Dana to concentrate on his work with AWHI. Hamish is the fifth generation of the family to work the land.

"I take a great deal of pride in the knowledge that, like most Māori farmers, we look after the land to ensure that future generations continue to gain a good livelihood from it," says Dana.

"Some years are tougher than others but when you're in for the long haul like us we know that if we make well informed, intelligent business decisions during those tough times things will always even out."

Huge benefits from entering

Ingrid Collins, chair of Whangara Farms, which currently holds the Ahuwhenua Trophy for Excellence in Sheep and Beef Farming, has joined the competitions Executive Committee.

"I think the main reason I was asked to come on the Ahuwhenua Board was the high level of governance now in place at Whangara Pakarae B. The experience of developing that high performing structure is something I can share with other Māori farmers whether they be operating under trusts and incorporations or running their own business.

A clear vision, says Ingrid, is essential.

Unless you know with crystal clarity, and clarity is the key word, what it is you want, you are unlikely to get it.

"At Whangara Farms we have, for example, a simple, one page strategic plan with a much more detailed business plan sitting behind it. We also have a series of clear, objectively measurable kpi's specifically related to the productivity and profitability of our farming systems and to the development of our staff.

After that comes our vision which is to deliver sustainable ongoing returns for our shareholders and provide asset growth for future generation.



Looking back over the last 18 months as Trophy holders Ingrid says that Whangara Farms benefited from the Ahuwhenua experience in a number of ways but the best thing was the excellent feedback and honest business advice from outside judges

"From people who aren't our friends or relatives," she says lightheartedly.

"Yes, entering the competition is a commitment. There's extra man-hours and a bit of paper work around it but for us the effort has translated into dollars and cents and I can say that although this last year has been tough for everyone we've been able to keep our heads well above water. In part that is due to entering and putting our best efforts into competing for the wonderful Ahuwhenua trophy."

BOB COTTRELL

HE'S GOT THE INFO ON ENTERING

Taupo based, Bob Cottrell who has been encouraging farmers to enter the Ahuwhenua shortly after it was re-launched in 2003 says interest in the competition this year is strong.

After 40 years in the agribusiness Bob has built up strong links with farmers throughout the country and he reckons he's got a good sense of where they're at.

"Interest in the competition increases every year and awareness of the Ahuwhenua Trophy is definitely growing. It's fair to say that Māori farmers are becoming increasingly aware of the benefits of taking part in this competition.

Bob has been drumming up entries in the competition since joining the executive in 2003, including serving as chair for a three year period. Although he is no longer a member of the executive. For the last 3 sheep and beef competitions he has been responsible for gaining entries.

Entries for the 2011 competition close on Friday January 28 but Bob is encouraging prospective competitors to register earlier rather than later.

"The earlier the better from my point of view. Anyone who wants to chat to me about entering is very welcome to call me on 07 377 0488. I can send you the registration form and talk you through anything you need to know," says Bob.

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