



Royal Agricultural Society of NSW

Friday, 1 August 2008

Presidential honours for Picton producer

Picton may well be home to Australia's finest product, if judges of the President's Medal are impressed enough with locally made Lush Traditional Handmade Yoghurt.

On Tuesday August 5, Country Valley will welcome President's Medal judges Simon Marnie, presenter of ABC Weekends and passionate foodie, and Scott Davenport, Chief Economic Analyst from NSW Department of Primary Industries.

The President's Medal is presented by the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW (RAS), and judges products from the wine, dairy and fine food industries against each other; the only competition of its kind in Australia.

Lush Traditional Handmade Yoghurt has been named as finalist for the President's Medal after being awarded Champion Cultured Milk Product or Yoghurt at the 2008 Sydney Royal Cheese & Dairy Produce Show.

Managing Director of Country Valley, John Fairly said the nomination has had a positive effect on the company, and could potentially increase production by 500%.

"My employees are very proud of what they have achieved, which is immeasurable," Mr Fairly said.

"It gives us the confidence we are producing the best product we can. Our sales are increasing and we are finding there are more customers who want our product based on sustainability."

The Fairly family has been farming in the Picton area for 150 years and in 2004 they established Country Valley. They have since perfected the process of using traditional methods to produce their yoghurt, without using artificial additives.

The judging panel will visit each of the six finalists, located across the country, to view their production processes and ensure they meet a set of strict environmental, economic and community criteria.

Other finalists include: Bass Strait Blue Cheese from King Island Dairy; Pendleton Estate Blend Olive Oil from Pendleton Estate, SA and Hot Smoked Atlantic Fish from Sapphire Coast Smoked Fish, also in NSW. Two fine wines are also in the running, the 2005 Reserve Shiraz from Evans & Tate, WA and the 2006 Shadowfax Chardonnay from Shadowfax Wines, Victoria.

Mr Glen Dudley, President of the RAS, said the award is fitting recognition for Australia's world class food industry and the six deserving finalists are to be congratulated.

Following the first round of judging, a tasting session will be held in Sydney led by renowned Australian chef Peter Doyle.

The overall winner will be announced on Tuesday, 26 August and will receive a silver heritage RAS medal and a \$10,000 prize.

Further media information:

Fiona Dewar, Cox Inall Communications, (02) 8204 3856

Philippa Lampe, RAS Manager Media & Public Relations

P (02) 9704 1453

M 0419 483 407

E plampe@rasnsw.com.au

Royal Agricultural Society of NSW

ABN 69 793 644 351

Sydney Showground

1 Showground Road Sydney Olympic Park NSW 2127

Locked Bag 4317 Sydney Olympic Park NSW 2127

Telephone (02) 9704 1111

Facsimile (02) 9704 1122

Email: info@rasnsw.com.au

www.rasnsw.com.au