

**PMAC weekly update 8th to 15th October**

1. **Government agencies**: New road signs for kauri lands; Biosecurity Award finalists reflect huge national effort in biosecurity; WTO Notifications; Indonesia, New Zealand to Strengthen Food-Industry Cooperation
2. **New Zealand News:**  EPA ramps up chemical reassessments programme; Saving the World (Trade Organisation); Tradeworks comment on the EU FTA negotiations; NZ food prices ease as lettuce prices plunge; NZ nurseries & orchards might be compensated for fruit tree seizures; Croptracker implemented by New Zealand apple supplier; Grower exports 90% of the Cymbidium Orchids they grow; New World enters war against plastic waste; Potato virus no threat to New Zealand chip supply

1. **International news:** GAIN reports; Denmark introduces climate label for food; European seed industry, unanimously in favor of CRISPR; Container demand forecasts adjusted to changing economic tide; United Nations Report: 7 of the top 10 container ports are Chinese; Chemical residue warning on fruit and vegetables Thailand; Food safety about more than just “keeping regulators happy; Five lessons from the Australian strawberry needle crisis; Outbreak that killed seven was largely caused by dust storms'

***Editors comments***

*A relatively quiet week news wise. The New Zealand section contains news that the EPA is ramping up its reassessment programme and is indicating it will be prepared to remove approval and put in place additional controls if it finds that current approvals do not provide enough protection for New Zealanders . This could have a significant effect on the chemicals available to New Zealand growers.*

*There is also a very interesting article on the importance of the WTO and steps that are being taken to defend it against the activities of countries like the USA who simply want to protect their own producers . A very good background article if you are interested in this area. .*

*In the International section the Gain reports have a lot of information about the hotel and food service business in a range of markets. If you are interested in direct sales to food service organisation these may be worth looking at . The size of this market segment has some eye watering figures . the USA sold $583 billion in product ( across all food types) to this sector in China, $295 billion to Japan and $22.4 billion to the Netherlands.*

1. **Agency news**



* 1. **New road signs for kauri lands**

New road signs calling on travellers to take action to protect kauri are being installed as part of the ongoing campaign to save the national taonga from dieback disease."The purpose of the signs is to help build a stronger message around the importance of following the cleaning steps when anyone visits kauri lands," says John Sanson, manager of recovery and pest management for Biosecurity New Zealand, which coordinates the national Kauri Dieback Programme alongside partner agencies and groups. [Full article available here](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/news-and-resources/media-releases/new-road-signs-for-kauri-lands/)

* 1. **Biosecurity Award finalists reflect huge national effort in biosecurity**

We were excited to receive over 60 very high calibre entries, making the judging task difficult, but rewarding," says New Zealand Biosecurity Awards judging panel chair, Dr John Hellstrom. The awards reflect the spirit of the newly launched biosecurity brand Ko Tātou This Is Us which has been created to help build a biosecurity team of 4.7 million – all New Zealanders. [Find out about the finalists and their projects](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/about-us/our-work/scholarships-and-awards/new-zealand-biosecurity-awards/)

The following finalists are of interest from a horticultural perspective IVS and KVH are finalists for the GIA award and Jacson Cube who have developed a technology to contamination free footwear is a Biotechnology finalist.

Award winners will be announced at a dinner function during the annual Biosecurity Forum in Auckland on 12 November. [Full article available here](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/news-and-resources/media-releases/biosecurity-award-finalists-reflect-huge-national-effort-in-biosecurity/)

* 1. **WTO Notifications**

Please find attached the most recent WTO 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. Changes notified over the last week include:

* Brazil and Canada MRL’s
* Taiwan changes to the "Enforcement Rules of Plant Protection and Quarantine Act"

The embedded files for the last week (which has links through to the original notifications)is available here 



* 1. **Indonesia, New Zealand to Strengthen Food-Industry Cooperation**

NZTE, through its Taste New Zealand event in the first week of October sought to raise awareness of New Zealand products in Indonesia. "[Indonesian consumers] are aware that New Zealand products are good and fresh, but they don't always know that some of the products they have been consuming are from New Zealand," she said.

As Indonesia and New Zealand celebrate 60 years of bilateral relations this year, Industry Minister Airlangga Hartarto said the two countries are committed to doubling the value of trade between them by focusing their exports on each other's priority industries. "We are seeking to strengthen partnership in the food and beverage industry, as both countries have abundant natural resources," Airlangga said in the statement.

He added that cooperation may include technology transfers from New Zealand to Indonesia, which could help boost the competitiveness of the latter's food and beverage products. [Full article available here](https://jakartaglobe.id/business/indonesia-new-zealand-to-strengthen-food-industry-cooperation/)



1. **New Zealand News**

**General**

* 1. **EPA ramps up chemical reassessments programme**

The EPA are ramping up oits reassessments programme and taking action on some chemicals to ensure risks to people and the environment continue to be managed effectively.

Working with international counterparts they have identified a [priority chemicals list](https://www.epa.govt.nz/industry-areas/hazardous-substances/chemical-reassessment-programme/priority-chemicals-list/) of around 40 chemicals that require review and scrutiny. This list contains a number of synthetic pyrethroids, organophosphates , insecticides , thesoil fumigant chlorpcrim, fungicides and herbicides (including paraquat but not glyphosate).

This will involve reviewing the rules that apply to those chemicals to ensure risks to people and the environment continue to be managed effectively, providing greater confidence for New Zealanders that the we are properly managing their health and environmental concerns on their behalf and on behalf of future generations.

“At times, new information may indicate a chemical poses more risks than existed, or that we knew of, at the time it was originally approved for use in New Zealand. But when an approval is granted for a chemical to be used in New Zealand that approval does not expire. The only legal way it can be amended or revoked is when the EPA, or an interested party, takes formal action.

Reassessments can be complex, lengthy and some may cost more than $1 million. We are funding this initial reassessment work by reprioritising its current expenditure, and are in discussion with the government on longer-term funding.  [Full article available here](https://www.epa.govt.nz/news-and-alerts/latest-news/epa-ramps-up-chemical-reassessments-programme/)

* 1. **Saving the World (Trade Organisation)**

The World Trade Organisation system has underpinned seventy years of global prosperity and has helped create a more level playing field for trade, even for small countries, but the global rules framework is now facing something of an existential crisis. The ‘friends of the system’, including New Zealand and others, along with the WTO itself, are rallying – but the path ahead will be challenging.

The more open, less distorted markets fostered by the WTO system have helped to reduce poverty, create jobs and improve living standards for billions of people. Enforceable global trade rules have enabled its 164 members both big and small to thrive and to defend their interests even against much larger players. (In New Zealand’s case, for example, we have won trade disputes against Indonesia, Canada, Australia and even the US.)

Following a decade of strong headwinds, including for the Doha Development Agenda negotiations, major new questions are being raised over the WTO’s future. Not coincidentally, these issues are playing out at the same time as we are seeing both a backlash against globalisation in Western economies as well as a severe ratcheting-up of protectionist measures (already on the rise since the 2008 Global Financial Crisis) thanks to the US’s tariff-happy trade war. The WTO has cut its global trade growth [forecast](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/pres18_e/pr822_e.htm) to 3.7 percent for next year, a significant drop from 2017’s 4.7 percent; WTO Director-General Roberto Azevedo has [warned](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-09-30/wto-imf-world-bank-seek-urgent-international-trade-reforms) that an intensified trade war could knock 1.9 percent off global GDP growth.

A number of countries have launched complaints about the tariffs under the WTO’s dispute settlement mechanism, but the disputes system itself is close to crisis-point. The US has long been troubled by aspects of the system including what it sees as judicial overreach on the part of the WTO’s ‘Supreme Court’, the Appellate Body. In effect the US has slowly strangled the seven-member body by refusing to allow the appointment of replacement members. As of 1 October, the number of members dropped to the functional bare minimum of three; by December next year, it will be down to one.

But it’s not all gloom: we are now seeing a concerted effort to save the WTO. The goal of these efforts is to improve and modernise the now 20-year-old WTO rules, including in relation to the disputes system, WTO members’ policy transparency and looking at more substantive areas such as subsidies, rules for state-owned enterprises and intellectual property, as well as potentially updating global frameworks to reflect the evolution of modern business, especially looking at the digital economy.

Leading the charge have been the [EU](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-18-5786_en.htm) and [Canada](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-09-25/canada-unveils-plan-to-bolster-wto-in-face-of-u-s-protectionism), with proposals on possible approaches to reform (although the US itself has not formally proposed anything and has said it disagrees with some of the proposals that have been made). The issues are also being discussed more widely, including bilaterally by China and the EU; in a trilateral dialogue of the US, EU and Japan (primarily focused on addressing current Chinese practices), and through a [separate process](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trade-wto-canada/canada-to-host-meeting-on-wto-reform-us-and-china-left-out-for-now-idUSKBN1KH26V) that Canada is convening later this month of a small group of like-minded countries including New Zealand.

The WTO Secretariat itself has issued a [paper](https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/Policy-Papers/Issues/2018/09/28/093018-reinvigorating-trade-and-inclusive-growth) on ‘Reinvigorating Trade and Inclusive Growth’ jointly with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. The paper underscores the “urgent” need for reform including better digital trade rules, improved transparency and also the greater use of “plurilaterals” – a departure from the traditional WTO big bang approach to negotiations, the so-called ‘single undertaking’ where nothing is agreed until everything is agreed across a broad agenda – to deliver quicker wins and build confidence. (New Zealand is or has been involved in three such Geneva-based plurilateral efforts, on services trade reform, information technology products and e-commerce.)

That said, the path will not be easy. Reforms that look like they are targeted solely at China will be hard sell in Beijing, whose agreement (like other WTO members’) would be needed for any reforms. Further, many will be quick to point out that much of the core Doha agenda remains ‘unfinished business’. A salient reminder of the work that remains to be done in agriculture has just been given by President Trump’s trade-war-related [$12 billion aid package](https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy-defence/article/2156874/us-china-trade-war-just-got-hotter-cold-cash-american) to farmers.

New Zealand and others have [questioned](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trade-agriculture-wto/wto-members-clamor-for-more-clarity-on-u-s-farm-spending-idUSKCN1M02M4) how these subsidies fit with US entitlements, which would have been cut if the Doha negotiations had succeeded. For our exporters, the worry is that not only are many agriculture products on tariff retaliation lists, which could displace affected product onto world markets, but also how much these subsidies may ramp up US production, creating further global market distortions.

Although we have a creditable portfolio of free trade agreements throughout the Asia-Pacific and in train with Europe, the WTO remains a crucial touchstone for our economic wellbeing. The importance of shoring up and saving the WTO, through these reform efforts, and by broadening popular support for the multilateral system by telling the story of its many benefits more compellingly, cannot be understated. [Full article available here](http://www.tradeworks.org.nz/saving-the-world-trade-organisation/)

* 1. **Tradeworks comment on the EU FTA negotiations**

**There is a certain irony in New Zealand’s current free trade negotiations with the European Union (EU), that were held in Wellington last week.**

In 1973, when the United Kingdom (UK), then our biggest trading partner by far, threw in its lot with the European Economic Community, we in New Zealand faced a massive challenge of diversifying our markets. Luckily we found Asia on our doorstep. Some 45 years later, the UK is seeking to leave the EU (more about that another day), while we are looking towards the EU as a means to diversify our markets away from what some at least perceive as an over-reliance on China!

In light of the second round of negotiations occurring this month, Tradeworks have now released an [updated summary](http://www.tradeworks.org.nz/towards-a-new-zealand-european-union-fta-update/) of the FTA negotiating process and the relationship as it stands today. The time may not have been right earlier for a comprehensive trade deal with the EU. While Asia is no less important to us, now is the time to put our relations with some old friends on a new level.  [Full article available here](http://www.tradeworks.org.nz/new-friends-from-an-old-continent/)

* 1. **NZ food prices ease as lettuce prices plunge**

New Zealand food prices eased in September, led by cheaper fruit and vegetables, including a 45 percent fall in lettuce prices. Lettuce prices fell to an average $1.81 for a 500g head, from $3.26 in August and an all-time high of $5.42 in July when the weather had been poor, Statistics New Zealand said.

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 In total vegetable prices fell 8.7 percent in September, influenced by lower prices for lettuce, tomatoes, and cucumbers. However, meat and poultry prices rose 2 percent, influenced by higher prices for beef and chicken. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9031303/nz-food-prices-ease-as-lettuce-prices-plunge/)

**Industry news**

* 1. **NZ nurseries & orchards might be compensated for fruit tree seizures**

A New Zealand High Court judge has thrown open the door for compensation to be paid to nurseries and orchards in a biosecurity case that could be worth $1.5 billion.

Growers have argued destroying the trees would choke off development of new varieties of fruit and containment rules would be onerous and expensive. They added MPI had used incorrect legal criteria for making their decisions. Justice Cooke supported many of their arguments in a complex judgement just issued. He ruled MPI had relied on section 116 of the Biosecurity Act under which these trees were declared unauthorised goods. Under this clause, compensation would not be payable.

The growers argued section 116 should apply to smuggled or illegal goods, not proper products imported legally and then banned retrospectively. The judge agreed, throwing out section 116 and directing MPI to consider two other clauses to support their action, both of which allow compensation. He directed the two sides to meet to take the matter forward and gave them until Thursday to come to an agreement.

In the meantime, the plants have been saved from destruction, but have been ordered to be sprayed and kept behind netting. The figure of $1.5 billion in losses was given in court but not supported by any details. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9030845/NZ-nurseries-orchards-might-be-compensated-for-fruit-tree-seizures/)

* 1. **Croptracker implemented by New Zealand apple supplier**

Croptracker, Inc. is excited to announce a long-term adoption and service level agreement of its crop management and record-keeping software by Mr Apple New Zealand Ltd. Mr Apple is New Zealand’s largest fully-integrated grower, packer, and marketer of apples.

Since 2006, Croptracker ( a Canadian development) has provided fruit and vegetable growers with advanced solutions to drive an increase in production efficiency and traceability while decreasing overall operational costs. Croptracker's mission is to develop technology to help the fruit and vegetable industry become more efficient, profitable, and sustainable.

This is a significant step for Mr Apple and the 1,300 orchard staff that will rely on the Croptracker software.” Mr Apple employs over 2,200 staff at its peak, operates over 1,100 hectares of orchards, and exports more than 4 million cartons of apples every year. Mr Apple is focused on how it can deliver the very best apples to its customers. It prides itself on their apples being “safe, pure and 100% traceable back to source” and holds food safety and traceability certifications from some of the most demanding programs in the world. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9030829/Croptracker-implemented-by-New-Zealand-apple-supplier/)

* 1. **Grower exports 90% of the Cymbidium Orchids they grow**

Martin Nieuwenhuijsen is grower manager at one of Ruby Orchids Ltd properties. Dick Oostdam, the owner of Ruby Nurseries, has several growing sites situated in Drury and Ramarama in South Auckland. Martin oversees a site in Drury which covers over 1.2 hectares growing entirely cymbidium orchids, predominately grown for export. Martin’s involvement with Ruby Orchids Ltd dates back to 1990. *This article provides an overview of Martins career* [Full article available here](http://www.floraldaily.com/article/9030447/New-Zealand-Grower-exports-90-of-the-Cymbidium-Orchids-they-grow/)

**Other**

* 1. **New World enters war against plastic waste**

A recent New World initiative will do away with plastic film. As New World upgrades or builds new stores, it would be aiming at this new policy in produce departments. The initiative uses a "misting system" to keep fruit and veg fresh and in good condition without the need for plastic.” Six stores had adopted "Project Naked" with more conversions planned. [Full article available here](http://www.hortidaily.com/article/9029174/New-Zealand-retailer-New-World-enters-war-against-plastic-waste/)

**Biosecurity**

* 1. **Potato virus no threat to New Zealand chip supply**

The potato mop-top virus was discovered in potatoes grown on two Canterbury properties last month. In an update to industry stakeholders this week, Potatoes New Zealand (PNZ) and Biosecurity New Zealand said 18 more farms in the Canterbury region had been added to the suspect list and testing had been widened to the North Island.

The mop-top virus exists in a lot of foreign countries as well. It could be managed if it was found to be widespread here.  It's in the United States and Europe and they still have plenty of hot chips.

Infected potatoes showed symptoms like distortions to the skin, deep cracking, and discolouration that made them unsuitable for processing. MPI said the virus was not a food safety issue but if found to be wide-spread, could cause some productivity issues for growers. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9031263/potato-virus-no-threat-to-new-zealand-chip-supply/)



1. **International news**

**Comment**

* 1. **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. With regard to import regulations for a particular market New Zealand exporters should first check the countries ICPR on MPI’s web site. These are collated specifically for New Zealand product. However the Gain reports often provide additional information that is useful e.g. on grading and labelling, economic profiles. This week see:

1. **Australia 2018 Food Service Report** Australia’s commercial foodservice sector (i.e., full-service restaurants, fast food outlets, caterers, etc.) is a competitive market and with an ageing population, the institutional foodservice sector continues to grow.  [Food Service - Hotel Restaurant Institutional\_Canberra\_Australia\_9-28-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Food%20Service%20-%20Hotel%20Restaurant%20Institutional_Canberra_Australia_9-28-2018.pdf)
2. **China Food Service Industry Sector Overview** China’s Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional (HRI) sectors recorded USD $583 billion in sales revenue in 2017. U.S. agricultural products generally enjoy good reputation for their quality, safety, stable supply and consistency. [Food Service - Hotel Restaurant Institutional\_Beijing ATO\_China - Peoples Republic of\_9-28-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Food%20Service%20-%20Hotel%20Restaurant%20Institutional_Beijing%20ATO_China%20-%20Peoples%20Republic%20of_9-28-2018.pdf)
3. **China Trade Shows Report for October 2018** This goal of this report is to introduce U.S. exporters of farm, fishery and forest products to the major trade shows taking place throughout China.  [China Trade Shows Report for October 2018 – December 2019\_Shenyang ATO\_China - Peoples Republic of\_9-28-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/China%20Trade%20Shows%20Report%20for%20October%202018%20%E2%80%93%20December%202019_Shenyang%20ATO_China%20-%20Peoples%20Republic%20of_9-28-2018.pdf)
4. **Eurasian Economic Union Ag Times No. 2 of 2018** This report contains summaries of relevant decisions and documents from the Armenia-Belarus-Kazakhstan-Kyrgyzstan-Russia Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) meetings, published between February 20, 2018 and September 12, 2018 that impact EAEU food and agriculture policy.   [Eurasian Economic Union Ag Times No. 2 of 2018\_Moscow\_Russian Federation\_10-5-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Eurasian%20Economic%20Union%20Ag%20Times%20No.%202%20of%202018_Moscow_Russian%20Federation_10-5-2018.pdf)
5. **Hong Kong Food Service** Hong Kong is the 4th largest export market for U.S. consumer-oriented agricultural products, by value. As hotel and restaurant expansions continue, demand for high-quality U.S. food and beverage products by the HRI food service sector in Hong Kong is expected to remain strong.  With a dynamic food culture, sophisticated buyers, and a world-class logistical infrastructure, Hong Kong is a market to promote high-quality, innovative [Food Service - Hotel Restaurant Institutional\_Hong Kong\_Hong Kong\_9-19-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Food%20Service%20-%20Hotel%20Restaurant%20Institutional_Hong%20Kong_Hong%20Kong_9-19-2018.pdf)
6. **Japan HRI Food Service Sector Report 2018** Japan’s hotel, restaurant, and institutional food service industry (HRI) achieved record high sales of ¥32.8 trillion ($295.2 billion) in 2017 following six consecutive years of growth.  Increases in home-meal replacements (HMR), inbound tourism, and corporate earnings have contributed to the industry’s success.  However, competition is intense and both Japanese consumers and foreign travelers demand high-quality food and beverages as well as unique eating experiences.  [Food Service - Hotel Restaurant Institutional\_Tokyo ATO\_Japan\_9-27-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Food%20Service%20-%20Hotel%20Restaurant%20Institutional_Tokyo%20ATO_Japan_9-27-2018.pdf)
7. **Netherland Dutch Food Service Report** The turnover of the Dutch foodservice market in 2017 was valued at $22.4 billion, up by 4.1 percent.  [Food Service - Hotel Restaurant Institutional\_The Hague\_Netherlands\_9-27-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Food%20Service%20-%20Hotel%20Restaurant%20Institutional_The%20Hague_Netherlands_9-27-2018.pdf)
8. **Thailand Food Service** This report contains information about Thailand’s food service industry.  It provides an overview of market opportunities and key channels of distribution for U.S. food and beverage products destined for the food service market in Thailand. [Food Service - Hotel Restaurant Institutional\_Bangkok\_Thailand\_10-3-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Food%20Service%20-%20Hotel%20Restaurant%20Institutional_Bangkok_Thailand_10-3-2018.pdf)
9. **Taiwan Retail Foods** Taiwan’s retail food sector is becoming increasingly competitive and chain operators, such as Costco, 7-Eleven, PX Mart, Carrefour, and Wellcome, continue to dominate Taiwan’s food retail market. The United States is the leading supplier of many consumer-oriented food and agricultural products including red meats, fresh fruit and vegetables, poultry. [Retail Foods\_Taipei ATO\_Taiwan\_10-4-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Retail%20Foods_Taipei%20ATO_Taiwan_10-4-2018.pdf)

Other Retail food and Food service reports available this week

* Burma [Retail Foods\_Rangoon\_Burma - Union of\_9-21-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Retail%20Foods_Rangoon_Burma%20-%20Union%20of_9-21-2018.pdf)
* Philippines [Retail Foods\_Manila\_Philippines\_9-17-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Retail%20Foods_Manila_Philippines_9-17-2018.pdf)
* Brazil [Food Service - Hotel Restaurant Institutional\_Sao Paulo ATO\_Brazil\_9-28-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Food%20Service%20-%20Hotel%20Restaurant%20Institutional_Sao%20Paulo%20ATO_Brazil_9-28-2018.pdf)
* Egypt [Food Service - Hotel Restaurant Institutional\_Cairo\_Egypt\_9-20-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Food%20Service%20-%20Hotel%20Restaurant%20Institutional_Cairo_Egypt_9-20-2018.pdf)
* Greece [Food Service - Hotel Restaurant Institutional\_Rome\_Greece\_9-20-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Food%20Service%20-%20Hotel%20Restaurant%20Institutional_Rome_Greece_9-20-2018.pdf)
* Israel [Food Service - Hotel Restaurant Institutional\_Tel Aviv\_Israel\_9-20-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Food%20Service%20-%20Hotel%20Restaurant%20Institutional_Tel%20Aviv_Israel_9-20-2018.pdf)
* Jamaica [2018 Jamaica HRI Food Service Sector\_Kingston\_Jamaica\_9-28-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/2018%20Jamaica%20HRI%20Food%20Service%20Sector_Kingston_Jamaica_9-28-2018.pdf)
* Mexico [Food Service - Hotel Restaurant Institutional\_Mexico City ATO\_Mexico\_9-25-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Food%20Service%20-%20Hotel%20Restaurant%20Institutional_Mexico%20City%20ATO_Mexico_9-25-2018.pdf)
* Morocco [Food Service - Hotel Restaurant Institutional\_Rabat\_Morocco\_9-20-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Food%20Service%20-%20Hotel%20Restaurant%20Institutional_Rabat_Morocco_9-20-2018.pdf)
* New Zealand [Food Service - Hotel Restaurant Institutional\_Wellington\_New Zealand\_9-28-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Food%20Service%20-%20Hotel%20Restaurant%20Institutional_Wellington_New%20Zealand_9-28-2018.pdf)+
* The Bahamas [Food Service - Hotel Restaurant Institutional\_Miami ATO\_Caribbean Basin\_9-28-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Food%20Service%20-%20Hotel%20Restaurant%20Institutional_Miami%20ATO_Caribbean%20Basin_9-28-2018.pdf)
* Peru [Food Service - Hotel Restaurant Institutional\_Lima\_Peru\_9-27-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Food%20Service%20-%20Hotel%20Restaurant%20Institutional_Lima_Peru_9-27-2018.pdf)

**Regulatory**

* 1. **Denmark introduces climate label for food**

Next week, the Danish government will present a new food label. The aim is to make the environmental impact of the individual food traceable so that the end user can better assess the climate balance. For this purpose, transport routes, cooling or energy consumption of the products are marked.

 In addition to the sticker, the government is planning a campaign to make it easier for consumers to buy more climate-friendly products. The initiative is to be developed in cooperation with several supermarkets. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9031672/denmark-introduces-climate-label-for-food/)

**Business**

* 1. **European seed industry, unanimously in favor of CRISPR**

The ESA (European Seed Association) held its Annual Conference in Madrid this week. It was attended by more than 1,000 participants from 47 countries, representing nearly 500 companies that work in the research, production and marketing of seeds.

During the meeting, decisive issues were addressed for the sector, such as the Common Agricultural Policy, the repercussions of Brexit, the fraudulent use of seeds, research and improvement of plants, GMO, biodiversity or plant health. However, the biggest issue is last June's ruling from the Court of Justice of the European Communities, which has resulted in the plant varieties modified through the CRISPR/Cas9 technology (genomic edition) being equated to the rest of genetically modified organisms.

CRISPR is a technique that makes it possible to select and modify genes with a previously unknown speed and precision. Practically the entire scientific community stands behind it, but some environmental groups are against it. In the course of a press conference, Dr. Pío Beltrán, Research Professor of the CSIC in the Institute of Plant Molecular and Cell Biology (IBMCP), said that "the scientific community is surprised and disgusted." He explained that the rejection to CRISPR is based on the same beliefs that already caused the ban on transgenic crops in Europe, but stressed that "scientists know without any doubt that the CRISPR genomic editing technique cannot be equated to that of transgenic crops. This is very clear when the CRISPR technique is used to cause mutations identical to those that occur randomly in nature, and which gives the crop a characteristic of interest to consumers.

Varieties must be evaluated for what they are, not for the technology used to obtain them." The ESA says that this judicial decision entails "unacceptable socio-economic risks for both plant improvement, the agro-food chain in general, consumers and our European environment." He argues that, with this ruling, the Court of Justice of the European Communities is causing serious damage to the scientific research in which European breeders have been investing, and that now 20 million Euro will have to be paid merely for the regulatory costs of each variety that is registered. In addition, the Court has placed "growers, processors, traders and consumers at a competitive disadvantage compared to those of other regions."

 Also recently, EuropaBio, the association of European biotechnology companies, called this ruling "a step back," adding that "the 1,000 million Euro invested by the States and companies for the use of CRISPR in agriculture will now not yield any practical results for European farmers." According to the ESA, closing the door to the CRISPR technique "will prevent Europe from moving forward in the development of new varieties of better adapted plants, with better yields and resistant to pests and diseases. It is also a hurdle to innovation for the prevention of climate change and the pursuit of a healthier and more sustainable agro-food system." [Full article available here](http://www.hortidaily.com/article/9030633/european-seed-industry-unanimously-in-favor-of-crispr/)

* 1. **Container demand forecasts adjusted to changing economic tide**

Shipping consultancy Drewry has announced that due to the somewhat a gloomier world economic outlook and rising trade tensions, the forecast for container demand was downgraded for the next five years. Previously, the global supply-demand index was expected to take incremental steps upwards through 2022, by which time the industry would at long last be close to equilibrium. However, the new forecasts suggest that the industry now faces being stuck with the current over-supplied situation for several more years.

“The anticipated re-balancing of the container market looks to have been postponed. That’s more bad news for carriers that are facing substantial cost increases as a result of stricter ship fuel standards from 2020,” said Simon Heaney, senior manager, container research at Drewry.

According to [worldmaritimenews.com](https://worldmaritimenews.com/archives/261899/drewry-container-demand-forecast-downgraded/), Drewry’s impact assessment of the latest round of US tariffs imposed last month indicate that eastbound Transpacific flows could be hit with an opportunity cost of approximately 1 million TEU next year. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9030134/Container-demand-forecasts-adjusted-to-changing-economic-tide/)

* 1. **United Nations Report: 7 of the top 10 container ports are Chinese**

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) recently announced the top 10 ports by container volume in a report on global shipping in 2017. The Chinese ports include Shanghai (number 1), Shenzhen (number 3), and 5 more, all in the top 10. Singapore (number 2) and Busan (number 5) were high on the list as well, making it clear that Asian ports are the "core" of global shipping. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9030297/United-Nations-Report-7-of-the-top-10-container-ports-are-Chinese/)

 **Food safety**

* 1. **Chemical residue warning on fruit and vegetables Thailand**

A medical researcher at a leading Thai university has warned that some fruit and vegetables in Thailand contain high levels of pesticides. The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives on recently reported the results of research on chemical residue on 48 kinds of fruit and vegetables. Six fruit and vegetables had high levels of chemical residue – chilli, tomato, long bean, egg plant and Chinese kale. However, the ministries reported that if consumers eat less than 400 grams per day it would not be harmful.

Dr Teerawat Hemachuta, the head of the Information Center for Emerging Infectious Diseases at Chulalongkorn University, said that 60% of the chemical residue found on fruit and vegetables cannot be washed off, while only 10% of the 280 types of pesticides registered in Thailand can be detected in a laboratory. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9030364/Chemical-residue-warning-on-fruit-and-vegetables-Thailand/)

* 1. **Five lessons from the Australian strawberry needle crisis**

Australia suffered a food contamination crisis, after metal needles were discovered in strawberries. The fruit sabotage has spread to at least six brands in four states and has resulted in Coles and Aldi supermarkets pulling the product from their shelves across the country The industry has learnt the following 5 lessons from the crisis.

1. ***Have a clear message*** if you are going to reassure customers. Consumers want to know whether the strawberries they have brought are s afe to eat and whether they need to avoid buying them next time they are in the supermarket.
2. ***Take decisive action*** In a situation like this, both producers and consumers need to see that action is being taken to resolve the situation and find those responsible.
3. ***Avoid speculation*** Avoid speculating on the motives or causes of the issue. Stick to the facts that you know when dealing with the media avoid getting drawn into commenting on possible cause.
4. ***Provide regular updates*** In a fast-moving crisis media management incident like this and organizations need to be on the front foot, releasing information at regular intervals. Failure to provide updates will result in the media trying to fill the void.
5. ***Recognize the appeal*** Look to work with the media and don’t view journalists as the enemy. Restoring trust and reputation is likely to take time, particularly with the speculation about copycat cases.  [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9031245/five-lessons-from-the-australian-strawberry-needle-crisis/)
	1. **Outbreak that killed seven was largely caused by dust storms'**

An investigation into a series of deaths linked to listeria on rockmelons has concluded the contaminated fruit came from a single farm in New South Wales, and the outbreak was largely caused by the weather. The investigation found the farm that was the source of the outbreak had hygiene and sanitary procedures on par with or better than most rockmelon-growing operations.

Dust storms that covered the farm's paddocks significantly increased the amount of listeria on the fruit There were other peripheral issues found in the packing facility that were not considered to be major underlying causes

Despite this, heavy rains in December and dust storms that followed covered the farm's paddocks in dust, and "significantly increased" the amount of listeria on the fruit. Rockmelons on the farm were washed in a chlorine solution and scrubbed prior to packing. "The wash water was not recirculated, sanitiser was constantly monitored and applied through an auto-dosing system, and all water coming into the facility was treated and considered potable," the report said. "The netted skin of rockmelons makes this fruit particularly hard to clean and sanitise."

The listeria contamination and the recent strawberry needle scandal have given rise to calls for better ways to alert the public to risks in the food chain. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9031854/outbreak-that-killed-seven-was-largely-caused-by-dust-storms/)

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