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Safer Farms ambassador Lindy Nelson recognised with national safety leadership award

Safer Farms ambassador Lindy Nelson has won national recognition for her long-standing work to shift the way New Zealand's primary sector thinks and acts on farm safety.

Nelson was named the winner of the Leadership category at the 2026 New Zealand Workplace Health and Safety Awards in Auckland, acknowledging her practical, farmer-led approach to reducing harm on farm.

Safer Farms chair Murray Donald said the award was a proud moment for Safer Farms and a fitting acknowledgement of Nelson's influence across rural communities.

"Lindy has helped bring farmers, industry and partners together around a shared goal: designing harm out of agriculture and making safer ways of working part of everyday farming.

"What makes her leadership so powerful is that it is grounded in real farming experience. She understands the pressures farmers face and has consistently championed practical change that can make a difference on farm.

"New Zealand produces the best food in the world. Safer Farms wants New Zealand to be the safest place for people to work."

Wairarapa farmer Nelson chaired Safer Farms from 2020 to January 2026 and was instrumental in the formation of the first-ever sector-wide plan, *Farm without Harm*, designed with farmers and industry. She also helped develop a partnership with ACC.

Nelson played a key role in the development of campaigns including *Half Aseed Stops Here*, and *Safer Rides*, which offers farmers financial incentives to offset the cost of purchasing and installing crush protection devices and other products on quad bikes.

She remains a Safer Farms director, and in January, became its *Farm Without Harm* ambassador.

Together with the organisation's Regional Champions, she is working to lead conversations and culture change, share experiences and provide practical approaches for farmers across the country.

In 2016, Nelson was appointed as a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM) for her services to women and agriculture

The New Zealand Workplace Health and Safety Awards identify the best in health and safety initiatives and shine a light on the people behind them.

Organised by Safeguard with the support of WorkSafe New Zealand and ACC, the 2026 awards were presented at a gala dinner at the Viaduct Events Centre in Auckland on 23 June.

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