



Report 03.361
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Committee Rural Services and Wairarapa
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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 has been signed between the Trust and Greater Wellington Regional Council, acting as Award Operator, to run the Awards.

The National Trust has appointed a National Co-ordinator to co-ordinate partnerships with major sponsors and ensure consistent delivery of the Awards through arrangements with other Regional Councils. To date five Councils have participated, namely Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Wellington, Canterbury and Southland.

In 2002, awards were presented under five categories:

- Nutrient Management
- Habitat Improvement
- Growing the Business
- 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. In 2003 the Harvest award was added to include horticulture, viticulture and market gardening.

3. Summary of Entries

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

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

On reflection, the number of entrants is unlikely to increase significantly in future years. Organisers 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 short term.

4. Summary of Expenditure

A budget allocation of \$20,000 has been approved for each of the last two 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 two years is listed in the table below.

<i>Expenditure Category</i>	<i>2001/2002</i>	<i>2002/2003</i>
Advertising & Promotion	4,465	5,095
Wages & Reimbursements	9,760	6,679
Photocopying & Postage	1,876	3,641
Maps & Stationery	888	1,968
Catering & Hireage	2,424	2,275
Staff Costs	5,260	9,571
Total	24,673	29,229

Staff costs have increased as result of two staff members being involved with judging, and the increase in time required to run the field day at Otaki.

5. Future Initiatives

The National Trust has been pursuing the notion of a National Farm Environment Award and has voted recently to modify this goal because of the perceived difficulties in achieving a fair and equitable judging system across the wide diversity of regional winners. Instead, the Trust and its major sponsors will look to bring together its regional winners into a Celebration of Environmental Achievements function where the achievements of the group of winners are promoted and publicised.

No date has been set as yet, but with the inclusion of Otago and Horizons.mw in next year's regional awards, there is a good base for such an event.

6. 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 Croad property at Otaki.

In the intervening period between now and the launch of the 2004 awards in October 2003, monthly articles will be provided for local newspapers to maintain the profile of the awards.

7. Recommendation

That the report be received and its contents noted.

Report prepared by:

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