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For Immediate Release

THE SEARCH FOR NEW ZEALAND'S BEST LAMB HEATS UP

The much anticipated finalists in the 2017 Beef + Lamb New Zealand Golden Lamb Awards (aka The Glammies) have been announced today.

Twenty finalists across the nation have made the cut and being a nation known for its lamb - the pressure is on.

The top twenty have taken out 166 other entries for a place in the Grand Final, held at the Wanaka A & P Show on 10 March, in the hunt for the most tender and tasty lamb.

Grand Final head judge and President of the New Zealand Chefs Association, Graham Hawkes says Kiwis should be proud of the farmers who produce lamb of the highest quality.

"I whole-heartedly believe New Zealand has the best lamb in the world and I think we should be celebrating the work and efforts of our world-class producers," says Hawkes.

"As a chef, I do my best to create innovative and interesting dishes and, as a consumer, I enjoy what's on my plate but I'd like to encourage New Zealanders to acknowledge the farmers who make that a reality."

Each of the finalist's lamb went through rigorous scientific testing to assess the tenderness, yield, colour and succulence of the lamb.

From here they will be judged in two rounds at the Grand Final by six of New Zealand's leading chefs.

2017 marks ten years of the competition with a special award to announce the Producer of the Decade taking place during the final prizegiving.

Beef + Lamb New Zealand Chief Executive Sam McIvor said the Glammies is a great way to showcase the premium protein grown by New Zealand sheep farmers.

"We've been staging the event for 10 years and it's a great platform to highlight the attributes that make New Zealand lamb a favourite with consumers both here and around the world but also how farmers and processors work together to ensure that consistent result time after time. That's what sets us apart from other lamb producers around the world."

Those attending the Glammies will have the opportunity to meet three of our nation's top athletes, Beef + Lamb New Zealand Iron Maidens Lisa Carrington, Sarah Walker and Caroline Evers-Swindell.

The competition is sponsored by Zoetis and Elanco and supported by Alliance Group, ANZCO Foods Canterbury, Ashburton Meat Processors, Auckland Meat Processors/Wilson Hellaby, Blue Sky Meats, Cabernet Foods/Kintyre Meats, Harris Meats, Oamaru Meats, Progressive Meats, Silver Fern Farms and Taylor Preston.

2017 Beef + Lamb New Zealand Golden Lamb Awards Finalists:

CLASS 1 // BEST OF BREED: TRADITIONAL

Robert Gardyne, Oturehua (Perendale), processed at Alliance Lorneville
Paul, Rachel, Mark, Louise Heslip, Dipton (Perendale/Romney), processed at Alliance Lorneville
Hamish Mackay, Gore (Romney), processed at Alliance Lorneville
Don Morrison, Gore (Romney), processed at Alliance Lorneville

CLASS 2 // BEST OF BREED: CROSSBREED

Charles Crutchley, Ranfurly (Texel/Perendale/Romney), processed at Oamaru Meats
Jane Leogreen, Dannevirke (Texel/Perendale/Romney), processed at Alliance Dannevirke
Hayden Peter, Wyndham (Greeline), processed at Alliance Lorneville
Roger, Alison & Jeremy Thomas, Tuatapere (Perendale/Texel), processed at Silver Fern Farms Waitane

CLASS 3 // BEST OF BREED: TERMINAL CROSS

Gary Fordyce, Gore (Composite/Texel X), processed at Silver Fern Farms Waitane
Don Morrison, Gore (Growbulk/Charrollais), processed at Alliance Lorneville
Allan Paterson, Otautau (CoopTexel/Texel), processed at Alliance Lorneville
Matt Wyeth, Masterton (Highlander/Primera), processed at Silver Fern Farms Takapau

CLASS 4 // BEST OF BREED: OPEN

Doug Brown, Oamaru (Poll Dorset/Texel), processed at Alliance Smithfield
Forbes Cameron, Ashhurst (Growbulk), processed at Alliance Dannevirke
Robert Gardyne, Oturehua (Perendale/Suffolk/Texel), processed at Alliance Lorneville
Peter Sim, Garston (Textra), processed at Silver Fern Farms Waitane

CLASS 5 // RETAIL

Countdown North Island (South Suffolk/Romney from Ruakiwi, Kaikohe)
Countdown North Island (Southdown/Texel/Romney from DI Cathcart, Huntly)
Lifestyle Meats (Texel Perendale from Ohakune)
Pure South, Alliance Meats (Romney/Texel from JW, JC & JR Clark, Milton)

--ENDS--

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