



In the Waipukurau Civic Theatre, Skellerup contestants undergo final questioning, speechmaking and judging. At left is compere Frank Torley, editor of Television NZ's Agreport, and other rural programmes. Centre stage is candidate Geoff Hornblow who almost made it to the finals in Christchurch. He is answering the question: "Do you see the current rise in horticulture as being a permanent one?"

# How to win next year's YFC contest

"You have to enter the Young Farmer of the Year competition again and again and again because it takes two or three experiences to get an idea of what the practical tests involve, what kind of questions you must answer, how to stand up and talk," says Geoffrey Hornblow, Ongaonga, who almost made it to the finals this year.

"Do it now. Don't put it off. You learn a little bit each time, you develop confidence only after several tries.

"Take a real interest in your daily farm tasks. Work out not just how they should be done but why they should be done that way," Geoff advises. "Know people and Government officials, who does what in the MAF and other departments. I studied up for this year's tests by listening to radio and reading newspapers and taking an interest in all aspects of agriculture and current events."

By going into the competitions, a candidate learns one very important thing: How to divide the time allotted. Geoff says: "It's a test to see if you can make quick decisions and get things done. Some people just stand and look at the job. You must get straight into it, not spend too much time on some things."

This year the East Coast Region of the Young Farmers Clubs, comprising five districts, including Hawke's Bay, held both the Miss NZ Farmer of the Year

contest (subsidised by the Australian Women's Weekly, Dalgety's, Bank of New South Wales, among others) and the Skellerup Young Farmer of the Year contest at the same time, on June 25, to avoid travel expenses of two separate contests.

Skellerup finals will be held on August 6 in Christchurch. Miss NZ Farmer of the Year finals will be held on November 5-6 in Palmerston North.

Regional convener was Brian Kirk who, with his colleagues Lou Bird and John Jamieson, have been highly praised for excellent organisation of the entire day.

"We held more practical tests this year than ever before," says Brian. "It's the first year we have had practical tests for the women too."

Male candidates underwent an interview with Sir John Ormond and Tom Aitchison, then carried out practical tasks: square and stay a wooden gate, swing a pipe gate, construct an electric fence, grade lamb carcasses noting blemishes, identify seeds, fertilisers, weeds, plants and offal faults, assemble a milk lift pump, analyse a dairy herd test sheet, rank four cows and give reasons, interpret

