



**UPDATE: 07 March 2025**

Kia ora

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2025. In this edition, we highlight major upgrades in international relationships and promising industry developments. Our international news sections features Australia's record horticulture production values, USDA projections through to 2034 and challenges faced by Chile's cherry industry. As always, you'll find links to these items, along with our regular updates on regulatory notifications, consultations, national and international news, and upcoming events.

Ngā mihi

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**GOVERNMENT AGENCY NEWS** **ICPR changes & other updates; Consultations:** Improving the system for importing food and fibre plants for planting;

**NEW ZEALAND NEWS:** **Government news:** PM announces major upgrade to relationship with Viet Nam; Foreign Minister concludes North Asia visit **Industry News:** China receives first shipment of New Zealand kiwiberries; RubyRed harvest begins New Zealand's earliest-ever kiwifruit season; Kiwi Crunch sees boost in Piqa Red Pear crop; New Zealand hosts Indian kiwifruit development delegation; Global potato sector delegation visits New Zealand for collaboration and knowledge exchange; Papatōetoe fruit fly response cost \$2.4 million; Stewart to finish up as FAR head. **Upcoming events & webinars**

**INTERNATIONAL NEWS:** **In the news:** Export growth helps drive record Australian horticulture production values amid challenging environments; India explores grape export opportunities to New Zealand as trade talks advance; Losses mount for Chile's cherry industry; USDA projections highlight fresh produce trends, trade shifts, and climate challenges through 2034; EU Commission aims to simplify rules on sustainability **Overseas Reports:** GAIN reports

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## **GOVERNMENT AGENCY NEWS**

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### ***Consultations***

#### **Improving the system for importing food and fibre plants for planting**

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) is consulting on proposed changes to options for importing food and fibre plants for planting. MPI want to support New Zealand's food and fibre industries by speeding up imports while maintaining our existing level of biosecurity risk management. Alongside the status quo, MPI has developed two options for improving the system.

More information on the proposals and how to make a submission are on the Ministry for Primary Industries [website](#). Deadline for submissions extended to 5 pm on 31 March 2025.

## ***ICPR changes & other updates***

The following ICPRs have been updated in a number of sections since the last newsletter:

- **China:** [ICPR China](#)
- **European Union:** [ICPR EU](#)
- **Fiji:** [ICPR Fiji](#)
- **Indonesia:** [ICPR Indonesia](#)
- **Korea:** [Korea ICPR](#)
- **New Caledonia:** [ICPR New Caledonia](#)
- **Samoa:** [ICPR Samoa](#)

If you need any further clarification, contact your Independent Verification Agency in the first instance.

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## **NEW ZEALAND NEWS**

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### ***Government news***

#### **PM announces major upgrade to relationship with Viet Nam**

Prime Minister Christopher Luxon and his Vietnamese counterpart, His Excellency Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh, recently announced the elevation of the New Zealand-Viet Nam relationship to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

This upgrade was announced during the Prime Minister's visit to Viet Nam as the two countries mark 50 years of diplomatic relations. Both leaders discussed opportunities to further grow and deepen the relationship between New Zealand and Viet Nam across economics, trade and investment, defence and security, education, and people-to-people connections under the new partnership. "A Comprehensive Strategic Partnership is the highest level of partnership with Viet Nam and is a fitting way to commence our 2025 anniversary year. Mr Luxon says. [Full article here](#)

#### **Foreign Minister concludes North Asia visit**

Deputy Prime Minister Winston Peters has concluded visits to China, Mongolia and the Republic of Korea focused on deepening ties with North Asia. "Our time spent this week in Beijing, Ulaanbaatar and Seoul has underlined the opportunities for New Zealand for enhanced engagement with North Asia," Mr Peters says. "North Asia is a dynamic region - and New Zealand is striving to do more with it."

During his visit to Seoul, Mr Peters met Korean Foreign Minister Cho Tae-yul. The New Zealand and Korean Foreign Ministers reaffirmed the strong bilateral relationship, including our close cooperation on security, trade, and enduring people-to-people links. "We look forward to enhanced collaboration with Korea as we work towards finalising a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. Korea is New Zealand's 4th largest trading partner, and we are looking for ways to further enhance our trade and economic links." Mr Peters says. [Full article here](#)

### ***Industry news***

#### **China receives first shipment of New Zealand kiwiberries**

A shipment of 324 kilograms of fresh New Zealand kiwiberries recently landed at Shanghai's airport after an 11-hour journey. This consignment marks the inaugural import of kiwiberries into China, as confirmed by the Embassy of China in New Zealand. The shipment quickly passed customs following an inspection.

This development follows the signing of a protocol between China and New Zealand, enabling the import of New Zealand kiwiberries. This agreement was part of New Zealand Prime Minister

Christopher Luxon's visit to China in June 2024, aimed at enhancing bilateral trade and investment, as reported by Xinhua. [Full article here](#)

## **RubyRed harvest begins New Zealand's earliest-ever kiwifruit season**

New Zealand's earliest-ever kiwifruit harvest has begun, with the first RubyRed fruit picked just outside Edgcumbe in the Bay of Plenty. According to grower organisation New Zealand Kiwifruit Growers Incorporated (NZKGI), the berry-tinged variety will be supplied to supermarkets in New Zealand itself, as well as some overseas markets.

The first volumes of harvested Zespri SunGold and Zespri Green are set to be picked shortly.

Growers have apparently been encouraged by "ideal" growing conditions, with industry forecasts pointing to a record crop of just over 200mn trays this season. That would represent a modest increase on last year's record-breaking campaign, when the country sold more than 190mn trays from mid-April to June. [Full article here](#)

## **Kiwi Crunch sees boost in Piqa Red Pear crop**

Kiwi Crunch is set to experience a boost in volume of Piqa (previously marketed as PiqaBoo) this season, with 26 per cent growth expected in 2025 based on the harvest to date. "Last year we harvested 142,500kg (142.5 tonnes) and this season we expect to harvest 180,000kg (180 tonnes), with further growth year-on-year going forward," said Nigel Hope, Kiwi Crunch operations manager.

As one of New Zealand's largest vertically integrated apple and pear exporters, Kiwi Crunch has orchards in Hawke's Bay and Central Otago, and markets around 2mn cartons of apples and pears annually into more than 30 countries. In 2024, the marketer planted 6,000 Piqa trees in Central Otago – the first commercial planting in the region. "We have put significant work into tree health and pruning in order to increase production and on our biggest orchard we expect to harvest over 55 tonnes per hectare," Hope said.

The first PIQA shipment grown by Kiwi Crunch is due to arrive into China on 16 March and will be packed into retail pack formats ready for release to market late March. [Full article here](#)

## **New Zealand hosts Indian kiwifruit development delegation**

A five-member Indian delegation has made the trip to New Zealand as part of a strategy to advance the Indian kiwifruit industry. The visit was organised by the New Zealand Embassy in Delhi in collaboration with Zespri International and included two representatives from Nagaland – Meyasashi, director of horticulture, and S Senka, joint director, horticulture Nagaland.

Over four days, the delegation engaged in extensive discussions with key stakeholders in Auckland, New Zealand, including the Consul General of India, the India-New Zealand Business Council, scientists from Plant & Food Research and the Kiwifruit Breeding Centre, the chief executive officer and officials of Zespri International, and Māori kiwifruit growers. The team also visited multiple kiwifruit orchards, export packhouses, and kiwifruit nurseries to gain insights into best practices in cultivation, post-harvest management, and export procedures on kiwifruit.

The exchange of expertise and advanced techniques are designed to enhance kiwifruit cultivation across the country, driving economic growth and improving the livelihoods of farmers, particularly in states like Nagaland. [Full article here](#)

## **Global potato sector delegation visits New Zealand for collaboration and knowledge exchange**

A delegation of ten international representatives from the potato sector, including delegates from the United States, Canada, and Australia, is on a week-long tour in New Zealand. Hosted by Potatoes New Zealand, the visit aims to facilitate engagement with local growers, researchers, and businesses, encouraging collaboration and knowledge exchange. The itinerary involves visits to key growing regions, research facilities, and processing plants, offering insights into advancements in horticulture, biosecurity, and production techniques.

Kate Truffitt, CEO of Potatoes New Zealand, remarked, "This tour is an excellent opportunity to strengthen global connections, share expertise, and promote New Zealand's high-quality potato industry on the world stage." [Full article here](#)

## **Papatoetoe fruit fly response cost \$2.4 million**

Biosecurity New Zealand's commissioner for the north, Mike Inglis, said the actions taken in partnership with the sector were to protect the country's \$7 billion horticulture industry. "The estimated cost is small in comparison with the economic impact to New Zealand of it becoming established here," Inglis said.

"At the peak of the response – which ran between 3 January 2025 and 13 February, we had more than 150 people involved – staff from across MPI alongside our contractors and Government Industry Agreement partners in the horticulture industry," Inglis said.

The Ministry for Primary Industries notified New Zealand's trade partners on the detection of the Oriental fruit fly in Papatoetoe, South Auckland, which included information about the response and the strong controls implemented, he said. "As there was not a breeding population, extensive trade restrictions were not required."

The response to the detection of a single male Oriental fruit fly in a national surveillance trap in the Auckland suburb of Papatoetoe ended on February 13, but the Birkdale response is still underway. [Full article here](#)

## ***Leadership announcements***

### **Stewart to finish up as FAR head**

Foundation for Arable Research (FAR) chief executive Dr Alison Stewart is standing down from the role at the end of June to pursue semi-retirement. Dr Stewart plans to continue working in a science advisory and board director capacity.

Chairman Steven Bierema said Dr Stewart had made a great contribution to FAR and the wider arable industry. She had been a driving force in a changing world for encouraging the arable industry to adapt and to adopt changes using science-based solutions, he said. [Full article here](#)

## ***Events & Webinars***

- Export NZ All of Government roadshow, various locations, 17 March- 02 April 2025 [More details here](#)
- Hort Connections, 4-6 June 2025, Brisbane Convention Centre, Australia [More details here](#)
- Primary Industries Summit & Awards, 24-25 June 2025, Christchurch [More details here](#)
- Potatoes Conference 2025, 12-12 August 2025, Christchurch [More details here](#)
- New Zealand Horticulture Conferences, 26-27 August 2025, Wellington [More details here](#)

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## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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### *In The News:*

#### **Export growth helps drive record Australian horticulture production values amid challenging environments**

Australian horticulture has achieved record production values, passing \$17 billion dollars in the 2023-24 financial year. According to Hort Innovation's annual statistics handbook, this is a 4.3 per cent increase compared to the year prior - and exports played a major role.

The 11th edition of the Australian Horticulture Statistics Handbook covers more than 75 different horticulture lines across the country and Hort Innovation CEO Brett Fifield says that the figures come despite Australian growers continuing to suffer record highs when it comes to input costs, and have recently felt the impacts of biosecurity incursions and national disasters. [Full article here](#) [Report here](#)

#### **India explores grape export opportunities to New Zealand as trade talks advance**

India's grape export potential to New Zealand is under evaluation as talks progress between the two nations. A New Zealand trade delegation is currently in Maharashtra to explore the possibility of importing Indian grapes, potentially opening new avenues for Indian exporters. A high-level meeting at the APEDA (Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority) office in Mumbai focused on this agenda.

Previously, New Zealand restricted Indian grape imports due to biosecurity concerns. Horticulture Director Dr. Kailas Mote, from the Ministry of Agriculture's Plant Quarantine Division pointed out that Indian grapes now meet international standards, urging New Zealand to reconsider imports based on India's quality assurance.

New Zealand delegation head Karen Paug mentioned that while import regulations require time, their team intends to inspect Maharashtra's vineyards before a trial shipment. "We understand the importance of trade cooperation. After on-site visits, we will make a decision regarding a test consignment of Indian grapes," she stated. [Full article here](#)

#### **USDA projections highlight fresh produce trends, trade shifts, and climate challenges through 2034**

The USDA's latest long-term agricultural projections provide a detailed outlook on the fresh produce sector through 2034, highlighting key trends in production, trade, and pricing. As global economic conditions stabilize following recent volatility, U.S. fruit and vegetable production is expected to see moderate growth, with shifting trade dynamics and policy decisions shaping the market. While overall crop acreage is projected to decline, consumer demand for fresh produce remains strong, emphasizing the need for efficient supply chains and sustainable production practices.

Trade policies and market conditions will play a crucial role in fresh produce availability and pricing. U.S. agricultural exports are projected to decline in 2025 before gradually increasing, with fresh fruit and vegetable exports remaining a key component of trade growth. Meanwhile, international trade restrictions, tariff adjustments, and supply chain disruptions continue to influence global produce markets. Countries like South Korea and the Philippines have implemented trade measures to stabilize domestic prices, while China and India focus on increasing self-sufficiency in staple crops, potentially affecting U.S. fresh produce exports. [Full article here](#) [Full report here](#)

## Losses mount for Chile's cherry industry

The Chilean cherry sector is set to rack up losses of at least US\$1.6bn in the 2024/25 season according to analysis by the consulting firm Colliers. With exports almost concluded, manager Rodrigo Gil said the signs are “not encouraging”, despite the industry previously forecasting that this would be its best season ever.

In China, which takes more than 90 per cent of Chile's cherry output, prices collapsed following unprecedentedly high shipment volumes. Exports grew 60 per cent compared to last season, saturating the market and causing prices to fall by 50 per cent from 2023/24. Colliers cited several reasons for the losses, chief among them the dramatic increase in exports, which went from 83mn cartons in 2023/24 to 120mn cartons in 2024/25, and the concentration of arrivals ahead of the Chinese New Year at the end of January.

“An early Chinese New Year (29 January), the subsequent rush of Chinese importers to receive fruit and a rather cold spring season in Chile meant that the bulk of the first fruit shipments were cherries of not the best quality, mainly due to lack of ripeness, and this caused them to be quoted at a lower value than in 2024 and slowed down demand in China,” Gil explained.

He added that even when the fruit did arrive in its optimal state of ripeness, it did so in such large quantities and faced such a high volume of accumulated stock that prices were unable to recover. [Full article here](#)

## EU Commission aims to simplify rules on sustainability

The European Commission has announced a new package of proposals aiming to “simplify EU rules, boost competitiveness and unlock additional investment capacity”. “This is a major step forward in creating a more favourable business environment to help EU companies grow, innovate and create quality jobs,” the Commission stated.

However, critics said that limiting the Corporate Sustainability Responsibility Directive (CSRD) would be a backward step for EU sustainability and raised questions over how the EU's Green Deal could be achieved.

The CSRD is currently designed to cover around 50,000 companies with more than 250 employees. By only applying them to firms with more than 1,000 employees, the proposed changes would remove around 80 per cent of companies from the scope of CSRD. The same exemption would be applied to the EU's “taxonomy”, which defines what can be considered a climate-friendly investment. The EU commission argued that the proposals would bring savings of around €6.3bn and mobilise investment capacity of €50bn.

The legislative proposals are now set to be submitted to the European Parliament and Council for their consideration and adoption, with EU member states and Parliament still in a position to block the changes. [Full article here](#)

## Reports:

### Gain reports

Global Agricultural Information Network reports are produced by the USDA. They are designed to provide timely information on the economy, products and issues in foreign countries that are likely to have an impact on United States agricultural production and trade. The information in them is written for USA exporters but the majority is equally relevant to New Zealand. For import regulations for a particular market, New Zealand exporters should first check the country's ICPR on MPI's website.

- **EU Organics Market Begins to Recover**  
After taking a dip in 2022, the EU organic market began to recover in 2023 as consumers' financial situations improved. France and Germany still have the largest organic markets in the EU and growth is expected in almost every Member State until 2025. Area under organic farming is anticipated to expand due to higher demand as well as the EU Farm to Fork Strategy, which sets out a target of 25 percent agricultural land under organic farming by 2025. [Full report here](#)
- **India:** Update of A Workaround Solution on Certificate of Non-Genetically Modified and GM-Free Status for Apple Consignments [Full report here](#)
- **Indonesian:** Prior Notice Must Now Be Submitted Before Vessel Departs US Port with Other Requirements Beginning June 6. [Full report here](#)
- **European Union:** Bans Bisphenol A in Food Contact Materials [Full report here](#)
- **EU Early Alert - Pesticide Review**  
The European Union (EU) follows a complex, rolling system of review for active ingredients and Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) in food. [Full report here](#)
- **Japan 264th Food Safety Group**  
The Consumer Affairs Agency (CAA) of Japan proposed three sets of revisions. One is for Japan's maximum residue levels for three agricultural chemicals (Fluazinam, Flupyrimin, and Mandestrobin) for various agricultural commodities. The second is for the CAA's proposal to eliminate provisional MRLs of 26 agricultural chemicals which MHLW could not confirm their use in Japan. [Full report here](#)
- **Japan 265th Food Safety Group**  
The Consumer Affairs Agency (CAA) of Japan announced four sets of proposals. First was revisions on Japan's maximum residue levels for 9 agricultural chemicals (Dimpropyridaz, Fluxametamide, Isofetamid, Polyoxin complex, Pyraziflumid, Thifluzamide, Broflanilide, Dibutyl succinate, and Norgestomet) for various agricultural commodities. [Full report here](#)
- **Exporter Guide Annual:** [Canada](#)
- **Citrus Annual:** [Australia](#), [Brazil](#), [China](#), [European Union](#), [Korea](#), [Morocco](#)
- **Avocado Annual:** [Chile](#)

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