

MEDIA RELEASE

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Scholarships reward commitment to the future of farming

Outstanding commitment to the future of the rural sector has earned three young students tertiary education scholarships from Ballance Agri-Nutrients.

The farmer-owned fertiliser co-operative has singled out students from Ohaupo near Hamilton, Ruawai near Dargaville and Yaldhurst near Christchurch to receive a three-year scholarship to further their university studies.

The 2010 scholarships are worth \$4,000 a year. Ballance has awarded 43 similar scholarships since 2002 to family of Ballance shareholders or Ballance employees.

'We always try to find students who are set on a future in agriculture in New Zealand, and choose those most likely to make a difference to the rural scene in later life,' says Warwick Catto, Head of Research and Environment at Ballance.

'We are in no doubt that the future success of New Zealand's agricultural industry depends upon the calibre and skills of the people attracted to it,' he says, 'and I congratulate our latest scholarship recipients on their outstanding credentials.'

He says Ballance received 95 applications for scholarships this year, up 36 percent on the previous year. 'Many had the potential to add significant value to the rural sector as graduates, but these three were exemplary candidates.'

Tom Shaw is studying for a Bachelor of Engineering with Honours (Chemical & Processing) at University of Canterbury. A former Dux of St Paul's Collegiate in Hamilton, he is into the second year of his tertiary studies with a view to working post-graduation in agrichemicals, fertiliser or manufacturing. Tom, 19, honed his dairy farming skills on his parents' farm, and is keen on calf rearing. His sporting endeavours include soccer, rowing and tennis. He is already thinking about developing bio-digesters to utilise farm effluent to create heat and electricity.

Gemma Payne is working toward a Bachelor of Agricultural Science, which she started in 2009 at Lincoln. She was raised on a fourth-generation intensive cropping farm in Canterbury, but has her sights on animal genetics, crop improvement and sustainability. A qualified personal trainer, the former Deputy Head Girl at St Andrews College took a gap year in Italy motivating people to overcome obstacles and reach their goals. She wants to carry this through into the rural sector on her way to owning a beef and sheep farm. Gemma, 20, is a former national cycling champion (three times) and provincial boxing rep.

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Calvin Ball from Ruawai also manages a heavy sports schedule while maintaining excellent scholastic grades. Aged 19, he is in his second year of study for a Bachelor of Agricultural Science at Massey University. Raised to handle most aspects of farming of the family dairy farm in Northland, he enjoys rugby and cricket and is a black belt Shaolin Kempo exponent. He was Head Boy at Dargaville High School, and is keen to advance his post-graduate career as a farm consultant or fertiliser technical sales representative.