

## SIR ARTHUR WARD AWARD

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The Sir Arthur Ward Award was initiated by this Society in 1981 to highlight the application of research or effective extension relating to a sector of animal production. The first recipient was the Dairy Board's Consulting Officer Service, and the contributions of Max Cooper, Des Clayton and Brian Curson to the dairy industry number among the 14 awards to date.

Recognising the importance of the communication of the results of research to help the improvement of animal production was a major reason for the Society establishing this Award from Sir Arthur's sponsorship. The dairy industry's Consulting Officer Service was, consequently, a very good first choice. The agricultural press also plays a major role in this regard - giving farmers awareness of, and information from, current research, reporting papers presented at Conferences and field days and providing the host of information from farm to the marketplace that is essential to farm business success.

It is therefore appropriate that the Society should add this year to the previous recipients of the award from the dairy industry that of its pre-eminent mass circulation publication, the New Zealand Dairy Exporter.

Founded by William Goodfellow well known as an industry pioneer, the Exporter as it is commonly known, was aimed at being the "mouthpiece of the NZ dairy industry" and to "inform the industry on matters of moment affecting efficient production". This was to counter views and propaganda from Tooley Street merchants who controlled the distribution of product in the then dominant UK market.

Over the 70 years of its existence, it has met these and wider objectives of presenting an independent view of New Zealand's dairy industry, with articles on dairy farm production, research, manufacturing and marketing.

A number of well known names have been associated with the Exporter - the first Managing Editor was Arthur Heighway and Charles Bernard and Tim Tyrer preceded people perhaps better known today - Doug McGillvray, David Yerex, Alan Hope, Brian Tallboys, not forgetting today's Lance McEldowney, Malcolm Mountfort and, of course, the late Hedley Dunn. Hedley's untimely death

three weeks ago was a great loss to the Exporter and to the research community with whom he interacted and who he supported so well. Indeed, the nomination for this Award is in a significant way a reflection of the emphasis Hedley placed on keeping his readers up-to-date with research and its outcomes.

That aspects of production research figure prominently is illustrated by the fact that over 100 articles last year included information from recent or ongoing research.

The management practices of individual farmers are regularly discussed against a background of the farm physical and financial situations. Many reflect the simple messages encapsulated by Des Clayton in his journeys through dairyland in the 1980's. Those who believe they are succeeding with high input systems also have exposure.

Livestock Improvement's activities also figure prominently and have benefited from Brian Curson's work in getting semen technology into use, and Max Cooper's training of AB technicians, and there are regular contributions from Consulting Officers.

The changing marketplace, as the industry moves to value added, specialist products and the extent and complexity of the Dairy Board's international operations have recently been put into sharp focus. Jock Macmillan's "Breeding Briefs" is to agricultural journalism what Country Calendar is to television!

Surveys of dairy farmers consistently find the Exporter rated as having the highest level of readership and as the most believable source of information on dairy farm management. Its success does not come from its free circulation, rather from the originality, quality and topicality of its journalism.

The NZ Society of Animal Production has chosen recipients of the Sir Arthur Ward Award very carefully. In accepting the nomination of the NZ Dairy Exporter those high standards have been maintained and recognition given to the role of responsible journalism and the agricultural press generally in communication of technology - in this case for our typically responsive dairy farmers and sharemilkers.