



MEDIA RELEASE

Sponsorship Saves Spelling Bee

Tuesday 6 November 2007

A much-loved thick black spread will ensure New Zealand's national spelling competition can continue.

Pupils at Auckland Normal Intermediate School, Mount Eden, celebrated the launch of the New Zealand Vegemite Spelling Bee in association with The New Zealand Listener today with a quick-fire round of spelling along with a few shots of the vitamin B rich spread on bread.

Karen Wheelahan, sales and marketing manager, says Kraft Foods is delighted to be supporting New Zealand's Spelling Bee with its number one spread, Vegemite.

"There are strong synergies between the two brands. Vegemite is loaded with vitamins and minerals, especially Vitamin B, great for vitality and keeping minds bright and attentive.

"The Spelling Bee's focus is to challenge these young minds, extending their skills with spelling, vocabulary and themselves," she says.

The announcement this side of Christmas means next year's intake of year nine students can gear up for the popular contest even though it is still months away.

Spellers from around the country can participate in one of the five regional spelling bees for a chance to compete in the National Vegemite Spelling Bee Final in Wellington at the end of March next year.

The New Zealand Spelling Champion wins an all expenses paid trip for two to Washington DC so they can compete in the Scripps National Spelling Bee.

As host of the international competition, Scripps is implementing a new registration fee in 2008 for all participating schools including those in New Zealand. Kraft's sponsorship will cover this levy for all schools which means the competition can continue.

Janet Lucas, Event Manager, New Zealand Vegemite Spelling Bee, says the spirit of the Spelling Bee is to ensure that there are no financial hurdles that prevent spellers from taking part.

“It is a huge relief that Kraft’s sponsorship also covers this levy. It means in the future more young New Zealanders will get the chance to go to what is regarded as the Olympics of the spelling world especially after the incredible performance of our speller, Kate Weir, who made it to the semi-finals this year,” she says.

Roger Hall, Playwright and Patron of the New Zealand Spelling Bee says next year will be the fourth year for the spelling bee and he is pleased there is a national event that challenges students to hone their spelling prowess.

Spellers interested in showing off their spelling skills at next year’s spelling bee should check out the website, www.spellingbee.co.nz

Other sponsors to the New Zealand Vegemite Spelling Bee are the New Zealand Listener, ZM and Franklin Electronic Publishers.

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