

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

1. **COVID 19** **C**losure of Xinfadi Market in Beijing, Covid testing disrupts China’s fruit imports, Demand from Asia for North American fruit continues to rise, COVID-19 and urban farming; Panelists discussed factors affecting recovery; New report sheds light on Covid-19 impact; COVID-19 disrupts US apple exports; At least 200 workers test positive for COVID-19 at Dole plant
2. **Government agencies**: ICPR Changes; MPI ready to go live with Risk & Intelligence project
3. **New Zealand News:**  Joint effort underway to repatriate stranded Vanuatu nationals; Foreign Affairs Minister announces embassy closure in Iraq; New Zealand and UK launch free trade talks; Further water storage for Northland announced; Covid recovery is a partnership; Proposed organic farming legislation deemed insufficient; BNZ’s survey confirms horticulture’s readiness to support post-covid recovery; T&G Global mourns passing of former Chairman; New Zealand avocado criminals on the prowl again; Lockdown pushes New Zealand avocado price down 62 per cent; Volumes continue to climb for New Zealand's Ambrosia apples; Home compostable zip-lock pouch bag for apples; Home compostable zip-lock pouch bag for apples; Grain deal gets over the line; SunGold licences come gold plated; Course aims to up orchard skills
4. **International news:** GAIN reports; Freshfel Europe response to Farm to Fork Strategy positive but with reservations; Maersk raises Q2 expectations; Disruptive Packaging wins innovation award; Record number of illegal pesticides taken off the market in 2020; Record number of illegal pesticides taken off the market in 2020; “Kiwifruit, citrus and apples have become the most demanded products in India”; Report finds supply chain inefficiencies are costing Australian fresh produce industry over $1billion; UK and EU farmers united in call for free trade agreement; Syngenta appoints new global head of Flowers business;; IPH announces online conference to support ornamentals industry recovery; US: New Hampshire florists see demand bloom despite event cancellations; US consumer sentiment toward floral products during the COVID-19 crisis; New study links dietary flavonols with reduced risk of Alzheimer dementia; Friendly fungi benefit 80% of all plant species; Australian research into new fresh produce postharvest treatment using supercharged air; Lasers and vibrations in the quest to find the perfect avocado; New electronic nose sniffs out ripe peaches

**Comment**

The shortest day is now past and we are half way through the year. It’s been a busy year to date and looking as though it will stay that way . It’s also been a busy week in the media with the most concerning news being China’s concern that COVID 19 may be transported on food or its packaging. This has resulted in increased testing of imports as a result. This could have ramifications far beyond China. Interestingly an article in the same section talks about 200 workers in a Dole processing plant being tested positive for COVID 19 . If nothing else this will make New Zealand’s produce look very safe. resulted. Also, in this week’s update there are a lot of articles talking about what next. Groups around the world have sat down to talk about what sustained changes we will see in the market place. Views vary but a predictable set of areas recur. These articles are found in both the Covid 19 section.

There is a lot of other news in the update on a wide range of topics but there are two that I would like to bring your attention. The first is an article by Mike Chapman talking about the need for Covid recovery to be a partnership. He mentions here that uncertainty ( in his original article he mentions at least three significant areas of uncertainty)” is the cancer that will kill New Zealand’s economic recovery from Covid”. He calls for consultative partnerships between Regulators and Industry to enable the country to move forward together, set sensible expectations and thrive.

The other article of interest is about a report that finds supply chain inefficiencies are costing Australian fresh produce industry over $1billion. If its happening in Australia it will be happening here too and it is something that we need to look at. New Zealand growers and exporters know it is attention to detail that return sustainable profits and this is a good opportunity to check and see if we have the details in this area right. One comment I like in the article is the suggestion we should not talk about shelf life ( retail orientated) but rather produces’ home life ( end consumer experience)

A reminder to the articles in this document are in most cases summarised so that their key messages are identified but often in summarising the articles some of the good examples and explanations are removed. If you are interested in an article it is well worth while looking at the original article. Any comments I have added by way of explanation are in Italics.

1. **Covid 19 specific reports**  

* 1. **Closure of Xinfadi Market in Beijing**

At 3:00 on June 13 (Beijing time), the Xinfadi Wholesale Market was temporarily closed due to the discovery of new Covid-19 cases. *Despite efforts by the authorities to set up alternative sale sites the doe to the high temperatures present at the moment the normal supply chain has been disrupted* . [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9226501/ecommerce-orders-spiking-following-closure-of-xinfadi-market-in-beijing/)

* 1. **Covid testing disrupts China’s fruit imports**

**C**hina’s fresh fruit imports are facing disruption as customs authorities at ports across the country begin testing incoming shipments for Covid-19.The new measures come in the wake of the [closure of Beijing’s Xinfadi Market](http://www.fruitnet.com/asiafruit/article/182092/covid-19-outbreak-closes-chinese-market) following a coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak last week, which has been linked by market authorities to the chopping board used by a seller of imported salmon.

China’s customs authorities have not issued any official notice or formal instruction to test imported fresh fruit for Covid-19, Asiafruit understands. Neither is there any evidence to suggest Covid-19 can be transmitted through fresh produce or other foods, but new inspection measures have been undertaken by customs officers at Shanghai, Tianjin and other ports across the country. “Customs has begun testing for Covid-19 on the packaging and surface of the fruits entering the port," an in-market source at Shanghai Huizhan Fruit & Vegetable Wholesale market told Asiafruit. "Ports in other regions have similar measures but they’re not as strict as Shanghai."The testing rate is not 100 per cent but it is quite high, especially for fruit arriving from the US and other countries with high Covid case numbers.

Products held for testing take an extra two days to clear, the Huizhan market source said. At Jiaxing Market, a major wholesale hub for domestically-grown and imported fresh fruit 100km west of Shanghai, a local market source told Asiafruit that products had also been tested for Covid-19. [Full article available here](http://www.fruitnet.com/asiafruit/article/182113/covid-testing-disrupts-chinas-fruit-imports)

* 1. **Demand from Asia for North American fruit continues to rise.**

Reports say demand for fruit is increasing from where it was over April and especially over May but volumes aren’t nearly what they normally . Once Japan lifted their stay in place order, demand increased pretty quickly. Taiwan is also strengthening. Singapore still hasn’t opened the hotels yet, so the tourism trade is down,” Southeast Asia has also been slowly increasing but again, not to where demand normally is. That said, some countries such as Malaysia are doing well. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9224669/fruit-demand-from-asian-countries-slowly-building/)

* 1. **COVID-19 and urban farming**

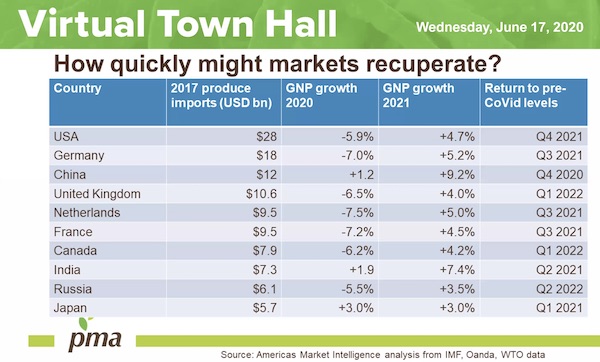
More urban dwellers who usually rely on food that is sourced from farms away from the city are turning to urban farming now that COVID-19 has fractured and exposed how fragile the existing food supply chains are. Google trends reports show that searches for “gardens” are up and enterprises that sell plants and seeds report a spike in the number of customers. Across America, people are planting more vegetables.

Around the world, other countries have seen a sharp increase in urban farming, from Jakarta, to Singapore to Australia. This is a move in the right direction and the reinvigorating of the urban farming movement should be supported and nurtured.  Urban agriculture can take many forms, from roof-top gardens to farming on abandoned buildings and parking lots to backyard and balcony gardening. In many African countries, it often entails sack and stack farming and traditional gardening in backyards and in some places like South Africa, it also includes roof top gardens and small farm gardens.

[Read more at Thomson Reuters Foundation News Full article available here](https://news.trust.org/item/20200609114853-9sia1" \t "_blank)

* 1. **Panelists discussed factors affecting recovery**

Lats week’s PMA virtual town hall focused on the global impact of the pandemic and how key regions have been affected. To start off the session, a discussion of national GDP growth looked at the effect on specific economies and possible timelines for recovery. A chart from America’s Market Intelligence agency pooled together data to make projections of the GDP growth for selected countries with predictions on when they might return to pre-COVID levels.



Fortunately for the produce sector, while economies have been severely affected by the pandemic, fruit and vegetables sales have generally grown. This is a trend that is observed in many countries across the globe. The general consensus from the panel was that the increased focus on health was one of the reasons for this. Additionally, when people are faced with difficult financial situations, they often return to the staples in their supermarkets; they’ll forego more high-end items, and will focus on the basics, such as fruits and vegetables. In China, particularly, food is often seen as medicine, and the overall fruit and vegetable consumption per capita is very high.

Looking back on the numbers from the last big economic crisis in 2008, the economic pressure and unemployment were very high. Despite this, the demand for fruits and vegetables did not decrease by much. The demand for food, in general has an income elasticity of zero, meaning that there is little to no reduction of overall food consumption during a recession.  [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9227186/panelists-discussed-gdp-recovery-impact-of-tourism-reduction-and-grower-responses/)

* 1. **New report sheds light on Covid-19 impact**

**F**ruitnet has published a special, in-depth report about the coronavirus crisis and its impact on the fresh produce business. Pressing Refresh, explains how the pandemic has affected fresh fruit and vegetable supply, distribution, marketing and purchasing behaviour in the world’s major consumer markets.

Combining analysis from key players in the fresh produce industry with insight from Fruitnet’s international team of experts, the 32-page report includes news, comment and analysis of three key areas:

• Markets – How lockdown is changing the shape of the fresh produce business.

• Supply – As costs rise, companies need to prepare for some big challenges.

• Logistics – The global fresh produce industry is facing a serious circulation problem.

“[Visitors to the Fruit Logistica website can download an executive summary, which includes details of how to download the full report, free of charge.](https://www.fruitlogistica.de/en/About/CoronaVirusReport/) [Full article available here](http://www.fruitnet.com/eurofruit/article/182088/new-report-sheds-light-on-covid-19-impact)

* 1. **COVID-19 disrupts US apple exports**

US fruit farmers are tallying losses incurred due to the coronavirus outbreak. According to the Washington Apple Commission, supply chain interruptions and a shift in consumer buying habits cut export sales. Growers say that the situation compounded losses after fallout from the US-China Trade War. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9227085/covid-19-disrupts-us-apple-exports/)

* 1. **At least 200 workers test positive for COVID-19 at Dole plant**

At least 200 employees in a vegetable plant in western Ohio have tested positive for the coronavirus, Ohio’s governor said Wednesday, The Springfield News-Sun reported earlier that the Clark County Combined Health District recently tested 829 employees from the Dole Fresh Vegetables plant in Springfield. Dole corporate spokesman William Goldfield said the Ohio plant will continue operating with additional safety measures, such as employee temperature checks before entering the plant.

“[Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9227097/us-covid-19-200-workers-test-positive-at-dole-plant/)

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

The following ICPR have been updated

* Argentina has been updated with Added requirements for Capsicum (Capsicum annuum) and Tomato (Solanum lycopersicum) seeds for sowing in Section 4.4.1 and updates to Appendix 1. Quarantine Pest List.
* Cambodia has been updated with the addition of Pseudomonas marginalis and Cnephasia jactatana to Quarantine Pest List as Notified by Cambodia in Appendix 1 and updated requirements for Actinidia chinensis and Actinidia delicisoa in section 4.1.1 Fresh Fruit.
* Cook Islands has with clarified treatment requirements under Brassica spp. to section 4.1.1 and conditions to section 3.1.1 Fresh Fruit and Vegetables.
* Tonga has been updated treatment requirements for Apium graveolens, Daucus carota, Foeniculum vulgare, Pastinaca spp., Petroselinum crispum and Vitis vinifera under section 4.1.1 and 3.1.1. Fresh Fruit and Vegetables.
* Vietnam has been updated with the addition of a statement under section 2.4 Quarantine Pests regarding “0” limit to detections of quarantine pests as listed in Appendix 1.

To view the updated requirements use the search at [Importing Countries Phytosanitary Requirements (ICPRs)](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/law-and-policy/requirements/icpr-importing-countries-phytosanitary-requirements/?utm_source=notification-email)



* 1. **MPI ready to go live with Risk & Intelligence project**

MPI advises they are getting ready to go live with the Risk & Intelligence (R&I) project. This is a new risk assessment engine designed to identify MPI Biosecurity and Food Safety risk in Import Declarations (IM1) and internal workflow. At this stage we are aiming to release this system on the weekend of 27th and 28th June. For more detail see [Full article available here](https://www.customs.govt.nz/business/trade-single-window/latest-news/mpi-ready-to-go-live-with-risk--intelligence-project/)



1. **New Zealand News**



* 1. **Joint effort underway to repatriate stranded Vanuatu nationals**

A joint effort between New Zealand Government agencies, employers, and the Vanuatu Government is underway to repatriate over 1000 Vanuatu nationals stranded in New Zealand.  “With no commercial flight options available, the Vanuatu nationals who are largely made up of Recognised Seasonal Employment (RSE) workers, will  return to Vanuatu on  New Zealand Defence Force flights over the coming week,” Stranded Pacific Island nationals wanting to return home should keep in close contact with their High Commissions in New Zealand to ensure they are considered as and when repatriation opportunities arise.  [Full article available here](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/joint-effort-underway-repatriate-stranded-vanuatu-nationals)

* 1. **Foreign Affairs Minister announces embassy closure in Iraq**

The Embassy in Baghdad will close at the end of June and New Zealand’s formal accreditation to Iraq will transfer to the New Zealand Embassy in Abu Dhabi. [Full article available here](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/foreign-affairs-minister-announces-embassy-closure-iraq)

* 1. **New Zealand and UK launch free trade talks**

New Zealand and the UK formally launched free trade negotiations last week.  “As the UK embarks on its next steps post-Brexit, New Zealand is pleased to be among the first countries to negotiate a trade agreement with one of our oldest friends,” Minister for Trade and Export Growth David Parker said.

“The UK is New Zealand’s sixth largest trading partner. Two-way trade totalled almost $6 billion last year. The first round of negotiations is expected to take place by video conference from mid-July.

[Full article available here](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/new-zealand-and-uk-launch-free-trade-talks)

* 1. **Further water storage for Northland announced**

Last week the Government announced eleven infrastructure projects to be fast-tracked under a new law to help rebuild the economy after the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the earmarked projects is the Kaikohe water storage facility in Northland, providing water for agricultural and horticultural use, as well as drinking water for the area.

i

Environment Minister David Parker says the eleven infrastructure projects included in the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast Track) Bill will be introduced in the House later this week. Parker says that the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, and Treaty Settlement obligations will apply to all projects under the Bill.  Once the Bill passes, the projects will be referred directly to Expert Consenting Panels, which will set appropriate conditions on the projects before they can proceed. Parker has encouraged further applications to be sent to him which will be assessed as part of the Fast Track Bill to stimulate the economy. [Full article available here](https://www.ruralnewsgroup.co.nz/rural-news/rural-general-news/further-water-storage-for-northland-announced?utm_source=Rural+News+Group+Weekly+E-Newsletter&utm_campaign=a0e91f60fe-RNG_16_JUNE_2020&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_fb79f8bfe8-a0e91f60fe-59798541&ct=t(RNG_16_JUNE_2020))

** Commentary**

* 1. **Covid recovery is a partnership**

An article by Mike Chapman about the risks associated with uncertainties that many people feel at the moment from tourist operators that have lost their customers , to growers and farmers, with enormous uncertainty around new Government and Regional Council requirements for freshwater quality and climate change adaptation and for the newly unemployed .

He says “Uncertainty is the cancer that will kill New Zealand’s economic recovery from Covid. Decisions need to be made to remove as much uncertainty as possible. What we need in all of this is a new age of partnership between industry and Government to achieve the economic and social outcomes we so urgently need, as we recover from Covid. During the first phase of Covid recovery, the Government rightly took a directive approach, so that as a country we could get through. Now I believe that a different approach is required. This is because it is not the Government but business that will drive the next, financial phase of the Covid recovery. The Government has a vital role to undertake in enabling this recovery, but in essence, it must be industry led.

Last week the Organic Products Bill was being considered by a Parliamentary Select Committee. In preparation for this Bill, MPI conducted extensive consultation over several years, but when it came time to draft the Bill, the consultation stopped. As a result, the Bill that has been introduced into Parliament is not supported by a majority if not all submitters, because unnecessary and costly bureaucracy has been introduced by MPI. What is required here is a collaboration and partnership between the organics sector and MPI to achieve the laudable outcomes the Bill is designed to achieve.

……….

Nothing drives uncertainty faster than decisions being announced without first there being extensive consultation across the broad range of industry. The most important point about consultation, however, is that those who are consulted are listened to. This does not mean that what they want becomes the announcement, but if indeed their views are to be rejected, then there is an explanation for this. This transparency helps to keep the unity that is vital for New Zealand’s economic recovery.

……. Put purely and simply; it’s time for a true and meaningful partnership.  [Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9225722/covid-recovery-is-a-partnership/)

* 1. **Proposed organic farming legislation deemed insufficient**

While the European Union has just announced an ambitious programme of funding for organic agriculture, organic producers in New Zealand are decrying proposed legislation as being "from the dark ages". The Organic Products Bill proposed one standard for organic certification which would be controlled by the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI). There were two current industry certifiers, Biogro and Assure Quality.

Organics Aotearoa New Zealand (OANZ) chairman Chris Morrison said the proposed legislation would do little to foster the domestic organic market, and its costs were likely to drive smaller growers out.

MPI would duplicate existing certification schemes, and withhold the right to issue organic certificates – a move Nordeng (, Biogro NZ CE) said would ‘waste everyone's time and money’. "It’s more onerous, cumbersome and expensive," he said. Biogro was accredited to the EU to certify organic producers in Fiji, Vanuatu and Malaysia. If the EU allowed Biogro to extend its certification to New Zealand it could certify directly, and save producers over $450,000 every year, he said. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9226199/new-zealand-proposed-organic-farming-legislation-deemed-insufficient/)

Some New Zealand shoppers of organic produce are concerned about the ambiguity of proposed organic legislation, which does not define what organic means. According to the majority of submissions, another major bone of contention was that the bill did not prohibit the use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in organic food. The global umbrella organisation for the organic movement, Ifoam, says globally, all organic regulations prohibit the use of GMOs in organic products.  [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9227173/new-zealand-shoppers-want-clarity-on-organic-produce-standards/)

* 1. **BNZ’s survey confirms horticulture’s readiness to support post-covid recovery**

Horticulture New Zealand says the findings of a Bank of New Zealand (BNZ) survey of the horticulture sector confirm that horticulture can fully support New Zealand’s post-Covid recovery. ‘The BNZ’s survey found that horticulture has higher levels of optimism about the future - 71% of the sector were optimistic - compared to the rest of the agriculture industry, at 58% optimism,’ says HortNZ Chief Executive, Mike Chapman.

Growers who are keen to get back the post-COVID recovery and provide displaced New Zealand with jobs but who, like the BNZ survey also noted, are wary. They are wary about the possible impact of central and local government decisions around freshwater, land use, labour availability, and education and training. The other key finding of the BNZ survey: that worldwide demand for New Zealand-grown fruit and vegetables will increase long-term, as people place increasing value on fresh, healthy food.

‘Our fruit and vegetables are grown to the highest possible standard and with complete transparency,’ says Mike. ‘‘This gives the New Zealand horticulture industry at a distinct competitive advantage. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9226276/bnz-s-survey-confirms-horticulture-s-readiness-to-support-post-covid-recovery/)

* 1. **T&G Global mourns passing of former Chairman**

T&G Global is saddened by the death of former Chairman and long-standing Director, Tony Gibbs, who has passed away following a period of ill health. Tony led T&G Global for 16 years from 1995 until 2011. Throughout his tenure, T&G grew from a domestic fruit and vegetable seller into a significant player in the international fresh produce industry, introducing new fruit varieties to the world, including Envy™ and JAZZ™ apples. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9225829/t-g-global-mourns-passing-of-former-chairman/)



* 1. **New Zealand avocado criminals on the prowl again**

For four years in a row, at the exact same time of year, New Zealand has been savaged by gangs of avocado thieves. Hayden Donnell sounds the alarm about the country’s most predictable crisis.

The avocado thieves’ first illicit harvest happened in June, 2016. Some reports thought it would be an isolated issue. “

Alasdair Macmillan, New Zealand community policing manager, talked recently about avocado theft in the media. In each of the last four years, the pillaging has taken place around June and July. Macmillan sees no reason the avocados will be spared this year. This year, he wants security to be a step ahead, though he won’t say what exactly that will entail. “[Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9225803/new-zealand-avocado-criminals-on-the-prowl-again/)

* 1. **Lockdown pushes New Zealand avocado price down 62 per cent**

With the hospitality industry on hold, the price of avocados in New Zealand has dropped significantly. Stats NZ consumer prices manager Bryan Downes said the limits on cafés and restaurants being open during the lockdown caused a surplus of avocados, driving prices down for supermarkets and greengrocers. Avocado prices fell almost 62 per cent in the year ending May, to about $2.21 per 200 grams – $3.50 cheaper than this time last year. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9225797/lockdown-pushes-new-zealand-avocado-price-down-62-per-cent/)

In May 2020, prices fell for, mandarins (down 31 percent), and potato crisps (down 6.5 percent). Prices for broccoli, a cool-season crop, also fell in May (down 26 percent), as it usually does at this time of year. In contrast, monthly prices for tomatoes went up. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9225825/new-zealand-food-prices-down-in-may/)

* 1. **Volumes continue to climb for New Zealand's Ambrosia apples**

New Zealand growers are expecting more volumes of Ambrosia apples this year, as the variety's year-on-year growth continues.

Heartland Group is responsible for marketing the brand and General Manager Sales & Marketing, Brendon Osborn says. "The overwhelming demand we have for Ambrosia has been outstanding both domestically and internationally. Volumes will continue to increase in the coming years as the new planting programmes that have been happening here over the past five years start to reach full production and the final trees go in the ground over the next couple of years.

" Heartland, are selling Ambrosia throughout Asia, Canada and NZ,” Mr Osborn said. “The markets in Asia that are currently showing the greatest level of growth are China, Vietnam and Thailand, even this year with the slowdown due to Coronavirus. Thailand and Vietnam were early adopters of the Ambrosia eating experience. Heartland will have a total of 10 Ambrosia growers when planting is completed and this small number of growers allows greater control over the production chain to ensure that a consistently superior eating apple is produced. Mr Osborn said. "With Ambrosia, we are planning to manage this through a small number of superior growers and having control over postharvest production processes." [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9225686/volumes-continue-to-climb-for-new-zealand-s-ambrosia-apples/)

* 1. **Home compostable zip-lock pouch bag for apples**

A world-first home compostable apple zip lock pouch bag, has just been launched by New Zealand’s largest organic apple producer. Bostock New Zealand has spent over 12 months developing what it believes to be, the world’s first certified home compostable zip-lock pouch bag for apples.

“We are trialling our new pouch bags in Countdown stores around the North Island and some Foodstuff supermarkets this week. We have also launched a trial in Russia and have been receiving some very positive feedback.” The bag is made from rice, potatoes and corn derivatives blended together and took 12 months to develop a bag that was strong enough to hold a kilogram of apples. The packaging is certified to the Australasian, European and American compost ability standards. However, currently in New Zealand there is no official home compostable standard.

“

Bostock New Zealand has also been trialling other sustainable and compostable packaging options across its products, including home compostable wood fibre netting for its organic onions. The new home compostable apple pouch bag is at least three times more expensive than a plastic apple pouch bag. “We need to make compostable packaging solutions more affordable, so they are financially sustainable for our business and others following the same path. This will also enable us to roll out more environmentally focused packaging.” [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9226269/home-compostable-zip-lock-pouch-bag-for-apples/)

* 1. **Grain deal gets over the line**

The arable sector has signed their biosecurity partnership, which has come as a relief to industry members. Federated Farmers, the Foundation for Arable Research, the Flour Millers Association, the Grain and Seed Trade Association and United Wheat Growers have spent years in discussion and the members have formed the Seed and Grain Readiness and Response. The group will work with the Government to protect the industry from new weed, pest and disease incursions and have stated that they will help to ensure better outcomes for the industry[. Full article available here](https://farmersweekly.co.nz/section/arable/view/grain-deal-gets-over-the-line)

* 1. **SunGold licences come gold plated**

Zespri Growers and Alliances Officer Dave Courtney reports that the values that have been paid this year for SunGold kiwifruit licenses reflects the optimism amongst growers. The variety’s average license costs are up at $400,000 a hectare this year, which is an increase of 37 percent off last year’s figures. The annual offering of SunGold licenses is 700 hectares, and bids totalled 1600 hectares.

SunGold has the highest fruit licensing values, with Envy apples being the next closest at around $100,000 per hectare. Zespri’s license income accounts for 6 percent of company revenue each year. For the first time, there were bidders seeking the purchase of over 20 hectares. Last season SunGold fruit averaged $11.86 a tray or $160,000/ha average return before costs. This year’s tender round was also the first time the Zespri red variety was made available for commercial orchardists, which was also oversubscribed, despite Zespri being open about the fruit’s shortcomings which include a shorter shelf life and lower yields. [Full article available here](https://farmersweekly.co.nz/section/horticulture/view/sungold-licences-come-gold-plated)

** Bits and pieces**

* 1. **Course aims to up orchard skills**

As the kiwifruit season enters its twilight Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has announced a $200,000 training package to attract and upskill staff as a winter pruner shortage looms. The programme offers a one-day introduction and basic skills course to let job seekers see if they are suited to it.  They can then participate in a two-week Qualifications Authority training course.

Indicative figures already show kiwifruit businesses have moved from their historic average of 50% Kiwis on the payroll to about 70% this year. However -thousands of seasonal workers from overseas are stuck in NZ well beyond their usual employment period, unable to return home.  Ardern said Civil Defence funds are being used to house, feed and care for them but that is not a long term strategy and the Government is considering options.

Farmers are also concerned the stranded workers are likely to face visa restrictions on being able to return for next season’s work. Usually workers are required to have five months back home before being eligible to return here but the covid-19 lockdown has made that unfeasible for many.

Kiwifruit Growers labour co-ordinator Gavin Stagg said the shortage is of skills rather than staff, hence the training emphasis.

Typically, it takes a full season for a pruner to get up to speed with potential to earn more than $1500 a week when skilled. “The ability of the industry to train on the job is lower this year so we are using the courses to get people introduced to the skills they need.” [Full article available here](https://farmersweekly.co.nz/section/horticulture/view/course-aims-to-up-orchard-skills)



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. This week see

1. **EU Early Alert - Pesticide Review - June 2020** The information in this document provides interested stakeholders with advance notice of active ingredients under review and highlights which substances may have restricted or non-renewal of approval. [EU Early Alert - Pesticide Review - June 2020\_Brussels USEU\_European Union\_06-07-2020](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=EU%20Early%20Alert%20-%20Pesticide%20Review%20-%20June%202020_Brussels%20USEU_European%20Union_06-07-2020" \t "_blank)
2. **COVID-19 in India - Weekly Food Retail Update** [COVID-19 in India - Weekly Food Retail Update\_Mumbai\_India\_06-12-2020](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=COVID-19%20in%20India%20-%20Weekly%20Food%20Retail%20Update_Mumbai_India_06-12-2020)
3. **COVID-19 in India - Weekly Port Situation Update** [COVID-19 in India - Weekly Port Situation Update\_Mumbai\_India\_06-12-2020](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=COVID-19%20in%20India%20-%20Weekly%20Port%20Situation%20Update_Mumbai_India_06-12-2020)
4. I**ndian Organic Foods Market Report** [Indian Organic Foods Market Report\_New Delhi\_India\_06-08-2020](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Indian%20Organic%20Foods%20Market%20Report_New%20Delhi_India_06-08-2020)
5. **Japan Translates Positive List of Food Packaging and Container Substances**

On June 1, 2020, Japan implemented the positive list system for food container and packaging materials with a five-year transition period. [Japan Translates Positive List of Food Packaging and Container Substances\_Tokyo\_Japan\_06-16-2020](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Japan%20Translates%20Positive%20List%20of%20Food%20Packaging%20and%20Container%20Substances_Tokyo_Japan_06-16-2020" \t "_blank)

1. **Korea - Republic of Retail Foods** [Retail Foods\_Seoul ATO\_Korea - Republic of\_06-30-2020](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Retail%20Foods_Seoul%20ATO_Korea%20-%20Republic%20of_06-30-2020)

 **Business/ Industry**

* 1. **Freshfel Europe response to Farm to Fork Strategy positive but with reservations**

Last Freshfel Europe has published its first preliminary reaction to the European Commission’s recently released Farm to Fork Strategy as part of the European Green Deal. *Freshfel supports the strategy and its initiatives but* remains wary of the viability of the high ambitions for the sector outlined in the Strategy that could inhibit its competitiveness. In particular

The specific targets for increasing organic farming and reductions in pesticide and fertilizer use. Freshfel Europe holds reservations on the viability in practice of some of these measures over the long-term. The Farm To Fork Strategy must have a holistic view and take overall production environmental performance into account, which should not be disregarded in preference for organic. Measures such as Integrated Pest Management often have greater environmental benefits. The fresh fruit and vegetable sector’s ability to provide high quality, safe, nutritious and affordable food to consumers and adequate return for growers should not be compromised. To avoid market distortion and unfair competition production standards and rules must be taken into account in any proposals.

Furthermore, Freshfel Europe was disappointed to note that no concrete initiatives are included in the Strategy to directly support the EU fresh fruit and vegetable sector. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9225794/freshfel-europe-response-to-farm-to-fork-strategy-positive/)

* 1. **Maersk raises Q2 expectations**

Logistics group says market demand is developing more favourably than anticipated in the second quarter with volumes downfall for APMM now anticipated to be in the range of -15 per cent to -18 per cent, compared to the initial guidance of -20 per cent to -25 per cent. [Full article available here](http://www.fruitnet.com/eurofruit/article/182111/maersk-raises-q2-expectations)

* 1. **Disruptive Packaging wins innovation award**

Disruptive Packaging has won the 2020 PMA A-NZ Tech Innovation Award with its Uniqcor product.

Developed over the last four years, Uniqcor is an innovative compound changing the way the fresh produce industry packages, handles and distributes its products.

Made mainly from natural earth materials (70 per cent), the compound can be used multiple times in the value chain and recycled with high yield. It can be utilised for a range of purposes, including replacing crates, cartons, pallets, corner angles and even produce bins. Uniqcor’s ability to maintain structural and temperature integrity in a cold chain environment was also well regarded, as was its ability to be used across a range of commodities and ultimately address the growing concern of food and packaging waste. [Full article available here](http://www.fruitnet.com/produceplus/article/182106/disruptive-packaging-wins-innovation-award)

* 1. **Record number of illegal pesticides taken off the market in 2020**

Europol coordinated the fifth edition of operation Silver Axe which saw twice the amount of illegal products seized compared to last year’s operation. The yearly law enforcement operation, which targets the counterfeit and illicit trade of pesticides, took place between 13 January and 25 April and involved 32 countries. (The EU plus Australia, Colombia, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom and the United States). Law enforcement authorities carried out inspections on land and sea borders, inland marketplaces and parcel deliveries, checking more than 3,000 tonnes of pesticides. Altogether, 260 investigations were opened, two individuals arrested and 1,346 tonnes of illegal pesticides seized. Currently, 8 investigations are still ongoing in Belgium, France, Germany, Poland, Slovenia and Switzerland.

A European study\*\* estimates between 10% and 14% of the EU pesticide market is affected by this illegal trade and criminals netting up to €70 for every trafficked kilogram of illegal pesticides. Some of the organised crime groups trafficking pesticides are also involved in other illegal activities such as trafficking counterfeited cigarettes and illegally trading pharmaceuticals. [Full article available here](https://www.floraldaily.com/article/9226343/record-number-of-illegal-pesticides-taken-off-the-market-in-2020/)

* 1. “**Kiwifruit, citrus and apples have become the most demanded products in India”**

The Indian fruit market has changed since the lockdown started. Although restrictions have been lifted in certain states, others are still struggling. It has resulted in less demand for the more perishable products, like grapes. Meanwhile kiwifruit, apples and citrus have become more popular in the country.

As the lockdown is easing we are seeing high demand in these three products, but only for new arrivals. The old arrivals and aged inventory have become more difficult to move. The consumer has become very selective. Also, we see that demand rising for premium apples. The consumer is selecting fruit based on its condition, rather than its looks. The consumer is also becoming more selective about the origin of the product they buy. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9227609/kiwifruit-citrus-and-apples-have-become-the-most-demanded-products-in-india/)

* 1. **Report finds supply chain inefficiencies are costing Australian fresh produce industry over $1billion**

Australia loses an estimated 18-22 per cent of produce, due to inefficiencies along the supply chain, according to PMA A-NZ's State of the Industry report.   The annual study, commissioned Ernst & Young, found that those losses were equivalent to $1.72 billion. Six key supply chain performance drivers were uncovered; facilities, inventory management, transport, information and communication, workforce, and supply and demand.

"We found that supply chain costs are about 55 per cent of total product costs," she said. "Therefore, inefficiencies across the supply chain have a huge impact in terms of overall product costs. For example, we waste fresh produce along every point of the supply chain, and about 20 per cent of produce is wasted throughout the supply chain." She added that fresh produce spends up to 50 per cent of its shelf-life in transit and the report identifies that quality is rated as number one for satisfaction with fruit and vegetables. For more information: and to access the report [click here](https://www.pma.com/global-pma/anz/news/2020/state-of-the-industry-report-2020) [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9227040/report-finds-supply-chain-inefficiencies-are-costing-australian-fresh-produce-industry-over-1billion/)

* 1. **UK and EU farmers united in call for free trade agreement**

Farming organisations from across the EU have joined the NFU in its call for an urgent breakthrough in trade talks in order to establish a UK/EU free trade agreement. More than 150 politicians, food and farming groups and stakeholders attended the discussion, which was jointly hosted by the NFU and six other UK/EU farming organisations. “This event showed that colleagues and competitors across the UK and EU, are united in our call for free trade. [Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9227140/uk-and-eu-farmers-united-in-call-for-free-trade-agreement/)

****

**Floral news**

* 1. **Syngenta appoints new global head of Flowers business**

Michael Kester will retire at the end of 2020 after 42 years at Syngenta. Mark Schermer is appointed as his successor as global head of Syngenta Flowers from September 1, 2020. [Full article available here](https://www.floraldaily.com/article/9225764/syngenta-appoints-new-global-head-of-flowers-business/)

* 1. **IPH announces online conference to support ornamentals industry recovery**

‘Recovery from Crisis – the future for Ornamentals’ is the title of a online conference to be organised by the International Association of Horticultural Producers (AIPH) in association with FloraCulture International (FCI). Growers, breeders, traders, retailers, manufacturers, associations, and media are invited to participate in one of the first global online conferences for the ornamental horticulture industry. Supporting partners include CIOPORA, Florint and FleuroSelect.

To be held live on 15 September 2020, the conference will start at 08:00 Central European Summer Time (CEST). The conference will be a 3D Virtual Event using the most advanced 3D technology in the world. It can be accessed from any device, and all you need to attend is a good internet connection.

The fee to attend is 75 GBP (including VAT), but there is an early-bird fee of only 55 GBP available until 20 July. For more details about the technology, speakers and programme and to book your place, visit <http://aiph.org/events/exhibitions/>.   [Full article available here](https://www.floraldaily.com/article/9226322/aiph-announces-online-conference-to-support-ornamentals-industry-recovery/)

* 1. **US: New Hampshire florists see demand bloom despite event cancellations**

To measure the yearning for human connection, look to trends in the flower industry. After an almost total lack of sales up to 75% of businesses polled by The Society of American Florists reported increased sales on Mother’s Day this year, despite the pandemic, according to a press release published May 21 *and for some this trend has continued* [Click here to read the complete article on www.nhbr.com](https://www.nhbr.com/new-hampshire-florists-see-demand-bloom-despite-event-cancelations/)

* 1. **US consumer sentiment toward floral products during the COVID-19 crisis**

PMA’s consumer sentiment research aims to provide insight into how COVID 19 pandemic is impacting consumer shopping trends for floral. This is directional information that can help guide PMA and its members with their messaging to consumers during this uncertainty.

The full article provides the following graphs of information from the USA, UK and Germany

* Floral purchasers prior versus since Covid 19
* Floral products purchased since Covid 19
* Where Floral products have been brought since Covid 19 - most respondents in the US, UK and Germany are purchasing their floral products in supermarkets and mass merchandisers, although florist and home improvement stores are important outlets in Germany for floral purchases.
* Reasons for purchasing less Floral products There is some consistency about the reasons for purchasing less across all 3 markets: 1. Shopping less frequently, 2. Not top-of-mind/a priority now, and 3. I usually buy them as gifts for special occasions or holidays and it is hard to celebrate those these days.
* Reasons for purchasing more floral products Among those who are buying more, the primary reasons are also consistent: 1. They make me happy, 2. House plants give me something to do, and 3. I am spending more time at home to want to spruce up my surroundings. The joy of floral products continues to be a great marketing message for the industry to rally behind.
* Future Floral purchases

[Full article available here](https://www.floraldaily.com/article/9226650/us-consumer-sentiment-toward-floral-products-during-the-covid-19-crisis/)

  **Health**

* 1. **New study links dietary flavonols with reduced risk of Alzheimer dementia**

A new study, published in the scientific journal Neurology found that a higher intake of plant compounds known as flavonols, is associated with a 48% decreased risk of developing Alzheimer dementia.

Flavonols are a type of bioactive compound found in grapes, as well as other fruits and vegetables. Flavonols are known for promoting beneficial antioxidant and anti-inflammatory activities. Grapes of all colors – red, green, and black – are a natural source of flavonols, including kaempferol, myricetin, quercetin, and isorhamnetin. In this study, the benefit observed was most strongly associated with kaempferol, myricetin and isorhamnetin; quercetin was not associated with Alzheimer dementia, although it has been linked to numerous other health benefits. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9227016/new-study-links-dietary-flavonols-with-reduced-risk-of-alzheimer-dementia/)

 **Innovation**

* 1. **Friendly fungi benefit 80% of all plant species**

Mycorrhizae are beneficial soil organisms used in all kinds of crops to help maximize plant performance. The company Mycorrhizal Applications produces and researches commercial mycorrhizae. The company has 25 years of experience helping growers of all kinds adopt this symbiotic technology.  This article provides a good outline of what mycorrhizae are , the types of useful mycorrhizae, their part in drought resilience and nutrient uptake.  [Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9227577/friendly-fungi-benefit-80-of-all-plant-species/)

* 1. **Australian research into new fresh produce postharvest treatment using supercharged air**

Australian fresh produce growers may soon have a new method of treating fruit and vegetables that minimise microbial food safety risks, with promising results from a current project with the potential to greatly improve food safety and reduce postharvest losses. The New South Wales Department of Primary Industries is leading the project on a postharvest treatment using supercharged air, which has strong potential to improve food safety and decay control outcomes in a range of horticultural products. Food Safety Scientist,

Supercharged air is generated by applying an electric current to normal air which causes the formation of several types of reactive species. Dr Singh says these reactive species interact with microbial pathogens potentially present on the produce surface and kill/deactivate them. "Washing with water containing a chemical sanitiser is a common practice currently," he said. "The washing processes reduce the microbial load present on the produce surface but do not completely remove if the microbial contaminants are present there. So, it is critical to reducing the microbial levels to the lowest possible by a further auxiliary treatment such as supercharged air. The treatment can also reduce the reliance on the chemical sanitisers and fungicides used to ensure food safety and decay in produce.

The NSW Department of Primary Industries has been working on the development of this technology for over 3 years. After the success of laboratory experiments, the technology is currently in a scale-up stage where the target industries will be involved in the demonstration of the technology benefits and conduct real-world validation studies. [Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9227165/australian-research-into-new-fresh-produce-postharvest-treatment-using-supercharged-air/)

* 1. **Lasers and vibrations in the quest to find the perfect avocado**

The age-old ‘squeeze test’ to find a ripe avocado could be a thing of the past if an English university has its way. Cranfield University has developed and tested technology using a laser and small vibration to test the individual fruits' resonant frequency, giving a reliable assessment of ripeness without damaging the avocado. The university says the technique could reduce waste by up to 10 per cent and help fulfil consumer demand for ready-to-eat fruit.  [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9225760/lasers-and-vibrations-in-the-quest-to-find-the-perfect-avocado/)

* 1. **New electronic nose sniffs out ripe peaches**

To help with the harvesting of various fruits, scientists have been developing electronic noses for sniffing out the ripest and most succulent peaches. In a recent study, one such e-nose exceeds 98 percent accuracy. Fortunately, peaches emit vaporous molecules, called volatile organic compounds, or VOCs. “We know that volatile organic compounds vary in quantity and type, depending on the different phases of fruit growth,” explains Stevan. “Thus, the electronic noses are an [option], since they allow the online monitoring of the VOCs generated by the culture.” [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9226214/new-electronic-nose-sniffs-out-ripe-peaches/)

**Subscribe/ Unsubscribe** If you no longer wish to receive this email please send a note to [info@pmac.co.nz](mailto:info@pmac.co.nz) asking to be added/ removed and providing the nominated email address

**Disclaimer** Please note this information has been accessed from emails that have been forwarded to info@PMAC.co.nz and are distributed as a weekly update. If you intend using this information please sight the original document to ensure you are aware of the context within which any changes have been made and to guard against any transcription changes