



# NZIFST Annual Conference

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Awards Dinner Citations 2023

# Fellow – Rebecca Klee

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Our first fellow has an outstanding combination of technical and business skills, starting with early training in food technology followed by experience in international business development and operations management.

She is also a firm advocate of our Institute, fulfilling the role of Secretary/Treasurer of the HBPB branch of NZIFST for eight years, supporting the revitalisation of the branch. Those who have worked with her describe her as always highly professional, competent, innovative and extremely helpful.

She is a tremendous supporter of young technologists and wherever possible takes the opportunity to mentor them, bringing an amazing 'how can I help' attitude to the food industry, always looking to help others, whether they are seeking employment, or need pointing in the right direction when looking for technical assistance. If they need an introduction to someone to aid in project work, her list of people who can help is endless.

Many younger Technologists and businesses within Hawke's Bay have benefited from her mentoring.

Her supporters say that she is the type of person that everyone knows, and everyone admires.



# Fellow – Hamish Conway

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Our next fellow for 2023 fits the mould of a quiet achiever, one who gets on with it and over time builds an impressive body of work.

He has been with his current employer for 17 years. In that time, he has strengthened the company's dairy science knowledge, particularly in stabilisation of dairy products through UHT processing and also the introduction of ultrafiltration technologies into the production of yoghurts for the New Zealand market. A number of patents have been gained relating to this work.

His expertise has also been applied to process engineering and packaging technology, in the broad picture of the company's product range.

Outside of his daily role he has strongly supported the Auckland branch of NZIFST, hosting many events at his company's head office and providing guidance and growth opportunities on a professional and personal level to many members over the years. Through his advocacy, Callaghan Innovation summer students have been welcomed and benefited from the opportunity to learn about the food and FMCG industries and as part of their studies and his employer also runs Graduate Programmes.

He has also served on Advisory Groups for university degree courses for Massey and University of Otago and is an executive member of the NZ Baking Association.



# Fellow – Jasmin Estrera

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Our third and final fellow this year has worked in the food industry for over 35 years.

She has been instrumental in sharing her knowledge and passion for Food Technology and Food Safety by enabling members to visit her workplaces and share in the journey in brewing and mushrooms.

She has also been a regular judge in the Canterbury Science Fair. She has encouraged and supported school children to follow their dreams in the STEM fields.

As a passionate believer in continuous education, encouraging students, graduates and new food industry entrants to get involved in NZIFST and actively engage with events, presentations and conference, her contribution to our Institute and our industry is significant. She is a strong believer in the role of learning from each other through networking.

She has been a very active member of the local branch for many years and is one member of the committee always out to get presenters keen to share knowledge.

Lately she has been very active in trying to re-engage with local educational institutions – with notable success.



# Distinguished Service Award - Craig Honoré

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The NZIFST Award for Distinguished Service recognises long and exceptional service and/or contribution to a NZ Food Industry sector in a scientific, technical, teaching, marketing or managerial role; and is specifically for industry personnel approaching, or in, retirement.

Our winner this year has enjoyed an exemplary career providing technical leadership in the New Zealand Cheese industry.

Throughout his career he has been a passionate champion of cheese, gaining an unmatched technical and sensory expertise in a vast array of cheese types. He has been at the forefront of innovation in the industry, including new product development for consumer cheeses, cheese ingredients for food manufacturers and foodservice cheese products. He was extensively involved in the development of the proprietary technology that transformed the manufacture of IQF mozzarella shred from a process spanning weeks to a straight-through continuous process that revolutionised New Zealand's competitive participation in the global pizza cheese market.

His first job was at Waitoa Cheese factory, joining in 1980. When he left, in 1991, he was Factory Manager. He then joined New Zealand Dairy Research Institute and over the years has held a series of senior roles at what is now Fonterra Research.

At Fonterra Research, his main role is as Fonterra's global cheese technology ambassador. He has been the "go-to" guy for technical trouble-shooting in key markets around the world for many years, and has built a special rapport with, and respect from operators in challenging markets, notably in Japan, Korea and China.

Not surprisingly, he is frequently recruited to judge local and international Cheese shows such as NZ Cheese Awards, Wisconsin World Cheese Contest and Nantwich International Cheese Awards.

A quiet achiever, he enjoys developing the pool of cheese talent around him. Over the years he has led the Cheese Technology component of the Dairy Industry Graduate Training Programme (latterly the Fonterra Graduate Training programme) and Cheese Skills Courses (aimed at upskilling cheese plant operators, supervisors and managers).

In addition to his industry activities, he has always been an active supporter of dairy and food technologists through their professional organisations, initially the Dairy Industry Association of New Zealand, and when they merged in 2004, the NZIFST. He has continuously served as Branch Secretary of these professional organisations from 1992 until just last year, 2022, providing 30 years of non-stop service to his professional peers.



# Ron Hooker Award – Fiona Nyhof

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Established to honour the outstanding voluntary contribution given by Ron Hooker to the NZIFST since its formation in 1965, this award recognises significant past or current service or contribution to the NZIFST, developing the affairs of the Institute, its Branches or Divisions.

The Institute is presenting this award to a most worthy candidate today. A member since 1980, she has always played an active role, both at branch and national level.

She has served on the Otago/Southland Branch Committee from the start of her career, serving as Chair for 10 of those years, and became a Fellow in 1995 in recognition of her leadership roles and contribution to NZIFST.

Not many will know this: she was the first editor of the NZIFST Journal, the Food Technologist, for 5 years from 1981. She also served on the NZIFST Professional Membership Committee from 2008 to 2014.

She has also had an outstanding record in the mentoring of student or younger members of the Institute both through her 27 years of teaching product development and also, for the last 8 years, through running NZIFST branded career workshops at the University of Otago.

She is a committed member of the team that organises the Food Science judging at local Science Fairs and is a key contributor to the Science of Food events held during the biannual International Science Festivals since 2002. Not only that, but as a member of the teaching staff, for ten years until 2020, she was project leader for Hands on at Otago, a one-week course held in January for secondary school students considering a career in the food industry.

This long serving and outstanding member is clearly a worthy recipient of the Ron Hooker Award for Exemplary Service for her invaluable contributions to leadership of the Otago-Southland branch for over 43 years, promotion of the NZIFST and the food industry through teaching and community engagement, and through her remarkable contribution to teaching at the University of Otago for over 27 years.



# J C Andrews Award – John Brooks

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We are pleased to honour a man whose name is synonymous with Food Safety in New Zealand. This reflects his expertise gained through almost 50 years of working in the food industry as a consultant and academic.

He has an impressive CV.

He gained his BSc (Hons) in microbiology at Queen Elizabeth College, London followed by a PhD in Biochemical engineering at Sydney University. He would be the first to admit that his education did not stop there as he became actively involved in the food industry and continues this involvement today.

Well over 1000 students were beneficiaries of his knowledge during his teaching career at Massey University, Hong Kong University and AUT. Many of these graduates are in leading roles in the food industry here and overseas.

He retired from his full-time academic career in 2014 as Professor at AUT and is currently an Adjunct Professor at that university. His teaching legacy includes 940 graduates in New Zealand and 280 in Hong Kong. In addition, he has run many training courses for the food industry, specifically in HACCP and low acid canning.

He leaves a strong research legacy from his 49 years as a microbiologist. He has published over 100 peer reviewed research papers as well as book chapters on biofilms and food safety. Many technical reports and have his name on them and he has presented papers at national and international conferences. His research specialty is biofilms, but his interests extend to various aspects of food safety and quality, including fermentation. His publications cover work in a

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# J C Andrews Award – John Brooks

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variety of topics including biofilms, fermented sausages, probiotic encapsulation, citric acid production, natural food preservatives, rapid microbiological tests methods, green-lipped mussel quality, foodborne pathogens and traditional Maori fermented foods.

During his academic career, he was frequently consulted on food safety and quality issues, including the Fonterra Whey Protein Concentrate issue in 2013. He has provided advice and been involved in on-site investigations for over 50 companies both in New Zealand and internationally.

His consultancy role led to the establishment of microTech Services Ltd, which at one stage involved setting up a laboratory specifically for consultancy work. He continues his consultancy role today – it is true that a good academic never truly retires!

He has contributed to the Institute in many ways, including as an Executive member and Vice President of the Auckland Branch. He created and administered the NZIFST Facebook page until March 2021.

Outside the NZIFST, he is an honorary life member of the New Zealand Microbiological Society and was awarded the honour of Distinguished Orator – the highest award given by this organisation, at their annual meeting in 2014. He is currently a Board member of the Earl Creativity Trust that funds innovation projects in the community.

