

UPDATE: 23 April 2024

Kia ora

In this week’s update, the government reports on its success in building trade relationships in South East Asia through recent visits while MPI focuses on food safety with a new newsletter and import requirements for frozen berries. In overseas news, Australia consults on trade reforms, and two reports from the US highlight the concern over pesticides in food and consumer trust in organic labels. 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 & other updates

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

* Fiji: [ICPR Fiji](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/643-Fiji)

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](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

New Zealand Food Safety is proposing changes to the Food Notice – Maximum Residue Levels for Agricultural Compounds:

* 5 amended entries for maximum residue levels in Schedule 1
* 4 new entries for maximum residue levels in Schedule 1.

More information on the proposal and how to make a submission are on the Ministry for Primary Industries [website](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/consultations/proposals-to-amend-the-new-zealand-maximum-residue-levels-for-agricultural-compounds-food-notice-10/?utm_source=notification-email). Submissions close at 5pm on the 24 May 2024.

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| NEW ZEALAND NEWS |

## Government news

#### PM’s South East Asia mission does the business

Prime Minister Christopher Luxon has completed a successful trip to Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines, deepening relationships and capitalising on opportunities. Mr Luxon was accompanied by a business delegation and says the choice of countries represents the priority the New Zealand Government places on South East Asia, and our relationships in the region. “In person engagements are an important part of maintaining and strengthening relationships with our partner countries, and I am committed to doing more,” Mr Luxon says.

In Singapore, the Prime Minister and Prime Minister Lee agreed to elevate our partnership with practical cooperation in priority areas of food security and supply chains, defence, investment and the transition to a green economy.

In Thailand, the Prime Minister and Prime Minister Srettha agreed to upgrade New Zealand’s bilateral relationship to a Strategic Partnership by 2026 and agreed to a shared trade goal of tripling our two-way trade by 2045.

In the Philippines, the Prime Minister met with President Marcos and agreed to elevate the New Zealand-Philippines relationship to a Comprehensive Partnership by 2026. They also set a shared goal to grow trade by 50 percent by 2030. [Full article here](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/pm’s-south-east-asia-mission-does-business)

#### Trade relationship with China remains strong

“China remains a strong commercial opportunity for Kiwi exporters as Chinese businesses and consumers continue to value our high-quality safe produce,” Trade and Agriculture Minister Todd McClay says.

Mr McClay has returned to New Zealand following visits to Beijing, Harbin and Shanghai where he met ministers, governors and mayors and engaged in trade and agricultural events with the New Zealand export community. Bilateral meetings with Mr McClay's Trade, Agricultural and Forestry counterparts in Beijing covered areas of further cooperation, in particular on agricultural innovation, services, and processed wood products.

The Government is looking to lead a trade and business mission to China in the second half of the year to build on leads and further the Kiwi brand. [Full article here](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/trade-relationship-china-remains-strong)

#### New diplomatic appointments

Foreign Minister Winston Peters has today announced four new diplomatic appointments for New Zealand’s overseas missions. The appointments are:

* Catherine Graham as High Commissioner to the Cook Islands.
* Catherine McIntosh as Ambassador to the Philippines.
* Daniela Rigoli as Ambassador to Chile.
* Katja Ackerley as Consul-General to Los Angeles.

#### New Zealand Food Safety within the Ministry for Primary Industries launches a new newsletter

Food Importer News is a regular e-newsletter for food importers, agents and food businesses that provides updates about the rules for importing food under the Food Act 2014. It is a valuable source of information for anyone who imports food for sale, including ingredients, alcohol and dietary supplements. Subscribe [here](https://cbaff.outreach.co.nz/redirect/YTo3OntzOjM6InVybCI7czo1NToiaHR0cHM6Ly93d3cubXBpLmdvdnQubnovaW1wb3J0L2Zvb2QvZm9vZC1pbXBvcnRlci1uZXdzLyI7czo0OiJ0eXBlIjtzOjQ6ImhyZWYiO3M6NzoibWVzc2FnZSI7czo1OiI5MDcyMSI7czo3OiJhY2NvdW50IjtzOjU6ImNiYWZmIjtzOjg6ImNhdGVnb3J5IjtzOjQ6IjUyMTUiO3M6Nzoic2VudF9hdCI7aToxNzEyODgxOTY3O3M6MTA6Im5vdGlmaWFibGUiO2k6MTt9?oid=10784)

## Industry news

#### Early start for Zespri as NZ kiwifruit arrives in Europe

Zespri says it is ready for an earlier start to its New Zealand campaign in Europe, and believes the trade will be boosted by the removal of tariff duties under a new NZ-EU free trade agreement.

The company took delivery of its first shipment of new-season SunGold kiwifruit from New Zealand last night at the Port of Zeebrugge in Belgium, and will start loading for its customers in the coming days.

“We will have an earlier start than in the last couple of years,” said Steven Martina, director for Europe and North America “This year, we are back to normal levels. So for us, there is a focus on SunGold and Green. We will have more SunGold available than in previous years, but Green is back to normal levels. And we still see strong demand for Green, especially in Europe.” [Full article here](https://www.fruitnet.com/eurofruit/early-start-for-zespri-as-nz-kiwifruit-arrives-in-europe/259822.article)

#### Mixed season for summerfruit

Summerfruit NZ chief executive Kate Hellstrom told Hort News that while growers will be pleased in general, there have still been some challenges during the season. "We've had smaller fruit than some other seasons and possibly that is due to pre-season weather conditions." Hellstrom says that high winds late last year affected Central Otago growers, while Hawke's Bay growers were still recovering from Cyclone Gabrielle - "as you would expect".

Freight wasn't the issue that it had been through the Covid period. "With the tourists returning to New Zealand that's a double bonus for the sector," Hellstrom adds. "On one side, we've got more passenger flights returning to the country so there's more freight options for our exporters. And on the other side, we've got plenty of backpackers, including of course New Zealanders, who have been available to pick the fruit here."

Meanwhile, Hellstrom says there are a lot of new plantings happening in both Central Otago and Hawke's Bay, but also in other regions where marginal farmland has been recognised as providing the right temperature, climate and growing conditions for summer fruit. "We're excited about the opportunities for the future. There's plenty of demand both in the domestic market and overseas for great tasting summer fruits." [Full article here](https://www.ruralnewsgroup.co.nz/hort-news/hort-agribusiness/mixed-season-for-summerfruit)

#### Avocado growers put their worst season behind them

The New Zealand avocado industry has come to the end of a very disappointing 2023-24 harvest with the lowest export sales volume of the past 10 years. Growers have been told to expect prices that will barely cover their picking and packing, certainly not a year’s worth of spraying, tree care and paying down debt.

After the excitement of hosting the World Avocado Congress for the first time in early 2023, the harvest season beginning last July has fallen substantially short of previous years. Fewer than 1.5 million trays have been exported, compared with up to 5 million in recent more favourable and productive seasons. The total harvest is forecast at 4.5 million trays, being only 60% of the 7-8 million-tray harvests of the previous four years.

According to Primor Produce director John Carroll, who sold a majority of the exports in conjunction with other exporters, prospects for the coming season are considerably better in terms of quality and quantity. Southern hemisphere growing competitors Australia and Peru will have lighter crops and NZ projections are for exports of 3 million to 3.5 million trays, he said. [Full article here](https://www.farmersweekly.co.nz/markets/avocado-growers-put-their-worst-season-behind-them/)

#### New Zealand grants access for Taiwanese pineapples

New Zealand has approved the bid for access to Taiwanese pineapples following the signing of a bilateral agreement between governments on 9 April. According to Taiwan’s Ministry of Agriculture, the agreement was signed by representatives from its Animal and Plant Health Inspection Agency, Taiwan’s Food and Drug Administration and New Zealand’s Ministry for Primary Industries.

Under the agreement, pineapples exported to New Zealand must adopt systematic management measures and be harvested during the green and ripe stage. Records of the production, harvesting, processing, and transportation processes of the goods must be kept for traceability, and education and training should be carried out annually before each export season. The crown buds of exported pineapples should also be removed, and 600 pineapples should be sampled during export quarantine to confirm that the goods are not contaminated with pests of concern to New Zealand.

Plans to export Taiwanese pineapples to New Zealand were first initiated in 2017. [Full article here](https://www.fruitnet.com/asiafruit/new-zealand-grants-access-for-taiwanese-pineapples/259692.article)

#### New import rules to avoid repeat of hepatitis A outbreak

Frozen berries coming into New Zealand will have to meet new import rules, in a bid to improve food safety. The move follows an outbreak of hepatitis A virus associated with frozen berries in 2022- 2023 which affected 39 people.

New Zealand Food Safety (NZFS) deputy director-general Vincent Arbuckle said the new import requirements for frozen berries were a win-win for consumers and food importers. "New Zealand was among a number of countries which recalled frozen berries at different times due to concerns about the presence of hepatitis A. We've worked hard to identify and implement ways to improve food safety rules to better manage the risk to consumers.

In a first for New Zealand, the change introduces the use of independent certification to confirm an importer's food safety systems meet New Zealand's food safety standards. "This gives us more confidence that risks associated with frozen berries are being managed off-shore before they come to New Zealand," Arbuckle said.

The changes will come into effect on 1 August, and importers have 18 months to transition to the new import requirements. [Full article here](https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/country/515001/new-import-rules-to-avoid-repeat-of-hepatitis-a-outbreak) [Proposed changes here](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/consultations/proposed-changes-to-the-import-requirements-for-frozen-berries/?utm_source=notification-email)

#### Crackdown on Chinese use of Zespri IP

Authorities in China have clamped down on companies in that country which have been packaging and selling their own local fruit under the Zespri brand.

In recent weeks, Zespri has been working with the Shanghai police to take enforcement action against a small number of people involved in extensive counterfeit operations. Information gathered through Zespri's investigations have allowed local police to successfully conduct a number of raids against those sellers. During these raids, it was also discovered that the counterfeiting operation also affected fellow fruit marketer Dole and Zespri customer GoodFarmer, which have since joined the enforcement action. The Public Prosecutor's Office has confirmed it will be prosecuting these crimes, with the enforcement action already having a significant deterrent effect on counterfeit sales on the e-commerce platform.

Zespri has also filed further legal action to recover damages from those involved in the propagation of Gold3 plantings as part of its commitment to protecting the industry's investment and intellectual property rights. [Full article here](https://www.ruralnewsgroup.co.nz/hort-news/hort-agribusiness/crackdown-on-chinese-use-of-zespri-ip)

#### Export lobby frowns on shipping carbon proposal

The Climate Change Commission draft advice on emissions budgets and targets from 2036-40 released this week scoped the idea of including air travel and shipping emissions in New Zealand’s inventory.

However, according to ExportNZ advocacy director Catherine Beard, accounting for carbon emissions from shipping should be by international agreement rather than imposed regionally or by a country that risks doubling up. “That is why a global approach is preferable to regional, localised charges. “If NZ looks at this policy it will amount to double dipping, double counting and double pay,” she said.

Zespri executive officer for sustainability Rachel Depree said ships carry 99% of the country’s trade by volume and around 80% by value and shipping emissions remain a challenge to decarbonising the industry. She said the kiwifruit industry’s total emissions are low at 2kg per kilogram of kiwifruit, of which shipping contributes 43%. “With Zespri having limited ability to directly reduce shipping emissions ourselves, our focus is on working with our shipping and distribution partners to increase efficiency and make the transition to low emissions fuels as we work towards being carbon positive by 2035.”

Distinguished Professor Robert McLachlan from Massey University said NZ’s international aviation emissions are nearly back to pre-COVID levels and are growing rapidly. Including international shipping and aviation emissions in NZ’s 2050 target would be consistent with the purpose of the Climate Change Response Act, global efforts under the Paris Agreement to limit global warming to 1.5degC and in line with recent actions by the United Kingdom, the EU and the United States, he said. [Full article here](https://www.farmersweekly.co.nz/news/export-lobby-frowns-on-shipping-carbon-proposal/) [Climate Change Commission draft advice here](https://www.climatecommission.govt.nz/our-work/advice-to-government-topic/preparing-advice-on-emissions-budgets/advice-on-the-fourth-emissions-budget/)

## Upcoming events and webinars:

* Hort Connections, 3-5 June 2024, Melbourne Convention Centre, Australia. [Full details here](https://hortconnections.com.au/)
* World Potato Congress, 23-26 June 2024, Adelaide, Australia. [Full details here](https://tcc.eventsair.com/world-potato-congress-2024/)
* International Fresh Produce Safety Symposium, 20-21 August 2024, Australia [Full details here](https://fpsc-anz.com/)
* Horticulture Conference and RSE Conference, 28-30 August 2024, Mercury Baypark, Tauranga. [Full details here](https://www.hortnzevents.co.nz/event/4b86d4f7-e739-4e8c-8efd-12054ec6239c/summary?i=VfAyVeWz4U67X5c_LTkR-Q&locale=en-US)
* CBAFF Annual Conference, 18-20 September, 2024, Christchurch.

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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 country's ICPR on MPI’s website.

Japan: Fresh Vegetable Market Update 2024

Japan's fresh vegetable market is estimated at approximately 14 million metric tons of which around 5 percent comes from imports. In 2023, the United States was the fourth largest supplier of fresh vegetables to Japan at $52 million and the second largest by volume at 46,309 metric tons. The United States is the leading supplier of chipping potatoes, chicory, witloof chicory, and celery. [Full report here](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Fresh%20Vegetable%20Market%20Update%202024_Osaka%20ATO_Japan_JA2024-0019)

China: National Food Safety Standard of Maximum Residue Limits for Pesticides in Foods Notified to WTO under G/SPS/N/CHN/1299. [Full report here](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=National%20Food%20Safety%20Standard%20of%20Maximum%20Residue%20Limits%20for%20Pesticides%20in%20Foods%20Notified%20to%20WTO_Beijing_China%20-%20People%27s%20Republic%20of_CH2024-0056)

Avocado Annual: [Mexico](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Avocado%20Annual_Mexico%20City_Mexico_MX2024-0018)

Exporter Guide: [Ireland](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Ireland%20Exporter%20Guide_London_United%20Kingdom_UK2024-0014)

A resource for US exporters that provides an economic and market overview for each country, as well as demographic trends, practical tips and information on local business practices, consumer preferences, and trends.

FAIRS Export Certificate Report Annual: [Malaysia](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=FAIRS%20Export%20Certificate%20Report%20Annual_Kuala%20Lumpur_Malaysia_MY2024-0001), [Germany](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=FAIRS%20Export%20Certificate%20Report%20Annual_Berlin_Germany_GM2024-0002)

These reports include requirements such as registration, technical information, certificates and other documentation for food and agriculture product exports from the US to each country.

## In The News:

#### Australia’s Simplified Trade System (STS) draft framework opens for public consultation

Australia’s Simplified Trade System (STS) reforms aim to deliver a simpler, more effective and sustainable cross-border trade environment that will ensure Australia remains a globally competitive trading nation. Business is at the centre of these reforms and the reforms are designed to roll out progressive benefits for business and government. The 2024 public consultation is for three draft frameworks:

* Trade Identity Policy Framework
* Fit and Proper Person Assessments Reform
* Border Controls Policy Framework

You can find more information on the reforms on the STS [website](https://app.converlens.com/austrade/simplifiedtrade)   [Consultation Paper here](https://www.simplifiedtrade.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-04/STS-Consultation-Paper-2024.pdf)

#### Australian best practice guide for citrus microbial food safety launched

The NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI) has launched the first edition of the Citrus microbial food safety best practice guide. NSW DPI's Dr Sukhvinder Pal (SP) Singh, Senior Research Scientist in Food Safety and Traceability, said that the guide provides a targeted, practical resource for citrus growers, packers and other supply chain participants to assess and manage microbial risks effectively.

"In 2021–2022, the Australian citrus industry produced 760,000 tonnes of fruit valued at $910 million. The success of citrus export is built on the free trade agreements with importing countries and a clean, green, and safe reputation. To remain competitive and retain market share in our key export markets, the Australian citrus industry must consistently supply safe fruit, and aim for zero product recalls," said Dr Singh. ‘This guide provides advice on best practice management and proactive measures for fruit production, harvest practices and postharvest so we can continue to minimise the risk of microbial pathogens and maintain our food safety and hygiene standards, and our reputation for safe and healthy food." [Full article here](https://www.freshplaza.com/asia/article/9616816/australian-best-practice-guide-for-citrus-microbial-food-safety-launched/?utm_medium=email) [Guide available here](https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/1546242/Citrus-microbial-food-safety-best-practice-guide-web.pdf)

#### IFPA A-NZ calls for national approach to fruit sticker ban

The International Fresh Produce Association A-NZ (IFPA A-NZ) supports a national approach to banning plastic non-compostable Price Look-Up code (PLU) produce stickers and wants to see compostable adhesive excluded from South Australia's proposed 2025 ban until growers, packers and retailers have more time to phase in approved alternatives. In its submission to South Australia's proposed 2024 and 2025 amendment to the Single-Use and Other Plastic Products (Waste Avoidance) Act, the IFPA A-NZ outlines key challenges for the produce sector ahead of the September 1, 2025 PLU ban, specifically implementation.

"We wholeheartedly support efforts to reduce the use of plastic waste in the fresh produce sector. But any changes should not compromise food safety and should be introduced in a way that is cost-effective, nationally consistent and supported by practical and effective alternatives," IFPA managing director A-NZ Ben Hoodless said. "For fresh produce stakeholders, alternatives need to be cost-effective and scalable, with workable timeframes to allow growers to place orders, test and implement," he said.

The IFPA A-NZ's view was aligned with leading retailers and industry authority The Australian Fresh Produce Alliance (AFPA), which suggested 2028 was a more achievable deadline. [Full article here](https://www.freshplaza.com/asia/article/9615917/ifpa-a-nz-calls-for-national-approach-to-fruit-sticker-ban/?utm_medium=email)

#### Korea extends tariff exemption for imported fruits

The Korean government stepped up measures to tackle the nation’s soaring prices of fresh fruit earlier this month by extending tax exemption for imported fruits. From 4 April to 30 June, the government is allowing duty-free imports of a range of fresh fruits, with no limits on volumes. The tax exemption applies to bananas, pineapples, mangoes, grapefruit, and avocados.

In addition to suspending import duties, the government has introduced subsidy schemes with major supermarket retailers and their fruit importers to try and bring down consumer prices. The moves come in response to a surge in domestic fresh produce prices in Korea, which have driven food price inflation and become a major policy issue in the nation’s recent elections. [Full article here](https://www.fruitnet.com/asiafruit/korea-extends-tariff-exemption-for-imported-fruits/259836.article)

#### US: “Most familiar + high trust = Organic”

Consumers recognize the USDA Organic seal more than any other certification in the marketplace, finds a new survey released by the Organic Trade Association (OTA). Compared to a dozen claims and certifications that can be found on various products in today's grocery aisles, almost 90 percent of consumers are familiar with organic claims. That deep familiarity with organic carries over into a solid public trust. The USDA Organic seal is trusted by 70 percent of consumers – the most trusted of any agricultural label and the second-most trusted food label existing, second only to the American Heart Association's iconic checkmark.

OTA partnered with Euromonitor International in a survey conducted in December of 2023 of around 1,200 consumers across the country to evaluate what today's consumers understand about organic, as well as their willingness to pay for USDA Organic products and the individual attributes supported by organic certification. A look at how organic stacked up against various claims and certifications was also done. The other food and beverage claims included in the survey were natural, local, grass-fed, raised without antibiotics, vegan, pesticide-free, free-range, hormone-free, humanely raised, allergen-free, fair trade, and regenerative.

Today's price-conscious shopper considers organic to be the food claim that most justify a higher price. When asked in the survey about the value of various claims, organic was ranked the most valuable, with nearly 60 percent of consumers saying that the organic claim warrants higher prices. [Full article here](https://www.ota.com/news/press-releases/23100)

#### US: Consumer Reports investigation raises concerns about pesticides in produce

Consumer Reports (CR) has found concerning discoveries regarding pesticide contamination in everyday fruits and vegetables in a newly released investigation. The report, representing CR’s most extensive analysis to date, examines the pervasive presence of harmful pesticides in our food supply, raising critical questions about food safety and regulatory oversight. Based on seven years of data from the Department of Agriculture, CR’s food safety experts examined 59 common fruits and vegetables. Pesticides posed significant risks in 20 percent of the items scrutinized. Among the offenders were household staples such as bell peppers, blueberries, green beans, potatoes and strawberries.

CR is advocating for regulatory interventions to better address pesticide risks. Enhanced oversight of imported produce, particularly from regions with more lax pesticide regulations, is recommended to ensure the integrity of our food supply. CR is also calling for increased support for organic farming practices, citing their potential to reduce reliance on harmful pesticides and promote sustainable agricultural systems. [Full article here](https://foodsafetynews.us16.list-manage.com/track/click?u=00b9adb6e97ef251187f5eddd&id=8f68e9cc50&e=1be378a101) [Full report here](https://www.consumerreports.org/health/food-contaminants/produce-without-pesticides-a5260230325/)

#### World Vegetable Map 2024: Turbulent times for the global vegetable sector

Vegetables have become more expensive to produce, but strong consumer demand and declining production in key markets of North America and Europe have opened new opportunities for major suppliers including Mexico, Spain, Netherlands, Turkey and Poland. Those are among the headline findings contained in a new report published by Rabobank and timed to coincide with the publication of its latest World Vegetable Map. The map, which is updated every few years, charts recent trends in vegetable production, consumption and trade worldwide.

According to the new analysis, the value of the global vegetable market remains below the hundred billion-dollar peak it achieved for the first and only time in 2021. However, its average 3 per cent annual growth between 2017 and 2022 kept sales in line with inflation.

At its height in 2021, the global trade in vegetables was valued at US$107bn. What’s remarkable is the fact that only 7 per cent of the world’s vegetables are sold outside their country of origin, and even that small proportion is sold mainly within continents and often between neighbouring countries.

Global vegetable production has grown at a slower pace compared with sales, according to the report, at 1.2 per cent per year over the same five-year timescale [Full article here](https://www.fruitnet.com/fruitnet/tough-times-for-veg-suppliers-but-new-opportunities-emerge/259721.article) [Full report here](https://research.rabobank.com/far/en/sectors/fresh-produce/world-vegetable-map-2024-turbulent-times-for-the-global-vegetable-sector.html)

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