



Entries now open for the 2025 New Zealand Food Awards

Aotearoa New Zealand's most innovative food and beverage producers - it's your time to shine by entering the 2025 [New Zealand Food Awards](#).

For more than 35 years, the New Zealand Food Awards, proudly owned and operated by Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa Massey University, have celebrated excellence, innovation and sustainability across the nation's food and beverage sector and are widely respected for their credibility.

The Awards showcase the full range of the industry, including fast-moving consumer goods, ingredient suppliers, primary producers, artisan creators and everything in between. Organisers are encouraging businesses of all sizes to [enter](#) and share the stories that set them apart between 1-30 May, shining a light on the technology, passion, creativity and key people behind each food product.

Professor Ray Geor, Chair of the New Zealand Food Awards Governance Board and Pro Vice-Chancellor of Massey's College of Sciences, says the awards are an important celebration of Kiwi technology and innovation, and New Zealand's leadership in developing healthy and sustainable foods.

“As a nation of primary producers, that supplies much of the world with our various products, the New Zealand Food Awards plays a critical role in showcasing and highlighting local leaders, global brands and important food advancements. Massey has long been the home of food technology teaching, research and industry partnerships in New Zealand. Our record in supporting and contributing to growing the NZ food industry places us front and centre to recognise and celebrate the leaders, both large and small, in the food and beverage sector.

“Food technology is not science fiction; it has a pivotal role in ensuring the food that we produce and eat supports the health of our people, communities and environment. New Zealand's legacy of food innovation is not celebrated in its country of origin as much as it should be, in some ways our innovation is better understood by those we export to. There is a need for us to better recognise the scientists, creators, developers and manufacturers that work on food products. These people are not household names – but their work is familiar to every single one of us, and we use their innovations every day.

“What we eat evolves over time, reflects our culture and has impacts on the world around us. The New Zealand Food Awards are evolving as well to include more awards this year but remain true to their mission recognising the central role food plays in everything we do as humans and as the leading university for food technology in Aotearoa New Zealand connecting with the industry we serve.”

Categories and judging

This year's Awards include [12 categories](#), recognising the products as well as the people behind the innovation and excellence.



An exciting update amongst the categories this year is the inclusion of three new categories including *Ingredient and Food Service*, for ingredients or partially-prepared food materials developed for the manufacturing or food service industries.

Two newly introduced People Awards shine a light on the often-unsung heroes of the food industry — the brilliant minds driving innovation behind the scenes. This exciting new section celebrates the vital role of food scientists, technologists and developers in shaping the future of food. It features two brand new awards: *Emerging Talent: Food Science and Technology* and *Food Technologist or Developer of the Year*.

Strategic partner Palmerston North City Council is proud to support the rising stars of New Zealand's food innovation sector through sponsorship of the *Emerging Talent: Food Science and Technology Award*.

Mayor of Palmerston North Grant Smith says, “We’re delighted to support the changemakers who are just getting started in their careers in this sector and are already making a real impact. These emerging professionals are the future of our food system, driving new ideas, technology and sustainable practices that will shape how we grow, process and enjoy food. With Palmerston North being New Zealand's food innovation capital, we’re thrilled to shine a spotlight on the next generation of industry leaders, helping shape a smarter, more sustainable food industry.”

Each category has specific criteria and entries are evaluated based on the New Zealand Food Awards’ pillars of innovation, excellence and sustainability. Regulatory compliance, food quality and safety are critical components of the judging process.

Judging also incorporates sustainability measures that consider environmental, social and economic performance. All finalists undertake thorough labelling, marketing and facility compliance checks delivered by an approved labelling consultant and New Zealand Food Safety experts. Through this, finalists and winners earn the right to display the New Zealand Food Awards Quality Mark, which signals that a product is locally made, safe, technically sound and consumer approved. Being named a finalist or winner in the Awards provides a valuable marketing opportunity, boosting brand visibility and credibility by attracting attention from both consumers and industry experts.

The Massey University Supreme Winner will be announced at the Gala Dinner on 16 October and will be selected from the winners across the Product Award categories, excluding the Product Lifetime Achievement Award, which is appointed by judge’s selection.

The New Zealand Food Awards appoints a panel of over 30 of the country’s leading food and beverage experts as judges. The judges represent a diverse cross-section of industry disciplines including technical judges, sustainability and commercial specialists, compliance checks, scientific experts, regulatory guides and more.

Backed by industry

Massey’s leadership in food-related education and research, both nationally and globally, forms the foundation of its stewardship of the New Zealand Food Awards. As the cornerstone of food technology in New Zealand and home to the southern hemisphere’s largest pilot-scale food processing plant and equipment collection, the university plays a pivotal role in driving innovation within the sector.



NZFOODAWARDS
POWERED BY MASSEY UNIVERSITY

Massey's ownership of the New Zealand Food Awards underscores its dedication to advancing the food and beverage industry, fostering innovation and contributing to the sector's ongoing growth and success.

The Awards also provide a powerful platform for fostering community by uniting a diverse network of producers, experts and enthusiasts, all alongside a partner network and a breadth of entrants and supporters to celebrate innovation, excellence and collaboration across the industry.

The Awards programme has been made possible with the support of a network of valued partners including Palmerston North City Council, Woolworths, Cuisine Magazine, New Zealand Food Safety, New Zealand Food Innovation Network, AsureQuality, FoodHQ, FMCG Business and NZ Vegetarian Society.

2025 categories

Product Awards

Artisan
Beverage
Chilled/Frozen
Health and Wellbeing
Ingredient and Food Service
Pantry
Primary Sector
Product Lifetime Achievement
Technical Innovation

People Awards

Emerging Talent Food Science and Technology
Food Technologist/Developer

Key dates

1 May – Entries open
30 May – Entries close
23 – 27 June – Judging week
12 August – Finalists announced
16 October – Gala dinner and winners announced, Central Energy Trust Arena, Palmerston North, 7pm - 11.30pm

Enter today: www.foodawards.co.nz/entering

For more information: www.foodawards.co.nz

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