



THE FARM POST

Bringing together the news, views and events of rural NSW

Official publication of the NSW Farmers Association

Issue 45 - August 2011

Wellington's Norm Smith 2011 Farmer of the Year



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2011 Farmer of the Year Norm Smith was humbled even to be nominated for the award. When he won Mr Smith said, to think the judges chose him was an amazing feeling.

Norm was joined by his wife Pip and their five children, Norm's mother and their good friends, to attend the Urban Paddock event where the award was announced.

Urban Paddock was part of the NSW Farmers Annual Conference, sponsored by Workcover.

Mr Smith runs 'Glenwood' a 2800ha grazing property 29kms east of Wellington, in a way that balances the needs of the environment, profit, family and community.

Norm is a fourth generation farmer on his land where Pip and his children help him run the farm.

The Glenwood merino stud has been established since 1929. All livestock are managed to minimise chemical use and mulesing ceased in 2005. Glenwood is 600 metres above sea level and averages approximately 650mm of rainfall per year which is neither summer nor winter dominated.

Glenwood runs predominantly a SRS® merino breeding enterprise including 700 stud ewes and 3500 flock ewes. Norm sells about 100 rams per year. He has an on property sale at Glenwood and is also involved in multi vendor sales in Wellington and Cooma.

Glenwood also engages in cattle trading when the seasons allow.

Mr Smith dedicated the award to his father who passed away recently.

"Number one with Dad was about honesty and integrity in everything that we do. I'd like to think about myself as an innovator, and I think my father was one as well," Mr Smith said.

Innovation seems to run in the family. Norm Smith's grandfather was one of the first farmers in the region to use a plane to spread super phosphate. Norm's father was then one of the first to use a plane to sow crops.

"Dad loved his toys and he loved being an innovator and hopefully I'm going down that same path," Mr Smith said.

The Farmer of the Year judges certainly think Mr Smith is heading down that path. They were impressed with Mr Smith's innovations relating to farming and the environment. In blending with the environment,



Primary Industries Minister Katrina Hodgkinson presents North Smith with the Farmer of the Year award.

Norm's sheep are managed in a way that minimises chemical use.

Norm is also regarded as a leader in the Central West farming community. He and Pip completed a holistic management course through what was then Orange Agricultural College.

The skills they acquired on that course saw them pioneer planned grazing management on Glenwood. Norm and Pip now use a rotational grazing system on Glenwood.

The Smiths are focused on emerging consumer trends based on their customer's desire for eco friendly products. They use up to the minute techniques to ensure the innovations they use are effective.

Norm and other graziers in his region commenced an early stage land health monitoring program called "Ecocheck." This program monitors paddock changes each year and has documented very significant improvements to the health of Glenwood over many years.

Norm has also been a pioneer in recognising the important role that native perennial plants have in the landscape and is a recognised local expert in the community on grazing management of perennials.

Norm is also very active in his local community. He co-founded a group called WAG in his local area, which is designed to help farmers get together and talk about farming

issues as well as give each other support and friendship during tough times. Norm isn't only interested in farming, he's been a member of the local Rural Fire Service for 20 years and is currently the senior vice captain of his local branch. Norm has been president of Wellington amateur swimming club since 2008.

Mr Smith thanked NSW Farmers, the Department of Primary Industries, RAS and The Land for running the award.

Read more about Young Farmer of the Year winner Marc Greening on Page 3.



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