

**PMAC weekly update 17th to 24th September**

1. **Government agencies**: ICPR changes; Potato Virus detected in Canterbury; WTO Notifications; Counting you down to 1 October 2018
2. **New Zealand News:**  Announcement of New Zealand’s first resident Ambassador to Ireland; New Consul-General for Southwest China announced; Announcement of new Consul-General in Shanghai; Taxpayer costs for kiwifruit claim trial balloon out to $6m; New Zealand fears for world trade in wake of Trump's tariffs; Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern responds to Countdown strawberry scare; How scientists plan to improve the kiwifruit; UMS appointed by New Zealand Avocado to expand presence in China; First batch of New Zealand avocados hits the Chinese market; Native birds as potential alternative to pesticides; Brisk weather brings cheaper broccoli; "Asian markets still open"
3. **International news:** GAIN reports; Indonesia concludes FTA negotiations with Australia; WTO members demand more clarity on US farm spending; US: Monsanto asks court to toss $289 million glyphosate verdict; Maersk to change fuel adjustment surcharge ahead of the 2020 sulphur cap; China: JD.com wants to ship fruit from all over the world to China in 48 hours; Spain: A system to trace stolen fruit; Spain: A system to trace stolen fruit**;** US: Rat lungworm infection linked to raw vegetables**;** Arizona growers hope new leafy greens protocols will help prevent outbreaks**;** New research paper uncovers interaction Xylella fastidiosa and its diverse hosts

**Editors comments**

*Needles in strawberries have certainly dominated the horticultural headlines in the last week. This is not the first time such an incident has happened but it’s the first time it has been on such a large scale and unfortunately is another food safety concern that consumers are bound to remember for a long time. It’s also possible metal detectors will become part of the equipment every packhouse needs to consider. But as one article states*  *if someone is determined to make an impact they can put glass, plastic, organic materials or bodily fluids in and that will create the same effect.*

*There never will be a simple answer but traceability and good surveillance of the food chain is probably the best approach to deal with such scares.*

*There are also two interesting articles in the International section which we should look at in relation to our exports. In the recently signed Indonesian Australia FTA Indonesia will “guarantee automatic issue of import permits for key products.” This would be very useful if we could arrange a similar arrangement for New Zealand products And in the article about JD.com a large ecommerce supplier in China they talk about working directly with governments and companies in fruit importing countries to shorten the duration of imports. Does this open the opportunity for facilitated entry across the border into China?*

1. **Agency news**



* 1. **ICPR changes**

The ICPR for India has been updated by removing Pseudococcus longispinus (long-tail mealy bug) from Appendix 1., updated definitions list and requirements for seed for sowing and amended additional declaration for carrot seed for sowing in section 4.1.1. For the full updated ICPR see in MPI’s [Importing Countries Phytosanitary Requirements](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/law-and-policy/requirements/importing-countries-phytosanitary-requirements/) web page

* 1. **Potato Virus detected in Canterbury**

Biosecurity New Zealand is working with Potatoes New Zealand to respond to a detection of *Potato mop-top virus* (PMTV) in potato tubers in Canterbury. "Potato mop-top virus is a crop disease which, if found to be wide-spread, could cause some productivity issues for growers and which is a notifiable and unwanted organism in New Zealand under the Biosecurity Act."

To date potato tubers from 2 properties in the Canterbury region have tested positive for the virus. Further sampling is under way in the region.

Potatoes New Zealand chief executive, Chris Claridge, says the affected potatoes are from the Innovator variety, which is only used for potato chips. "The industry is working closely with Biosecurity New Zealand to learn more about the virus, the impact it could have on growers, and to stop any risk of spread," Mr Claridge says. "We will then consider if it is possible to eradicate it, or whether we will need to work with growers to manage its impact over the long term."

The Innovator variety of potato was last imported as germplasm into New Zealand in July 2011.

[Full article available here](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/news-and-resources/media-releases/potato-virus-detected-in-canterbury/)

* 1. **WTO Notifications**

Please find attached the most recent WTO notifications from countries that are considering changes to their plant import requirements for specific products. If you have any concerns about the notifications being presented please contact [Plant.exports@mpi.govt.nz](mailto:Plant.exports@mpi.govt.nz) so that they can potentially make a submission to the notifying country. Changes notified over the ltwo weeks include:

* Brazil, Japan , Taiwan and USA MRL’s
* Korea – Heavy metals in food

The embedded files for the last 2 weeks (which has links through to the original notifications)are available here  

**** **Customs**

* 1. **Counting you down to 1 October 2018**

There's just six working days to go until our new Act comes into force. If you need help identifying what the changes may mean for you, please have a look at our online education resources. See a summary below. There is also a [Readiness checklist available](https://www.customs.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/ce-2018/checklist-for-ce-2.pdf) which details useful resources and provides tips on what you can do to prepare for and on 1 October 2018.

The 10 changes made can [be viewed here](https://www.customs.govt.nz/about-us/customs-and-excise-act-2018/whats-changed/10-new-services/) . A number of changes are importer specific but the following will also apply to exporters

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| [Compensatory interest and late payment penalties](https://www.customs.govt.nz/about-us/customs-and-excise-act-2018/whats-changed/10-new-services/compensatory-interest-and-late-payment-penalties/) | There is a new system for charging compensatory (use of money) interest and late payment penalties, when duty hasn't been paid in full at the right time. |
| [Infringement notice scheme](https://www.customs.govt.nz/about-us/customs-and-excise-act-2018/whats-changed/10-new-services/infringement-notice-scheme/) | A new infringement notice scheme for minor offences will be introduced on 1 April 2019. |
| [Joint Border Management Systems (JBMS) competency and registration](https://www.customs.govt.nz/about-us/customs-and-excise-act-2018/whats-changed/10-new-services/joint-border-management-system/) | Trade Single Window (TSW) users need to provide evidence of ongoing competency. |
| [Administrative penalties](https://www.customs.govt.nz/about-us/customs-and-excise-act-2018/whats-changed/10-new-services/administrative-penalties/) | The same administrative penalties will apply to exporters, importers, licensees, and agents who make errors or omissions in their entries and do not voluntarily disclose it to Customs |
| [Storing business records](https://www.customs.govt.nz/about-us/customs-and-excise-act-2018/whats-changed/10-new-services/storing-business-records/) | Customers can now apply to store their electronic business records outside New Zealand, including in the cloud. |



1. **New Zealand News**



* 1. **Announcement of New Zealand’s first resident Ambassador to Ireland**

Brad Burgess has been appointed as New Zealand’s first Ambassador to Ireland. Most recently, Mr Burgess has held the roles of Free Trade Agreement Lead Negotiator and worked as TPP Deputy Chief Negotiator at MFAT. He has also previously been seconded to the Department of International Trade in the UK to work on FTA policy post-Brexit. [Full article available here](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/announcement-new-zealand%E2%80%99s-first-resident-ambassador-ireland)

* 1. **New Consul-General for Southwest China announced**

Stephen Wong has been appointed as the new Consul-General in Chengdu, Southwest China.

“New Zealand and China share a comprehensive strategic partnership, with a close, constructive and increasingly mature relationship. Two way trade now stands at NZ$27.8bn in the year to June 2018, and China is New Zealand’s largest trading partner and number one goods export market.”

Stephen Wong served most recently as Deputy Head of Mission at the New Zealand Embassy in Yangon, Myanmar. He has also worked in Jakarta, Singapore and Hong Kong. New Zealand was among the first group of countries in the world to open a diplomatic post in Chengdu in 2014, and the Consulate is one of 3 in mainland China supporting the embassy in Beijing.  [Full article available here](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/new-consul-general-southwest-china-announced)

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

Andrew Robinson has been appointed as the new Consul-General in Shanghai. “Mr Robinson will be responsible for our relationships with Zhejiang, Jiangsu and Anhui provinces, as well as Shanghai, which together make up a critical economic region with a population of over 180 million people. Andrew Robinson is currently a Lead Advisor at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, working on New Zealand’s preparation for hosting APEC in 2021, and was previously part of the leadership group for New Zealand’s UN Security Council term. He is a Mandarin speaker who has previously served at the New Zealand Embassy in Beijing. [Full article available here](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/announcement-new-consul-general-shanghai)

**General**

* 1. **Taxpayer costs for kiwifruit claim trial balloon out to $6m**

Taxpayers had spent $6 million on defending the kiwifruit claim case. Growers had claimed the MPI were negligent in allowing the Psa disease into the country in 2010 and are claiming more than $450 million in compensation. MPI wanted to clarity the scope for government regulators to be sued in negligence in appealing the original judgement .

The claimants filed a cross-appeal that Seeka was owed a duty of care, and that MPI was negligent in failing to inspect a shipment of kiwifruit plant material infected with Psa from China. Kiwifruit Claim Chairman, John Cameron, would not disclose how much they had spent on the case, but said it was less than the Crown’s costs. The case had already set the record for being the most expensive primary sector trial, and had the potential of reaching the supreme court . [Full article available here](https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/farming/107133960/Taxpayer-costs-for-kiwifruit-claim-trial-balloon-out-to-6m)

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* 1. **New Zealand fears for world trade in wake of Trump's tariffs**

Trade Minister David Parker and his National Party counterpart Todd McClay are predicting that New Zealand faces risks rather than opportunities from the Trump administration's escalating trade war with China. Parker said New Zealand was dependent on "rules-based trade agreements" and rising protectionism around the world was not in the country's interests. Meanwhile, president Trump has announced tariffs on a further US$200 billion of Chinese imports from next week. The new tariffs will start at 10 percent and rise to 25 percent from the beginning of next year, and come on top of 25 percent tariffs on another $50 billion of imports imposed in August. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9019976/New-Zealand-fears-for-world-trade-in-wake-of-Trump-s-tariffs)

* 1. **Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern responds to Countdown strawberry scare**

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has described the discovery of needles in Australian strawberries stocked in Countdown as alarming. She said the matter was currently being investigated by police and MPI, following the first case of a needle being found in a strawberry in New Zealand.

While sewing needles were found in a punnet of strawberries in New Zealand, they were not New Zealand strawberries. The contaminated strawberries were from the brand Australian Choice, sourced from Western Australia. While a BBC headline reporting the find was: "Australia fruit scare: Needles found in New Zealand strawberries", however, it got the facts right in the written story saying "The strawberries in Auckland, originally from Western Australia state, were sold in New Zealand Countdown stores nationwide last week,".

It captioned its mobile headline: "Strawberry needle scare spreads" followed by "A New Zealand supermarket chain is removing some Australian strawberries after needles were found in a container bought in Auckland" as its synopsis. The [Daily Mail reported](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6198021/Strawberry-contamination-international-crisis-needles-New-Zealand-fruits.html) the strawberry nightmare had become an "international crisis" after needles were found in a punnet of Australian Choice brand strawberries bought at a Countdown store in St Lukes. [Full article available here](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/the-country/news/article.cfm?c_id=16&objectid=12130550)

Strawberry Growers NZ said although the affected berries were from Australia, farmers here were becoming concerned. Some of those growers were now looking at adding metal detectors to their production line in a bid to reassure consumers.

Executive manager Michael Ahern said: "Some of our guys, like a week or so ago, have already been hunting for metal detectors. "But we've got to appreciate this is all from a standing start. You can't go down to The Warehouse and buy one of these things. "We're not accustomed to this type of challenge to our fruit safety systems.''

With the season and crop ready in a matter of about two weeks, he said growers were hoping the public would continue to buy the much-loved fruit. "I'm not too casual about it either," he said. "We're very worried. There's a lot of money on the line, it's a seasonal business and I guess we're just trying to manage the unknown." [Full article available here](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=12130415)

Six brands of strawberries are now believed to be affected by needle and pin contamination, according to New South Wales police. Vice-president of the Queensland Strawberry Growers Association, Adrian Schultz, says what started with a single "act of commercial terrorism" has now brought a multi-million dollar industry to its knees, with jobs beyond the growers now likely to be lost. [Full article available here](http://www.hortidaily.com/article/9018480/Foodstuffs-and-Woolworths-NZ-halt-all-Australian-strawberry-distribution)

*Another article looks at the mentality and potential profile of a person who would commit such an act.*

Professor of Quality Systems at New Zealand's Massey University, Nigel Grigg, has weighed in on the incident saying there are many types of contamination. While some contamination methods are accidental, he warned that deliberate contamination of the kind we're seeing is entering the realm of food terrorism. "There are lists of contamination incident, both accidental or adulteration for economic gain, such as dyes and detergents. "Its difficult to safeguard against it. You can install metal detectors in farms or retailers. But if someone is determined to do this they can put glass, plastic, organic materials, bodily fluids. "This takes it into the realm of terrorism. You're looking to spread panic, fear and create uncertainty in the industry.

Bob Sheehy, who owns Shaylee Strawberries, suggested those responsible, at least initially, were disgruntled workers. He said strawberry farms were closing amid one of the worst seasons in recent memory, meaning the fruit was being sold for as little as $1 a punnet in shops and many were being forced out of a job. Speaking to The New Daily, Mr Sheehy said he would not be surprised to learn the strawberry sabotage was a case of "sour grapes". "Some workers are paid a pittance," he said. "Some of the bigger farms have five million plants, so think of how many workers they each have."

Another Queensland-based grower told the publication he "sort of saw this coming"."The pressure and the relationships between workers and farmers and farms and retailers are no good for anybody.

"This season we had a glut. The bigger farms are getting bigger and the smaller farms are getting smaller." [Full article available here](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/lifestyle/news/article.cfm?c_id=6&objectid=12128000)

* 1. **How scientists plan to improve the kiwifruit**

A kiwifruit contains about as much vitamin C as an orange, thanks to extra genes. The fruit's extra boost in vitamin C production is the result of the kiwifruit's ancestors spontaneously duplicating their DNA in two separate evolutionary events approximately 50-57 million and 18-20 million years ago, researchers reported last week in the journal iScience.

"Polyploidy is an abrupt evolutionary event that produces thousands of extra copies of genes overnight," said senior author XiyinWang, an agricultural plant scientist at the North China University of Science and Technology. "These extra copies may greatly elevate the robustness of the plant, providing opportunities for natural selection to prune and rewire its biological system over time."

They found the kiwifruit's genome often contained four or five copies of a gene in places where plant sharing a similar background only had one. The kiwifruit's extra genes included the biological instructions for creating and recycling vitamin C. Wang's team will continue decoding the kiwifruit and other plant genomes. They plan to explore more genes that could be copied to produce more successful fruits and vegetables. [Full article available here](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/the-country/news/article.cfm?c_id=16&objectid=12129507)

**Industry news**

* 1. **UMS appointed by New Zealand Avocado to expand presence in China**

United Media Solution has been appointed by New Zealand Avocado, to create and manage its digital marketing presence in China. New Zealand Avocado, the body which represents the country’s avocado growers, has tasked UMS with building awareness of the brand and products in China as part of a strategy to quadruple sales of NZ avocados there by 2023.[Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9019873/UMS-appointed-by-New-Zealand-Avocado-to-expand-presence-in-China)

* 1. **First batch of New Zealand avocados hits the Chinese market**

According to the latest list of registered orchards and packaging factories, the first commercial New Zealand avocados have officially entered the Chinese market and are now on sale at Tmall. It is understood that the first-ever New Zealand avocados have a weight of more than 200 grams and a high dry matter content of more than 24%. Compared with countries such as Mexico, Chile and Peru, it has larger fruits, higher dry matter content and a denser taste. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9020978/first-batch-of-new-zealand-avocados-hits-the-chinese-market)

**Other**

* 1. **Native birds as potential alternative to pesticides**

A team led by Plant & Food Research will undertake a pilot study this summer to determine if native birds can potentially function as nature’s pest control. With the blessing of iwi, scientists will catch and release native birds such as tui, korimako (bellbird), piwakawaka (fantail), riro riro (grey warbler) and tauhou (silvereye) currently present in apple, wine grape, berry and plum orchards in Palmerston North, Levin and Ohau.

The team will use next-generation sequencing (NGS), a DNA-based method, to identify insect DNA from collected avian faeces, which will allow them to understand which insects the birds favour in their diet. This new technology has advantages over traditional methods, offering a fast, accurate and relatively non-invasive approach.” The study, in collaboration with Dr Isabel Castro from Massey University, is part of a wider vision to incorporate more native plants and animals into Aoeteroa’s horticultural production system. It is hoped the project will provide some insight into another potential tool for growers to reduce chemical pesticides required to grow crops, supporting New Zealand to meet the requirements of export markets, retailers and consumers to minimise environmental impact of food. [Full article available here](http://www.hortidaily.com/article/9020176/New-Zealand-Native-birds-as-potential-alternative-to-pesticides)

* 1. **Brisk weather brings cheaper broccoli**

Statistics NZ have released the latest food price data, which shows broccoli costs 27 per cent less in August than in July, with prices down 32 per cent for the year. These lower prices for broccoli and other vegetables drove an overall decrease in monthly and annual food prices. Food prices fell 0.5 per cent in August, with fruit and vegetables costing 2.1 per cent less, influenced by lower prices for lettuce, broccoli, and cucumber.

In the year to August, total food prices dipped just 0.1 per cent in the year to August 2018, although fruit and vegetable prices fell 6.5 per cent, reflecting lower broccoli, potato, and cucumber prices. "Fruit and vegetable prices rose strongly last year due to wet weather, peaking in August 2017," Duoba said. "This month prices are closer to those experienced two years ago, in August 2016."[Full article available here](http://www.hortidaily.com/article/9019909/New-Zealand-Brisk-weather-brings-cheaper-broccoli)

* 1. **"Asian markets still open"**

Asia Fruit Logistica 2018 took place in Hong Kong in the first week in September, and proved to be another successful event for New Zealand exhibitors. The New Zealand stand, supported by Horticulture New Zealand, Plant and Food Research, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise, and New Zealand Apples and Pears, was once again a busy hub for those exporters who took part.

The exhibition grew again in 2018 with a 10% increase in floor space and visitor numbers up. It was interesting to note an increase in exhibitors from Europe again this year, as they focus on new export markets in Asia. While demand grows for New Zealand’s premium quality fresh produce, there remain international and domestic challenges to fully meeting this market opportunity. In the background, the China - United States trade war is driving some odd behaviours of US produce exporters, in turn affecting New Zealand markets, as well as creating an opening for countries to adopt a less liberal trade approach as the US regime continues to threaten withdrawal from the World Trade Organisation. This brings some uncertainty for New Zealand exporters, and further demonstrates the importance of a cohesive, progressive international rules based system, of which the country has long been a champion.

Domestically, there remains a shortfall in overall agency capacity to drive new and improved market access for New Zealand’s fresh produce exports – crucial, as the sector grows both in value and broadens with new high value fruit and vegetables being planted. It still requires a shift in thinking across the policy spectrum.  [Full article available here](http://www.hortidaily.com/article/9019911/Asian-markets-still-open)



1. **International news**

**Comment**

* 1. **GAIN reports**

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

1. **China -Growing U.S. Export Opportunities in Lanzhou’s HRI and Retail Sector** Lanzhou is a rising second-tier city in Northwest China that is now increasingly able to provide U.S. food and agricultural exporters opportunities in the retail and hotel, restaurant and institutional (HRI) sectors. Retail sales of consumer goods increased 7.6 percent to reach $21 billion in 2017. Due to the fierce competition in major east coastal cities, national retailers are expected to turn their attention west to second-tier cities, such as Lanzhou. [Growing U.S. Export Opportunities in Lanzhou’s HRI and Retail Sector\_Beijing ATO\_China - Peoples Republic of\_9-18-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Growing%20U.S.%20Export%20Opportunities%20in%20Lanzhou%e2%80%99s%20HRI%20and%20Retail%20Sector_Beijing%20ATO_China%20-%20Peoples%20Republic%20of_9-18-2018.pdf)

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| 1. **Japan 216th Food Safety Group** On Thursday, September 13, 2018, Japan’s Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare (MHLW) announced revisions to Japan’s Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) for the following agricultural chemicals and veterinary drugs: Simeconazole,  [Japan 216th Food Safety Group\_Tokyo\_Japan\_9-14-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Japan%20216th%20Food%20Safety%20Group_Tokyo_Japan_9-14-2018.pdf) 2. **Germany Fresh Deciduous Fruit SP1 - Expand International Marketing Opportunities** On August 8 - 10, 2018, the World Apple and Pear Association (WAPA) presented the 2018 EU apple and pear crop forecast at the 42th Prognosfruit convention in Warsaw/Poland.  WAPA forecasts the 2018 EU fresh apples crop at 12.6 million metric tons (MT).  This is not only a 36 percent increase [Prognosfruit 2018\_Berlin\_Germany\_9-12-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Prognosfruit%202018_Berlin_Germany_9-12-2018.pdf) |

1. **Ukraine Amendments to Phytosanitary Legislation** Recent amendments to Ukraine’s Plant Quarantine Law authorize the use of private phytosanitary laboratories to conduct commodity sampling and analysis for the purposes of export only.  [Amendments to Phytosanitary Legislation\_Kiev\_Ukraine\_9-14-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Amendments%20to%20Phytosanitary%20Legislation_Kiev_Ukraine_9-14-2018.pdf)

**Regulatory**

* 1. **Indonesia concludes FTA negotiations with Australia**

On August 31, the Governments of Indonesia (GOI) and Australia announced the conclusion of trade negotiations under the Indonesia-Australia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (IA-CEPA). IA-CEPA builds on an existing free trade agreement, the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (AANZFTA), further reducing tariffs and providing additional cooperative mechanisms for addressing non-tariff barriers and import licensing.

Perhaps the most significant feature of the agreement is not related to a reduction in duties or quota allotments for various products, but rather that Indonesia will “guarantee automatic issue of import permits for key products.” It is unclear if this automatic issuance of import permits refers only the Ministry of Trade issued SPIs (Import Permit) or if it also extends to the Ministry of Agriculture RIPHs (Import Recommendation).

The agreement is still pending final translation, review, and approval by both countries.. [Click here for the full report.](https://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Indonesia%20Concludes%20Negotiations%20on%20FTA%20with%20Australia_Jakarta_Indonesia_9-12-2018.pdf" \t "_blank)

* 1. **WTO members demand more clarity on US farm spending**

Trading partners will demand more details from the United States at the World Trade Organization next week about its planned $12 billion aid package, destined for US farmers affected by the tariff wars. The US aid package, announced in July, is intended to shield US farmers from the repercussions of trade disputes between the United States and China, the European Union and others.

But other WTO members want more clarity on how long it will last and whether it adheres to WTO rules as it could have an impact on their own agriculture sectors and competition. A compilation of written questions submitted to the WTO’s regular agriculture committee meeting on Sept. 25-26 included questions from New Zealand, Japan, India, the European Union, Canada and Australia, all demanding more detail on the plan. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9021180/wto-members-demand-more-clarity-on-us-farm-spending)

**Business**

* 1. **US: Monsanto asks court to toss $289 million glyphosate verdict**

Bayer unit Monsanto has asked a California judge to throw out a $289 million jury verdict awarded to a man who alleged the company’s glyphosate-based weed-killers, including Roundup, gave him cancer. The company said in motions filed in San Francisco’s Superior Court of California that the jury’s decision was insufficiently supported by the evidence presented at trial by school groundskeeper Dewayne Johnson. Monsanto asked Superior Court Judge Suzanne Bolanos, who oversaw the trial, to set aside the verdict or, in the alternative, reduce the award or grant a new trial. A hearing on the motions is set for Oct. 10. [Full article available here](http://www.hortidaily.com/article/9020245/US-Monsanto-asks-court-to-toss-$289-million-glyphosate-verdict)

* 1. **Maersk to change fuel adjustment surcharge ahead of the 2020 sulphur cap**

The new BAF[[1]](#footnote-1) surcharge aims at recovering the Maersk Line costs of compliance with the global sulphur cap which enters into force on 1 January 2020. This regulation has been developed and adopted by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), a specialised agency under the United Nations (UN). Whereas today ships can use fuel with a sulphur content of 3.5%, the new sulphur cap will be 0.5%.

To become compliant shipowners will have to invest in compliant fuels, LNG or scrubber technology. This is expected to lower global shipping’s sulphur emissions, a known source for respiratory disease and acid rain, by more than 80%. The 2020 sulphur cap is a game changer for the shipping industry. Maersk preparations to comply are well underway and so are our customers’ efforts to plan ahead. The new BAF is a simple, fair and predictable mechanism that ensures clarity for our customers in planning their supply chains for this significant shift.”

According to industry estimates, more than 90% of the global vessel fleet will be relying on compliant fuels when the sulphur rules step into force on 1 January 2020. External sources estimate the additional cost for the global container shipping industry to comply could be up to USD 15 billion. Maersk Line expects its extra fuel costs could exceed USD 2 billion.

To allow customers to familiarise with the changed formula, Maersk Line’s BAF surcharge will be introduced on 1 January 2019. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9020226/Maersk-to-change-fuel-adjustment-surcharge-ahead-of-the-2020-sulphur-cap)

* 1. **China: JD.com wants to ship fruit from all over the world to China in 48 hours**

The e-commerce giant JD.com has signed an alliance with 18 fruit retailers from countries that are far away from China, such as Canada, the US, and Chile, to ensure the rapid delivery of their products from several countries. With this alliance, JD plans to fly New Zealand kiwis, Canadian cherries, oranges and cherries from the west coast of the United States, and Chilean blueberries directly to China in 48 hours.

The alliance includes the Zespri brand of kiwis; South Africa's Capespan; American Strawberries by Driscoll; FruitMasters of the Netherlands, and Prize of Chile. These companies would cooperate with JD in terms of 1) product packaging; 2) customized order of products; 3) exclusive sales of new products, and 4) expansion of sales channels. For example, JD is standardizing fruit packaging to prevent easily perishable products from spoiling during the transportation process.

In addition, JD Fresh will work directly with governments and companies in fruit importing countries to shorten the duration of imports. In order to be efficient over time, JD is currently working with agricultural companies in the use of drones and blockchain to shorten the time in which the fruit's quality is inspected. According to JD, sales of imported fruit have increased steadily over the years. In 2016, the proportion of sales of imported fruit was 20%. This figure jumped to 45% in 2017, and then went up to 65% this year. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9021017/china-jd-com-wants-to-ship-fruit-from-all-over-the-world-to-china-in-48-hours)

* 1. **Spain: A system to trace stolen fruit**

A group of Andalusian entrepreneurs has developed Olidetec, a system that is able to warn of a theft in the countryside and trace the stolen fruit. The service offers 24/7 information on the situation of the crop and, in the event of looting, locates the exact place where the merchandise is in real time.

The system is designed to offer a level of security that goes beyond the limits of producer's land, as, after being alerted of a theft, the tool begins to generate a report on traceability and geolocation. The information is encrypted with the same technology and security that financial entities use to work.

Another advantage offered by Olidetec is the possibility of reducing insurance costs in the facilities where it is installed, as happens with other types of anti-theft systems. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9017370/Spain-A-system-to-trace-stolen-fruit)

 **Food safety**

* 1. **US: Rat lungworm infection linked to raw vegetables**

In the continental United States, twelve cases of human infection with Angiostrongylus cantonensis, otherwise known as rat lungworm, have been identified. According to study results from the CDC, possible sources include raw vegetables from local gardens.

“Ingestion of snails or slugs containing rat lungworm larvae can result in angiostrongyliasis, an illness that can cause inflammation of the lining of the brain,” “Angiostrongyliasis typically occurs in Asia and the Pacific Islands, including Hawaii. However, the CDC recently identified 12 angiostrongyliasis cases in the continental United States.”

Six patients reportedly consumed raw vegetables from local gardens, whereas 2 reported consuming raw snails and two others had reported snails in their environment. [Full article available here](http://www.hortidaily.com/article/9018613/US-Rat-lungworm-infection-linked-to-raw-vegetables)

* 1. **Arizona growers hope new leafy greens protocols will help prevent outbreaks**

For months romaine growers, consumer advocates, researchers and government agencies have been scrutinizing factors that contributed to this year’s deadly E. coli outbreak. As of this week — about 10 days into planting for their next harvest — most growers in the implicated region are operating under new food safety requirements.

The new “metrics” for members of the Arizona Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement are effective immediately. The revised requirements in Arizona involve:

* Daily cleaning of equipment;
* More extensive review of crop impact after weather events such as flooding or high winds;
* Mandatory traceability measures; and
* A 1,200-foot minimum buffer zone between growing fields and feed lots with 1,000 or more animals. Previously the buffer requirement was 400 feet.

Another new provision deals with treatment of water used for overhead irrigation, said Scott Horsfall, CEO of the California LGMA organization.

Many in the food safety arena describe this year’s outbreak as a game changer. “Everyone realizes it can’t be business as usual,” Horsfall said.  Top leaders in government and industry agree. “A change in awareness and recognition that (contamination) is an issue is more powerful than any other factor,” “

*Apart from the above this article provides a lot of information on the background to the outbreak, what has been found and areas where information is lacking* [Full article available here](https://www.foodsafetynews.com/2018/09/arizona-growers-hope-new-leafy-greens-protocols-will-help-prevent-outbreaks/)

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**Floral News**

* 1. **Are edible flowers a foodservice trend to watch?**

[Organic September](http://www.verdictfoodservice.com/insight/organic-september-sustainable-trends/) has shone a light on a range of emerging trends, from root to stem vegetable use to grass-fed meat. One of the trends expected to be fully included in organic products and restaurants this year is edible flowers. However, is this aesthetic addition to the menu something that diners actually want?

A survey conducted by GlobalData last year found that 45% of consumers globally like to experiment with new and unusual flavours. In addition, 60% of consumers globally believe that botanicals and plant extracts have a positive impact on their health. However, this belief is more prominent among younger participants – 62% of millennials compared to 41% of seniors.

*Opinions raised in the article range for* “It’s certainly a trend to watch and while it may be more suited to the spring and summer months, we see it as something that will be popular all year round in restaurants.” To “ believes the edible flowers trend isn’t substantial” [Full article available here](https://www.verdictfoodservice.com/insight/edible-flowers-foodservice-trend/)

 **Innovation**

* 1. **New research paper uncovers interaction Xylella fastidiosa and its diverse hosts**

The plant pathogenic bacterium Xylella fastidiosa occurs widely and often asymptomatically, yet it is associated with a few seriously bad disease outbreaks, the most recent affecting olive trees in southern Italy and adjoining regions. Sicard et al. review all aspects of the interaction between Xylella fastidiosa and its diverse hosts, as well as the insect vectors responsible for its spread, with a focus on understanding why in some cases this relatively benign bacterium becomes a dangerous pest.

One key take-home message is that as landscapes shift from natural, diverse environments to less diverse agricultural environments, the bacterium shifts from a harmless generalist to a destructive specialist. [Full article available here](http://www.floraldaily.com/article/9017212/New-research-paper-uncovers-interaction-Xylella-fastidiosa-and-its-diverse-hosts)

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1. BAF Bunker adjustment factor floating part of sea freight charges which represents additions due to oil prices. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)