



## January 2018

Email all queries and feedback to: [kotuku.media@xtra.co.nz](mailto:kotuku.media@xtra.co.nz)

### From the President's desk

There's no shortage of stories from the rural sector right now – but unfortunately many of them aren't good news.

The discovery of further cases of *Mycoplasma bovis* in herds in Hastings and Winton and a suspected case in Ashburton in December is extremely concerning and led Federated Farmers President Katie Milne to warn; "Don't rely on others to protect your patch, protect it yourself. In the end, we are all biosecurity officers with a role to play."

Eradication is still the aim but the spread of the disease makes that even more difficult. There's a distinct possibility that, as with *Psa-V* in kiwifruit, varroa mite in bees and myrtle rust disease in pohutukawa, manuka and similar species, we may have to learn to live with *mycoplasma bovis*.

Just when the weather got warm enough to go back in the water – Lake Taupo turned toxic with an algae bloom – blamed on hot, still weather conditions. No one was initially pointing the finger at farming, but that may well be the reaction of people denied the chance to take a dip in their favourite and very large 'swimming hole'. The same hot weather is causing real concerns for farmers and growers just getting over the impacts of too much rain – quite the turnaround from one extreme to another.

Bringing stories, good or bad, to the public, is what our guild members do so very well. The pressures of ever constant deadlines make ours a challenging task but I hope all guild members found some time for a little R&R with family and friends this holiday season, and had the chance to re-charge the batteries for 2018.

Warm wishes to you all,  
*Elaine*



### Star Prize

The end of the year is a time for reflection—including a look back at the great work you did in 2017. IFAJ's Star Prize contests are a great way to celebrate and share the best agricultural print, photography, broadcast and online reporting in the world. (Winners receive cash prizes!)

The Star Prize contest juries will judge work published, broadcast or posted between 1 January and 31 December 2017.

IFAJ member guilds may submit one entry each for the Star Prizes for Print, Video, Audio and Digital contests. Each guild has its own selection process. We will be sending out entry forms before the end of January, and the deadline will be 10 February.

The Star Prize for Photography contest is open to individuals – go to the contest pages on the IFAJ website for more complete details and rules. Entries are sent direct to IFAJ and the deadline is 23 February. Go to [ifaj.org](http://ifaj.org) under contests and awards

### Alltech Young Leaders Award

If you were 35 or under on 31 December, you might like to enter the IFAJ-Alltech Young Leaders Award, a travel scholarship to attend the IFAJ World Congress in The Netherlands in July 2018.

However, you are running out of time to enter, as the deadline rapidly approaching. Guilds can nominate one member, who will be consider for one of 10 scholarships. Contact me urgently for details and an application form at [kotuku.media@xtra.co.nz](mailto:kotuku.media@xtra.co.nz)

