

## **THE Northern Star**

### **Award underlines success of couple's Alstonville tree-change**

Andy Parks | 7th August 2014

A DECISION to pack up their old lives in Canberra and try their luck at coffee farming on the Alstonville Plateau seems to be paying off for Jos and Wendy Webber.

The Tintenbar couple has just taken out a gold medal for their Magma roast at the 2014 Royal Hobart Fine Food Awards. They also picked up two bronze medals - for their Magma roast in the Cappuccino class and for their Lava roast in the Plunger class.

Their property, Kahawa Estate, was a macadamia and avocado farm when they bought it in 2004 and they have since converted the whole 13 acres to coffee.

"It seemed like a good idea at the time," Jos said.

Wendy said the fact it could be grown without the use of pesticides and herbicides was also a factor in their decision.

"We were both keen gardeners and interested in horticulture and wanted to live in the (Northern Rivers) area, and coffee seemed like an easy crop to grow," Jos said.

Experience has modified his view somewhat, but they seem to be doing okay for an ex-vet and a physiotherapist.

They have previously won a silver at the Sydney Royal Easter Show and a bronze at Hobart.

Jos said the soil, climate and rainfall made the region good for coffee growing, adding that growers and roasters from the local association - the Australian Sub Tropical Coffee Association - took out 10 medals in Hobart.

"This is an international event, so we have beaten coffee from Ethiopia and Brazil," Jos said.

In order to make the business profitable Kahawa Estate roasts, packages and markets their own products and Jos said winning medals gives them assurance they are on the right track.

"It certainly helps with the marketing, but it also gives us the confidence that we are meeting an independent assessor's idea of quality and that Australian coffee can compete with the best."

The couple has retail outlets in Ballina, Tintenbar, Nimbin, Brisbane and Perth as well as online.

#### **The Australian Sub Tropical Coffee Association**

The Australian Sub Tropical Coffee Association represents growers from Coffs Harbour to the Sunshine Coast but most of them are in the Northern Rivers' region.

More than 200 coffees from around the world were entered in the 2014 Royal Hobart Fine Food Awards.

Other winners from the region included; High Trees Estate at Dalwood who won a gold in the Plunger, single origin class and two bronze in the Espresso short black single origin and Cappuccino classes.

Three Valleys Coffee at Teven won three bronze medals - two in the Plunger single origin class and one in the Cappuccino class for their Espresso Roast.



CREAM OF THE CROP: Wendy and Jos Webber of Kahawa Estate Coffee have been awarded a gold medal for their Magna roast and two bronze medals in the Plunger Single and Cappuccino classes at the Royal Hobart Fine Food Awards. Doug Eaton

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