

UPDATE: 11 October 2023

Kia ora

As optimism grows with the start of the growing season in New Zealand, there continues to be signals from overseas markets that environmental and sustainabile practices go beyond how our produce is grown to encompass the whole supply chain right down to retail packaging. In response, some organisations are developing new programmes while others are pushing back on the requirements or seeking a more balanced approach. 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 |

## 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](mailto:Plant.exports@mpi.govt.nz) so that they can potentially make a submission to the notifying country.



## ICPR changes

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

* Samoa: [ICPR Samoa](https://cbaff.outreach.co.nz/redirect/YTo3OntzOjM6InVybCI7czozOToiaHR0cHM6Ly93d3cubXBpLmdvdnQubnovZG1zZG9jdW1lbnQvNjg0IjtzOjQ6InR5cGUiO3M6NDoiaHJlZiI7czo3OiJtZXNzYWdlIjtzOjU6Ijg2NzM3IjtzOjc6ImFjY291bnQiO3M6NToiY2JhZmYiO3M6ODoiY2F0ZWdvcnkiO3M6NDoiNTIxNSI7czo3OiJzZW50X2F0IjtpOjE2OTYzMDI1Mzc7czoxMDoibm90aWZpYWJsZSI7aToxO30.?oid=10784)
* Tonga: [ICPR Tonga](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/697-Tonga)
* Uruguay: [ICPR Uruguay](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/703-Uruguay)
* USA: [ICPR USA](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/702)

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

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| NEW ZEALAND NEWS |

## Industry news

#### Optimism grows

HorticultureNZ chair Barry O'Neil believes the mood in the sector is more positive than it's been all year. He says after all the rain and weather events that have plagued the sector and caused terrible damage, things are looking much brighter as spring begins.

However, O'Neil adds that the unknown with fruit crops is what the flower capacity will be, and what the vine and trees loads will be able to carry as the fruit develops. "There is still a question mark as to whether we will get a full bumper crop or whether we will have to reduce out crop in the light of status of the trees and vines being stressed," he explains.

While significant areas of prime horticulture land appears to be lost - especially in places such as the Esk Valley in Hawke's Bay - O'Neil still believes that the horticulture sector will continue to expand. He points to the fact that kiwifruit, apple, avocado and cherry plantings have been expanding significantly in recent years. "While that expansion rate will have slowed down a little bit, I still expect horticulture to expand significantly going forward," he adds. "Providing we have the right government policy settings that will support and not restrict growing." [Full article here](https://www.ruralnewsgroup.co.nz/hort-news/hort-general-news/optimism-grows?ct=t(RNG_10_OCTOBER_2023_COPY_01))

#### Zespri’s Northern Hemisphere harvest to be the biggest yet

Zespri’s kiwifruit harvest from the Northern Hemisphere is set to exceed previous sales volumes with the strong harvest supporting its efforts to deliver 12-month supply in key markets, maintain brand presence and shelf space and support New Zealand and offshore grower returns.

Zespri’s Executive Officer - Northern Hemisphere Supply, Nick Kirton says the Northern Hemisphere sales programme has just commenced with Zespri expecting to sell around 29 million trays, or just over 100,000 tonnes of kiwifruit from orchards throughout France, Italy, Greece, Korea, and Japan. This compares to 24 million trays or 88,000 tonnes last season.

Across the Northern Hemisphere supply regions - which include Italy, France, Greece, Japan and Korea, Zespri has formed partnerships over more than 20 years with around 1,500 Zespri growers and suppliers who play a key role in Zespri’s global supply strategy, which is working towards the ultimate goal of supplying premium Zespri Kiwifruit for all 12 months of the year. [Full article here](https://www.freshplaza.com/asia/article/9564485/zespri-s-northern-hemisphere-harvest-to-be-the-biggest-yet/?utm_medium=email)

#### First commercial volumes from 25 hectare apricot orchard expected this season

New Zealand grower Ardgour Valley Orchards will see the first commercial volumes of the apricot varieties planted over 25 hectares in the Ardgour Valley, Tarras, Central Otago.

The varieties grown have been bred specifically for the New Zealand climate by Plant and Food Research in conjunction with SummerfruitNZ. Summer 2,3, and 4, were bred in Clyde at the Plant and Food Research Station specifically for Hort Invest's growing area. They are good a size, sweet, juicy and highly coloured.

"On the export front this will be our first development year. We are targeting Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam, Thailand, Middle East, USA, UK and Australia. The apricots will be marketed by Ardgour Valley in a generic brand. This will be our first year to get fruit to the international market, but customers that were here last year tasted the fruit fresh from the tree and were excited about the taste and the quality." said Sharon Kirk, Director of Ardgour Valley Orchards [Full article here](https://www.freshplaza.com/asia/article/9565346/first-commercial-volumes-from-25-hectare-apricot-orchard-expected-this-season/?utm_medium=email)

#### United Fresh Launches Fresh Facts 2023 with Fresh Produce Insights for NZ

Celebrating over two decades of providing invaluable insights into the fresh produce sector, Fresh Facts, an annual resource collating data contributions from the industry, has found a new home under the stewardship of United Fresh.

Dr. Hans Maurer, Chair of the Technical Advisory Group at United Fresh says Fresh Facts was in recent years a collaboration between Plant & Food Research and Horticulture New Zealand. “While the familiar format of Fresh Facts remains, there is an additional emphasis on reporting data that specifically represents the domestic fresh produce sector, signifying a strategic move towards better serving the entire pan-produce industry,” he say

Maurer says the primary goal is to see Fresh Facts play an even more central role in the data-based decision-making processes that are integral for the continued growth of our industry. “We aim to enhance the timing relevance of credible industry data, by incorporating information available from various annual reports, industry sectors, product groups, marketers and other sources, so the industry can have a repository of data at their fingertips, helping them to make strategic decisions for growth,” he says. [Full article here](https://unitedfresh.co.nz/news-events/media-releases/united-fresh-launches-fresh-facts-2023-with-fresh-produce-insights-for-nz) [Full report here](https://unitedfresh.co.nz/assets/site/images/images/Fresh-Facts-–-Online-version-2023_3.pdf)

#### Challenges and new chances in EU Green Deal

A research paper on the European Union’s Green Deal reveals an umbrella of policies adopted to make the bloc climate neutral by 2050 that will pose significant challenges for New Zealand’s primary export sectors.

Organics Aotearoa NZ chief executive Tiffany Tompkins presented the findings of the research, which was funded by the Our Land Our Water National Science Challenge and titled EU Green Deal: Impact on NZ’s land-based primary producers, at the NZ Landcare Trust-OLW, Food, Farming and Freshwater roadshow in Canterbury.

Tompkins said the Green Deal, especially the Farm to Fork strategy, presents both challenges and opportunities for NZ exports into the EU. “What opportunities and how we are placed to capitalise on these now and into the future is the challenge. “All countries, like NZ, are getting their heads around the EU Green Deal,” she said.

Trade agreements recently concluded by the NZ government and those currently under negotiation increasingly include clauses related to environmental concerns such as greenhouse gas emissions, climate change, water quality and biodiversity loss. Tompkins said several areas of focus for the Green Deal are likely to pose significant challenges for NZ’s export sectors, not only directly in the context of the NZ-EU Free Trade Agreement but also due to the potential for the EU’s practices and regulations to become de facto global standards for sustainable trade and be adopted by NZ’s other major trading partners. [Full article here](https://www.farmersweekly.co.nz/news/challenges-and-new-chances-in-eu-green-deal/) [Full report here](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UThlgW07ZKfXivrlDHDNQUhbAWMuPdGU/view)

## Reports & Insights

#### MFAT Market Intelligence Report: Impact of drought on Spanish agriculture.

Spain is a major food-producing nation both for Europe (where it grows one in four of the fruits and vegetables produced in the European Union) and internationally (traditionally producing more than half of the world’s olive oil, and 25% of the world’s citrus exports). Droughts are a frequent occurrence in Spain’s dry southern Mediterranean climate. The current drought, however, is particularly acute and prolonged – underway since the second half of 2022 ...40% of total Spanish territory is now in a state of drought, affecting 80% of farmlands. Spanish farmers and livestock owners talk about an “absolute catastrophe”. [Full report here](https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/trade/mfat-market-reports/impact-of-drought-on-spanish-agriculture-october-2023/?utm_source=MFAT&utm_campaign=f35f78b528-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2023_10_08_10_37&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-f35f78b528-%5BLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D)

#### Upcoming events and webinars:

* United Fresh & IFPA Sustainability Workshop, 15November 2023, Mt Wellington, 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: WTO Notified Amendment to Excessive Packaging National Standard

On September 15, 2023, China notified an amendment to the National Food Safety Standard for Restricting Excessive Packaging for Foods and Cosmetics (GB 23350-2021) to the World Trade Organization (WTO) under G/TBT/N/CHN/447/Add.2. The standard entered into force on September 1, 2023. [Full report here](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=WTO%20Notified%20Amendment%20to%20Excessive%20Packaging%20National%20Standard_Beijing_China%20-%20People%27s%20Republic%20of_CH2023-0128)

Taiwan Upgrades Council of Agriculture to Ministry of Agriculture

On August 1, 2023, Taiwan’s Council of Agriculture (COA) was transformed into the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA). The key organizational changes are the creation of the Department of Animal Welfare and Department of Resource Sustainability and Utilization in MOA headquarters, and two affiliated agencies, Forestry Bureau and Soil and Water Conservation Bureau. [Full report here](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Taiwan%20Upgrades%20Council%20of%20Agriculture%20to%20Ministry%20of%20Agriculture_Taipei_Taiwan_TW2023-0044)

Stone Fruit Annual: [Australia](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Stone%20Fruit%20Annual_Canberra_Australia_AS2023-0015)

Fresh Fruit Market Update 2023: [Japan](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Fresh%20Fruit%20Market%20Update%202023_Osaka%20ATO_Japan_JA2023-0090)

## Other Reports

#### Statistics Handbook highlights shifts in Asia trade

Asiafruit Congress Statistics Handbook 2023 provides expert analysis of key trends in trade across 12 different Asian markets. Published by Asiafruit Magazine, the annual statistical guide to Asia’s fresh fruit and vegetable trade was launched at the recent Asiafruit Congress and Asia Fruit Logistica in Hong Kong. A key finding in the Handbook is that Asia’s total fresh fruit imports declined in 2022 on the back of lower volumes from key origins as suppliers struggled to keep pace with market demand. [Full report here](https://desktop.asiafruitmagazine.com/full_page_image/asiafruit-congress-statistics-handbook-cover/content.html)

#### EU experts discussed eight emerging food safety risks

Shiga toxin-producing E. albertii and the potential health risk of increased consumption of coconut oil are among topics on the radar of European authorities, according to a recent report.

Eighteen potential emerging issues were discussed in 2021 and eight were judged to be emerging risks, according to the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). In four of the issues discussed in 2021, a change in consumer trends was identified as a driver. Six were classed as microbiological hazards and four as chemical. An example of an emerging risks from a new consumer trend is the potential health risk of increased consumption of coconut oil. The potential emerging risks associated with decreased use of pesticides and fertilizers were also assessed as an emerging risk.

EFSA networks contributing to the topic include the Emerging Risks Exchange Network (EREN), the Stakeholder Discussion Group on Emerging Risks, EFSA’s scientific units, scientific panels and the Scientific Committee.

In New Zealand, the Emerging Risk Identification System (ERIS) has seen 57 issues put into the emerging risk register. Examples include microplastics and nanoplastics in food, Salmonella in finfish, chlorpyrifos-containing agrichemicals used for food crops and new limits for chlorate in milk. [Full article here](https://www.foodsafetynews.com/2023/09/eu-experts-discussed-eight-emerging-risks/) [Full report here](https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.2903/sp.efsa.2023.EN-8233) New Zealand’s ERIS reports [here](https://nzfssrc.org.nz/resources/eris/#/)

## In The News:

#### Australians flabbergasted as avocado prices plunge to just 9 cents

In Brisbane, avocados have plummeted to just 9 cents each as Australia faces a growing surge in production. Avocados Australia explained that while the price of the fruit can be impacted by many factors, for example quality, pack type, size, supply and demand, the underlying issue is that there is an exceptionally strong supply of avocados.

In the 2021 to 2022 financial year, the country produced over 122,197 tons of avocados, which was 56 per cent more than the previous year. Looking to the future, avocados are set to smash production records with the country on track to produce an average of around 170,000 tonnes per year by 2026, that's a 118 per cent increase on the above figure. [Full article here](https://au.news.yahoo.com/aussies-stunned-as-avocado-prices-plunge-to-just-9-cents-073118656.html)

#### Australian stone fruit production forecast to increase MY 2023/24

Stone fruit production in Australia is forecast to increase in marketing year (MY) 2023/24, following two successive seasons affected by unseasonably wet weather, labour shortages at harvest, logistics challenges, and very high costs due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Cherry, and peach and nectarine, production is forecast to increase by 18 and 13 percent, respectively.

Weather conditions in MY 2023/24 are expected to support higher production and improved fruit quality. Cherry, and peach and nectarine, exports are expected to increase by 72 and 40 percent, respectively, from a low level. [Full article here](https://www.freshplaza.com/asia/article/9564054/australian-stone-fruit-production-forecast-to-increase-my-2023-24/?utm_medium=email)

#### World's first genetically-modified banana might become Australia's first available for cultivation and consumption

Food Standards Australia (FSANZ) is calling for public comment on the world's first genetically-modified banana. If approved, the banana will become Australia's first genetically modified fruit available for cultivation and consumption.

After 20 years of work on the project, Queensland University of Technology (QUT) scientists submitted their application to FSANZ in May. The banana, known as QCAV-4, has been engineered by scientists to become resistant to the fungus known as Panama disease, which for the last decade has caused havoc on the global Cavendish industry.

FSANZ has assured that the future sale of any genetically-modified fruits in Australia would be clearly labelled for consumers. [Full article here](https://www.bendigoadvertiser.com.au/story/8363829/australias-genetically-modified-banana-a-world-first/)

#### Australia: Cherry traceability pilot ramps up

The second phase of Cherry Growers Australia and Agriculture Victoria’s Cherries Traceability Pilot is set to commence this season with Victorian cherry grower-exporter CherryHill Orchards to pilot producer-to-customer traceability. The two-year project was launched in 2022 with year one of the project focusing implementation of on-farm traceability through RFID technology.

Nick Noske, acting president of Cherry Growers Australia, said the pilot will provide valuable information for the cherry industry. “Traceability remains pivotal to enhancing the competitiveness of our cherries in international markets. It will reinforce the provenance, authenticity, and safety of our products. The insights gained through this initiative continue to serve as a foundation of integrity for our industry, empowering us to navigate both local and global challenges,” said Noske. [Full article here](https://www.fruitnet.com/produce-plus/cherry-traceability-pilot-ramps-up/256236.article)

#### Vietnam-US Comprehensive Strategic Partnership heralds new waves of trade

As a result of the newly-signed Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between Vietnam and the US, American exporters are setting their sights on delivering a wider range of agricultural products to the Asian nation. According to US ambassador to Vietnam, Marc Knapper, bilateral trade was growing steadily over the past decade, reaching 130 billion USD in 2022, of which 10 billion USD went to agriculture.

Following the elevation of the relationship to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, there's no doubt that bilateral trade, particularly in the agricultural sector, would continue to thrive. [Full article here](https://www.freshplaza.com/asia/article/9564312/vietnam-us-comprehensive-strategic-partnership-heralds-new-waves-of-trade/?utm_medium=email)

#### China announces new fruit packaging standards

This week China is celebrating its Mid-Autumn holiday, traditionally celebrated with beautifully packed fresh fruit gift bags. However, in the future, retailers might have to reconsider bringing their fruits to the market, as the country has launched a new set of packaging requirements that should counter the excessive use of packaging materials.

The State Administration for Market Regulation (National Standards Administration) issued the National Standard Announcement No. 10 of 2023. This mandatory national standard is officially called "Restricting Excessive Packaging of Commodities Requirements for Fresh Edible Agricultural Products". The standard was drafted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs and will be implemented from April 1, 2024.

The requirements include limits to the outside packaging empty space, the number of layers of packaging around produce and the ratio of the packaging cost to the overall sales price. [Full article here](https://www.freshplaza.com/asia/article/9566057/china-announces-new-fruit-packaging-standards/?utm_medium=email)

#### KiKoKa yellow kiwifruit brand debuts at Fruit Attraction

First volumes of KiKoKa-branded yellow-fleshed kiwifruit from the Yellow Kiwi Project will be on sale in Europe from this autumn.

The Yellow Kiwi Project began in 2008 with the planting of 16,000 seedlings bred by the University of Udine and evaluated and selected by nursery New Kiwi Plant (NKP). Last year, Rivoira signed a worldwide license with NKP to grow and market the first two varieties to emerge from the programme, AC497 076 and AC501 022.

“The two varieties have different characteristics: ‘022’ is harvested in mid-October and has a good shelf-life, while ‘076’ is harvested as early as mid/late September and has superior sweetness and dry matter characteristics,” project manager Gerhard Dichgans explained. “But a key point is that in seven years of testing they have both shown a strong resilience towards PSA/bacteriosis and Moria, the two biggest problems facing producers in Europe and around the world today.” [Full article here](https://www.fruitnet.com/eurofruit/kikoka-yellow-kiwifruit-brand-debuts-at-fruit-attraction/256378.article)

#### Anecoop launches sustainability benchmark project

Anecoop has unveiled a new initiative to bring greater transparency and accountability to the sustainability efforts of its grower members and Spain’s agri-food industry as a whole.

Under the motto ‘Measure, evaluate, act’, the project aims to establish a reference framework to measure, correctly and accurately, the impacts and improvements that Anecoop and its partners can have on the sustainability of the agri-food system, as well as the quantification and social, economic and environmental impact of their actions.

The project methodology will allow Anecoop to prioritise areas in which it wants to implement quality through sustainability. “We want to be more than a producer and marketer of fruits and vegetables, we want to be pioneers in the implementation of tools to identify, quantify and measure sustainability criteria, as well as establish a culture of business sustainability at all levels,” said Alejandro Monzón, the company’s director of quality and sustainability,

Anecoop is the producer and exporter of vegetables, citrus fruits, wines, and olive oils all over the world. [Full article here](https://www.fruitnet.com/eurofruit/anecoop-launches-sustainability-benchmark-project/256373.article#:~:text=Under%20the%20motto%20%27Measure%2C%20evaluate,and%20social%2C%20economic%20and%20environmental)

#### Resistance to green policies around Europe

Europe faces growing pushback against policies to address climate change and protect the environment, causing its green agenda to start to fray.

Countries experiencing "greenlash" include: Britain where Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said on Sept. 20 he would delay a ban on sales of new petrol cars and targets for domestic heating until 2035 to maintain the consent of the British people in the switch to net zero, among other changes to climate strategy; Germany which will indefinitely halt plans on more stringent building insulation standards, environment minister Robert Habeck said on Sept. 24, after industry complaints the measures are too costly and hurt the depressed construction sector. In Italy, the right-wing government is pushing back on an array of European Union initiatives aimed at greening the economy, arguing that local business can ill-afford transition goals while in the Netherlands, the BBB or BoerBurgerBeweging (Farmer-Citizen Movement) party, founded in 2019 in opposition to the government's plans to drastically cut nitrogen pollution on farms, has experienced a meteoric rise in polls. Poland's government, long conservative on environmental policies at home and facing elections in October, has gone a step further by suing Brussels. [Full article here](https://www.reuters.com/business/environment/resistance-green-policies-around-europe-2023-09-27/?utm_source=Newsroom&utm_campaign=2154da1464-Sustainable+Future+29.09.2023&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_71de5c4b35-2154da1464-98041230&mc_cid=2154da1464&mc_eid=b80691ad9c)

#### Fairtrasa launches world's first 100% Regenerative Organic Certified® bananas

Fairtrasa unveiled a breakthrough in sustainable agriculture at this year's Fruit Attraction. The company introduced bananas from the world’s first Regenerative Organic Certified® banana farm in Ecuador.

The Regenerative Organic Certification serves as the highest standard of both environmental and social sustainability and represents a crucial step forward in banana cultivation. To achieve Regenerative Organic Certified status, most farms must put in years of hard work. They have to avoid all industrial inputs, typically creating their own compost and using smart intercropping techniques where plants fix nutrients for each other and protect the soil by creating ground cover. The farms then have to conduct a series of thorough tests periodically, proving that their soil is healthy, rich in organic matter and continuously improving. [Full article here](https://www.freshplaza.com/asia/article/9564911/fairtrasa-launches-world-s-first-100-regenerative-organic-certified-r-bananas/?utm_medium=email)

#### Fairmiles seeks more balanced approach to airfreighted produce

A new campaign for a fair transition towards net zero kicked-off this month. Called Fairmiles, it calls on policy makers from government and the private sector to consider sustainability impacts on developing countries when pursuing carbon reduction strategies which seek to minimise so-called ‘food miles’ particularly with regard to airfreighted produce.

“Climate change is real and demands an urgent and radical response if we are to adapt to the significant threat it poses to our planet. However, with increasing pressure on organisations to act, there is a growing risk that corporate net zero strategies that seek to reduce emissions by reducing imported or airfreighted food, end up alienating and negatively impacting economically less developed countries, to the detriment of livelihoods in rural communities,” said Simon Derrick, global head of sustainability of Blue Skies, one of the companies behind the new initiative.

Fairmiles has been formed by a partnership between Blue Skies, Air France-KLM, the University of Northampton and Beanstalk.Global. [Full article here](https://www.fruitnet.com/eurofruit/fairmiles-seeks-more-balanced-approach-to-airfreighted-produce/256206.article)

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