

# MEDIA RELEASE

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Contact: Riitta Mustonen +358 40 7070522



## Laura Rance of Canada wins IFAJ print journalism competition

Laura Rance of Canada is this year's winner of the IFAJ Star Prize for print journalism. The award was announced at the 2016 International Federation of Agricultural Journalists (IFAJ) congress in Bonn Germany.

Rance's article "Africa's hunger games" was published in Winnipeg Free Press in April 2015. Matthew Cawood of Australia was second in this competition. His story "Simplifying towards complexity" was published in Good Land Project in December 2015.

The two finalists were very close, but the judges ended up naming the Canadian the winner.

"Africa's hunger games" received many positive comments. "This is an excellent piece of journalism; the first-person approach allows the author to weave human emotion into this comprehensive piece, filled with facts and expertise on both sides of the issue," praised the judges. Another said: "The writer draws us in and takes us on a compelling journey. Well-done! A marathon effort in the field of conservation agriculture in Africa. Three weeks work in one article. Well-explained and holds interest throughout. The article included a lot of information, yet the journalist didn't get lost in the detail and didn't forget about the humans."

Judges also praised Matthew Cawood's article, calling it an excellent, very comprehensive piece of writing. "Skilled and committed journalist! Very high quality writing. Website concept and upkeep commendable."

One of the judges said: "I found both articles carried me along. I didn't want to stop reading. Both were very well structured."

There were 17 entries from IFAJ member guilds for this year's contest. Each guild was allowed to send one entry.

Mike Wilson, the chair of judges, said, "Articles of a very high standard were entered for the competition. These ranged from articles covering the daily life of farmers and how they deal with crises and disasters, to in depth articles on specific agricultural sectors. In the end these entries show how resilient farmers all over the world are and how they manage to be not only a farmer, but also a manager, vet, financial expert, advisor to other farmers, and also husband and father.

"I am very proud of our agricultural journalists. All the entries reflected just how good they are and how deep their knowledge of agriculture is."

The Star Prize for print journalism is sponsored by John Deere. The winner receives a certificate, gold IFAJ pin and 1,000 Euro cash prize. The runner up receives a 500 Euro cash prize, certificate and a pin.

Judges were Mike Wilson, editor of Farm Futures and past president of IFAJ from the USA, Philippa Courtney, presenter/reporter of Landline ABC TV from Australia, and Hugh Stringleman, Agricultural journalist for NZ Farmers Weekly, Dairy Exporter and Country-Wide, Northland correspondent for NZX Agri Ltd and Researcher for Rural Delivery, TV One.

The competition coordinator was IFAJ Secretary General Riitta Mustonen.

Further information about the IFAJ Star Prize for print journalism is available on the IFAJ website at [www.ifaj.org](http://www.ifaj.org), or by contacting Mustonen at [riitta.mustonen@mt1.fi](mailto:riitta.mustonen@mt1.fi).

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Attached photos:

(1) Secretary General Riitta Mustonen presents the first place award for the IFAJ-John Deere Star Prize for print to Laura Rance.



(2) Secretary General Riitta Mustonen presents the second place award for the IFAJ-John Deere Star Prize for print to Matthew Cawood.

