

**PMAC weekly update 31st May to 7th June**

1. **Government agencies**: ICPR Changes WTO Notifications; MFAT’s Global Trade and Economic Update for NZ Businesses – 4th June 2021
2. **New Zealand News:**  Minister of Foreign Affairs makes three diplomatic appointments; New regional fund announced; Alan Pollard to step down; A difficult year for New Zealand’s Apple Producers; Tough season despite positive profits for Zespri; Zespri sees Chinese kiwi sales blossom; Zespri focuses new campaign on 'irresistible taste' in Benelux; Rockit Global officially opens global headquarters; New Zealand's first commercial pineapple crop; Kāpiti olive oil makers win in prestigious New York competition; Southern Paprika continues to grow; Seeka announces capacity expansion for 2022; Mediterranean fruit fly outbreak in South Australia
3. **International news:** GAIN reports; What is the EU prioritizing in the upcoming UN Food Systems Summit?; Imports must meet UK standards'; Future availability of crop protection tools; Fruit Attraction 2021 in Madrid will be an in-person event in October; Freshfel Europe & CIQA China meet to discuss common concerns for fresh produce sector; Vietnam & China set to speed up customs clearance for fresh fruits; JD launches Thai charter flight; Shipping costs up due to COVID-19 flare-ups in Guangdong Province; Covid resurgence hampers Chinese apple exports; Food Safety at the WHO: The Long Walk to Recognition; Good bacteria contribute in fight against pathogens in food processing environment; PepsiCo backs EU-wide environmental labelling; Infrared scanner analyzes fresh produce's internal quality, predicts shelf life; Data interoperability important. ”Electronic phytosanitary certification is still at the beginning”

**Comment**

The New Zealand section this week reports on a number of highs and lows . Two articles talk about the challenges currently facing our two biggest horticultural sectors – apples and kiwifruit. The section also reports on the growth and success of a number of New Zealand businesses (including kiwifruit). Its reassuring to see that even when trading gets tough New Zealand businesses can grow and thrive.

The International section has a lot of good articles . Interestingly there several this week about China and efforts it is making to streamline trade – not only with its neighbours but also Europe. The only other one I’ll draw your attention to this week is about the support European businesses are calling for to be able to comply with the EU Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies and the need for realistic time frames so that suppliers to the EU can also make the necessary adjustments.

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

The ICPR for :

* The European Union (EU) has been updated with changes to Seeds for Sowing (Pisum sativum)
* Thailand has been updated with a new Section 4.3 Seeds, Grains, and Nuts to include specific commodity requirements for capsicum, eggplant, tomato and maize seeds for sowing and also changes to a number of quarantine pest
  1. **WTO and TBT Notifications**

Please find attached the most recent WTO and TBT 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:

* Japan MRL’s for vegetables and edible roots and tubers



** MFAT**

* 1. **MFAT’s Global Trade and Economic Update for NZ Businesses – 4th June 2021**

MFAT update is available at <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/trade/mfat-market-reports/market-reports-global/global-economic-and-trade-update-for-new-zealand-businesses-4-june-2021/> Amongst other entries included in this weeks edition are news of :

* **Members of the Comprehensive and Progressivee Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP),** including New Zealand, have agreed to **commence the accession process towards the UK becoming a member** of the Agreement. An accession working group has been set up to examine how the UK will comply
* The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Secretary-General Angel Gurria chaired his final Council meeting on 26 May, stepping down after 15 years at the helm of the world’s leading economic and policy forum. New Secretary-General Mathias Cormann (an Australian) started on 1 June
* On 4 June, the **Minister for Trade and Export Growth Hon Damien O’Connor** will [lead](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/trade-minister-lead-first-virtual-trade-mission-japan-0) a **‘virtual’ trade mission to Japan**, one of New Zealand’s largest trading partners. Business leaders from New Zealand’s premium food and beverage, health technology, consumer tech, and renewable energy sectors will also be joining him. Delegates from both countries will explore opportunities to work more closely with each other through targeted discussions, market intelligence updates and key note addresses.
* **Viet Nam’s largest COVID-19 outbreak continues to spread,** with new and more transmissible variants identified in multiple provinces nation-wide.
* On 28 May, **Malaysia’s Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin announced** that the country will come under **heightened lockdown** for at least two weeks starting 1 June. The announcement comes two weeks after a lighter lockdown was imposed nationwide. It follows steadily escalating COVID-19 cases and deaths, which are putting continued stress on the country’s healthcare system.
* On 19 May**, New Zealand Minister of Commerce and Consumer Affairs Hon David Clark** determined that there was **insufficient evidence** of **dumping of imports of frozen potato products** from **Belgium** and **the Netherlands,** and that the imports were therefore not causing or threatening to cause injury to the domestic industry. This determination resulted in the dumping investigation into those imports being terminated.
* On 26 May, in a landmark ruling in **the Netherlands,** the **District Court in The Hague ordered** Anglo-Dutch oil and gas multinational **Royal Dutch Shell (Shell)** to **cut its CO2 emissions** to bring them in line with the Paris Agreement, including reducing its 2019 emissions by 45% net by the end of 2030. The ruling has far-reaching implications and is the first time a Court has compelled a private company to comply with the Paris Agreement. Shell has already stated it will appeal the decision.



1. **New Zealand News**



* 1. **Minister of Foreign Affairs makes three diplomatic appointments**

Foreign Affairs Minister Nanaia Mahuta LAST WEEK announced three New Zealand Head of Mission appointments. They are:

* Richard Prendergast as Ambassador to Brazil He is a career diplomat, has held postings in the United States and Malaysia, and was Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) director of the Provincial Reconstruction Team in Bamyan, Afghanistan.
* Felicity Roxburgh as Consul-General to New Caledonia Ms Roxburgh has held diplomatic postings in New York, Poland and Hong Kong, and brings experience from the Asia New Zealand Foundation.
* Barney Riley as Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Mr Riley is an experienced diplomat who has most recently served as a lead trade negotiator within MFAT. He has formerly served as New Zealand’s Ambassador to Cairo, as well as Deputy Head of Mission to Tehran and as a representative to the World Trade Organisation in Geneva. [Full article available here](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/minister-foreign-affairs-makes-three-diplomatic-appointments-0)
  1. **New regional fund announced**

The Government has launched a regional strategic fund to replace the provincial growth fund.

Economic and Regional Development Minister Stuart Nash . It is the $200 million Regional Strategic Partnership Fund (RSPF),to support the Governments promise to support economic recovery in the regions,”

The RSPF has three goals. It will work in local partnerships to enable economic and business development, accelerate Māori economic aspirations, and support sector transformation. Each region will help decide its own priorities. “Central government will partner with local government, iwi, businesses, community organisations and other agencies to identify priorities and co-funding opportunities. Regions will identify priority investments which support the Government’s vision of creating more productive, resilient, inclusive, sustainable and Māori-enabling regional economies.

The first year of funding was set aside in Budget 2021 from reprioritised funding administered by the Provincial Development Unit (PDU). The $200 million fund will be seed funding for regional priorities, with further funding decided on a case by case basis. The investments will be strategically designed to unlock various other sources of capital to get projects under way. The PDU will adopt a new name to reflect its new focus. It will be known as Kānoa, or the Regional Economic Development and Investment Unit. Kānoa has a broad meaning through proverbs and whakataukī, with reference to home fires, and to the guardian of the storehouse who helped others to thrive. [Full article available here](https://farmersweekly.co.nz/)



* 1. **Alan Pollard to step down**

# Alan Pollard will be stepping down from my role as Chief Executive of NZ Apples & Pears Inc. (NZAPI) later this year.

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# He been in this role for just over nine years. The industry realised about $340m in export earnings when he started in the role in March 2012, and about $920m last year, close to the $1billion by 2022 target that was set in 2013.

* 1. **A difficult year for New Zealand’s Apple Producers**

According to a [U.S. Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service report](https://www.fas.usda.gov/data/new-zealand-fresh-deciduous-fruit-semi-annual-5) released on May 17, apple growers in New Zealand produced 591,200 metric tons of apples during the 2019/20 season, corresponding to a 5% increase over 2018/19 and setting a new national record. The country’s apple exports during this period hit a record 401,200 tons, with few disruptions due to COVID-19. Unfortunately, the 2020/21 season has been a different story.

New Zealand’s apple crop is expected to decrease by 8% in the 2020/21 season, down to 543,000 tons. The USDA report highlighted three primary reasons for this fall in production. First, December hailstorms on New Zealand’s South Island caused severe damage to some apple orchards. Second, lower summer temperatures did not allow apples to grow to their maximum size. Third, a limited labor supply led to fewer picks, preventing apples from reaching their ideal size and quality; it is estimated that international border closures created a 20–25% labour shortfall. The combination of these factors is expected to lead to fewer apples being exported this year, with a larger share of the harvest being diverted to processing.

For the 2020/21 season, New Zealand’s apple exports are projected to fall by 14% to a total of 345,000 tons. Delays due to COVID-19 are another major concern, with packing houses reportedly having to occasionally adjust their packaging to meet unique shipping specifications. Fortunately, there will likely be an abundance of cool storage as a result of this season’s smaller apple crop. [Full article available here](https://www.producereport.com/article/can-new-zealands-apple-producers-weather-storm)

* 1. **Tough season despite positive profits for Zespri**

Despite positive revenue and profit figures, disruptions to shipping and tight labour supply continue to challenge Zespri and kiwifruit growers, says chief executive Dan Mathieson. Strong returns to kiwifruit growers from Zespri’s marketing efforts disguise major logistic and resource challenges the industry has faced in the past year, and continues to face well into the new season.

Zespri has announced its 2020-21 financial results, reporting record global operating revenue of $3.89 billion, with global fruit sales accounting for $3.58b. This has accompanied a lift in profit of 45% to $290.5 million.

Plant variety licencing for the high-value SunGold fruit now forms a significant part of the company’s income stream and grower dividend payout, with last year’s tender round generating over $300m or about 8% of total revenue. This year’s tender round has surged even further, with growers laying out almost $430m in licences for SunGold and the new Red variety.

For growers, the 2020-21 returns mark record levels.They equate to an average Green tray value of $7.51, or average per hectare return of $76,722. Green’s Organic premium has grown, with the variety fetching $10.53 a tray.

SunGold fruit returned an average of $12.46 a tray, equating to an average of $177,846 a hectare.

Zespri chief executive Dan Mathieson says it had been a Herculean task to harvest last season’s crop during lockdown, and the industry continued to face significant labour constraints at home.

In the meantime, shipping and logistics challenges continued to exist, both portside here and in overseas markets. “Our delivered volumes to date are up 25% on the same time last year under some very challenging circumstances,” Mathieson said. “While we have built up our charter vessel fleet to take 65% of the crop, we are still relying upon containers for the rest. There are delays, a lack of ships and scheduling and port congestion both here and overseas.”

Despite this, he says to date fruit quality on arrival is still being reported as excellent, with no spoilage losses attributable. “But this is something we will have to watch throughout the season,” he said.

Mathieson says Zespri was confident this season would continue to experience gains in value, with consumers clamouring for the SunGold fruit. “And we have had a very good growing season, with good increases in SunGold volumes and organic crop,” he said.  This was likely to see the sector hit about 175 million trays of locally-grown fruit, only a few million short of its total NZ-overseas combined crop recorded last season.

Zespri is hoping to grow its Northern Hemisphere volumes after a tough growing season last year that resulted in significant crop losses due to frost, with the aim to get back to about 23m trays. Greece is now the only country outside of NZ and China growing increasing volumes of Green crop, and now supplies almost a third of Zespri’s European Green crop. [Full article available here](https://farmersweekly.co.nz/section/horticulture/view/zespri-reports-bumper-season)

* 1. **Zespri sees Chinese kiwi sales blossom**

Kiwifruit producer Zespri is looking to scale up its presence to 100 Chinese cities -from the current 50- bringing onboard more partners in the next five years as it looks to tap into market opportunities.

Looking ahead to the next five years, Michael Jiang, general manager of Zespri Greater China, sees huge growth potential in the China market. "While we've seen rapid development in China, the household penetration rate of Zespri kiwifruits in the country is only 20 percent. We aim to further boost the figure in the next five years." According to [epaper.chinadaily.com.cn](http://epaper.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202106/02/WS60b6cc0ea31099a2343568db.html)¸ Zespri's goal is to double sales in China in the next five years with a 15 percent annual compound growth rate. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9326590/zespri-sees-chinese-kiwi-sales-blossom/)

* 1. **Zespri focuses new campaign on 'irresistible taste' in Benelux**

Zespri launches its new European communication campaign starring the company's mascots, the “Kiwi Brothers”. After successfully introducing its first rebranding in its 22-year history last year, along with the new communication platform “Make your healthy irresistible”, achieving great results on the different markets in which it was presented, the company has gone one step further, launching the campaign “Chase the irresistible taste” throughout Europe. By taking this step forward, Zespri seeks to reflect on the importance of the  flavour of its varieties, the Zespri Green and Zespri SunGold kiwifruit. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9326279/zespri-focuses-new-campaign-on-irresistible-taste-in-benelux/)

* 1. **Rockit Global officially opens global headquarters**

Rockit Global Limited has unveiled its brand new facility – gifted the name Te Ipu.. Millions of tiny apples will leave the 21,000m2 packhouse, coolstore and global offices - located in Irongate, Hastings - this year, each one packed into the signature Rockit™ apple tubes. With demand continuing to grow exponentially across America, Asia, Europe and the Middle East, Rockit Global CEO Mark O’Donnell says expansion into a revolutionary, digitally advanced, fit-for-purpose facility was a worthy investment. “This is a magnificent moment for everyone involved with Rockit Global,” says Mark. “It’s not only a place to call home for our hundreds of growers, investors, staff and industry colleagues, it’s an innovation hub and place of ideating, exploring and excelling.”

Apples are washed and dried automatically before a specialised conveyor scans the fruit, determining size and colour and checking for any anomalies. Software can also sort the apples into manual or automated packing lines. “Using robotics to pack our apples has significantly grown our capacity,” explains Mark. “Automated packing helps reduce our reliance on finding staff for what have typically been harder roles to fill, and we’re optimising workers’ time.”

This year, he estimates that over 100 million apples will be packed and shipped out of Rockit Global’s headquarters. But that’s just the tip of the iceberg. “By 2025, we’re expecting that figure to swell to over 400 million apples,” Mark says.

Elsewhere in the packhouse and coolstore, lithium-powered forklifts – rechargeable in just 25 minutes – zoom across the floor carrying pallets of apples. And machinery to manufacture Rockit’s own tubes – a vital component in maintaining the very highest food safety standards for export – sits on the mezzanine. “This means we only manufacture what we need – no waste – and that we can trial innovative new packaging, including promotional and sustainable options.”

GM Global Marketing, Julian Smith, also revealed fresh branding for Rockit™ apples, explaining that a reimagining of the logo and colour palette helps to widen its appeal overseas. “We’re still instantly recognisable, but we’ve evolved our brand personality, story and position in the market so that we truly stand out,” he says. A “brave, innovative and cheeky” new logo, packaging and design will roll out globally on 1 July 2021, partnering with heavyweights PacMan (part of the Namco family) in greater China. “We involved the entire company in bringing our new brand to life – it really reflects who we are,” Julian says. “Our goal is to become the world’s most loved apple and we believe our contemporary and appealing new brand will help drive consumer demand in global markets.”

Mark O’Donnell says it’s an incredibly proud day in Rockit Global’s history. With projections for dynamic year-on-year growth looking to further catapult the Rockit™ brand into new markets – beyond the 30 countries in which the miniature fruit are currently sold – he’s delighted to be leading a talented and enthusiastic team, who are happily settling into their new home. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9326212/rockit-global-officially-opens-global-headquarters/)

* 1. **New Zealand's first commercial pineapple crop**

A Northland family, Owen and Lina Schafli, are harvesting their first commercial pineapple crop of between 5000 and 10,000 pineapples from their 22,000 plants. Owen explains their pineapple variety ‘Queen’ was preferred over ‘Cayenne’, the main variety imported in NZ, as it has a better tolerance to cold, disease and stress. The Schaflis can see that there is fast-growing demand for locally grown tropical fruits and are “experimenting with other . [Full article available here](https://www.stuff.co.nz/life-style/homed/garden/125129780/sweet-as-how-a-northland-family-grew-new-zealands-first-commercial-pineapple-crop)

* 1. **Kāpiti olive oil makers win in prestigious New York competition**

Lisa Buchan and partner Glenn Wigley, of Waikawa Glen Olive Oil, have won gold at the prestigious New York International Olive Oil Competition for their 2020 blend. With a record 1100 entries from 28 countries, the New York competition is considered to be one of the most prestigious in the world with Waikawa Glen from Manakau, just north of Ōtaki, among six New Zealand entries to enter and win a medal.

Registered as organic and committed to sustainable growing principles, Waikawa Glen is a boutique grove of about 500 trees. Converting to organic five years ago and becoming certified last year after completing an organic certification programme, it has shown that using organic principles can be successful. Their award-winning oil, a boutique medium blend, was judged against other organic, medium-intensity blends and was awarded a gold medal, which refers to excellence across multiple quality dimensions.

All the entries sent to New York from Olives New Zealand were awarded. From the Wairarapa, Loopline Olives won two gold medals, with Olive Black and Juno Olives winning a gold medal each. Sapphire Olives from Bay of Plenty won silver. [Full article available here](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/the-country/news/kapiti-olive-oil-makers-win-in-prestigious-new-york-competition/TGITO6OMQDSH3BJ5FVKAQ3GXHE/)

* 1. **Southern Paprika continues to grow**

Southern Paprika (SPL) began in a field in Matakana and has now grown into a global operation with a 26 ha glasshouse enterprise producing seven million capsicums per year, 80% of which goes to the domestic market and the rest is exported. Production staff harvest the fruit before the company’s packhouse grades by colour, quality and size, and puts through up to 60 tonnes a day at peak. SPL has a further 10h a of land in Warkworth and the company is currently evaluating the potential to develop two more glasshouse complexes. [Full article available here](https://farmersweekly.co.nz/section/other-sectors/on-farm-story/stringing-bells-in-glasshouses)

* 1. **Seeka announces capacity expansion for 2022**

Seeka Limited announces that it will build and commission a new kiwifruit MAF RODA packing machine in the KKP packhouse situated at Maketu Corner Te Puke, replacing an existing 25 year old 10 lane machine a new 8 lane machine including camera grading and packing automation.The Company expects the MAF RODA to deliver significant production efficiencies and a commensurate increase in total trays packed. Minimal modifications will be made to the KKP building other than the construction of additional curing canopy. The project is expected to be commissioned in time for the 2022 harvest.

An additional 650,000 static trays of cool storage will be constructed at the adjacent Transcool site by demolishing a smaller old cool store. The new store includes additional pre-cooling capacity to handle the increased production and will be a high efficiency store with 5 high pallet racking, high air movement and automation. The announced investment gives Seeka more time to consider its capacity options going forward including the potential for a new packhouse on the Pukenga Orchard site. The need for this investment is now delayed. The total investment for the MAF RODA and cool store is forecast to be $20 million. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9327386/seeka-announces-capacity-expansion-for-2022-and-delays-decision-on-pukenga-development/)

 **Biosecurity**

* 1. **Mediterranean fruit fly outbreak in South Australia**

The state of South Australia has tightened its rules around the importation of fruit and vegetables from Victoria, after two Mediterranean fruit fly outbreaks. Some larvae of the destructive pest have been discovered in backyard fruit in Port Augusta and Warradale. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9325857/mediterranean-fruit-fly-outbreak-in-south-australia/)



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. **Hong Kong Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards Country Report**

Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards Country Report\_Hong Kong\_Hong Kong\_06-30-2021

1. **Hong Kong Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards Export Certificate Report** Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards Export Certificate Report\_Hong Kong\_Hong Kong\_06-30-2021

 **Regulatory**

* 1. **What is the EU prioritizing in the upcoming UN Food Systems Summit?**

The European Council released its[position on the priorities of the Union vis-à-vis the United Nations Summit on Food Systems](https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-8949-2021-INIT/en/pdf). Following the position adopted by the Council, the discussions that will take place in Rome and New York in the coming months should follow the European logic of the Farm to Fork strategy. The big question is – will other countries follow?

Proposed by UN Secretary-General António Guterres, the food systems summit aims to bring all the actors in the food chain to the table of negotiations in order to propose healthier, more sustainable, and fairer food systems as part of the UN sustainable development goals. Discussions on the preparation of this summit have been underway for months and in many ways echo the ongoing discussions at the European level on the Farm to Fork strategy. [Full article available here](https://www.verticalfarmdaily.com/article/9326263/what-is-the-eu-prioritizing-in-the-upcoming-un-food-systems-summit/)

* 1. **Imports must meet UK standards'**

Nearly eight out of ten Brits believe imported food should meet the same environmental and animal welfare standards as food produced in the UK. The results show no change in public sentiment since the BGAJ’s last survey, which was carried out before a Brexit deal was agreed.

The survey also indicates that the public would not support any free trade deal allowing Australia tariff-free imports on beef, lamb and sugar – an arrangement that would undercut UK farmers and set a dangerous precedent.” Almost half said they believe a climate change levy should be charged on food with a higher carbon footprint, with the proceeds spent on encouraging carbon-friendly farming methods. [Full article available here](http://www.fruitnet.com/fpj/article/185373/imports-must-meet-uk-standards)

* 1. **Future availability of crop protection tools**

Agri-food chain organizations joined their forces to write an open letter about the future availability and use of crop protection tools in the framework of the EU Farm to Fork Strategy. With the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies, the Commission has set out its ambition to position the EU as the gold standard for environmental, social, and economic sustainability at global level. The co-signing associations of the agri-food value chain support this ambition; in fact, we believe in many cases, our sectors already are the global gold standard.

The co-signing organisations, which are members of the Agri-Food Chain Round Table on Plant Protection, call on the Commission to take into consideration the following points:

* Firstly, the need to carry out a comprehensive assessment of the cumulative economic, social and environmental impacts of the various targets for EU agriculture set out in the Farm to Fork and the Biodiversity Strategies before taking any political or binding regulatory decisions.
* Secondly, the targets proposed should not only be coherent and consistent across the European Green Deal initiatives but also useful, measurable, realistic and achievable.
* Finally, the targets should be science-based, technically feasible and economically sustainable to enable the long-term economic viability and competitiveness of all players in the food supply chain.

In order to deliver on the ambitious Green Deal objectives, any proposed combination of policy measures needs to balance trade-offs without leaving anyone in the food supply chain behind – especially in the aftermath of COVID-19. This means that the policy options under consideration need to be science-based and premised on solid data. This is too important an issue for there not to be a full assessment of the potential consequences.

The co-signers believe that it is important to recognise what has already been delivered by EU supply chain stakeholders in terms of the sustainable use of pesticides. In Europe, pesticide use and risk have decreased sharply over the past 50 years. Thanks to innovation in agriculture, the average use rate of active ingredients per hectare for herbicides, for instance, has dropped by 97%. Ultimately, over the past 60 years, the average use rates of newly introduced active ingredients have been reduced. Currently, less than 470 active substances (including 29 low-risk active substances and 23 basic substances) are available on the market to protect our crop and plant production.

To achieve the targets and fulfil the objectives set in the Farm to Fork Strategy, producers need to have enough safe, effective and affordable tools at hand to ensure food security and sustainable production, including biocontrol technologies, crop rotation systems, digitalisation methods, New Genomic Techniques and resilient varieties for EU crops and plants.

With regard to the impact of these targets on international trade, we have to bear in mind that goods imported into the EU also form an essential part of the agri-food chain. Moreover, it is in the EU’s interest that other producing countries interested in continuing their trade relations with the EU also have the possibility to adapt to these requirements without upsetting the balance of international trade. We call on the Commission to consider a realistic time frame before making any legislative decision or change in the near future. [Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9326182/future-availability-of-crop-protection-tools/)

 **Business/ Industry**

* 1. **Fruit Attraction 2021 in Madrid will be an in-person event in October**

Fruit Attraction, the international trade fair for the fruit and vegetable sector, has confirmed the event is organised by IFEMA Madrid and FEPEX and has been scheduled to take place from 5 to 7 October. Already, 150 days before the fair kicks off, participation levels are the same as they were in 2019, on the same date.

International participation in Fruit Attraction, which is expected to be excellent, will get a boost from the gradual relaxation of the travel restrictions currently affecting international visitors from non-EU areas. This will be helped by the recently-approved European Union "EU Covic-19 Travel Passport”, which will come into effect on 1 July and will allow people who have been vaccinated or who are immune after having had COVID-19 in the last six months or have a negative PCR or antigen test certificate to move freely in the European Union. [Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9324611/fruit-and-vegetable-sector-is-feeling-upbeat-about-fruit-attraction-2021-which-will-be-an-in-person-event/)

 **China**

* 1. **Freshfel Europe & CIQA China meet to discuss common concerns for fresh produce sector**

On 26 May delegations from Freshfel Europe and CIQA met virtually to exchange expertise on a number of issues of common concern. Topics covered included lessons learnt from the COVID-19 pandemic for fresh produce business, the development of e-commerce and online sales on both sides and the move towards sustainability. The two Associations are due to sign a Memorandum of Understanding in the coming weeks to further foster the collaboration and mutual exchange of best practices between the Associations to boost the fruit and vegetables category in both Europe and China.

“Trade between China and Europe slowed down during the pandemic, after peaking in 2019 at 200.000 T of export from China to the EU (grapefruit, pears, garlic and onions) and 65.000 T of export from the EU to China (oranges, pears and kiwifruit). As the pandemic is ending more opportunities might arise, building on the new sustainability move, online sales opportunities and in regard to logistics the Silk Road Train alternative.”

Both Associations presented the key features of their actions during the COVID-19 pandemic, the stage of e-commerce development and their perspectives and engagement on sustainability. In regard to the impact of the pandemic, responses from both sides were similar, addressing the changing trade environment and capitalizing on stimulating consumption towards healthier lifestyles and better nutrition with fresh produce. The e-commerce development demonstrated the significant advance of China in online sales to consumers driven by giant online retailers, while Europe is still witnessing quite different and fragmented models at national level. It was agreed to further explore collaboration with CIQA on this matter for the benefit of Freshfel Europe members. The two Associations also exchanged on practices and new approaches towards sustainability and agreed to continue collaborating on this i8mportant topic to gain expertise from each other. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9325837/freshfel-europe-ciqa-china-meet-online-to-discuss-common-concerns-for-fresh-produce-sector/)

* 1. **Vietnam & China set to speed up customs clearance for fresh fruits**

Officials from Vietnam and China on June 2 reached a consensus on plant quarantine to simplify procedures and shorten customs clearance time for fresh fruit exports. The two sides discussed fruit quarantine activities at border gates in the recent past, focusing on quarantine for Vietnam’s fresh fruits to be exported to the neighbouring country in the time ahead.

Accordingly, China’s customs and quarantine agencies will examine Vietnamese fruits randomly and exempt check-up for fresh lychees from Vietnam. Vietnam has exported nine types of fruits to China, namely dragon fruit, longan, mango, lychee, banana, jackfruit, rambutan, watermelon and mangosteen.

Given the complex developments of the COVID-19 pandemic, the two sides agreed to study the possibility to build a joint mechanism to speed up plant quarantine at border gates. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9326903/vietnam-china-set-to-speed-up-customs-clearance-for-fresh-fruits/)

* 1. **JD launches Thai charter flight**

JD.com has opened an all-cargo charter flight between Shenzhen and Bangkok, the e-commerce giant’s first in the Asia-Pacific region. Open to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in both countries, the freight-dedicated route will facilitate delivery of goods from mainland China to customers in Thailand and vice versa within 48 hours.

JD is excited for this opportunity to leverage our international supply chain resources to strengthen the relationship between Thailand and China, and to facilitate the transport of high-quality Chinese goods going to South-East Asia and vice versa. They see enormous potential in South-East Asia, and this is just the first step.” The service will run between Shenzhen Bao’an Airport and Bangkok Suvarnabhumi Airport three times a week with same-day return.

JD said this end-to-end fully self-operated and full-link transportation route is set to not only greatly increase the speed of cross-border freight, but also provide vigorous support for the development of cross-border business through both Thai and Chinese e-commerce channels, including JD.com and JD’s joint venture in Thailand, JD Central (JDC).The cargo transported from Thailand is expected to mainly comprise fresh produce such as durian, supplemented by other industrial products. [Full article available here](http://www.fruitnet.com/asiafruit/article/185402/jd-launches-thai-charter-flight)

* 1. **Shipping costs up due to COVID-19 flare-ups in Guangdong Province**

Renewed cases of COVID-19 at the Yantian Port area in Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, have pushed the port to slow down its operations by suspending the acceptance of heavy export containers for several days. According to a local official statement issued on Friday, the Yantian district in Shenzhen urged all citizens to be tested for COVID-19. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9325751/shipping-costs-up-due-to-covid-19-flare-ups-in-guangdong-province/)

* 1. **Covid resurgence hampers Chinese apple exports**

China’s apple exporters have seen sales drop in South-East Asia, their largest market, as Covid-19 outbreaks dampen local economies. According to a report from the Global Times, exporters have faced poor sales and prices as they have tried to find a market for their harvest. The price has dropped 60 per cent this year, causing severe losses.( from approximately $1 US/ Kg) [Full article available here](http://www.fruitnet.com/asiafruit/article/185401/covid-resurgence-hampers-chinese-apple-exports)

 **Food safety**

* 1. **Food Safety at the WHO: The Long Walk to Recognition**

Mankind has long recognized the importance of food availability for survival and wellbeing: It is the concept of food security. Not surprisingly, this concept has been captured by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[¹](https://www.food-safety.com/articles/7123-food-safety-at-the-who-the-long-walk-to-recognition#1) adopted by the United Nations in 1948, where food availability is identified as a basic human right. However, it is extremely surprising that the concept of food safety, that is the absence of health and life-damaging or destroying pr ( *this article goes on to provide a history of the growing realisation that safe food is an important human right and its ownership by international bodies*). [Full article available here](https://www.food-safety.com/articles/7123-food-safety-at-the-who-the-long-walk-to-recognition)

* 1. **Good bacteria contribute in fight against pathogens in food processing environment**

In a [study](https://www.nature.com/articles/s41538-020-00076-x), scientists explained the survival behaviour of E. coli O157:H7 after exposure to unfavourable conditions such as those created by routine sanitation procedures, and how it varies within beef processing facilities that are following similar sanitizing protocols. "Under certain conditions, pathogens like E. coli O157:H7 and S. enterica would enter into a dormant or "hibernation" stage, forming a thin film that allows it to better survive on hard surfaces such as concrete or steel. This is called a bacterial biofilm, and it cannot be seen with the naked eye.

A major concern is that biofilms allow harmful bacteria to better survive on hard surfaces at the facility, potentially contaminating food, and making consumers sick. Interestingly, studies show that these pathogens do not survive on their own. After comparing samples from different facilities that follow similar cleaning measures but experiencing different levels of pathogens, scientists learned that multiple species of bacteria found in the processing plant environment of each location could either enhance or reduce a pathogen’s chance of surviving sanitizing procedures. They do this by forming a biofilm community (mixed biofilm structure).

We look at the unique communities of environmental bacteria that collaborate or compete with pathogens at each location. The collaboration may lead to high pathogen prevalence at certain locations, but strong competition may inhibit pathogen survival at other places. Since many of these environmental bacteria are not harmful to humans or animals, if we can identify the specific species that inhibit pathogen biofilm formation, we can use them as probiotics (preventive measures) against disease-causing bacteria."

More research is needed to understand the interaction of multiple species of bacteria present in different processing plant environments and how they vary from one facility to another—reflecting different locations, temperatures, and other factors. Is it possible to develop a more environmentally friendly and cost-effective approach against pathogens in food processing facilities? [Full article available here](Good%20bacteria%20contribute%20in%20fight%20against%20pathogens%20in%20food%20processing%20environment)



* 1. **PepsiCo backs EU-wide environmental labelling**

PepsiCo Director of Environmental Policy Gloria Gabellini advocates for an EU-wide harmonised environmental labelling scheme as she says consumers have a right to expect transparency from producers. Gabellini said “consumers are… increasingly interested in knowing more about the environmental footprint of food and beverage products in particular” and environmental labelling will help consumers make informed sustainable choices and incentivise the industry to “do better” in terms of environmental impact. [Full article available here](https://www.foodnavigator.com/Article/2021/06/01/PepsiCo-backs-EU-wide-environmental-labelling-Consumers-should-be-supported-and-industry-incentivised)

 **Innovation**

* 1. **Infrared scanner analyzes fresh produce's internal quality, predicts shelf life”**

A scanner will be on the market this year that not only analyzes fruit and vegetables' internal quality but also predicts how long they'll keep. " For now, though, the scanner's a B2B product. The system's unique. It can predict products' shelf life. Based on that, users can decide what to do with the batch." Currently, day codes are affixed to fresh produce. These indicate its estimated shelf life. For example, P6 means the product should be eaten within six days of being harvested. However, this is a static, conservative average.

The scanner measures a product's internal quality. It then uploads this information to a database. This contains all known algorithms about the product's shelf life. But the scanner is also self-learning. Machine learning means the algorithms are constantly updated. In the long term, the scanner should also become available for the consumer market as an app. Phone developers are currently already integrating infrared scanners. The shelf life app could then easily be run on a mobile phone. [Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9325223/infrared-scanner-analyzes-fresh-produce-s-internal-quality-predicts-shelf-life/)

* 1. **Data interoperability important**

In greenhouse horticulture, interoperability is important and in the interests of the growers. It’s important that growers can make data transparent on the data platform of their choice. It’s important that the data can be used for the applications they choose. And it’s important that the sensors they have bought can also be connected to the data platforms and climate computers of their choice. In other words: systems interoperability in greenhouse horticulture.

The data-driven and autonomous greenhouse sounds very nice and presents an inspiring picture of the future. But working towards it means that all parties must be able to connect with each other. Climate computers, AI services, data platforms, harvesting robots and drones must be able to communicate with each other through unified and robust APIs and data protocols. This sounds far away, but it already means that all parties must be willing to exchange data today. In the interests of the grower. And at the grower’s request. Every sensor should be able to be linked to every AI service, to every climate computer, and to every dashboard.

So this is my call to all greenhouse horticulture suppliers: create good connections with your platform, climate computer, or algorithms. Create good connections and standards. Make it possible. Reach agreements together in the interests of the sector, so that the grower can choose what suits him or her best. And so that we move forward as a sector. And my question to growers: how important is it to you, to be able to choose the combination of parties and solutions that suits you? [Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9325922/what-horticulture-can-learn-from-electric-cars/)

* 1. **”Electronic phytosanitary certification is still at the beginning”**

SHAFFE, the Southern Hemisphere Association of Fresh Fruit Exporters together with Freshfel Europe and the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation, has held two webinars on the state of play of electronic phytosanitary certificates – one at the 27th and one at the 31st of May 2021 – to create a truly global outreach. At the centre of the meetings was the evolution of the IPPC ePhyto Hub, a global transmission system for phytosanitary certificates to which nearly 50 countries have been connected already. With around about 260 participants, the webinars bridged the gap between the global fruit industry and policy makers.

The meeting, which was attended by fruit and vegetable business together with NPPO representatives from all over the world, covered three major elements:

1) to create more global awareness on the IPPC ePhyto solution as a simple, inclusive and safe transmission tool for electronic phytosanitary certificates,

2) to motivate NPPO’s all over the world to streamline endeavours and to implement this global solution, to facilitate trade for perishable goods, and

3) also to reveal and discuss the practical challenges in the implementation process together with the fruit sector.

Nonetheless, the practical implementation is challenged by the evolution of different transmission systems, a lack of communication and understanding of the different national regulatory requirements for e-certification which in particular backfires in concrete at custom operations level, when inspector are not trained to take ownership on the solutions offered and last but not least the different security requirements diverging from electronic seals to QR codes, challenging the harmonized implementation all over the world.

Craig Fedchock, Senior Advisor at the IPPC, highlighted that the onboarding is still at the very beginning, and all countries will have to continue to strengthen efforts to onboard to the IPPC ePhyto system as fast as possible, which can be done with support of the Alliance.While the European Union has been fully onboarding the IPPC ePhyto Hub to their TRACES system, there is still a lot of opportunity for key trading partners such as China and Australia to fully come on board. Combined efforts of NPPOs, together with industry – including thorough analysis of business procedures – will be needed to continue the trend towards paperless processes. [Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9326678/electronic-phytosanitary-certification-is-still-at-the-beginning/)

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