

UPDATE: 09 November 2023

Kia ora

In this week’s update, there is guarded optimism about the upcoming season with an early cherry crop predicted and encouraging signs that the kiwifruit crop will be a good one while the pipfruit sector is investing in a project to be a global leader in sustainability. On the international front, Australia has got one step closer to exporting avocados into India but hasn’t been able to progress its FTA with the EU. You’ll find links to these as well as our regular items of regulatory notifications, consultations, national and international news, and upcoming events below.

Ngā mihi

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| GOVERNMENT AGENCY NEWS |

## ICPR changes

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

* Canada: [ICPR Canada](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/628)
* Eurasian Economic Union: [ICPR EEU](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/11518-russia-and-the-eurasian-economic-union)
* European Union: [ICPR EU](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/640)
* Indonesia: [ICPR Indonesia](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/652)
* Japan: [ICPR Japan](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/657)
* Reunion Island: [ICPR Reunion Island](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/681)
* Taiwan: [ICPR Taiwan](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/694)
* United Arab Emirates: [ICPR UAE](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/700)

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

#### WTO and TBT Notifications

Please find attached the most recent WTO and TBT notifications from countries that are considering changes to their plant import requirements for specific products. If you have any concerns about the notifications being presented, please contact Plant.exports@mpi.govt.nz so that they can potentially make a submission to the notifying country.



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| NEW ZEALAND NEWS |

## Opinion piece:

#### Nadine's update: Government must prepare the ground

In this week’s update Nadine Tunley stresses the vital role of horticulture in building an economy which is environmentally and economically sustainable. Horticulture NZ has presented a briefing document to the new government that focusses on the Aotearoa Horticulture Action Plan and recommends that the new government develop its work programme based on that strategy. HortNZ is also calling for regulatory reforms, recognition of certification frameworks, and flexibility in labour practices to ensure a resilient and prosperous horticulture sector. [Full article here](https://www.hortnz.co.nz/news-events-and-media/nadines-update/government-must-prepare-the-ground/)

## Industry news

#### Cherry crop earlier than usual

This year's Central Otago cherry picking season looks like being about a week earlier than usual. According to Tim Jones, chief executive of Cromwell-based cherry orchardists 45 South, the fruit is at chuck fall stage with small green fruit appearing. He says that a warm spell in July "kicked things off and then it's just been slightly warmer all the way through". Expecting 2,200 tons of fruit this year, 45 South is primarily exporting but with "a strong relationship" with Foodstuffs for its pre-Christmas trade. Jones says they normally start picking around the December 10 to 15 but are expecting to start around December 5 at this stage.

Central Otago Fruitgrowers Association chair Kris Robb commented it was early days but everyone is through flowering and pollination. "The early fruit is set now and I think the general consensus around the area is there is a bit of optimism now about the crop" he said. [Full article here](https://www.ruralnewsgroup.co.nz/hort-news/hort-general-news/cherry-crop-earlier-than-usual)

#### Kiwifruit bouncing back?

There are encouraging signs and hopes that this season's kiwifruit crop will be a good one. NZ Kiwifruit Growers Incorporated (NZKGI) chief executive Colin Bond says it's still early days, with bud burst starting, but things are looking positive without being exceptional. "

Bond says Hawke's Bay was the kiwifruit area most impacted by Cyclone Gabrielle, and people need to appreciate how long it's going to take for some growers in that region to get back on their feet. In addition to the damage caused by silt, there remains concerns about vine roots saturated by the heavy rain. He reckons it'll be a couple of months - maybe longer - before growers know the health status of their vines. "It's still a bit of an open question on how the plants will survive in the coming months." He says most growers are cautiously optimistic about the coming season and the spring is looking positive. [Full article here](https://www.ruralnewsgroup.co.nz/hort-news/hort-general-news/kiwifruit-bouncing-back)

#### Zespri's overseas tours return

Around 50 Zespri Kiwifruit growers from New Zealand have been able to see the fruit they grow on retailer shelves in Singapore and across Europe for the first time since an overseas industry tour hiatus due to Covid-19 travel restrictions. The group of growers from the Bay of Plenty, South Auckland, Gisborne and Hawke’s Bay included representatives from Zespri and grower advocacy body Māori Kiwifruit Growers Incorporated (MKGI).

The first stop was Singapore where the group attended the official opening of Zespri’s new Centre of Sales and Marketing Excellence. The group also visited FreshMart, Zespri’s Singapore distribution and repack partner. Growers then travelled to Europe to visit orchards, packhouses and key markets Italy, France and Belgium

Zespri chief executive Dan Mathieson says it’s been fantastic for New Zealand-based growers to reconnect with markets where the fruit they grow for Zespri is sold. “It’s been an opportunity for our growers to see how we’re creating demand ahead of supply through continuing to invest in our brand and strengthening the way we sell kiwifruit as the teams strive to support New Zealand and offshore grower returns. While Zespri volumes in market are quite low as the New Zealand season comes to an ends, growers have seen the execution of displays including new cardboard-based sustainable packaging[. Full article here](https://www.ruralnewsgroup.co.nz/hort-news/hort-general-news/zespri-s-overseas-tours-return)

#### Zespri meets China's foreign minister over illegal Sun Gold plantings

Zespri and its board advisor Sir John Key have met with China's foreign minister to discuss the illegal plantings of Gold3 kiwifruit in the country. Zespri owns the rights to Sun Gold, or G3, and growers in New Zealand pay hundreds of thousands of dollars per hectare to grow it. A grower took clippings to China in 2016 and since then the amount being grown has been increasing.

Zespri chief executive Dan Mathieson said the unauthorised plantings remain a significant challenge with around 8000ha in the ground in China, putting at risk the significant investment by growers through the potential for oversupply.

Sir John met with Foreign Minister Wang Yi in Beijing on Monday. Mathieson said the meeting involved discussions around the importance of IP protection. "We have been encouraged by the support we've received from within China as we've sought to address the challenge of unauthorised Gold3 kiwifruit plantings in China. This includes the steps taken to amend its Seed Law to grant stronger protections to investors in plant varieties."

Zespri has also launched legal action in China as part of its efforts to address the issue. [Full article here](https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/country/501862/zespri-meets-china-s-foreign-minister-over-illegal-sun-gold-plantings)

#### $15m project to drive sustainable NZ pipfruit production

New Zealand Apples and Pears is working on a near $15 million project to achieve the industry's goal of being a global leader in sustainable production practices. The project is funded 50-50 by Apples and Pears and the Government through the MPI sustainable food and fibre futures fund (SFF futures).

New Zealand Apples and Pears research and development manager Rachel Kilmister says NZ exports fruit to 80 markets worldwide, all of whom have different rules, and the aim is to be able to meet all these requirements. "We are recognised globally as world leaders in producing safe and sustainable food, but we want to continue to be innovative and to improve on how we do that," Kilmister said. "There are more and more challenges coming from offshore around growing more sustainably, in terms of meeting climate change challenges, so we are constantly trying to demonstrate how we are doing that."

Kilmister says there is a challenge in meeting overseas chemical requirements while, at the same time, meeting phytosanitary requirements to keep export fruit free from pests and diseases that will run afoul of importing countries' biosecurity regulations. One of the problems NZ faces, she says, is that some of the sprays that are more efficient are simply not available in NZ. [Full article here](https://www.ruralnewsgroup.co.nz/hort-news/hort-general-news/15m-project-to-drive-sustainable-nz-pipfruit-production)

#### New Zealand plans changes to strengthen frozen berry import rules

New Zealand Food Safety is inviting comments on proposals that include changing the imported food category of frozen berries from “increased regulatory interest (IRI)” to “high regulatory interest (HRI).” The new rules would apply to frozen berries, including mixed frozen food containing frozen berries imported from any country ready to eat. Fruits include blackberry, blueberry, cranberry, currants, raspberry, and strawberry.

New Zealand has had import controls for frozen berries since December 2015. Work was started in 2020 to improve knowledge of microbiological food safety risks associated with frozen fruits and vegetables, including berries. New Zealand Food Safety is proposing a new risk management approach focused on ensuring that RTE frozen berries are sourced by importers from overseas manufacturers that operate food safety management systems with procedures and processes in place to identify and control hazards in berries. It also introduces the use of third-party certificates issued by accredited certification bodies to satisfy clearance requirements. This is consistent with Australia’s requirements for RTE berries, which allow such certificates to be used to meet border clearance demands. [Full article here](https://foodsafetynews.us16.list-manage.com/track/click?u=00b9adb6e97ef251187f5eddd&id=908fdf2a55&e=1be378a101)  [Consultation document here](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/59794-Discussion-Paper-Proposed-Changes-to-the-Food-Notice-Requirements-for-Registered-Food-Importers-and-Imported-for-Sale)

## Reports & Insights

#### Market Intelligence Report: France - A growing business and investment hub in Europe

France’s efforts in making itself an attractive market for business investment have been paying off. Recent changes enhancing France’s economic and regulatory settings for businesses have resulted in France being the largest recipient of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) across Europe for four years in a row. New Zealand businesses thinking about establishing a presence or modifying their footprint in Europe may want to consider the opportunities a base in France could offer. [Full report here](https://govt.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=ee12ff73e0bbcb23b01a60631&id=fe47d6930d&e=f1812fde89)

#### PWC: Transforming New Zealand’s Food and Fibre sector for global prosperity.

As the global population continues to surge, predicted to reach 9.8 billion (an increase of more than 25% from 2020) by 2050, the demand for Food and Fibre production is set to soar to unprecedented levels. New Zealand’s agriculture sector is feeding approximately 40 million people globally, however there is increasing pressure to boost production by 70% by 2050 to feed the world while also facing the pressure of climate change and other challenges. This dramatic surge in demand, coupled with the urgent need to address environmental concerns and resource scarcity, requires a paradigm shift. This report provides an overview of the sector and proposes some future options for future prosperity. [Full report here](https://www.pwc.co.nz/assets/2023-assets/food-and-fibre-for-prosperity/food-and-fibre-thought-leadership-final.pdf)

#### Upcoming events and webinars:

* United Fresh & IFPA Sustainability Workshop, 15Nov 2023, Auckland [Full details here](https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/auckland-sustainability-workshop-wed-15-november-2023-tickets-716965752867?aff=oddtdtcreator)
* Adapting Aotearoa: Towards a Climate Resilient Land and Food System. Deep South Challenge, Resilience to Nature’s Challenges and Our Land and Water. 20 November 23, Christchurch Town Hall, Christchurch. [Full details here](https://deepsouthchallenge.co.nz/adapting-aotearoa/?utm_medium=email&_hsmi=272241730&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--m2Lcd2I5GV_82uymEjsQHyPxO0jYoU9a9HO_cqzjtI6QlTVrb1QlLn_Xh3y39CCz7FdEgzdwpOJXPFmkUsjhm1pRGGg&utm_content=272241730&utm_source=hs_email)
* Asian Seed Congress 2023, 20-24 November 2023, Christchurch. [Full details here.](https://web.apsaseed.org/asc2023)
* Hort Connections, 3-5 June 2024, Melbourne Convention Centre, Australia [Full details here](https://hortconnections.com.au/)

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| INTERNATIONAL NEWS |

## GAIN reports:

Gain reports are from the “Global Agricultural Information Network” and 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 countries ICPR on MPI’s web site.

China: National Food Safety Standard of General Safety Requirements of Food Contact Materials and Articles Notified to WTO.

On October 25, 2023, China notified the National Food Safety Standard of General Safety Requirements of Food Contact Materials and Articles to the World Trade Organization (WTO) under G/SPS/N/CHN/1293. The proposed date of entry into force is to be determined. [Full report here](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=National%20Food%20Safety%20Standard%20of%20General%20Safety%20Requirements%20of%20Food%20Contact%20Materials%20and%20Articles%20Notified%20to%20WTO_Beijing_China%20-%20People%27s%20Republic%20of_CH2023-0154)

China: Updated Catalog of National Food Safety Standards Released

On September 28, 2023, the People’s Republic of China (PRC) National Health Commission (NHC) released an updated Catalog of National Food Safety Standards. The updated list contains 1,563 standards covering food products, additives, quality specifications, testing methods, and production practices. [Full report here](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Updated%20Catalog%20of%20National%20Food%20Safety%20Standards%20Released_Beijing_China%20-%20People%27s%20Republic%20of_CH2023-0145)

European Commission Authorizes Four GE Crops for Import

On October 13, 2023, the European Commission authorized four genetically engineered maize crops for import as food and animal feed, including three full approvals and one renewal. [Full report here](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=European%20Commission%20Authorizes%20Four%20GE%20Crops%20for%20Import_Brussels%20USEU_European%20Union_E42023-0046)

FAIRS Export Certificate Report Annual: Japan

This report lists major export certificates required by the Japanese government to export food and agricultural products from the United States to Japan. [Full report here](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=FAIRS%20Export%20Certificate%20Report%20Annual_Tokyo_Japan_JA2023-0099)

Exporter Guide: Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia was the 22nd largest market ($1.58 billion) for U.S. food and agricultural products in 2022, an increase of 18 percent compared to 2021. There are plenty of opportunities for a wide range of new-to-market U.S. food products; especially, healthier products aimed at a generation with more disposable income. [Full report here](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Exporter%20Guide_Riyadh_Saudi%20Arabia_SA2023-0014)

Fresh Deciduous Fruit Annual: [India](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Fresh%20Deciduous%20Fruit%20Annual_New%20Delhi_India_IN2023-0074), [Egypt](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Fresh%20Deciduous%20Fruit%20Annual_Cairo_Egypt_EG2023-0024), [Taiwan](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Fresh%20Deciduous%20Fruit%20Annual_Taipei_Taiwan_TW2023-0049), [Argentina](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Fresh%20Deciduous%20Fruit%20Annual_Buenos%20Aires_Argentina_AR2023-0015), [China](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Fresh%20Deciduous%20Fruit%20Annual_Beijing_China%20-%20People%27s%20Republic%20of_CH2023-0153), [Canada](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Fresh%20Deciduous%20Fruit%20Annual_Ottawa_Canada_CA2023-0050), [Chile](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Fresh%20Deciduous%20Fruit%20Annual_Santiago_Chile_CI2023-0030), [South Africa](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Fresh%20Deciduous%20Fruit%20Annual_Pretoria_South%20Africa%20-%20Republic%20of_SF2023-0040), [Korea](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Fresh%20Deciduous%20Fruit%20Annual_Seoul_Korea%20-%20Republic%20of_KS2023-0021), [EU](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Fresh%20Deciduous%20Fruit%20Annual_Berlin_European%20Union_E42023-0045)

Fresh Deciduous Fruit Annual: New Zealand

New Zealand apple-planted area in the 2023/2024 market year is forecast to drop substantially from 11,000 ha to 9,200 ha. This development results from the impacts of cyclone Gabrielle, which caused large scale floodwaters, silt, debris, wind, and surface flooding in the primary apple growing regions of Hawkes Bay and Gisborne. FAS/Wellington is forecasting apple production in the 2023/2024 market year to be 460,000 metric tons (MT). This is representative of a predicted recovery as a result of the forecasted El Niño weather, availability of seasonal labor, and implementation of farm system innovations. Although projected exports are well behind historical years volumes, FAS/Wellington forecast a recovery in the 2023/2024 market year following the damage incurred in the current year. Due to New Zealand’s counter-seasonal production to other countries, market demand will likely stay strong. [Full report here](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Fresh%20Deciduous%20Fruit%20Annual_Wellington_New%20Zealand_NZ2023-0018)

## In The News:

#### Aussie Hass avo protocol approved by India

Avocados Australia has received confirmation recently that the protocol for exporting Australian Hass avocados has been approved by India! This is good news for Australian avocado growers looking to export their Hass avocados to India.

Avocados Australia, the industry’s peak industry body, welcomes the news and says the next step is to work on accrediting growers and packers to the new protocol. “It is terrific news that Australian avocado growers, once accredited, can export to India,” said John Tyas, Avocados Australia’s CEO. “We can now look to growing this exciting new market.”

But John Tyas says the industry can’t stop there. “We have increasing supply so growing export markets and increasing exports is an important focus for us.” Australian production is forecast to increase strongly over the next few years to around 170,000 tonnes per annum expected to be produced by 2026. Avocados Australia has a number of new markets in its sights. “With Australia’s relationship improving with China we see China as an excellent market opportunity.” [Full article here](https://www.freshplaza.com/asia/article/9574884/aussie-hass-avo-protocol-approved-by-india/?utm_medium=email)

#### Apple growing in Australia in decline because prices haven’t risen in 20 years

According to The Australian Grower, apple growing in the country is gradually dying out. Australian farmers complain that the business is becoming unprofitable as apple prices have remained stable for nearly 20 years while production costs have risen at an incredibly high rate. Farmers accuse local supermarket chains of increasing the retail price of apples by no more than 50 Australian cents in 20 years, while the wholesale price has remained virtually unchanged.

About 20 years ago, Australia was a relatively large supplier of apples to the markets of India, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and Hong Kong. Currently, only about 1% of the apples grown in the country are exported. Today, the country is not among the major exporters of these fruits, selling no more than 3 thousand tons of fresh apples to foreign markets per year. Moreover, Australian apples mainly get exported to the Papua New Guinea market.

Apple imports range from one to one and a half thousand tons per year with almost 100% of apples imported into Australia coming from China. Previously, Australia imported significant volumes of apples from New Zealand, but since 2019 these supplies have ceased. [Full article here](https://www.freshplaza.com/asia/article/9572406/apple-growing-in-australia-in-decline-because-prices-haven-t-risen-in-20-years/?utm_medium=email)

#### EU-Australia trade deal talks collapse

The trade talks between the EU and Australia have stalled. The talks between Brussels and Canberra were seen as a final attempt by the two to solve their differences. In a statement on Sunday, Australian Trade Minister Don Farrell said the two sides had not been able to make progress: "Negotiations will continue and I am hopeful that, one day, we will sign a deal that benefits both Australia and our European friends."

In July, Australia walked out of earlier talks as they said the EU's offer wouldn't give Australia's farm produce enough access. In response, Australia's trade minister said that if Brussels's offer was ‘not good enough’, they would walk away from the deal.

The National Farmers’ Federation has congratulated Trade Minister Don Farrell for turning down an EU trade offer that would have disadvantaged Australian farmers. [Full article here](https://www.freshplaza.com/asia/article/9572432/eu-australia-trade-deal-talks-collapse/?utm_medium=email)

#### US: Organic produce sales and volume edge up again in Q3

For the second quarter in a row, organic fresh produce in the US grew slightly in year-over-year sales and volume in the third quarter of 2023, according to the Q3 2023 Organic Produce Performance Report issued by Organic Produce Network and Category Partners.

Overall, organic fresh produce dollar sales and volume increased by 2 percent and 1.9 percent, respectively, for Q3 2023 compared to the same period last year, with sales for the quarter topping $2.44 billion and volume movement at 733 million pounds. Conventional produce dollar sales and volume showed similar year-over-year gains, with sales up 2.4 percent and a volume increase of 1.8 percent.

The Q3 2023 Organic Produce Performance Report covers food sales in the U.S., including all outlets (i.e., supermarkets, mass merchandisers, club stores, dollar stores, convenience stores, and military commissaries) for 13 weeks of 2023 (7/02-9/30) compared to the same period last year. [Full article here](https://www.freshplaza.com/asia/article/9571939/organic-produce-sales-and-volume-edge-up-again-in-q3/?utm_medium=email) [Full report here](https://www.organicproducenetwork.com/amass/listener/document_get_public.php?dir=document&id=43&file=OPN_Quarterly_Report_Q3_2023.pdf)

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