

Media Release
Kaikohe, Tuesday 21 June 2005



Tall Poppies stand up to be counted

More than 30 entries have been received for the 2005 Top Energy Tall Poppy Business Awards and the Awards judges are now making their deliberations.

With Top Energy as Sponsor, the Awards competition is contested on a region-wide basis, in association with district Business Associations throughout the region. The Tall Poppy Business Awards are designed to recognise and celebrate excellence in business practice.

Categories for this year's Awards included Retail, Manufacturing & Primary, Tourism & Hospitality, Export, Technology/Innovation and Customer Service.

Entries are again being judged, under strict criteria including business development, marketing, service levels, business growth and environmental, cultural & community sensitivities, by a panel of three judges: [Chair] Heather Ayrton, (Coroner, JP and resident of Kaikohe); Robin Shepherd (Top Energy Consumer Trust Deputy Chairman and Kaitaia resident); and John Halse (Enterprise Northland, Business & Industry Development and Russell resident).

According to Awards Judge Chairperson, Heather Ayrton, "What strikes one [about this year's entries] is the evidence of innovation. They indicate the opportunities in the region and the grasping of them. We are seeing entries from people with enough confidence to determine potential growth and the opportunity for success, not forgetting some solid hard work in establishing and maintaining their initiatives."

Says Roger de Bray, Top Energy Chief Executive, "These Awards are a way for the community to recognise and celebrate business excellence - to highlight outstanding business achievement, which creates growth, job opportunities and wealth. As Kiwis, we are quick to celebrate success in sporting endeavours, but when it comes to business, we don't recognise business talent or even seem to value it. Yet that same commitment to success which drives successful sports people drives business people too."

Category winners from each district will be announced towards the end of July. They will then also go through to a regional Awards competition, where the most deserving category and Supreme Award winners will be chosen from across the region.