

UPDATE: 24 January 2023

Kia ora

We might have clicked into a new year but as is evident in business surveys and industry reports, the sector, businesses and consumers continue to experience the downstream impact of the events of 2022. You’ll find news items and links for these as well as our regular items of regulatory notifications and upcoming events below.

Ngā mihi

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# GOVERNMENT AGENCY NEWS

## ICPR changes

The following ICPRs have been updated in the last two weeks

* Taiwan has been updated for a number of commodities. [ICPR Taiwan](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/694-Taiwan)
* Iran has been updated to add requirements for Daucus carota seed for sowing under section 4.4.1 [ICPR Iran](https://mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/653)

## 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.



## Food recalls:

* Pams brand Carrot Batons. Foodstuffs Own Brands Ltd is recalling a specific batch of its Pams brand Carrot Batons due to the possible presence of E.coli. Affected product should not be consumed. [More information here](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/food-safety-home/food-recalls-and-complaints/recalled-food-products/pams-brand-carrot-batons/)
* Pams brand Frozen Berries. Foodstuffs South Island Ltd is recalling its Pams brand Frozen Mixed Berries. This product (amongst other Pams berry products) was recalled on 4 October 2022 due to a possible link of Hepatitis A associated with frozen berries sourced from Serbia, however this product has been released in error by the Foodstuffs South Island Hornby Distribution Centre. [More information here](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/food-safety-home/food-recalls-and-complaints/recalled-food-products/pams-brand-frozen-berries/)

# NEW ZEALAND NEWS

## Opinion piece

#### Nadine's update: Egg on our faces

In this week’s update Nadine Tunley reflects on New Zealand’s recent egg shortage and draws similarities to the situation fruit and vegetable growers are facing with the development of proposed regulations amongst other challenges. [Full article here](https://www.hortnz.co.nz/news-events-and-media/nadines-update/egg-on-our-faces/)

## Government News

#### Trade and Agriculture Minister attends World Economic Forum and Global Forum for Food and Agriculture

The Government is maintaining its strong trade focus in 2023 with Trade and Agriculture Minister Damien O’Connor visiting Europe this month to discuss the role of agricultural trade in climate change and food security, WTO reform and New Zealand agricultural innovation. Damien O’Connor travelled to Switzerland to attend the World Economic Forum and associated World Trade Organization (WTO) meetings in Davos, before travelling to Berlin for the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture and meetings with German government and industry leaders.

The World Economic Forum brings together civil society, business and political leaders annually to discuss some of the world’s most pressing challenges. [Full article here](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/trade-and-agriculture-minister-attend-world-economic-forum-and-global-forum-food-and)

## Industry news

#### NZ supermarkets are paying 24% more for fresh produce due to rising production costs

The Grocery Supplier Cost Index, which measures the cost of more than 60,000 grocery products supplied to the Foodstuffs co-operative, indicates that the cost of groceries from suppliers rose 10.6% in 2022. Supplier costs were higher across all departments, with produce prices jumping 24%.

Some New Zealanders claim they're thinking more carefully about the amount of food they're wasting amid high prices. Infometrics’ previous analysis showed supplier costs represented two-thirds of the shelf price charged by supermarkets. [Full article here](https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/130977107/supermarkets-paying-24-more-for-fresh-produce-as-suppliers-costs-keep-rising)

#### Pay cuts for kiwifruit growers as quality deteriorates

In a letter recently sent to growers, Zespri chief executive Dan Mathieson said quality issues had kept building as the 2022 kiwifruit season drew to a close.

"Demand for our fruit has remained as expected and we completed the 2022 season in line with previous years. However, we have seen further deterioration in the fruit quality of our final vessels, particularly in the final shipments of our Green varieties into Europe and Asia." Mathieson said at the time of its previous forecast, fruit loss in Europe was estimated at approximately 7 percent for the last quarter of 2022, but that estimate had now been revised to about 20 percent. "Quality claims from customers are also estimated to be nearly three times the level we experienced in 2021, and more significant than anticipated in the prior forecast," he said.

Due to these problems, Zespri planned to downgrade its payments to green kiwifruit growers, likely by more than 60 cents per tray for Green and 50 cents for Green Organic growers, although that was still subject to finalisation. [Full article here](https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/country/482956/pay-cuts-for-kiwifruit-growers-as-quality-deteriorates)

#### Zespri to focus on fruit quality concerns over the next five years

Zespri will follow a conservative five-year growth plan as the kiwifruit marketing cooperative still faces fruit quality concerns and many other unknowns. Chief grower at Zespri, Carol Ward, said the cooperative allowed only 350 hectares of new SunGold kiwifruit orchard to be planted this year to meet growing demand for fruit. It had previously considered up to 700ha, Ward said. The conservative move was an attempt to focus on meeting consumer quality demands.

Ward said the quality issues appeared to be mostly driven by labour shortages, created by the Government’s Covid response and inability of the fruit industry to attract workers. [Full article here](https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/farming/130984989/kiwifruit-marketer-zespri-to-focus-on-fruit-quality-concerns-over-the-next-five-years)

#### Sky Brown partners with Rockit

One of the biggest names in skateboarding will help grow brand awareness for Rockit apples, particularly in the US.

Sky Brown, a multiple X Games and Olympic medallist, has signed a partnership deal with the company behind the snack-sized apple offering, Rockit Global. The partnership will see 14-year-old Brown post about Rockit on her social channels during 2023, with the option to extend the agreement after that. Her first post went live earlier this month on Instagram and TikTok.

“With her 2.1m followers on TikTok and another 1.3m on Instagram, Sky has enormous reach and is hugely admired and keenly followed by millions around the world,” says Rockit Global’s general manager global marketing, Julian Smith. [Full article here](https://www.fruitnet.com/asiafruit/sky-brown-partners-with-rockit/248091.article)

#### Despite challenges spuds remain a billion-dollar business

Despite some major challenges, the New Zealand potato industry remains a billion dollar business. Data from 2021 presented in the Potatoes New Zealand (PNZ) annual report shows minimal impact on production despite a rough couple of years. The overall value of the industry including the domestic and export markets dropped slightly to $1.095 billion.

Despite this, growers believe their industry remains under pressure despite the pandemic disruption abating. Potato growers across the country say they have continued to navigate regional plan changes, restrictive government policies, ongoing pest challenges, weather events and rising costs of production. [Full article here](https://www.ruralnewsgroup.co.nz/rural-news/rural-general-news/despite-challenges-spuds-remain-a-billion-dollar-business)

#### VECS partners with Te Mata Exports

A partnership agreement between Inversiones Vecs SpA (VECS) and Te Mata Exports will help the pair boost their supply of key fresh produce lines to Asia.

Chile-based VECS will have better access to the Asian market for the fresh produce lines it grows, packs and markets. Te Mata Exports, a leading Australasian fresh produce supplier, will strengthen its supply base, providing its Asian customers with access to top quality fruit, including Chilean cherries and Peruvian blueberries and grapes.

“Te Mata Exports has a proven track record supplying key customers across Asia with products such as grapes, citrus, cherries and apples from Australia and New Zealand, so it was a natural next step for us to expand our supply base by sourcing products from South America to be able to add to our offering,” said Sarah McCormack, chief executive of Te Mata Exports. [Full article here](https://www.fruitnet.com/asiafruit/vecs-partners-with-te-mata-exports/248070.article)

#### Shortage of CO2 causes chaos for trade industry

Air cargo exports of New Zealand products are being severely impacted by the critical shortage of liquid CO2 and dry ice, says the industry body representing freight forwarders. The Customs Brokers and Freight Forwarders Federation of New Zealand (CBAFF) is calling on the Government to investigate options to increase domestic production of food grade CO2 – including the possibility of reopening the Marsden Point refinery, which produced CO2 as a by-product of its refining operation.

Liquid CO2 is used to create dry ice, with many thousands of kilograms used weekly to fly high quality perishable goods, including meat, fish, dairy and pharmaceutical products, internationally. CBAFF chief executive Rosemarie Dawson said many of its freight forwarder members are reporting difficulties with shipping customers’ product out of New Zealand because they cannot source dry ice. [Full interview here](https://www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/morningreport/audio/2018873966/shortage-of-co2-causes-chaos-for-trade-industry-too)

#### Spike in detections of Fall armyworm in North Island crops

The number of farms confirmed as having an invasive pest that has wreaked havoc on crops overseas has been reported to have spiked in recent weeks.

First discovered in New Zealand in March last year, the fall armyworm can chew through more than 350 plant species. The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) said there had now been 45 positive detections of the pest in North Island maize and sweetcorn crops, with 17 of those detections occurring in the past two weeks. MPI biosecurity response director John Walsh said a further 45 farms had reported possible sightings. The ministry's biosecurity response had recently been focused on scouting and surveillance in key regions to understand the timing and scale of fall armyworm (FAW) incursion, Walsh said. "This will enable targeted management measures to be developed," he said. "With warmer weather and increasing awareness of FAW, we expect reporting to increase over the next few weeks. We'd like farmers and growers to keep a lookout for FAW on their properties." [Full article here](https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/country/482195/fall-armyworm-spike-in-detections-of-pest-in-north-island-crops) [More information here](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/biosecurity/major-pest-and-disease-threats/fall-armyworm/?gclid=CjwKCAiAoL6eBhA3EiwAXDom5sjAfuDIHuq5yNsGw9n-4Lxp32gWFvBHTOX7QHt-_5D2-Kh6U8m7pRoCSqIQAvD_BwE)

#### Trading challenges for NZ hort

Horticultural exports from New Zealand have risen in dollar terms, but at the same time, percentage wise, the tariffs these incur have dropped by nearly two thirds since 2004. That's the good news for the sector revealed in the biennial report Barriers to Our Export Trade produced by the Horticultural Export Authority (HEA), which was published late last year. The HEA is responsible for promoting the effective export marketing of NZ's horticultural products - including advocacy for the freeing up of trade barriers. Chief executive Simon Hegarty says this is due to the 12 operative Free Trade Agreements that NZ has signed. In 2004, there were just two FTAs.

Hegarty stated that the overall picture is good news, with the growth of NZ horticultural exports that are now worth $4.8 billion. Still, the news seems to be less good for some sectors, notably avocados, onions and asparagus, which have seen their export earnings fall. Prices for apples and kiwifruit have been good, which Hegarty says has effectively propped up the earnings for the wider sector. [Full article here](https://www.ruralnewsgroup.co.nz/rural-news/rural-general-news/trading-challenges-for-nz-hort)

#### Fresh produce most commonly seized undeclared item for NZ biosecurity officers

It's been a busy summer so far for biosecurity officers protecting New Zealand's borders from unwanted pests and diseases. Biosecurity officers screened over half a million arriving passengers in December, says Mike Inglis, northern regional commissioner of Biosecurity New Zealand.

With borders reopening, the increase in passenger traffic has been matched with a rise in infringement notices for travellers who fail to declare items that pose a biosecurity risk, including food, plant products, and used equipment. Officers issued 511 infringement notices in December, compared with 467 issued in November. [Full article here](https://www.freshplaza.com/europe/article/9495964/fresh-produce-most-commonly-seized-undeclared-item-for-nz-biosecurity-officers/)

## Reports & Insights

#### MFAT Market Intelligence Report: Germany economic update: going through an unprecedented energy crisis.

As anticipated, Germany is having a hard time weathering the economic storm triggered by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The German economy has continued to grow modestly but is now expected to enter a (mild) recession. German business and consumer confidence has been shaken by the events, and this could impact both New Zealand’s exports and imports. For now, bilateral trade is recovering slowly, thanks in part to New Zealand re-opening for German tourists and students. [Full report here](https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/trade/mfat-market-reports/market-reports-europe/germany-economic-update-going-through-an-unprecedented-energy-crisis-january-2023/)

#### NZIER Quarterly Survey of Business Opinion: January 23

The latest NZIER Quarterly Survey of Business Opinion (QSBO) shows a deterioration in business sentiment and activity. The survey was open from 28 November 2022 to 9 January 2023 and captured the effects of the more hawkish than expected November Monetary Policy Statement (MPS) on 24 November. In this MPS, the Reserve Bank of New Zealand (RBNZ) indicated that it would take interest rates higher than initially expected to rein in inflation.

On a seasonally adjusted basis, a net 73 percent of businesses expect general economic conditions to deteriorate over the coming months – the weakest over the survey’s history. When it comes to activity in their own business, a net 13 percent of firms reported a decline in activity over the past quarter. This was the weakest since June 2020 survey when the full impact of the first COVID-19 lockdown was captured. [Full report here](https://www.nzier.org.nz/publications/qsbo-shows-business-sentiment-and-activity-taking-a-turn-for-the-worse)

#### Lincoln PhD student needs plant producer survey participants

Lincoln University PhD student Julio Botero is researching business structures and relationships in the horticulture sector. Julio's study is focused on understanding the preferred business arrangements of horticultural producers and how this relates to business arrangements that enable businesses to thrive. The ultimate objective of his research is to enable producers or sectors to move from 'craft' businesses to successful national and export businesses. Julio is looking for growers across the motu to take part in his study to ensure his doctorate thesis research results reflect the breadth of the industry. The link to his anonymous survey is [here](https://nzppi.co.nz/link-1748.htm).

## Upcoming events:

* Aotearoa Horticulture Action Plan launch, **1 February 2023, Gisborne** [Full details here](https://www.hortnz.co.nz/news-events-and-media/media-releases/aotearoa-horticulture-action-plan-launch-1-february/)
* ICC Future Trade Forum 2023, 28-31 March 2023, Singapore. [Full details here](https://futuretradeforum.org/)
* World Avocado Congress 2023, 2-5 April 2023, Auckland. [Full details here.](https://www.wacnz2023.com/)
* 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

# 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.

**Exporter Guides**: [Israel](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Exporter%20Guide_Tel%20Aviv_Israel_IS2022-0014), [China](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Exporter%20Guide%20_Shenyang%20ATO_China%20-%20People%27s%20Republic%20of_CH2023-0003), [Taiwan](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Exporter%20Guide_Taipei%20ATO_Taiwan_TW2022-0065), [Hong Kong](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Exporter%20Guide_Hong%20Kong_Hong%20Kong_HK2022-0084), [Philippines,](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Exporter%20Guide_Manila_Philippines_RP2022-0019) [Singapore,](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Exporter%20Guide_Singapore_Singapore_SN2022-0010) [Canada](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Exporter%20Guide_Ottawa_Canada_CA2022-0038)

**Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards Report**: [India,](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=FAIRS%20Annual%20Country%20Report%20Annual_New%20Delhi_India_IN2022-0105) [UK](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Food%20and%20Agricultural%20Import%20Regulations%20and%20Standards%20Country%20Report_London_United%20Kingdom_UK2022-0032)

**Ag and Economic Outlook**. [Chile](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Chile%20Ag%20and%20Economic%20Outlook_Santiago_Chile_CI2023-0001)

**China: Updated Catalog of National Food Safety Standards Released**. On January 11, 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 1,478 standards covering food products, additives, quality specifications, testing methods, and production practices. This report provides an unofficial translation of the Catalogue. [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_CH2023-0013)

**German Organic Market Takes a Dip.** Germany is the second largest organic market in the world. While market growth slowed this year due to high inflation and rising food prices, this is likely a temporary situation. This report contains information on the German organic market, including best prospects, and opportunities, including BioFach, the world’s largest organic trade fair again taking place February 14-17, 2023. [Full report here](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=German%20Organic%20Market%20Takes%20a%20Dip_Berlin_Germany_GM2023-0001)

**Spanish Tax on Non-Reusable Plastic Packaging Enters into Force.** As of January 1, 2023, Spain implemented a special tax on non-reusable plastic packaging that also applies to imported food products. For imports, payment of the tax is the responsibility of the importer, although third country manufacturers must provide their Spanish buyers with information regarding the amount of non-recyclable plastic packaging used in their products’ packaging. [Full report here](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Spanish%20Tax%20on%20Non-Reusable%20Plastic%20Packaging%20Enters%20into%20Force_Madrid_Spain_SP2023-0004)

## In The News:

#### Australia’s self-regulating pesticide monitoring regime picked up far fewer violations than government study

The pesticide testing Australia relies on to pick up chemicals in fresh fruit and vegetables sold domestically routinely picked up far fewer breaches than a government study in 2013. Unpublished results of a 2013 pilot study for a national produce monitoring system (NPMS) by the federal agriculture department have been revealed under freedom of information laws. The study was shelved by the former Coalition government despite some disturbing findings.

Testing of strawberries revealed samples with up to 90 times the maximum residue limit (MRL) set for dimethoate, while one apricot and nine peach samples contained levels of the now-withdrawn pesticide fenthion that were “unacceptable from an acute or short-term dietary risk perspective.”

The study also looked at the adequacy of the self-regulatory system run by the fruit and vegetable wholesalers, known as FreshTest. [Full article here](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/jan/12/australias-self-regulating-pesticide-monitoring-system-picked-up-far-fewer-violations-than-government-study)

#### New grower survey reveals scale of crisis for British top fruit industry

A British Grower Association (BGA) survey of British Apples & Pears Limited (BAPL) members conducted in late 2022 has revealed a major retreat in future orchard investment in the face of stagnant returns.

According to the survey of growers, representing about 80% of the British top fruit industry, 150,000 new apple and pear trees have been cancelled this season. The grower intention had been to continue to invest in the long-term future of their orchards by planting 480,000 new trees. Now, one third of those orders have been cancelled.

“This is the clearest indication yet, that the future of apple and pear growing in the UK is seriously in doubt. The industry is on a knife edge. Without long-term investment and new tree planting, orchards will quickly go into decline. That’s not something any of us wants, least of all the British consumer. The key reason for the lack of investment is supermarket returns that are unsustainable. Increased input costs of around 23%, for example for picking, energy, haulage and packaging, are being met with almost static average fruit prices paid by retailers," explained Ali Capper. [Full article here](https://www.freshplaza.com/europe/article/9496864/new-grower-survey-reveals-scale-of-crisis-for-british-top-fruit-industry/)

#### French apple growers uproot trees in protest

Apple growers in France say they need an additional €0.20 per kilogram to save the country’s orchards, as the impact of increased costs bites hard.

ANPP, the French topfruit association, offered a stark warning on the current state of the apple sector in France in a post on LinkedIn entitled “Apple industry on the verge of ruin”. Photos from the association showed producers in the process of uprooting their own trees due to the unsustainable price currently being paid to growers. “Having warned for several months now of the dire need to increase the price paid to producers, today, in several regions of France, producers are uprooting their orchards,” ANPP reported. [Full article here](https://www.fruitnet.com/eurofruit/french-apple-growers-uproot-trees-in-protest/248112.article)

#### Pacific pact will greatly benefit British trade

If all goes well, the UK will be a full member of this Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) within months, becoming the first European country to join this eclectic club. They have one shared objective: to make trade as easy as possible. Today’s members are Japan, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Canada, Mexico, Peru, Chile, Australia, New Zealand, and Brunei. Britain lifts the fast-expanding group to 16% of global GDP. Several others have either applied or signaled an intent to join, including Taiwan, Korea, Thailand, Uruguay, Colombia, Ecuador, and Costa Rica. The Philippines may soon follow. [Full article here](https://www.freshplaza.com/europe/article/9494643/pacific-pact-will-greatly-benefit-british-trade/)

#### Eosta hits plastic packaging savings landmark with laser marks on produce

Dutch group Eosta has said that its laser branding of organic fresh produce has now saved the equivalent of 50m pieces of plastic packaging. In late 2016, Eosta – under its brand name Nature & More – introduced the application of a laser technique to brand organic fruit and vegetables as a way of avoiding the use of stickers and packaging in supermarkets.

Natural branding involves marking fruit and vegetables using laser light, a process which requires the removal of a minor amount of pigment from the outer layer of the skin or peel. ”This method saves plastic and paper and huge amounts of energy and emissions: a laser mark requires a mere fraction of the energy required for a sticker,” Eosta explained. [Full article here](https://www.fruitnet.com/eurofruit/eosta-hits-plastic-packaging-savings-landmark/248111.article)

#### Specialized reefers poised to disrupt air cargo’s cut-flower dominance

Modern reefer and controlled-atmosphere containers could enable a modal shift in the cut-flower segment – until now almost exclusively handled by air – to cheaper and less-polluting transport.

In static tests by the Taiwan Floriculture Exports Association and Taiwan Agricultural Research Institute, a Daikin Active CA (controlled atmosphere) container was able to keep a shipment of Oncidium orchids in shelf condition for 18 days. Like other reefer types, the Daikin container is flushed with nitrogen to displace oxygen, a method that also generates positive gas pressure inside the box to prevent any air from getting in. The news follows a project between Maersk and Kenyan grower Sian Flowers late last year that saw shipments of roses and other summer flowers go via sea between Mombasa and Rotterdam. [Full article here](https://theloadstar.com/specialised-reefers-poised-to-disrupt-air-cargos-cut-flower-dominance/)

#### Labour troubles quadrupled in 2022 in world ports

The impacts of labour interruptions in various ports around the world quadrupled in 2022 and these could bring further disruption in 2023. Last year, there were at least 38 cases of protests or strikes affecting port operations, more than four times as many as in 2021 when the pandemic upended global trade. There were nine incidents in 2020, according to data beginning in July.

With inflation still looming, supply chains fragile and labour markets tight, workers will remain a volatile force in the new year. Industry experts claim that labour unrest is unlikely to abate after 2023 and may in fact worsen in the likely event that global economic conditions do not improve. [Full article here](https://www.freshplaza.com/europe/article/9495903/labor-troubles-quadrupled-in-2022-in-world-ports/)

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