



Media release

4 June 2009

Ballance growing greener by the year

Employees at Ballance Agri-Nutrients' main fertiliser manufacturing plants across New Zealand are once again celebrating World Environment Day (5 June) by acting local.

Volunteers at its industrial sites in Northland, Bay of Plenty, Taranaki and Southland have planned environmental efforts to enhance their sites, and the farmer-owned co-operative is conducting its annual environmental awards ceremonies the same day.

Ballance manufactures superphosphate at Whangarei, Mount Maunganui and Awarua, and urea at Kapuni. Extensive tree and shrub plantings have helped soften the environmental impact of these sites, and Ballance has been granted long-term air and water resource management consents at each site.

Each year Ballance also conducts a search for the best environmental initiative within its organisation; attracting nine entries in its individual/team environmental award and five in its site award category this year.

Whangarei has won both these categories this year for its team initiative to reduce electricity use and for its wider site clean up. Trees planted several years ago have now reached a significant size and have changed the whole appearance of the site from both sides of the fence.

As part of a government scheme designed to reduce electricity demand, and subsequent necessity for construction of more power generation and power reticulation infrastructure, Ballance Whangarei replaced 14 ageing electrical motors used on site.

This created an expected 5-7% electrical efficiency gain, further reducing plant operating costs, improving the site's carbon footprint, and diminishing green gas emissions.

Based on the current plant operating time per annum, the electrical energy saving of this project is estimated at 110,000 Kwh units, with no subsequent reduction or restriction in plant capacity, and is simply increased efficiency to the benefit of our environment.

As a company, Ballance has carried out a series of audits to examine various aspects of its environmental performance. Waste audits were conducted at each of its main sites to identify its main waste materials and how they are managed. Similarly, energy auditors have assessed its sites to identify practices that could reduce the company's energy use.

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Within the community, Ballance employs more than 130 Technical Sales Representatives to advise farmers and horticulturalists on the environmentally sustainable use of fertilisers. These reps call in on farms and orchards to conduct nutrient management plans that record all known nutrient inputs and outputs, enabling the farmers to keep a close watch on their carbon footprints.

One of Ballance's most visible commitments to environmental sustainability is its sponsorship of the Ballance Farm Environment Awards. The Ballance Farm Environment Awards are a nationwide showcase event for the rural sector, providing a vehicle for farmers to demonstrate that they are good stewards of the environment. These awards enable farmers to show how an environmentally sensitive approach can be part of a profitable farm business and aim to inspire and motivate others by example.

Note: World Environment Day was established by the United Nations in 1972 to mark the opening of the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment.

World Environment Day tips

- Plant a tree
- Join or assist a community conservation group
- Conserve energy: Insulate your home and the water heater, install timers on heaters, match the size of the cooking pan to the size of the heating element to lower energy wastage. In winter, lower your thermostat and put on a jumper. Turn off lights when not in the room, turn appliances off at the wall.
- Conserve water: Repair leaky taps, install low flow showerheads, capture rainwater for garden irrigation
- Reduce waste: Compost green waste, separate recyclables
- Save fuel: Carpool, public transport, bicycle and walking. Be aware of what affects fuel efficiency – vehicle type/size, engine tuning, gradual acceleration, tyre pressures etc...