

**PMAC weekly update 15th to 22nd August**

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3. **International news:** GAIN reports; New traceability technology working group launches, Bayer launches sustainable agriculture platform focused on collaboration, Fruit Attraction 2022 is going to be a great fair, anticipated attendance similar to 2019, Cyber attacks growing threat to food security, Retailer puts money into setting up organic cut flower sector in France, How Blockchain and Cryptocurrency will Benefit the Floral Industry, Fruit and vegetables high in calcium and potassium could prevent recurring kidney stones, From fruit stones to tasty food

**Comment**

A wide range of articles this week of which there are four I’d like to draw to your attention to. The first reports on Peter Gluckman’s desire to hold a citizens’ assembly to consider whether GE organisms can be grown in New Zealand. Sir Peter reports the results of a survey that show the majority of New Zealanders now accept the use of GE and his conviction that a citizens assembly would be a robust approach to assessing their acceptability. The second article in the New Zealand section is an update from United Fresh on progress towards having compostable labels available in New Zealand to satisfy the Governments requirement that by 2023 New Zealand fruit can only have compostable labels.

In the International section there is a good article ( written from a Canadian perspective) about the increasing vulnerability of agribusiness to cyber attacks and their potential to affect food security. This is an area of increasing importance as AI and technology support become more important in food production. In a similar vein the other article worth looking at is the article on how blockchain can benefit the Floral Industry. While much of the information has been presented in other articles this article provides some good examples of the power of blockchain for increasing transparency for all network participants increasing the individual responsibility of everyone on the supply chain.

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

The ICPR for Australia has been updated with the following changes:

* Updated Australia’s National Plant Protection Organisation name to Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) throughout document.
* Updated section 3.2 Phytosanitary Certificates regarding physical phytosanitary certificates.

If you need any further clarification, contact your Independent Verification Agency in the first instance.

[Importing Countries Phytosanitary Requirements (ICPRs)](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/export/export-requirements/icpr-importing-countries-phytosanitary-requirements/?utm_source=notification-email)



1. **New Zealand News**



* 1. [New Zealand food and fibre exports leap to a $53.3 billion result](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/new-zealand-food-and-fibre-exports-leap-533-billion-result)

Final export data shows New Zealand’s food and fibre exports for the year ending June 2022 leapt to $53.3 billion, adding $1.1 billion to the expected $52.2 billion announced in June, Agriculture Minister Damien O’Connor said last week. “This outstanding result is testament to the ongoing efforts of our farmers, growers, foresters, fishers and processors,” Damien O’Connor said. The data showed seafood and horticulture exports surpassing the previous year’s exports, which is fantastic news.”

“Food and fibre exports made up 81.4 percent of New Zealand’s total exports in the year to 30 June 2022,” Damien O’Connor said.

* 1. [APEC economies commit to 10-year food security roadmap](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/apec-economies-commit-10-year-food-security-roadmap)

Agriculture and food ministers from APEC economies have committed to delivering a new roadmap to guide efforts to boost food security over the next ten years, Agriculture Minister Damien O’Connor announced last week. The commitment was made at the virtual Food Security Ministerial Meeting hosted by Damien O’Connor as part of New Zealand’s hosting of APEC 2021.

“The extent of this challenge is huge, but I believe it’s achievable. Fora such as APEC are critical in unlocking the full potential of the Asia-Pacific.” Food Safety Minister Ayesha Verrall was New Zealand’s representative at the virtual meeting. To hit our APEC goal of enabling more certainty of food supply, New Zealand has led the development of the Food Security Towards 2030 Roadmap that will guide efforts to enable food security now and in the future.

“The roadmap is a guiding document to ensure APEC economies work towards a common purpose of building a resilient, efficient and more sustainable food production system, linking together the strands of production, processing, trade, and consumption,” Damien O’Connor said.

 The roadmap incorporates four key areas of focus:

* Digitalisation and innovation: using digital levers to drive food sustainability
* Productivity: prioritising systems that are fit for purpose
* Inclusivity: ensuring that underrepresented groups are set up to thrive
* Sustainability: tackling climate change and environmental challenges

Member economies are committing to a programme of specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-based (SMART) goals in order to meet the 2030 implementation of the roadmap.Damien O’Connor said a Ministerial Statement for Food Security also released last week is a sign of the commitment by APEC communities to this critical area.

Read the [Food Security Roadmap Towards 2030](https://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Sectoral-Ministerial-Meetings/Food-Security/2021_food_security/Annex)

Read the [Ministerial Statement for Food Security](https://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Sectoral-Ministerial-Meetings/Food-Security/2021_food_security)

* 1. [New High Commissioner to Kiribati appointed](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/new-high-commissioner-kiribati-appointed)

Foreign Minister Nanaia Mahuta last week announced the appointment of Andre Van Der Walt as New Zealand’s next High Commissioner to Kiribati. Andre Van Der Walt is currently managing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade’s humanitarian and disaster management team. He has previously served as deputy head of mission to New Zealand’s High Commission in Niue.

** Commentary**

* 1. [Take GE decision to the people, urges Sir Peter](https://www.farmersweekly.co.nz/take-ge-decision-to-the-people-urges-sir-peter/)

Sir Peter Gluckman says genetic engineering is too important to be a political football.

The constitutional tool that broke Ireland’s deadlock on abortion law could yet bring about a change in New Zealand’s genetic technology regulations. Pre-eminent professor and scientist Sir Peter Gluckman is leading the push for a citizens’ assembly to decide whether NZ should revisit its genetic technology regulations.

Rules around genetic technology became an election issue over 20 years ago, prompting a Royal Commission and a “proceed with caution” approach from the government.  However, little research has been done in NZ since, due to the expense and restrictions that NZ’s ensuing regulations on genetic engineering or genetic modification bought with them. Sir Peter, a longtime critic of NZ’s regulations, said he is using his role as founder and director of Koi Tū, the Centre for Informed Futures, to push for an assembly on an issue he said is too important to be left to politicians to decide.

A recent survey conducted by Christchurch company Research First highlights that the majority of New Zealanders are either comfortable or neutral about gene editing being used in healthcare and farm production. That support ranges from 48% support to use GE to speed up plant genetic gain, to 62% to protect native taonga species. Those saying they are neutral range from 27%-36%, with opposed ranging from 8%-28%.“That higher acceptance rate does not surprise me at all,” Sir Peter said. “In the early days there was some hesitancy about the new technology, but in 30 years of experience with it we have had no catastrophes. Any hype about the lack of safety is long gone.”

He said this is reinforced by the irony that much of NZ food now has GE-modified ingredients in it, whether it is the rennet in cheese or the soy component of chicken feed. A citizens’ assembly would remove the politics by recruiting a cross-section of the public to study the issue, almost in a jury-type arrangement, presided over by a pre-eminent judge who would request expert opinion on the matter as required.

Sir Peter is seeking out more interested parties to see if it would be possible to raise the estimated $2 million required to run an assembly, hopefully in 2024.Koi Tū, based at the University of Auckland, aims to incorporate thinking from across disciplines to deal with areas of national and global concern. As a small-scale dry run, Koi Tū is hosting a citizens’ assembly over August and September in Auckland trialling the process. It involves 40 Aucklanders, considering the issue “What will Auckland’s next water source be?”

A GE assembly could involve 100 citizens who represent NZ’s population profile. They would ultimately vote on whether to make changes to the GE regulations or not.

Sir Peter said NZ’s GE regulations, while ostensibly allowing GE trials here, are strongly focused on the technology rather than the outcome. “We regulate GE more tightly than we regulate nuclear power,” he said.

Minister for the Environment David Parker told Farmers Weekly that the government is not considering any amendment to regulations on field testing or the release of genetically modified organisms, or research on heritable cells.  It is, however, considering what practical improvements could be made to regulations on research, particularly for medical/human health purposes. But Sir Peter lambasted this.

“That does not deal with the issues. We have been using GE modified hormones for diabetes for a long time, and all hepatitis vaccines have been GE for years. It is a cop-out.”

* 1. [Nadine on the importance of listening to and supporting young growers](https://www.hortnz.co.nz/news-events-and-media/nadines-update/listening-to-and-supporting-young-growers/)

At the recent Primary Industries Summit in Auckland, a discussion panel of young people from across the wider primary sector emphasised the role of older mentors. That is, someone with experience and a commitment to bringing young people on board, who made the time to encourage and guide, usually very early on in the young farmer or grower’s career. Quite often, this involvement started at secondary school, however, what was consistent was that the listening and guiding ear was readily available, as the young person traversed education and training options and early career choices.

Young Grower of the Year contestants all have to stand up and make speeches in front of a few hundred of the people they work with in our industry and their wider community. Most contestants touch on the role of technology and automation to address these changes. However, while the speech makers may entertain or entice us with a futuristic vision full of drones, driverless tractors and disease resistant new varieties, they emphasise the role of the human being to direct the growing. They also worry about how automation and robotics could take away the pride that every grower takes in the produce that they grow, as an intersection of land, water, warmth and light.

The current government sees automation and robotics as the key to reducing our industry’s labour needs. It also believes that somehow, our industry has underinvested in this ‘solution’. Well, these Ministers and their advising officials can’t have visited a modern packhouse lately, where quality control, food safety, human safety and speed are all down to the millions that individual growers have invested and continue to invest in technology and automation advances.

Young people – like all of us – have been affected by Covid. I think their optimism has been drained as they are even more worried about the future and New Zealand horticulture’s place in it.

What they do see however, is a future and a place for them in it. A future that will take advantage of research and development, and automation gains, but will always involve the grower as director and decision maker, as well as a key member of regional communities across New Zealand. It is perhaps a cliché to say our industry is in ‘safe hands’ and the ‘future looks bright’, but it is. And why? Because of the talented young people coming through, and their perspectives and commitment to growing the best produce in the world, while addressing all of the world’s challenges through future tools and techniques.  So how can we older industry members help? By making ourselves available, listening and guiding and helping map out the bright future that is New Zealand horticulture.



* 1. [NZ kiwi revenues hit by poor fruit quality and rising costs](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9450385/nz-kiwi-revenues-hit-by-poor-fruit-quality-and-rising-costs/)

Zespri chief executive Dan Mathieson said in a recent update that fruit quality remained an ongoing and significant issue this season: "Zespri is continuing to work with our colleagues across the industry and with our partners to address the immediate and longer term issues to ensure we see improvements this year and into the years ahead. "We are not alone in facing this challenge, with quality issues evident across other global fruit categories this season, and our competitors and colleagues have also battled labour shortages, supply chain congestion and inflationary pressures, all of which impact grower returns."

Mathieson said this was likely to be reflected in the next orchard gate returns forecast on 23 August. Indications were conventional fruit returns would be at the bottom of, and possibly even below, the ranges published in June, he told growers.Organic fruit, where quality is closer to last season, was tracking between the mid-point and the lower end of the range published in June.

* 1. [Zespri Hong Kong wants consumers to say ‘yes’](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9450873/zespri-hong-kong-wants-consumers-to-say-yes/)

Zespri has joined hands with soccer star Matthew Or and local celebrity Sarika Choy to co-host a "delightful and interactive" ad campaign, in line with the brand’s motto “Say yes to possibilities”.   The campaign aims to encourage everyone to say yes to challenges and pursue seemingly impossible dreams, at the same time supporting local sports talents and giving a strong boost to the Hong Kong soccer team.

* 1. [NZ avocado industry expects price drops as key Australian market is overflowing](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9450061/nz-avocado-industry-expects-price-drops-as-key-australian-market-is-overflowing/)

New Zealand’s avocado industry needs to brace itself for a period of lower prices and volatility ahead as its key Australian market is swamped with the fashionable fruit, and returns from its emerging Asian market lag behind. Increased Australian production resulted in a deluge of avocados last year which saw retail prices for the fruit fall to a record low A$1 and prices this year are 47% below the five-year average.

Strong demand for the heavily promoted “superfood” which features in dishes such as smashed avocado, has prompted Australian farmers to plant more than 1000 hectares a year and after six years those trees are now coming to maturity, which is expected to see Australia’s production expand by more than 40% over the next four years.

* 1. [Seeka: $49.4m EBITDA – up 5.3% on six months to June 2021](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9451179/seeka-49-4m-ebitda-up-5-3-on-six-months-to-june-2021/)

Seeka has announced its results with a backdrop of Covid-19, adverse weather events, extreme labour shortages, machine commissioning delays, shipping disruption, lower fruit yields and poor quality. It has been a tough six months and the company has hunkered down, toughed it out and focussed on the immediate job of optimising its operations and results in a volatile environment with significant inflationary pressure and geopolitical events affecting key markets.

The company has focussed on core business having completed the acquisition and integration of OPAC, Orangewood and NZ Fruits in the last twelve months. While revenue was up by 10% to $247.3m, earnings were impacted by increased costs and lower than expected fruit volumes. Labour was extremely tight through key main harvest periods with Seeka having to innovate to maintain operations. Loyal personnel were redeployed to "play out of position" at peak stress load to ensure the continuity of operations. Fruit quality in 2022 is unseasonably poor and this has created industry-wide issues.

In June Seeka delivered its first sustainability report including three years of verified carbon footprint calculations. Seeka is committed to reducing its carbon footprint by 30% by 2030, 50% by 2030 and to be net carbon neutral by 2050.Seeka’s full year outlook is dynamic, with a challenging second six months forecast. Full year net profit before tax is forecast to be between $9.0m and $11.0m.

[Click here to read the full report.](https://agfstorage.blob.core.windows.net/misc/FP_com/2022/08/18/Seek.pdf)

* 1. [New Zealand’s pipfruit industry gathers in August for National Conference](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9450037/new-zealand-s-pipfruit-industry-gathers-in-august-for-national-conference/)

More than 250 growers, suppliers, industry leaders and government officials from around the country will gather at the Rutherford Hotel in Nelson for the 2022 NZ Apples and Pears Inc (NZAPI) Conference. The Conference will be held on Thursday 25 and Friday 26 August, with the industry AGM being held on Wednesday 24 August at 4pm. An ‘Agritech in the Orchard’ field day will be also be held on Wednesday 24 August, a collaboration between Callaghan Innovation and NZAPI.

The theme for the 2022 conference is ‘Adapting to New Horizons’. NZAPI CEO Terry Meikle says that two years on from the beginning of the pandemic, we have learned to modify and adapt to a new environment to ensure New Zealand pipfruit can continue to compete on the global stage, demand premiums and remain an industry exemplar.

“NZ is widely regarded as the best apple and pear producer in the world, but to retain that title, we must continue to adapt and innovate. The Conference will explore how we as an industry can meet and succeed in these new environments. This event will be a great opportunity for our members and industry stakeholders to share their plans and explore how we can achieve our goal of becoming a $2 billion export industry despite the challenges we continue to face,” says Mr Meikle.

* 1. [Spinach in short supply in New Zealand](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9450383/spinach-in-short-supply-in-new-zealand/)

Spinach, and a number of leafy green vegetables, are in short supply due to the rain that has hit much of New Zealand in recent weeks. The good news is that supply is expected to bounce back within the next couple of weeks and, provided we don’t have any major weather events, customers should be able to find plenty of their leafy green favourites on the shelf then.” Stats NZ data last week showed that fruit and vegetable prices lifted 10% year-on-year in July, led by tomatoes, lettuce and broccoli.

* 1. [In eight years, Ranjit Singh has become one of New Zealand’s largest telegraph cucumber growers](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9450419/in-eight-years-ranjit-singh-has-become-one-of-new-zealand-s-largest-telegraph-cucumber-growers/)

Ranjit Singh, owner of Bmak Evergreen, began growing cucumbers in a small 1500m2 greenhouse that he leased in 2016. Ranjit now owns his own property with 4000m2 of greenhouses and leases a further 21,000m2, including a brand-new high-tech Apex greenhouse situated at the top of the Bombay Hills in South Auckland.   At twenty-six years old, Ranjit has already achieved a great deal. He has worked tirelessly over the past six years to build his business that now employs twenty-five staff increasing to thirty in the warmer months.

This achievement is even more remarkable as Ranjit only immigrated to New Zealand in 2014 when he began working at a kiwifruit orchard in Tauranga before being introduced to greenhouse growing. He quickly identified an opportunity to establish his own business and so begin his growing journey.

The ability to learn quickly and implement good growing practices has been key to the growth of the business. Ranjit also identified that new technology and labor-saving techniques were required to maintain his business and profitability long term. The large issues currently facing the business are labor, energy, and fertilizer costs. It may sound like a broken record, but these are very difficult times for our industry and many others. Ranjit has identified the business needs to continually adapt to improve efficiencies. Read the complete article at [www.grower2grower.co.nz](https://www.grower2grower.co.nz/in-eight-years-ranjit-singh-has-become-one-of-new-zealands-largest-telegraph-cucumber-growers/).

* 1. [Cherry grower pleased with first trial of electric sprayer in 'zero fossil fuel orchard'](https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/country/473026/cherry-grower-pleased-with-first-trial-of-electric-sprayer-in-zero-fossil-fuel-orchard)

In what is thought to be a world first, an Otago orchard has developed an electric foliage sprayer.

Forest Lodge Orchard, which is about 10 minutes north of Cromwell and grows six hectares of cherries, is completely electric. It does not use fossil fuels for anything. Traditionally, sprayers run off the back of tractors using what's called a PTO shaft or power take off shaft, which of course runs off diesel off the tractor, but that's not an option for us so we had to come up with another way. By asking lots of questions and lots of people, they teamed up with TRS Wholesale Ltd in Blenheim and created the first fully electric foliar sprayer, converting an existing sprayer that runs off tractor power to one that can be directly powered from a 230 volt power source."

They can spray for about two-and-a-half hours on one charge and that allows us to spray about a third of the orchard in one go." However they do lose the ability to refuel quickly. To charge the tractor takes about six hours,

* 1. [Changed ownership for two Waikato persimmon orchards](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9450778/nz-new-owners-bring-energy-as-grower-exits/)

*This article provides news of two Waikato persimmon orchards which were started in the 1980s . One has recently been sold and the other is just about to go on the Market.*

* 1. [Government backs Māori horticulture project](https://www.farmersweekly.co.nz/government-backs-maori-horticulture-project/)

The government is investing $975,000 in a large-scale horticulture project led by Northland’s Tupuānuku Collective. It will enable landowners to get on-the-ground support to identify the best crops to grow in their district and to assess the availability of water for irrigation. The collective is made up of representatives from 13 whānau, hapū and iwi landowners covering more than 35,000ha from the Far North down to the Kaipara district.

Contractors will investigate water accessibility and storage, map soil types and support the collective’s members when it comes to lodging consents and attracting investment. Another key part of the two-year project’s mahi will be to deliver a workforce capability development strategy to support the creation of new jobs.”

* 1. [Free myrtle rust workshops in September and October](https://www.floraldaily.com/article/9449996/free-myrtle-rust-workshops-in-september-and-october/)

NZPPI and member nurseries are hosting a series of free myrtle rust workshops for plant producers around the North Island and Nelson in September and October. . Each workshop will include presentations and practical sessions on myrtle rust and its management in the nursery. There will be how-to sessions on:

* Using the myrtle rust risk models in the [NZPPI Plant Disease Management Platform](https://nzppi.co.nz/link-1570.htm) alongside the [NZPPI protocols](https://nzppi.co.nz/link-1571.htm)
* Managing the different myrtle species with their different susceptibilities
* Applying non-chemical methods to reduce disease pressure.

There will also be a tour through a working nursery to put some of the risk models and protocols into a practical context. Participants will leave with a handbook of all the NZPPI Plant Disease Management Platform protocols and know how to use the myrtle rust risk models ahead of the next myrtle rust season. The workshops are free, and refreshments are provided.  R**egister** [here now](https://nzppi.co.nz/Myrtle-Rust-Workshop/19657-d0c217c0-90e3-42d8-9ccb-b6b53ea39790/)**.**

** Bits and pieces**

* 1. [Cauli, kiwifruit among KiwiNet finalists](https://www.farmersweekly.co.nz/cauli-kiwifruit-among-kiwinet-finalists/)

The primary sector features strongly in the finalists for this year’s KiwiNet research and commercialisation awards, with entries ranging from a cauliflower “ice-cream” to the Ruby Red kiwifruit launch. The annual awards showcase the latest research innovations poised for commercial deployment from the KiwiNet consortium of 19 universities and Crown Research Institutes, aiming to boost commercial outcomes from publicly funded research into new products and services.

University of Canterbury student Ben Scales is a finalist in the same category with his KiwiFibre natural fibre composite solutions. His first customer is a Nasdaq-listed company using the flax-based fibre to replace carbon fibre in a range of products.

Dr Richard Winkworth, founder of Ampersand Technologies at Massey University, is a finalist in the breakthrough category for his genetic diagnostics tools for use in primary sector and environmental monitoring.. The tool has been used for field tests on kauri dieback and myrtle rust.

The commercialisation impact finalists include Zespri’s Ruby Red kiwifruit launch, with the marketer and Plant & Food Research jointly nominated.   Award winners will be announced on October 6.

Note [Kiwnet](https://kiwinet.org.nz/About) is an organsiation made up of 19 public research organisations who have voluntarily joined forces, and pooled funding, to get their best research discoveries investor ready. They share a common goal of increasing the scale and impact of science and technology-based innovation, to maximise economic benefits to New Zealand. By collaborating on projects, combining their capability and sharing their networks, they help one another deliver better commercial outcomes for New Zealand.

* 1. [Overseer's a screwdriver, not a hammer!](https://www.ruralnewsgroup.co.nz/rural-news/rural-general-news/overseer-s-a-screwdriver-not-a-hammer?ct=t(RNG_16_AUGUST_2022_COPY_01))

Jill Gower CEO of Overseer says one of the challenges with Overseer is the perception of what it can and can't do. One of the criticisms has been that some regional councils are using it as a regulatory tool to enforce environmental standards Gower admits some of the criticism has been difficult to deal with but reckons when you look into what people are criticising, it's about its use in specific situations.

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"Think of Overseer as a screwdriver and it is a very good screwdriver. But if you use it like a hammer there's a problem, because in those instances it's not fit for purpose," she says.Gower says one of the positives is the way that regional councils are using Overseer. She says her organisation is more comfortable with what's happening now. Gower believes for the councils it has been a learning journey and now Overseer is being used more appropriately and is being folded in with other environmental tools.

At present, the Overseer organisation is running a series of projects aimed at making the tool much more fit-for-purpose for a range of situations. People in the diary sector are a lot more comfortable using it that in horticulture. "We have a way to go yet and part of the redevelopment programme is looking at our crop model and what we can do to improve it."

* 1. [Home Compostable Label Update](https://www.unitedfresh.co.nz/news-events/newsletters/home-compostable-label-update)

The United Fresh TAG team has been working with the Ministry for the Environment (MfE) over the past 12 months around the introduction of Home Compostable Produce Labels. Subject to final approval of regulations by Cabinet later this year, from July 2023 labels on produce grown and sold within New Zealand will need to be;

* Home Compostable except the adhesive
* The adhesive will need to be certified compostable in an industrial/commercial compost setting
* From July 2025 a fully certified Home Compostable label will be required across both domestic and imported produce (imported produce is exempt until this date)

 Our work continues in this space around the transition in the supply chain. MfE will continue to consider supply chain challenges for produce labels and other products planned for phase out between now and 2025.  
   
The Ministry is working on draft regulations, which will be shared with a small, closed group of stakeholders for feedback on technical workability around mid-September. United Fresh will be given the opportunity to provide further feedback at this time.

* 1. [Radio interview making plants grow faster with light treatments](https://www.rnz.co.nz/audio/player?audio_id=2018854371)

# Or https://www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/afternoons/audio/2018854371/making-plants-grow-faster-with-light-treatments

A Palmerston North company has been able to improve the productivity of plants with light treatments.

BioLumic Found and Chief Scientific officer Dr Jason Wargent talks to Jesse about their processes.

* 1. [Radio interview Kiwifruit growers warned to expect lower returns](https://www.rnz.co.nz/audio/player?audio_id=2018854102)

Kiwifruit growers have been warned to expect lower returns this season due to poorer fruit quality and rising costs. Zespri says that poor fruit quality is a significant problem affecting not only kiwifruit.

Zespri chief grower Carol Ward spoke to Corin Dann.



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. **China PRC Issues 36 New and 3 Amended National Food Safety** On July 28, 2022, the People’s Republic of China (PRC), National Health Commission (NHC) announced the issuance of 36 new National Food Safety Standards and 3 revised National Food Safety Standards. The standards cover a broad range of products and specifications, including beverages, food additives, detergents, contaminants, and test methods. This is the first batch of national food safety standards issued by the NHC since September 2021. This report provides an unofficial translation of the NHC letter. [PRC Issues 36 New and 3 Amended National Food Safety Standards \_Beijing\_China - People's Republic of\_CH2022-0087](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=PRC%20Issues%2036%20New%20and%203%20Amended%20National%20Food%20Safety%20Standards%20_Beijing_China%20-%20People's%20Republic%20of_CH2022-0087)
2. **Israel- Heavy Metals limits in Foodstuffs** [Israel- Heavy Metals limits in Foodstuffs \_Tel Aviv\_Israel\_IS2022-0008](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Israel-%20Heavy%20Metals%20limits%20in%20Foodstuffs%20_Tel%20Aviv_Israel_IS2022-0008)
3. **The Netherlands Food Service - Hotel Restaurant Institutional** [Food Service - Hotel Restaurant Institutional\_The Hague\_Netherlands\_NL2022-0040](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Food%20Service%20-%20Hotel%20Restaurant%20Institutional_The%20Hague_Netherlands_NL2022-0040)
4. **United Arab Emirates** **Retail Foods** [Retail Foods\_Dubai\_United Arab Emirates\_TC2022-0007](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Retail%20Foods_Dubai_United%20Arab%20Emirates_TC2022-0007)

 **Business/ Industry**

* 1. [New traceability technology working group launches](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9449593/new-traceability-technology-working-group-launches/)

The Produce Traceability Initiative (PTI), consisting of the Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA), GS1 Canada, GS1 US, International Fresh Produce Association (IFPA), and its many volunteer industry members, has launched a new working group titled, Enhancing Traceability Through Technology, to help the industry prepare for traceability implementation and address the pending requirements for section 204 of the Food Safety Modernization Act’s (FSMA) Proposed Rule for Food Traceability. Details about the workgroup can be found via the redesigned [PTI website](https://producetraceability.org/), which was recently enhanced to better serve the growing needs of the produce industry today and into the future.

The new working group will focus on three core areas:

* Traceability
* Develop data sharing best practices
* Investigate a potential repository for lot number definition schemas
* Global Location Number (GLN)
* Review GS1 global GLN guidance and consider North American industry requirements
* Develop education as needed
* Next Generation Data Carriers for PTI Label
* Review existing Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) guidance and determine specific needs for the produce industry
* Investigate the potential of two-dimensional (2D) barcodes on PTI Labels

Working group participants, including more than 50 members of the sponsoring organizations, will collaborate to produce traceability guidance and assist the industry in implementing decisions.

Those interested in participating in a working group should contact Ryan Richard at [rrichard@GS1US](mailto:rrichard@GS1US?subject=Response%20to%20FreshPlaza.com%20article) or Jane Proctor at [jproctor@cpma.ca](mailto:jproctor@cpma.ca?subject=Response%20to%20FreshPlaza.com%20article).

* 1. [Bayer launches sustainable agriculture platform focused on collaboration](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9450792/bayer-launches-sustainable-agriculture-platform-focused-on-collaboration/)

Bayer recently announced the launch of [ForGround](https://cts.businesswire.com/ct/CT?id=smartlink&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.bayerforground.com%2Ffarmers&esheet=52813290&newsitemid=20220815005201&lan=en-US&anchor=ForGround&index=1&md5=0841221b5704f05d627f8107cdd302bf), a farmer-first digital platform that will transform the way farms of all sizes can more easily make the transition to sustainable agricultural practices. ForGround offers growers tools, resources, discounts, and the potential to earn revenue through the Bayer Carbon Program for the adoption of regenerative practices and to connect with businesses looking to advance their sustainability and carbon goals.

Based on the successful foundation of the existing Bayer Carbon Program, ForGround will expand and evolve to go beyond carbon offsets to explore other ways that farmers can make a positive impact in their operations through the adoption of regenerative agriculture practices and technologies and the potential to connect with companies to help them meet their sustainability goals from footprinting to value chain interventions all the way to carbon offsets.

Through ForGround, Bayer will assist enrolled farmers in implementing and managing practices that can help provide benefits to their land, such as improved soil health, increased water availability, fewer inputs, increased weather resiliency, and less soil erosion, as well as the opportunity to generate incremental revenue by connecting them with programs like Bayer Carbon. The available benefits at launch are:

* Best-in-class practice transition support with agronomic support, evidence-based field studies & trials, curated content & events, a like-minded community, and a trusted network of leading experts
* Connection to potential new revenue streams for adopting these new practices (i.e., Bayer Carbon Program)
* Reduced transition cost barriers, ​including incentives and rewards such as a free subscription to Climate FieldView Plus

This platform enables farmers to participate in this increasingly transparent supply chain where consumers are interested in knowing how their food is produced.ForGround participating companies can take advantage of a suite of digital applications powered by Climate FieldView to define and offer incentive programs that allow them to achieve their sustainability goals. "Our difference lies in understanding different needs, realities, and adoption rates from farmers and different ways companies can create a positive impact on the environment," says Bastos.

ForGround's digital platform is now live and available for farmers and companies in the United States and will be globally expanded in the near future. Visit [bayerforground.com](https://cts.businesswire.com/ct/CT?id=smartlink&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.bayerforground.com%2Ffarmers&esheet=52813290&newsitemid=20220815005201&lan=en-US&anchor=bayerforground.com&index=4&md5=05b8987a1e52ba1385b5ac710f1e1165) to get more information on how to enroll.

* 1. [Fruit Attraction 2022 is going to be a great fair, anticipated attendance similar to 2019](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9450237/fruit-attraction-2022-is-going-to-be-a-great-fair-with-participation-figures-similar-to-those-of-2019/)

From October 4 to 6, the 14th edition of Fruit Attraction will be held at IFEMA Madrid. The new director of the event, María José Sánchez, is optimistic and reported that the level of participation will be similar to that of 2019. "Our forecasts are optimistic, given the good pace of participation confirmations, with figures similar to those of 2019; that is, around 90,000 professionals and some 1,800 companies.

It is worth recalling that last year, despite the economic and health situation, the edition was closed with the participation of 65,000 professionals from 110 countries, as well as 1,300 companies. "For now, the event is expected to have exhibitors from Algeria, Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Israel, Italy, Kenya, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, the Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tanzania, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

* 1. [Cyber attacks growing threat to food security](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9451579/cyber-attacks-growing-threat-to-food-security/)

Canadian farmers have long fought off crop and livestock threats from diseases and pests. Now add to that the growing threat of cyber-attacks as producers in Canada and abroad adopt more on-farm smart technologies. So says a University of Guelph computer scientist whose lab is the only Canadian university research center investigating an increasing number of cyber-attacks on farm networks. Besides helping farmers fight off hackers, Dr. Ali Dehghantanha hopes his pioneering research helps arm producers in preventing such attacks and spurs governments to develop data security standards for the agricultural sector.

To help ensure food security, producers are increasingly adopting smart farming and precision agriculture technology to grow and raise more food while reducing environmental impacts and waste from fertilizers and pesticides. But all those interconnected sensors, smart meters, cameras, and other devices leave farmers more vulnerable to “data insecurity” and potential cyber-attacks.His new paper reviewing current technology used on farms is the first Canadian research to investigate weaknesses and potential cyber-attack strategies and tactics in the agricultural sector.

In 2020, Dehghantanha co-authored the first-ever market research study looking at the growth of smart agriculture and cybersecurity in North America. That study found that as of 2019, the global smart agriculture market – consisting of various smart farming technologies – was worth more than $10 billion. But spending on cybersecurity in smart agriculture accounts for only about three percent of total cybersecurity spending in North America, far outpaced by spending on security in other applications from finance to health care. “The level of cybersecurity protection in agriculture is minimal to non-existent,” he said. “The agricultural sector is a soft underbelly from a cybersecurity point of view.”

To ensure on-farm security – and, ultimately, food security in Canada and abroad – he said farmers need to make sure their technology can ward off three main kinds of threats. One threat comes from cybercriminals using ransomware to effectively lock up digital systems and demand a ransom payment from the producer.

Another growing problem involves hackers stealing confidential information on anything from production rates to greenhouse temperatures to animal feeding schedules to supply chains. Those hackers then sell that data to clients, including competitors.

He said the most dangerous threat – and one that continues to grow – is posed by state-sponsored hackers aiming to help disrupt or control network systems. Interrupting farm supply chains, for instance, may mean farmers lose crops and ultimately lose time and money in replacing them. “Any disruption of infrastructure could cause disruption of the supply chain and affect food security.”

His group is developing techniques and procedures to detect, analyze and respond to cyber-attacks on smart farming systems. He said farmers need to practice “cyber hygiene” by updating systems, protecting private information, and using authentication and password procedures. He urges producers to consider deploying cyberthreat monitoring systems available from various companies. And he suggests that producers build relationships with system vendors to ensure prompt response if problems occur. “It’s too late if you search for a responder when you see a ransomware message,”

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**Floral news**

* 1. [Retailer puts money into setting up organic cut flower sector in France](https://www.floraldaily.com/article/9450581/retailer-puts-money-into-setting-up-organic-cut-flower-sector-in-france/)

A major French retailer is to invest in developing an organic cut flower sector in France. Supermarket chain Carrefour recently unveiled a plan to revitalise the rural economy in certain parts of France. Investment in ornamental plant cultivation is one of the components of the plan.

* 1. [How Blockchain and Cryptocurrency will Benefit the Floral Industry](https://www.rioroses.com/how-blockchain-and-cryptocurrency-will-benefit-the-floral-industry/)

In this article, we’ll discuss blockchain, how it can benefit the floral industry, and how cryptocurrency (like Bitcoin) is changing the way florists and suppliers do business.

The biggest benefit will be transparency since every network participant will share data and information in real-time, from production to packing to shipping and delivery. This will increase the individual responsibility of everyone on the supply chain. How will this transparency affect the floral industry? Here are a few examples from an article published by the floral industry software development company Quick Flora:

* You’ll be able to easily search online for the physical location of every grower and how many acres or hectares they planted.
* Growers can share what they planted, when they harvested it when they cut and boxed it, and how they shipped it. These details will be easily accessible to buyers around the world.
* • Everything growing in a farm’s field will be public information, like how you can go onto Google maps and see a street-level view now
* • The day a grower cuts and boxes a particular flower will be available for every buyer to see. And the growers who don’t choose to share this data will have less market share.
* • All known manufacturers of a floral hard good — like glass vases, for example — will be online and easily searchable, making product sourcing much more straightforward.

Overall, the most significant benefit of blockchain technology will be that everyone will be far more informed about the quality and availability of a product. This will make buyers, producers, and sellers know they need to share more and more data — or risk being left behind.

The most popular form of blockchain is cryptocurrency, and it’s here to stay. Bitcoin and Ethereum are the most well-known; however, many other types of cryptocurrencies exist. And since Bitcoin has become such a trusted currency, more and more floral providers are accepting it as payment.

And it may sound like this is a future thing that will happen eventually, but that’s not the case. Think back to when e-commerce was in its infancy and how many people said they would “never purchase something online!” Just as that changed due to the increased security and trust online, so will cryptocurrency become a trusted form of payment.

  **Health**

* 1. [Fruit and vegetables high in calcium and potassium could prevent recurring kidney stones](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9451620/fruit-and-vegetables-high-in-calcium-and-potassium-could-prevent-recurring-kidney-stones/)

New research has shown that the consumption of bananas, cucumbers, mushrooms and apricots could help recurrent incidents of kidney stones. The new study into the dietary changes show people can themselves reduce the risk of kidney stones coming back. It has found that eating calcium and potassium-rich foods could help. For people who have had one episode, they have a 30% chance of having kidney stones again within a five-year period. Other foods high in calcium and potassium include oranges, grapefruits, cantaloupes, honeydew melons, potatoes, peas, and zucchini.

 **Innovation**

* 1. [From fruit stones to tasty food](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9450785/from-fruit-stones-to-tasty-food/)

BayWa AG has become a strategic investor and partner of Kern Tec GmbH. The start-up based in Austria has developed a range of technologies that turn the fruit stones that normally end up in the rubbish into tasty food. More than half a million tonnes of apricot, cherry, plum and peach stones are thrown away every year in Europe alone.

Seeds from pome fruit stones are a real power food that provide valuable nutrients, vitamins and minerals. Each seed is made up of 25% protein, the same as turkey breast meat. Fruit seeds are among the most sustainable nuts on the market as they don’t require any agricultural land to grow and consume around 90% less water than other nuts such as almonds. Kern Tec specialises in turning these raw materials into gourmet oils, nougat cream and even dairy alternatives for its B2B customers. The husks that remain after cracking open the seeds are also used as a raw material in takeaway coffee cups or as an alternative to microplastics in cosmetics. The press cake left over from extracting the oil can also be recycled: a new technology that separates hydrocyanic acid is scheduled to go live in 2023.

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