

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **New Ballance director brings fresh thinking to the table**

Ballance Agri-Nutrients Limited has appointed a new independent director from outside the rural sector to bring a new dimension to its board.

The fertiliser co-operative's Chairman David Graham has invited Tony McNeil, who has just stepped down as Managing Director of supermarket giant Foodstuffs (Wellington) Co-operative Society, to bring his 40 years of retailing experience to the board.

'We are looking forward to Tony's contribution at board level,' says Mr Graham. 'He has exceptional marketing and strategic experience and has overseen some innovative service offerings at Foodstuffs Wellington, such as the fuel discounts, the construction of a fresh milk factory, and the move into stand-alone liquor outlets.'

'I am sure the Ballance board will benefit from his entrepreneurial approach to business and his wealth of experience working for a co-operative.'

Mr McNeil replaces sitting director Graeme Hawkins, who has elected to stand down at the end of his current term in March after 13 years on the Ballance board. The co-operative has one other independent director, David Pilkington from Wellington, and eight regional directors elected by its farmer shareholders.

'Graeme has done an excellent job for Ballance,' says Mr Graham. 'He has helped us through the many challenges that created the national co-operative in 2001, and we wish him well in his new endeavours.'

Mr McNeil, 57, who lives in Wellington, will join the board for its April meeting.