

MEDIA RELEASE

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NATURAL HEALTH PRODUCTS INDUSTRY AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Natural Health Products NZ has announced the winners of its annual industry awards, including the Supreme Award for the best overall entry:

SUPREME AWARD	Vitaco Health NZ
Marketing Award (\$2m and over in sales)	Vitaco Health NZ
Marketing Award (Under \$2m in sales)	Manuka Bioscience
Cawthron Institute Innovation Award	Anagenix
The FernMark Licence Programme Growth Award	PharmaNZ
2021 Business Resilience Award	Winner: Alaron Products Highly Commended: Vitaco Health NZ
Outstanding Contribution to the Industry Award	Alison Quesnel

Natural Health Products New Zealand is a national industry organisation representing this country's natural health products, functional foods, complementary medicines, cosmeceuticals and nutraceuticals industries within New Zealand and internationally.

Announcing the winners, the Awards Lead Judge Alison Quesnel says New Zealand's natural health products industry has risen to the challenges posed by Covid-19.

"This year, more than ever, Awards winners demonstrated a positive, can-do attitude combined with continuing to push beyond boundaries with high-quality innovations that further enhanced New Zealand's international reputation as a source of high-quality natural health products."

Award winner overviews

SUPREME AWARD: VITACO HEALTH NZ

Vitaco Health is the home of Australia and New Zealand's most trusted health food, sports nutrition and supplements brands – Musashi, Aussie Bodies, Nutra-Life and Healtheries. With a heritage dating back over 116 years, its vision is to Empower Healthier Lives in Australia, New Zealand and across the globe.

It is a complex business that operates across multiple sites 24 hours a day and it has a large field-based team that service pharmacy and supermarket stores across New Zealand. In 2020 overall employee engagement measures improved and confidence in Leadership grew.

Judges said Vitaco's entries demonstrated clever thinking, a commitment to ongoing improvement and the well-being of their people. Their obvious success in those areas made them a clear winner.

For more information contact: Roger Scott, Chief Operating Officer, Vitaco Health (NZ). **Mob:** +64 21 248 0722 / **Email:** roger.scott@vitaco.co.nz / **Web:** www.vitacohealth.com

MARKETING AWARD (\$2M AND OVER): WINNER VITACO HEALTH (NZ)

This award recognises a company that has achieved exceptional results from the implementation of an outstanding marketing campaign.

The Marketing Award (\$2m and over) winning entry was for Vitaco's Joint Bio Flex product. The marketing and innovation challenge was to mitigate the joint health segment's decline by creating a product that delivered both tangible human results and positive category results.

The judges were impressed with Vitaco's comprehensive and very detailed analysis of the marketing challenge and opportunity. The resulting multifaceted marketing plan was impressively executed to promote Joint Bio Flex.

They also liked Vitaco's identification of several learnings that will set them up well for this and subsequent product launches.

For more information contact: Tracy Leach, Senior Brand Manager Nutri-Life, Vitaco Health (NZ). **Mob:** +64 27 440 5040 / **Email:** tracy.leach@vitaco.co.nz / **Web:** www.vitacohealth.com

MARKETING AWARD (UNDER \$2M): MANUKA BIOSCIENCE

This award recognises a company that has achieved exceptional results from the implementation of an outstanding marketing campaign.

Manuka Bioscience is an innovative healthcare company that develops evidence-based cosmeceuticals and drug candidates for OTC topical treatments and dermatological therapeutics using New Zealand's East Cape mānuka essential oil.

This Marketing Award was for the company's consumer brand Manuka Rx.

The Judges were impressed by Manuka Bioscience's customer-centric approach to marketing of mānuka oil: "They built up a thorough understanding of existing customers and channels and set about doing the digital basics really well. Their success was evident across a range of measures including revenue increase, customer satisfaction, Google review ratings, web traffic and conversion rates."

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CAWTHRON INSTITUTE INNOVATION AWARD: WINNER – ANAGENIX

This award recognises outstanding innovation demonstrated in any facet of business.

Auckland-based Anagenix is a leading global supplier of innovative natural health and wellness ingredients made from 100% natural, NZ-grown plant-based products. They work closely with NZ growers, manufacturers/suppliers, and research institutes to bring clinical science-proven natural health products to the world.

The Cawthron Institute Innovation Award is given for the redevelopment of Anagenix's feijoa extract product - Feiolix® whereby the company met the significant challenge of converting the extract into a cost-effective and saleable product that retained the extract's health benefits.

The judges commented that Anagenix had excellent R&D processes in place coupled with their existing experience with other products. Their entry demonstrated a thorough and systematic approach to innovation. They also noted the strong emphasis on science, which is essential to support ingredient health claims.

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THE FERNMARK LICENCE PROGRAMME GROWTH AWARD: PHARMANZ

This award is made to the company with the highest percentage increase in total revenue.

Hamilton-based PharmaNZ Limited is a 100% New Zealand family-owned company that is committed to collaborating with like-minded customers in Creating a Healthier World. The GMP certified contract manufacturer of health supplements achieved 342% growth in 2020.

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BUSINESS RESILIENCE AWARD: WINNER: ALARON PRODUCTS

HIGHLY COMMENDED: VITACO HEALTH (NZ)

This new award was established to recognise a company that went above and beyond in managing its business through 2020. It recognises the grit and agility of our industry's business leaders and workforce.

ALARON PRODUCTS (Winner): Nelson-based Alaron Products is a GMP certified contract manufacturer that was established in 1993.

During 2020 Alaron grew to employ more than 140 people and continued to expand and add additional manufacturing capacity.

The Judges said this entry was a clear demonstration of resilience and an obvious commitment to customer needs through rapid scale-up of production capacity. Alaron seized the opportunity and successfully executed a very ambitious recruitment plan over a short period.

Alaron's growth in the face of a global pandemic was testament to its values, quick but considered actions, and the importance it placed in maintaining effective communication with all stakeholders.

VITACO HEALTH (NZ) (Highly Commended): Vitaco clearly demonstrated a commitment to its vision “To Empower Healthier Lives” by actively keeping its employees’ well-being and safety to the forefront in 2020. This saw the company manage rapidly fluctuating demand and challenging supply chain issues, while keeping Covid-19 out of their multiple manufacturing sites.

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OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO THE INDUSTRY AWARD: ALISON QUESNEL

Longstanding natural health products industry member Alison Quesnel has received Natural Health Products NZ’s *Outstanding Contribution to the Industry* award. The award is not conferred every year and is only made in cases where someone has been truly outstanding.

Ms Quesnel has had extensive experience in the health supplements, food manufacturing and business service industries spanning three decades. She has also held several government advisor roles in relation to the natural health products, small business, and food and beverage sectors.

Between 2009 and 2020 she held a variety of roles with Natural Health Products New Zealand, including as a board member, executive director from 2012 to 2017 and, more recently, government affairs director. Despite having retired in 2020, she led the judging in this year’s Natural Health Products NZ Awards (Outstanding Contribution to the Industry Award excepted).

During her time with Natural Health Products NZ, Ms Quesnel was responsible for helping the sector grow from an industry worth \$1 billion to \$2.3 billion today. Her efforts also saw membership expand to represent more than 80 per cent of all companies involved in this country’s natural products industry, including all major brands and manufacturers.

She also led important regulatory and public affairs workstreams, particularly in relation to the Natural Health Products Bill.

At the same time, she happily mentored many in the industry and was considered the go-to person on natural health product regulatory matters.

Ms Quesnel's professionalism, positivity and ability to build outstanding relationships have been pivotal to the sector's success.

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