

**PMAC weekly update 29th March to 6th April**

1. **Government agencies**: Fruit Fly Official Assurance Programme , WTO and TBT Notifications; MFAT’s Global Trade and Economic Update for NZ Businesses – 1st April 2021
2. **New Zealand News:**  Horticulture can help New Zealand reduce emissions and grow the economy, Housing and horticulture taxed, HortNZ backs Biosecurity Amendment Bill, Concerns for domestic organic industry as MPI accused of 'not listening', NZ's Agritech Industry Transformation plan is trying to get the most out of research investment, ‘Vegetable growers produce fresh, healthy and sustainable produce, yet are undervalued in NZ, Labour inspectors keeping close eye on Hawke's Bay orchards, Building a skilled Hawke’s Bay workforce through virtual reality, WorkSafe concerned following rapid rise in fruit picking injuries, More than 2600 people come off benefits to do seasonal work, Orchard labour shortages beginning to bite, Covid impact on Northern Hemisphere chip industry threatens locally grown hot potato chips, Early indications show a good volume of good sized avocados, New berry business with iwi support offers new jobs for workers in Kaikohe, Turbo charged leaf blower helps T&G, Deep Creek Fruits NZ looks to expand, 'Citrusy aroma': how feijoas baffled a New Zealand immigrant
3. **International news:** GAIN reports; Ontario government considering vaccinating migrant farm workers on arrival, Securing food supply for the long term, PMA and United Fresh To Create New Global Trade Association, Marketing after the Pandemic, Can urban agriculture provide enough food for big cities?, Suez Canal reopening triggers rush on ports around the world, New report on climate positive farming, Resources for reaching net zero in commercial horticultural production, Germany calls for dark nights in dark sky week, Crushed rock ‘could improve carbon capture’, Best year ever for Dutch garden industry, Flora Holland’s international market developments report, This simple solution will keep fruit fresh for longer - and help avoid food waste, Saving the climate with algae

**Comment**

The news didn’t stop with Easter and I’m sure work didn’t stop for those involved in harvesting. What is changing though is the first moves towards a post pandemic world. Jacinda Ardern is releasing a date for the travel bubble with Australia today and the MFAT update provides news about partial opening up in Malaysia and hopefully Singapore – a small start back towards pre-pandemic freedom.

Of particular note for me in this weekly update is the news that MPI has released the rewritten Fruit Fly OAP . This has been produced by a PMAC project team and represents a lot of hard work by both Industry and MPI staff to make it as practical and fit for purpose as possible. This time its release is being supported by a series of webinars – if you produce a commodity that fruit fly feed on ( i.e. are a fruit fly host) its important that you attend one of these webinar so you are aware of what will be required to export during an fruit fly incursion and what changes will be required to your MAO system .

There’s a lots of comment and news on a wide range of subjects in the New Zealand section of which employment issues still remain a significant part. News that horticultural labour is under the spotlight with both the labour Inspectorate and ACC is unwelcome although perhaps it should not have been unexpected. The article about vegetable grower Mark O’Connor and his plea for fair prices so that sustainability and compliance are achievable is a salient reminder that business sustainability is often forgotten as more and more demands are made of growers.

And in the International section there are reports that the flow on effects of the Suez Canal blockage will have a determinantal effect( for several months) on the already strained shipping industry and cause more challenges for our exporters to the EU. But there is an article about an area where New Zealand has an advantage over more populated countries. Researchers in Germany have raised the issue of the effect of artificial light on nocturnal insects- many of them important pollinators. While this will lead to increased research into more environmentally sensitive lightening New Zealand can claim (right away) little to no light pollution and in fact home to two of the worlds Dark sky reserves- the Aoraki-Mackenzie region and Great Barrier Island.

1. **Agency news**  
   1. **Fruit Fly Official Assurance Programme**

The MPI Fruit Fly Official Assurance Programme (OAP) has been published on the [MPI Plant Exports OAP webpage.](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/export/food/fruit-and-vegetables/official-assurance-programmes/) Participation in this programme is voluntary. However, we encourage all MPI Approved Organisations (MAOs) to register to this programme in order to maintain options for exporting in the event of a fruit fly incursion in New Zealand. Applications to register for this programme can be accepted at any time of the year. [Plant Export Requirement: Official Assurance Programme for the export of fruit fly host material](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/44623-Fruit-fly-host-material-Official-Assurance-Programme)

To assist with understanding the requirements in the Fruit Fly OAP, MPI will be holding a series of workshops and webinars between April – December 2021. These sessions may be attended by IVAs, MAOs, non-MAOs, industry representatives and exporters. These sessions will give an overview of the requirements in the programme, describe MPI’s expectations from the programme participants, and provide an opportunity for questions. MPI will be in touch soon regarding the workshop and webinar registration and attendance

.If you are interested to attend one of the workshops/webinars, please feel free to express your interest via the survey link below: Expression of Interest Survey:<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DHYYXS5>

* 1. **WTO and TBT Notifications**

Please find attached the most recent

* WTO notifications from countries that are considering changes to their plant import requirements for specific products. If you have any concerns about the notifications being presented, please contact [Plant.exports@mpi.govt.nz](mailto:Plant.exports@mpi.govt.nz) so that they can potentially make a submission to the notifying country. Changes notified over the last week include:
  + MRL’s Brazil, Canada and USA
  + EU hygiene of foodstuffs
  + EU levels of allowable cadmium if fruit and vegetables
  + Germany mineral oil aromatic hydrocarbons associated with recycled paper and board in contact with food

The embedded files for the last week (which has links through to the original notifications)is available here 

* TBT Notifications
  + Argentina identification and quality of peppers and strawberries
  + Bahrain. Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and UAE- regulation is concerned with (HDPE) and (LDPE) Bags to be used for food packaging application

The embedded files for the last week (which has links through to the original notifications)is available

 

** MFAT**

* 1. **MFAT’s Global Trade and Economic Update for NZ Businesses – 1st April 2021**

MFAT update is available at <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/trade/mfat-market-reports/market-reports-global/new-general-content-global-economic-and-trade-update-for-new-zealand-businesses-1-april-2021/> Amongst other entries included in this week’s edition are news:

* Australia will let New Zealanders enter the country with no quarantine requirements
* Malaysia will not require quarantine for business travellers with a preapproved itinerary following a clean covid test at the KL on arrival airport
* **Singapore** is looking at the creation of **travel corridors** – for vaccinated passengers from places with low to moderate infection rates – in the second half of 2021. Singapore’s entire population is expected to be fully vaccinated in the next six months.
* Following the reopening of the Suez Canal it is considered there will be a further escalation of **global sea freight congestion** and a reduced flow of empty containers from Europe to Asia . MFAT are aware of shipping lines temporarily restricting the availability of new spot rate bookings for exports out of Asia to all markets, including Australia and New Zealand, until they clarify the extent of the likely shortage.
* **NZTE** have launched a **business leverage programme**, to support Kiwi businesses maximise the opportunities **Expo 2020 Dubai** will provide across the Gulf (and beyond). Further information is available here [Expo 2020 Dubai Business Leverage Programme (nzte.govt.nz)(external link)](https://www.nzte.govt.nz/page/expo-2020-dubai-business-leverage-programme).



1. **New Zealand News**

 **Commentary**

* 1. **Horticulture can help New Zealand reduce emissions and grow the economy**

The horticulture industry is well placed to help New Zealand reduce its emissions while also enabling the economy to grow, Horticulture New Zealand says. In its submission to the Climate Change Commission, it pointed out that horticulture is now producing more food from less land, using fewer inputs like fertiliser and water.

Hort NZ believes that horticulture could play a more significant role in New Zealand’s transition to a low emissions economy. What is needed is investment in the right areas, as well as the right policy and regulatory environment. ‘In terms of policy and regulation, settings in the areas of labour, the environment - access to land and water, and land use change - and investment, for example in water storage, need to all be aligned. ‘Horticulture also needs investment in research and development to speed up progress in automation, next generation orchard design, and new varieties and products.’  
  
In terms of energy, HortNZ is seeking an energy transition strategy. ’Changing from gas heating covered crops to renewables can’t happen overnight. It will require significant capital investment, some of which should be coming from the money generated from the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) scheme,’. ‘Growers also need technology solutions that are practical and affordable, before they can move away from fossil fuels for tractors and trucking. These alternatives will come but it will take time, and we can’t have growers forced out of business due to high ETS costs if there aren’t viable affordable alternatives available.’ [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9308256/horticulture-can-help-new-zealand-reduce-emissions-and-grow-the-economy/?edition=5)

* 1. **Housing and horticulture taxed**

*An article from Mike Chapman asking for better labour policies to allow horticulturalists to grow more and a plea to look after our horticultural soils and prevent them being covered with housing*. [Full article available here](https://www.hortnz.co.nz/news-events-and-media/mikes-blog/housing-and-horticulture-taxed/)

* 1. **HortNZ backs Biosecurity Amendment Bill**

New Zealand’s horticulture and other primary industries may have extra confidence in their industry as the biosecurity amendment bill was drawn from the private member’s ballet. The bill will potentially amend the Biosecurity Act 1993 to require all aircrafts entering New Zealand to provide biosecurity information to people onboard both by video and writing. "When the border re-opens, it will be important to remind travellers of the need to be particularly vigilant when entering New Zealand" says Horticulture NZ chief executive, Mike Chapman. [Full article available here](https://www.ruralnewsgroup.co.nz/hort-news/hort-general-news/hortnz-backs-biosecurity-amendment-bill)

* 1. **Concerns for domestic organic industry, as MPI accused of 'not listening'**

Proposed legislation could result in MPI controlling the final approval needed for their organic certification, duplicating the certification process and adding extra costs according to some in the organic industry. “It poses risks around cost increases that the domestic industry will struggle to bear. We think MPI have misunderstood what is required here, and are failing to listen to feedback” said Soil and Health Association general manager, Pete Huggins. [Full article available here](https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/farming/124643441/concerns-for-domestic-organic-industry-as-mpi-accused-of-not-listening)

* 1. **NZ's Agritech Industry Transformation plan is trying to get the most out of research investment**

New Zealand's "world-class" agriculture and scientific research are often being underutilised, according to the country's leading agritech organisation. At the recent MobileTECH Ag in Rotorua, . At the recent MobileTECH Ag in Rotorua, the question was asked whether New Zealand was currently getting enough outputs from its investment and resources in research, and compared it to Israel, a country that is on a similar scale of financial input and similar levels of investment in the agritech space when you look at exports, we are at NZ $1.4 billion in New Zealand, and Israel is at US $10.4 billion. That’s many times more, in fact, nearly 10 times the output of how does commercialisation happen from science."

*The balance of this article asks how this situation in New Zealand can be improved* [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9307383/how-nz-s-agritech-industry-transformation-plan-is-trying-to-get-the-most-out-of-research-investment/?edition=5)

* 1. **‘Vegetable growers produce fresh, healthy and sustainable produce, yet are undervalued in NZ’**

Former Vegetables New Zealand director Mark O’Connor says vegetable growers produce fresh, healthy and sustainable produce, yet growers are very undervalued in New Zealand become a buzz word that he says should never be used in a meeting, the focus needs to be more on profitability because otherwise businesses are unsustainable. “If you make your growers profitable as the first part of business, sustainability and compliance will naturally fit into the system. If you’re not profitable, you’re not sustainable.”

The balance of the article looks at Marks career and his family business, Appleby Fresh, that produces 500,000 units of mainly green vegetables per annum on the Waimea Plains near Nelson.

[Click here to read the full Press Release.](https://www.hortnz.co.nz/news-events-and-media/media-releases/sustaining-profit/)



* 1. **Labour inspectors keeping close eye on Hawke's Bay orchards**

Labour inspectors will be visiting orchards in the Hawke's Bay this week, making sure apple growers are paying their employees correctly and keeping accurate records. Employers with a recorded history of employment issues would be targeted,

The horticulture industry is a priority area for the Inspectorate - a part of the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) - with efforts underway to raise compliance with minimum employment standards. As well as complying with all the legal requirements for their own employees, businesses also needed to undertake due diligence before using labour contractors.

"Employers who breach employment law are banned from recruiting new migrants from overseas. That also prevents them from recruiting workers under the recognised seasonal employers scheme."

Poor employment practices not only jeopardise domestic sales and exports, but also "undercut the majority of employers who do the right thing". [Full article available here](https://www.newshub.co.nz/home/rural/2021/03/labour-inspectors-keeping-close-eye-on-hawke-s-bay-orchards.html)

* 1. **Building a skilled Hawke’s Bay workforce through virtual reality**

T&G Global is harnessing virtual reality technology to recruit and train Hawke’s Bay locals in positions it’s struggling to fill, particularly forklift drivers. The company has partnered with the Whiti programme to deliver a Supply Chain Cadetship which offers job seekers a two-week comprehensive forklift training programme utilising the latest virtual reality (VR) training technology and upon completion, consistent employment for 11 months across T&G’s Hawke’s Bay operations.

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In the peak apple season T&G employs around 75 forklift operators in the Hawke’s Bay and over the past few years, have struggled to hire the number of forklift operators they need. By using VR technology, they can replicate the physical environment so people can be trained safely in a very immersive and realistic way. It enhances their learning experience, and importantly builds confidence, skills and experience.” [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9307567/building-a-skilled-hawke-s-bay-workforce-through-virtual-reality/?edition=5)

* 1. **WorkSafe concerned following rapid rise in fruit picking injuries**

Fruit picking injuries have increased by over 50% in the last three years as labourers try to keep up with the strong demand. Growth in the horticulture industry comes with increased pressure to get the work done, and is believed to result in a higher rate of worker injuries. Injury risks are being identified in apple orchards in Hawke’s Bay and technology is being seen as a possible solution to solve the problem. [Full article available here](https://www.tvnz.co.nz/one-news/new-zealand/worksafe-concerned-following-rapid-rise-in-fruit-picking-injuries)

* 1. **More than 2600 people come off benefits to do seasonal work**

More than 2600 people came off their benefits to do seasonal fruit picking work and 195 of them took on incentives from the government work scheme – providing relief to the industry. Yummy Fruit Owner, Paul Paynter, says the biggest hindrance to finding pickers in Hawke’s Bay is the lack of housing; “It's really held people back. I’ve had conversations with many about the poor quality of accommodation, or the fact they can’t get accommodation at all,” Paynter said. [Full article available here](https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/300265642/more-than-2600-people-come-off-benefits-to-do-seasonal-work)

* 1. **Orchard labour shortages beginning to bite**

Reports from Central Otago that labour shortage are biting, New Zealanders are very slow often needing to be topped up by $6-$7 per hour to make the minimum wage . In addition, some take the Government’s $5000 grant for a jobseeker who needs to relocate for a job that was longer than 91 days and then leave after the 91 days. Other orchardists say some on the grant never arrived, or left before the 91 days were up. [Click here to read the full article.](https://www.odt.co.nz/rural-life/horticulture/orchard-work-shortage-bites)

* 1. **Covid impact on Northern Hemisphere chip industry threatens locally grown hot potato chips**

The impact of Covid-19 on the chip industry in the Northern Hemisphere is putting locally grown and processed hot potato chips at the local snack bar under threat. Already, packets of imported frozen fries from Belgium are being sold at nearly half the price of locally produced chipped spuds in New Zealand supermarkets. New Zealand produces about 150,000 tons of frozen fries a year but Europe exports around 400,000 tons in one month.

Potatoes NZ is urging government action to protect New Zealand potato farmers from the influx of frozen fries grown and processed in Europe undercutting their locally grown equivalent.

McDonalds are standing with local producers. “They’re very proud to be locally owned and operated with local produce from just down the road.” But the local potato industry, Claridge said, was nervous as consumers opted for the cheaper imported frozen fries from their local supermarket. [Full article available here](https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/farming/124680343/potato-growers-feeling-the-heat-as-foreign-frozen-fries-flood-the-market)

* 1. **Early indications show a good volume of good sized avocados**

The New Zealand avocado industry has grown from a high of $68m in 2011 to a forecast of over $200m in 2020. Almost 44,000 tonnes of avocados were harvested this season, with 4.9 million trays exported. Sales in the New Zealand market will top 2.5 million trays. New Zealand has over 4,000 hectares of avocado trees in production with a further 1,000 hectares recently planted now beginning to come into production.

The New Zealand avocado industry is on track to achieve its vision to quadruple sales to $280m and triple productivity by 2023, and has a long term strategy to become a billion dollar industry by 2040," explains Jen Scoular, CEO NZ Avocado.

*The article also talks about the efforts the industry is making to ensure all production is compliant carbon zero and sustainable*. NZ Avocado is undertaking a life cycle assessment (LCA) study to determine the carbon footprint of avocados grown in New Zealand. The LCA project will measure inputs and outputs across New Zealand avocado orchards, post-harvest and onward distribution to market. The results will be used to benchmark environmental impacts and sustainability of New Zealand grown avocados.

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New Zealand has recently completed the 2020 avocado season, which produced the highest volume in four years, with volumes for export up 10% on the previous season." Demand for avocados from New Zealand has been strong in our largest export markets Australia, Thailand and Taiwan. New Zealand avocado volumes to Australia are up 45% on the previous season, with a combination of a short Australian domestic supply and good New Zealand export packouts contributing to the increase.

Volumes are down slightly in New Zealand’s top Asian markets Thailand and Taiwan, and down quite considerably in Korea and China, where sea and air freight disruption has had a major impact on New Zealand’s ability to assure premium quality fruit. Exporters have elected to prioritise exports to markets where freight has been more reliable, to avoid disappointing customers and consumers in other markets with fruit age related quality issues." [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9307416/early-indications-show-a-good-volume-of-good-sized-avocados-on-healthy-trees/?edition=5)

* 1. **New berry business with iwi support offers new jobs for workers in Kaikohe**

A unique partnership between a family-run business and an iwi is about to bear fruit in the economically deprived Northland [town of Kaikohe](https://www.stuff.co.nz/environment/climate-news/119705841/northland-drought-kaikohes-taps-run-dry-after-water-main-break-in-far-north). The first 28 employees of Kaikohe Berryfruit began work this month, starting to build 10 hectares of tunnel houses that will shelter the hydroponic raspberries and blackberries. The company is one of the first tenants in [Ngāwhā Innovation and Enterprise Park](https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/300055369/northlands-new-business-park-at-ngwh-given-195m--if-it-proves-viable), a greenfields site on Kaikohe’s outskirts being developed by the Far North District Council’s commercial arm, Far North Holdings.

Kaikohe Berryfruit is a partnership between Maungatāpere Berries, [Ngāpuhi Asset Holding Company](https://www.stuff.co.nz/pou-tiaki/300149674/waitangi-treaty-claim-settlement-negotiations-with-ngpuhi-take-step-forward) and Far North Holdings. By the end of the year, the aim is to have 80 fulltime employees plus 120 seasonal staff – who work up to nine months of the year.

The company was attractive because it offered reasonable pay and flexible hours – such as the option to work 40 hours over four days a week, he said. The berries are light to carry and will be picked from table height, which means people of all physicalities can work in the role, not just the most strong and fit. Another aspect that makes Kaikohe Berryfruit attractive to workers is the fact a past conviction does not rule out a job, as long as people are open and honest.

If everything goes to plan, the first berries will be planted in July and harvested in November. The company will mainly supply the domestic market, although export opportunities will be explored. The first 10ha of tunnel houses is just the first stage of the venture, with another 8ha planned for phase two.

[Full article available here](https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/124653465/new-berry-business-with-iwi-support-offers-new-jobs-for-workers-in-kaikohe)

* 1. **Turbo charged leaf blower helps T&G**

T&G has partnered with Fruition Horticulture to trial a leaf blower machine which uses alternating pulses of air to strip off leaves on the lower part of trees, exposing the fruit to sunlight, which is important for fruit colour and the ability to command a premium price in export markets.

“We’ve been really impressed with the new machine and excited about its performance. It removes around 30 per cent of the leaves on the tree and we’re seeing 15 per cent more fruit being picked on the first pick with a higher colour percentage. The pneumatic defoliator replaces the manual work done by orchard crews to remove leaves off the trees and given the productivity gains achieved from the trial, the company will look to invest in turbo charged leaf blowers in 2022. [Full article available here](http://www.fruitnet.com/produceplus/article/184817/turbo-charged-leaf-blower-helps-tg)

* 1. **Deep Creek Fruits NZ looks to expand**

**N**ew Zealand cherry development, Deep Creek Fruits, has announced a second capital raise in a move it hopes will fund a packhouse and expansion at its Central Otago orchards. Deep Creek Fruits chairman Michael Ambrose said the offer, in accordance with the Financial Markets Conduct Act 2013, invited wholesale investors to purchase partnership interests in the development which would export cherries to global markets for the first time in 2021/2022.

Expansion plans included purchasing and developing additional land for cherry production at Lindis Peaks and establishing the packhouse and export infrastructure required. *Eighty*-three hectares has now been planted at Mt Pisa and 36 hectares at Lindis Peaks, with additional land available for development at Lindis Peaks.  [Full article available here](http://www.fruitnet.com/produceplus/article/184831/deep-creek-fruits-nz-looks-to-expand)

* 1. **'Citrusy aroma': how feijoas baffled a New Zealand immigrant**

*A long article published in the UK’s Guardian about a new arrival in* [*New Zealand*](https://www.theguardian.com/world/newzealand)*, who tastes a feijoa for the first time in quarantine.* [Full article available here](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/apr/02/strange-fruit-how-feijoas-baffled-a-new-zealand-immigrant-and-polarise-a-nation)



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:

1. **China - Country Report** This report presents the key regulations and standards applicable to food and agricultural imports, including changes to existing standards. In mid-March 2021, China issued 50 new national food safety standards and four revised standards. [Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards Country Report\_Beijing\_China - People's Republic of\_03-31-2021](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Food%20and%20Agricultural%20Import%20Regulations%20and%20Standards%20Country%20Report_Beijing_China%20-%20People's%20Republic%20of_03-31-2021)
2. **China Export Certificate Report** [Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards Export Certificate Report\_Beijing\_China - People's Republic of\_03-31-2021](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Food%20and%20Agricultural%20Import%20Regulations%20and%20Standards%20Export%20Certificate%20Report_Beijing_China%20-%20People's%20Republic%20of_03-31-2021)
3. **Egypt Launches Single Window Pre-Clearance System** [Egypt Launches Single Window Pre-Clearance System\_Cairo\_Egypt\_01-19-2021](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Egypt%20Launches%20Single%20Window%20Pre-Clearance%20System_Cairo_Egypt_01-19-2021)
4. **Japan 240th Food Safety Group** On March 30, 2021, Japan’s Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare announced revisions to Japan’s maximum residue levels for 13 agricultural chemicals (Tolfenpyrad, Fenquinotrione, Flazasulfuron, Cypermethrin, Isometamidium, Eugenol, Chlorhexidine, Decoquinate, Nafcillin, Nitroxinil, Virginiamycin, Mecillinam, and Menbutone) for various agricultural commodities.
5. [Japan 240th Food Safety Group\_Tokyo\_Japan\_03-31-2021](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Japan%20240th%20Food%20Safety%20Group_Tokyo_Japan_03-31-2021)
6. **Philippines Country Report** [FAIRS Annual Country Report Annual\_Manila\_Philippines\_03-31-2021](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=FAIRS%20Annual%20Country%20Report%20Annual_Manila_Philippines_03-31-2021)
7. **Catching up with Portuguese Consumers** [Catching up with Portuguese Consumers\_Madrid\_Portugal\_03-17-2021](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Catching%20up%20with%20Portuguese%20Consumers_Madrid_Portugal_03-17-2021)

 **Regulatory**

* 1. **Ontario government considering vaccinating migrant farm workers on arrival**

Ontario would like to see migrant farm workers vaccinated against COVID-19 as soon as they arrive.

[Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9307067/ontario-government-considering-vaccinating-migrant-farm-workers-on-arrival/)

* 1. **Securing food supply for the long term**

The GCC is heavily dependent on food imports to meet local demand. In the UAE for instance, near­ly 90 percent of demand is met through imports. The region’s dependence on imports is a significant food security risk to the region. The Covid-19 pandemic has further exposed the vulnerabilities of the global food supply chain, making it clear that any long-term disruptions to global food networks could have catastrophic consequences.

To counter the effects of the region’s arid climate, the UAE, along with other governments in the region, has invested in cutting-edge food production and distribution techniques such as hydroponics and vertical farming, smart irrigation, and aquaponics. And it is clear that advanced technologies such as robotics and AI offer exciting new opportunities for the food F&B sector.

Securing Supply, the latest briefing paper produced by MEED in partnership with Dubai-based Mashreq Bank, discusses the food security strategies underway in the GCC and Egypt, including the shifting focus on self-sufficiency in sectors such as fisheries, dairy and poultry; enhancing in-country reserves; and growing investments in agricultural technology. [Download the paper here.](http://image.digitalinsightresearch.in/Uploads/ImageLibrary/Active/MEED/Mashreq/Services_&_Manufacturing/Securing%20Supply%20-%20MEED-Mashreq%20-%20March%202021.pdf)

 **Business/ Industry**

* 1. **PMA and United Fresh To Create New Global Trade Association**

The boards of directors of the [Produce Marketing Association](https://www.pma.com/) (PMA) and [United Fresh Produce Association](https://www.unitedfresh.org/) (United Fresh) have reached an agreement in principle to create a new global trade association combining their resources and expertise to enhance member services, increase advocacy before government and the public, help members grow their businesses, and drive consumption of fresh produce and demand for floral products as a vital cornerstone of public health. The two associations will continue to operate as independent organizations through 2021, with the new association to be launched Jan. 1, 2022.

*The balance of the article lists the strategic commitments agreed for the new association* . The new association will be led jointly by Burns and Stenzel as co-CEOs throughout 2022. After that time, Burns will become the sole CEO. [Full article available here](https://www.producereport.com/article/press-release-pma-united-fresh-create-new-global-trade-association)

* 1. **Marketing after the Pandemic**

*A long article with section that provides some interesting insights into the drivers of consumer behaviour* Results from five waves of research with 14,500 individuals in 20 countries since the start of the pandemic, has identified five different cohorts of consumers:

1. **Affordability first (32% of consumers):**Living within their means and budget, focusing less on brands and more on product functionality.
2. **Health first (25%):** Protecting their health and that of their family, choosing products they trust to be safe and minimizing risks in the way that they shop.
3. **Planet first (16%):**Trying to minimize their impact on environment and buying brands that reflect their beliefs.
4. **Society first (15%):** Working together for the greater good, buying from organizations they find to be honest and transparent.
5. **Experience first (12%):**Living in the moment to make the most of life, often making them open to new products, brands, and experiences.  [Full article available here](https://hbr.org/2021/03/10-truths-about-marketing-after-the-pandemic)

 **Indoor production**

* 1. **Can urban agriculture provide enough food for big cities?**

While urban agriculture can play a role in supporting food supply chains for many major American cities, contributing to food diversity, sustainability and localizing food systems, it is unrealistic to expect rooftop gardens, community plots and the like to provide the majority of nutrition for the population of a metropolis. That’s the conclusion of a team of researchers who analyzed the nutritional needs of the population of Chicago and calculated how much food could be produced in the city by maximizing urban agriculture, and how much crop land would be needed adjacent to the city to grow the rest. The study was the first to evaluate land required to meet food demand while accounting for a range of nutritional needs instead of only calories or quantities [Full article available here](https://www.verticalfarmdaily.com/article/9308018/can-urban-agriculture-provide-enough-food-for-big-cities/)

[](http://upload.evocdn.co.uk/fruitnet/uploads/asset_image/2_1216358_e.jpg) **Freight**

* 1. **Suez Canal reopening triggers rush on ports around the world**

The resumed passage through the Suez Canal has the maritime cargo industry bracing for the next phase of the crisis – a race to ports around the world. Data from supply chain visibility company project44 indicates that consumer goods will be delayed as the canal incident creates worsening congestion at ports. Ports including Jeddah, Rotterdam, and Singapore are likely to be overwhelmed.

Vessel data released by project44 details the retail value of the cargo stuck in transit, currently at over $83 billion. With reroutes further complicating scheduling, boats currently making their way around Africa will soon join the competition for limited discharging capacity at ports where supply chain breakdowns will take place in the weeks ahead.

Although Egyptian officials say the backlog of ships waiting to transit through should be cleared in around three days, experts believe the knock-on effect on global shipping could take weeks or even months to resolve According to experts at Maersk, the world's biggest shipping company, the Suez Canal blockage has caused shipping backlogs that could take months to unwind. In a statement, Maersk said: "Even when the canal gets reopened, the ripple effects on global capacity and equipment are significant and the blockage has already triggered a series of further disruptions and backlogs in global shipping that could take weeks, possibly months, to unravel. Find attached [the latest reports](https://agfstorage.blob.core.windows.net/misc/FP_com/2021/03/30/Suez_20Canal_20Calculations_202.xlsx) from project44 detailing impending port congestion. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9307499/suez-canal-reopening-triggers-rush-on-ports-around-the-world/?edition=5)

Around 100 container ships with an aggregated capacity of one million TEU were waiting to cross the canal when the jammed ship was eventually freed on 29 March. While some of that cargo is outbound or empties, on average 52 per cent of canal capacity each week is northbound to Europe, according to the institute. “From our perspective, it is going to be more chaos and more congestion,” said Eleanor Hadland, senior ports analyst at maritime research consultancy Drewry.

The International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations said disruption of the supply chain was expected to “worsen dramatically” over the coming weeks. This would result in “high delays in shipments, increased costs and product shortages”, it warned last week. Air freight is also operating at full capacity, freight and logistics publication Loadstar has reported, estimating that it will take two weeks for the impact of the crisis to “unravel”.  Rates could be elevated until the end of the year,”  [Full article available here](http://www.fruitnet.com/fpj/article/184838/european-ports-brace-for-surge-after-suez-crisis)



* 1. **New report on climate positive farming**

Sustainable farming organization, LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) has released its latest Global Impacts Report ( one decade after it started) , showing the continued progress of LEAF Marque-certified businesses in delivering more sustainable, climate-positive farming and food systems.  These include reducing carbon emissions, building healthier and more productive soils, delivering better air and water quality and enhancing biodiversity. LEAF’s Global Impacts Report 2021 is available online [here](http://www.leafuk.org/about-leaf/our-impacts).

Globally, 299,185 hectares of land is producing LEAF Marque crops with cereals and horticulture being the two largest sectors. The report also reveals continued growth in the flower and ornamental sector.

Launching the report, Tom Green, LEAF Marque Chairman, said: “With farmers from 21 countries worldwide being certified LEAF Marque and 45% of UK fruit and vegetables being produced on LEAF Marque farms, this report tells an encouraging story. [Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9307077/new-report-on-climate-positive-farming/)

* 1. **Resources for reaching net zero in commercial horticultural production**

Over recent months the spotlight in the UK has been on the Net Zero agenda. This has made commercial horticultural businesses increasingly focus on their own carbon footprint and how the industry can meet the UK government target of achieving a net zero economy by 2050;.Proper assessment of carbon footprint is a key consideration in this journey; however, it is very involved and will not, on its own, provide recommendations for reduction of emissions to help reach the Net Zero goal.

To start the process the NFU Energy team highlighted some key steps you can take:

* Firstly, check your understanding - what is net zero? Familiarise yourself with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol and the scopes for monitoring carbon emissions
* Know what you’re dealing with in your business – make a list of all your inputs that can be emissions sources, e.g., fertiliser, pesticides, growing media, water, packaging etc
* Make a start somewhere! Energy is one of the biggest considerations for protected cropping growers – you know how much energy you are using (fuel and electricity), so quantify and record it and then consider how to streamline your use
* Start asking for the carbon credentials of the businesses and products that are part of your supply chain and consider alternatives for the highest emitting ones where possible.  
  Overall, understand the principles, measure your activity, reduce your inputs, increase efficiencies, and then consider measures to offset your carbon emissions. [Full article available here](https://www.floraldaily.com/article/9307013/resources-for-reaching-net-zero-in-commercial-horticultural-production/)
  1. **Germany calls for dark nights in dark sky week**

From 5 to 12 April 2021 is the International Dark Sky Week. The event always takes place during the week of the new moon in April, when the sky is dark and visibility of the night sky is optimal. *This article looks at the concerns that some researchers have about light pollution and the effect it may be having on nocturnal insects*

In Germany there are 3,300 moth species and thus more than 95 percent of the native butterfly species belong to the group of nocturnal insects. They are important pollinators and play a significant role in the food web. Nocturnal insects rely on darkness and natural light from the moon and stars to navigate, or to avoid predators. Natural night light conditions are also important for the insects to forage for food and reproduce - with these all night tasks they fulfil important ecosystem services such as pollination and food supply for other animals and consequently for our quality in life. An artificially illuminated night disrupts this natural behaviour – and reduces the chances of survival.

Therefore, light pollution could be an important reason for the worldwide decline of insects. [Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9307505/germany-calls-for-dark-nights-in-dark-sky-week/)

* 1. **Crushed rock ‘could improve carbon capture’**

A Scottish study has shown that crushed basic silicate rockcould help growers absorb more carbon in their soil, and give soil a more balanced and higher value microbial biodiversity.  This positive effect was still being seen three years after treatment, suggesting he benefit is still there well after the product was applied. [Full article available here](http://www.fruitnet.com/fpj/article/184837/crushed-rock-could-improve-carbon-capture)

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**Floral news**

* 1. **Best year ever for Dutch garden industry**

In the unusual Corona year that was 2020, the garden industry in the Netherlands saw its highest turnover ever. The annual turnover came to 1.95 billion euros, more than 19% higher than that of 2019 . This result was seen in all categories of plant and hardware products sold in Garden centres and though florist shops [Full article available here](https://www.floraldaily.com/article/9306790/best-year-ever-for-dutch-garden-industry/)

* 1. **FloraHolland's international market developments report**

The latest report on conditions in Netherlands, Germany, United Kingdom, France, Italy, Poland, Belgium, Russia, Switzerland, Sweden, and Austria. It is indicated how long a possible lock-down per country takes and what effect this (possibly) has on the floriculture sales [Full article available here](https://www.royalfloraholland.com/media/15171828/corona-landenupdate-en-31032021.pdf)

 **Innovation**

* 1. **This simple solution will keep fruit fresh for longer - and help avoid food waste**

StixFresh’s new invention of a natural sticker will lengthen the shelf life of fresh fruit by an extra two weeks, thus reducing food waste. Natural ingredients are used to replicate the antimicrobial compounds that plants use to protect themselves against post-harvest diseases. The stickers are most effective on apples, avocados, citrus, fruits and mangoes but are currently being developed to be effective on berries and vegetables as well. [Full article available here](https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/03/sticker-helps-cut-food-waste/)

* 1. **Saving the climate with algae**

*An interesting article that shows how energy usage to cool a data centre can be off set by using the heat to grow algae in glasshouses*

Data centres require a lot of energy and have a correspondingly large carbon footprint. This can change in the future. The data centre operator Windcloud, in cooperation with the company Eschenburg EKK and the Dierck Group, has developed a revolutionary data centre that works with electricity from wind power and uses the waste heat for algae cultivation. The result is a neutral, ideally even positive climate balance.

Algae are a kind of super biomass and can be used in many ways - in medical technology and the pharmaceutical industry, in the cosmetics sector and in the food industry. In addition, they can produce oil as an energy source without requiring arable land. As they grow, they extract carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, thereby purifying the air and counteracting the greenhouse effect. Until now, algae processed in Germany have mostly been imported from the Far East, which is harmful to the climate, but this is no longer necessary with locally produced algae. Another advantage only became clear during the development of the concept: the waste heat from the computing centre can be used for algae cultivation all year round. In winter, the algae can be perfectly tempered with the temperature of the exhaust air. But even in the summer, the constant waste heat of 35.9 °C ensures optimal growth conditions for the Spirulina and Chlorella algae used. Harvested algae can also be dried with the exhaust air before the air is blown out [Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9308296/algae-greenhouse-neutralizes-carbon-footprint-data-centre/)

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