

Kiwis take Tri-Nations Cup

Dominic Groenendijk and Katrin Woermer of Insel Farm, Kio Kio, have been named winners of the Intellect Tri-Nations Cup at the company's conference in Melbourne.

They triumphed over Australians Andrew and Zoe Gaul, of Lardner, West Gippsland, and South Africans Pete and Meg Clowes, of Scotston Farm, Underberg.

The three couples were selected by Intellect consultants in each of the countries and their properties' performance was analysed using Red Sky software.

With a return on assets (ROA) of 8.8 percent compared with the average of the top 10 percent of New Zealand dairy farmers of 5.4 percent, Groenendijk

\$1902/ha (\$3169/ha).

Groenendijk described his mission as to grow as much grass as possible. He applies nitrogen after almost every grazing rotation.

"We think the quality of grass is very important. We aim to get the residual right at every grazing," he said.

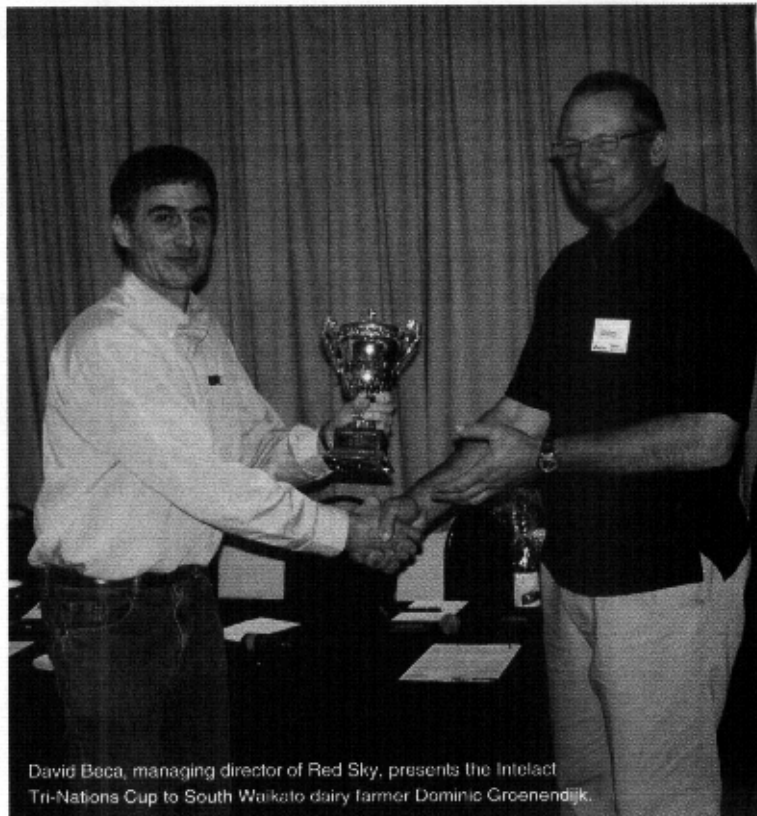
"We've given away under-sowing because we believe it reduces summer pasture quality. For supplementary feeding we look for the cheapest form of energy while keeping its use as simple as possible. That has meant we have normally ended with palm kernel (costing 21 cents/kg of dry matter) and maize silage"

Around one tonne a year of palm kernel is used, and less

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made a profit of \$3029/ha in the 2004/05 season. Clowes, with 12.9 percent ROA (2005/06 17.4 percent) while the top 10 percent of South African farms average 21.8 percent, made a profit of \$2286/ha (\$3296/ha). Gaul had a 7.6 percent ROA (8.8 percent) with the top 10 percent of Australian farms averaging 5.4 percent. He had a profit of

than a tonne of maize silage, which they plan to grow on-farm in future to bring the price down. This year for the first time Groenendijk plans to use whole crop barley in a bid to further lower the pH in his cow's rumens and slow the passage of feed. He had found no economic response to the use of by-pass protein.



David Beca, managing director of Red Sky, presents the Intellect Tri-Nations Cup to South Waikato dairy farmer Dominic Groenendijk.

With Friesian-Friesian Cross cows he has used sire-proving semen from Kiwi cross and Friesian bulls for the past 14 years for a saving, he claims, of about \$14,000 a year.

He likes a medium size, aggressive eating cow.

His production target is 500kg of milksolids (MS)/cow.

With three fulltime staff he

believes employing a manager, rather than a lower-order sharemilker, is important.

"I provide him with the tools to do this and advise him."

They could milk more cows but because did not want the stress of doing so, he was sure his staff wouldn't either.

"The system works well now and I'd be reluctant to change." **D**

The Tri-Nations lineup – 2005/6 figures in brackets.

Cost of production	Groenendijk-Woermer	Clowes	Gaul
2004/05	\$2.44/kg MS	\$5.80/kg MS(\$5.19)	\$3.24/kg MS (\$2.63)
Pasture	13.1t DM/ha	14.5t DM/ha(15.3)	11.6t DM/ha (12.3)
Milk/ha	1944kg MS	1429kg MS (1527)	1651kg MS (1697)
Cows/ha	4.05	3.45 (3.16)	3.97 (3.33)
Milk/cow	480kg MS	414kg MS (484)	416kg MS (509)
Cows/staff	147	22 (20)	137 (130)
Forage costs	\$295	\$203 (\$428)	\$306 (\$224)
Concentrate costs	\$270	\$561 (\$503)	\$403 (\$385)
Core/cow costs	\$302	\$439 (\$483)	\$334 (\$305)