



Executive Update August 2025

Kia ora tatou,

Welcome to the 2025-2026 season. The first show is only seven weeks away!

For those of you that missed it, the Annual Conference was held in June and provided a great opportunity for delegates to catch up with friends, associates and volunteers again.

Thank you to our Guest Speakers – Peter Nation (AGbiz), and Sir David Carter. Great engagement and discussion were had in the Workshops and Panel sessions. We hope that you have taken something new back with you to put into place or to have further discussion within your own Association/Society.

Congratulations to our Rural Ambassador finalists who represented their districts well, engaged in the weekend, networked with delegates, and delivered well researched speeches on the topic given by the Judges - *"What is Artificial Intelligence and how do you see this contributing to the Rural Sector?"* Congratulations to Sophie Kirk, representing Western District who was named our 2025 Rural Ambassador. Thank you to Alice Jones, Maxine Mulligan and Paul Vanner, adjudicators of the Award this year.

The Gazette has been circulated and includes all AGM minutes and the outcomes of submitted remits.

Incoming Committee

At conference Ben Burgess was elected into the President role. Congratulations Ben and we look forward to seeing what you and the Executive achieve over the coming season. Sophie Kirk (2025 National Rural Ambassador) was elected onto the executive committee for a three year term, following her one year co-option. Sophie Holst has recently been co-opted into the position of Vice President of the RAS until June 2026. Paul Vanner has also been co-opted onto the Executive for a 12 Month term until end of June 2026.

Outgoing Committee

After three years as the elected RAS National President we said farewell to Rachel Walker as her term came to an end. Thank you Rachel for your significant contribution.

We also said farewell to Caitlin Rhodes (2024 National Rural Ambassador) and wish to thank her for her contribution to the Rural Ambassador Programme.

The executive has also accepted Anne Rogers resignation with regret, and thank her for her support and commitment to the Executive over the past season.





MPI Government Funding

The 2025 Government budget included a \$400,000 allocation over four years to support A&P shows and the huge network of volunteers across the country that convenes them. This funding will provide each of our affiliated A&P shows and events with a grant of \$1,000 annually for the next four years. This is an incredible grant that will impact our shows significantly. Once the draft contract is finalised the executive will circulate information on next steps.

Volunteering New Zealand

As we head into the 2025-2026 showing season we would like to encourage you to ensure you are following the Best Practice Guidelines supplied by Volunteering New Zealand. This month we are focusing on how to recruit and engage volunteers. Volunteering New Zealand highlights three key principles along with providing [information](#) around what volunteers need and what 'best practice' looks like.

Principles:

1. A positive organisational approach to diversity, inclusion and equity is in place
2. A proactive approach to making volunteering accessible is in place (including removing any barriers to access)
3. Volunteers reflect the communities that their organisations serve.

Upcoming Events

RAS Royal Events 2025 – 2026

- Poverty Bay A&P Association (15-18th October 2025) Equestrian and Dog Trials.
- Marlborough A&P Association (8-9th November) – Home Industries.
- Mayfield A&P Association (7th March 2026) – Home Industries.
- Golden Fleece Exhibition – hosted by Central Otago A&P Assn – April 2026.

The Royal A&P Show of New Zealand

- Canterbury A&P Show (13-15th November) – Royal Show 2025.
- Stratford A&P Association (28-30th November) – Royal Show 2025.

RAS Annual Conference

- Hotel Elms Christchurch (26-28th June 2026).

If you are finding you are struggling in any way, your District is a good starting point for practical help (details at [Our Districts – Royal Agricultural Society New Zealand \(ras.org.nz\)](https://ras.org.nz)).

If you have any concerns or support you would appreciate, please contact your District Chair, the Executive, or the RAS office at any time. If you need your website member login set up (please note each member A&P or Breed and Kindred Society can have two member logins), please contact Christine. Watch out for the buzz around our members in the Show Connect newsletter and on Facebook.

Any words above in this update that are [blue and underlined](#) are links, in some cases to the members only page. If you press the control button (Ctrl on the bottom left of your keyboard) and hover the cursor over the link and then left click with your mouse, you will be taken to the page.

Mā mua ka kite a muri, mā muri ka ora a mua

Those who lead give sight to those who follow, those who follow give life to those who lead.