



**Landcare Research**  
**Manaaki Whenua**



## **Being green leads to high growth**

A company that developed a low-cost carbon accreditation programme has won the High Growth sector of the Vero Excellence in Business Support Awards. Since launching its carboNZero<sup>Cert™</sup> programme Landcare Research has contributed to the mitigation of around 124,383 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions and increased revenue by over 200%.

The Vero Excellence in Business Support Awards were founded by business support specialist, Sarah Trotman of fast50 company Bizzone, and sponsored by Vero, the *National Business Review* and BDO Spicers. The awards are a key event of the Bizzone Business Expo – New Zealand’s largest event for business - with the Supreme Award presented to Ministry of Economic Development - *Insolvency & Trustee Service* by Prime Minister Hon John Key at a Black Tie Gala Dinner held on 28 May in Auckland.

Our small and medium businesses play a critical part in our economy, “he said. “They provide Kiwis with the essential goods and services they need. They help drive innovation across our economy. And they can become – with good leadership and support – our large businesses of tomorrow.”

Landcare Research’s carboNZero programme launched their small enterprise certification at the Business Expo in 2008 to encourage SMES to reduce global emissions, save on operating cost and establish a point of differentiation. Up until then similar programmes cost between \$11,000-\$16,000 but registration on the carboNZero programme is just \$500 and certification \$1500.

The carboNZero programme is now a dedicated Strategic Business Unit of Landcare Research, with staff in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. The programme has received numerous high profile awards from both sustainability and business peers. Internationally, it has been successfully licensing into the UK with its partner Achilles Information whose client base of over 32,000 companies across 24 countries is increasing the carboNZero programme’s market reach.

The financial performance of the carboNZero programme has been spectacular since start up. Since introducing the programme the carboNZero programme increased its revenues by 229% despite this being during its international start-up phase. Domestically the business dominates the market with 96.3% market share.

Currently there are over 3000 individuals and organisations registered with the programme, 50 have achieved certification for their organisation, product, service or event. Landcare has also been proactive in reducing its own impact on the environment in the area of waste, reducing the amount of waste per full time equivalent (FTE) by some 27% over the last 12 months.

One of the key missions of the carboNZero programme is to provide a service that enables New Zealand export businesses to create market advantage for export goods and services through the certification of carbon footprints down the supply chain. The carboNZero programme has set itself the aspirational goal of reducing global emissions by New Zealand's deficit of 45.5 millions tonnes by 2012.

The New Zealand Wine Company was the first winery in the world to achieve carboNZero certification. Consequently, their wines gained preferential supplier status to UK supermarket giants, "We've been winning awards for our wines for years, but it's carboNZero that has made people want to talk to us," New Zealand Wine Company (NZWC) CEO, Rob White said.

Christchurch and Canterbury tourism have also committed to the environment by achieving carboNZero certification. "This achievement demonstrates our commitment to the environment and to providing leadership in this area," says Christchurch & Canterbury Tourism chief executive Christine Prince.

The carboNZero programme also offers expert services to community groups and networks such as Lincoln Envirotown, the Sustainable Business Network, the Youth Hostel Association, and provides 'free to air' access to carbon calculators for individuals, travellers/tourists and schools so they can measure and proactively work on reducing their own carbon footprints.

Excellence in business is more important than anything else Roger Bell, Chief Executive of Vero Insurance, the Foundation Sponsor of the awards, says. "The

point of these awards is that our winners don't end up just being excellent on one aspect of business – it goes right across the business – across leadership , strategy, people, processes and the results from all of those things. So it's not just narrowly defined."

BDO Spicers' National Chair Judith Stanway says the Vero awards recognise businesses that are striving, and succeeding. "In doing so they give businesses great role models to aspire to follow," she says. "In the current environment, when so many aspects of our working lives are uncertain, it's important to do a good job and to do it right first time," she says. "No one has the capacity or time to have to go back and re-do things at present: striving for excellence is therefore beneficial to the bottom line, not just the top one."

"Excellence delivered to a well targeted audience equals guaranteed success!" says NBR's Todd Scott, sponsor. "Whether it's excellence in editorial content and commentary or excellence in advertising creative, in today's economic environment nothing short of excellence is acceptable when so many people have a stake in the outcome."

Awards' organiser Bizzone has grown to become one of New Zealand's Fast50 high growth companies and global franchise plans are currently being implemented in Australia. Bizzone has recently created an Online Business Expo and Community being populated from its database of over 35,000 business owners which will go live in mid-August 2009.

[www.carbonzero.co.nz](http://www.carbonzero.co.nz)