

# Value for entrants in Environment Awards

Bev Doole

Farmers, foresters, winegrowers, marine farmers - the Cawthron Marlborough Environment Awards are seeking entrants who look after the environment as part of their business.

The Awards have been running for two decades and in that time nearly 300 entrants have put themselves forward, sometimes after a bit of arm-twisting. That was the case with Steve and Mary Satterthwaite of Muller Station, who won the 2017 Farming Award. "We were talked into entering because we didn't believe we were particularly environmental," says Mary. "The judging process showed us we were doing more than we thought. We realized that every step you take all helps you get to your end goal. You don't have to have it all done in a month or a year – you can make a difference bit by bit."

The judges' independent report is like a free audit that highlights positives and suggests improvements. The field day at the Muller was also a chance to get together with other farmers and share experience. "The field day really helped bring the community together," says Mary. "Especially up the top end of the Awatere Valley, where all our children have now left home and we don't catch up nearly enough to talk



Mary Satterthwaite spoke at the Muller Station field day

about what's happening on our properties."

Since entering the awards Mary and Steve have been inspired to take a closer look at protecting native vegetation on their high country station. "Winning the Farming Environment award and having the field day really triggered us to get motivated and do more," says Mary.

Farming is one of seven award categories, along with Forestry, Wine Industry, Marine, Landscape and Habitat Enhancement, Business Innovation and Community Innovation.

Water engineering and irrigation company SWE won the Business Innovation award in 2017 and managing director

Stephen Leitch says entering was a valuable experience. "It provided a great opportunity to showcase the outstanding commitment and hard work put in by the whole SWE team, to reflect on our business, and to benchmark our achievements – and the judges' questions and feedback helped us look towards the future. "For anyone considering entering, I have three words of advice: Just do it!" says Stephen. Winners receive between \$1000 and \$3000 in prizes. Enter online by September 28, 2018. [www.cmea.org.nz](http://www.cmea.org.nz)

*Bev Doole is coordinator of the Cawthron Marlborough Environment Awards.*