MANAGING NUTRIENT AND GHG LOSSES WHILE MAINTAINING AN ECONOMIC BUSINESS –

DENNLEY FARMS, BFEA WINNERS 2019

Adrian and Pauline Ball

Dennley Farms, Waikato

Adrian and Pauline Ball, owners and operators of Dennley Farms Ltd, were the 2019 recipients of the Gordon Stephenson Trophy, as National winners of the Ballance Farm Environment Awards.

Dennley Farms' strong environmental, social and economic sustainability was a stand-out for the National Judging Panel. The business' tagline is 'creating value inside the farm gate,' and the farm team is active in the creation of meaningful industry change and driven to improve consumer perception of the sector.

Aspiring to model low input, low footprint, high animal welfare values, the Balls have achieved best practice agronomy to optimise crop and animal yields without compromising environmental health.

Pauline runs the dairy beef unit which is part of their closed, low-input system where forage crops are home-grown and stocking rates are adjusted accordingly. An innovative approach to managing staff rosters makes Dennley Farms a great place to work.

The couple's early adoption of technology demonstrates an active intention to run a business that has science, logic and progressive innovation at its heart. Long-term plans are to fine-tune farm-grown feed requirements, trial crops and practices that reduce the farm's footprint further year-on-year, introduce more energy-saving and cost-effective infrastructure to the asset base, and maintain growth across the dairy platform and beef breeding enterprise.

Dennley Farms is a showcase for New Zealand farming and growing, with 1.7km fenced and riparian planting along the Waihou River. Adrian continues to be actively engaged in sowing the seeds of change within both Fonterra and the dairy sector.

In this session, Adrian and Pauline discussed how they have been able to manage nutrient loss along with the conflict this brings in reducing GHG's per unit of meat and milk produced, while maintaining an economic farm business.