

Media Release: 18th January 2012

Attention: Environment, Tourism, Business, Health, Science, Education,
Food, Farming and Political Reporters

Association of Biological Farmers (NZ) Inc

Biological Open Days Building Brand NZ

With increasing concerns about the environmental impacts of farming and the loss of New Zealand's 'clean, green' brand, a growing number of farmers and growers are taking matters into their own hands.

The Association Biological Farmers (ABF) has a nationwide series of Biological Farming Open Days over the next few months, aiming to share some of the simple ways farmers can improve their bottom lines while reducing environmental footprints. The project has received assistance from the Sustainable Farming Fund and a number of other organisations interested in sharing information and tools around this commonsense farming approach.

The second of a series of six workshops around the country is being held in Taupo Bay, near Mangonui, on the 31st of January, followed by a workshop and display at Kauhanga Marae, Peria on the 1st of February. These interactive days, run in conjunction with the Doubtless Bay Community Catchment Care programme, will offer practical tips and insights from leading farming practitioners. Discussion will also focus around weeds as indicators, soil health, riparian zones, bees and other practical methods farmers can adopt without reducing bottom lines.

All are welcome, as the ABF spokeswoman Nicole Masters points out, "Whether your focus is sheep, beef, dairy, viticulture, horticulture or market gardening, there

will be something on offer here to stimulate your thinking around the benefits of regenerative soil practices.”

ABF is a NZ wide organization which includes a diverse and broad group of members linked by a common thread; “to promote regenerative on-farm practices which improve and enhance natural capital, building a vibrant and healthy society, environment and economy”.

To help support farmers’ learning, the Association continues to run an email discussion group, which originally began in 2006. The service keeps farmers and growers up to date with breaking news, workshops and general discussions. Future open days are booked in for North Canterbury (20th Feb), South Otago (6th March) and the Hawkes Bay (20th March).

If you are interested in attending an open day or being involved in this project please get in touch with Nicole Masters, info@biologicalfarmers.co.nz or go to the news section of www.ecocentre.co.nz or text Soozee on 022 1407546 for details of the local field days.