

**PMAC weekly update 23rd to 30th March**

1. **New Zealand News:**  Post-quake study reveals hort potential; New crops to grow in Kaipara get a boost; Plant protein a big opportunity; Central Otago orchards uncertain about labour shortage; Piqa Boo set for global commercial launch; The taste of New Zealand citrus becomes an iconic biscuit flavour; Maori orchardists profit from global demand for organic produce; Bad weather does not affect brown-marmorated stink bug
2. **International news:** GAIN reports; The US confirmed it will inspect 100% of Mexican tomato exports; Europe to debate ban on mancozeb; Extension of time limits in proceedings before the CPVO; Watch out: a list of recognisable digital security dangers in horticulture; BayWa ends the financial year 2019 on a successful note; Packaging enhances food safety and security; Australian rock melon growers get best practice guide regarding food safety; Series of salad recalls in Australia due to Salmonella; Spain: Water theft is a growing concern in an increasingly dry country; Syngenta seeks to reduce carbon intensity with packaging innovations; Annual report American Floral Endowment; Kenyan-owned firms in the floriculture global value chain

***Editors comments***

*Well Covid 19 is definitely dominating the media at the moment but there is still some other news around that deals with longer term issues . In New Zealand there is news of two initiatives ( in Canterbury and Kaipara) that are looking at the potential for changes land use by undertaking studies about crops that could replace more traditional farming. It looks as though the move in to horticulture could accelerate over the next few years. Another reports article calls for NZ to investigate producing more plant protein to complement the animal protein we already produce.*

*Internationally ( despite Covid 19) the USA have announced 100% inspections of Mexican tomatoes to stop “dumping” And the EU is reviewing mancozeb’s registration ( the 7th most widely used pesticide in Spain) with a view to stopping its use because of suspected effects on hormones. There is also a good article on Digital security and the need for Horticulturalists to begin to think seriously about protecting digital tools and data – always a good reminder*



1. **New Zealand News**



* 1. **Post-quake study reveals hort potential**

Large areas of North Canterbury and South Marlborough – affected by the 2016 Kaikoura Earthquakes – offer wide potential for horticulture. A Plant and Food Research investigation has found that several crops – in particular, apples, grapes, hazelnuts and walnuts – could be grown in pockets throughout the region. It identified 41,515 ha of land – or about 9% of the total 466,000ha – that would potentially be suitable.

The study was commissioned by the Post Quake Farming (PQF) project, an MPI-funded programme to support the recovery of farming businesses and future land use decisions in the area affected by the quakes. The study’s co-author, Dr Brent Clothier, of Plant and Food Research, Palmerston North, said it began with a series of community engagement meetings where a list of crops suitable for investigation was agreed upon. These included apples, kiwifruit, wine grapes, blueberries, avocados, hazelnuts and walnuts. In response to community feedback, the scope has been further expanded to hops and hemp.  iWhile it found that apples, grapes and nuts would be suitable on the right land across the region, avocados and kiwifruit generally would not be suitable – while blueberries were only marginally suitable in certain areas.

Clothier said the first part of the study was a “broad brush sweep” across the post-quake region, identifying areas that met four basic criteria:

* Land Use Capability (LUC) class 1, 2, or 3. Under the LUC regime, New Zealand has been mapped into eight LUC classes, 1 being the best land and 8 the worst, due to limitations around water, erosion, root zone depth, drainage etc. “We feel that horticulture requires land that has few limitations, or limitations that can be easily mitigated,” said Clothier.
* The land slope less than 15 degrees (initially 8 degrees but relaxed because there are existing successful vineyard developments in steeper land north of Waipara).
* Growing Degree Days (GDD) greater than 800, because of the need for warmth over summer to get a horticultural crop through to maturity.
* Frost-Free Period (FFP) of 180 days or more.

In the second stage, the researchers applied specific rules for the specific crops, matched against detailed climatic analysis using NIWA’s Virtual Climate Station Networks.

Clothier said the first two stages of the study were a desktop exercise, with findings presented to farmers in the region in a series of meetings in September.  It was now in a third stage of “ground-truthing” the study by visiting farms in the region to see what has been successfully grown over the years – ranging from small commercial growers to “where granny used to have apple trees behind the homestead and they still fruit beautifully.”

**Micro-climates are important** Understanding that could be very important to securing contracts for higher value/higher margin crops. This autumn, PQF intends to do extension with farmers to help them do climate surveys on their farms.  [Full article available here](https://www.ruralnewsgroup.co.nz/rural-news/rural-general-news/post-quake-study-reveals-hort-potential)

* 1. **New crops to grow in Kaipara get a boost**

The Kaipara Kai hub in Ruawai has recently been opened. To boost the hunt for new crops, livestock types and aquaculture options in Northland. A year after a $980,000 Provincial Growth Fund grant was announced Kaipara District Council has commissioned and staffed a resource centre for local landowners. Landowners can access knowledge and resources and speak to rural professionals while outsiders can base themselves at the hub for consultations.

New higher-value crops such as hemp, soybeans and peanuts have been suggested on flat land now being used for dairying or kumara growing. Detailed analysis will soon be available on crops best suited to specific sites in Kaipara.  Northland Inc chairwoman Sarah Petersen said Kaipara Kai is the first of its kind in the country aimed at diversifying crops and raising productivity. “We will help unlock the potential of more than 50,000 hectares of land that has in the past and could be used again for food production.” [Full article available here](https://farmersweekly.co.nz/section/agribusiness/view/new-crops-to-grow-in-kaipara-get-a-boost)

* 1. **Plant protein a big opportunity**

The food and agricultural sectors need to work together to meet the growing consumer demand for plant-based proteins, FoodHQ business development manager Amos Palfreyman says. It did an innovation scan with Netherlands collaborator Food Valley to examine the rapidly evolving landscape of the alternative protein sectors in both countries, FoodHQ chief executive Abby Thompson said.

It found NZ needs to have a constructive national discussion about how the alternative protein sector can be developed.

Increasing numbers of people around the world have decided they want to eat less meat and dairy

The report identifies some of the entrepreneurs, farmers and large food companies in both countries focused on rolling out new products and ingredients using alternative plant proteins, insect sources and new biotechnology. Its says the bulk of new plant protein product development in NZ is being taken on by small to medium private enterprises, which often don’t have ready access to technology and science.

NZ is still discovering its comparative advantages and new industries continue to emerge. In the past 20 years NZ wine, honey, aquaculture and avocados have all emerged from almost nothing into world-leading sectors. NZ has attracted investment in food and beverage manufacturing from around the world. Global leaders have already endorsed NZ by investing in manufacturing in the country and about 25% of the food and beverage manufacturing sector is foreign owned. [Full article available here](https://farmersweekly.co.nz/section/agribusiness/view/plant-protein-a-big-opportunity)



* 1. **Central Otago orchards uncertain about labour shortage**

Uncertainty over travel for the international workforce is compounding what has been a difficult season for orchardists in Central Otago. Border restrictions and reduced airline capacity in response to Covid-19 are creating anxiety in the industry. Summerfruit New Zealand chairman and chief executive of 45 South -New Zealand's largest cherry exporter- Tim Jones said traditionally two-thirds of his workforce came from overseas, half on Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) visas and half backpackers.

While the majority of this season's crop was exported before widespread outbreak of the disease, export volume was well down due to a difficult growing season. However, the timing of the outbreak saved further pain for the industry.[Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9201582/new-zealand-central-otago-orchards-uncertain-about-labour-shortage/)

* 1. **Piqa Boo set for global commercial launch**

**T**he highly anticipated 2020 season of New Zealand-grown Piqa Boo will officially be launched on 13 April by the New Zealand Piqa Boo Governance Organisation (GO Group). Production of the bright red-skinned fruit, said to have a refreshingly tropical taste, has increased considerably over recent years, with the upcoming harvest prompting GO Group to form a collaborative approach to the marketing. Consisting of exporters Fern Ridge Fresh, Freshmax, Integrow, PickMee, Yummy Fruit Company and Golden Bay Fruit, GO Group decided a global launch date would be an ideal way to kick start the new season.

The variety ( a red skinned fruit which is a cross between an apple and a pear) was commercialised in 2014, with many of New Zealand’s leading apple and pear growers encouraged to take up the challenge of growing the fruit. Livingston said GO Group was anticipating a total harvest of 385 tonnes for the 2020 season, coming from approximately 60ha.Fruit picked this year is destined for sales domestically in New Zealand, as well as global markets including Taiwan, China, Singapore and Malaysia. [Full article available here](http://www.fruitnet.com/produceplus/article/181218/piqa-boo-set-for-global-commercial-launch)

* 1. **The taste of New Zealand citrus becomes an iconic biscuit flavour**

The flavour of New Zealand oranges has been immortalised, with the taste and flavour being used in the iconic Tim Tam biscuit. As part of the launch, the biscuit company showcased some of the Gisborne growers, including Murray Burgess, who is part of the largest navel growing area in New Zealand.( the company is using freeze drying of oranges to introduce the taste).

Arnott’s confirming that there was a lot of research that had gone into testing the best raw ingredients from local farmers and businesses for the Tim Tam Crafted Collection range, which were sourced from some of the best regions across Australia and New Zealand .[Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9201554/the-taste-of-new-zealand-citrus-becomes-an-iconic-biscuit-flavour/)

* 1. **Maori orchardists profit from global demand for organic produce**

Māori orchardist Otama Marere has embraced organic kiwifruit production, growing organic SunGold kiwifruit on a total of 7 hectares. The trust that manages the land has also held educational days on the land for other Maori kiwifruit growers interested in organic production. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9202024/nz-maori-orchardists-profit-from-global-demand-for-organic-produce/" \t "_blank)

 **Biosecurity**

* 1. **Bad weather does not affect brown-marmorated stink bug**

In the past few days, temperatures have dropped dramatically throughout Italy, reaching 5-6°C below zero in some areas. Temperatures well below zero may have created some problems for brown-marmorated stink bug but it is nothing compared to the damage that frost has caused to production. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9203196/bad-weather-does-not-affect-brown-marmorated-stink-bug/)



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 go to the Gain web site (<https://gain.fas.usda.gov/>) and search for the country and any reports released in the last month. This week see:

1. **Belgium Export Certificate Report**
2. **Korea** Additional Impact on Korean Agriculture and Food Situation This report provides an overview of the impact to date of COVID-19 on the Korean trade balance, distribution channels, wholesale prices and government support programs provided to cope with the COVID-19.
3. **Korean Food and Agricultural Market Conditions Under COVID-19 Outbreaks** The Korean food market has been seriously hit by the on-going COVID-19 outbreak. Consumers have reduced outdoor activities dramatically, including shopping and dining trips, since the first local infection reported on January 20, 2020. Food supplies are ample and prices have been stable.
4. **Slovakia Exporter Guide 2019** Slovakia is a prosperous, industrialized, and export-driven economy located in the center of Europe. The country is a part of the EU single market and its economy tends to perform better than the EU average.

 **Regulatory**

* 1. **The US confirmed it will inspect 100% of Mexican tomato exports**

The manager of the IACHR, Mario Haroldo Robles Escalante, stated that despite the exceptional restrictions that the US government has imposed to stop the expansion of the coronavirus, the measure to review 100% of the trucks loaded with Mexican tomatoes that enter the United States, which is part of the latest agreement to reached to suspend the tomato dumping investigation, will continue to enter into effect. [Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9202637/the-us-confirmed-it-will-inspect-100-of-mexican-tomato-exports/)

* 1. **Europe to debate ban on mancozeb**

The EU's Standing Committee on Vegetables, Animals, Food and Feed plans to meet on March 23 and 24 to decide if they continue to authorize the use of mancozeb, the seventh most widely used pesticide in Spain. Mancozeb is a fungicide that has been associated with different possible health effects by many scientists. One of the metabolites of this type of pesticide, ethylenediourea (ETU), has been associated with birth defects and cancer in laboratory animals. It can also cause hormonal changes and it is toxic for reproduction. It also represents a significant risk for birds, mammals, insects, and soil organisms.

The Standing Committee is currently expected to decide on the substance at its meeting next week. It is a historical moment. For the first time in 20 years and after accumulating scientific evidence, the Commission and the EU Member States are debating the possibility of banning it. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9201469/europe-to-debate-ban-on-mancozeb/)

* 1. **Extension of time limits in proceedings before the CPVO**

On 24 March 2020 the President of the Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO) has taken a ["Decision concerning the extension of time limits"](https://cpvo.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/decision_on_extension_of_time_limits.docx.pdf) that fall in the period 17 March – 3 May included, until 4 May 2020 for parties to proceedings before the Office and the Board of Appeal. The extension applies to all deadlines except for the submission of material for technical examinations and the payment of examination fees. An [Explanatory note detailing the practical aspects of the Decision is also available](https://cpvo.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/explanatory_note_on_extension_of_time_limits.docx.pdf).  [Full article available here](https://www.floraldaily.com/article/9202671/extension-of-time-limits-in-proceedings-before-the-cpvo/)

 **Business/ Industry**

* 1. **Watch out: a list of recognisable digital security dangers in horticulture**

Virtually everyone says "yes" when asked if digital security is important. When push comes to shove, though, labour or water gets more priority from the grower, and for suppliers, there's always a higher item on the to-do-list, too. Strange actually, because in all company processes digital security is key.

Recently in the EU a digital security work group was founded , Their first goal is raising awareness.

. Hackers get smarter so anyone can be hacked and the grower with a fully automated greenhouse is maybe the most vulnerable of all. The three most common reactions are 'my supplier probably takes care of digital security', 'I don't click on wrong links' or 'that's scary, I don't understand that'.

None of those three is 'the right answer'. Even more so, the whole horticultural chain is interlinked, and a chain is only as strong as its weakest link. Only together and by sharing knowledge, horticulture can take steps.

OT stands for Operational Technology, which are all machines, from conveyor belt to robotic arm, in the greenhouse. The OT is vulnerable, because the software that controls that hardware is often hard to update, or it can't be updated at all.  Some simple, sometimes obvious tips, are necessary. It's wise to change the password every now and then, on the hardware too ('adminadmin' is easy to hack). Choose for multi factor authentication for everything that requires logging in, and for a password manager which is guarded with another password to make using good, strong passwords possible.

**Another tip** not to open your e-mail on the climate computer and to use the 3-2-1 back up rule (original data, back up drive and in the cloud with a password).

And then there's data. The amount of data increases, but the question is how much you want to keep. Data that doesn't exist anymore, cannot fall into the wrong hands either. For that reason it is inadvisable to take business computers and phones to 'risk countries' like China, Russia or the United States. A little 'check' at customs and before you know it there's spyware on it. Several people on the working group have had similar experiences, or at least a hunch that something like that had happened to them For more information, please send an e-mail to [colinda.debeer@innovationquarter.nl](mailto:colina.debeer@innovationquarter.nl?subject=Reactie%20op%20GroentenNieuws.nl%20artikel)  [Full article available here](https://www.floraldaily.com/article/9199992/watch-out-a-list-of-recognisable-digital-security-dangers-in-horticulture/)

* 1. **BayWa ends the financial year 2019 on a successful note**

In the financial year 2019, revenues at BayWa AG, Munich, Germany, increased to €17.1 billion (2018: €16.6 billion), thereby exceeding the mark of €17 billion for the first time.

“The positive development in the Energy Segment made the largest contribution to BayWa’s good overall development in the past year. Global Produce – our fruit business – was also successful. Specifically the national and international fruit business developed positively in the past year. The Global Produce business unit increased its marketing volume by a total of 8%, bringing it up to 380,550 tonnes. The new harvest brought better fruit quality and higher prices. The New Zealand Group company T&G Global Limited (T&G Global), which was particularly successful in the Asia-Pacific market, recorded an increase in vegetable fruits and tropical fruit. Development differed in the business involving apples, as New Zealand’s harvests were negatively impacted by late frosts, leading to smaller fruit sizes and lower quality. The sale of T&G Global’s office building generated special income. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9203433/baywa-ends-the-financial-year-2019-on-a-successful-note/)

* 1. **Packaging enhances food safety and security**

The European Organization for Packaging and the Environment called on the European Commission on 20 March to recognise packaging as an essential component in maintaining the uninterrupted flow of product groups that the Commission has identified as critical such as “health-related and perishable goods, notably foodstuffs.”  
   
Amid food shortage fears, particularly for fresh produce and uncertainties unnerving the global community in the wake of the Corona virus pandemic, sustainable packaging developer StePac demonstrates how its modified atmosphere packaging solutions can help alleviate many of the concerns related to food contamination and food security. The article mentions the following advantages this packaging provides . It can

* Delay ripening and ageing processes, inhibits microbial decay and preserves the quality and nutritional value of the fruit and vegetables packed within
* **Protect from contamination** that can arise from handling of foodstuffs.
* **Preserve nutritional value** [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9203395/smart-packaging-enhances-food-safety-and-security/)

 **Food safety**

* 1. **Australian rock melon growers get best practice guide regarding food safety**

Australian melon growers have been given an extra resource to help ensure the safety of their products as the NSW Department of Primary Industries has released a best practice guide for rock melons  and speciality melons. The need for the guide was prompted by the 2018 listeria detection on a NSW farm which severely impacted the entire Australian rock melon industry. At that time, domestic and export sales ceased for around six weeks. It has taken the following two years to regain market share. [Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9201575/australian-rock-melon-growers-get-best-practice-guide-regarding-food-safety/)

* 1. **Series of salad recalls in Australia due to Salmonella**

In Western Australia, a number of salad products have been recalled because of Salmonella contamination. These recalls involve the Loose Leaf Lettuce Co., Supreme Salads, Fresh Frontier and Quality Produce International. During routine testing the Special Salad Mix was found to be positive for Salmonella, according to a company statement.

“

A statement from Supreme Salads said due to a supplier notifying them of a contamination problem

[Full article available here](https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9202166/series-of-salad-recalls-in-australia-due-to-salmonella/)



* 1. **Spain: Water theft is a growing concern in an increasingly dry country**

Unfortunately, digging an illegal well to irrigate crops is a widespread practice in Spain as water becomes increasingly scarce. But around 100 such boreholes have been blocked off recently around Lucena del Puerto, a small town some 70 kilometres (45 miles) west of Seville in southern Spain, which has won notoriety for being the epicentre of groundwater theft. [Click here to read the full article.](https://www.ibtimes.com/water-theft-growing-concern-increasingly-dry-spain-2943283)

* 1. **Syngenta seeks to reduce carbon intensity with packaging innovations**

To improve sustainability across its supply chain, Syngenta recently announced a $2 billion investment in sustainable agriculture. Part of this investment will go toward packaging innovations.

“Things like reducing the weight of plastic in containers, moving plastics and products in bulk, and cutting the thickness of our label paper all contribute to making our operations more sustainable,” said Gabriel Oxby, Syngenta formulation and packaging group leader. The company hopes these and other sustainability efforts will help Syngenta meet its target to reduce the carbon intensity of its operations and supply chain by 50% by 2030. [Full article available here](https://www.hortidaily.com/article/9202552/syngenta-seeks-to-reduce-carbon-intensity-with-packaging-innovations/)

****

**Floral news**

* 1. **Annual report American Floral Endowment**

The American Floral Endowment released its annual report, in which research projects, education and travel grants and scholarships are named, and new projects are announced.  [Read the report here.](https://endowment.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/AFE_2018-19_Annual-FINAL-electronic.pdf)

* 1. **Kenyan-owned firms in the floriculture global value chain**

A new research paper focuses on the floriculture industry in Kenya as a successful export-oriented agro-industry to analyze the interplay of multilevel factors that condition whether, when, and how local firms can enter and remain competitive (or not) in the floriculture global value chain. [Full article available here](https://www.floraldaily.com/article/9202970/kenyan-owned-firms-in-the-floriculture-global-value-chain/)

**Subscribe/ Unsubscribe** If you no longer wish to receive this email please send a note to [info@pmac.co.nz](mailto:info@pmac.co.nz) asking to be added/ removed and providing the nominated email address

**Disclaimer** Please note this information has been accessed from emails that have been forwarded to info@PMAC.co.nz and are distributed as a weekly update. If you intend using this information please sight the original document to ensure you are aware of the context within which any changes have been made and to guard against any transcription changes