

**PMAC weekly update 24th September to 1st October**

1. **Government agencies**: ICPR changes; MPI releases 20,000 imported apple plants and 400 stonefruit plants; Kiwiberry - advice to exporters
2. **New Zealand News:**  Announcement of new Consul-General in Sydney; Trade and investment focus of Sydney talks; Scientists recognised for controlling plant disease; Call for submissions on local bill related to proposed Waimea dam; Major fresh produce traceability project launches in New Zealand; Massive bed shortages expected during Central Otago’s peak harvesting periods; TomatoesNZ on the latest Emissions Trading Scheme review; How a New Zealand family made tomato growing their passion; Tomato growers plan 24hour strike in pursuit of living wage; Zespri reports strong year despite lower volumes; Wet winter could result in vegetable shortages’; New Zealand Fuyu persimmon filling gap before California season starts; New Zealand kiwifruit growers experience a bumper Hayward crop; Kiwifruit export monopoly "Creates climate that crushes independent thought and innovation"; Zespri and Tesla create giant human pinball game; Auckland port: Diversions and delays for customers; Potato virus: New Zealand government and industry on the case; Australia: Best practice scheme ‘BioSecure HACCP’ gets tick of approval
3. **International news:** Importing & exporting plants if there is a no-deal Brexit; Food products protected by a ‘geographical indication’ if there’s no Brexit deal; Walmart will use blockchain to stop the spread of E. coli and other diseases in lettuce; Australian PM outlines tighter export control due to contaminated fruit scare; Australia: Bulk of Queensland 'strawberry fund' goes to ad campaign; MSC: The 2020 sulphur cap is increasing operation costs; An innovative leaching solution to the worldwide salinity crisis"

***Editor’s comments***

*Good to see this week that following testing MPI has been able to release approximately half the plants that had been subject to restrictions because of their potential contamination with viruses. Also good to see the recognition received by Dr Philip Elmer and his team for outstanding science. In both cases it has been thanks to science the New Zealand horticultural and arable sectors have been able to move forward and export with confidence.*

*In the international section there are three areas of interest. Firstly a release from the UK on how they will manage the import of plants should no deal be arranged before Brexit occurs on 29/3/2019. Full details are available both for imports direct from third countries and from third countries via the EU*

*There is also a second article announcing a pre-emptive charge from a shipping company getting ready for the imposition of a sulphur cap in 2020. This levy of fuel is obviously going to have a significant effect on maritime fright rates and requires extensive work to minimise the impact. And last but not least news of a new technology that can be used to remedy soil salinity caused by irrigation. Not such an issue in New Zealand but potentially a significant development that will make 10,000’s of hectares productive once more.*

1. **Agency news**



* 1. **ICPR changes**

The ICPR for

* Japan has been updated clarifying that fresh potato’s (Solanum tuberosum) do not have access (section 4.1.1)
* Reunion Island has been updated with an additional declaration updated for fresh Apples, Pears and Quince

see [Importing Countries Phytosanitary Requirements](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/law-and-policy/requirements/importing-countries-phytosanitary-requirements/)

* 1. **MPI releases 20,000 imported apple plants and 400 stonefruit plants**

Around 20,000 apple plants and 400 stonefruit plants imported from a US testing facility have been released from all restrictions, says MPI. The plant material was seized following an MPI audit in March which found a number of significant failures at the Clean Plant Centre Northwest (CPCNW). MPI had little confidence in the testing carried out. An investigation by US authorities confirmed MPI's findings.

MPI has now completed additional testing for pests and diseases of concern on the affected apple plants as well as a small number of stonefruit plants, says director of plant and pathways, Pete Thomson. "As all the test results were negative and we are satisfied the biosecurity risk has been minimised, we're pleased to be in the position to release these plants back to their owners.

"Throughout this process, our decisions have been based on protecting New Zealand. Some of the diseases, if present, could impact significantly on our wider horticultural industry.” Nearly 20,000 stonefruit plants require further testing over spring and summer when diseases of concern will be most evident if they are present.

Almost 48,000 affected apple and stonefruit plants and small trees were secured at 50 sites in Hawke's Bay, Waikato, Nelson and Central Otago. In total, 32 nurseries, importers, and growers were affected. Just over 1,000 apple plants have been voluntarily destroyed by 12 owners. Twenty owners opted to destroy over 6,000 stonefruit plants. "MPI remains open to receiving requests for payment for direct and verifiable losses incurred as a result of destroyed or contained plant material," says Mr Thomson. "We've written to all affected owners on this, and we are offering one-on-one meetings to talk through the process." [Full article available here](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/news-and-resources/media-releases/mpi-releases-20000-imported-apple-plants-and-400-stonefruit-plants/)

The apple and stonefruit industry members at the heart of the legal action against MPI over seized plants and plant material have welcomed MPI’s latest announcement, advising the release of 20,000 apple plants and 400 stonefruit plants from containment. The group considers that it should be possible to progressively release further plants (from the 20,000 still requiring testing) before then.

Industry member and owner of McGrath Nurseries, Andy McGrath said, “We are encouraged by MPI’s announcement today and the release of the apple plants and plant materials. We feel this has vindicated the position we have taken since the very beginning of this issue."“ The vast majority of stonefruit plants remain in containment and the testing plans that have been proposed by MPI are, in our view, overly strict. We will be addressing this directly with MPI in a meeting later this week."

“We recognise stonefruit have a different risk profile, but we are very optimistic that the tests will not reveal any cause for concern,” added Andy McGrath.

In Andy’s opinion, the CPCNW facility is willing to consider re-accreditation, and provided encouraging comments regarding the required process. A meeting between MPI and industry members to discuss the potential re-accreditation of the CPCNW facility is scheduled soon. Andy holds some hope that MPI may be able to take a reasonable approach to discussions, repair their relationship with CPCNW, and set a clear plan in place towards re-accreditation. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9024993/Apple-and-stonefruit-industry-members-encouraged-by-release-of-some-plants-but-still-a-way-to-go)

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* 1. **Kiwiberry - advice to exporters**

Exporters of kiwiberries to Australia are advised that they must have a valid licence or an exemption from licensing to export kiwiberries. The licence and the exemption are issued by the Horticultural Export Authority and the appropriate document is to be obtained prior to attempting to export the kiwiberries. [Full article available here](http://www.hea.co.nz/)



1. **New Zealand News**



* 1. **Announcement of new Consul-General in Sydney**

Bill Dobbie has been appointed as the new Consul-General in Sydney. Bill Dobbie is currently a Unit Manager at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade responsible for working with New Zealand Trade and Enterprise and other government agencies to strengthen the Ministry’s support for our exporters in overseas markets. He was previously High Commissioner to Vanuatu and has also worked in London, Apia and Madrid. [Full article available here](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/announcement-new-consul-general-sydney)

* 1. **Trade and investment focus of Sydney talks**

Minister for Trade and Export Growth David Parker went to Sydney last week to promote New Zealand’s trade and investment interests. The two day visit included meetings with the Australian and New Zealand branches of the American Chamber of Commerce as well as with companies doing business and investing in New Zealand.

He also sought to expand Australian and American investment by reaffirming that New Zealand remains open to trade and to investment in our businesses and forests.

Rating agency Moody’s last week confirmed New Zealand’s Aaa rating with a stable outlook – the highest score it is able to give – and said it expected New Zealand’s growth to be stronger than other Aaa-rated countries in the next few years. “The Government’s changes to the overseas investment regime aim to channel foreign investment into the productive sectors of the economy rather than into speculative sectors like residential housing. “ The recently-passed Overseas Investment Amendment Act seeks to support business investment and, in particular, encourages foreign direct investment in forestry, where it is crucially needed,” [Full article available here](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/trade-and-investment-focus-sydney-talks)

* 1. **Scientists recognised for controlling plant disease**

Dr Philip Elmer, a senior scientist in plant pathology and biological control at PFR, has been presented with this year’s Lifetime Achievement Award, while his team was awarded the Kudos Science Trust - Agriculture Science Award. The University of Waikato Lifetime Achievement Award recognises a scientist in the Waikato region that has made a major contribution to science, regionally and nationally, and to the international profile of New Zealand science.

Dr Elmer has spent more than 30 years developing tools and technologies to manage key diseases that impact the New Zealand horticulture industry. He is a world leader in the development of biological control tools, particularly for botrytis in wine grapes, and was instrumental in the development of GrapeFutures, an integrated management system that optimises pest and disease control in wine grapes that delivers residue-free wine for export sale. This model was replicated for the Summerfruit industry, delivering sustainable pest management practices and tools through the SummerGreen Futures programme. He currently leads the Zespri/KVH- funded GoldFutures project, with the aim of implementing best practice strategies to reduce Psa in Gold3 kiwifruit orchards. He is renowned for his ability to communicate his science and work with growers to understand their issues and develop robust, science-based solutions.

The Ruakura-based Integrated Disease Control Team, led by Dr Elmer, was also named the winner of the Kudos Science Trust Agriculture Science Award for their contribution to the horticulture sector. The Team have developed a number of biological control products, including BOTRY-Zen®, ARMOUR-ZEN®, and MIDI-Zen® for season-long control of botrytis bunch rot in wine grapes. The team has also successfully commercialised a bio-bactericide for control of Fireblight in apples (Blossom Bless®) and developed a new bio-bactericide for control of Psa in kiwifruit (Aureo®Gold). The team was also critical in the response to the kiwifruit disease Psa, rapidly developing bioassays to screen plants in the breeding programme for resistance to the disease. Their invaluable contribution to the Psa incursion was also recognised by being part of the Plant & Food Research Psa Response Team awarded the Prime Ministers Science Prize for 2017. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9027236/Scientists-recognised-for-controlling-plant-disease)

**General**

* 1. **Call for submissions on local bill related to proposed Waimea dam**

Submissions are being sought on a bill designed to enable to construction of the Waimea Dam. The Tasman District Council Bill passed its first reading. Nelson MP, Nick Smith, said the bill was the last

critical piece of work required to enable to construction of the dam. He added the project had full resource consents and the funding required from horticulturalists, Government and Council. The bill looked to gain an inundation easement over 9.67 hectares of conservation land. Mr Smith noted he would work closely with the select committee to meet the requirement for it to be reported back to Parliament. He wanted to have the bill passed by Christmas. The Golden Bay Greens sponsored a petition for those opposed to the bill, its spokesman, Jon Pawley, said it was a way for the public to have their say on the significant issue involving all ratepayers for decades to come. [Full article available here](https://www.stuff.co.nz/nelson-mail/news/107282433/call-for-submissions-on-local-bill-related-to-proposed-waimea-dam)

* 1. **Major fresh produce traceability project launches in New Zealand**

United Fresh is spearheading a major project, led by New Zealand, reviewing traceability systems in the produce sector following the Australian strawberry tampering scandal. Jerry Prendergast,

This includes secure packing and distribution facilities as well as regular assessment of the supply chain processes. “These risk mitigation strategies need to be reviewed regularly and cover all steps in the supply chain,” Prendergast said. The project started this year and will continue for three years. It is co-funded by MPI’s Sustainable Farming Fund and involves working with the fresh produce industry to ensure effective traceability from paddock to plate. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9025153/Major-fresh-produce-traceability-project-launches-in-New-Zealand)

**Industry news**

* 1. **Massive bed shortages expected during Central Otago’s peak harvesting periods**

The expansion of the Central Otago cherry industry means there may not be enough beds for the workers required to harvest them. More than 465 hectares of cherry trees are expected

to be planted across the region, which represented a 56 percent increase on the current level? An additional 284 hectares of grapes were also likely, which would be a 14 percent increase. Central Otago Labour Market Governance Group Chairman, Stephen Jeffery, said it was important that the horticulture industries and community knew how much growth was expected so they could plan to accommodate seasonal workers.

He noted growers were optimistic, but the growth was contingent on solving the labour challenges. An extra 1,186 workers would be needed during peak seasons over the next five years. The report predicted an additional 6,198 beds would be required to cater for peak harvest demand.

The report made 13 specific recommendations. [Full article available here](https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/107166765/massive-bed-shortages-expected-during-central-otagos-peak-harvesting-periods)

* 1. **TomatoesNZ on the latest Emissions Trading Scheme review**

In September TomatoesNZ submitted on the government’s “improvements to the New Zealand emissions trading scheme” consultation. They agreed that improvements to the scheme are needed to provide certainty and transparency, and supported opportunities for New Zealand to transition to a net zero emissions economy while ensuring that the impacts on domestic vegetable producers were understood and managed. [Click here for an extract from the TomatoesNZ submission.](https://www.tomatoesnz.co.nz/hot-topics/ets/)

[Full article available here](http://www.hortidaily.com/article/9025457/TomatoesNZ-on-the-latest-Emissions-Trading-Scheme-review)

* 1. **How a New Zealand family made tomato growing their passion**

Growing fruit and vegetables commercially is not all about serious business and finances. A small New Zealand produce farm, called The Curious Croppers, mainly produce heritage tomatoes on a small scale, but couple Angela and Anthony Tringham are on a ride that has given them plenty of fun and stories along the way.

The family live in Clevedon, South Auckland in a 150-year-old farmhouse. On the property there are some greenhouses and some old tunnel houses, where they grow their tomatoes. *They grow for flavour and with minimal spraying a good human interest story.*  [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9025408/How-a-New-Zealand-family-made-tomato-growing-their-passion)

* 1. **Tomato growers plan 24hour strike in pursuit of living wage**

New Zealand tomato growers will strike for 24 hours to protest low pay. The union representing the growers, First Union, said more than 100 growers and distribution and logistics employees at T&G Global would protest. Its lead organiser, Denise Roche, said the action was in protest of low pay and its refusal to negotiate a collective agreement.

Workers from 9 T&G sites would strike. Most workers were currently being paid minimum wage; however they wanted a living wage. The Government promised to lift the minimum wage to $20 by 2021. T&G Global Spokesman, Andrew Keaney, said it had a strong relationship with its staff. He added they had been acting in good faith while negotiating collective agreements. It was committed to working with First Union to resume negotiations and achieve a positive outcome for all. [Full article available here](https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/industries/107308147/tomato-growers-plan-24-hour-strike-in-pursuit-of-living-wage)

# Crop news

* 1. **Zespri reports strong year despite lower volumes**

New Zealand‘s kiwifruit giant Zespri has reported a rise in earnings for the 2017-18 season, despite the volume of kiwifruit sold falling by 11 percent during that period. Despite that, the bottom line has improved for Zespri, with global kiwifruit sales rising six percent, to $2.3 billion compared to $2.2bn the previous year. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9022590/New-Zealand-Zespri-reports-strong-year-despite-lower-volumes)

* 1. **Wet winter could result in vegetable shortages’**

A wet winter could lead to a vegetable shortage, warns one of New Zealand's major growers. General manager for supply Brent Wilcox said continuous rain stopped the ground from drying out and that had impacted vegetable quality. "Crops become much waterlogged, so they start to deteriorate in terms of their skin finish and cosmetic appeal, but also it starts to take its toll in terms of rots. So the recovering levels are a lot lower than what we would have hoped for.”

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“Wilcox said this could affect the supply of vegetables for Christmas. Andre de Bruin, chairman of Vegetables NZ, which does not represent potato or onion growers, said he had not heard of significant issues from its members this winter. He said with many vegetables, it was too early to know what Christmas supply would be like. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9025599/Wet-winter-could-result-in-vegetable-shortages)

* 1. **New Zealand Fuyu persimmon filling gap before California season starts**

The persimmon season has just started in the United States, with harvest of the early season varieties underway. This year, the US market will see some New Zealand Fuyu available for the next few weeks. California Fuyu is not due for another week or two, and New Zealand has decided to try and fill the gap before the California Fuyu season begins. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9020603/New-Zealand-Fuyu-persimmon-filling-gap-before-California-season-starts)

* 1. **New Zealand kiwifruit growers experience a bumper Hayward crop**

New Zealand kiwifruit growers have experienced a big season, with volumes of the Hayward (Green) variety up significantly. "There is a lot of fruit to sell," New Zealand Kiwifruit Growers Inc. CEO Nikki Johnson said.

Ms Johnson adds that the extent of the increase in the Hayward variety was a surprise, as there was no real indication until late in the harvest season. "There haven’t been significant plantings of the Hayward, and there has actually been a reduction in Hayward because of the cutover to Gold," she said. "It's just a reflection of different seasons from 2017 to 2018. If you compare the figures from 2016 to 2017, and then where we are at in 2018, there's quite a variation. There's no specific reason, apart from that it was a really good growing season."

Zespri released its August forecast, as it prepares to step up its international marketing programmes. The Green return is forecast at $5.47 per tray, the Organic Green at $8.67 per tray, Gold at $10.28 per tray and Green14 at $6.85 per tray.

In 2018, Ms Johnson says the industry was 1,200 workers short at the start of the harvest, across the picking and packing. Realising that this will be an ongoing issue, the NZKGI last month published a report outlining the challenges the industry faces in securing staff, stating that an additional 7,000 seasonal workers will be required by 2027. This is to cover the increase in production from 123 million trays in 2017 to 190 million trays a decade later. Full

**Other**

* 1. **Kiwifruit export monopoly "Creates climate that crushes independent thought and innovation"**

Mr Wilkins and his wife say they were given the world's first kiwifruit 'plant breeding right', after discovering it in the mid-1980s, but every attempt to have the "Wilkins Super" variety commercialised, marketed or sold has not been approved by Zespri (previously the Kiwifruit Marketing Board). Under New Zealand legislation Zespri has sole rights to export the kiwifruit grown in the country anywhere in the world.

"I have had more than 30 years of this, and shed many a tear," Mr Wilkins said. "They will tell you that they tested it in the market, it doesn't store well and there was no market acceptance." But he believes that he has found out otherwise, confirming that he is exploring ways to grow the fruit outside New Zealand, outside of Zespri's control.

He adds that the "Wilkins Super" kiwifruit, started out as the Hayward variety, but developed as mutation sport with different behaviour, appearance and shape than the original. Mr Wilkins says he has been fighting, unsuccessfully, to have it marketed as a separate variety. Small shipments of the fruit were sent to Japan before the introduction of the board in the late 1980s, which he says had positive feedback. The interesting thing was in the first few years of regulation, the importer who had the variety, kept coming back to the exporters to get it again - but the answer was no."

The 83-year-old says changes to the law allowed for collaborative marketing; although it only covers 1-2 per cent of the crop, it at least provided him an outlet to get the product to market through Seeka. However, he added the downside of collaborative marketing is that it is a system where approval is only granted for one year - so there is no opportunity as an exporter to develop a market, and he does not know year by year whether it will be accepted by Zespri.

Seeka actually helped us out by taking it up to China," he said. "Seeka got a premium marketing it as Green with their own marketing program and brand. The rules will generally regulate your price rate, how much volume you can sell, what channels you can use – and despite all that, Seeka still got a premium.

In comment Oliver Broad, Communications Manager for Zespri said, "Zespri has supported a sales programme with the Wilkins variety this year in the markets of Singapore, China and East Malaysia. That programme has gone well and the circa 95,000 trays supplied are now almost all sold. “Mr Wilkins said that the volume was 65,000 trays and that, “The return was average, and we did not get a premium return as we did when it was marketed by Seeka.” "Zespri has been given a privileged position by the NZ government and NZ Growers have done a great job by paying for a powerful brand to be built on the back of that privilege. Zespri Directors and Management don't need to abuse that privilege and create this climate that crushes independent thought and innovation," Mr Wilkins concluded. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9025846/NZ-Kiwifruit-export-monopoly-Creates-climate-that-crushes-independent-thought-and-innovation)

* 1. **Zespri and Tesla create giant human pinball game**

Zespri Kiwifruit, together with TSLA (Tesla, Inc.), recently created the world’s largest human pinball game held in Singapore, as a part of an experiential effort. The game saw around 600 players and spectators participating. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9027302/Zespri-and-Tesla-create-giant-human-pinball-game)

* 1. **Auckland port: Diversions and delays for customers**

The Port of Auckland is hoping to get back to a more regular schedule by the middle of next week, but says there may be challenges for the next 18 months. According to port spokesman Matt Ball, there has been a string of events combining to create delays and congestion with some ships diverted to Tauranga. They include the peak export season coinciding with a tight labour market, fickle weather, the port's longer term automation programme and the distracting public debate over expansion. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9027373/New-Zealand-Auckland-port-Diversions-and-delays-for-customers)

**Biosecurity**

* 1. **Potato virus: New Zealand government and industry on the case**

Biosecurity New Zealand is investigating how potato mop-top virus (PMTV) could have entered the country. The agency was working with Potatoes New Zealand after the crop disease was discovered in potato tubers in Mid Canterbury, MPI’s incident controller David Yard said. Two properties had tested positive for the disease, which had never before been found in New Zealand. The virus was not a food safety issue but could cause productivity issues if it was found to be widespread. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9025919/Potato-virus-New-Zealand-government-and-industry-on-the-case)

* 1. **Australia: Best practice scheme ‘BioSecure HACCP’ gets tick of approval**

Ten years of dedicated work to develop a robust and certified on-farm biosecurity program for the nursery industry has resulted in the announcement of BioSecure HACCP as the first ever ‘approved’ third-party biosecurity scheme under the Queensland Biosecurity Act 2014.

Nursery & Garden Industry Australia (NGIA) have also been announced as the first ever ‘approved’ operator of a biosecurity scheme under the Act. Developed by NGIA with funding from Hort Innovation, BioSecure HACCP enables certified production nurseries to minimise pest, disease and weed risks, while working towards a more streamlined self-certification approach to interstate trade of nursery stock. [Full article available here](http://www.floraldaily.com/article/9025535/Australia-Best-practice-scheme-BioSecure-HACCP-gets-tick-of-approval)



1. **International news**

**Regulatory**

* 1. **Importing & exporting plants if there is a no-deal Brexit**

A scenario in which the UK leaves the EU without agreement (a ‘no deal’ scenario) remains unlikely given the mutual interests of the UK and the EU in securing a negotiated outcome." However a series of technical notices has been prepared setting out information to allow businesses and citizens to understand what they would need to do in a ‘no deal’ scenario, so they can make informed plans and preparations." This guidance is part of that series and was published on 24 September 2018.

***Importing and exporting plants and plant products if there’s no Brexit deal***

This includes trade in products that are currently managed under the EU plant passport regime or subject to third country controls under current EU rules. It also includes movement of wood packaging material between the UK and the EU.

***Before 29 March 2019*** Currently there are no border controls on most imports and exports of plants and plant products between the UK and the EU. Some plants and plant products that present a higher biosecurity risk are managed under the EU plant passport regime. For trade with third countries, the process is different. Some plants and plant products that do not pose a biosecurity risk can move freely. Others, known as ‘controlled’ plants and plant products, must meet certain import requirements because they are considered to pose a risk to plant health. The importing country determines which plants and plant products are controlled.

The list of plants and plant products managed under the EU plant passport regime for trade between EU countries is not the same as the list of commodities from outside the EU – third country goods - that are controlled by the EU.

Controlled third country goods include all plants for planting (including some seeds) and certain plant products. These goods are specified in the [EU Plant Health Directive](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A32000L0029)and associated legislation, implemented in the UK through national legislation in England and the devolved administrations.

Controlled goods exported from the UK to third countries are determined by the country receiving the goods and must travel with a Phytosanitary Certificate (PC) issued by the relevant plant health authority, and are usually checked on arrival at the border of the third country concerned.

The relevant UK plant health authorities are responsible for enforcing import controls and for issuing Phytosanitary Certificates for export from the UK.

***Wood packaging material*** Currently, WPM moving between the UK and the rest of the EU does not need to meet ISPM15 requirements and can move freely without checks or controls. WPM moving in and out of Portugal and parts of Spain must conform to ISPM15 standards, owing to the presence of Pinewood nematode. In the unlikely event that the UK leaves the EU in March 2019 with no deal, the UK would be treated as a third country and would lose access to the EU plant passport regime. This would affect businesses that export to the EU, import from the EU, and move some plants and plant products within the UK. Exports to and imports from current third countries would not be directly affected.

***Post March 2019***

***Exports from the UK to EU countries*** In a ‘no deal’ scenario, the UK would become a third country, and would need to meet EU third country import requirements to export controlled plants and plant products to the EU, including controls on all plants for planting and all wood packaging material. Under this process, businesses need to apply for a Phytosanitary Certificate (PC) from the relevant UK plant health authority before they can export. Some commodities require laboratory testing of samples to ensure they are free from pests and diseases, while others also need to have had an inspection during the growing season. Consignments of controlled plants and plant products exported to the EU from the UK may be subject to checks at the EU border.

***Imports from EU countries to the UK*** To deliver a smooth transition when we leave the EU, in a ‘no deal’ scenario the Government has decided that the majority of plants and plant products are low-risk and should continue to enter the UK from the EU freely, as they do now.

There would be some exceptions: Plants and plant products managed under the EU plant passport regime: Plants and plant products currently managed under the EU plant passport regime would be subject to UK import controls to replace the assurance and traceability offered by the EU plant passport regime, maintaining biosecurity whilst minimising the impact on businesses.

Consignments of these plants and plant products entering the UK would require a PC issued in the country of export (or re-export), and the importer or the importer’s agent would need to inform the relevant plant health authority in the UK before the consignment arrived.

Further details of how to [inform the relevant plant health authority](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/importing-plants-fruit-vegetables-or-plant-material-to-the-uk) are available on GOV.UK. The importer or agent would also need to provide scanned copies of the PC and relevant documents in advance to the relevant UK plant health authority, and supply the original copy of the PC once the consignment has arrived.

Consignments of plants and plant products from EU countries would not be stopped at the border. The relevant UK plant health authority would carry out documentary and identity checks remotely.

Plants and plant products originating outside the EU and arriving in the UK via the EU: Plants and plant products that come from non-EU countries, but travel to the UK via the EU without an EU member state carrying out plant health checks, would be treated as non-EU imports and subject to third country controls on arrival in the UK. Further details on [current third country controls](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/importing-plants-fruit-vegetables-or-plant-material-to-the-uk) are available on GOV.UK. Detail on alternative arrangements for points of entry that do not have capacity to carry out third country controls at the border will be made available in due course.

***Wood packaging material*** As indicated in the [EU’s technical notice on this topic](https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/plant/docs/notice_brexit_plant_health.pdf), in the unlikely event of the UK leaving the EU in March 2019 without a deal, all WPM moving between the UK and the EU would need to be ISPM15 compliant (treated and marked). These products may be subject to official checks either upon entry to the EU or after entry.

For the complete text of the technical bulleting please click [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/importing-and-exporting-plants-if-theres-no-brexit-deal/importing-and-exporting-plants-and-plant-products-if-theres-no-brexit-deal). [Full article available here](http://www.floraldaily.com/article/9025497/Importing-exporting-plants-if-there-is-a-no-deal-Brexit)

* 1. **Food products protected by a ‘geographical indication’ if there’s no Brexit deal**

***Before 29 March 2019*** There are currently 86 GI-protected UK product names, comprising 76 agricultural and food products, five wines and five spirit drinks which together make up a quarter of the value of UK food and drink exports. These products make an important contribution to local economies and enhance the UK’s reputation for high-quality food and drink.

***After 29 March 2019 if there’s no deal*** "When the UK leaves the EU it will set up its own GI schemes which will be WTO TRIPS compliant, broadly mirror the current EU regime and be no more burdensome to producers. Details to be explored in a public consultation include the UK GI logo and appeals process. The protections will be similar to those enjoyed now by UK GI producers, with all 86 UK GIs given new UK GI status automatically. The UK would no longer be required to recognise EU GI status. EU producers would be able to apply for UK GI status. The UK will be publishing guidance on the UK GI schemes in early 2019."

***International protection of UK GIs*** The UK Government is working with its global trading partners to replicate EU free trade agreements and other sectoral agreements, including accommodating the protection of UK GIs in third countries. After March 2019, irrespective of the outcome of EU negotiations, we expect UK GIs currently named in and protected by EU free trade agreements and other sectoral agreements will continue to be protected." [Click here for the full report](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/725288/The_future_relationship_between_the_United_Kingdom_and_the_European_Union.pdf) [Full article available here](http://www.hortidaily.com/article/9025487/Producing-food-products-protected-by-a-geographical-indication-if-there-s-no-Brexit-deal)

* 1. **Walmart will use blockchain to stop the spread of E. coli and other diseases in lettuce**

Grocery giants Walmart and Sam's Club are requiring their lettuce suppliers to get into blockchain technology. Those providing leafy greens to the grocery chains will need to upload data about their foods to blockchain within a year, the companies announced to its suppliers Monday. With blockchain, all fresh leafy greens suppliers are expected to be able to trace their products back to farms "in seconds, not days," Walmart said in a letter to suppliers. Direct suppliers will be required to conform to Walmart's standards and "enable end-to-end traceability" back to farms by September 30, 2019, the company said. [Full article available here](http://www.hortidaily.com/article/9025079/Walmart-will-use-blockchain-to-stop-the-spread-of-E-coli-and-other-diseases-in-lettuce)

* 1. **Australian PM outlines tighter export control due to contaminated fruit scare**

Thursday, PM Scott Morrison outlined tighter export controls as the crisis, which has seen pins and needles inserted into fruit across the country, spread further overseas. The PM detailed several government-backed measures to restore confidence in the industry, including funding to review tamper-proof packaging options, and the recent introduction of X-rays and shrink wrapping on exports. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9027293/Australian-PM-outlines-tighter-export-control-due-to-contaminated-fruit-scare)

**Business**

* 1. **Australia: Bulk of Queensland 'strawberry fund' goes to ad campaign**

More than half of the Queensland government's million-dollar rescue package to the strawberry industry will be spent on an advertising campaign, following the needle crisis. The state government has allocated AU$1 million towards responding to the crisis, and on Wednesday revealed $600,000 of that money would be spent on a targeted campaign, while $250,000 has been allocated for safeguarding supply chain integrity. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9025606/Australia-Bulk-of-Queensland-strawberry-fund-goes-to-ad-campaignhttps%3A/www.news.com.au/national/breaking-news/bulk-of-qld-strawberry-fund-to-ad-campaign/news-story/12d83f1db362d02d30bb35b8bbe79890%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)

* 1. **MSC: The 2020 sulphur cap is increasing operation costs**

MSC Mediterranean Shipping Company S.A.’s operating costs are expected to increase significantly as we continue to prepare for the 2020 low-Sulphur fuel regime. We are therefore introducing a new Global Fuel Surcharge as of 1 January 2019 in order to help customers plan for the impact of the post-2020 fuel regime. The new MSC Global Fuel Surcharge will replace existing bunker surcharge mechanisms and will reflect a combination of fuel prices at bunkering ports around the world and specific line costs such as transit times, fuel efficiency and other trade-related factors.

The cost of the various changes we are making to our fleet and its fuel supply is in excess of two billions of dollars (USD) per year. A plan to optimize energy efficiency through continuous evaluation of trade route networks is also expected to help limit fuel use and improve service reliability.

[Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9025062/MSC-The-2020-sulphur-cap-is-increasing-operation-costs)

Full article available here

 **Sustainability**

* 1. **An innovative leaching solution to the worldwide salinity crisis"**

The issue of salt accumulating in soil is as old as agriculture itself. ‘Current figures estimate that over 830 million hectares across all continents is salinized[[3]](https://blog.aqua-4d.com/leaching-solution/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn3), and possibly up to 20% of all cultivated land and 33% of irrigated agricultural land worldwide[[4]](https://blog.aqua-4d.com/leaching-solution/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn4). Salts are naturally-occurring but salinity concentrations increase after many cycles of irrigation, while additional salts and minerals are also introduced by fertilizers. Crops grown on saline soil suffer “high osmotic stress, nutritional disorders and toxicities, poor soil physical conditions and reduced crop productivity”[[5]](https://blog.aqua-4d.com/leaching-solution/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn5), which can over time turn fruitful fields into deserts. The issue has gained traction in recent decades, especially in arid or semi-arid regions where the problem is most pressing.

Soil salinity entails unhealthy levels of harmful mineral ions such as sodium and chlorine, with highly charged water in turn leading to a high level of electrical conductivity (EC) in the soil. Several techniques can be employed to manage salinity. There are hydraulic techniques (irrigation and drainage), physical techniques (levelling the soil), farming techniques (contribution of organic matter) and biological techniques (tolerant plants). A sustainable, long-term solution would have a huge impact on the millions of growers plagued by soil salinity and a huge impact on humanity.

This paper provides evidence that a new technology Aqua-4D changes the organization of the water molecules and behaviour of minerals, so that plants can absorb what they need and salts are dissolved and transported below the root zone. This has huge implications for growers in regions with poor quality saline water, but also for growers facing unusable land after several cycles of rising soil salinity.

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