

**PMAC weekly update 12th to 19th April**

1. **Government agencies**: ICPR Changes, Auckland High Court jails man for smuggling methamphetamine in avocado pulp, WTO Notifications, MFAT’s Global Trade and Economic Update for NZ Businesses 16 April
2. **New Zealand News:**  NZ Horticulture Conference, NZ-UK trade: 'Let’s Make a Deal', Horizons requirements are tough but growers are up for the challenge, The need for water storage, Diversification key for NZ exports, New CEO for kiwifruit organisation Kiwifruit Vine Health, Kiwifruit supplier seeks major acquisition, Exports of new season Zespri kiwifruit, New Zealand start-up uses TikTok to alleviate picker shortage, Dazzle apples celebrate big launch in China, Growers 'devastated' as apples rot in Hawke's Bay orchards, Virus free asparagus seed improves grower’s bottom line, Harvest begins at one of New Zealand's largest medical cannabis crop, Solutions for growers to not only become economically sustainable but reduce food waste, New Zealand investors focus on agtech, New Zealand experts leading global conversation for UN about Equitable Food Systems, Government to back more initiatives to boost food and fibre workforce, ToBRFV update
3. **International news:** GAIN reports; EU Parliament committees back Brexit trade deal, Japan Bans Export of Fruit and Vegetable Seedlings, Global standards body pushes for data harmony, FL presents European Statistics Handbook 2021, US: Measuring greenhouse workers' welfare, EU: Ageing of farmers remains a major challenge in rural areas, Investment grows in China’s agrifood start-ups, Smart platform to implement a new eco-sustainable agriculture model, Australia: Produce prices may spike as farmers warn they will not plant crops, Hapag-Lloyd orders more reefer containers, Pink Lady launches 'adopt a tree' campaign, M&S launches biggest-ever quality campaign, JAZZ™ teams up with upcoming DreamWorks film, Project seeks science-based interventions to persistent Listeria strains, FDA: ‘Foreseeable hazard’ if leafy greens are still grown near cattle or dairy farms, PMA A-NZ resource on microplastics in food, PMA A-NZ webinar on avoiding the water hazard, New food safety tool kit on food fraud, Walmart introduces restoring pollinator habitat program, Change for the long-term' message for earth day 2021, Soil for the future, "Our goal is to grow scaly lily bulbs with zero pesticides by 2030", China: Organic Smart Factory implements science and technology for agriculture, Fruits and vegetables could help young adults improve sleep, Eating strawberries daily may strengthen vascular health, New resource boosts nutrition in older adults, Hazel Technologies raises $70M for packets to prevent food waste, Scientists discover new natural blue food colouring from red cabbage, A fungus to reduce the use of inputs in tomato crops

**Comment**

A lots of good news this week. I’ve had to trim it hard to reduce content to a reasonable length and even so it’s a long newsletter. In the New Zealand section, a good spread of articles. There are two articles about smaller sectors I’d like to draw your attention to – the production of Asparagus seed( exported to 20 countries) and the first medicinal marijuana harvest in New Zealand.

In the International section there are two dominant collections of articles . Firstly, the use of IT to support production , reduce waste and generally to save the planet . Its obvious technology, either information technology or technology to replace labour is very high profile ( both in NZ and overseas) is becoming increasingly important and will transform how we produce and do business. One article states Agritech investments last year in China increased 66% when venture capital generally fell 50%.

The second area that profiles strongly this week is promotions to the end customer. Walmart and M&S are promoting their produce by supporting pollinators and emphasising quality standards for production of their quality produce. These contrast with stories of two promotions for apples which are very innovative. The apple Jazz will appear in the soon to be released DreamtWorks movie and in the EU the public can adopt an apple tree which will regularly update adoptive owners about what is happening in the orchard on the apples journey to harvest.

1. **Agency news** 
   1. **ICPR changes**

The following ICPR have been updated: For

* the European Union changes to the associated Additional declarations for Nursery stock
* French Polynesia has been with regard to Growing Media and Packing Material , Phytosanitary Certificates and Re-exported Products.
* Great Britain for additional declarations for Olea europaea , Exemption for prohibited items (Scientific license/Letter of Authority) and information regarding phytosanitary certificate requests in ePhyto.
* Japan with requirements in Seeds and Grains for Sowing, Processing and for Consumption. Dried Fruit and Vegetables, for Capsicum spp. and Lycopersicon esculentum and in Miscellaneous.
  1. **Auckland High Court jails man for smuggling methamphetamine in avocado pulp**

In the Auckland High Court, a Mexican national has been sentenced to 10 years and 7 months for his part in smuggling 113 kg of methamphetamine concealed in a shipment of avocado pulp in April 2019. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9311635/auckland-high-court-jails-man-for-smuggling-methamphetamine-in-avocado-pulp/)

* 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](mailto:Plant.exports@mpi.govt.nz) so that they can potentially make a submission to the notifying country. Changes notified over the last week include:

* Canada – increased scrutiny of wooden pallets
* Japan – MRL for Bixafen and Cyflufenamid
* Kyrgyz Republic and Russian federation- changed phytosanitary requirements
* Chinese Taipei – confirmation of a list of MRL’s

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

** MFAT**

* 1. **MFAT’s Global Trade and Economic Update for NZ Businesses 16 April**

MFAT update is available at <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/trade/mfat-market-reports/market-reports-global/global-economic-and-trade-update-for-new-zealand-businesses-16-april-2021/> Amongst other entries included in this weeks edition are new of :

* **Public consultations** were launched on Thursday 1 April **requesting feedback from New Zealanders** on additional economies joining **the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).** This follows**the United Kingdom’**s formal request to join**.**  Submissions can be made [here(external link)](https://www.haveyoursay.mfat.govt.nz/) and close on 2 May.
* **Singapore** has become the first participating country to **ratify** the **Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)** and deposit its ratification instrument with ASEAN.
* On 7 April, **NZTE** hosted a virtual **‘Taste New Zealand Conference and Exhibition’** in **Saudi Arabia** to connect New Zealand exporters with leading Saudi distributors and key government



1. **New Zealand News** 
   1. **NZ Horticulture Conference**

Registrations are open for the Horticulture Conference: **Resilience and Recovery,** to be held on 5-6 August 2021 at Mystery Creek, Hamilton: [https://conferences.co.nz/hortnz2021/](http://mail.eventsairmail.com/ls/click?upn=xY20HnFlZWW96TLNVmvrzitHcxO8Wz2nO8gcBR5-2FXCzvNoMUH4YvAhp-2Beb0nNa2qcdHA_r95Xg7-2BqhKQOvO-2B4rh9LgpexoiHOwJe6W5azxXhWHXC29CGyUStUxqqKPkfS-2Ba9UEMxNwZA8GegoBHeWu5YJe6QF-2FGunDnDyeWD0-2B5PCxBZfdVuljcToxmkXqp7Z42J5Z2pun40BklloUJzABZrBjctvyWCbamemQuX3qnOs2avz60O68JlGsmoFes7MU7pdUW5-2Bn7OYEb5ADeO-2BQPrbyeM-2B7p-2Bgtf4wtRjCoinsgjo-2FPcqDfa1gZ36cbRYbdgrQl6hDAH02Ij5QSJR0kGSS-2BbHoDu9djoepe-2Beaw9BO2HxTHWA2MxyzpUANDxQTlxVWOWsrUAl8-2Fzj5WPkV0B-2F-2FVQ-3D-3D).

[**Click here**](http://mail.eventsairmail.com/ls/click?upn=xY20HnFlZWW96TLNVmvrzitHcxO8Wz2nO8gcBR5-2FXCway3m8VctEXIotZNX9bR1Mb5bJp48-2B0ZP1nfJB3eJxsg-3D-3DX7u1_r95Xg7-2BqhKQOvO-2B4rh9LgpexoiHOwJe6W5azxXhWHXC29CGyUStUxqqKPkfS-2Ba9UEMxNwZA8GegoBHeWu5YJe6QF-2FGunDnDyeWD0-2B5PCxBZfdVuljcToxmkXqp7Z42J5Z2pun40BklloUJzABZrBjctvyWCbamemQuX3qnOs2avz60O68JlGsmoFes7MU7pdXUqaouWa0gddKJafR8VRWEf2xixXzB0DYHstXislYk7mimZD4StoFzkMq4odEB3HjUg-2BqTrJgk6-2BNX-2FE6My4LsjUMORoSBpA6mVzHAY3RHZOBxdWzm-2FXQEICsWTKgaIrCY5rlPnk0MLy4cNrQNUAwg-3D-3D) to see the speakers and [**click here**](http://mail.eventsairmail.com/ls/click?upn=xY20HnFlZWW96TLNVmvrzitHcxO8Wz2nO8gcBR5-2FXCzOdimavKLCuV23yE7vepwxb05j0AX6l5gWkWGnYZTjgg-3D-3D0yKa_r95Xg7-2BqhKQOvO-2B4rh9LgpexoiHOwJe6W5azxXhWHXC29CGyUStUxqqKPkfS-2Ba9UEMxNwZA8GegoBHeWu5YJe6QF-2FGunDnDyeWD0-2B5PCxBZfdVuljcToxmkXqp7Z42J5Z2pun40BklloUJzABZrBjctvyWCbamemQuX3qnOs2avz60O68JlGsmoFes7MU7pdk-2BpQPe18KxpDkZdhgi-2FthszDyHwkezHlkJbsWXhB1iSRe7NcKYSKlMnELEXjCrLwCm6kMHWkvITJJP6jVAvI-2FS98t-2BD3cTfnH2Jh-2BPHNoG9T5mWypfjTllCSZNZwnXrTz-2FPtOx-2F0Jfe9i4eDRr8RQw-3D-3D)  to see full pricing schedule and register online now!

** Commentary**

* 1. **NZ-UK trade: 'Let’s Make a Deal'**

Negotiators will begin tomorrow on the fourth round of discussions on a free trade agreement between the United Kingdom and New Zealand. As has become familiar, this happens via video conference, not in a meeting room.  Formal discussions with NZ were first launched in June 2020 but have had a low profile.

*This article talks about the desirability of agreeing a trade deal with the UK to slow our growing reliance on China and notes that our small market size will mean a deal is not a priority for UK politicians*

NZ business needs to sell the benefits to the British public and not rely on our government to do the heavy lifting of ensuring a deal is acceptable to domestic producers in the UK.  Direct engagement and confidence-building are required to allay British *farmers fears about New Zealand’s highly competitive farm production .*

***The balance of the article talks about the more invisible but equally important skill and it income that could be fostered by a trade deal stating.*** But NZ should not fixate on the agricultural deal. Being closely connected to the financial and technological powerhouse of the UK makes sense as the world economy changes.  [NZ-UK trade: 'Let’s Make a Deal'](http://email.mail.businessdesk.co.nz/c/eJxljjtvwzAMhH-NvAgSRL01aCjSZOljy5JNjunYsOIUlgIU-fUVimwBOBx4x483RJBWY-jmKIUEocGDEwCCA98dQAXnrANv7S5YosU1zZn39zKvWMqAZeHnG18f3RSNGQ04L7VVRvejV0krZ3zopdYCRtflONX6U4h6I_LQ5pXSlmmr8zljU-uD3RdWtzQgy1gLu6YFWWIDptxtsU7IL5i20kr9ttSzR43fJ3b8oP937RUl0n1iJXtJvCAhFPrVMDTR94Zp3h-sGkw_)

* 1. **Horizons requirements are tough but growers are up for the challenge**

Horticulture New Zealand is welcoming Horizons Regional Council’s decision to adopt recommendations on Plan Change 2 that affect vegetable growing. "The new requirements are tough but growers are up for the challenge," says HortNZ Chief Executive, Mike Chapman.  "In its decision, Horizons is providing existing vegetable growers with a way to stay in production and feed New Zealanders, while continuing to reduce environmental impact," [Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9311210/the-requirements-are-tough-but-growers-are-up-for-the-challenge/)

‘This plan provides a way forward in the short term.  However, to provide for long-term food security, a further plan is required to map out how resource management decisions can provide for both environmental improvements and long-term food supply.’   Levin supplies around 20 percent of New Zealand’s fresh vegetables. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9311233/hortnz-welcomes-horizons-support-for-levin-vegetable-growing/)

* 1. **The need for water storage**

We have water in abundance. A series of reports from Berl (Business Economics and Research Ltd) make the abundance clear: New Zealand has about twice the quantity of freshwater on its area than United Kingdom, and about four times that of China and the United States of America. On average, New Zealand receives about twenty times the volume of freshwater per square kilometre of area than does 'unlucky' Australia and over 24 times the amount of water per person than France, for instance.

*While the article shows we are also amongst the i highest global users of household water this article points out it is not lack of water that could restrains our future use* The problem is uneven distribution over the country and during the year - and the fact that we don't store during periods of excess. While environmentalists are vocal about capture of water not being natural, and argue for prescriptive regulation, there should be no argument that capture and storage allows environmental flow. The 2020 OECD report on Nature-Based Solutions (to mitigate climate change) suggests increasing and maximising water storage capacities, and thus slowing the release of water. [Full article available here](https://www.ruralnewsgroup.co.nz/rural-news/rural-opinion/we-just-can-t-leave-it-to-beaver)

* 1. **Diversification key for NZ exports**

A new report “Food for thought – export potential from the Top of the South “ published by New Zealand economic consultancy, Infometrics, has identified New Zealand’s apple and kiwifruit exports as having “untapped potential". Defined by Infometrics as the difference between the potential market and the value of the country's exports to that market, the untapped potential cited in the report refers to New Zealand’s apple exports to Saudi Arabia. “[Full article available here](http://www.fruitnet.com/asiafruit/article/184953/diversification-key-for-nz-exports)

* 1. **New CEO for kiwifruit organisation Kiwifruit Vine Health**

Kiwifruit Vine Health last week announced that Leanne Stewart has been appointed as the biosecurity organisation’s new Chief Executive. Currently the Deputy Chief Executive at Horticulture New Zealand and General Manager Process Vegetables New Zealand, Leanne has had previous roles in MPI working in the import regulatory space and the International Plant Protection Convention in Rome, where she reviewed global implementation of the international agreement and standards.

Leanne starts at KVH on Monday 31 May. She replaces Stu Hutchings, who is taking up the role of Biosecurity New Zealand’s Chief Biosecurity Officer. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9310861/new-chief-executive-for-kiwifruit-organisation-kiwifruit-vine-health/)

* 1. **Kiwifruit supplier seeks major acquisition**

Seeka chief executive Michael Franks expects shareholders to greenlight plans to acquire post-harvest operator Opotiki Packing and Coolstorage (OPAC).A combined Seeka-OPAC business will handle approximately 25% of New Zealand’s kiwifruit crop and will be NZ’s largest kiwifruit grower and the second-largest post-harvest operator, according to Seeka. Importantly, it will deliver an estimated $2.5 million to $3.0m in savings a year and the combined group is expected to generate more than $300m in revenue.

A total of 99.8% of OPAC's shareholders voted in favour of the deal this week, well ahead of the required 75% threshold. Seeka shareholders will vote on April 16 and the deal requires more than 50% support.  [Full article available here](https://businessdesk.co.nz/article/primary-sector/kiwifruit-supplier-seeks-major-acquisition?utm_source=Digest&utm_medium=email)

* 1. **Exports of new season Zespri kiwifruit**

The new season New Zealand kiwifruit is aboard MV Cool Eagle, a new specialised reefer vessel built by Cool Carriers, with the ship expected to arrive in the EU on Sunday 18 April. MV Cool Eagle is one of a series of five ships that are the largest reefer vessels ever built and will carry over 7,000 pallets of fruit making MV Cool Eagle the largest vessel to carry Zespri Kiwifruit to date. The vessel will discharge her cargo of Zespri SunGold TM Kiwifruit in the Port of Zeebrugge, Belgium. This season Zespri is expected to supply nearly 20 percent more Zespri SunGold Kiwifruit to Europe, and around the same level of Green as last season.” [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9310665/new-season-zespri-kiwifruit-due-to-arrive-in-europe/)

In addition the reefer ship Kakariki berthed at Eastland Port last week , to take in kiwifruit. In mid-March the ship had to bypass Gisborne's due to berthing difficulties associated with the weather and the 1400 pallets it had to be trucked over to the Mount instead.. This time, there were no hitches and it will loadout 2,000 pallets of kiwifruit before loading more cargo in Tauranga.  [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9312685/gisborne-new-reefer-ship-to-load-this-season-s-first-kiwifruit-consignment/)

The New Zealand Trade and Enterprise Trade Commissioner, Pete Frost presented at the celebrations and cut the ribbon, officially launching Dazzle apples to the China market, saying New Zealand’s apple industry is rated the best in the world. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9312518/dazzle-apples-celebrate-big-launch-in-china/)

* 1. **New Zealand start-up uses TikTok to alleviate picker shortage**

A Gisborne tech start-up is helping New Zealand’s picking shortage by using social media platform TikTok to fill hundreds of jobs. The company, founded by Gisborne’s Candice Pardy, has launched a three to six month social media campaign. The aim is to fill hundreds of horticulture vacancies around Gisborne and the rest of New Zealand.

Jobloads is a job marketplace helping people find meaning and thrive at work. The app puts respect for the human rights of every worker in the supply chain at its centre. The new campaign, which is independent of the government’s Help the Harvest campaign to recruit pickers, would run for three to six months. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9310741/new-zealand-start-up-uses-tiktok-to-alleviate-picker-shortage/)

* 1. **Dazzle apples celebrate big launch in China**

New Zealand’s Newest Apple Variety Dazzle (bred by Plant and Food Re) has arrived in China with large celebrations at Wholesale Markets as Importers and Retailers race to get a taste of Dazzle Apples. It’s the first year that there have been large volumes of Dazzle apples available for Chinese customers and they weren’t wasting any time to get their hands on the delicious, red, sweet apple from New Zealand.

* 1. **Growers 'devastated' as apples rot in Hawke's Bay orchards**

The apple industry is pleading for help as thousands of tonnes of fruit go to waste, devastating growers.

Due to a [severe labour shortage](https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/opinion-analysis/300138256/fruitpicking-jobs-going-begging-who-is-really-to-blame), huge volumes of apples have been left on trees this season and the industry is predicting losses of more than $600 million to provincial economies. *This article again makes the case that the severe lack of labour this season is having a devastating effect on orchardists and leaving large quantities of apples unpicked. It asks that planning now start for next year.*

Agriculture Minister Damien O’Connor said that having been a grower himself, he understood that small orchardists would be under extra stress due to the impacts of Covid-19. *And is working with MPI on a well being package* [Full article available here](https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/farming/124768684/growers-devastated-as-apples-rot-in-hawkes-bay-orchards)

* 1. **Virus free asparagus seed improves grower’s bottom line**

The asparagus seed harvest normally runs from mid-March through to the end of April *but this years its about 2 weeks ahead of normal because of an excellent growing season* The excellent conditions have come at a great time for Aspara Pacific who have begun full production of ground-breaking varieties that are virus free and Phytophthora tolerant.

Asparagus decline had previously been associated with the soil borne fungus Fusarium but research at Michigan State University and Lincoln University, New Zealand has since shown that Fusarium is more of a problem when asparagus plants are already infected with the virus. Virus free plants live longer and have considerably higher yields of better quality spears.

The article provides detail about some of the asparagus varieties that it produces seed of. *In addition to selling seed to New Zealand producers* they export seed to over 20 countries with Dr. Falloon “looking forward to exporting larger volumes of premium seed around the world.[Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9312351/virus-free-asparagus-seed-improves-grower-s-bottom-line/)

* 1. **Harvest begins at one of New Zealand's largest medical cannabis crop**

Tens of thousands of cannabis plants are being picked over the coming weeks, as harvest begins at one of New Zealand's largest commercial medical cannabis crops. The plants are being grown at Kēkerengū on the Kaikōura coast by medical cannabis company, Puro. Puro planted the 10-hectare crop of medical cannabis in December 2020.

Following the harvest, the plants will go to the company’s drying facility, which has been purpose-built on the site. At nearly 1,000 square meters, it is one of New Zealand’s largest cannabis drying facilities and is home to specialist equipment, imported by Puro for the specific purpose of drying cannabis for pharmaceutical supply.

At its Kēkerengū site, Puro is growing under organic protocols with its organic certification process underway. It’s expected that once accredited, Puro will be one of only a few large-scale certified organic growers in the world providing the company a unique position in key export markets. As well as its outdoor crops at Kēkerengū, Puro is growing high THC cultivars indoors at its research facility in the Waihopai Valley, Blenheim.

Puro has received and processed small volume orders within the New Zealand medical cannabis industry. Once its products have been dried and tested, Puro will start the compliance processes required for export. [Full article available here](https://www.mmjdaily.com/article/9310795/nz-harvest-begins-at-one-of-new-zealand-s-largest-medical-cannabis-crop/)

* 1. **Solutions for growers to not only become economically sustainable but reduce food waste**

A New Zealand-based agritech solutions (waybeyond) company says even changing an element of the way a fruit and vegetable business is run can greatly lead to the reduction in food waste and improve sustainability. Domestically, New Zealand throws out over 157,000 tonnes every year, including 6,302 tonnes of oranges and mandarins and 4,767 tonnes of potatoes. They work on the premise that there are business opportunities in addressing these problems in the production process, as it will ensure items that producers put time, money and resources into, actually reach their potential. *This article gives examples of how horticultural businesses have used technology and data to cut down the amount of produce that is being lost or wasted, with four key messages being "grow where people live" ; "direct to customer" approach, "managing the environment" and “managing the people with the product"*. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9312651/solutions-for-growers-to-not-only-become-economically-sustainable-but-reduce-food-waste/)

* 1. **New Zealand investors focus on agtech**

Finistere Ventures, an investor in agrifood technology companies, last week announced the launch of the $40M NZD Finistere Aotearoa Fund in partnership with New Zealand Growth Capital Partners (NZGCP).  “New Zealand has become big in agricultural research and innovation focused on curtailing the environmental impact of agriculture, fueled in part by the government’s continued investment in and passion for environmental and agricultural efforts. Investing over $250M annually through its public sector institutions, cementing its commitment to a zero-emissions national agriculture strategy and continuing its close partnership with its ag and food ecosystem, New Zealand is a center for agricultural excellence,” said Arama Kukutai, co-founder and partner, Finistere Ventures.

Finistere’s new fund operations will be based in Palmerston North at The Factory, a leading R&D and company incubation cluster that has a longstanding relationship with Finistere. The Factory has been central to Finistere’s investments in New Zealand-grown companies such as BioLumic and ZeaKal, as well as its most recent investment in Sprout alongside partners Fonterra and OurCrowd.  [Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9311322/new-zealand-investors-focus-on-agtech/)

* 1. **New Zealand experts leading global conversation for UN about Equitable Food Systems**

United Fresh, Aotearoa’s pan produce industry organisation, is set to lead a United Nations Independent Dialogue as part of the UN’s global initiative the Food Systems Summit (UNFSS).

United Fresh will host the Dialogue ‘The Future for Fruit & Vegetable Kai Systems in Aotearoa’, contributing a vital local viewpoint to an international discussion on the future of food systems.

Jerry Prendergast, President of United Fresh, says “Our current supply systems are not always an option for those living in poverty. Many rely on food banks and church-based charities to put essential foods on their table. It’s important that we examine our whole food system to address these inequity issues and ensure the health and wellbeing of all Kiwis”.

The Independent Dialogue will address a range of issues beyond food insecurity. The role of Māori in the $6 billion horticulture industry will also be in the spotlight, with discussions lead by Dr Nick Roskruge, Chair of Tāhuri Whenua – The National Māori Vegetable Growers Collective. The importance of Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi) and its principles of partnership, participation and protection will be a key part of the Dialogue. Challenges such as climate change, water fluctuations, labour shortages and the spread of urban areas into traditional growing regions are also on the agenda. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9312093/new-zealand-experts-leading-global-conversation-for-un-about-equitable-food-systems/)

** Bits and pieces**

* 1. **Government to back more initiatives to boost food and fibre workforce**

Agriculture Minister Damien O’Connor has announced a series of initiatives to fill critical jobs in the food and fibre sector. The Government-backed initiatives include $240,000 funding for an on-the-job mentoring programme, funding for two horticulture career development managers in Pukekohe and Canterbury, the establishment of a Food and Fibre Youth Network and Innovation Activator workshops with Rural Women New Zealand (RWNZ). “These initiatives follow work we’ve already done over the past eight months through the Opportunity Grows Here campaign and training initiatives that’s resulted in 3,694 more people working in the food and fibre sector,” O’Connor says. [Full article available here](https://www.ruralnewsgroup.co.nz/rural-news/rural-general-news/government-to-back-more-initiatives-to-boost-food-and-fibre-workforce)

 **Biosecurity**

* 1. **ToBRFV update**

Following the early detection of the unwanted virus, the tomato brown rugose fruit virus in a small tomato seed lot last year, a group of growers, GIA industry partners, and Biosecurity NZ met in February to discuss measures growers can adopt for good greenhouse hygiene to prepare for, and help prevent the spread of this virus. This virus is mechanically transmitted so it can be easily spread and can survive on greenhouse surfaces for up to 6 months.

From the meeting, TomatoesNZ and Vegetables NZ are working together to develop information tools for greenhouse growers on effective hygiene practices including a poster with high-resolution photos of virus symptoms for display in key areas, and an information sheet. The hygiene measures required are similar to those for managing bacterial canker, which many growers have some prior experience of. Key recommendations are: [Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9309481/nz-tobrfv-update/)



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. To see the full report click on the link in each notification This week see:

1. **EU Review of the EU Policy on the Promotion of Agricultural Products** [Review of the EU Policy on the Promotion of Agricultural Products\_Brussels USEU\_European Union\_04-08-2021](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Review%20of%20the%20EU%20Policy%20on%20the%20Promotion%20of%20Agricultural%20Products_Brussels%20USEU_European%20Union_04-08-2021)
2. **Singapore Exporter Guide** [Exporter Guide\_Singapore\_Singapore\_12-31-2020](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Exporter%20Guide_Singapore_Singapore_12-31-2020)

 **Regulatory**

* 1. **EU Parliament committees back Brexit trade deal**

Last week , European Union Parliament committees overwhelmingly backed the new trade deal between the EU and former member Britain, pushing it to the full legislature for a final vote expected later this month. Since the provisional application of the deal on January 1, both sides have been discussing the Brexit divorce that went into effect at the end of January last year. The two sides continue to try to find common ground on trade rules in Northern Ireland, where Britain’s exit from the EU has unsettled a delicate political balance. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9312735/eu-parliament-committees-back-brexit-trade-deal/)

* 1. **Japan Bans Export of Fruit and Vegetable Seedlings**

Japan’s recent amendments to seedling legislation came into effect on April 1. The new legislation prohibits individuals or corporations from taking seeds or seedlings of registered Japanese agricultural produce varieties out of Japan without prior permission. On April 9, Japan’s Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries released a list of 1,975 Japanese plant varieties whose seedlings are not allowed to be taken out of the country,

Statistics show that in Japan, developing a new cultivar of one of seven or eight common types of fruit tree, such as apples, pears, citrus fruit and peaches, takes an average of 24.5 years. The balance of the article states that this will remove a source of superior varieties from China and there are signed the Chinese are ramping up investment in plant breeding [. Full article available here](https://www.producereport.com/article/japan-bans-export-fruit-vegetable-seedlings)

* 1. **Global standards body pushes for data harmony**

**A** global produce standards body has launched a new initiative to harmonise Price Look Up codes as well as international data on food safety and sustainability. The International Federation for Produce Standards (IFPS), which represents produce associations around the globe, wants to improve supply chain efficiency by developing, implementing and managing harmonised data across different countries.  Among other objectives, the body wants to harmonise Price Look Up (PLU) schemes (for produce sold loose or in bulk) into one global list that is centrally managed to help ensure point-of-sale accuracy in multiple countries. When it comes to sustainability, the federation said the process of international standardisation is “only at the beginning of its development and therefore requires our [continued attention”. Full article available here](http://www.fruitnet.com/fpj/article/184925/global-standards-body-pushes-for-data-harmony)

 **Business/ Industry**

* 1. **FL presents European Statistics Handbook 2021**

**T**he latest edition of [Fruit Logistica's annual European Statistics Handbook](https://www.fruitlogistica.com/en/about/european-statistics-handbook/) has been released, and shows just how big an impact the coronavirus pandemic has had on Europe’s fresh fruit and vegetable business. Due to the cancellation of its Special Edition, Fruit Logistica has decided to present the European Statistics Handbook as part of the upcoming digital event organised by its partner Fruitnet Media International.Behr will present several of the handbook’s key findings during [World of Fresh Ideas, a free online event for the global fresh fruit and vegetable business that takes place on 26-27 May 2021](https://www.worldoffreshideas.com/).

[The free registration for World of Fresh Ideas is now open](https://www.worldoffreshideas.com/registration). As of now visitors to the Fruit Logistica website can [download a copy of the European Statistics Handbook free of charge](https://www.fruitlogistica.com/en/about/european-statistics-handbook/).

* 1. **US: Measuring greenhouse workers' welfare**

An article talking about the importance of labour to ensure food supply and the lessons leant about helping to keep employees healthy. Suggestions include better company provided housing and regular temperature checking [Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9310410/us-measuring-greenhouse-workers-welfare/)

* 1. **EU: Ageing of farmers remains a major challenge in rural areas**

In 2016, for every farm manager under 40, there were three farm managers over the age of 65 in the EU. A recent study and examines the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and EU added value of the policy measures of the two pillars of the CAP implemented between 2014 and 2020. The measures assessed in the evaluation are those most relevant to generational renewal: (i) direct payment support to young farmers; (ii) investment support; and (iii) business start-up aid (‘CAP generational renewal measures’).

The evaluation finds that the support provided by the ‘CAP generational renewal measures’ have a positive impact in the increase of the number of young farmers, although to a limited extent. This positive impact also depends on other factors. For instance, socio-cultural and wider economic incentives play a major role in deciding to get into farming or living in rural areas. The support provided by the generational renewal measures helps new farmers with the general costs following the set-up of their farm and of the early-year investment support. However, on its own it is insufficient, to address main entry barriers into farming such as access to land and capital issues.

Although the training level of young farm managers under 35 has increased over time, access to knowledge and advice is still insufficient. [Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9310784/eu-ageing-of-farmers-remains-a-major-challenge-in-rural-areas/)

* 1. **Investment grows in China’s agrifood start-ups**

## E-Grocery and farm robotics drive 66 per cent increase in investment in China’s agrifood technology sector in 2020 Annual analysis by AgFunder found agrifoodtech funding in China rose 66 per cent year-on-year in 2020 to reach US$6bn. In its analysis, AgFunder said the growth “underlines the agrifood sector's resilience, considering that total private equity and venture capital (VC) funding across all sectors in China dropped by 50 per cent from 2019 levels.” The China 2021 AgriFood Investment Report indicated a clear shift in investor interest toward technologies that boost agricultural efficiency and food self-sufficiency. This includes farm robotics such as drone company XAG, which raised US$174m to “address rural labour shortages and farming input inefficiency.”

“The momentum in farm robotics is by no means an accident. For years, the central government has been driving consolidation of China’s smallholder farms into industrialised operations,” read the report.

“Between 2019 and 2020, state owned enterprises and other corporates increased their investment in large agricultural projects by 43.6 per cent to reach $79bn.”

Supply chain upgrades across China, as large platforms and regional players link up fresh produce procurement platforms, are increasingly filling supply chain gaps highlighted by downstream foodservice and food retail upgrades, according to the report. China’s foodservice industry is expected to reach US$950bn by 2024, and this growing market is drawing strategic investors looking to expand vertically and horizontally. The balance of the article provides more detail about the effect of e commerce ,[Full article available here](http://www.fruitnet.com/asiafruit/article/184931/investment-grows-in-chinas-agrifood-start-ups)

* 1. **Smart platform to implement a new eco-sustainable agriculture model**

In the EU the iAgri project is an industrial research initiative, is achieving the implementation of a new eco-sustainable agriculture model, which guarantees the productivity, quality, and sustainability of crops. The project aims at doing it by designing and developing an intelligent platform for the storage, treatment, and management of biomarkers and relevant indicators for agri-food production.

This platform will reduce production costs, optimize agricultural management (fertilizers, irrigation, control of pathogens, harvest time, physiological adaptation of the crop to weather conditions), and certify the quality of food and the sustainability of agricultural production. The project will use an algorithm to analyse data from sensors placed in the production areas to help to predict risks, such as pests, diseases, water stress, solar radiation stress, salinity stress, poor vegetative development, or fruit set failure. The algorithm should alert farmers of the possible risks that may arise in the future, anticipating and thus avoiding possible damage to the crops.

Another objective pursued by the iAgri project is to determine whether the crop is sustainable or not by analyzing the measurements of the sensors. The iAgri project will develop a certification standard in eco-sustainable agriculture based on productivity, nutritional quality, and environmental sustainability data, which will allow distributors to easily homologate suppliers. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9311484/smart-platform-to-implement-a-new-eco-sustainable-agriculture-model/)

* 1. **Australia: Produce prices may spike as farmers warn they will not plant crops**

As Covid travel restrictions and the subsequent labor shortages have had a heavy impact on the operations of Australia’s fruit and vegetable growers, some of these warn claim will not plant crops for a year. Farm laborers and fruit pickers usually made up from overseas backpackers have declined this year with an estimated 40,000 to be in Australia compared to last year’s figure of 140,000.

Many Queensland farmers were affected by the worker shortage, with some considering not planting crops in 2021. Experts believe the move will lead to supermarkets increasing their prices and customers paying up to $50 per kilo for tomatoes instead of the current average price of $5 a kilo.

According to a recent report by the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences, shoppers should expect to pay up to 30 per cent more for produce as farmers struggle to find workers amid the pandemic. [Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9311680/australia-produce-prices-may-spike-as-farmers-warn-they-will-not-plant-crops/)

[](http://upload.evocdn.co.uk/fruitnet/uploads/asset_image/2_1216358_e.jpg) **Freight**

* 1. **Hapag-Lloyd orders more reefer containers**

**H**apag-Lloyd has ordered 150,000 TEU of new standard dry containers and state-of-the-art reefer containers from China for 2021. The container shipping line has increased its investment in response to the need for significantly more boxes to carry the same volume because of boxes turning slower.

[Full article available here](http://www.fruitnet.com/asiafruit/article/184950/hapag-lloyd-orders-more-reefer-containers)

 **Marketing**

* 1. **Pink Lady launches 'adopt a tree' campaign**

*An interesting concept which allows members of the public to adopt an apple tree , virtually follow its annual cycle from flowering to harvest and even help to pick apples in the autumn.*

*The article states* “Our aim with this promotion is to create a moment of escapism by giving every winner a little patch of sunshine in one of our orchards in the Vendée this summer.” *To see details of the promotion, see* [*https://www.apple-pinklady.com/en/adoptatree/*](https://www.apple-pinklady.com/en/adoptatree/) [Full article available here](http://www.fruitnet.com/fpj/article/184899/pink-lady-launches-aldi-adopt-a-tree-campaign)

* 1. **M&S launches biggest-ever quality campaign**

## An article with details of a M&S promotion backing British farming with biggest-ever TV and multimedia campaign to showcase its Select Farms quality standards Select Farms quality means M&S only works with farmers, growers and producers it knows and trusts to source its products with care - whether that’s the highest animal welfare standards or protecting the natural environment. To support this aim, M&S has also started a new five-year ‘Farming with Nature’ collaborative programme to support its Select Farmers to become more resilient to the biggest environmental challenges they face – spanning climate change, biodiversity, soil health and water usage.

As part of this, and to support the British bee population, M&S is introducing 30 million bees to 28 UK Select Farm Sites this summer located across the country, from Herefordshire to Hampshire. [Full article available here](http://www.fruitnet.com/fpj/article/184902/ms-launches-biggest-ever-quality-campaign)

* 1. **JAZZ™ teams up with upcoming DreamWorks film**

JAZZ™ apples are joining an epic adventure thanks to an exclusive new partnership with the new DreamWorks Animation film, Apples are core to the story of Spirit Untamed, which will hopefully encourage children and families to eat more JAZZ apples and other healthy produce. [Full article available here](file:///C:\Users\Helen\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Word\Club%20apple%20brand%20teams%20up%20with%20upcoming%20DreamWorks%20film%20JAZZ™%20apples%20are%20joining%20an%20epic%20adventure%20thanks%20to%20an%20exclusive%20new%20partnership%20with%20the%20new)

 **Food safety**

* 1. **Project seeks science-based interventions to persistent Listeria strains**

A Ph.D.project at , Cornell University is looking at ['Factors affecting persistence of Listeria monocytogenes need to be identified for evaluation and prioritization of interventions](https://www.centerforproducesafety.org/researchproject/453/awards/Factors_affecting_persistence_of_Listeria_monocytogenes_need_to_be_identified_for_evaluation_and_prioritization_of_interventions.html)', with the intention of developing a decision support tool for businesses. [Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9312155/project-seeks-science-based-interventions-to-persistent-listeria-strains/)

* 1. **FDA: ‘Foreseeable hazard’ if leafy greens are still grown near cattle or dairy farms**

Last week, the Food and Drug Administration announced that it would take ‘two important steps to advance the safety of leafy greens’. It all revolves around: the fact that cattle and/or dairy farms adjacent to farms where leafy greens are grown are the likely root cause of E. coli outbreaks tied to lettuce.

The FDA recommends that, in the future, the growers work to “determine how the contamination likely occurred and then implement appropriate prevention and verification measures and that the growers create “protocol[s] to aid in the development and registration of antimicrobial treatments for pre-harvest agricultural water, and several focused inspections, follow-up investigations, sampling assignments, and critical steps taken to advance traceability of leafy greens.” [Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9311679/fda-foreseeable-hazard-if-leafy-greens-are-still-grown-near-cattle-or-dairy-farms/)

* 1. **PMA A-NZ resource on microplastics in food**

PMA A-NZ has released a new factsheet as part of its Food Safety 101 series on microplastics in food. The factsheet explains: "while plastics are a key material in modern life, their contamination of aquatic and terrestrial environments is an ongoing concern. Of particular concern is the presence of microplastics which are being integrated into widely consumed food products during agricultural production." [Full article available here](https://fpsc-anz.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c73673335989d1fc2801530c8&id=94498e5e09&e=f93013672e)

* 1. **PMA A-NZ webinar on avoiding the water hazard**

PMA A-NZ is hosting a webinar on "Avoiding the water hazard: Managing food safety risks from irrigation water".  Dr Jenny Ekman from AHR will outline the potential hazards found in irrigation water, discuss recent research activity, and provide guidance on science-based approaches for managing the food safety risks. The webinar will be held on Thursday 29 April at 8am AWST, 10am AEST, 1pm NZDT. [Full article available here](https://fpsc-anz.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c73673335989d1fc2801530c8&id=89a8fdfb07&e=f93013672e)

* 1. **New food safety tool kit on food fraud**

The Food and Agriculture Organization has released a food safety technical toolkit on food fraud. The document [*Food fraud – Intention, detection and management*](https://fpsc-anz.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c73673335989d1fc2801530c8&id=6327d6f897&e=f93013672e) explains the key aspects of food fraud, and discusses a set of measures that food safety authorities can take to stop food fraud. Freshcare defines food fraud as "the deception of customers or consumers for economic gain by providing food, ingredients or packaging which is different to that specified. Food fraud can include presentation of substandard products as well as adulteration of food with undeclared or low-quality ingredients." For the FAO food fraud toolkit click [here](https://fpsc-anz.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c73673335989d1fc2801530c8&id=108daac1e1&e=f93013672e) and for Freshcare resources (factsheet F12) on food fraud click [here](https://fpsc-anz.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c73673335989d1fc2801530c8&id=1c8315467a&e=f93013672e)



* 1. **Walmart introduces restoring pollinator habitat program**

It’s estimated one of every three bites of food we eat is possible because of animal pollinators. Yet studies show vital pollinator populations have been declining over the last 30 years due to loss of habitat, pests, pollution, pesticides and a changing climate. To help improve pollinator health and biodiversity in the regions in which Walmart U.S. operates it is announcing new pollinator commitments that will further our efforts to help reverse nature loss and ultimately bring us closer to meeting new nature commitments made by Walmart and the Walmart Foundation.

These commitments aim to reduce several pollinator threats through promoting integrated pest management (IPM) practices and improving and expanding pollinator habitats.

To do this they are committing to

* source 100 percent of the fresh produce and floral we sell from suppliers that adopt IPM practices, as verified by a third-party, by 2025.
* encourage fresh produce suppliers to phase out chlorpyrifos and nitroguanidine neonicotinoids pesticides (where applicable unless mandated otherwise by law), avoid replacing them with other products with a level I bee precaution rating and assess and report annual progress.
* continue to avoid selling invasive plant species in our retail stores (based on recognized regional lists).
* partner with solar developers to establish pollinator habitats around solar panel arrays.
* Fund research to leverage citizen science data to monitor pollinators, unlocking opportunities to improve conservation planning, farm practices and landscape management in the United States.
* To help educate our customers about pollinator plants, Walmart U.S. encourages suppliers to label pollinator-friendly plants as attractive to pollinators in retail locations.
* Sell more plants that attract pollinators [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9311550/walmart-introduces-restoring-pollinator-habitat-program/)
  1. **Change for the long-term' message for earth day 2021**

.“Earth Day is one of the oldest and largest global movements when it comes to positive environmental changes. A 22 April event is supported by 75,000 partners in over 190 countries all focused on positive action for our planet, which resonates strongly with our personal Vision of sustainable crop production,” says Head of Industry Transformation Kylie Horomia at Waybeyond. Kylie sttes “The AgTech sector has a key role to play, and Earth Day is a great time for everyone in our industry to stop and think about what changes they want to make that can support a sustainability agenda for the long-term.”

Since 1970, Earth Day has been central to significant environmental events including the signing of the Paris Agreement, U.S. legislation for Clean Air, Clean Water, and Endangered Species Acts, the establishment of Climate Literacy Campaigns in schools, Green School Funding, and Global Cleanup events at rivers, beaches, and communities. Earth Day has also become a positive movement for young students and those embarking on their agricultural careers.

“

“When you look at the biggest challenges facing the planet, they can seem overwhelming but as we have seen in the past, a movement of people working together can make a huge positive impact.” [Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9312057/change-for-the-long-term-message-for-earth-day-2021/)

* 1. **Soil for the future**

**T**he lack of action on soil remains a concern, according to Dr agr Johannes Eisenbach, coordinator of the organic marketing platform for Greece and Cyprus, OMEN (Organic Marketing & Export Network). He is also president of the Berlin-based Association for Biocyclic Vegan Farming and the driving force behind the Biocyclic Vegan Standard for a new form of agriculture dedicated to restoring and maintaining natural lifecycles and natural soil fertility, without animal husbandry or animal-derived agricultural inputs.

Awareness is growing about the Biocyclic Vegan Standard, including among producers. Each cultivated plot of a biocyclic vegan operation has to be evaluated as to its interaction with its natural and anthropogenic environment using the Biocyclic Operation Index (BOI).

**The BOI is a** biodiversity and security index with a scale from 0 to 10. It makes comparable all kinds of agricultural operations. We’ve used it continuously since 2002 and seen it work perfectly in every climate, in every country, whether on small-scale farms or large-scale with hundreds of hectares. By looking at the borders of a farm, you can discover everything. If an organic orange tree is not protected by a suitable border, chemical residues from conventional farms may be detectable. Then the organic farmer is in danger of losing their certificate, or the packhouse their business with a particular customer. Or the quality seal may be jeopardised.

**Organic production is** how we can mitigate climate change – by shifting from animal-based to plant-based agriculture, and by replacing animal fertilisers with plant-based fertilisers or humus soil. That way, the carbon is kept locked into the soil. By increasing the humus content of the upper 25cm of the soil by just 0.5 per cent on 10 per cent of arable land worldwide, we could cut annual manmade CO2 emissions by 70 per cent.

**They are also considering developing a** humus certificate, with an interest rate of say 2 per cent per year, kind of like a humus soil equivalent-based currency. We want to give incentives to those who produce compost to keep part of their production aside – not to sell it immediately – and instead to ripen it into humus soil. The humus soil currency would be tradable. If a company wanted to show they were doing something for the environment, they could buy this humus currency.  [Full article available here](http://www.fruitnet.com/eurofruit/article/184947/soil-for-the-future)

* 1. **"Our goal is to grow scaly lily bulbs with zero pesticides by 2030"**

Researchers at the Wageningen University & Research in the Netherlands have successfully grown proper scaly lily bulbs from tissue culture material. They did so in a greenhouse in just nine months. Not only that, they didn't use any pesticides. However, planting material cultivated like this sometimes shows growth defects. That's after it's planted outside. So, the researchers will continue to search for what causes this. The Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality subsidizes the project. It aims to develop new resilient cultivation systems by 2030. [Full article available here](https://www.verticalfarmdaily.com/article/9312320/our-goal-is-to-grow-scaly-lily-bulbs-with-zero-pesticides-by-2030/)

* 1. **China: Organic Smart Factory implements science and technology for agriculture**

A long article about research underway to grow vegetables in vertical farms at the Organic Smart Factory in Yukesong Digital Agriculture Industrial Park, Fangzi District, Weifang City. [Full article available here](https://www.verticalfarmdaily.com/article/9289356/china-organic-smart-factory-implements-science-and-technology-for-agriculture/)

  **Health**

* 1. **Fruits and vegetables could help young adults improve sleep**

Increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables could help young adults sleep better, especially young women, a new University of Michigan study shows. Young adults who increased their fruit and vegetable consumption by at least three servings experienced modest improvements in sleep latency (time to fall asleep) and insomnia over a three-month period, compared to participants with no change or smaller increases in fruits and vegetable intake, although there were no differences in sleep duration.

[Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9311168/fruits-and-vegetables-could-help-young-adults-improve-sleep/)

* 1. **Eating strawberries daily may strengthen vascular health’**

Including strawberries into your daily diet may improve blood vessel function and systolic blood pressure. A new study seems to indicate that the fruit shows benefits for those who are overweight or obese and who have moderately high cholesterol (LDL cholesterol or ‘bad’ cholesterol). Plus, systolic blood pressure decreased among participants two hours after drinking a strawberry beverage, and was still noted four weeks later. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9311748/eating-strawberries-daily-may-strengthen-vascular-health/)

* 1. **New resource boosts nutrition in older adults**

A new resource in the UK should boost awareness of the health properties of fruit and vegetables, has been launched by the British Nutrition Foundation. ‘Nutrition and Immunity for Older Adults’ aims to provide practical insights to help older people get all the nutrients needed for a properly functioning immune system.

The new resource profiles 10 key nutrients the body needs throughout later life to support the immune system and provides handy hints on the foods that can provide these vitamins and minerals. [Full article available here](http://www.fruitnet.com/fpj/article/184940/new-resource-boosts-nutrition-in-older-adults)

 **Innovation**

* 1. **Hazel Technologies raises $70M for packets to prevent food waste**

Hazel Technologies creates sachets that can be placed in bulk boxes of produce at the time of harvest to inhibit the release of the ripening agent ethylene. The startup claims it can extend shelf life up to three times compared to produce transported without the sachets. Hazel claims to be working with over 160 companies in 12 countries, including Mission Avocado, kiwifruit distributor Zespri, and Canadian produce distributor Oppy.[Full article available here](https://www.fooddive.com/news/hazel-technologies-raises-70m-for-packets-to-prevent-food-waste/598268/)

* 1. **[Scientists discover new natural blue food colouring from red cabbage](https://www.newfoodmagazine.com/news/143432/blue-food-colouring/)**

An international team of researchers has discovered a natural blue colour obtained from red cabbage and have said that it could be used as an alternative to synthetic blue food colourings. The blue colouring is only present in tiny amounts of red cabbage. [Full article available here](https://www.newfoodmagazine.com/news/143432/blue-food-colouring/)

* 1. **A fungus to reduce the use of inputs in tomato crops**

According to a new study conducted by the Southwest University of China, the Ceriporia lacerata fungus could reduce the use of inputs in tomato crops. A specific strain of Ceriporia fungus, which grows on trees, produces enzymes such as proteases and phosphatases to obtain nutrients from the immediate environment. In doing so, the fungus in question releases nutrients (including those previously delivered in fertilizers) which would otherwise remain "trapped" in the natural soil compounds. These nutrients can then be absorbed by plants. [Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9311519/a-fungus-to-reduce-the-use-of-inputs-in-tomato-crops/)

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