

UPDATE: 18 April 2023

Kia ora

This update takes a more positive direction with kiwifruit exports underway and the quality of kiwifruit for the coming season looking good. At the international level, trade continues to be affected by the war in Ukraine, droughts and strikes. You’ll find items on these well as our regular items of regulatory notifications, consultations 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.



## Consultations

#### Proposals to amend the New Zealand (Maximum Residue Levels for Agricultural Compounds) Food Notice

MPI is seeking feedback on the proposed changes to the New Zealand Food Notice: Maximum Residue Levels for Agricultural Compounds: 6 proposals for new or amended maximum residue levels in Schedule 1and 4 new entries to Schedule 3 (veterinary medicines for which no maximum residue level applies). Consultation is open until 16 June 2023. You can find more information about the proposed changes and how to provide a submission on the MPI [website](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/consultations/proposals-to-amend-the-new-zealand-maximum-residue-levels-for-agricultural-compounds-food-notice-8/?utm_source=notification-email).

#### Draft import health standards for importing plant germplasm for propagation

The Plant Germplasm Imports team is looking to amend a number of import health standards, to remove the requirement for plant testing by biological indexing, and replacing this with serological or molecular testing where appropriate. The proposed changes affect the following standards:

Actinidia Plants for Planting; Citrus Plants for Planting; Importation of Nursery Stock; Prunus Plants for Planting; Seeds for Sowing.

Consultation is open until the 12 May 2023. You can find more information about the proposed changes and how to provide a submission on the MPI [website.](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/consultations/draft-import-health-standards-for-importing-plant-germplasm-for-propagation/?utm_source=notification-email)

# NEW ZEALAND NEWS

## Opinion piece:

#### Nadine's update: Growers still under the pump

In this week’s update, Nadine Tunley reflects on impact of increasing the minimum wage and a further 10% increase in the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme at a time when growers are already under immense pressure. [Full article here](https://www.hortnz.co.nz/news-events-and-media/nadines-update/growers-still-under-the-pump/)

## Government News:

#### PM’s international travel to advance NZs economic interests

Prime Minister Chris Hipkins will undertake a small number of international engagements this year, focused on advancing New Zealand’s trade and economic interests.

He will travel with a trade delegation to Australia this weekend to mark 40 years of Closer Economic Relations (CER). The Prime Minister will also travel to the United Kingdom to attend the Coronation of King Charles III in May. He will be joined by a delegation of prominent Kiwis and community representatives who will represent the country at the Coronation.

He has also accepted an invitation to attend the NATO leaders’ summit in Vilnius Lithuania in July. The Government is continuing to pursue a trade focused trip to China later in the year. [Full article here](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/pm’s-international-travel-advance-nzs-economic-interests)

## Industry news

#### Kiwifruit quality on the up and up!

The quality of kiwifruit for the coming season is looking good.

That's the view of Zespri's chief executive Dan Mathieson. He told Hort News that while there's been a slight delay to the start of the picking season, they are seeing a lot of good quality fruit sizes coming through. But he adds that due to last year's October frost - and to some extent, Cyclone Gabrielle - the 2023 crop will be lower than last season. "We think it will be in the order of between 15% and 20%," he says.

Mathieson says a huge effort is being made to ensure that fruit quality in 2023 is back to where it should be. He says there is an industry wide response plan to the problem to deal with the issue and all those in the supply chain are cooperating fully. [Full article here](https://www.ruralnewsgroup.co.nz/hort-news/hort-general-news/kiwifruit-quality-on-the-up-and-up)

#### NZ kiwifruit growers vote to retain levy

New Zealand Kiwifruit Growers (NZKGI) will continue its advocacy work for at least the next six years.

The decision was approved in a recent referendum, where New Zealand kiwifruit growers voted in favour of retaining a compulsory levy on their exports, except fruit sent to Australia. The levy is used to fund NZKGI’s work. “This great result reflects the return on investment that NZKGI has delivered growers over the last six years,” said NZKGI chairman, Mark Mayston. [Full article here](https://www.fruitnet.com/asiafruit/nz-kiwifruit-growers-vote-to-retain-levy/248742.article)

#### China Market Delighted About RubyRed, Volumes To Continue Growing

The arrival of Zespri’s first consignment of kiwifruit in March marked the beginning of the 2023 Zespri New Zealand kiwifruit season in China.

“Consumers in China are very excited and delighted about RubyRed,” Zespri chairman Bruce Cameron told Produce Report during the 2023 Zespri Season Launch Conference in Shanghai on March 31. He added that last season was extremely successful for the new variety, which was introduced to the Chinese market two years ago. China’s first imports of red-fleshed kiwifruit amounted to 12,000 trays in 2021 and doubled to 24,000 trays in 2022. “We are seeing growth in volumes exported again this year. The potential and opportunities of RubyRed are growing significantly in China,” stated Cameron, adding that although volumes of this niche product remain relatively light, its extraordinary taste means that Chinese consumers are ready to pay a premium. [Full article here](https://www.producereport.com/article/zespri-chairman-china-market-delighted-about-rubyred-volumes-continue-growing)

#### Almonds a potential new crop for Hawke’s Bay

The Hawke’s Bay landscape could one day see almond trees popping up beside the apple trees and grapevines it’s more traditionally known for. Research conducted by Plant & Food Research and AgFirst has shown that almonds could be a viable crop for the Hawke’s Bay region, particularly in the Heretaunga Plains and the Poverty Bay area. However, more research is required to determine the best varieties and management systems to ensure new almond orchards are productive and tailored to the New Zealand environment.

Funded primarily by the Ministry for Primary Industries’ (MPI’s) Sustainable Food and Fibre Futures fund (SFF Futures), the research included economic analysis, land use and climate suitability modelling, and consumer research. [Full article here](https://www.freshplaza.com/europe/article/9518796/almonds-a-potential-new-crop-for-hawke-s-bay/)

#### New CEO for Plant & Food Research

New Zealand’s Plant & Food Research has announced the appointment of Mark Piper as its new chief executive effective 1 May 2023. Piper will take over from David Hughes who has held the role since 2018 and announced his retirement in late 2022.

Piper is an experienced senior leader with 30 years’ global experience in the food and primary sectors and a strong track record of delivering financial results and operational impact. [Full article here](https://www.fruitnet.com/produce-plus/new-ceo-for-plant-and-food-research/248725.article)

## Reports & Insights

#### MFAT Market Intelligence Report: India Economic Update

India’s economy – the fifth largest in the world – continues to perform strongly against global economic pressure, particularly relative to its peers with large economies. The Indian Government presented a Budget in February that builds on its second term economic policy agenda: large capital expenditure, especially on transport-related infrastructure, and maintaining macroeconomic stability though fiscal restraint. [Full report here](https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/trade/mfat-market-reports/india-economic-update-april-2023/?utm_source=MFAT&utm_campaign=c5dd24aa06-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2023_03_30_09_59&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-c5dd24aa06-%5BLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D)

#### Upcoming events and webinars:

* MFAT and NZTE webinar: Thriving in a Volatile Global Trading Environment in 2023. Shifts in the international geopolitical and trading environment, and what these mean for New Zealand businesses. 28 April 23. [Register here](https://my.nzte.govt.nz/attend/Thriving_in_a_Volatile_Global_Trading_Environment_in_2023902864822)
* Hort Connections 2023, 5-7 June 2023, Adelaide Convention Centre, Australia. [Full details here](https://hortconnections.com.au/program/)
* 2023 Horticulture Conference / RSE Conference, 1- 4 August 2023, Te Pae Convention Centre, Christchurch. [Full details here](https://www.hortnz.co.nz/news-events-and-media/events/).
* Asia Fruit Logistica, 6-8 September 2023, AsiaWorld Expo, Hong Kong[. Full details here](https://www.asiafruitlogistica.com/)
* CBAFF Conference 2023, 13-15 September, 2023, Wellington
* Asian Seed Congress 2023, 20-24 November 2023, Christchurch. [Full details here.](https://web.apsaseed.org/asian-seed-congress)

# 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.

**Malaysia: FAIRS Export Certificate Report Annual**

This report provides information on the export certification requirements of the Government of Malaysia. This report supplements the Malaysia Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards (FAIRS). [Full report here](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=FAIRS%20Export%20Certificate%20Report%20Annual_Kuala%20Lumpur_Malaysia_MY2023-0003)

## In The News:

#### China: President calls for improved food security

President Xi Jinping underscored the need to diversify China's food production and build up the seed industry during his first domestic fact-finding trip this year, a move analysts said will help guarantee the nation's food security and put food that is more nutritious on the tables of Chinese people. Such a strong emphasis is crucial, as geopolitical risks hover over the global food trade and people's higher living standards are driving demand for greater food variety and improved nutrition, they said. [Full article here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9521256/china-president-calls-for-improved-food-security/?utm_medium=email)

#### Malaysia and China explore blockchain tech to facilitate exports

Malaysia and China are exploring blockchain technology for preferential certificate of origin (PCO) to better facilitate Malaysia’s exports to China.

The Ministry of International Trade and Industry (Miti) in Malaysia said in a statement that the move is to support mutual recognition of digital certificates of origin under the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) framework. This system, through its proposed single window framework, aims to improve trade facilitation and reduce technical barriers by offering more efficient and secure processing of goods originating from Malaysia to China. Further, adopting an e-system between Malaysia and China could greatly benefit businesses, including streamlining the customs clearance process and reducing storage costs at China ports. [Full article here](https://technode.global/2023/04/05/malaysia-china-explore-blockchain-technology-for-pco-to-facilitate-malaysias-exports-to-china/)

#### Fruit and vegetables will require phytosanitary certificates in new post-Brexit border proposals

Goods imported into the UK from the EU will be subject to changes from October after the UK government released its 'Target Operating Model.'

The new plans will see a more streamlined process than previously announced after a series of delays on more stringent checks on goods coming from the EU to the UK. Phytosanitary certificates will be required for phytosanitary goods, items like fruits, vegetables, seeds, and grains, imported from the EU. New physical checks will also be implemented at the UK border from January before further security and safety checks for all EU imports are introduced in October 2024.

A "trusted trader scheme" will be created to allow regular importers to avoid going through rigorous custom checks every time. A "single trade window" is proposed, which would allow traders to submit their paperwork in a single digital system. [Full article here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9518852/fruit-and-vegetables-will-require-phytosanitary-certificates-in-new-post-brexit-border-proposals/)

#### EU proposes clampdown on companies using fake 'green' claims

The European Commission has proposed new rules that would require companies in Europe to back up climate-friendly claims about their products with evidence, to stamp out misleading green labels for products from clothing to cosmetics and electronic goods.

The proposed European Union rules would regulate labels like "natural", "climate neutral" or having "recycled content" - and tackle what the EU says is rampant greenwashing among products sold in Europe. To use such labels, a company must carry out a science-based assessment, assessing all significant environmental impacts, to prove that its product lives up to the claim, or have it verified under an environmental labelling scheme. Companies that make climate-friendly claims without proof could face financial penalties.

A Commission assessment of 150 claims about products' environmental characteristics in 2020 found that most - 53% - provided "vague, misleading or unfounded information". [Full article here](https://www.reuters.com/business/sustainable-business/eu-proposes-clampdown-companies-using-fake-green-claims-2023-03-22/)

#### War in Ukraine continues to impact EU farmers

The negative impacts of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, and the ensuing high input costs and food inflation, continue to weigh on agricultural markets and consumers’ purchasing decisions. In addition, large parts of the EU experienced winter droughts after the hot and dry summer of last year, further worsening water availability in regions with already record low water reservoirs. This might lead impacted farmers to substitute away from more water-intensive crop cultures. The current EU macroeconomic forecast is relatively more positive than in autumn 2022, despite uncertainties about the energy supply for next winter and recent financial market tensions. High commodity prices last year helped counter high input costs, and farm income increased on average, with significant sectorial and regional disparities.

The latest short-term outlook report shows that lowering energy inflation could bring some relief regarding input prices. Fertilizers, especially nitrogen-based ones, could become more available and affordable compared with 2022. [Full article here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9517169/war-in-ukraine-continues-to-impact-eu-farmers/) [Report here](https://agfstorage.blob.core.windows.net/misc/FP_com/2023/03/31/Aad2.pdf)

#### FSA and FSS share findings from the evaluation of the recall system

An updated food recall system in the United Kingdom has improved the situation but there are still areas to develop and things to consider for the future, according to an evaluation.

In 2016 and 2017, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and Food Standards Scotland (FSS) held a review to improve the way food is recalled. This resulted in changes to the withdrawals and recalls system, including new guidance, a revised point-of-sale notice template for shops, and additional training for food businesses.

RSM UK Consulting was commissioned by FSA and FSS in 2021 to evaluate the development of the new system. This included a desk review, interviews with those who worked on the updated system, case studies of real recalls, looking at hypothetical scenarios, and consumer focus groups. Those who worked on the new traceability, withdrawals, and recalls guidance said it was an improvement on the old document. However, one concern was that smaller businesses have fewer resources to implement the new processes and understand the legalities behind them. Lack of resources was also discussed as a barrier by local authorities. [Full article here](https://www.foodsafetynews.com/2023/04/fsa-and-fss-share-findings-from-evaluation-of-recall-system/) [Report here](https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/downloads/FSA_FSS_Report_-_Efficacy_of_withdrawals_and_recalls_evaluation.pdf)

#### Number of port strikes around the world has been growing over the past year

The number of port strikes around the world has been growing over the past year, causing headaches for many parties. The number of protests and strikes affecting port operations quadrupled last year to 38 incidents. From trucker stoppages in South Korea to dock strikes in Britain, worker shortages have prompted shipping lines to divert or delay cargoes globally. According to Nick Rowe, NorthStandard’s head of strike & delay, the cost of living crisis had come to a head with port strikes making headlines in the US, UK, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Finland, Israel and Argentina already this year. [Full article here](https://www.freshplaza.com/europe/article/9520796/number-of-port-strikes-around-the-world-has-been-growing-over-the-past-year/)

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