

**PMAC weekly update 14th to 21st October**

1. **Government agencies**: Australian entry update; ICPR Changes MPI Postgraduate Science Scholarships open, WTO Notifications
2. **New Zealand News:**  New structures for new challenges; Northland avocado nursery expands into China; Lettuce business a way of life for Manakau family; Flower Week 2019 theme will be 'The Power of Flowers'; Zespri researches basics to increase sales in the US; Helius appoints Quality Manager; New Zealand summer fruit growers will vote on industry levy; High alert for stink bugs; Australia working to safeguard horticultural sector from Xylella fastidiosa devastation; EU prioritizes fight against 20 quarantine plant pests
3. **International news:** GAIN reports; Australian horticulture exports perform strongly; MSC rules out Arctic exploration based on environmental concerns; Heatwaves Could 'Double In Size', Researchers Warns...; CargoX and RoadLaunch merge the worlds of public and private blockchains; America's shocking vegetable admission; Evolving Chinese Consumption Habits; International floriculture trade fair; IPM ESSEN at the modernized Messe Essen; Plants For Better Mental Health; New molecular research tool for testing fruit and vegetables for pesticides;

***Editors report***

*Another good batch of news this week but instead of commenting on the news I’d like to mention that I attended a funeral for Richard Ivess on Monday of this week. Its more than possible that most people in the horticultural Industry will not have heard of Richard Ivess but he has a significant effect on the success of horticultural exports today and I’d ask you to take a minute to think of him.*

*Richard started his working career as a horticultural adviser with MAF in the 1970’s and then rose through the ranks to become Chief Plant Officer in the late 90’s early 2000’s . From there Richard worked for FAO for several years in Rome before returning in 2008 to work for MFAT through until 2017. During his working career Richard saw the value of horticultural exports grow from less than $35 million to over $3.5 billion. He and his cohorts were also instrumental in helping to establish many of the assurance systems that have resulted in the delegated MAO model that provides one of the world’s most cost efficient and flexible exporting systems .*

*Richards was also personally involved with the negotiation of some of our most difficult access negotiations for fruit and vegetables in the 90’s such as cherry’s into Japan. It is easy at times to forget the role that MPI plays in supporting our exports with good systems (it’s easy instead to see them just as being restrictive but when compared to other countries they are outstanding in terms of their robustness and flexibility). It’s a little less difficult to appreciate MPI’s role in arranging market access they are so integral to its success.*

*Many of those involved in the early days when exporting began have or are retiring. With Richards passing I feel it is a good time to reflect on the legacy they and he personally has left. Richard stood out for his depth of knowledge, his integrity and his advocacy for all things and people involved in Horticulture.*

1. **Agency news**



* 1. **Australian entry update**

The Australian Offshore Pre-inspection (OPI) programme is ceasing at the end of April 2020. This programme involved inspectors from Australia’s Department of Agriculture (DOA) inspecting shipments of New Zealand fresh produce prior to export to Australia and thereby leading to streamlined clearance of compliant product on arrival in Australia.

The decision to cease the OPI programme has been made by Australia’s Department of Agriculture as they wish to no longer support the programme. This affects fresh produce exports to Australia from both New Zealand and USA.

In August 2019 the Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) met with Australia’s Department of Agriculture to request for an extension to the OPI programme citing significant benefits to exporters of New Zealand fresh produce and to support reduced demand on arrival in Australia for quarantine inspections. This request was declined by DOA.

A small number of DOA OPI inspectors will be available prior to April 2020 to inspect fresh produce destined for Australia and these will only be available in centralised export locations within New Zealand providing an opportunity for as many exporters as possible to access this reduced OPI inspector resource.

MPI in collaboration with the Plants Market Access Council (PMAC) have been actively working since 2016 to mitigate the impact on New Zealand’s fresh produce exports to Australia from the withdrawal of the OPI programme. This work is continuing.

Australia’s DOA has introduced a Compliance-Based Intervention Scheme (CBIS) for consignments arriving in Australia covering various plant products. CBIS is not a direct replacement for OPI. CBIS allows products found to have good compliance to have reduced inspections on arrival in Australia. Compliance is based on documentation and the level of detections found during inspections for each importer.

MPI has been working with DOA to allow New Zealand commodities, in addition to avocados, to be eligible for CBIS. From August 2019, New Zealand capsicums and stonefruit will be eligible for CBIS.

For any issues related to the withdrawal of the OPI programme, please contact MPI’s Plant Exports team [plantexports@mpi.govt.nz](mailto:plantexports@mpi.govt.nz) or contact your PMAC industry representative.

* 1. **ICPR changes**

The following ICPR have been updated

* Ecuador has been updated in section 4.4.1 Seed, Grains and Nuts for sowing with requirements for carrot seed (Daucus carota).
* Korea has been updated with the contact details for requesting information on restricted bulbs/tubers/corms/rhizomes (for propagation) species added, fresh underground parts of Daucus carota (carrot) and Pyrus spp. (Pear) added to prohibitions. The quarantine pest list has also been updated. To see all [ICPR’s click here](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/law-and-policy/requirements/icpr-importing-countries-phytosanitary-requirements/icprs-by-country/)
  1. **MPI Postgraduate Science Scholarships open**

Applications are open for Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) Postgraduate Science Scholarships for PhD and Masters students undertaking primary sector research. This scholarship programme is aiming to encourage PhD and master’s students to pursue research within the primary industries, particularly where there are science and skills gaps. The total value for each PhD scholarship is up to $50,000 and each master’s scholarship is up to $12,000. Successful recipients will also benefit from mentoring from MPI scientists and career development opportunities to fast-track their career in the primary industries. Applications close 8 December 2019. [Full article available here](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/news-and-resources/media-releases/mpi-postgraduate-science-scholarships-applications-open/?utm_source=notification-email)

* 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:

* EU capsicums and tomatoes
* Canada and USA MRL’s

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



1. **New Zealand News**

** Commentary**

* 1. **New structures for new challenges**

*In his Blog last week Mike Chapman. CEO Hort NZ, looks at the need for reform* . Einstein famously said the definition of insanity is to do the exact same thing again and again and expect things to change.  Ever since he said that we have proved it to be true.

The Government has some really big changes coming: climate change mitigation, environmental initiatives including improving freshwater quality, and educational reforms.  These changes are major.  They are not evolutionary, they are revolutionary.  They require new thinking and us to embrace new ways of doing what we have done in the past.  There is a real risk here and that is to try and deliver these new revolutionary policies with the same structures.  Einstein would just nod in agreement.

However, the design and detail of the new policies is being done with a high degree of replication, albeit with new names, of the structures we have now.  If the delivery and administration structures in essence stay the same, then the risk is what was delivered in the past will just be what is delivered in the future. *The article then looks in detail at the Regional Council Structure and Educational reform*.

Unless these organisations are radically changed, the real risk we face is that all we will have is a new industry and provider structure that is forced to deliver the current aged and ineffective training we have today.  In other words, the reform needs to go much further and tackle all the core issues.

So, my message to the Government is we support your reforms, we will work with you to make them successful, but what you need to do is ensure that the structural impediments to your policy revolutions’ success are changed too.



* 1. **Northland avocado nursery expands into China**

A Northland business is setting up New Zealand's first joint venture avocado nursery operation in China amid an international boom in the demand for the fruit. About $2 million worth of young avocado trees will be produced annually in the Chinese nursery joint venture, that has been set up by Maunu's Lynwood Nursery, west of Whangarei. The venture is in Hunan province, south-central China. The venture's first Maunu-grown avocado "mother" seeds and budwood were flown from New Zealand to China in June this  year to establish the new nursery. It is forecast to be producing half a million young  avocado plants annually by 2022. [Full article available here](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/the-country/news/article.cfm?c_id=16&objectid=12277087)

* 1. **Lettuce business a way of life for Manakau family**

A former Wellington couple who escaped the city with their three young children to grow lettuce in Manakau. Mrs Dale-Low said they purchased Waikawa Fresh as a going concern in July last year, growing lettuce and herbs for the local environment. They both had green thumbs, but it was a leap of faith. [Read the full article at NZ Herald (Paul Williams)](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/wanganui-chronicle/horowhenua-chronicle/news/article.cfm?c_id=1503788&objectid=12274204) [Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9152990/new-zealand-lettuce-business-a-way-of-life-for-manakau-family/)

* 1. **Flower Week 2019 theme will be 'The Power of Flowers'**

As a country that prides itself on its clean, green outlook New Zealand must take the time to appreciate nature’s gift – flowers. And doing just that is New Zealand Flowers Week 2019, back with added vigour and a renewed theme, ‘The Power of Flowers’.

Incredibly in New Zealand, the floral industry employs around 10,000 people Jones says. “And through the United Flower Growers auctions, anywhere between 50,000 and 100,000 stems of flowers are sold per week, depending on the season.

This year’s theme also speaks to the power of flowers on a scientific level, with a Harvard Medical School study finding people feel more compassionate towards others, have less worry and anxiety and feel less depressed when fresh cut flowers are present in a home.NZ Flowers Week 2019 will incorporate several nationwide activations and leading florists who will create installations specific to the ‘The Power of Flowers’ theme. [Full article available here](https://www.floraldaily.com/article/9152737/new-zealand-flower-week-2019-theme-will-be-the-power-of-flowers/)

* 1. **Zespri researches basics to increase sales in the US**

The US is a comparatively recent market for Zespri ,which previously looked much more to China and Japan for growth. However, the kiwifruit marketer opened a pan-American office in 2017. Last year, US sales reached almost $100 million, an annual increase of 50 percent, and Zespri chief grower David Courtney says this season will see even more fruit sold

Volume to the US will account for about 7 million of the 140 million trays it expects to sell, with sales driven by the SunGold variety: “The US has been a green market, with fruit either from Chile or California, so we see gold as the opportunity to open up the market to the different taste profile.”

He says the United States is a relatively underdeveloped market for kiwifruit where it is number 21 in the overall fruit bowl - in Europe and Asia it sits in the top 10. In more developed markets such as China and Japan, which are the Zespri’s top sales generators, more sophisticated messaging is required such as the fruit's nutritional value. In the US, Zespri tries to just get people to buy kiwifruit.

US sales are hoped to drive Zespri toward its sales goal of $4.5 billion by 2025. In the 12 months ended March 31, global kiwifruit sales and licence release revenue broke the $3 billion mark for the first time. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9154829/zespri-researches-basics-to-increase-sales-in-the-us/)

* 1. **Helius appoints Quality Manager**

Helius Therapeutics, has appointed Keryn Davies as its Quality Manager. Mrs Davies will ensure pharmaceutical and regulatory compliance for the company, as well as the quality of all manufactured medicinal cannabis products. As Quality Manager she will report to the Chief Science Officer at Helius Therapeutics, Dr Jim Polston. His appointment earlier this year marked the first globally-recognised medicinal cannabis researcher to move to New Zealand. Helius is the first certified New Zealand grown cannabis. [Full article available here](http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/BU1910/S00323/helius-appoints-quality-manager.htm)

* 1. **New Zealand summer fruit growers will vote on industry levy**

Industry body Summerfruit NZ has been consulting growers around the country on renewal of the sector's commodity levy order, which expires before the start of the 2020 summer fruit season. The new order would allow Summerfruit NZ, which represents 220 growers, to levy growers for a further six years.

The levies provide more than two-thirds of Summerfruit NZ's funding and are used for biosecurity, crop protection, export market access and other activities. The summer fruit market is worth $127 million each year - 69 percent of which is export sales (based on figures from the 2017/18 season).

According to Cromwell cherry grower and Chairman of Summerfruit NZ, Tim Jones, meetings had been held across the country in the lead-up to the vote.

"We found almost unanimous support for our current levy calculation method, which is based on a percentage of sales value," he said. "So, we are putting this option forward for growers to vote on in the levy referendum. We're also proposing no increase for the maximum levy rates - currently one rate for apricots, nectarines, peaches and plums, and another rate for cherries."

Growers have 3 weeks from Wednesday 16 October and can vote online or by post. The outcome should be known within a few days after 8th November. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9153948/new-zealand-summer-fruit-growers-will-vote-on-industry-levy/)

** Bits and pieces**

* 1. **Countdown says customers moving to plant-based proteins**

Supermarket chain Countdown is reporting a surge in consumer demand for alternative proteins. The supermarket said in the last year, demand for plant-based vegan and vegetarian meal solutions had increased 36 percent. Ms Hannifin stated that there has been a growing retail trend in which people were interested in buying and eating food that was good for them and good for the environment. [Full article available here](https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/country/400942/countdown-says-customers-moving-to-plant-based-proteins)

* 1. **Nanotechnology solutions explored in agricultural sector**

Researchers from Lincoln University are investigating how to use nanotechnology in agriculture to increase productivity and reduce environmental impact. Lincoln University Associate Professor in Animal Science Craig Bunt stated his team was looking to develop a ground-breaking nano-coating over the next three years which could be applied to fertiliser to control its rate of release into soil, and to seeds to control their timing of germination. This nano-coating could help prevent excessive nitrogen loss as well as allow multiple crops to be sown at once, one crop with uncoated seeds and one coated in order to delay germination until the first crop has matured and been harvested. Dr Bunt described the technology as a specific solution that could increase sustainability, enhance productivity, and for New Zealand would help improve yield and export revenue. [Full article available here](https://www.newsroom.co.nz/2019/10/15/860942/nanotechnology-solutions-explored-in-agricultural-sector)

* 1. **Bunds offer phosphorus solution**

Capturing phosphate in water spilling off farm catchments has been made easier thanks to work done in a detainment bund trial. Under the Government’s latest water quality rules, not only nitrogen losses are required to be measured and reduced but also phosphorus losses need to be mitigated. Mitigation of phosphorus often focusses on riparian plantings; however, the Rotorua Phosphorus Mitigation Project has gone a step further with its efforts to capture the deluge of high-phosphate runoff generated by rain in on-farm detainment bunds, letting it settle back into the soil before releasing the water. The new structures have twice the storage capacity and hold the run-off longer.

Support from the Lake Rotorua Primary Producers’ Collective helped kick-start the project with three farms used for the trials and setting-up measuring equipment on the bunds. The project has been revealing that the relatively simple earth bunds can catch about 60% of phosphate losses and 80% of sediments in storm water runoff, depending on soil drainage conditions. The group is awaiting the final thesis from Massey University doctoral student Brian Levine after which a how-to guide for farmers who want to use bunds will be written and made freely available. [Full article available here](https://farmersweekly.co.nz/section/agribusiness/view/bunds-offer-phosphorus-solution)

* 1. **Kiwifruit is going to be tested as a sleeping aid**

A new study wants to determine just how useful kiwifruit is to get people to sleep more soundly.

Sleep specialist Angela Campbell said a large portion of the population had trouble with insomnia and another portion struggled with disorders like sleep apnoea. Kiwifruit has been found to potentially have a beneficial role in sleep because it contains serotonin. Massey University researcher Alex Kanon plans to spend the next three years investigating exactly what it is about kiwifruit that helps with sleep.

Despite research already having been done of the benefits of kiwifruit as a sleep aid its hoped the study will confirm the link (if it exists) between sleep and kiwifruit consumption and assist in identifying the underlying mechanism. [Full article available now](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9153954/kiwifruit-is-going-to-be-tested-as-a-sleeping-aid/)

 **Biosecurity**

* 1. **High alert for stink bugs**

New Zealand is on high alert for brown marmorated stink bug. Biosecurity Minister Damien O’Connor is warning travelling Kiwis to be vigilant as the high-season for the crop-eating brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB) is under way. The high season runs until April 30 and we’ve strengthened our measures to stop stink bug establishing itself here,’’ O’Connor said.

“It’s an especially timely reminder for those travelling to Rugby World Cup matches. A recent swarm of green stink bug and yellow spotted stink bug have occurred in Kobe, Japan. Biosecurity NZ staff based there will continue to ensure we have the right measures in place. We want to keep the risk offshore as much as possible

In the past few months Biosecurity NZ has increased the number of additional BMSB risk countries from 16 to 33: mandatory pre-arrival treatment requirements for targeted vehicles, machinery and parts have been boosted. Biosecurity NZ staff are being sent overseas to visit and audit treatment providers, shippers and freight forwarders in Europe.  “Elsewhere, all cruise ship operators have to show they’ve taken measures to prevent pests arriving here by using our accreditation system and we’re working on hi-tech scanning equipment to find the bug in luggage and mail.  [Full article available here](https://ruralnewsgroup.co.nz/rural-news/rural-general-news/high-alert-for-stink-bugs?utm_source=Rural+News+Group+Weekly+E-Newsletter&utm_campaign=1fa6084d8d-Rural_News_Group_Bulletin_15_OCT_2019&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_fb79f8bfe8-1fa6084d8d-59798541&ct=t(Rural_News_Group_Bulletin_15_OCT_2019))

* 1. **Australia working to safeguard horticultural sector from Xylella fastidiosa devastation**

Here is a snapshot of current initiatives in the Australian nursery industry, as they work to prepare for the management and mitigation of Xylella if it does eventually arrive in Australia.

***Xylella coordinator*** In a joint initiative earlier this year, Wine Australia and Hort Innovation, appointed Craig Elliott in the role of Xylella coordinator, as part of the Plant Biosecurity Research Initiative.

Since his appointment, Craig has been travelling across the country meeting growers, other members of potentially affected industries, government biosecurity officers, and an array of researchers to determine how Australia can best prepare for the threat of Xylella. Prevention of the entry of Xylella remains the priority, however the Xylella coordinator also plays a key role in improving communication amongst stakeholders, to foster greater information, resulting in a coordinated effort.

***New project commissioned*** A new project to update Australia’s diagnostic protocols and validate new diagnostic testing has recently been commissioned. This project will include an assessment of an in-field diagnostic kit, looking at speed of Xylella detection which is central to improving preparedness.

***Contingency plan*** Nursery & Garden Industry Australia led the development of contingency plans for a potential outbreak of Xylella, and its key insect vector, the Glassy-winged sharpshooter.

***Incursion exercise*** In November 2018, NGIA, Plant Heath Australia, Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries conducted a Xylella fastidiosa incursion exercise (Exercise Fastidious) to investigate and improve Australia’s preparedness to respond to detection. To read more on the Xylella fastidiosa incursion exercise, [click here](https://yourlevyatwork.com.au/simulation-exercise-to-strengthen-response-to-xylella-fastidiosa/). [Full article available here](https://www.floraldaily.com/article/9154886/australia-working-to-safeguard-horticultural-sector-from-xylella-fastidiosa-devastation/)

* 1. **EU prioritizes fight against 20 quarantine plant pests**

The European Commission has published a list of 20 regulated quarantine pests qualifying as priority pests, including Xylella fastidiosa, the Japanese beetle, the Asian long-horned beetle, Citrus greening and Citrus Black Spot, whose economic, environmental and social impact on EU's territory is the most severe.

Member States will have to launch information campaigns to the public, do annual surveys, prepare contingency plans, simulation exercises, and action plans for the eradication of these pests.

The selection of pests is based on the assessment carried out by the Commission's Joint Research Centre and the European Food Safety Authority, which takes into account the probability of spreading, establishment and consequences of those pests for the Union. Views of a dedicated Experts Group and public feedback provided via the Better Regulation portal were also taken into account. [Full article available here](https://www.floraldaily.com/article/9153051/eu-prioritizes-fight-against-20-quarantine-plant-pests/)



1. **International news**

**Comment**

* 1. **GAIN reports**

Gain reports are from the “Global Agricultural Information Network” and are produced by the USDA. They are designed to provide timely information on the economy, products and issues in foreign countries that are likely to have an impact on United States agricultural production and trade. The information in them is written for USA exporters but the majority is equally relevant to New Zealand. With regard to import regulations for a particular market New Zealand exporters should first check the countries ICPR on MPI’s web site. These are collated specifically for New Zealand product. However, the Gain reports often provide additional information that is useful e.g. on grading and labelling, economic profiles. This week see:

1. **Egypt Food Service - Hotel Restaurant Institutional** The Egypt Food Service - Hotel Restaurant Institutional (HRI) sector’s sales grew in 2018; reaching $17.4 billion, representing about seven percent of Egypt’s gross domestic product (GDP) of $251 billion. Food Service - Hotel Restaurant Institutional\_Cairo\_Egypt\_09-30-2019
2. **Greece Food Service - Hotel Restaurant Institutional** Greece continues to break records with the number of tourist arrivals in the country rising to almost 35 million tourists in 2018, up 16 percent compared to the previous year, and is forecast to further increase. Surging tourism is expected to help Greece record its highest annual real GDP growth in a decade. Food Service - Hotel Restaurant Institutional\_Rome\_Greece\_09-30-2019
3. **Singapore Retail Foods** The Singapore food retail sector is highly developed and competitive. The industry is comprised of a range of large supermarkets/hypermarkets, convenience stores, “mom and pop” traditional stores and specialty retailers. Retail Foods\_Singapore\_Singapore\_06-30-2019

 **Business/ Industry**

* 1. **Australian horticulture exports perform strongly**

According to Rural Bank’s most recent agricultural trade report, Australia’s horticulture industry enjoyed a 27.6 per cent increase, worth A$594.1m (US$401m), in export value over the 2018/19 season. Each of the main horticultural categories experienced an increase in exports, with nuts (+39.1 per cent) leading the way ahead of fruit (+22.1 per cent) and vegetables (+18.4 per cent).

According to the report, global agricultural commodity prices were impacted by shifting trade relationships and geopolitical tensions.

The growth in 2018/19 came from an increased volume of exports, combined with higher prices on average. *The article looks in detail at the figures for each of the main export crops.* [Full article available here](http://www.fruitnet.com/eurofruit/article/179980/australian-horticulture-exports-perform-strongly)

* 1. **MSC rules out Arctic exploration based on environmental concerns**

MSC Mediterranean Shipping Company has decided not to use the Arctic as a new short cut between northern Europe and Asia and will instead focus on improving environmental performance on existing global trade routes. The Northern Sea Route lies entirely in Arctic waters and has been trailed by other shipping lines seeking to take advantage of melting ice from global warming. MSC is convinced that the 21 million containers moved each year for its customers can be transported around the world without passing through this Arctic corridor. A surge in container shipping traffic in the Arctic could damage air quality and endanger the biodiversity of untouched marine habitats – a risk MSC is not willing to take.

MSC’s decision to avoid the Northern Sea Route is complementary to the company’s broader strategic approach to sustainability. To help tackle climate change, MSC completed a program to retrofit more than 250 ships in its existing fleet with the latest green technologies, cutting about 2 million tons of CO2 emissions each year. Furthermore, the latest new building additions to the fleet – led by MSC Gülsün, the largest container ship in the world – has introduced a new class of sustainable container shipping, with the lowest carbon footprint by design, at 7.49 grams of CO2 emissions to move 1 ton of cargo 1 nautical mile.

MSC’s fleet improvement program has resulted in a 13% reduction in CO2 emissions per transport work\* in 2015-18. The great challenge which remains for container shipping this century is how to decarbonise and meet the UN IMO’s future emissions goals beyond 2030. While we are fully supporting these more distant targets, this will not be achievable without some major breakthroughs in fuel and propulsion technologies,” said Bud Darr, Executive Vice President, Maritime Policy & Government Affairs, MSC Group. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9154423/msc-rules-out-arctic-exploration-based-on-environmental-concerns/)

* 1. **Heatwaves Could 'Double In Size', Researchers Warns...**

Researchers are predicting that the most extreme heatwaves could more than double in size by 2050 if greenhouse gas targets aren’t met. "By mid-century, in a middle greenhouse emissions scenario, the average size of heat waves could increase by 50%. "Under high greenhouse gas concentrations, the average size could increase by 80% and the more extreme heatwaves could more than double in size. As the physical size of these affected regions increases, more people will be exposed to heat stress." [Click here](https://uk.news.yahoo.com/heatwaves-could-double-in-size-by-2050-101930137.html) for more details. [Full article available here](https://www.hortibiz.com/news/?tx_news_pi1%5Bnews%5D=30707&cHash=650007fca0394b0c4041ddaea817795e)

* 1. **CargoX and RoadLaunch merge the worlds of public and private blockchains**

Recently, CargoX, a public blockchain logistics document transaction platform which was built on a public blockchain, was integrated into RoadLaunch, a private blockchain-based digital freight management platform. According to the companies, this is the first publicly available integrated product in logistics of this kind.

One of the key points is that this partnership merges a private and public blockchain. Why does this matter? As Stefan Kukman, CEO and founder of CargoX explained, public blockchain servers are spread out all over the world. They can be joined by anyone, and transactions can be validated by anyone. In contrast, private blockchains are typically hosted locally. A private blockchain is much more centralized and does not have some of the benefits of a public blockchain, such as trust built on public cryptographic validation."

By combining the strengths of the two, the companies aim to capitalize on these and provide a better experience for users. As they said in a release, "The joint solution keeps records of the user’s data and documentation on multiple blockchains simultaneously. Users access the services in one single-window application, and they need no knowledge of the underlying blockchain technologies to use them successfully."

The solution offered can help produce companies really take advantage of the speed and reliability of blockchain documentation transactions. This means there is less chance of receiving bills of lading too late and thus having to pay demurrage costs. Companies also avoid damage or spoilage to their produce while it is waiting in port in the event an errant paper document (the old way) is taking too long to arrive."

Another benefit of using the technology is the real-time shipment tracking and management. This is delivered with the help of IoT (Internet-of-Things) sensors, a built-in automated quote framework, and tools for digital freight capacity management. It's fair to say that technology for produce shipments will only continue to advance. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9152940/cargox-and-roadlaunch-merge-the-worlds-of-public-and-private-blockchains/)

* 1. **America's shocking vegetable admission**

A frozen food company surveyed Americans to find out their favourite and least favourite vegetables but discovered that a quarter of respondents had never even eaten one. 2000 adults were surveyed, and among those who reported eating vegetables, only one third of their meals included one. Seventy-two per cent of respondents said they wanted to eat more vegetables and 67 per cent said they felt guilty when they failed to eat vegies with their meal. Barriers cited for eating vegetables included being too expensive and having short shelf lives along with being too hard to prepare. The favourite vegetable voted by those surveyed was corn, with potatoes coming in a close second. Turnip was named the most hated vegie with 27 per cent of respondents reporting they disliked it [Full article available here](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/lifestyle/news/article.cfm?c_id=6&objectid=12275677)

 **China**

* 1. **Evolving Chinese Consumption Habits**

Over the past several years, the Beijing-based supermarket chain CSF Market has established a name for itself among community supermarkets in China The company’s CEO, Li Yanchuan, explain’show changes in selection, packaging, product display and sales of fresh produce in the past five years have enabled the company to stay on top of its game.

In particular, the company’s fruit product selection has seen considerable changes, in which the share of bananas, pineapples, citrus and drupes has slightly increased while the share of fruits traditionally common in the North China market, such as apples and pears, has significantly decreased. Alongside the decrease in traditional fruits, the company has also recorded an increase in the share of imported fruits. At present, the most popular fruits include [Philippine bananas](https://www.producereport.com/article/banana-prices-reach-peak-2019-likely-weaken-future), [Thai durians](https://www.producereport.com/article/thai-durian-deal-alibaba-once-again-shows-it-can-move-fruit), Vietnamese dragon fruit, [Thai mangosteens](https://www.producereport.com/article/thailand-enjoys-lions-share-chinas-mangosteen-market), [Chilean cherries](https://www.producereport.com/article/2018-year-review-chinas-cherry-market) and [Mexican avocados](https://www.producereport.com/article/mexican-avocado-exporters-dubafresh-frutival-%E2%80%9Cwe-see-our-future-china%E2%80%9D).

The company has also witnessed a gradual shift in the focus of consumers from product price to quality, especially with respect to taste and health benefits, and has started to track the market and consumer demands and increase the number of new fruit varieties and categories accordingly.

Li went on to explain that it is not sufficient to provide quality products alone and suppliers must also consider the health benefits of fruits, adding that medium-sized community supermarkets must demonstrate to customers that their products are fresh, for example by organizing fruit tastings or presentations.

Connections with overseas suppliers have also played an important role in bringing world-renowned varieties of apples, cherries and kiwis onto the supermarket shelves. [Full article available here](https://www.producereport.com/article/csf-markets-fruit-sales-reveal-evolving-chinese-consumption-habits)

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**Floral news**

* 1. **International floriculture trade fair**

The 10th edition of the international floriculture trade fair “IFTF” will take place in Holland Expo Haarlemmermeer in Vijfhuizen, Holland. Even more so than before, the coming edition of IFTF is the place to be to discuss the state of the floral industry. The flower industry is getting into dire straits and it is not getting any better with e.g. the latest unrest in Ecuador.With so many questions and uncertainties spinning in people’s heads about where the industry is heading to, this makes it a priority to be attending this year’s IFTF, where a vast majority of all important industry players will be present. It is an event not only to meet and greet buyers and suppliers, but also to gather valuable information to know how to handle your business given the current troubled and unprofitable developments in the market. [Full article available here](https://www.floraldaily.com/article/9153004/a-platform-for-the-latest-developments-in-the-world-floriculture-industry/)

* 1. **IPM ESSEN at the modernized Messe Essen**

**IPM ESSEN will take place for the 38th time at Messe Essen from 28 to 31 January 2020. In 2020, the world's leading horticultural trade fair will be held on the completely modernized exhibition grounds for the first time.** The range on offer at the international trade fair will include innovative products and services from the fields of plants, technology, floristry and garden features. IPM ESSEN will be accompanied by a varied program. [Full article available here](https://www.hortibiz.com/news/?tx_news_pi1%5Bnews%5D=30700&cHash=f6c05b49f44d89896b8b704bdfa3840f)

  **Health**

* 1. **Plants For Better Mental Health**

**Treating depression, anxiety, and related issues is much more difficult than, say, zapping a case of strep throat with an antibiotic. While there are a number of effective medications that can help, in addition to these, some doctors in England have begun writing prescriptions for something that doesn’t come in a pill bottle, but rather a pot.** They provide patients with a potted plant, usually an easy-care herb like [sage](https://www.bhg.com/gardening/plant-dictionary/herb/sage/) or [lavender](https://www.bhg.com/gardening/plant-dictionary/herb/lavender/), to take home.

The idea of telling patients struggling with anxiety and depression to get out and garden might seem a little unconventional, but there’s a [substantial amount of clinical research](https://www.ahta.org/research-info) indicating that spending time with plants improves our well-being, both mental and physical. [A study from 2016](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2211335516301401) looked at all the available research on how gardening can affect the mood, and found that there is “robust evidence for the positive effects of gardening on health.” [Full article available here](https://www.hortibiz.com/news/?tx_news_pi1%5Bnews%5D=30647&cHash=3f7d0bfecbd1559f9df7ade463715794)

 **Innovation**

* 1. **New molecular research tool for testing fruit and vegetables for pesticides**

New research from West Virginia University is transforming technology. The WVU research team has made a vibrating sharp-edge spray ionization device, created by Assistant Professor Peng Li and his research group: a rectangular piece of glass approximately 2.5 inches long and one inch wide that collects and ionizes samples on the spot.

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"This method has great potential for a wide range of applications," Li said. "It can be used for … testing the surface of fruits and vegetables for pesticides." [Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9154925/new-molecular-research-tool-for-testing-fruit-and-vegetables-for-pesticides/)

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