

**PMAC weekly update 18th to 25th July**

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**Comment**

A relatively quiet week this week. Nadine Tunley reports on her experience with Covid and then a second virus which has forced her and several others in HortNZ to slow down and give themselves a chance to recover. I have heard this anecdotally from several of my own contacts so I can only support her plea and encourage anyone who is sick to ensure they are well rested and completely recovered before returning to work- otherwise is sounds as though you remain well below parr for a long time. The other topic worth looking at in the NZ section is labour. Figures acquired under an OIA show that the lack of pickers in the Kiwifruit and Apple industries this season were as close to the number of unemployed in the regions which needed labour. Zespri’s CEO feels the answer lies in creating as many permanent jobs as possible . ACT’s spokesman considers that the Government settings need changing. I suspect that each article make important points and all areas will need to see change if there are going to be sufficient pickers and packers in 2023.

The one article I’d like to mention in the International section is the one that deals with Canada’s requirements for Romaine lettuce from the USA. This autumn lettuce imported from areas which have been the source of eColi food scares in recent years will need to demonstrate they are eColi O157H7 free.

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

The ICPR for Taiwan has been updated the need for am additional declaration for Pisum sativum and the addition of Rhagoletis pomonella to the Quarantine Pest List’

* 1. **FYI on food safety data for Indonesia**

A For Your Information (FYI) document has been released on to MPI’s password protected site providing information on recommended food safety sampling and testing for fresh and frozen horticultural produce to Indonesia. This document is only for current exporters of fresh and frozen produce to Indonesia.

* [F26/22: Indonesia: Recommended Food Safety Sampling and Testing for Fresh and Frozen Horticultural Produce](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/52351-f26-22)[PDF, 174 KB]

MPI recommends that producers of fresh and frozen produce types which are included in the CRA and have exported to Indonesia during the most recent reporting period (or wish to export to Indonesia in the near future) conduct sampling and testing of their produce for:

1. Contaminants and pesticide residues,
2. Heavy metals, and
3. Microbiological contaminants. The FYI provides more information about how the samples should be collected and analysed and provides deadlines for submission of the monitoring data

* 1. [MPI identifies opportunity for disabled in](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/news/media-releases/looking-for-loyal-workers/?utm_source=notification-email) primary industry

MPI is encouraging employers to become "disability-confident" as it strives to enhance inclusivity in the food and fibre sector. MPI, in partnership with Universal College of Learning (UCOL), recently held two apiculture taster courses for people with disabilities at the Taratahi Agricultural Training Centre in Wairarapa. [Video: Disabled youth buzzed about beekeping - Youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OoQU8a7V5B8)

Labour market statistics show that New Zealanders with disabilities are 3 times less likely to be employed than non-disabled people. “There’s a huge range of disabilities. People recovering from long-term injuries, for example, who may not identify as disabled, or those with long-term managed health conditions, mental health barriers, and neurodiversity. If you are a disability confident employer, or want to know more about what that means, get in touch with [workforceteam@mpi.govt.nz](mailto:workforceteam@mpi.govt.nz)

** MFAT**

* 1. [Monitoring Global Supply Chains: April-June 2022](https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/trade/mfat-market-reports/market-reports-global/mfat-monitoring-global-supply-chains-apriljune-2022/)

This report provides a **snapshot of how global supply chains are functioning offshore, significant international initiatives affecting supply chains, and other issues of interest to New Zealand exporters and importers. The report contains a high level overview for airfreight and sea freight and then provides comment about port activity in many of our key markets   
  
MFAT’s network of posts and the Trade Recovery Unit** have been **monitoring the operations of** [New Zealand’s sea and air freight connectivity](https://govt.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=ee12ff73e0bbcb23b01a60631&id=d5b79f7c32&e=f1812fde89), and publishing reports like this one since June 2020.



* 1. [New Customs post in Tokyo to open opportunities in North Asia](https://www.customs.govt.nz/about-us/news/media-releases/new-customs-post-in-tokyo-to-open-opportunities-in-north-asia/)

Customs has established a new Counsellor position in Japan, with the newly-appointed representative having headed to Tokyo this week. Having our new Customs Counsellor in Tokyo will help strengthen the bilateral relationship and promote collaboration to bolster economic prosperity and enhance regional security with the North Asia region,” In addition to enhancing Customs' relationships with Japan, the new Counsellor will also be responsible for maintaining a relationship with South Korea and its customs administration to generate more opportunities in the wider region,

 “Having a Customs Counsellor on the ground in the North Asian region fits with the key role Customs plays supporting New Zealand Inc. It means Kiwi exporters have someone right there in the region should they need help locating a consignment or clearing up a misunderstanding that may be holding up their goods getting to market. Customs already has representatives based in Beijing, Jakarta, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Brussels, London, Washington DC, Los Angeles, and Canberra.



1. **New Zealand News**

** Commentary**

* 1. [Nadines advice about looking after yourself](https://www.hortnz.co.nz/news-events-and-media/nadines-update/look-after-yourself/)

Covid is sweeping through again and we are also seeing various strains of the flu taking hold in some places. I have had Covid, which for me, had no real effect. But now I have caught some kind of virus, as have a number of HortNZ staff, over the past few weeks. I and some of the team had got to the stage where we were too unwell to function. However, despite the warning signs, many of us soldiered on to the point where we have no option but to take some time out.

I bet this scenario sounds familiar to a lot of you. You keep on going to the point where you can no longer function or to where someone intervenes and takes the keys to the tractor or office away.

This week’s column is a plea to heed the signs and take time out early rather than later, particularly as early intervention will probably reduce the amount of time you need ‘off’. And get back to basics, wear a mask, stay home if you are unwell, wash hands and practise good hygiene.

* 1. [‘EU FTA talks said to have threatened Zespri's single-seller status](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9446251/eu-fta-talks-said-to-have-threatened-zespri-s-single-seller-status/)

Government ministers, officials and some industry experts have dismissed claims that New Zealand should have walked away from the EU FTA talks because the deal was not up to expectations. Sources claim that there was a risk that the EU would have demanded that Zespri's single-desk seller status be dismantled, at huge expense and disruption to NZ. This had apparently been raised early on in the talks, but strongly rejected by NZ. However, there were fears that the EU may try to bring it up again.

There were also concerns about the EU wanting to impose what is known as 'patent term extensions' for agricultural chemicals, meaning NZ growers would have been forced to use European patented chemicals instead of being able to use generic brands. They were also targeting generic medicines, all of which could have cost millions of NZ dollars. As it stands, European farmer organization COPA has made clear its opposition to the FTA saying for them the deal is painful and compromises their 'sensitive' sectors.

* 1. [Government data does not reflect farm challenges’](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9445792/government-data-does-not-reflect-farm-challenges/)

According to a fruit grower and industry body, data from the NZ government on industry successes does not always reflect what is really happening on farms. Cromwell cherry grower Alan Smith said there were colossal differences between what government data showed was happening in the primary industries and what was actually happening on farms.

Smith was responding after MPI report showed the average export price of cherries rose to $24 per kilogram, and that cherry exports increased by 40.5% to $77.8 million with both higher volumes and prices contributing. The report also forecast horticulture export revenue to increase by 2% to $6.7 billion for the year. Growers did not receive anything near $24 per kilogram, Smith said. According to him, he had recently stopped supplying to export pack houses and began a pick your own business as it generated 50% more returns. After picking costs and pack house deductions he received about $8 per kilogram. This had to cover all growing costs, Smith said.

Smith was paid for the quality of his cherries, with cherries for local markets returning as little as $2 per kilogram. He kept track of supermarket prices and said these cherries that were not good enough for export markets often sold for as much as $28 per kilogram in local supermarkets.



* 1. [T&G teams up with NZ Super Fund for second time as part of Envy™ expansion](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9445786/t-g-teams-up-with-nz-super-fund-for-second-time-as-part-of-envy-expansion/)

T&G Global has continued its partnership with the New Zealand Superannuation Fund – with a second orchard sale to its rural investment manager FarmRight to help expand one of New Zealand’s best-returning premium export apples, Envy™. As a result of the deal, T&G will sell its 40-hectare Steiner orchard in Hawke’s Bay, and will be contracted to provide all post-harvest, export and marketing services for Envy grown on the orchard. It follows on from FarmRight’s acquisition of a 40-hectare orchard from T&G in 2021.

T&G Chief Executive, Gareth Edgecombe, says “Globally, there’s incredible appetite for Envy, especially in China, Vietnam, Thailand and the United States where consumer demand for Envy and its superior attributes is exceptionally strong. It’s this momentum that has Envy on track to be a billion-dollar brand by 2027,” says Gareth.

* 1. [Apple and kiwifruit growers tell thousands on jobseeker support during harvest: 'we want workers'](https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/news/hawkes-bay/129118203/apple-and-kiwifruit-growers-tell-thousands-on-jobseeker-support-during-harvest-we-want-workers" \t "_blank)

Figures obtained under OIA show there were thousands on unemployment benefits in regions crying out for workers to help bring in the harvest. During peak harvest while [apple growers across Hawke’s Bay were crying out for workers](https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/farming/cropping/127517404/growers-weary-as-harvest-crunch-time-nears-amidst-ongoing-labour-shortage), there were up to 4000 people of working age on unemployment benefits in the region. As the [kiwifruit vines continued to ripen and the next harvest event rolled round a few weeks later](https://www.stuff.co.nz/bay-of-plenty/128000961/kiwifruit-sector-prepares-for-season-of-uncertainty?rm=a), there were another 3000 across Bay of Plenty.

Kate Bryant, general manager corporate services of kiwifruit producer Seeka, said it was a shame to think there were that many people not working who might have been able to help with the harvest.

“If those numbers are accurate what an opportunity we’ve just missed out on. It’s a lost opportunity.”

Kiwifruit growers started picking the first week of March with 2000 workers harvesting at orchards across the Bay of Plenty, Coromandel and Northland. This was compared with the 4800 seasonal fixed-term workers they need for the harvest period. Crews started picking right as the Omicron variant whipped through the country. “We had vacancies and over one 10-day period we had 600 people off sick,” she said. “That just contributed to the workload and pressure that was on everyone at work.”

She acknowledged there were other barriers which may have prevented people taking up orchard work, such transport as a barrier for those travelling out of the city centres. Seeka had spent a lot of time working with organisations like MSD to organise vans to assist with this. “We had vans, but we had no people.”

Physical barriers also existed for some and while there was increased automation, this was largely limited to packhouses as it was difficult to implement in kiwifruit orchards.

Of increased wages – [some orchards this harvest offered rates of up to $60 per hour and other incentives to lure kiwifruit pickers](https://www.stuff.co.nz/bay-of-plenty/300551480/60-an-hour-to-pick-fruit-kiwifruit-industry-desperate-for-workers) – she didn’t expect to see pay checks drop anytime soon.

She said they would love to see more New Zealand pickers. “We genuinely do want Kiwis.”

Regional commissioner for Bay of Plenty and speaking on behalf of the East Coast, Mike Bryant said MSD worked closely with seasonal industries and had a “year-round approach” to support recruitment needs. It was important to match people’s skills and abilities to the right kind of work though, he said. “It needs to be recognised that this type of work is not suitable for everyone – it can be a physical job with long hours, and due to ill health, childcare, and accommodation availability, it may not work for all.”

There were other opportunities like forklift operating and administration for those less capable of the physical work.

President of the Hawke's Bay Fruitgrowers' Association, Nisbet said growers had explored every avenue to get workers. “MSD and growers are doing a great job to try and get people in, but we can only do so much,” he said, adding [people to be willing and able to do the work](https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/111019439/meeting-for-flaxmere-locals-interested-in-picking-fruit-during-labour-shortage-draws-a-crowd-of-zero) .Not everyone in the region managed to get all their harvest in. Napier grower Kelvin Taylor [earlier told Stuff he had to leave 15% to 20% of his apple crop on the trees this year,](https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/farming/128700421/tenth-of-apple-harvest-left-on-trees-with-noone-to-pick-it) as he managed to find only 15 of the 70 people needed to fill his packhouse.

* 1. [Days of relying on cheap migrant labour are gone](https://www.farmersweekly.co.nz/days-of-relying-on-cheap-migrant-labour-are-gone/)

Addressing New Zealand’s ongoing labour crisis was a key topic at the Primary Industries of NZ Summit in Auckland this month. The primary sector will have to revisit the matter of permanent jobs in the industry given the challenges of getting enough temporary workers to meet its needs, a summit was told. The primary sector needs to face up to reality when it comes to its reliance on migrant labour, and realise that those days are probably gone. This is according to Zespri chief executive Daniel Mathieson, who says the sector has to look at how it can restructure its business and take in more people on a permanent basis.

Speaking at a panel of sector leaders at the Primary Industries of New Zealand Summit in Auckland this month, he said Zespri is in discussions across the kiwifruit industry about how to progress people so they are not just turning up and leaving. He backed calls to focus on New Zealanders first, but said this would not be enough, given the industry’s growth projections.

“Demand is enormous. It is getting stronger and it won’t go back. New Zealand is seen as a great place for food products – healthy, safe and nutritious – and we are a great country to supply the world, but we are going to need people to do that,” Mathieson said. There needs to be a better balance between the industry demonstrating healthy growth for the local workforce and the number of people coming into the country.

At Zespri, labour issues are having a marked impact on product quality, he said. Zespri makes its money by being the best in the world, but the lack of people across the supply chain in the past two years means quality standards are starting to slip. “That’s actually starting to erode customer goodwill and the value we can get in the marketplace, so it’s a really serious issue,” he said.

NZ Kiwifruit Growers Incorporated (NZKGI) chair Mark Mayston says labour costs are the biggest component of growers’ bills, and one that has soared by as much as 20% in the past year.

Asked why the government is not more responsive to requests for labour, Mathieson said some self-reflection is required. While there are some amazing employers, there are also some scoundrels – and the negative often has a bigger impact. “It’s distorting the story and we have to have a look at ourselves as well, and when we see behaviour that is not right for the agribusiness sector, we have to take action against it,” he said.

* 1. [Act says real change to the New Zealand immigration system](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9447016/real-change-to-the-new-zealand-immigration-system/)

“New Zealand businesses are suffering from workforce shortages caused by an inflexible and illogical immigration system, we need real change to ensure employers can access the workers they need and hard working immigrants can contribute to New Zealand society,” says ACT’s Immigration spokesperson Dr James McDowall.

“The New Zealand economy is facing a labour crisis that’s reducing production and pushing up costs. ACT is calling on the Government to remove restrictions that may have made sense when we were short of jobs, but make no sense in a labour crisis,” says ACT’s Immigration spokesperson Dr James McDowall. “To ease the cost of living crisis, the Government should dump the labour market test, industry specific wage requirements, and transfer restrictions. Foreign workers should be able to work for accredited employers so long as they are employed consistent with New Zealand law.

“The Government’s new residency scheme ‘Green List’ leaves far too many professions out in the cold and Kiwi business owners shaking their heads. “The few professions that are eligible for residency are held back by leisurely visa processing times. “Other countries can see there’s a war for talent and they’re taking steps to raid New Zealand’s. For example, the UK recently extended the working holiday visa for Kiwis to 35 years of age. In stark contrast Immigration NZ is acting like a security guard at the border.

“In short, the whole system is a mess. It inflicts costs on struggling businesses which are then passed on to consumers as well. Our productivity levels are tanking as orchards can’t get fruit pickers. Building sites can’t get builders. Hospitals can’t get nurses. Farms can’t get milkers. There are shortages of essential workers that are creating a wage-price spiral.

“ACT is proposing bold change to shake up the immigration sector and provide immediate relief to struggling Kiwi businesses.

As an immediate fix, ACT would:

* Provide all occupations on the ‘Green List’ a fast-track to residency by removing the ‘work to residence’ divide
* Simplify the Accredited Employer Work Visa scheme by abolishing labour market tests, wage rules, and make it easier for migrants to move between accredited employers.

“This will put the power in the hands of employers and allow them to get the workers they need now.

“It’s a bold change, but it’s absolutely necessary to address the labour crisis. We need this change to make our society productive again and to let businesses thrive.”

* 1. [NZ’s Tasman Seeds Co. breeding hybrid variety in U.S.](https://onionbusiness.com/nzs-tasman-seeds-co-breeding-hybrid-variety-in-u-s/)

Tasman Seeds has an employee in the U.S. “to help develop a local breeding program to produce our hybrid seed here, which will pull the seed genetics from a late intermediate to a true long day, while preserving the traditionally outstanding storability of the Pukekohe varieties.”

Robert added “They, the family of PLK NZ varieties, were bred to hold up on the month-long sea voyages required for NZ export. Historically all the breeding has been done in New Zealand, which as I mentioned creates a late intermediate onion (due to its latitude) that works great as a transplant but is problematic for direct seeding in the NW.”. By breeding locally in the Treasure Valley and Western Oregon, we will produce varieties that will work if early conditions are not ideal and planting is delayed.

* 1. [Full potential of walnut industry yet to be cracked](https://www.hortnz.co.nz/news-events-and-media/media-releases/full-potential-of-walnut-industry-yet-to-be-cracked/)

Setting up a walnut orchard is a long-term investment, but the industry is young and full of potential, Heather North says. In 1998 Heather formed a business partnership with Dr Clive Marsh, starting Lightfoot Walnuts on a 16ha plot near Lincoln in Canterbury. They began planting that same year, with the bulk of trees planted in 2001 and 2002, finishing by the end of 2003.

The article talks about the set up their business, the varieties they have planted, what needs to be done to grow a good crop, the Canterbury Walnut collective ( with 50 Growers) and the future of the Industry.

** Bits and pieces**

* 1. [Cost of groceries drives food prices up 6.6% on last year](https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/129260005/cost-of-groceries-drives-food-prices-up-66-on-last-year)

Data from Stats NZ shows [grocery food prices were 7.6% higher last month](https://www.stats.govt.nz/news/annual-food-price-increase-remains-high-at-6-6-percent) compared to June 2021, with milk, potato chips and yoghurt seeing the largest increases. Meat, poultry, and fish prices were up 6.8%, while fruit and vegetable prices rose 5.6% and prices for non-alcoholic drinks increased by 4.8%.

In the last month a 4.9% increase in fruit and vegetable prices was the largest contributor to the monthly movement. After adjusting for seasonal effects, fruit and vegetable prices were up 0.7%, indicating that most of the movement in fruit and vegetables is due to seasonal effects.

* 1. [Overseer faces evolution over revolution](https://www.farmersweekly.co.nz/overseer-faces-evolution-over-revolution/)

Overseer chief executive Jill Gower says changes to the software will be incremental, rather than a complete makeover of the system. Farmers and consultants concerned that a review of Overseer may see the software dumped for a new system have been assured by the new chief executive that the longstanding nutrient programme will not be wiped for a replacement. [Jill Gower](https://www.farmersweekly.co.nz/new-chief-executive-appointed-at-overseer/) spent three years as Overseer company secretary before assuming the interim CEO role in February and is now in the permanent role.

With about a month’s worth of review work still to complete, Gower said if a new modelling system is required it will be invented, but she sees no fundamental change in the way Overseer’s proposed reiteration will work. Overseer’s  review comes after a [stinging report from a scientific panel](https://www.farmersweekly.co.nz/science-heads-share-overseer-concerns/) on the software almost a year ago. *The article looks at some of the issues that were identified and what has been found in the review*.

Overseer subscribers have borne a hike in annual subscription rates over the past 12 months that has almost doubled the cost to about $680 a year, an increase Gower reassured them is not going to be repeated.

She is unsure about the approach councils will take in using [Overseer](https://www.farmersweekly.co.nz/overseer-review-sees-plan-audits-on-hold/) in the future when setting nutrient regulations. At this point there are several regional councils around New Zealand eyeing the review process, having employed Overseer to help set nutrient limits for farming. She said she takes comfort in the fact that councils have continued to work with Overseer as the review progresses,  but acknowledged there could be potential for another model to evolve for council use. “We have always talked about there being a suite of tools, it does not have to be a binary argument,” said Gower.

The recommended changes to Overseer will be passed to a government technical advisory group for assessment later this year.

* 1. [NZ agritech's bright future](https://www.ruralnewsgroup.co.nz/rural-news/rural-general-news/nz-agritech-s-bright-future)

O'Connor says agritech is vital to New Zealand's efforts to produce high quality, high value food and fibre products. A recently released NZ Agritech Insights Report 2022 showed that of the country's Top 200 technology exporters - around 10% or 22 companies - were responsible for $1.6 billion worth of business.

"Agritech is critical to the country's efforts to produce high quality, high value food and fibre products with a lighter touch on the environment," says Agriculture Minister Damien O'Connor. "It is not only contributes to economic growth but is also vital to the prosperity and wellbeing of our regions - through high value employment and the products and services they provide to our primary industries."

Encouragingly, the report delivers a snapshot showing that NZ's agritech sector delivers about 11.4% of the country's Technology Investment Network' 200 revenue, with its $1.6b contribution - up $118 million on the previous year.

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 **Biosecurity**

* 1. [MPI hoping cold winter curbs fall armyworm infestations](https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/country/471195/mpi-hoping-cold-winter-curbs-fall-armyworm-infestations)

MPI says the crop-killing fall armyworm has now been confirmed at 26 properties nationwide in six regions. The first one was in Tauranga, we have a number in the Waikato, a couple in Auckland, in Waitara in Taranaki, in Gisborne, Northland and potentially one in Canterbury.

MPI says eradicating the pest is very unlikely, but early research showed our cold winters could reduce its numbers and give it less time to do damage. f it doesn’t survive the winter here, we face the risk of continued invasion from Australia, because it's likely to have arrived here from a wind event from Australia, so we continue to have that problem. But because we are generally a more temperate climate, even if it does survive the winter, it's highly unlikely to have the number of life cycles that it has in warmer climates, which cause the major problems from fall armyworm in warmer parts of the world, where it could have 10 or 11 life cycles in a season. In New Zealand, three or four life cycles is probably the maximum we're going to get." *A similar story but with more detail can be found at*[*Understanding the threat of fall armyworm in New Zealand*](https://www.hortnz.co.nz/news-events-and-media/media-releases/understanding-the-threat-of-fall-armyworm-in-new-zealand/)

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The bad news is that fall armyworm has a taste for more than 350 plant species. In particular, it likes maize and corn, but also a wide variety of other production plants including those in the brassica and the nightshade families – tomatoes, potatoes, capsicums and aubergines, as well as asparagus, beans, peas, beetroot and lettuce.

Biosecurity New Zealand director of readiness and response, John Walsh, says first and foremost, they are encouraging farmers and growers to keep a good look out on their properties. “If they find it, we are helping them to figure out what to do about it. This can involve the removal of any crop in which it has been found, which has the effect of killing the worm. Or else spraying the crop with insecticide.”

MPI is also working on information and advice for growers and gardeners, in the event fall armyworm is found on their property.



1. **International news**

**Comment**

* 1. **GAIN reports**

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

**European Commission Authorizes one GE Crop for Import** [European Commission Authorizes one GE Crop for Import\_Brussels USEU\_European Union\_BE2022-0004](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=European%20Commission%20Authorizes%20one%20GE%20Crop%20for%20Import_Brussels%20USEU_European%20Union_BE2022-0004)

 **Regulatory**

* 1. [New USDA database will replace three import manuals](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9445505/new-usda-database-will-replace-three-import-manuals/)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has developed a new database called “Agricultural Commodity Import Requirements” (ACIR). ACIR gives users a simple search interface for finding and displaying import requirements for agricultural commodities. It will become the official location for import requirements for commodities currently found in the Fruit and Vegetable Import Requirements (FAVIR) database and three import manuals:

* Cut Flowers and Greenery Manual
* Seeds Not for Planting Manual
* Miscellaneous Processed Products Manual

On September 30, 2022, the FAVIR web page will redirect users to the ACIR landing page, and FAVIR will no longer be available on the APHIS website.

ACIR provides a single source to search for and retrieve entry requirements for imported commodities. ACIR information includes treatment schedules, inspection procedures, and other necessary information to determine the admissibility without the need to access multiple manuals. Users can check ACIR to see if they need to apply for a permit. APHIS’ eFile system for permit, license, and registration applications uses the ACIR import requirement data when processing plant and plant product permit applications.

* 1. [Israel and UAE seek joint ventures in Africa](https://www.fruitnet.com/eurofruit/israel-and-uae-seek-joint-ventures-in-africa/246758.article)

### The foreign ministries of the UAE and Israel are working on a shared database to help their companies take advantage of opportunities in Africa, including in agriculture and water. The foreign ministries will reportedly provide assistance to the companies in dealing with the different governments on the continent.

Trade between Israel and the UAE has rocketed by 438 per cent to more than US$1bn in 2021 following the signing of the Abraham Accords in 2020, and the free trade deal agreed in May is expected to lead to a further boost. “The past two years have seen a significant leap in mutual trade, and such business cooperation strengthens ties between economies and adds a dimension of depth to all relations between the two countries,” The project is set to focus on ventures in Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, Côte d’Ivoire and Senegal. According to Ravia-Zadok, Africa will be home to around a quarter of the world’s population by 2050, with its population forecast to rise from 1.3bn people in 2020 to 2.5bn.

 **Business/ Industry**

* 1. [Droughts in Europe in July 2022: Almost half of the EU and UK territory at risk](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9446707/droughts-in-europe-in-july-2022-almost-half-of-the-eu-and-uk-territory-at-risk/)

The European Commission’s Joint Research Centre today published the “Drought in Europe - July 2022” report, an assessment of Europe’s drought situation based on the European Drought Observatory.The analysis of the evolution and impact of the prolonged drought in the EU shows that a staggering portion of Europe is currently exposed to warning (44% of EU+UK) and alert (9% of EU+UK) drought levels, associated with soil moisture deficit in combination with vegetation stress.

The drought in much of Europe is critical as the winter-spring precipitation deficit (19% of the 1991-2020 average across all warning areas in EU+UK, and 22% in areas under drought alert) was exacerbated by early heatwaves. River discharge in multiple countries is severely affected, with stored water volumes also depleted. Altogether, this may require extraordinary water and energy management measures to be taken in affected countries.

Most affected are Italian lowlands, in southern, central and western France, in central Germany and eastern Hungary, Portugal and in northern Spain. Water and heat stress are driving crop yields down from a previously already negative outlook for cereals and other crops. France, Romania, Spain, Portugal and Italy will need to deal with this reduced crop yield. Germany, Poland, Hungary, Slovenia and Croatia are also impacted.

And more detail in [Europe’s big dry](https://www.politico.eu/article/europe-temperature-heat-wave-drought/)

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The degree to which climate change is driving or exacerbating this particular drought is not clear.

Such analysis is challenging, said Friederike Otto, a senior lecturer at Imperial College London and one of the world’s leading experts in finding the fingerprints of global warming on our weather. Still, she believes global warming was behind an increase in droughts across much of Europe, especially in the Mediterranean. Humans also play a role by over-stretching water resources, said Otto. “A huge part of the problem is draining of land.”

* 1. [EU delegation in Vietnam and Singapore](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9446815/eu-delegation-in-vietnam-and-singapore/)

A European Commission delegation visited Vietnam and Singapore in recent days. It was led by the Commissioner for Agriculture, Poland's Janusz Czesław Wojciechowski, who visited the two destinations in an effort to revive business relations, including trades in the fruit and vegetable sector.

"The purpose of the Commission's visit was to revive and reconnect relations, intensified with the 2019 agreements and then loosened because of the pandemic,”. “Vietnam is growing a lot. I envision it as the China of 15 years ago, with a low average age and low incomes. However, there is an affluent 10 percent of the population, about 10 million people, who are looking for Italian products and have high spending power.”

By contrast, the situation in the city-state Singapore is different. "The residents here, about 5.5 million, have an income twice that of Western countries like Italy. They import 90 percent of food resources and have high regard for Italy. Our productions are seen as high quality and secure in terms of health, thanks to our strict controls." During the visit to Singapore, "I realized that high-quality fruits and vegetables and food products cost 4-5 times more than ours. To them, exotic fruit is Italian fruit, since what is exotic to us is local to them. A different perspective."

 **Food safety**

* 1. [Canadian Food Inspection Agency announces 2022 import requirements for US romaine lettuce](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9445519/canadian-food-inspection-agency-announces-fall-2022-import-requirements-for-us-romaine-lettuce/)

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has announced the fall 2022 import requirements for US romaine lettuce. The requirements are the same as fall 2021, but the enforcement timeframe has shifted slightly. Romaine lettuce and products containing romaine lettuce (I.e., bagged salads) produced in the four Salinas Valley counties of Santa Cruz, Santa Clara, San Benito, and Monterey must “submit an attestation form and Certificates of Analysis for each shipment to demonstrate that the romaine lettuce does not contain detectable levels of E. coli O157:H7.”

Products originating from other areas of the US must “declare that the product does not originate from [the] counties of Santa Cruz, Santa Clara, San Benito and Monterey in the Salinas Valley, California, US” This declaration can take the form of a letter printed on company letterhead.



* 1. [GRI opens Brussels office to boost EU impact](https://www.fruitnet.com/eurofruit/gri-opens-brussels-office-to-boost-eu-impact/246719.article)

The world’s leading sustainability reporting standards setter, Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), has boosted its EU presence with the opening of an office in Brussels.The office is set to act as a hub for stakeholder engagement, GRI stated, including with the European Commission and Parliament, multinationals, EU-focused business and environmental organisations, and civil society groups.

“It opens at a key stage in the progress of the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD),” GRI explained, “which from 2024 will mean more than 50,000 EU companies are required to disclose detailed sustainability information.” GRI is committed to playing its part, working with all stakeholders, to advance transparency and responsible business – in the EU and around the world.”

  **Health**

* 1. [Fruit as a snack could be good for our mental health](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9445802/fruit-as-a-snack-could-be-good-for-our-mental-health/)

In a recent study, published in the British Journal of Nutrition, people who consumed a diet rich in fruits and vegetables reported a more positive psychological state and were less likely to have symptoms of depression, stress and anxiety compared to those who do not eat these nutrient-rich foods as regularly.

While there are a lot of factors that contribute to mental health outcomes, the study suggests nutrition could play a role. Vitamin C, which is found in many fruits, provides key protection to our organs, including the brain,

Scientists found that people who regularly consume nutrient-poor foods—processed and sweet foods like chips and cookies—were more likely to experience “everyday mental lapses” in the form of low productivity and forgetfulness which could affect work and home life. Additionally, they had an increased risk of depression, anxiety, and stress.

 **Innovation**

* 1. [New study uses AI to help find downy mildew](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9446294/new-study-uses-ai-to-help-find-downy-mildew/)

In newly published research, the researcher used spectral reflectance, the energy a surface reflects at specific wavelengths, of plant canopies and machine learning to quickly and efficiently detect downy mildew in several stages of the disease reports on [www.theapopkavoice.com](https://www.theapopkavoice.com/stories/ai-helps-detect-watermelon-disease-quickly-accurately,15576).  The team successfully detected downy mildew in several stages of severity. For the next steps in they want to develop a simple and inexpensive drone-based sensor to improve the detection of downy mildew in watermelon plants.

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