

UPDATE: 21 December 2023

Kia ora

This is our last update for 2023. We’ll be back in January with our regular roundup of regulatory notifications, consultations, national and international news, reports and upcoming events. We hope you found the newsletter informative – please feel free to email me with your feedback, suggestions, or any specific areas you think we can improve on next year.

Wishing you all the best of the holiday season and the New Year.

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:

* American Samoa: [ICPR American Samoa](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/619-American-Samoa)
* Australia: [ICPR Australia](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/621-Australia)
* Cook Islands: [ICPR Cook Islands](https://cbaff.outreach.co.nz/redirect/YTo3OntzOjM6InVybCI7czo1MjoiaHR0cHM6Ly93d3cubXBpLmdvdnQubnovZG1zZG9jdW1lbnQvNjMyLUNvb2stSXNsYW5kcyI7czo0OiJ0eXBlIjtzOjQ6ImhyZWYiO3M6NzoibWVzc2FnZSI7czo1OiI5MDkyNyI7czo3OiJhY2NvdW50IjtzOjU6ImNiYWZmIjtzOjg6ImNhdGVnb3J5IjtzOjQ6IjUyMTUiO3M6Nzoic2VudF9hdCI7aToxNzAyNTIzOTM1O3M6MTA6Im5vdGlmaWFibGUiO2k6MTt9?oid=10784)
* European Union: [ICPR EU](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/640)
* Taiwan: [ICPR Taiwan](https://cbaff.outreach.co.nz/redirect/YTo3OntzOjM6InVybCI7czozOToiaHR0cHM6Ly93d3cubXBpLmdvdnQubnovZG1zZG9jdW1lbnQvNjk0IjtzOjQ6InR5cGUiO3M6NDoiaHJlZiI7czo3OiJtZXNzYWdlIjtzOjU6IjkwMDcxIjtzOjc6ImFjY291bnQiO3M6NToiY2JhZmYiO3M6ODoiY2F0ZWdvcnkiO3M6NDoiNTIxNSI7czo3OiJzZW50X2F0IjtpOjE3MDA3MDkwMTc7czoxMDoibm90aWZpYWJsZSI7aToxO30.?oid=10784)

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 so that they can potentially make a submission to the notifying country.



## Consultations

#### Proposals to Amend the New Zealand (Maximum Residue Levels for Agricultural Compounds) Food Notice

New Zealand Food Safety is inviting public comment on changes proposed to the Food Notice: Maximum Residue Levels for Agricultural Compounds. The proposed changes are: One amended entry for maximum residue levels in Schedule 1; One Schedule 1 entry proposed for removal; and 3 new entries for veterinary medicines for which no maximum residue level applies in Schedule 3.

More information on the proposal and how to make a submission are on the Ministry for Primary Industries [website](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/consultations/proposals-to-amend-the-new-zealand-maximum-residue-levels-for-agricultural-compounds-food-notice-9/?utm_source=notification-email). Submissions close at 5pm on 13 February 2024.

#### Proposed amendments to the Organic Export Requirements: Organic Production Rules

New Zealand Food Safety is seeking feedback on proposed changes to the Organic Export Requirement: Organic Production Rules (OER: OPR) which forms part of MPI's Official Organic Assurance Programme.

In July 2023, New Zealand Food Safety invited applications to proposed changes to the generic inputs that could be used by organic producers under the Official Organic Assurance Programme. One application to amend the generic inputs was received and assessed by a panel of technical experts. The panel recommended that New Zealand Food Safety consult on the inclusion of lignosulphonate for use in organic production. Feedback is also invited for additional amendments to the OER: OPR including to the definitions; requirements for registration of organic operators; and provision of official organic assurances (organic export certificates).

More information on the proposed changes and how to make a submission are on the Ministry for Primary Industries [website](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/consultations/proposed-amendments-to-the-organic-export-requirements-organic-production-rules/?utm_source=notification-email). Submissions close at 5pm on 2 February 2024 .

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## Government News

#### Customs welcomes China delegation

The New Zealand Customs Service recently hosted a delegation of senior officials from the General Administration of Customs China. This visit was an opportunity to strengthen New Zealand’s bilateral relationship with China and progress the ongoing work which follows this year’s upgrade to the New Zealand-China Free Trade Agreement (FTA), including signing a new arrangement which supports paperless trade. [Full article here](https://www.facebook.com/NZCustoms/posts/pfbid07iPQM3Q6UdFrxnNiidXTRAeZYcp5FzNhFufqHH28YBzWeacz3VRgrjbhVUHgYAQZl)

#### Trade Minister travels to India and Singapore to advance key relationships

Trade Minister Todd McClay left earlier this week to make his first overseas visit to India and Singapore to meet with his trade counterparts and to advance New Zealand’s relationships.

“India and Singapore are two key partners in the Indo-Pacific region, and I look forward to having engaging conversations with Minister Piyush Goyal and Minister Gan Kim Yong to deepen our relationships.” said McClay. “The relationship with India is a strategic priority for the coalition Government, and we will look at how to strengthen this important connection across a range of areas.”

Mr McClay will also deliver a speech on the Government’s ambition for the relationship with India, and participate in a moderated discussion with G20 Sherpa, Amitabh Kant, in front of an audience of national business and community leaders. Mr McClay will then travel to Singapore. [Full article here](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/trade-minister-travels-india-and-singapore-advance-key-relationships)

## Industry news

#### Food, fibre export revenue predicted to drop 5 per cent

New Zealand's food and fibre exports are forecast to dip this year mainly due to softer demand and weaker prices for dairy and red meat. The Ministry for Primary Industries Situation and Outlook for Primary Industries Report forecasts exports for the year to June 2024 to be $54.3 billion, down from $57.4b.

The report highlights the issues the primary industries are facing with most sectors expected to see a decline in export revenue: dairy exports are expected to drop 7 percent to $24.1b due to softer global dairy prices and a decline in domestic milk production; red meat exports are forecast to be down 5 percent because of weaker demand in key markets like China; and weaker prices for logs and a less favourable 2023/34 outlook for pulp and paper have forestry exports forecast to fall nine per cent to $5.8b.

Despite wine and cherry exports forecast to grow, overall horticulture exports are expected to drop one per cent to $7b. Seafood and arable sectors are performing well however, with exports forecast to rise. Seafood exports are forecast to increase 8 percent to $2.3b while arable is forecast to rise 7 percent to $290 million thanks to increased prices for vegetable seed and increased volumes of clover seed.

Minister of Agriculture Todd McClay said while exports were forecast to drop, the mid-to-long forecasts remain strong, with export revenue forecast to build to a record $57.7b in the year to 30 June 2025. "It's been a tough few years for New Zealand's food and fibre businesses. High domestic inflation rates, high-interest rates, workforce shortages, adverse weather events, increasing business input costs, combined with geopolitical tensions and supply chain challenges, have put continued pressure on the sector." [Full article here](https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/country/504717/decline-in-export-revenue-forecast-due-to-low-demand-prices)  [Full report here](https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/60526-Situation-and-Outlook-for-Primary-Industries-SOPI-December-2023)

#### Scales forecasts full-year after-tax profit of $14-19 million

Scales Corporation, a New Zealand-based company involved in apple production and logistics, has reaffirmed its guidance for the 12 months ending December. The company expects an underlying profit after tax in the range of $14-19 million for the current year. Additionally, the forecast for the next year's underlying profit is expected to be between $30-35 million, aligning with pre-COVID levels.

Despite challenges faced in 2023, including the impact of Cyclone Gabrielle on its Hawke's Bay staff, Scales Corporation expressed pride in the resilience shown by its team. The horticulture division is anticipated to return to more normal trading, with a promising 2024 apple crop currently on the trees. [Full article here](https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/country/504221/scales-forecasts-full-year-after-tax-profit-of-14-19-million)

#### Tears of joy for onions

Onion growers will be saving $6.5 million on tariffs once the free trade agreement (FTA) with its number one market – the European Union – is ratified next year.

Onions NZ chief executive James Kuperus told Hort News that 40% of NZ onions exports are destined for Europe. This is approximately 70,000 tonnes a year, returning $65m to rural New Zealand. “This FTA puts us on a level playing field with some of our competitors such as Chile and in a more favourable position than countries such as Australia,” he says. “The FTA will save the industry about $6.5m a year which is significant for our sector.”

The EU FTA is good news for the sector, given the extremely difficult season onion producers have had in the North Island. Kuperus says, overall, the sector has been bruised by the last few years with extreme weather and the Covid pandemic. “However, the future is looking promising if we can improve market access to markets such as the EU and China,” he adds. [Full article here](https://www.ruralnewsgroup.co.nz/hort-news/hort-general-news/tears-of-joy-for-onions)

## Reports & Insights

#### MAF Market Intelligence Report: Indonesia: economic and trade update

Indonesia’s economy grew by 5.04 percent in the year ending September 2023. Its year-on-year inflation rate in November 2023 was 2.86 percent, and the unemployment rate in August 2023 was 5.32 percent.  Indonesia is now New Zealand’s 10th largest export market destination (down from 8th) but retained its position as 12th highest for two-way trade, valued at NZ$3.26 billion (down from NZ$3.42 billion in the year ended September 2022). Dairy remains the top export to the Indonesian market for the year ended September 2023, followed by albuminoids, wood pulp and recovered paper/paperboard, meat and bone meal, and travel. [Full report here](https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/trade/mfat-market-reports/indonesia-economic-and-trade-update-december-2023/?utm_source=MFAT&utm_campaign=135be49759-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2023_12_18_12_22&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-135be49759-%5BLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D)

#### MAF Market Intelligence Report: Germany: food and beverage update

Changes in tax, policy and social values are shifting consumer habits in the German food and beverages (F&B) market, with possible impacts on consumption of organic, vegetarian and meat products. Key changes include:

* A value-added tax (VAT) on food and beverages served in restaurants will increase from 7% to 19% on 1 January 2024.
* The Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture promotes organic and plant-based products.
* Key stakeholders have launched a private sector label for German food products.
* Leading retailers continue to promote plant-based products while growth slows.
* German consumers are more price-sensitive again due to high food price inflation.
* Plant-based products become mainstream but meat remains a valued part of the diet.

[Full report here](https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/trade/mfat-market-reports/germany-food-and-beverage-update-december-2023/?utm_source=MFAT&utm_campaign=dd2861391c-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2023_12_18_01_26&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-dd2861391c-%5BLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D)

#### Upcoming events and webinars:

* IFPA – A-NZ Food Safety Trends - 2024 Edition Webinar, 1st Feb 2024. Free. [Full details here](https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/food-safety-trends-2024-edition-tickets-778019305687?aff=odeimcmailchimp&mc_eid=ba99fc8413&mc_cid=3240ff07c2)
* Hort Connections, 3-5 June 2024, Melbourne Convention Centre, Australia [Full details here](https://hortconnections.com.au/)

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## 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.

China: Decree 248 Guidance for US Exporters

This report contains guidance from the Office of Agricultural Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, China for U.S. exporters who continue experiencing difficulties registering their manufacturing, processing, and storage facilities subject to General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China (GACC) Decree 248. [Full report here](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Decree%20248%20Guidance%20for%20US%20Exporters_Beijing_China%20-%20People%27s%20Republic%20of_CH2023-0191)

Japan 259th Food Safety Group

Japan’s Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) proposed revisions to Japan’s maximum residue levels for 5 agricultural chemicals (Flonicamid, Fluoxastrobin, Polyoxorim-zinc, Prothiofos, and 3-Nitrooxypropanol) for various agricultural commodities. [Full report here](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Japan%20259th%20Food%20Safety%20Group_Tokyo_Japan_JA2023-0132)

Philippines: Connecting Port to Plate amid Evolving Food Preferences

The Philippines is expected to experience economic growth between 2025 and 2070, due to a shift in its demographics, necessitating a robust and efficient food distribution system. This report provides an overview of the distribution process of imported food and agricultural products from Philippine ports to consumers’ plates, highlighting evolving food preferences. [Full report here](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Connecting%20Port%20to%20Plate%20amid%20Evolving%20Food%20Preferences_Manila_Philippines_RP2023-0071)

Exporter Guide: [Spain](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Exporter%20Guide_Madrid_Spain_SP2023-0040), [India](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Exporter%20Guide_New%20Delhi_India_IN2023-0094), [Netherlands](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Exporter%20Guide_The%20Hague_Netherlands_NL2023-0014), [Pakistan](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Exporter%20Guide_Islamabad_Pakistan_PK2023-0023), [Australia](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Exporter%20Guide_Canberra_Australia_AS2023-0024), [Japan](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Exporter%20Guide%20Annual_Osaka%20ATO_Japan_JA2023-0133)

Citrus Annual: [Chile](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Citrus%20Annual_Santiago_Chile_CI2023-0035), [Peru](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Citrus%20Annual_Lima_Peru_PE2023-0024), [Morocco](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Citrus%20Annual_Rabat_Morocco_MO2023-0021), [Australia](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Citrus%20Annual_Canberra_Australia_AS2023-0025), [South Africa](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Citrus%20Annual_Pretoria_South%20Africa%20-%20Republic%20of_SF2023-0047), [Egypt](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Citrus%20Annual_Cairo_Egypt_EG2023-0030). [European Union](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=EU%20Citrus%20Annual%202023_Madrid_European%20Union_E42023-0051)

## In The News:

#### Australian and New Zealand summit steers growers towards a safer food chain

Australian and New Zealand fresh produce growers need to consider safe food practices a necessary step in the cost of doing business, an investment in market access, and an insurance policy against outbreaks, delegates at the International Fresh Produce Association Australia and New Zealand’s (IFPA A-NZ) second annual Food Safety Summit heard.

Key topics included an overview of the global food safety landscape; upcoming changes to production and processing standards for berries, melons, and leafy vegetables due for implementation on February 12, 2025; and how the IFPA A-NZ can support growers on food safety.

Speakers included United States-based IFPA chief food safety and regulatory officer Natalie Dyenson. Dyenson said the safety of Australia and New Zealand’s food supply chain was equivalent to that of the world’s leading nations including the United States and parts of Europe. However, food safety was a constantly evolving area and producers needed to be ready for what could go wrong, Mahoney said. [Full article here](https://www.freshplaza.com/asia/article/9586802/australian-and-new-zealand-summit-steers-growers-towards-a-safer-food-chain/?utm_medium=email)

#### Australia: Recommendations for Minister of Food to enhance food security

A parliamentary committee in Australia has recommended the establishment of a minister for food and the creation of a food council to enhance the nation's food security.

The year-long inquiry focused on strengthening and safeguarding Australia's food security, examining production, supply chains, key inputs, climate change, biosecurity, and food insecurity. The committee chair, Meryl Swanson, highlighted the need for a national food plan, similar to measures implemented in other comparable countries, to provide a strategic approach to food production, soil and water usage, and ensure affordable access to food for all Australians. [Full article here](https://www.abc.net.au/news/rural/2023-12-08/food-security-report-government-pests-biosecurity-climate-abares/103201798)

#### Avocados Australia and Fasta join forces to boost market access

A research forum hosted by Avocados Australia and the Fresh and Secure Trade Alliance (Fasta) brought together government and industry professionals with the aim of building out an avocado market access plan. This was the inaugural roundtable forum to be held as part of the Fasta initiative and Avocados Australia was the first peak industry body to benefit. The initiative was created to develop robust datasets, open new export markets for Australian avocados, and strengthen access to existing markets.

Fasta’s eight-year, national programme unites state governments and several universities to strengthen Australia’s biosecurity and support its pest management.  More than 70 scientists from the nine partner agencies across Australia will test innovative technologies to improve understanding and management of fruit fly and other key pests.  [Full article here](https://www.fruitnet.com/produce-plus/avocados-australia-and-fasta-join-forces-to-boost-market-access/257607.article?mc_cid=6797f69eb4&mc_eid=b69805930f)

#### United States certifies irradiation for horticulture trade pathways

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has certified Australia’s Steritech Merrifield irradiation facility for the export of horticulture produce with approved irradiation trade pathways to the United States.

Acting Head of Trade at the Australian Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Nicola Hinder said US approval of the Merrifield facility in Victoria was an important step forward for Australian horticulture export industries interested in seeking access to the US via the irradiation pathway. “Irradiation is becoming increasingly popular with our horticulture industry, trading partners and consumers to safely treat biosecurity pest risks,” Ms Hinder said.​ “It doesn’t involve chemicals, gases, or leave any residues, making it a safe, clean and sustainable treatment option for fresh horticulture products. Australia has approval to export irradiated mangoes and lychees to the US from approved facilities in northern Australia." [Full article here](https://www.freshplaza.com/asia/article/9586546/united-states-certifies-irradiation-for-horticulture-trade-pathways/?utm_medium=email)

#### Coffee firms turning away from Africa as EU deforestation law looms

Importers of coffee to the European Union are starting to scale back purchases from small farmers in Africa and beyond as they prepare for a landmark EU law that will ban the sale of goods linked to the destruction of forests, a cause of climate change. Industry sources said the cost and difficulty of complying with the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), which comes into force late in 2024, meant it was already having unintended impacts that could in time reshape global commodities markets.

Under EUDR, importers of commodities like coffee, cocoa, soy, palm, cattle, timber and rubber - and products that use them - must be able to prove their goods did not originate from deforested land, or face hefty fines. The EUDR requires companies to digitally map their supply chains down to the plot where the raw materials were grown, which could potentially involve tracing millions of small farms in remote regions. Moreover, because companies often don't deal directly with farmers, they could be relying in part on data provided by multiple local middlemen, some of whom they also might not deal with directly or trust.

The European Commission said the EUDR is not expected to drive food inflation. It noted, for example, that while traceability has a cost, this will likely be offset as the law should reduce the number of intermediaries in the market. [Full article here](https://www.reuters.com/markets/commodities/coffee-firms-turning-away-africa-eu-deforestation-law-looms-2023-12-19/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=Newsletter&utm_campaign=Daily-Briefing&utm_term=121923&user_email=b2b7302eec288cded54cb9cdad2ef273639f17733b3c15fb7fa4b3eb3795721a)

#### Asia feels the sting of India's onion export ban

India's ban on the export of onions has driven up prices of the vegetable for Asian buyers. All parties involved are looking for cheaper alternatives, particularly as New Delhi is unlikely to lift the curbs before next year’s general elections. India, the world's biggest exporter of onions, banned shipments on December 8 as domestic prices more than doubled in three months following a drop in production.

Since traditional Asian buyers, such as Bangladesh, Malaysia and Nepal and even the United Arab Emirates, rely on imports from India to bridge domestic gaps, customers all over Asia are struggling with the high prices. [Full article here](https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/asia-feels-sting-indias-onion-export-ban-2023-12-20/)

#### Bayer AG and G+Flas partner to develop Crispr genome-edited tomatoes

G+Flas Life Sciences and Bayer AG have signed a letter of intent (LOI)  to collaborate on the development of novel Crispr genome-edited tomato varieties that are nutritionally enhanced with vitamin D3.

Bayer AG is a leading player in the global vegetable seeds business, selling tomato varieties under the De Ruiter and Seminis brands. G+Flas Life Sciences is a Korean biotech company that specialises in developing Crispr genome editing technology and applications.  “This LOI underscores the shared interest of G+FLAS and Bayer AG in developing tomato seeds that not only meet high commercial standards but also incorporate cutting-edge genetic traits through G+Flas’s Crispr genome editing technology,” said Anne Williams, head of protected culture at Bayer’s vegetable seeds business. [Full article here](https://www.fruitnet.com/asiafruit/bayer-ag-and-gflas-partner-to-develop-enhanced-tomatoes/257609.article)

#### Major shipping companies pause all sailings through Red Sea amid attacks

MSC has joining Hapag-Lloyd and Maersk in pausing shipping through the Suez canal Red Sea after attacks by Iranian-backed Houthi militants from Yemen. The MSC Palatium III was attacked on Friday while transiting the Red Sea, the shipping giant has said it will pause operations on the route and redirect some services via the Cape of Good Hope instead.

Israel-based ocean carrier ZIM has re-routed vessels to avoid the Arabian and Red Seas to safeguard their vessels and crew amid the threats by the Houthis. The vessels are traveling around the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa. This alternative route to the Indian Ocean adds 10 to 14 days of travel time to a vessel’s journey. The long way around Africa also incurs higher fuel costs because of the longer travel distance. [Full article here](https://www.freshplaza.com/asia/article/9586512/major-shipping-companies-pause-all-sailings-through-red-sea-amid-attacks/?utm_medium=email)

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