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Elsthorpe farmer Evan Potter

Partnership key to success, say Ballance award winners

Hawke's Bay farmers Evan and Linda Potter have developed an award-winning sustainable commercial operation after overcoming significant land challenges.

In partnership with the Hawke's Bay Regional Council, Evan Potter says they have employed a range of environmental measures to slow down erosion and enhance the biodiversity of their land.

This work saw the Potter's winning the 2020 Supreme Award at the Ballance Farm Environment Awards – East Coast, and the Deer Industry Elworthy Environment Award last year, recognising their sustainable farm practices.

Evan Potter says the collaborative nature of their relationship with the Hawke's Bay Regional Council has resulted in significant gains.

The Potter's cattle, sheep and deer operation is rugged, dry hill country in Elsthorpe and covers 740 hectares, of which 600 hectares is grazable.

“Over the past few years we have planted willow and poplar poles to combat erosion from the high country, retired unproductive areas, and generated alternative income such as developing pine plantations.”

With assistance from the Regional Council through the Erosion Control Scheme, the Potter's have fenced alongside the Hawea Stream, and developed a nine hectare area of natives – a corridor of biodiversity for flora and fauna.

“This will help stop sediment loss from our land in to Hawea Stream, one of the most sediment laden waterways that runs in to the TukiTuki river. This is the best use of this area for our farm.”

“We feel like we are on the same page with the Hawke's Bay Regional Council with the same end goal of water quality and environmental protection, and we have achieved much more working together than going in separate directions,” says Evan.

Hawke's Bay Regional Council's Catchment Advisor for Southern Area, Dean Roughton says the Potter's hard work to build a sustainable farm practice will reap economic and environmental benefits for years.

“This has been a fantastic, enduring partnership. A highlight has been the fencing out of the Hawea Stream. This area already has significant native plantings so it will be great to see the reversion happening over the next few years.”

“The Potter's now have a farm with several tree plantings providing erosion control, and shade for stock, and a growing riparian zone, stabilising the land and improving water quality and biodiversity.”

There are a variety of ways for farmers to get assistance from the Regional Council to fence and plant to protect their land from erosion. Visit www.hbrc.govt.nz and search #erosion or call your local catchment advisor.

**Plant to
Protect**

Let's protect our land
and waterways together.


HAWKES BAY
REGIONAL COUNCIL

TE KAUNIHERA Ā-ROHE O TE MATAU-A-MĀUI