

# *New Zealand to take on the world in 2016 Culinary Olympics*



## **Fonterra sponsors NZ Chefs' Association team**

The competition, to be held in Erfurt, Germany in October 2016, will host 2000 chefs from 40 countries around the world. Next year's event will mark the first time a New Zealand team has entered the competition since 1988.

Grant Watson, Global Head of Foodservice – Fonterra, which is sponsoring the NZChefs team, says New Zealand has phenomenal culinary talent and it is well and truly time this was showcased to the world after not having competed for 28 years.

“We have some amazing chefs in this country working with unique and innovative techniques and fabulous, fresh ingredients. The Culinary Olympics will not only give us the opportunity to compete on the world stage but show the world the talent we have here in New Zealand and to showcase our amazing ingredients.

“The New Zealand culinary world has changed so much over the past 28 years, and so has our cuisine. We now have star chefs and top rated restaurants which are as good as anywhere on the planet.”

He says Fonterra's focus on innovation, the best quality natural ingredients and high quality made working with the Culinary Olympics team an ideal match.

In the lead up to next year's Olympics, the NZChefs team will cook at a series of events and dinners around the country - giving Kiwis the opportunity to taste the dishes and the chefs the chance to hone recipes and their teamwork. These events will also involve workshops for local chefs to inspire them to become involved in culinary competitions.

“We want everyone in the country to have the opportunity to experience some of our best culinary offerings and ingredients but also for local chefs to learn from the expertise of chefs in the NZChefs Fonterra Culinary Olympics team about what culinary competitions are about and how they can make them better chefs. Hopefully the team will also inspire some of amazing young chefs we have coming through to take their skills and New Zealand's amazing ingredients to the 2020 Culinary Olympics.”

Graham Hawkes, National President of NZChefs, is delighted with the high quality of chefs in the team to take on the culinary world and includes a mix of experienced competition chefs with some exciting new talent.

Team manager Neil MacInnes says the group is thrilled to be representing New Zealand and are excited about the challenge ahead.

“The opportunity to take the journey to the ultimate competition destination does not come around very often. Performing under this kind of pressure and at an international level is such an amazing

career opportunity for all of us. We're also excited about what we can learn from some of the best chefs in the world who we will be competing against."

Graham explained that the team chose the dishes through a process of collaboration and that they will continue to evolve with each Olympic Feast event.

"We started with a blank plate and then carefully chose an iconic ingredient to be the hero of each dish - for example the salmon, venison or the cream cheese. We then added components through flavor profiles until all aspects of the dish worked together.

"Over the next 15 months this will continue until the entire squad is satisfied they will present a true menu that leverages the very best of truly New Zealand ingredients."

### *The Chefs:*

Steve Le Corre	Aoraki School of Hospitality & Tourism (Timaru), Cookery Tutor
John Kelleher	AUT School of Hospitality & Tourism (Auckland), Senior Lecturer Professional Cookery
Darren Wright	Chillingworth Rd (Christchurch), Chef/Owner
Mark Sycamore	CPIT (Christchurch), Tutor
Richard Hingston	Christchurch Casino (Christchurch), Head Chef
Ken O'Connell	Bracken Restaurant (Dunedin), Chef / Patron
Corey Hume	Blanket Bay (Queenstown), Executive Chef
Neil MacInnes	CPIT(Christchurch)
Gary Miller	CPIT (Christchurch)
Graham Hawkes	NZChefs President
Keith McDonald	Fonterra

