

50 Years Young

A History of the Young Farmer of the Year

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THE COLOURFUL HISTORY OF NEW ZEALAND'S BEST LOVED FARMING CONTEST

The Young Farmer of the Year has tested the knowledge and skills of rural men and women for 50 years. Join our winners, finalists and organisers as they share the history of rural New Zealand's most prestigious competition, dubbed 'the challenge second only to the land.'

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kate Taylor grew up on a farm in west Otago and has been a journalist since she left school, starting with radio and moving into print when she returned from her OE in 1996 to work for the then *Hawke's Bay Herald Tribune*. She left what became *Hawke's Bay Today* in 2000 when her daughter was born and she has been a freelance journalist, administrator and event manager ever since. Kate, her husband Thomas and their children Sarah and Lachlan live on a small farm at Takapau in Hawke's Bay, where she is an active member of the local fire brigade.

SALES POINTS

- The colourful fifty-year history of one of New Zealand best loved contests
- Written in an accessible and engaging style
- Featuring profiles of past winners and finalists
- A wide audience of rural and city people throughout New Zealand
- Attractive design with lots of photographs
- All previous winners and finalists listed in a roll of honour

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CLONING FROM TOP The 1970 Sherry Young Runners of the Year, Allan Anderson, was a member of the Young Runners Club; Allan Anderson with the current trophy, his new tractor, and Gough. Gough is Blaine Le Gough (left); Sherry manager Charlie Miller is Milwaukee North; Allan Anderson competes against Don Ben Jas Terry and Andrew Wright at the 1970 Sherry Young Runners of the Year, held at the Maple Marsh Theatre, Orlin, Wis., the program for the 1970 grand field.

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GRAND OPENING Caption to come; Katherine Tucker cleaning wood during the 2012 grand final practical at Forest Skills Academy in Brundage, Lisa Kendall in a bushcraft module in the grand final practical in Palmspring, North (in 2012)

to start a family. That's the hardest thing for women competitors — most of the ones who win the competition tend to be 20, 25, 30 and that's when many women are having children. There's nothing we can do about that. Kerry and her husband Paul, who was a great help through all her VPC activities, have three children: their son Ben came fifth for Christchurch Boys' High School in last year's Tynagh, their daughter Samantha competed in the 2014 Tynagh as a Year 12 and their daughter Annabel's team from Mount Rossmore Springfield School came eleventh at the 2014 Aggildes Road in Invercail.

Another composer in the 1920s was *Pina Gleser*, who went on to be the national *presidente* of Rural Workers New Zealand. Pina competed in two regional finals: she came fourth in the Wellington region (near Takamāhū) in 1926 and third in the South Auckland region (near Waiakata) in 1927. In 1927 she had been a member of the Marston Club since 1909, where she met her partner Terry Tusa. 'In another building living Farmers romance', she joked. 'But rural dating agency in the country.' She moved to Tauranga in 1936 after she had qualified for the regional final, so she returned to Pōitanga to compete for Marston, where she

One of the hardest parts was not having the practical side-forms skills as the wren's doing farm work every day. That's always a challenge if you're a non-farmer, whereas I was doing a lot of the technical stuff in my role with Williams & Kettle. I had quite a bit of technical knowledge but not the practical. Ploema grew up on a farm but it was based out there when she was a child. Later I helped out neighbours, my brother and others as well as doing farm practicals for university, but it's not the same as doing tasks day in, day out, especially in the dairy industry, which I hadn't really experienced at all. It's a pretty novel of the practicals I was in had a shearing or wool section. She is a qualified wool classifier but came with a Diploma in Wool Technology from Lincoln University.

She never dwelt on the fact she was a woman competing. 'My brother Richard did two grand finals so it was like, if he can do it, I can do it — follow in the footsteps of my big brother. I never really considered the fact I was a female, I was just having a go.'

did not become shunned to learn how to cheat. She was spared to enter by watching Jerry Makelos (see chapter 3) and found she could answer a lot of the questions. I thought, "I can do this!" She made two Tannish/Makelos regional finals and came second in 1998. The only test where strength was an issue was during a wood-chopping event. That's something you can do if you know how to do it. This is a technique to it. I got that with wet work all the time. People ask how I cope with not being as big and strong as the men, but I tell them it's nothing to do with strength, it's all about technique.

In the December 1993 issue of *Young Country* magazine, contest management committee member Christine Bristol, from the Wellington region, made special mention of women in the Young Farmer of the Year as part of its twenty-fifth celebrations. To mark the centenary of Women's Suffrage, a prize of a one-year subscription to *NZ Farmer* was given jointly by YFC and

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