

# Norman H. Taylor Memorial Lecture 2025

*“Past, present, and future of soil microbiology for New Zealand’s productive sectors: how managing soils for productivity could paradoxically benefit natural ecosystems by reducing land pressure”*



**2025 recipient**

**Steve Wakelin –  
Bioeconomy  
Science Institute**



Steve Wakelin is a soil microbiologist specialising in how below-ground microbial communities shape ecosystem function, soil and plant productivity, and resilience. His research combines molecular tools, ecological modelling, and field studies to understand how soil microbes respond to land use, climate, and management practices. After completing a PhD on soil-borne diseases, Steve spent 10 years with CSIRO Land and Water (affectionately known as “Club Mud”) in Australia before returning to work across forests, agriculture, and restoration systems in Aotearoa. His interests centre on nutrient cycling, deep soil systems and soil carbon, and plant–microbe interactions. Steve has contributed to numerous national and international projects aimed at improving the sustainability of land management through better use of microbial ecology and has published more than 160 peer-reviewed papers. He works for the newly formed Bioeconomy Science Institute and is based in Christchurch.

## **University of Waikato**

- 15 December 2025, 1:00 pm **S-Block (S1.02)**
- A campus map can be found at the [link here](#).
- Light lunch in S-Block from 12:00 pm – all welcome
- Please RSVP to [Louis.Schipper@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:Louis.Schipper@waikato.ac.nz)

## **Lincoln University (jointly with Lincoln University Soils Society (LUSS))**

- 17 December 2025, 1:00-3:00 pm **S-Block (S1)**
- Lincoln University Soil Society will initially host a mini forum with presentations from soils students (1:00-2:00 pm – all welcome), with the Norman Taylor lecture commencing at 2:00 pm.
- Followed by refreshments and cutting of the World Soil Day cake
- Please RSVP to [Brendon.Malcolm@plantandfood.co.nz](mailto:Brendon.Malcolm@plantandfood.co.nz)

## **Massey University (jointly with the 2026 FLRC Conference)**

- 2 February 2026, 4:00 pm **AH Lecture Block (see link to maps here)**
- Followed by refreshments
- Please RSVP to [C.W.N.Anderson@massey.ac.nz](mailto:C.W.N.Anderson@massey.ac.nz)