



# RURALINSIGHT

NZ'S #1 RURAL REAL ESTATE BRAND

APRIL 2019



## PEOPLE'S ROLE RECOGNISED IN SUSTAINABLE JOURNEYS.

The Ballance Farm Environment Awards have long been a respected, exciting highlight in the rural calendar, with each year's award winners doing much to showcase the best this country has to offer in farming talent that recognises and respects the environment they depend upon.

**T**his year the awards have a welcome addition with national realtor Bayleys sponsoring a "People in the Primary Sector" award.

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The award aims to recognise those employers who are taking as much care with their staff as their environment, fostering talent and encouraging young people to engage with farming and the environment.

Bayleys made an initial step last year by sponsoring this category in the Canterbury section of the awards.

David Hislop and his wife Brenda claimed the top prize with their success on their 440ha North Canterbury dairy unit. They also ultimately claimed the regional winner title for the competition.

“The decision to expand from there to offer an award across the entire country is a natural one for Bayleys, given our national coverage, and the importance we believe needs to be placed on fostering talent in the New Zealand primary sector,” says Duncan Ross, Bayleys national country manager.

This year’s Ballance Farm Environment Award announcements are well underway, with the most talented farmers gaining recognition for their sensitivity and sustainable approach to managing the environment they are so dependent upon.

“Given the average size of almost all categories of farms and orchards are increasing, we could see the importance of being able to engage staff on the sustainable vision the owners may have for that farm.”

By early April of the seven regional winners announced five had also claimed the Bayleys People award.

Duncan Ross said given the scale of the provincial winners’ operations, it was understandable those winners should be recognised for the efforts they have made to promote a good working environment for their staff.

“If you can’t take the people on your farm business along with you, then all the vision in the world will not come to much when you try to make it real and those people are not on board with it,” says Ross.

Similarly the farmers have also proven themselves highly capable business people, managing their environmental constraints and delivering a sustainable profit from their operations.

This year’s provincial award winners are in the process of being announced before the Grand Final event held in early June, and the calibre is as high as any year the competition has been running.

James Ryan, general manager the New Zealand Farm Environment Trust, the body overseeing the competition, said this year’s competition highlights the diversity of farming and orcharding operations qualifying for judging.

“The interest we have seen in this year’s competition in particular highlights the diversity of farmers and growers keen to get feedback to improve the sustainability of their business.”

The contrast in entrants this year is highlighted with the likes of Featherston sheep and beef farm Palliser Ridge claiming the regional and Bayleys People award for Wellington.

At the other end of the island a Whangarei family claimed that region’s top prize and also the Bayleys People award from their 20ha berry and kiwifruit operation.

“There is a remarkable contrast between all the operations who have won to date, but in many cases the thing that ties them together is this ability to combine people into their environmental focus, taking them along on the journey is the true proof of sustainability,” says Ryan.

Duncan Ross said environmental awareness is also becoming a draw card for attracting young staff to work on the land.

“ We want to be part of encouraging young people to work on the land, all the while recognising those who are walking the walk for the environment and their staff. ”

“Anything we can do to encourage that, and to recognise those who are walking the walk for the environment and their staff, is something we want to be part of,” says Ross.

