

**PMAC weekly update 27th August to 3rd September**

1. **Government agencies:** ICPR changes
2. **New Zealand News:**  Export NZ August Trade Update; New value chain research for F&B exporters; Highlight on administrative penalties; EU-NZ FTA Update; UK-NZ FTA Update; Fruit sector and MPI head back to court over destruction order; PM suggests New Zealand support Vietnam with dragon fruit value chain; ; Robotics Plus appoints CEO as demand grows for agricultural automation; US and NZ sign historic agritech agreement; PM opens avocado conference in Tauranga’ Avocado price drop may be on the way; New Zealand apples dominate the market; New Zealand organic apple grower tries to keep up with demand from Asia; Can kiwifruit ease exercise-induced stress?; Samoa is aiming at NZ banana market; Katikati officially the avocado capital of NZ; Growing cucumbers"; Italy's olive trees are dying. Can they be saved?; New Zealand BANS the importation of Australian fruit and vegetables
3. **International news:** GAIN reports; European Parliament; Preparing for a No Deal Brexit; Investors increasingly engaged on world water issues;‘The fruit and vegetable sector in the EU; Freshfel's Fresh Times ; Going Dutch could drive future of Australia’s agri sector; Taste Australia yields big results in foreign trade; Scientists find a way to zap fruit & kill mould; CRISPR mushroom is changing the dialogue around GMOs

***Editors comments***

*Having been to the Avocado conference in Tauranga (a great conference that was a good mix of inspiration and practical advice on how to grow/ export avocados) last week there are three articles that particularly resonate with me. Two deal with agritech. This is a fast moving area Robotics plus has employed a CEO so that the co funder can spend more time (rightly) involved in the innovation and the US has signed an agritech agreement that will encourage both countries to work together. With labour shortages destined to continue it is pleasing to see that New Zealand companies are creating solutions and collaborating with others to keep ahead of the pack.*

*As the conference was told several times collaboration is the key. Which brings me to the third report; one produced by KPMG identifying learnings for the Australian agri-sector which concluded that innovative technology, collaboration and a values-driven ecosystem are the key characteristics of the Dutch.*

*There are two other articles of interest in this weeks update. Forty percent of global water demand is unlikely to be met as soon as 2030 . New Zealand is lucky to have reasonable levels of natural water but how we use that water is likely to come under increasing scrutiny . How investors might respond to this is outlined in the article and provides several areas that may be worth looking at to inform our own use. Then last but not least the USA has stated that a Crispr produced mushroom does not need to be approved i.e. it is not a GMO. This will open the floodgate for exciting new varieties.*

1. **Agency news**



* 1. **ICPR changes**

The ICPR for

* Korea has been updated by adding fresh leaves, stems and seedlings of carrot, parsley and parsnip.to the list of prohibited commodities and updated the requirements of carrot, celery and parsley seeds for sowing, section 4.4.1 effective 28 August 2018
* Russia and the EEU has been updated with the requirement for an a[dditional declaration for Allium spp. to Russia in section 4.1.](http://www.mpi.govt.nz/document-vault/11518%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)

See [Importing Countries Phytosanitary Requirements](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/law-and-policy/requirements/importing-countries-phytosanitary-requirements/)



1. **New Zealand News**

**Export NZ**

* 1. **Export NZ August Trade Update**

Trade policy is dominated by Northern hemisphere countries. August is the height of summer in most places so the WTO shuts down, politicians and senior officials go off on holiday.  It is not a good time to be suggesting the next round of a trade negotiation.

#### China-US Key Vice-Ministers from China were in Washington DC last week to try and break through the current tensions.  They did not succeed.  Instead the tariff war has escalated.

#### New Zealand The China-NZ FTA upgrade does not seem to be going well.  China is playing tough on dairy.  Singapore-New Zealand relations seem to be on an even keel.  This might allow for progress on the negotiations to upgrade the FTA with Singapore. The promotion of the Trade For All Agenda has taken officials some time.  Sessions on this are being arranged around the country. [Full article available here](https://www.exportnz.org.nz/news-and-information/news/2018/trade-updates-2018/trade-update-august/_recache?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=The%20Exporter%20August%202018&utm_content=The%20Exporter%20August%202018+CID_c41b7d6910d7f357851aeeea7a29adaf&utm_source=Campaign%20Monitor&utm_term=Trade%20Update)

* 1. **New value chain research for F&B exporters**

Food and beverage exporters will benefit from taking a look at these reports done by the Agribusiness and Economics Research Unit at Lincoln University. They look into consumer preferences in various markets for various food products and include the following

***How Value Chains Can Share Value and Incentivise Land Use Practices: A White Paper***[Download the report](https://www.sustainablewellbeing.nz/s/AERU-Value-Chain-White-Paper_2016.pdf)

***The AERU Data Portal: An Introduction*** To help exporters capture these higher prices, the Agribusiness and Economics Research Unit (AERU) received funding from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment for a programme undertaking original research in five key export markets (China, India, Indonesia, Japan and the United Kingdom) to discover how consumers understand these attributes. the AERU prepared an online data portal, which can be accessed at [www.lincoln.ac.nz/aeru/mer](http://www.lincoln.ac.nz/aeru/mer). [Download the report](https://www.sustainablewellbeing.nz/s/IVC-Report-AERU-Data-Portal_2018.pdf)

***The Governance of Value Creation and Capture in Agri-Food Supply Chains****:* A Conceptual Framework, Propositions and Protocols The concept of value is central to business operations and how the process of value creation and value capture is managed is a critical success factor to the performance of supply chains. [Download the report](https://www.sustainablewellbeing.nz/s/IVC-Report-Conceptual-Framework_2018.pdf)

## *Technologies and audit systems for authenticating food trust.* This report describestechnologies and systems that can assist New Zealand to capture greater value through the value chains for our food products. [Download the report](https://www.sustainablewellbeing.nz/s/IVC-Report-Food-Trust_2018.pdf)

## *Consumer insights and willingness to pay for attributes: Kiwifruit in Shanghai* This report is on consumer’s behaviours and attitudes towards purchasing, using and gaining information on kiwifruit in Shanghai. [Download the report](https://www.sustainablewellbeing.nz/s/RR-346-OLW-Shanghai-Kiwifruit_FINAL.pdf)

* 1. [**Highlight on administrative penalties**](https://businessnz.cmail19.com/t/r-l-jjtihykt-aekytdhr-s/)

From 1 October 2018 Administrative penalties will extend to export entries. This means that anyone, including agents, who makes an error or omission on an entry and doesn’t voluntarily disclose it to Customs, will be liable for an administrative penalty. If a mistake is made on an entry, notify Customs as soon as possible. The person making the entry will be liable for an administrative penalty if it isn’t voluntarily disclosed to Customs.

Penalty amounts will be capped according to the level of offending:

* $20,000 for errors or omissions due to a lack of reasonable care
* $35,000 for cases of gross carelessness
* $50,000 for an error made knowingly.

# [See more on the customs web site](https://www.customs.govt.nz/about-us/customs-and-excise-act-2018/whats-changed/10-new-services/administrative-penalties/)

* 1. [**EU-NZ FTA Update**](https://businessnz.cmail19.com/t/r-l-jjtihykt-aekytdhr-yh/)

 A first round of negotiations was held in Brussels in July. The first round of negotiations was constructive, with early progress made in a range of areas. A second round of negotiations has been scheduled for October in New Zealand. Engagement by New Zealand businesses to help maintain and build support for an ambitious outcome remains useful. Further information for businesses and stakeholders id available at the MFAT [***website***](https://businessnz.cmail19.com/t/r-l-jjtihykt-aekytdhr-yk/)*.* MFAT will hold a series of public meetings throughout New Zealand in September. You can register for these events [***here***](https://businessnz.cmail19.com/t/r-l-jjtihykt-aekytdhr-yu/)***.***

* 1. [**UK-NZ FTA Update**](https://businessnz.cmail19.com/t/r-l-jjtihykt-aekytdhr-jl/)

The UK launched domestic consultations on a future Free Trade Agreement with New Zealand on 18 July, which is open until 26 October. This follows earlier statements by the UK government identifying New Zealand, together with the US and Australia, as priorities for negotiating bilateral FTAs following its departure from the EU.

The UK is expected to be able to engage in trade negotiations with third parties once it leaves the EU in March 2019. However, it will be unable to ratify or implement any trade agreements in its own right during any transition period that may follow its departure. For more information visit the UK Department of International Trade’s [***website***](https://businessnz.cmail19.com/t/r-l-jjtihykt-aekytdhr-jr/)*.*

**General**

* 1. **Fruit sector and MPI head back to court over destruction order**

The legal stoush continues between apple and stonefruit growers and MPI over a plant destruction order after the parties failed to make discussion progress before the interim High Court orders expired. MPI said it was seeking an extension order to the interim orders, due to expire last week.

Orchardists and nursery owners who sought a judicial review of MPI's order for the destruction or containment of 48,000 trees claim MPI has failed to engage with them to find a solution as directed by a High Court judge last week. But MPI director of plants and pathways Pete Thomson said the ministry had fully engaged with affected nurseries, importers and growers throughout the process.

It had committed to a meeting with them tomorrow, with further meetings to follow, he said.

The apple and stonefruit group claims MPI's "flawed" order will cause projected losses of up to $500 million over 10 years and set sector innovation back by up to 15 years.

Paynter from Yummy Fruit Co said some trees have been destroyed and most were contained, netted and sprayed. Trees in storage needed to be planted urgently or they would die. The High Court judgment enabled MPI to make a new decision on how to manage the risk associated with the plants, he said. [Full article available here](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/business/news/article.cfm?c_id=3&objectid=12116249)

A Hawke's Bay fruit grower says he has suffered financially and emotionally after he was made to burn thousands of fruit trees while waiting for a High Court judgement. Kerry Sixtus from Pattullos Nurseries in Napier was one of five industry players hoping to put a stop to MPI’s efforts to destroy enormous amounts of thousands of imported apple and nectarine plants.

Although a High Court Judge 2 weeks ago found that the MPI directions were unlawful and directed MPI to reconsider its approach, Sixtus said that came too late for most: "Orchardists, probably just about most of them, have destroyed the trees that they were required to destroy and I've already destroyed some of my nursery crops as well. "The order affected 32 orchardists, nurseries, importers and intellectual property companies in Hawke's Bay, Waikato, Nelson and Central Otago across a range of fruit-based industries including apples and nectarines in Hawke's Bay. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/200186/Too-late-for-many-New-Zealand-trees)

* 1. **PM suggests New Zealand support Vietnam with dragon fruit value chain**

The Vietnamese Prime Minister took Damien O’Connor’s visit to Vietnam as the occasion to thank New Zealand for providing official development assistance (ODA) for Vietnam. The bilateral cooperation potential remains huge, including the production of Vietnamese avocado for exports, he said.

Minister O’Connor agreed with the PM’s proposal of building a value chain to boost exports of this fruit to the world, the PM said. New Zealand is willing to support Vietnam in this field as well as in the management of food safety and other realms, he affirmed. [Full article available here](http://english.vietnamnet.vn/fms/government/207658/pm-suggests-new-zealand-support-vietnam-with-dragon-fruit-value-chain.html)

**Industry news**

* 1. **Robotics Plus appoints CEO as demand grows for agricultural automation**

Robotics Plus, a New Zealand agricultural robotics and automation company, last announced it has appointed Dr Matt Glenn as the company’s chief executive officer. The move comes after a period of accelerated growth for Robotics Plus fuelled by industry demand for its innovative horticulture automation technologies. Steve Saunders , Co-Founder and Chairman of Robotics Plus, will remain an Executive Director to focus on the strategy and establishment of a US subsidiary.

Dr Glenn was previously the CEO of Hill Laboratories, New Zealand’s leading analytical testing laboratory, a role he served since 2014. Prior to that he worked in management consulting after roles at Fonterra and Ballance Agri-nutrients where he gained expertise in a broad range of management disciplines. Earlier in the year, Robotics Plus secured investment and a partnership agreement from Yamaha Motor Co. (Japan) and the Saunders Family Trust in New Zealand to support its ambitious growth plans.

In May, Robotics Plus signed an agency and distribution agreement with Global Pac Technologies, a joint venture between United States company Van Doren Sales and New Zealand-owned Jenkins Group, for the company’s revolutionary robotic apple packers to go global. The apple packer, which identifies and places apples in their trays and can safely handle up to 120 fruit per minute, is already operating in packhouses in New Zealand and the USA.

Other technologies under development, at various stages of commercialisation, include an autonomous agricultural vehicle, robotic kiwifruit harvester, robotic pollinator, crop estimator, and a number of confidential projects. A key focus for Robotics Plus in the coming months will be actively recruiting more engineers, to add to their team of 27 staff and 8 researchers, to keep pace with the global demand for their innovation. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/200553/Robotics-Plus-appoints-CEO-as-demand-grows-for-agricultural-automation)

* 1. **US and NZ sign historic agritech agreement**

Agritech New Zealand has forged a partnership with a major American company to speed up growth of agritech in New Zealand. The partnership with Western Growers will strengthen and accelerate the development of agritech markets in both countries.

Western Growers provide a co-working space that offers agritech start-up companies access to training and mentorship; monthly seminars; regularly scheduled events; and exclusive events with Western Group members such as specialty crop farmers in Arizona, California, Colorado and New Mexico. As part of the deal, the community that Agritech NZ serves will now have access to Western Growers offerings.

The American company will work with Agritech NZ to evaluate opportunities to conduct research and development trials with potential New Zealand partners during the northern hemisphere off season.

Western Growers, founded in 1926 represents local and regional family farmers growing fresh produce in Arizona, California, Colorado and New Mexico.Their members and their workers provide over half the nation's fresh fruits, vegetables and tree nuts, including nearly half of America's fresh organic produce.

Agritech NZ was launched earlier this year to connect agritech innovators, investors, regulators, researchers and interested public. Agritech New Zealand is helping build a world class agritech ecosystem but New Zealand needs to integrate agriculture and technology to strengthen its primary export sector. [Full article available here](http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/BU1808/S00967/us-and-nz-sign-historic-agritech-agreement.htm)

* 1. **PM opens avocado conference in Tauranga**

**Prime Minister Jacinda Arden opened the New Zealand Avocado International Industry Conference 2018 held in Tauranga on Thursday and Friday last week. The Prime Minister congratulated avocado growers of the recent success of the New Zealand avocado industry which has been driven by a carefully grown, premium quality product which meets the needs of health conscious consumers globally.** The conference hasn’t been held for five years – and so hundreds from the industry – from growers, to packers, to exporters and those in related service industries – attended [Full article available here](https://sunlive.co.nz/news/187538-pm-opens-avocado-conference-tauranga.html)

**Crop news**

* 1. **Avocado price drop may be on the way**

Good news for avocado lovers - prices could drop eventually as more homegrown avocados come on to the market. The group marketing New Zealand avocados says [rapid industry growth](https://www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/checkpoint/audio/2018657415/businesses-struggling-to-keep-up-with-demand-for-avocados) should help ease supply pressures here. New Zealand does not import any avocados, relying on what growers here supply, which can put pressure on prices of the seasonally grown fruit. Mexico, Peru and Chile have [shown interest in supplying avocados](https://www.radionz.co.nz/news/business/360125/australia-s-exclusive-avocado-supply-from-nz-under-threat) to New Zealand.

Ms Scholar said while she understood those discussions were ongoing, the amount of avocados being grown here was increasing rapidly and that should help ease prices and supply in the future. "We have got 20 percent [more] new plantings of avocado orchards. [Full article available here](https://www.radionz.co.nz/news/country/365189/avocado-price-drop-may-be-on-the-way)

* 1. **New Zealand apples dominate the market**

“In China the period around the Mid Autumn Festival, which takes place on 24 September this year, was previously the peak period for imported US fruits, but this year circumstances have changed. Up until now, only a small amount of US cherries have entered the Chinese market. Some of those cherries have been air freighted to China instead of shipped by sea as is traditional." This is according to Mike Hoare from Shanghai Fruit Sea Trade Co., Ltd.

"We are currently importing and selling New Zealand apples in large volumes. They have become a hot item in the period leading up to Mid Autumn Festival. We have a long history of cooperation with several well-known New Zealand apple companies. The import and sales conditions of New Zealand apples have been stable for many years as a result of mutual trust and friendship. The import of New Zealand apples develops at a smooth pace." [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/200540/China-New-Zealand-apples-dominate-the-market)

* 1. **New Zealand organic apple grower tries to keep up with demand from Asia**

New, exclusive apple varieties have been planted in New Zealand this winter as growers work to keep up with the demand from Asia. Bostock New Zealand has been busy replacing old trees with new varieties like Dazzle, Premier Star, Posy and Prince. “All are bright red, sweet, juicy apples, which appeal particularly to the Asian consumers." Bostock New Zealand customer and China’s Fruit Day Founder Loren Zhao has just visited Hawke’s Bay and was very impressed by the new planting developments. Mr Zhao says an appealing incentive to buy New Zealand fruit is the new varieties on offer and the exclusiveness of the varieties: “Asian customers just love trying new products. The new varieties coming out of New Zealand like Dazzle and Posy have real appeal because they are new and exciting. "[Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/special-article/200485/New-Zealand-organic-apple-grower-planting-new-varieties;-tries-to-keep-up-with-demand-from-Asia)

* 1. **Can kiwifruit ease exercise-induced stress?**

Kiwifruit may help combat a female stress response to exercise that's linked to menstrual dysfunction, infertility and osteoporosis later in life. Scientists have begun investigating whether the vitamin C-rich food might ease exercise-induced stress in women, and are seeking participants for their study.

"Several supplements are known for their beneficial effects on immunity and exercise-induced stress, most notably antioxidants such as vitamin C," said study leader Dr Noha Nasef, of Massey University-based Riddet Institute Centre of Research Excellence." However, little attention has been paid to whole foods rich in vitamin C, such as kiwifruit."

What was known, Nasef said, was that exercise could produce stress markers such as cortisol - and specific to gender. "We also know that women, particularly athletes, suffer long-term consequences of exercise like osteoporosis and menstrual dysfunction, and we think this is linked to the stress response," she said. "Vitamin C is known to reduce the stress response after exercise and so what we want to determine is whether vitamin C works better when it is eaten as a natural food like kiwifruit."

Her research team was looking for study participants and need 12 healthy active women living in Auckland, aged over 18, with a regular menstrual cycle. Women keen to take part can contact the researchers at goldkiwistudy@gmail.com. [Full article available here](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=12113820)

**Other**

* 1. **Samoa is aiming at NZ banana market**

Samoa‘s Ministry of Agriculture is eyeing New Zealand‘s lucrative $170 million banana market and expects its first exports of a new species of banana in coming months. Agriculture Minister Lopao‘o Natanielu Mu‘a said the species -originating in Israel- had been selected as the best for the export market. He said the first shipment grown in Samoa is expected to head to New Zealand by September. [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/200286/Samoa-is-aiming-at-NZ-banana-market)

* 1. **Katikati officially the avocado capital of NZ**

Katikati has been crowned the Avocado Capital of New Zealand, (ACONZ). Avocados were pioneered in Katikati, the largest tree is here, the first commercial orchard was established here and with two thirds of the country's growers here, many in the industry believe the title is well overdue. [Full article available here](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/the-country/news/article.cfm?c_id=16&objectid=12116351)

* 1. **Growing cucumbers"**

Article about Tina Weng growing glasshouse cucumbers in Drury, South Auckland. [Full article available here](http://www.hortidaily.com/article/45386/There-is-a-great%2C-long-term-future-for-growing-cucumbers)

**Biosecurity**

* 1. **Italy's olive trees are dying. Can they be saved?**

We've heard talk on the Xylella fastidiosa creating havoc around Italy and other countries. Olive trees are dying, other crops like vines and lavender (and about 300 more) are also affected and in a number of other Southern European countries the decease had been detected. At the same time Northern neighbour countries are dead scared to get the bacteria within its own boarders, therefore taking very strict preventive measurements. " [Check out the article at National Geographic](https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2018/08/italy-olive-trees-dying-xylella/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)

* 1. **New Zealand BANS the importation of Australian fruit and vegetables**

Two weeks ago New Zealand authorities confirmed the detection of Cucumber Green Mottle Mosaic Virus (CGMMV) on watermelons produced in the Northern Territory. As a result, authorities opted to suspend some imports from August 20 onwards.

CGMMV is a soil-borne plant virus which affects cucurbits such as watermelons, pumpkins, zucchinis and cucumbers - but is not harmful to humans. The plant virus was first detected in the Northern Territory's Katherine region back in 2014 when it decimated the lucrative watermelon industry, costing an estimated $60 million.

The virus has recently been discovered on farms in Queensland and Western Australia.

Dianne Fullelove, from the Australian Melon Association, confirmed the infected fruit from a Northern Territory farm. 'This virus is extremely difficult to eradicate from soil once it is present on a farm, so it is unfortunate for that farm that they are still getting outbreaks of the virus,' she said. '[New Zealand] is our third, almost second, largest market for melons, so we are very keen to maintain the trade with New Zealand. The Commonwealth departments are working together to find a resolution.'  [Full article available here](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6108807/Australian-farmers-suffer-latest-setback-virus-infested-produce-fruit-vegetables.html)

New Zealand consumers may have to go without melons after a suspension of imports from Australia. MPI has suspended the import of melons (rockmelon, honeydew and watermelon), cucumber and courgettes after finding the cucumber mottle mosaic virus on Australian produce at the border.

An MPI spokeswoman said the virus was detected on a consignment of watermelon by border staff as part of its routine border clearance inspections and was diagnosed by its laboratory on August 15.[Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/200295/Melons-off-the-shelves-after-New-Zealand-import-suspended)



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. **Canada to Phase Out Two More Neonicotinoids** Two Pest Management Regulatory Agency special reviews have proposed cancellation of all outdoor uses of clothianidin and thiamethoxam over three to five years.  Ninety-day public consultations on the proposed special review decisions will close on November 13, 2018.  Maximum residue limits for clothianidin and thiamethoxam would remain unchanged, as Canada has not proposed revoking the products’ registrations.   [Canada to Phase Out Two More Neonicotinoids\_Ottawa\_Canada\_8-23-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Canada%20to%20Phase%20Out%20Two%20More%20Neonicotinoids_Ottawa_Canada_8-23-2018.pdf)
2. **China Retail Foods** China remains one of the most dynamic retail markets in the world and offers great opportunities for U.S. food exporters. Exporters should be aware of several new trends that are changing China’s retail landscape.  Imported food consumption growth is shifting from China’s major coastal metropolitan areas (e.g., Shanghai and Beijing) to the dozens of Second-and-Third Tier cities throughout China.  China is experimenting with new retail models, such as 24-hour unstaffed convenience stores and exp... [Retail Foods\_Beijing ATO\_China - Peoples Republic of\_8-17-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Retail%20Foods_Beijing%20ATO_China%20-%20Peoples%20Republic%20of_8-17-2018.pdf)
3. **EU-28 Stone Fruit** EU-28 production of peaches and nectarines in MY 2018/19 is estimated at 3.5 million MT, 12 percent lower compared to the previous campaign due to unfavorable weather conditions in most of the major producing countries. [Stone Fruit Annual\_Madrid\_EU-28\_8-24-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Stone%20Fruit%20Annual_Madrid_EU-28_8-24-2018.pdf)
4. **Japan Proposed Modifications to Gibberellin MRLs Notified to WTO**  On July 30, 2018, Japan notified the World Trade Organization of draft amendments to the maximum residue level (MRL) for the plant hormone Gibberellin via G/SPS/N/JPN/583.  The public comment period for the draft will close on September 28, 2018.  [Proposed Modifications to Gibberellin MRLs Notified to WTO\_Tokyo\_Japan\_8-21-2018](http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Proposed%20Modifications%20to%20Gibberellin%20MRLs%20Notified%20to%20WTO_Tokyo_Japan_8-21-2018.pdf)

**Regulatory**

* 1. **Preparing for a No Deal Brexit**

On 23rd August the UK Government published 25 technical guidance notes giving advice to businesses and individuals about being prepared for a no deal when the UK leaves the EU on 29th March 2019. A further 60 guidance notes are to be published in September. The full guidance notes and other information can be accessed through the UK and EU section on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

The technical guidance stresses that the UK Government firmly believes that a deal will be reached with the EU prior to 29th March. However, it has published the guidance notes to allow people and businesses to start preparing should a deal not be agreed. The technical guidance also stresses the importance of the Northern Ireland border in the ongoing negotiations. The article includes the following details about [proposed changes:

* Trading with the EU - Importing from EU Countries and Exporting to EU Countries
* VAT
* Classifying goods in the UK trade tariffs
* Workplace rights
* Receiving funding from EU-funded programmes
* Farm payments
* Trade remedies  [Full article available here](http://www.hortidaily.com/article/45369/Preparing-for-a-No-Deal-Brexit)

**Business**

* 1. **Investors increasingly engaged on world water issues**

Record heatwaves and droughts across Europe the USA and Asia are causing concern. These events are not anomalies. They are the latest examples of how growing competition for water, poor water management, aging infrastructure and climate change are exacerbating water risks across the global economy.

From agriculture and mining to energy and entertainment, every business in the world relies on water. As population growth, water pollution and hotter, more volatile weather events strain the world’s freshwater supplies, companies and investors can no longer ignore the critical water issue.

Forty percent of global water demand is unlikely to be met as soon as 2030, according to a [United Nations report](https://www.gbm.hsbc.com/insights/economics/heatwave-raises-food-costs), unless companies, investors and governments step up water management and stewardship efforts.

The global food sector, which uses 70 percent of the world’s freshwater, faces the most immediate risks from the multiple challenges of water scarcity, water pollution and water demand pressures from other sectors. Recent [HSBC research](https://www.gbm.hsbc.com/insights/economics/heatwave-raises-food-costs) concluded countries will need to build resilience in their agricultural systems, achieved via agricultural technology, improved water infrastructure and develop new farming methods. No doubt, investors and companies are paying more attention to water risks, although not yet at the level they need to. One [indicator](https://www.ceres.org/node/2373) of this gap: while 81 percent of major U.S. companies in water-dependent sectors have water stewardship programs, only 37 percent have set qualitative targets to better manage water resources facing the biggest risks.

Investors are also boosting their attention. Investors have many  options for managing their water vulnerabilities, the first being  awareness that water-scarcity concerns can pose material risks. Among the other steps investors should consider, as outlined in the [Ceres Investor Water Toolkit](https://www.ceres.org/resources/toolkits/investor-water-toolkit), are the following:

* Set clear priorities and goals from the top down. Investors can consider a wide range of [options](https://www.ceres.org/resources/toolkits/investor-water-toolkit), from asking portfolio companies to improve their water disclosure, to elevating water as a priority for company board of directors, to aligning with international norms such as Sustainable Development Goal 6 and the Principles on Valuing Water.
* Conduct portfolio water footprinting to highlight potentially common geographic or systemic water risks (for example, agriculture related or social licenses).
* Integrate water-related research into buy/sell analysis decisions for equities, municipal water bonds and private equity projects by understanding where water risks lie in a company’s’ value chain and assessing if management is mitigating risks at the scale needed.

[Full article available here](https://www.forbes.com/sites/unicefusa/2018/08/10/growing-up-surrounded-by-violence-in-central-america/#58272278742d)

* 1. **The fruit and vegetable sector in the EU**

The EU fruit and fresh vegetable sector is polarised between a few Member States responsible for the largest proportions of production, trading and processing, and several others that account individually for almost negligible volumes. According to the most recent (2013) farm structure survey, almost 920 000 holdings grew fresh vegetables, which was 12.4 % of all European farms with an arable area. Nearly half (49.4 %) of those holdings were in just three countries: Romania (22.1 %), Poland (15.4 %) and Spain (11.9 %). By contrast, 15 countries accounted for shares of less than 1 % each.

The average area in the EU devoted to fresh vegetables per holding was 1.7 ha. Two Member States devoted areas to growing fresh vegetables which were much higher than the average: the United Kingdom (17.4 ha) and the Netherlands (10.3 ha). While 14.0 % of the EU fresh vegetable area was on farms growing fresh crops on less than 1 ha. Such farms accounted for 79.5 % of all holdings cultivating vegetables.

7.2 % of all European fresh vegetables were grown on land given over to cultivation under glass or other high accessible cover. However, the figure was much higher in Spain (17.2 %) and Italy (13.3 %). [Click here to read the full report.](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/The_fruit_and_vegetable_sector_in_the_EU_-_a_statistical_overview) [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/200547/The-fruit-and-vegetable-sector-in-the-EU)

* 1. **Freshfel's Fresh Times**

The Freshfel time is produced every two to three months by the European fresh producers association. The Headlines for the latest period c[can be found here](http://freshfel.org/fresh-times-4-2018/) . In this edition, you can find the following initiatives:

* Editor's Note: Back to school and work!
* Spain: The language of F&V
* UK: 1 carrot, 2 carrots, 3 carrots, 4!
* Germany: Lidl supports 5-a-day
* Belgium: Junk fruit not food
* The Netherlands: A world of salad
* Global: Melons at home & on holiday
* Poland: Happiness in F&V
* Italy: Freshness from Europe
* UK: Hail a Chiquita cab
* Germany: Tomato paradise
* Korea: A banana a day
	1. **Going Dutch could drive future of Australia’s agri sector**

The culture of collaboration that has propelled the Netherlands to become such successful exporters of food can and should serve as inspiration for Australia’s agrifood sector, according to a new report from global consultancy KPMG Australia and online venture capital investor AgFunder.

*Going Dutch – Opportunities of the Australian Agri-food Sector* distils insights gathered in the Netherlands by those who attended the Agri Food Traction Tour earlier this year. The new report finds that innovative technology, collaboration, and a values-driven ecosystem form the competitive pillars of the Dutch agrifood powerhouse, which remarkably manages to produce 810 times more export earnings per hectare, and nearly three times more agri-food export earnings than Australia. [Report available here](https://home.kpmg.com/au/en/home/insights/2018/08/australian-agtech-lessons-from-the-netherlands.html)

* 1. **Taste Australia yields big results in foreign trade**

In the 12 months since Hort Innovation launched its boldest foreign trade initiative to date, the industry has reported record export sales and greater demand for Australian grown produce.
Underpinned by more than $40 million in research and development projects, and backed by world-class science and technology, the Taste Australia initiative was developed in response to industry calls for a cohesive, national export project to drive foreign interest and demand for Australian horticultural products. The initiative was launched at Asia Fruit Logistica (AFL) last year,. The project proved so successful, it is now being rolled out in 10 countries across Asia and the Middle East. For more information about Taste Australia visit: [www.tasteaustralia.net.au](http://www.tasteaustralia.net.au)

Australian growers will once again showcase their premium products under the Taste Australia banner at AFL with a Hort Innovation delegation of more than 220 stakeholders, representing 80 Australian businesses across 528 square metres. The Taste Australia campaign is funded by Hort Innovation using industry research, development and marketing levies and funds from the Australian Government. [Full article available here](http://www.hortidaily.com/article/45443/Taste-Australia-yields-big-results-in-foreign-trade)

 **Innovation**

* 1. **Scientists find a way to zap fruit & kill mould**

Scientists at Murdoch University have developed a low-energy, chemical-free process that can zap fresh produce, stopping mould spores from germinating and extending its shelf life for weeks. The scientists are using cold plasma technology, which plant pathologist Dr Kirsty Bayliss described “as an ionised gas. You are applying an electrical current to a gas, and in our case we are just using the air and it creates this plasma.”

The technology is like the lamp but without the glass. "It comes out as a flame and that actually zaps the fruit but it is only very low temperature," she said. "It's called cold plasma because it is room temperature. It's not heating the fruit, it's not going to affect the quality, which is a major advantage." [Full article available here](http://www.freshplaza.com/article/200256/Scientists-find-a-way-to-zap-fruit-and-kill-mould)

* 1. **CRISPR mushroom is changing the dialogue around GMOs**

The term "genetically modified organism" is almost guaranteed to spark debate . In a letter dated April 13, 2016, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service confirmed to Yinong Yang, associate professor of plant pathology, that the anti-browning mushroom he developed using a gene-editing technique known as CRISPR-Cas9 would not be subject to USDA approval. The notification apparently clears the way for the potential commercial development of the mushroom, which is the first CRISPR-Cas9 gene-edited crop deemed to require no regulatory review by USDA.

Why does this anti-browning mushroom not require USDA regulation? Because, Yang explained, unlike most GMO crops, which receive DNA from foreign organisms such as bacteria or other plant species, this mushroom is transgene-free, thanks to the CRISPR-Cas9 tool. "Our genome-edited mushroom has small deletions in a specific gene but contains no foreign DNA integration in its genome," said Yang. "Therefore, we believed that there was no scientifically valid basis to conclude that the CRISPR-edited mushroom is a regulated article based on the definition described in the regulations."

"This technology holds promise for precision breeding of crops with many desirable traits, such as low levels of food allergens or toxins, disease resistance, drought tolerance, and efficient nitrogen and phosphorus utilization," Yang said. "These agronomic traits not only help reduce pesticide, fertilizer, and water usage, but also improve food quality and safety." The USDA ruling could open the door for many other GMO crops developed using CRISPR-Cas9 technology. In fact, less than a week after USDA's notification regarding Yang's anti-browning mushroom, the agency ruled that a CRISPR-Cas9-edited corn variety developed by DuPont Pioneer also would require no USDA approval. [Full article available here](http://www.hortidaily.com/article/45314/US-%28PA%29-CRISPR-mushroom-is-changing-the-dialogue-around-GMOs)

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