

## **Pukekohe student's passion for Horticulture rewarded**

Pukekohe-based Michael French is bucking a trend – and he's just won a \$2,500 scholarship to help him do it.

The 20-year-old Bachelor of Agri-Science student at Massey University says there aren't many students coming through with a specific interest in horticulture, but he sees it as a great career path.

Michael is a step closer to his goal after winning a \$2,500 scholarship from Agcarm to help with his university studies.

Agcarm is an industry association of companies which manufacture, distribute and sell products that keep animals healthy and crops thriving.

Michael (20) is studying towards a Bachelor of Agri-Science at Massey University, majoring in Horticulture. He intends to spend his winnings on practical investments – some new textbooks and a contribution to his student loan.

"I'm very grateful to Agcarm for this scholarship. While the money will be a great help with my course-related costs and student loan, the scholarship itself has been something to aspire to.

"Working towards the Agcarm scholarship has given me a real reason to aim for good grades. I'm also grateful to Agcarm for helping me raise my profile in the industry, which will be extremely valuable when I finish my degree and start looking for full-time employment."

Michael comes from a horticulture-focussed family, based in Pukekohe, and has always wanted to work in the horticulture industry.

"My family grows kiwifruit and avocado, and Pukekohe is a very agricultural area. At school I developed a further interest through an NCEA horticulture programme, which I've now followed through to university."

Michael believes it is important for organisations such as Agcarm to support horticulture at a tertiary level, as it encourages students to get involved with the industry.

"Horticulture is an industry that not a lot of younger people are aspiring to be a part of, and it needs to be encouraged. The profile of horticulture needs to be raised: the industry won't grow without new research and the manpower to extend it.

"The Agcarm scholarship not only raises the profile of horticulture, it also encourages students to get involved through a financial incentive."

Agcarm Chief Executive, Graeme Peters, said the association is pleased to contribute toward the future of such a talented, enthusiastic student.

"Michael's application was of a very high calibre. We were extremely impressed with the passion he showed for his area of study," Mr Peters said.

Industry initiatives led by Agcarm include providing safe and sustainable animal health and crop protection technology for the future of New Zealand, and educating the community about the industry's contribution.

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