

Ballance Farm Environment Awards®

Promoting Sustainable Farming and Growing

About the **Ballance Farm Environment Awards**

bfea.org.nz

General Information

The Ballance Farm Environment Awards are an annual awards programme managed by the New Zealand Farm Environment Trust.

The purpose of the Ballance Farm Environment Awards is to:

- Celebrate farmer and grower achievement;
- Showcase good practice to other farmers and growers;
- Share positive farming and growing stories with other audiences.

The awards help to demonstrate that profitability goes hand-in-hand with sustainability. By profiling the positive actions of award-winning farmers and growers, the Ballance Farm Environment Awards encourage others to be more proactive in their land stewardship by providing them with examples they can learn from.

Established in 1993 in Waikato, the Ballance Farm Environment Awards programme is now run throughout New Zealand across twelve regions by local teams who organise the networking functions, property visits, awards judging, regional awards functions and field days each year.

By entering the Ballance Farm Environment Awards, farmers and growers are given the opportunity to showcase their business to their peers and receive constructive advice and feedback, including a site visit report offering commendations and recommendations.

Please visit www.nzfetrust.org.nz for more details.

The Benefits of Getting Involved

There are many benefits of getting involved in the Ballance Farm Environment Awards including:

- Have your business evaluated by a team of highly respected and experienced peers and agribusiness professionals.
- Receive a holistic view of your business including environmental management, productivity and profitability.
- Celebrate success with your peers and community.
- Receive feedback and recommendations to support your sustainability journey.
- Join the BFEA community and continue to connect and learn from others across the country.
- Have the opportunity to mentor and develop other farmers and growers.



Visit **www.bfea.org.nz** to hear from some former entrants about their experience.



New Zealand Farm Environment Trust®
Proudly Facilitating the BFEA

The Review Process

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All entrants are visited by a team of three or four experienced peers and agribusiness professionals, each bringing specialist skills and knowledge. The purpose of this visit is to provide you an opportunity to show us what you are doing, and receive feedback and ideas on areas you would like to focus on in the future. Generally, these visits take up to three hours. Up to six entrants from each region will be selected to have their story profiled and some will be shortlisted as eligible for awards. Those eligible for awards will have a second visit by a Regional Awards Panel.

1 **Your Highlights.** When the initial team visits, they will view your property and discuss your plans and aspirations, and how these goals fit with long-term sustainability. These visits are a chance for you to talk about highlights of your operation and give a property tour. You will have the opportunity to showcase what you are most proud of.

2 **Topics of Interest.** Your business will be viewed as an overall operation, not only in respect of environmental management, but also in relation to sustainability. You may present on topics of your choice, with the following areas being of key interest with respect to the awards programme: water & soil, climate stewardship, biodiversity, waste management, people & wellbeing, business health, biosecurity and animal care. We will provide you with sample "talking points" relating to these topics of interest, and, if you wish, you may plan the team's visit around these points.

3 **You & Your Land.** A key element of our overall programme is sharing your unique stories with peers. This being the case, we seek role models who may have overcome hurdles and are interested in limitations you may have encountered, eg relating to topography, climate or the business itself. Let us know if you have developed workarounds, or innovative and/or sustainable solutions.

4 **Photography.** Photographs will be taken of your property during the visit for use in storytelling. The team wants to hear about and see what you're proud of on your property as well as any special features on your land.

5 **Feedback.** While our team will provide verbal feedback on the day, you will subsequently receive a site visit report about their impressions and recommendations for your property. This process is certainly not about ticking off checklists, pointing out mistakes, pouring over accounts, or putting you on the spot. It is a chance for you to get free, independent feedback on a variety of issues.

6 **Video Story Shortlist.** We thrive on seeking out community role models and sharing their stories with short videos. If you are shortlisted to have a video made, our storywriter will write an overview about you and your land. Content will be drawn from the visiting team and their photos, along with information provided in the "Getting to Know You Form" that you are asked to complete after entry.

7 **Awards Shortlist & Award Panel Visit.** Entrants who are shortlisted to be eligible for an award (finalists), receive a second visit by a Regional Awards Panel. They will visit all shortlisted entrants to ensure consistency in the process. Topics of interest are the same as earlier, however this team will delve into more detail in some areas, including business sustainability.

Please note that not all topics may be relevant to your business and it is not expected that you will excel across all of the topic areas. We encourage entries from all farmers and growers, no matter where you are on your sustainability journey.

All members of our visiting teams are required to leave their 'hat' at the farm gate. Sponsorship ties do not compromise advice or the assessment process. All sensitive information provided to the visiting teams remains confidential.

BFEA Programme Process

REGIONAL AWARDS PROGRAMME

AWARDS REGISTRATION
Entrants or their nominees register online at **nzfetrust.org.nz.**

ENTRY COMPLETION
BFEA provides further information and **"Getting to Know You Forms"** for completion at entrant's earliest convenience (no later than one week after entries close).

FIRST-ROUND PROPERTY VISIT
BFEA arranges a visiting team for each entrant, to meet and discuss their business. This is a chance for entrants to showcase their property and operation.

SHORTLIST PROCESS – VIDEOS & AWARD ELIGIBILITY
The first-round teams meet to discuss all entrants and select those for whom we would like to **create a video story.** These will be based on great farming stories, and may include some who are early in their sustainability journey. Some entrants (finalists) will also be **shortlisted to be considered for awards** based on good farming practice and being role models for certain aspects of their operation.

REGIONAL AWARDS PANEL VISIT
The Regional Awards Panel visits all finalists at their properties to be assessed for awards available in their region.

AWARDS EVENING
A function is held to celebrate all entrants and finalists, announce awards and name one of the finalists as the Regional Supreme Winner for the year.

BFEA REGIONAL SUPREME WINNER'S FIELD DAY
The Regional Supreme Winner hosts an Open Day on their property, bringing together their community, other entrants, the BFEA regional team and sponsors.

NATIONAL AWARDS PROGRAMME

SELECTION OF NATIONAL AMBASSADORS FOR SUSTAINABLE FARMING & GROWING
The Regional Supreme Winners from all regions are eligible for this national award. The judging process starts with a **visit by the National On-Farm Judging Team.** This is followed by an **interview with the National Judging Panel.**

NATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY SHOWCASE
This is a conference event bringing together all the Regional Supreme Winners, Alumni from previous awards, the National Ambassadors from the previous year, and members of the regional committees and NZ Farm Environment Trust Board.

This event culminates with a gala awards dinner that celebrates all the Regional Supreme Winners and concludes with naming the new National Ambassadors and winners of the Gordon Stephenson Trophy.