

**PMAC weekly update 22nd to 29th October**

1. **Government agencies**: ICPR changes; New regulations proposed to strengthen food recalls and manage risks; Report shows opportunities to leverage food and beverage exports with tourism; WTO Notifications
2. **New Zealand News:**  Food and fibre fund open for agribusiness; Top primary sector employers shortlisted; New Zealand ratifies CPTPP during trade minister’s trip to Ottawa and Washington; NZ first country to ratify PACER Plus trade deal; Trade agreements: good things come in threes; Will increased compliance promote growth?; Primary Sector Council an expensive white elephant?; Farmers urged to consider partial kiwifruit conversion; Apple and stonefruit industry members successfully broker meeting between MPI and US facility; Talking to plants big potential market for Kiwi high-tech company Autogrow; Waikato’s Zealong tea brews another global winner; New Zealand avocados crack Chinese market; New cherry orchard is a vote of faith in sector’; The Apple Press wins New Zealand Food Award; Dry spring leads to water warnings in New Zealand; Study links glyphosate to antibiotic resistance; Judge upholds jury's ruling that Roundup caused dying man's cancer; Potato mop top virus here to stay
3. **International news:** GAIN reports; Regulatory; EU parliament urged to reverse de facto ban on gene-edited crops; BASF licenses CRISPR-Cpf1 genome editing technology; Chile: 2017/18 fruit and vegetables export season – record numbers; Barcoded apple more important than many realise; Not enough fruits, vegetables grown to feed the planet'; Chile: Scientists keep fruit from turning black

***Editors comments***

*The world continues to look unsettled and I suspect you must be an optimist to make your way in the world today. Some of these sentiments are portrayed in the article on a new cherry orchard in Central Otago. This week sees articles on several bigger picture items that have an influence on exporters.*

*On a positive note CTPP, Pacer and RCEP are all progressing well and will provide a good base for future trade. Top scientists from 85 European plant and life sciences organisations are asking their regulators to revisit their decision that Cripsr produced seedlings be considered genetic modification- let’s hope such an united approach will result in a change allowing breeding of new varieties that can cope with climate change to continue and an EU population happy to consume the new varieties*

*On a less positive note Mike Chapman discusses the tsunami of regulations that affect growers (and exporters) and calls on Government agencies to work towards a single auditor that can deal with all assurances rather than an auditor for each requirement. And then there is the debate about glyphosate which has been rumbling away since May. Now there is suggestion that it may increase the antibacterial resistance of bacteria. Apparently so do a couple of surfactants used in food production – but the court of popular press is likely to miss those details.*

1. **Agency news**



* 1. **ICPR changes**

The ICPR for Japan has been updated with new requirements updated for fresh grapes. For the full ICPR see [Importing Countries Phytosanitary Requirements](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/law-and-policy/requirements/importing-countries-phytosanitary-requirements/)

* 1. **New regulations proposed to strengthen food recalls and manage risks**

New Zealand Food Safety last week announced it is seeking feedback on proposals to strengthen food recalls and improve risk-based plans and programmes. The document sets clear expectations for food businesses in preparation for and during a recall, as well as providing more certainty by making the food safety requirements clearer and more accessible to all parties involved in the food system.

This is about a business's ability to quickly trace and recall their products.  Food businesses need to maintain readily accessible records of their food inputs and outputs. Another area identified for improvement is risk-based plans and programmes – the key tool food businesses use to manage their food safety and suitability risks."

Consultation on the proposals to strengthen food recalls and risk-based plans and programmes is open until 5pm on 7 December 2018.

 A discussion paper that sets out proposals for potential regulations is among the consultation documents. [Find out more about the consultation and have your say](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/news-and-resources/consultations/proposals-to-strengthen-food-recalls-and-risk-based-plans-and-programmes/) [Full article available here](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/news-and-resources/media-releases/new-regulations-proposed-to-strengthen-food-recalls-and-manage-risks/)

* 1. **Report shows opportunities to leverage food and beverage exports with tourism**

The New Zealand Food & Agri Tourism Industry Insights Report, a collaborative project between ANZ and MPI's Economic Intelligence Unit was released last week. The report builds on New Zealand's understanding of food and beverage tourism and opportunities for our primary industries.

This report helps to build our understanding of the types of tourists that value quality food and beverages. By having a better understanding of food tourism we can turn the growing number of tourists visiting New Zealand into consumers of our primary sector products. Our research shows not only do tourists seek out great food and drink experiences, they also seek it out when they return home. There are opportunities for businesses in our primary sector, particularly in the regions, to tap more into food tourism and also connect more directly with consumers.

The report highlights some challenging areas where there is scope for improvement. For example, New Zealand is not well recognised as a food and beverage destination, and some travellers perceive a lack of quality, variety, and high cost.  Businesses can help to address this by focusing on delivering high-value, quality products, as well as great tourism experiences. [Full article available here](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/news-and-resources/media-releases/report-shows-opportunities-to-leverage-food-and-beverage-exports-with-tourism/)

* 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 so that they can potentially make a submission to the notifying country. Changes notified over the last week include:

* Canada, USA and Korea – MRL’s
* Korea – addition of 7 quarantine pests
* Taiwan – Food packaging
* Ukraine - food safety requirements
* Vietnam Inspection requirements for food safety of imported food of plant origin

The links to these notifications can be found below

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Document symbol** | **Notifying Member** | **Notified document title** | **English** |
| G/SPS/N/CAN/1182/Add.1 | Canada | Established Maximum Residue Limit: Sethoxydim | [EN](https://docs.wto.org/imrd/directdoc.asp?DDFDocuments/t/G/SPS/NCAN1182A1.DOCX) |
| G/SPS/N/CAN/1183/Add.1 | Canada | Established Maximum Residue Limit: Mandipropamid | [EN](https://docs.wto.org/imrd/directdoc.asp?DDFDocuments/t/G/SPS/NCAN1183A1.DOCX) |
| G/SPS/N/CAN/1184/Add.1 | Canada | Established Maximum Residue Limit: Flubendiamide | [EN](https://docs.wto.org/imrd/directdoc.asp?DDFDocuments/t/G/SPS/NCAN1184A1.DOCX) |
| G/SPS/N/CAN/1185/Add.1 | Canada | Established Maximum Residue Limit: Trifloxystrobin | [EN](https://docs.wto.org/imrd/directdoc.asp?DDFDocuments/t/G/SPS/NCAN1185A1.DOCX) |
| G/SPS/N/CAN/1186/Add.1 | Canada | Established Maximum Residue Limit: Quinclorac | [EN](https://docs.wto.org/imrd/directdoc.asp?DDFDocuments/t/G/SPS/NCAN1186A1.DOCX) |
| G/SPS/N/CAN/1189/Add.1 | Canada | Established Maximum Residue Limit: Rimsulfuron | [EN](https://docs.wto.org/imrd/directdoc.asp?DDFDocuments/t/G/SPS/NCAN1189A1.DOCX) |
| G/SPS/N/CAN/1190/Add.1 | Canada | Established Maximum Residue Limit: Pyroxasulfone | [EN](https://docs.wto.org/imrd/directdoc.asp?DDFDocuments/t/G/SPS/NCAN1190A1.DOCX) |
| G/SPS/N/CAN/1212 | Canada | Notice of Health Canada's Proposal to Enable the Use of Protein-glutaminase from Chryseobacterium proteolyticum AE-PG as a Food Enzyme in Various Standardized and Unstandardized Foods – Reference Number: NOP/ADP-0030 | [EN](https://docs.wto.org/imrd/directdoc.asp?DDFDocuments/t/G/SPS/NCAN1212.DOCX) |
| G/SPS/N/KOR/212/Add.11 | Korea, Republic of | Amendment of Quarantine Pest List | [EN](https://docs.wto.org/imrd/directdoc.asp?DDFDocuments/t/G/SPS/NKOR212A11.DOCX) |
| G/SPS/N/KOR/248/Add.15 | Korea, Republic of | Add of prohibited hosts | [EN](https://docs.wto.org/imrd/directdoc.asp?DDFDocuments/t/G/SPS/NKOR248A15.DOCX) |
| G/SPS/N/TPKM/464/Add.1 | Chinese Taipei | Import inspection requirement for commodities classified under nine specific CCC codes if they are used for foods, food additives, food utensils, food containers or packaging | [EN](https://docs.wto.org/imrd/directdoc.asp?DDFDocuments/t/G/SPS/NTPKM464A1.DOCX) |
| G/SPS/N/UKR/129 | Ukraine | The draft Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine "On approval of the procedure for establishment of the special requirements for import of food products and feed" | [EN](https://docs.wto.org/imrd/directdoc.asp?DDFDocuments/t/G/SPS/NUKR129.DOCX) |
| G/SPS/N/USA/2865/Add.1 | United States of America | Food Additives Permitted for Direct Addition to Food for Human Consumption; Styrene; Final Rule | [EN](https://docs.wto.org/imrd/directdoc.asp?DDFDocuments/t/G/SPS/NUSA2865A1.DOCX) |
| G/SPS/N/USA/3028 | United States of America | Flumioxazin; Pesticide Tolerance. Final Rule | [EN](https://docs.wto.org/imrd/directdoc.asp?DDFDocuments/t/G/SPS/NUSA3028.DOCX) |
| G/SPS/N/USA/3029 | United States of America | Receipt of Several Pesticide Petitions Filed for Residues of Pesticide Chemicals in or on Various Commodities. Notice of filing of petitions and request for comment | [EN](https://docs.wto.org/imrd/directdoc.asp?DDFDocuments/t/G/SPS/NUSA3029.DOCX) |
| G/SPS/N/VNM/104 | Viet Nam | Circular on State food safety inspection of plant origin exports | [EN](https://docs.wto.org/imrd/directdoc.asp?DDFDocuments/t/G/SPS/NVNM104.DOCX) |

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1. **New Zealand News**



* 1. **Food and fibre fund open for agribusiness**

The Sustainable Food & Fibre Futures fund is now open to invest $40 million per annum in projects which can demonstrate they will deliver benefits beyond the applicants to wider New Zealand.

Fund investments and arrangements will vary . At one end of the scale for small grants of up to $100k will be funded for up to year while large partnerships applying for over $5 million can run for 5 years or more . In terms of co-investment:

* Community projects will usually need to provide at least 20% of costs.
* Profit-driven projects will need to cover 60% or more of costs.

 For full details see SFF Futures [Full article available here](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/food-and-fibre-fund-open-agribusiness)

* 1. **Top primary sector employers shortlisted**

Last week Minister of Agriculture Damien O’Connor announced the 5 finalists in each of the 5 categories in the first Primary Industries Good Employer Awards. For Horticulture:

* James Trevelyan of Trevelyan's is a finalist for the Safe And Healthy Work Environments
* Aaron Kurei of Te Kaha Gold Spraying Limited is a finalist in the Maori Agribusiness section
* Bruce Beaton, Kristen Nash and Maurice Windle of T&G Global Pipfruit and James Trevelyan of Trevelyan's are finalists in the Ministers award

 [Full article available here](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/top-primary-sector-employers-shortlisted)

* 1. **New Zealand ratifies CPTPP during trade minister’s trip to Ottawa and Washington**

Last week was a big week for New Zealand in trade and investment. The ban on foreign buyers of existing homes took effect on Monday. This cleared the way for us to pass the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans‑Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) legislation. This in turn allowed us to ratify the agreement. This takes the number of countries that have ratified the CPTPP to four.

CPTPP will come into effect 60 days after six countries ratify the deal. New Zealand joins Japan, Mexico and Singapore that have already ratified. Australia and Canada are expected to join very soon. That means the tariff reductions and increased exports will begin very early in 2019.  [Full article available here](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/new-zealand-ratifies-cptpp-during-trade-minister%E2%80%99s-trip-ottawa-and-washington)

* 1. **NZ first country to ratify PACER Plus trade deal**

New Zealand has completed its domestic procedures to ratify the PACER Plus trade and development agreement. “We have notified Tonga as Depositary for PACER Plus. New Zealand is the first country to ratify the agreement,” Trade and Export Growth Minister David Parker said. “New Zealand, together with Australia, is providing significant development assistance to Pacific signatories to support their efforts to ratify in coming months. This reflects New Zealand’s long held view that PACER Plus is primarily a development FTA.”

PACER Plus comes into force 60 days after at least eight of the eleven signatories have ratified. The other signatories are: Australia, the Cook Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. [Full article available here](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/nz-first-country-ratify-pacer-plus-trade-deal-0)

**General**

* 1. **Trade agreements: good things come in threes**

Trade works opinion piece This last week has been a hectic but productive week for New Zealand trade policy, with Parliamentary ratification of two important agreements – the Asia-Pacific mega-regional CPTPP, and the Pacific-focused PACER Plus agreement – and a negotiating session for a third big deal, the Asia-focused Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership.  At a time of otherwise fairly dismal prospects for the global trading system, progress on these three agreements shows that many countries are still committed to creating the best possible opportunities for sustained prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region.”

It is expected that the CPTPP will enter into force (for the first six or seven nations, at least) by late this year or early next year. The underpinning ethos for CPTPP is a desire to create the best possible environment for dynamic modern business, including by enabling global value chains, the digital economy and cross-border investment.   CPTPP writes a powerful set of regional rules to enhance trade, including by trying to sweep away the “grit in the trade machine”, non-tariff barriers such as red tape and unscientific standards, as well as fostering small business opportunities.

Sustainable development, resilience and inclusive growth are central to a new kind of trade agreement, [PACER Plus](https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/trade/free-trade-agreements/free-trade-agreements-concluded-but-not-in-force/pacer/), signed by New Zealand, Australia and nine Pacific Island nations last year.

The agreement provides building blocks for greater prosperity for New Zealand’s Pacific neighbours, by building capability, improving opportunities, including for regional workers, and putting in place more predictable trade rules.  Many Pacific nations face formidable challenges including small scale, limited resources, isolation and climatic vulnerability.   The agreement enables members to integrate more successfully into regional trade thanks to capacity-building aid, while providing flexibility to open up their own markets only very gradually.

For New Zealand businesses (including those from the many Pacific Island communities established here), the agreement will provide greater certainty, less red tape and new opportunities, including for services and investment, in Pacific markets.   The deal also ensures that New Zealand and Australia can maintain a level playing field with others in the region who are negotiating their own trade deals with Pacific Island nations.

## Mind the gap: RCEP. This mega-regional deal encompasses diverse economies accounting for over 40 percent of world GDP, including China, India, the ten-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Japan, Korea, Australia and of course New Zealand.  Participants met in Auckland this week to try to chip away at remaining differences – of which there are still plenty.  RCEP members’ political leaders have made clear that they would like to see “substantial conclusion” of an ambitious deal by the end of this year.

It seems likely that even if this target can be met, there will still be details to hammer out next year – but the effort is certainly worthwhile. This will provide further ballast against the disruptive impacts of the so-called “trade war”, but also, importantly for New Zealand, to give us a solid trade footing with India, with which we have not yet concluded any trade agreements or deals. [Full article available here](http://www.tradeworks.org.nz/three-trade-agreements/)

* 1. **Will increased compliance promote growth?**

*A good article written by Mike Chapman re the issues with ever increasing compliance requirements for growers .* --- Increased regulation is (not always) a backward step. There are some essential environmental and food safety requirements that are needed to ensure sustainability and the production of best quality produce. The key issue is how this is achieved. Many growers are facing the prospect of an endless stream of inspectors and auditors coming up their drive, every day of the week, taking valuable time away from their prime job of growing food. They are facing the prospect of conflicting requirements that by default, becomes their job to fix. This leaves little time to grow healthy produce. It is truly the age of the bureaucrat.

One option Hort NZ is actively pursuing is the “one auditor up the drive”. This can be achieved by horticulture’s good agriculture practice (GAP) programmes. The one operated by New Zealand growers, but internationally benchmarked, is called NZGAP. If the collective “we”, including government and industry, does not make it time-efficient for growers and farmers to satisfy the increasing number of rules and, if we do not make processes and rules straight forward and enabling, then people will vote with their feet and we will be left with no choice but to import our food. [Full article available here](http://www.hortidaily.com/article/9036032/new-zealand-will-increased-compliance-promote-growth/)

* 1. **Primary Sector Council an expensive white elephant?**

Six months down the track and with an estimated $250,000 of taxpayer funds already spent, Ag Minister Damien O’Connor’s Primary Sector Council (PSC) is looking increasingly like an irrelevant, costly, white elephant.

Investigations earlier in the year by *Rural News* – under the Official Information Act (OIA) – revealed annual costs for the PSC would exceed $500,000. However, that was only for administration and the costs of the running the council; it did not include any estimate of the cost of external consultants – at least two lots have already been engaged. The PSC had met five times up to September 19 but it has been plagued by absenteeism and has progressed little in developing ideas. [Full article available here](https://www.ruralnewsgroup.co.nz/rural-news/rural-general-news/primary-sector-council-an-expensive-white-elephant?utm_source=Rural+News+Group+Weekly+E-Newsletter&utm_campaign=c2e346dbc5-Rural_News_Group_Bulletin_16_January_2018_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_fb79f8bfe8-c2e346dbc5-59798541&ct=t(Rural_News_Group_Bulletin_16_January_2018_COPY_01))

* 1. **Farmers urged to consider partial kiwifruit conversion**

Growing confidence in the kiwifruit sector is providing new opportunities for pastoral farmers to tap into, giving them the opportunity to be part of the horticultural success story without necessarily having to sell their entire farm to do it. For farmers in parts of the upper and central North Island the improvement in returns can offer a double-barrelled opportunity to have a foot in both the horticultural and pastoral sector, spreading their risk, optimising their property's return and even helping inject some additional capital value into it.

*The balance of this article makes a case for farmers to consider putting a portion of their farm into kiwifruit* [Full article available here](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/the-country/news/article.cfm?c_id=16&objectid=12147118)

**Industry news**

* 1. **Apple and stonefruit industry members successfully broker meeting between MPI and US facility**

The nursery and fruit-growing companies at the heart of the legal action against MPI over seized plants and plant material have been working hard to facilitate the rebuilding of the relationship between MPI and the USA-based Clean Plant Centre North West (CPCNW). This facility has supplied New Zealand orchards and nurseries with new plant varieties for over 30 years and plays a critical role in the future of the New Zealand apple and stonefruit export industry.

Industry member and owner of McGrath Nurseries, Andy McGrath is encouraged that the group and the industry has been able to bring the parties together and hopes that a meeting of the minds will be the first step towards the rapid reaccreditation of CPCNW. The group will continue to liaise with both parties with the aim of achieving an outcome that will be in the best interests of all in the New Zealand apple and stonefruit industry. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9036051/apple-and-stonefruit-industry-members-successfully-broker-meeting-between-mpi-and-us-facility/)

* 1. **Big potential market for Kiwi high-tech company Autogrow**

Data science company Autogrow is developing artificial intelligence so the world's indoor commercial growers can talk to an avatar about the health and progress of their crops.

Not content with lifting export destinations for its high-tech automated growing systems from 14 to 45 countries in the past three years, the Auckland-based agtech company is setting up shop in America's fresh produce-growing heart, California. Chief executive, director and shareholder Darryn Keiller will by Christmas shift house to California's Bay Area, joining four Autogrow staff already working in the West Coast state.

The company has been around for 25 years but "Autogrow leapt out of the box around 2011 when it developed Multigrow, which was launched in 2012 and is still sold today. Multigrow is a flexible system that can be configured to perform climate, control, fertigation, dosing, batching and irrigation. "Through that system they were able to gather lots of data."

These days Autogrow routinely collects about 40 trillion data points from its operations, Keiller says.

He said the data measures everything from temperature and humidity to the alkaline or acidity of water supply, weather factors, wind direction, and solar radiation levels. "We track those data points and use them to inform the technology about what it needs to do to feed plants, water, control the temperature etc. We can predict what's going to happen with the fruit – whether it's healthy or not, when it's ready for harvest."

Autogrow is one of only six companies in the world using this type of tech in the controlled environment area, says Keiller. But it would have needed to find US$100 million to distribute its technology without an established tech platform partner. Four partners were considered: Google, IBM, Microsoft and Amazon Web Services. Autogrow went with Amazon.

"The idea is you pull all that data up into the Cloud then it runs through Autogrow's data processing engine, our proprietary IP. We develop that tool that sits on Amazon and it allows us to deploy it to any farm anywhere in the world as long as they have Internet connectivity."We can take their data, process it, and return it as useful information to say what is happening with their crop and their farm production. That's very powerful."

Growers buy the hardware and subscribe to Autogrow's technologies suite, which is "open platform" meaning it is designed to integrate with other operating systems. The next frontier for Autogrow is AI and as usual, it's not hanging about. It aims to be the first agtech company in the world to commercialise voice technology that allows growers to ask an avatar about the state of a crop. [Full article available here](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/the-country/news/article.cfm?c_id=16&objectid=12149496)

**Crop news**

* 1. **Waikato’s Zealong tea brews another global winner**

For the second consecutive year New Zealand’s only commercial tea estate, Zealong, has won the top prize in its class at the Global Tea Championships. Zealong competed against 140 teas from 16 countries in the competition held in Colorado, winning the silver medal in the pan-fired green category of the loose leaf tea contest (no gold medal was awarded). Zealong General Manager, Gigi Crawford, said the award confirms the high calibre of tea grown in New Zealand and means the tea will again appear in the October 2018 Global Tea Buyers Guide. [Full article available here](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/business/news/article.cfm?c_id=3&objectid=12147223)

* 1. **New Zealand avocados crack Chinese market**

New Zealand's avocado industry is thinking about the next step after a breakthrough in exports to China. Several years of trial shipments and rigorous testing procedures led to the first commercial shipments in early OctoberIn the 2018 season, New Zealand expects to send around 50,000 trays of Class I fruit to China, but industry leaders says that it is just the beginning. The aim is to be exporting 500,000 trays within five or six years. [News.cgtn.com](https://news.cgtn.com/news/3d3d514d3563444d30457a6333566d54/share_p.html) reports that much will depend on good marketing. New Zealand avocados will cost double what Chinese consumers currently pay for fruit from South American countries like Mexico and Chile. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9036081/new-zealand-avocados-crack-chinese-market/)

* 1. **New cherry orchard is a vote of faith in sector’**

A new 12 hectares cherry orchard, being set up by the company 45 South out of Cromwell, is seen by some as a vote of confidence in the future of Central Otago’s cherry industry. 45 South owns or manages at least 150 hectares of cherry orchards in the Cromwell area, producing 30-40% of New Zealand’s export cherries.

Now it is planting a new 12 ha block on the slopes above Lowburn on Lake Dunstan. General manager Tim Jones, who is also the Summerfruit NZ board chairman, says the industry is expanding hugely, particularly in Central Otago.The district already has 850ha of cherries and Jones expects that to double in the next three years with new investment coming in and orchards being planted.

However, Jones acknowledges that the industry has questions it must ask itself. “Where is the expertise? Where are the people? Where are the houses in Cromwell?” he told [Rural News](https://www.ruralnewsgroup.co.nz/rural-news/rural-agribusiness/new-orchard-a-vote-of-faith-in-sector%20).

“As much as I think it’s great to see the industry expand, I just hope it’s happening sensibly, and people have done their due diligence to be market-led.” NZ’s two biggest markets for cherries are China and Taiwan, with Vietnam, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore and Korea also important. “But whether we can rely on them to take double the amount of fruit in five years, I’m not sure,” says Jones. The biggest competitor is Chile, which is planting about 2000ha a year and comes into the market at the same time as NZ and at a much lower cost of production. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9036463/new-orchard-is-a-vote-of-faith-in-sector/)

**Other**

* 1. **The Apple Press wins New Zealand Food Award**

Hawke’s Bay’s beverage company The Apple Press, have just taken out a trophy for the “Best Non-Alcoholic Beverage”  at the 2018 New Zealand Food Awards. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9035645/the-apple-press-wins-new-zealand-food-award/)

* 1. **Dry spring leads to water warnings in New Zealand**

Many New Zealand farmers fear they are heading for a second dry year in a row. Most of their country saw sub-average rainfall over the past three months, causing soil moisture levels to go down, said the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research. [Radionz.co.nz](https://www.radionz.co.nz/news/national/369374/dry-spring-weather-sparks-water-warnings) quoted NIWA principal forecaster Chris Brandolino as saying it had been abnormally dry for the past three months, with some areas getting just 50 percent of last year's rainfall: "Pretty much the entire North Island is at some degree of dryness in terms of soil moisture. From just north of Christchurch to the top of the South Island, soil levels are running low for this time of year." [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9036097/dry-spring-leads-to-water-warnings-in-new-zealand/)

* 1. **Study links glyphosate to antibiotic resistance**

The safety of Roundup and other branded weedkillers is under question after a landmark US jury case. Now scientists from the University of Canterbury found glyphosate, the active ingredient in Roundup, caused antibiotic resistance at concentrations well below the application rates given on their labels. UC molecular biology and genetics professor Jack Heinemann said the study's key finding was that "bacteria respond to exposure to the herbicides by changing how susceptible they are to antibiotics used in human and animal medicine."

Two other herbicides, Kamba and 2,4-D which contain dicamba and 2,4-D respectively, were also studied and found to cause antibiotic resistance. The trio of weedkillers were among the most widely used in the world, including New Zealand, Heinemann said. An antibiotic resistance response was also caused by both the tested surfactants, Tween80 and CMC, both of which are used as emulsifiers in foods like ice cream and in medicines. Both caused antibiotic resistance at concentrations allowed in food and food-grade products.

Heinemann, an expert in genetic engineering, bacterial genetics and biosafety, said regulators needed to consider the "sub-lethal" effects of chemical products when deciding whether they were safe for their intended use. "More emphasis needs to be placed on antibiotic stewardship compared to new antibiotic discovery," he said.

University of Canterbury professor of toxicology Ian Shaw was in favour of categorising the chemical as hazardous and reassessing its regulatory status in New Zealand. However, while the courts required a balance of probabilities (51 per cent) for a guilty verdict, scientists usually required much greater statistical security, he said. "I do not think we should base our regulatory decisions on a US court case, but I do think that the evidence that glyphosate is possibly a carcinogen in humans is robust." [Full article available here](https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/farming/108039983/study-links-glyphosate-to-antibiotic-resistance)

* 1. **Judge upholds jury's ruling that Roundup caused dying man's cancer**

Two months after a jury awarded $289 million to California groundskeeper DeWayne Johnson, a California judge reduced the amount to $78 million. Johnson's case was the first to directly connect Monsanto's Roundup with deadly cancer.

Judge Suzanne Bolanos lowered the punitive damages from $250 million to $39 million, the same amount awarded for compensatory damages. Bolanos also stated that Johnson and his attorneys have until Dec. 7 to either accept the new amount or ask for a new trial. Earlier this month, Bolanos announced she was considering eliminating the entire $250 million in punitive damages because she said there was no compelling evidence that Monsanto ignored evidence that Roundup caused cancer. However in the end, Bolanos decided to honour the jury's ruling and instead lowered the amount.

In May, Judge Curtis Karnow ordered that jurors in the trial may consider the scientific evidence regarding Johnson's cancer as well as the allegations that Monsanto knowingly suppressed findings regarding glyphosate's potential cancer-causing dangers. [Full article available here](https://www.mnn.com/family/protection-safety/stories/dying-man-monsanto-trial-roundup-cancer-risk)

**Biosecurity**

* 1. **Potato mop top virus here to stay**

Potato mop top virus could well be here to stay. Potatoes New Zealand and Biosecurity New Zealand say the disease cannot be eradicated and will have to be managed instead.

"It has now been agreed that MPI will transition the current response into an industry-led management programme for PMTV, whilst still supporting the industry to achieve agreed outcomes.

"Biosecurity New Zealand is continuing testing to identify how far spread potato mop top virus is. The number of farms under suspicion of having the virus changes regularly, as we rule properties out, or identify potential new properties."

The virus, which causes distortions to the potato skin, deep cracking, rust-coloured arcs and streaks in the tuber flesh, is spread by soil-borne fungus but survives long-term in the potato plant or fungus. If established in fields, its spores can survive up to 20 years in the soil. [Full article available here](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/the-country/news/article.cfm?c_id=16&objectid=12147155)



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. **Austria FAIRS Annual Country Report 2018** This report outlines specific requirements for food and agricultural products imports into Austria. Austria, as a member of the European Union, follows the EU directives and regulations.   [Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards Report\_Vienna\_Austria\_10-19-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Food%20and%20Agricultural%20Import%20Regulations%20and%20Standards%20Report_Vienna_Austria_10-19-2018.pdf)
2. **China Passes E-Commerce Law** On August 31, 2018, the Standing Committee of the 13th National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China passed the E-commerce Law of the People's Republic of China. The E-commerce Law of the People's Republic of China will enter into force as of January 1, 2019. [China Passes E-Commerce Law\_Shanghai ATO\_China - Peoples Republic of\_10-19-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/China%20Passes%20E-Commerce%20Law_Shanghai%20ATO_China%20-%20Peoples%20Republic%20of_10-19-2018.pdf)
3. India **FSSAI Grants Extension in Use of Organic Sticker** The Government of India’s Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has extended the September 30 deadline allowing imported organic products to enter India with a non-detachable sticker of FSSAI’s organic logo by 3 months, until December 31, 2018, [FSSAI Grants Extension in Use of Organic Sticker\_New Delhi\_India\_9-14-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/FSSAI%20Grants%20Extension%20in%20Use%20of%20Organic%20Sticker_New%20Delhi_India_9-14-2018.pdf)
4. **India FSSAI Publishes Revised Standards for Varied Food products** On August 14, 2018, the Government of India’s Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) notified the Food Safety and Standards (Food Products Standards and Food Additives) Ninth Amendment Regulations, 2018

**Regulatory**

* 1. **EU parliament urged to reverse de facto ban on gene-edited crops**

In some circles, the recent decision from the European Union Court of Justice that new gene-editing techniques must go through the same lengthy approval process as traditional transgenic genetically modified (GM) plants, was received in shock. The decision will have a direct impact on European biotech companies trying to compete in a global market. Sarah Schmidt of the Heinrich Heine University of Düsseldorf, Germany, called the ruling “the death blow for plant biotech in Europe. It will force gene-edited plants to go through a regulatory process that typically costs about $35 million …. effectively pricing out universities, non-profits, and small companies.” She claimed the EU Court of Justice can’t be the last word on this subject and that the EU must follow sound science for the world to be able to feed itself. [Full article available here](http://www.hortidaily.com/article/9035237/eu-parliament-urged-to-reverse-de-facto-ban-on-gene-edited-crops/)

Leading scientists representing more than 85 European plant and life sciences research centers and institutes have endorsed a position paper that urgently calls upon European policy makers to safeguard innovation in plant science and agriculture. The scientists are deeply concerned about a recent European Court of Justice ruling around modern genome editing techniques that could lead to a de facto ban of innovative crop breeding. As a result, European farmers might be deprived of a new generation of more climate resilient and more nutritious crop varieties that are urgently needed to respond to current ecological and societal challenges. Together with the countless statements of European research institutes that appeared online over the last months, this statement is proof of a solid consensus among the academic life science research community in Europe on the negative consequences of this ruling. [Full article available here](http://www.hortidaily.com/article/9036027/european-scientists-unite-to-safeguard-precision-breeding-for-sustainable-agriculture/)

* 1. **BASF licenses CRISPR-Cpf1 genome editing technology**

BASF has attained a global, non-exclusive licensing agreement with the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard for the use of CRISPR-Cpf1 genome editing technology to improve products in agricultural and industrial microbiology applications.

CRISPR-Cpf1 has demonstrated distinct advantages for certain applications over CRISPR-Cas9, which BASF has previously licensed from the Broad Institute. By adding CRISPR-Cpf1 to its portfolio, BASF has the flexibility to choose the right tool for specific applications. Access to both technologies will also help to accelerate the development of new agricultural and industrial microbiology products.

[Full article available here](http://www.hortidaily.com/article/9036030/basf-licenses-crispr-cpf-genome-editing-technology/)

**Business**

* 1. **Chile: 2017/18 fruit and vegetables export season – record numbers**

According to data of Chilean SAG, the total export figure of the 2017/18 season of fresh, dried and frozen fruits and vegetables between 1 September 2017 and 31 August 2018 was 2,9 million tons.

Although in the 2017/18 season, exports were still led by apples and table grapes, these are complemented by a larger number of products that only five seasons ago had a minor share in the total exports, like sweet cherries, blueberries, walnuts, plums and nectarines. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9035272/chile-fruit-and-vegetables-export-season-record-numbers/)

* 1. **Barcoded apple more important than many realise**

Bar coding every single apple on a retailer’s shelf seems a tedious process, but an apple is much more than it seems. It has a history, a place of origin, a past in which it was grown in specific soil and shipped in a certain container. This is valuable information, even for the humble apple, as a food recall could affect any product at any time.

In August alone, Food Standards Australia New Zealand warned of nine products that had been recalled due to undeclared allergens or the presence of foreign matter. [Foodmag.com.au](https://foodmag.com.au/barcode-apple-gs1-australia/) reported on GS1 Australia recall services sales manager, Andrew Brown, said the traceability of products was important, including for fresh produce such as apples. GS1 Australia works with the fresh product market to get products labelled correctly. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9036143/barcoded-apple-more-important-than-many-realise/)



 **Sustainability**

* 1. **Not enough fruits, vegetables grown to feed the planet'**

If everyone on the planet wanted to eat a healthy diet, there wouldn't be enough fruit and vegetables to go around, according to a new University of Guelph study. Researchers concluded that the global agriculture system currently overproduces grains, fats and sugars, while production of fruits and vegetables and, to a smaller degree, protein is not sufficient to meet the nutritional needs of the current population.

The researchers also found that shifting production to match nutritional dietary guidelines would require 50 million fewer hectares of arable land, because fruit and vegetables take less land to grow than grain, sugar and fat. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9036433/not-enough-fruits-vegetables-grown-to-feed-the-planet/)

 **Innovation**

* 1. **Chile: Scientists keep fruit from turning black**

A team of Chilean researchers at the University of Santiago has developed a product that keeps fruit fresh for up to a month after being cut, and is particularly useful for avocados or apples, which need to be consumed instantly or they will discolour. Its a chemical combination of antioxidants, the product is colourless and has no flavour, which helps preserve the quality of the natural food.

[Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/9035827/chile-scientists-keep-fruit-from-turning-black/)

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