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40th National Bank Young Farmers Contest Grand Final

Steve Belton — Contest Chair

Richard Fitzgerald — CEO

Duncan McArthur — Grand Final Manager

Charlie Graham — General Manager Rural Banking

Sponsor Representatives

Invited Guests, including the family and supporters of our finalists

And the 7 young farmers who represent all the special attributes that make up the driving force behind this wonderful country that we call home. Without a successful rural based economy New Zealand would not enjoy the standard of living it does today, and this week Ashburton is very proud to host what is truly an iconic New Zealand event.

This contest will showcase the place of modern technology in farming, under the banner “Innovation” and therefore I feel very comfortable in welcoming you, as this district is right up there when it comes to innovative farming practice. Our district has benefited immensely from our association with the Young Farmers and has a proud sense of involvement in this contest.

Despite what some might say about the bias within the Crusaders franchise, I would like to reassure Nick (Webster) who represents the Aorangi region and farms in Oamaru, that you have our full support and best wishes over the next few days.

What makes this event special is the fantastic work at grassroots level and I would like to acknowledge all those who have worked so hard to get us to this stage today.

This contest has a loyal family of Sponsors and their continued involvement surely contributes to its success.

We have 7 finalists in —

Nick Webster	-	Oamaru	-	Aorangi
Kyle Thorburn	-	Winton	-	Otago / Southland
Fraser McGougen	-	Awakeri	-	Waikato – Bay of Plenty
Steve Knight	-	Blenheim	-	Tasman
Grant Charteris	-	Tikokino	-	East Coast
David Skiffington	-	Marion	-	Taranaki – Manawatu
James Donaldson	-	Bream Bay	-	Northern

You are to be congratulated for being worthy representatives of all Young Farmers and we sincerely trust you enjoy your experience over the next three days.

Gentlemen, I have no doubt that one of you will be a worthy champion and role model for all young New Zealanders and therefore I have much pleasure in inviting you to commence proceedings for the

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and hereby declare it open.