

UPDATE: 06 December 2023

Kia ora

In this week’s update, as the new government settles in, Trade priorities are announced, NZ signs up to a new agreement at COP28 and the EU ratifies the NZ-EU FTA. On the international front, there is a resurgence of disruption to global shipping routes, the EU parliament adopts a plan to cut packaging but rejects a Commission proposal to cut the use of pesticides and a deadly Salmonella outbreak is linked to fresh produce. You’ll find links to these as well as our regular items of regulatory notifications, consultations, national and international news, and upcoming events below.

Ngā mihi

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| GOVERNMENT AGENCY NEWS |

## ICPR changes & other updates

The following ICPRs have been updated in a number of sections since the last newsletter:

* China: [ICPR China](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/630-China)
* European Union: [ICPR EU](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/640)
* Malaysia: [ICPR Malaysia](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/664-Malaysia)
* Türkiye: [ICPR Türkiye](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/699)
* Taiwan: [ICPR Taiwan](https://cbaff.outreach.co.nz/redirect/YTo3OntzOjM6InVybCI7czozOToiaHR0cHM6Ly93d3cubXBpLmdvdnQubnovZG1zZG9jdW1lbnQvNjk0IjtzOjQ6InR5cGUiO3M6NDoiaHJlZiI7czo3OiJtZXNzYWdlIjtzOjU6IjkwMDcxIjtzOjc6ImFjY291bnQiO3M6NToiY2JhZmYiO3M6ODoiY2F0ZWdvcnkiO3M6NDoiNTIxNSI7czo3OiJzZW50X2F0IjtpOjE3MDA3MDkwMTc7czoxMDoibm90aWZpYWJsZSI7aToxO30.?oid=10784)
* Tonga: [ICPR Tonga](https://cbaff.outreach.co.nz/redirect/YTo3OntzOjM6InVybCI7czo0NToiaHR0cHM6Ly93d3cubXBpLmdvdnQubnovZG1zZG9jdW1lbnQvNjk3LVRvbmdhIjtzOjQ6InR5cGUiO3M6NDoiaHJlZiI7czo3OiJtZXNzYWdlIjtzOjU6Ijg5MTExIjtzOjc6ImFjY291bnQiO3M6NToiY2JhZmYiO3M6ODoiY2F0ZWdvcnkiO3M6NDoiNTIxNSI7czo3OiJzZW50X2F0IjtpOjE3MDEwNTcwMDI7czoxMDoibm90aWZpYWJsZSI7aToxO30.?oid=10784)
* United States of America: [ICPR USA](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/702)

If you need any further clarification, contact your Independent Verification Agency in the first instance.

#### 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.



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| NEW ZEALAND NEWS |

## Industry news

#### New CEO for New Zealand Avocado announced

NZAGA Executive recently announced the appointment of Brad Siebert as CEO of NZ Avocado. Brad has been acting CEO since mid-August and is now formally stepping into the role with the full confidence of the Executive.

Brad has worked in the primary sector for much of his career and the last nine years with the Avocado Grower Association. Brad's industry background, technical experience and the wider relationships he has built across both industry and government will greatly benefit the direction of the sector.

Bringing with him into the role is a continued focus on biosecurity, market access, sustainability and trade policy. These are areas of critical importance as the industry puts more emphasis on risk management and expanding market access.

#### Trade priorities revealed

As Trade Minister, Todd McClay says his number one priority will be a focus on trade with India. He'll be getting there quickly so he can meet with his counterpart and get the conversation going again. McClay says NZ is going to invest heavily in the Indian relationship and claims the effort put into developing the Indian relationship over the past six years has been underwhelming and underdone.

"I want to get up there and tell them we see them as partners," he told Rural News. "Then I want to get up to the Middle East, the UAE and GCC - the Gulf Cooperation Council which brings together six Arab countries - Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates." [Full article here](https://www.ruralnewsgroup.co.nz/rural-news/rural-general-news/trade-priorities-revealed?ct=t(RNG_5_DECEMBER_2023_COPY_01))

#### Zespri creates US$2m fund to boost kiwifruit industry

Zespri, the world’s largest kiwifruit marketer, has established a US$2m fund to support industry innovation and partnerships. The initiative, which is known as ZAG, is part of the company’s work to help people, communities and the environment around the world, it said.

As such, it aims to attract innovative problem solvers from around the world who can help address some of the key challenges the industry faces as it meets growing demand for kiwifruit. Those challenges could be in sustainable agriculture, technology, automation, packaging, supply chain, logistics and industry education.

ZAG will support projects focused on four areas: improving product quality and orchard productivity; promoting consumer wellbeing; protecting and enhancing nature; and benefiting growers and local communities. [Full article here](https://www.fruitnet.com/main-navigation/zespri-creates-us2m-fund-to-boost-kiwifruit-industry/257256.article)

#### Strong market prospects for kiwifruit

Zespri says there is strong demand for NZ kiwifruit in all markets and especially in China.

Chief executive Dan Mathieson told Hort News that this is particularly encouraging given the trauma the industry has gone through in the past few years – with adverse weather events, labour problems and Covid-19. He says with the fruit quality issues sorted, Zespri now has good quality fruit flowing into markets and the demand is strong.

He says China has been a standout market and is going from strength-to-strength with consumers looking for healthy and nutritious food. “The Zespri brand is a very trusted source of health and nutrition and is much sought after in the Chinese market.”

Mathieson says they are also seeing very good demand and performance from other markets such as Europe – which he describes as a star performer. He says the news for Zespri right across the Asia Pacific region is positive for both the Sun- Gold, Zespri Green and the organic varieties. He also points to Vietnam as another market that is doing well.

“One other pleasing market for us has been North America. This is a market we have been investing in a big way in the last five or six years,” Mathieson told Hort News. “We are seeing good growth in both our Sun- Gold, Green and Organics in that market. We see very good growth opportunities there over the coming years as the volumes return in 2024 and 2025.” [Full article here](https://www.ruralnewsgroup.co.nz/dairy-news/dairy-general-news/strong-market-prospects-for-kiwifruit)

#### Envy apples ready to get grip on China

Increasing demand for the licenced apple variety in China has prompted the company to embark on trial-sized plantings of the apple in conjunction with Chinese distribution and orcharding company Joy Wing Mao. Despite the risks of having its fruit grown illegally, T&G is confident about promoting the high-value Envy apple variety in China.

T&G CEO Gareth Edgecombe said T&G has compared notes with Zespri as it builds its presence in China and works to protect the IP of the apple variety. Edgecombe also commented that T&G has already successfully defended its IP against illegally grown fruit, through the Chinese legal system

Envy is ticking all the boxes as a successful apple for the large fruit-eating Asian market. “It has a sweetness and crunch, visual appeal, and aroma that mean it all comes together as the ideal apple,” Edgecombe said. From an orchardist’s perspective, Envy is not the simplest apple to grow, but if done well can prove a high-yielding, high-value option.

Growing the apple in China demonstrated to Chinese authorities that T&G is attempting to lift standards in the industry while protecting its IP to maintain sovereignty over the variety. “But to do that well in China you have to be local, so we have a good partnership with Joy Wing Mao as distributors and growers.” [Full article here](https://www.farmersweekly.co.nz/markets/envy-apples-ready-to-get-grip-on-china/)

#### Brussels greenlights EU-New Zealand trade deal

Brussels has given the final green light for an EU-New Zealand trade deal that, while mutually lowering barriers for both markets, highlights the recent failure of EU-Australia negotiations. The European Council, representing the EU's 27 member countries, said it adopted the New Zealand pact, setting it up to come into force "probably in early 2024" once Wellington ratifies it.

The deal provides for a phased-in slashing of duties on New Zealand imports of lamb, beef, wine, and fruit such as kiwifruit, while European exports would benefit as well.

Two-way trade in goods and services is currently worth €9.1 billion but is expected to grow by 30% over a decade with the new deal. The EU, with its population of 450 million, is the third-biggest export market for New Zealand, with a population of five million. However, the deal is not without critics in Europe. The European Commission, though, has stressed that all food reaching the EU market has to comply with EU standards and vowed a "robust" system of checks. [Full article here](https://www.freshplaza.com/asia/article/9581015/brussels-greenlights-eu-new-zealand-trade-deal/?utm_medium=email)

#### New Zealand signs up to COP28 declaration on food production, sustainable agriculture adaptations

New Zealand has signed an international agreement saying agriculture and food production must urgently adapt to respond to climate change. The declaration comes out of COP28, the United Nations' climate summit currently taking place in Dubai, signed by 134 of the 197 countries in attendance.

Titled "COP28 UAE declaration on sustainable agriculture, resilient food systems and climate action", it acknowledges both the threat the world's food systems are under, and the role food production methods must play in reducing emissions. It makes five broad commitments, among them an intent to scale up adaptation and resilience work to protect vulnerable food producers - from farmers to "fisherfolk" - facing risks caused by climate change.

The signatories also agreed to increase efforts to support vulnerable people, through social protection systems and safety nets like school meals and targeted research and innovation, and to work towards better water management within agriculture and other food systems. They committed to conserve, protect and restore land and natural ecosystems, enhance soil health and biodiversity, as well as "shifting from higher greenhouse gas-emitting practices to more sustainable production and consumption approaches, including by reducing food loss and waste and promoting sustainable aquatic blue foods".

In order to achieve these goals, the signatories agreed to integrate agriculture and food systems into national adaptation plans and biodiversity strategies before the convening of COP30, which is set to take place in Brazil in 2025. [Full article here](https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/country/503758/new-zealand-signs-up-to-cop28-declaration-on-food-production-sustainable-agriculture-adaptations)

#### TradeWindow cuts dozens of jobs, staff take pay cuts

Troubled trade software company TradeWindow is cutting 32 full-time jobs as it looks to save money, while a number of remaining staff and directors are taking temporary pay cuts. The job cuts, signalled earlier this month, meant 40 percent of its 80 staff would be let go, with the bulk of the redundancies completed by the end of the month.

The company also announced it has trimmed its half-year loss by a third to $4.8 million, as trading revenue rose by 25 percent, and has reduced its monthly average cash burn from $1 million to $700,000 - excluding the job cuts. Chief executive AJ Smith said despite the challenges, the company continued to consolidate its presence in the New Zealand export sector, while growth continued despite the headwinds. [Full article here](https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/business/503522/tradewindow-cuts-dozens-of-jobs-staff-take-pay-cuts)

#### Local freight industry concerned about the resurgence of global shipping disruptions

The global supply chain is facing new disruptions from drought and war. A severe drought is causing shipping delays at the Panama Canal, one of the world's main maritime trade routes, and adding to congestion at the Suez Canal, another major trade route, with some shipping companies paying a premium to jump to the front of the growing queue.

Low water levels in the Panama canal system meant fewer ships were able to transit through, causing delays on both sides of the waterway, with some ships waiting 20 days to cross and having to unload cargo to meet weight restrictions. In addition, three commercial vessels came under attack in the international waters of the Red Sea, over the past weekend, further elevating the risk to global shipping, as well as causing global inflation expectations to rise.

Custom Brokers and Freight Forwarders Federation chief executive Sherelle Kennelly said the local industry was concerned about the resurgence of global shipping disruptions, but was yet to be directly affected. [Full article here](https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/business/504044/local-freight-industry-concerned-about-the-resurgence-of-global-shipping-disruptions)

## Reports & Insights

#### MAF Market Intelligence Report: Thailand: Bangkok becomes world’s most visited city

Thailand presents substantial opportunities for New Zealand exporters. There are opportunities to further consolidate market positions over the next few years in advance of other trading partners, such as the EU and EFTA, potentially securing wide ranging FTAs with Thailand.

Based on 2022 data, Thailand is New Zealand’s 10th largest export market, and 8th largest import market. New Zealand food and beverage products are sought-after in Thailand, where New Zealand consistently ranks top in consumer preferences. [Full report here](https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/trade/mfat-market-reports/thailand-bangkok-becomes-worlds-most-visited-city-november-2023/?utm_source=MFAT&utm_campaign=a45e785faa-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2023_11_08_08_24_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-dbad797889-%5BLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D)

#### MAF Market Intelligence Report: China: Agricultural outlook 2023 - 2032

China’s Ministry of Agricultural and Rural Affairs annually reviews the country’s agricultural production and consumption trends, and publishes 10-year projections for key agricultural commodities. The most recent Agricultural Outlook Report, for the period 2023-2032, contains a number of findings relevant to New Zealand’s agricultural trade interests.

* In order to achieve its food security goals, China will continue to invest in improving production efficiency and rural modernisation to build a diversified national food supply system over the next 10 years.
* China’s agricultural production capacity will continue to increase, aided by productivity gains and technological advancements. Consumption of agricultural products is also expected to continue to grow with a significant increase in demand for high-value and high-nutrition products.
* Imports of beef and sheep meat, dairy, fruit, and seafood will continue to grow during the projection period.
* Outside of these sectors of interest to New Zealand, imports of agricultural products were expected to decline overall. China will focus on diversifying import sources and strengthening trade with South East Asia, South America and the Black Sea region [Full report here](https://govt.us6.list-manage.com/track/click?u=ee12ff73e0bbcb23b01a60631&id=46c5422c78&e=f1812fde89)

#### Upcoming events and webinars:

* IFPA A-NZ 2023 FOOD SAFETY SUMMIT, 12 December 2023, Melbourne, Australia [Full details here](https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/ifpa-a-nz-2023-food-safety-summit-tickets-723783555097?aff=odeimcmailchimp&mc_eid=ba99fc8413&mc_cid=719266ad85)
* Hort Connections, 3-5 June 2024, Melbourne Convention Centre, Australia [Full details here](https://hortconnections.com.au/)

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| INTERNATIONAL NEWS |

## 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. For import regulations for a particular market, New Zealand exporters should first check the countries ICPR on MPI’s web site.

UK Import Controls Update

The United Kingdom's Border Target Operating Model, its post-Brexit system of import controls on animals, animal products, plants, and plant products, is set to come into effect on exports from the EU on January 31, 2024, and from the rest of the world (including the United States) starting April 30, 2024. [Full report here](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=UK%20Import%20Controls%20Update_London_United%20Kingdom_UK2023-0025)

Exporter Guide: [New Zealand](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Exporter%20Guide_Wellington_New%20Zealand_NZ2023-0022)

Agricultural Biotechnology Annual: [New Zealand](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Agricultural%20Biotechnology%20Annual_Wellington_New%20Zealand_NZ2023-0015)

## In The News:

#### Forces combine to shield Australian vegetable industry from exotic pest threats

Australia’s vegetable industry is set to receive an unprecedented level of protection against exotic pests through a unique $10 million levy-funded collaborative biosecurity strategy. The Hort Innovation investment on behalf of growers will build the vegetable industry’s resilience to exotic pest threats through the creation of an industry-led biosecurity program that will strengthen pest surveillance, preparedness and management efforts.

The Vegetable Industry Biosecurity and Business Continuity Strategy will be led by AUSVEG with support from Plant Health Australia and state and territory biosecurity and research agencies.

Hort Innovation chief executive officer, Brett Fifield, said the five-year program aimed to boost response capabilities and limit the impact of incursions. “A key aspect of this new vegetable industry biosecurity strategy is the development of protocols that enable movement of produce and swift reinstatement of market access.” [Full article here](https://www.freshplaza.com/asia/article/9580981/forces-combine-to-shield-australian-vegetable-industry-from-exotic-pest-threats/?utm_medium=email)

#### Optimism in Australian avocado industry despite climatic concerns

The Australian avocado industry is experiencing a significant turn this season, marked by favourable weather and promising market developments. John Tyas, CEO of Avocados Australia, is optimistic yet realistic about the sector's current state and future trajectory.

The recent opening of the Indian market is a significant milestone for Australian avocados. "It's just opened," Tyas remarks. "We're registering orchards and packhouses for export to India and expect the first commercial consignments to move next month." The main export destinations remain in Asia. "Mostly Singapore, Malaysia, and Hong Kong, with Hong Kong being very strong.

"We’re expecting a continued increase in production in the next few years. Plantings have been reduced recently, so we hope supply will stabilize. We're keen to open more export markets. It’s a tough couple of years ahead, but longer term, the industry has a bright future." [Full article here](https://www.freshplaza.com/asia/article/9579782/optimism-in-australian-avocado-industry-despite-climatic-concerns/?utm_medium=email)

#### Chilean and Colombian suppliers form avocado alliance

Two of South America’s major produce exporters have effectively joined forces to develop their sales of fresh avocados on the international market. The strategic alliance brings together Chilean group Cabilfrut and Colombian company Green SuperFood, with the ultimate aim to become one of the world’s most recognised avocado suppliers in the global marketplace.

Juan Pablo Cerda, executive director of Cabilfrut, said the alliance would target long-term expansion by integrating the strengths of both companies, from production to logistics and commercial sales. Eventually, that expansion could see other producers join the project.

In time, the partners said they planned to develop a joint brand identity and develop commercial marketing programmes under that label in the US, Europe, Asia and Latin America. [Full article here](https://www.fruitnet.com/chilean-and-colombian-suppliers-form-avocado-alliance/257295.article)

#### "Chile is one of the few countries in the world to have all its fresh fruits approved to enter the Chinese market"

Chinese Customs inspectors recently visited Chile. They toured packing facilities and stone fruit orchards with representatives of the Agricultural and Livestock Service (SAG) and Fruit of Chile. The visit follows the signing of the protocol authorizing the entry of Chilean peaches and damasks into the Chinese market, which took place in October in Beijing.

"With this opening, Chile positions itself as one of the few countries in the world to have all its fresh fruits approved to enter the Chinese market. It's a very important accomplishment. It reflects the close relations of friendship and bilateral trade between both countries. It's also a testament to the commitment and hard work of the Chilean export fruit industry and SAG authorities to comply with each of the protocols, which has allowed our country to become China's main supplier of temperate climate fresh fruits." said Miguel Canala-Echeverria, general manager of Frutas de Chile. [Full article here](https://www.freshplaza.com/asia/article/9581664/chile-is-one-of-the-few-countries-in-the-world-to-have-all-its-fresh-fruits-approved-to-enter-the-chinese-market/?utm_medium=email)

#### Climatic and regulatory burdens take centre stage at ICOP

Some 150 delegates from 17 countries met to discuss the challenging scenario for Europe’s produce industry at the 17th edition of the International Congress of Fruit and Vegetable Producer Organisations (ICOP), which took place in Almería on 22-24 November.

The burdens placed on producers by the European Union’s new Plant Health Regulation and Packaging Regulation, and the impact of increasingly frequent incidences of heat, drought, flooding were among the most hotly debated topics of the first day.

On day two of the conference, attention turned to how the newly revised Common Agricultural Policy, already in its first year for the current 2023-27 period, are affecting the fruit and vegetable sector, especially regarding funding opportunities via the so-called Operational Programme. [Full article here](https://www.fruitnet.com/eurofruit/climatic-and-regulatory-burdens-take-centre-stage-at-icop/257334.article)

#### EU parliament kills off pesticides bill

The European Parliament has rejected a Commission proposal to cut the use of chemical pesticides by a large majority after a backlash from farmers.

In June 2022, the Commission proposed a regulation to reduce the use and risks of plant protection products (PPPs) by 50 per cent at EU level by 2030 as part of the Green Deal climate law to cut greenhouse gas emissions within the EU and improve biodiversity and ecosystems.

On Wednesday, 299 MEPs voted to reject the Commission’s proposal, with 207 supporting the proposal and 121 abstaining. Many Green and socialist MEPs said they had voted against the proposals because of the weakened provisions.

Spanish grower-exporter federation Fepex welcome the result, claiming it showed that “realism has prevailed and that production and food security are beginning to be taken into account and become priorities”. [Full article here](https://www.fruitnet.com/eurofruit/eu-parliament-kills-off-pesticides-bill/257242.article)

#### European Parliament adopts plan to cut packaging waste

The European Parliament has brought EU countries closer to a major reduction in packaging waste after it approved a position paper on new EU-wide rules designed to encourage more reuse and recycling.

Overall packaging reduction targets proposed in the regulation equate to 5 per cent by 2030, 10 per cent by 2035 and 15 per cent by 2040. What’s more, MEPs want to set specific targets to reduce plastic packaging – 10 per cent by 2030, 15 per cent by 2035, and 20 per cent by 2040).

The new rules require that all packaging should be recyclable, fulfilling strict criteria to be defined through secondary legislation. Certain temporary exemptions are foreseen, for example for wood and wax food packaging. [Full article here](https://www.fruitnet.com/eurofruit/european-parliament-adopts-plan-to-cut-packaging-waste/257228.article)

#### More cantaloupe products recalled because of possible link to deadly Salmonella outbreak

Sixteen more freshcut cantaloupe products have been recalled in Canada because of links to a deadly international Salmonella outbreak. The most recent outbreak update for Canada, posted Nov. 24, showed 63 confirmed patients with 17 of them hospitalized and one dead.

As of Nov. 30, there were 117 confirmed patients in the United States, up by 18 since the previous update on Nov. 24. At lease 61 of the patients have required hospitalization and two people have died. The outbreak stretches across 34 states, according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

The implicated whole cantaloupe in both countries was imported from Mexico. The pre-cut products were made using the recalled whole cantaloupe. Pathogens on the outside of cantaloupe are easily transferred to the fruit inside during the cutting process. [Full article here](https://www.foodsafetynews.com/2023/12/more-cantaloupe-products-recalled-in-canada-because-of-possible-link-to-deadly-outbreak/)

#### WTO sees record high for trade concerns debated at meeting on safe food

Delegates at the WTO Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Measures meeting in November addressed specific trade concerns relating to food safety and animal and plant health.

Countries raised 55 specific trade concerns, including seven for the first time in the committee. In July, 46 concerns were discussed, but only one was new.

New topics in the latest meeting addressed issues such as delays in import authorizations and publication of import requirements and restrictions due to possible radionuclide contamination, high pathogenicity avian influenza (HPAI), and pests. Products affected included seafood, citrus fruits, grapes, apples, pears, live poultry and poultry meat, and beef.

Previously raised concerns covered pesticide tolerances and the environment, rules on veterinary medicinal products concerning antimicrobial resistance (AMR), approval procedures for animal and plant products, and import restrictions due to various diseases, such as bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), HPAI, and African swine fever (ASF). [Full article here](https://www.foodsafetynews.com/2023/12/wto-meeting-sees-record-high-for-trade-concerns-debated-at-meeting-on-safe-food/)

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