

President Toomas Hendrik Ilves today attended the closing ceremony of the competition "Farmer of the Year 2006", organised by the weekly newspaper Maaleht and the Estonian Chamber of Agriculture and Commerce. This year's competition was already the sixth such competition.

At the ceremony held in Hotel Olümpia Conference Centre, the publisher-in-charge of newspaper "Maaleht" Agu Veetamm and editor Silja Lättemäe introduced 14 nominees for the title of the Farmer of the Year 2006.

The chairman of the judging panel, Professor Olev Saveli, announced this year's title winner. The Farmer of the Year 2006 title was awarded to Chairman of the Board of AS Sagro Kalle Reiter from Harjumaa.

In the words of President Ilves the copy of the historical sculpture "Sower" by Ferdi Sannamees that accompanies the title of honour indicates the ties between times and takes us back to the year 1928 when Head of State Jaan Tõnisson presented that sculpture to the then best farmer Theodor Pool. "I hope that it also marks a shift in our values. That people who have concentrated to live in cities will rediscover countryside where it is safer for our children to grow up and for all of us more peaceful to live. If there are people everything else will follow soon enough. As a President who lives in the countryside I would like to promote such way of thinking in Estonia during the next five years," the Head of State said.

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