

Innovation marks out award winners

MICHELLE NORTON

In the midst of a technicolour crowd, Comvita, Clinicians and SeaDragon reigned supreme at the Natural Products New Zealand industry awards.

The GMP Pharmaceuticals Gala Awards Dinner (20 March) was held at the Rutherford Hotel in Nelson.

Around 140 delegates from across the natural health industry dressed in colourful attire for the “splash of colour” themed do, to celebrate companies making their mark in natural health.

Natural Products New Zealand executive director Alison Quesnel says all winners showed an ability to think outside the square and this attitude has been a key to the natural health product industry’s success as a whole.

Comvita won the Innovation in Science and Technology award for its formulation, technical development and clinical trial work

investigating the health properties of olive leaf extract.

The company worked with the University of Auckland’s Liggins Institute and the University of Reading in the UK on trials which showed its olive leaf extract improves the way insulin is secreted in overweight men.

Clinicians snapped up the Excellence in Marketing award for the success of its Clinicians for Women campaign.

The judges were impressed with the company’s ability to differentiate their product and to get the attention of its customers.

This year, the judges also awarded a “silver” award to Oxygen Skincare in this marketing category. They were particularly impressed with the small business’ ability to market products on a shoestring budget.

Nelson-based SeaDragon Marine Oils – Australasia’s largest refiner and blender of internationally-certified Omega 3 oils – won



Comvita’s Ronnie Butt, Leigh Kite, Brett Hewlett, Michelle Cubitt and Sharon Seager celebrate their success at the Natural Products New Zealand awards

the Exporter of the Year award.

In the year ending 2013, SeaDragon has grown by 40%.

However, any hopes of a company going home with the Sustainability award were dashed as the judges did not believe any company had quite hit the mark.

Instead, the sponsors of the award and winners of the Westpac 2013 business awards for sustainability, Label and Litho, took to the podium to remind entrants to

persevere with ways to run a more sustainable business.

Natural products industry thriving

The natural products industry remained vibrant in tough economic times and this shows good signs it can continue to make progress on its goal of becoming one of New Zealand’s top exporters by 2025, Ms Quesnel says.

The awards dinner followed

the Natural Products New Zealand Industry Summit day (20 March) with the theme of “achieving success naturally”. MN

FOR MORE SUMMIT COVERAGE

See the Spotlight feature on Natural Health, page 45
PharmacyToday.co.nz