



CHAPTER NINE CAREERS IN HORTICULTURE

A career in horticulture isn't just about picking and packing fruit; there are many highly-valued roles available in the scientific, commercial and technical sectors. This chapter includes a career map displaying the wide range of career opportunities available, and provides biographies of industry entrants to show the pathways they took to get where they are today.

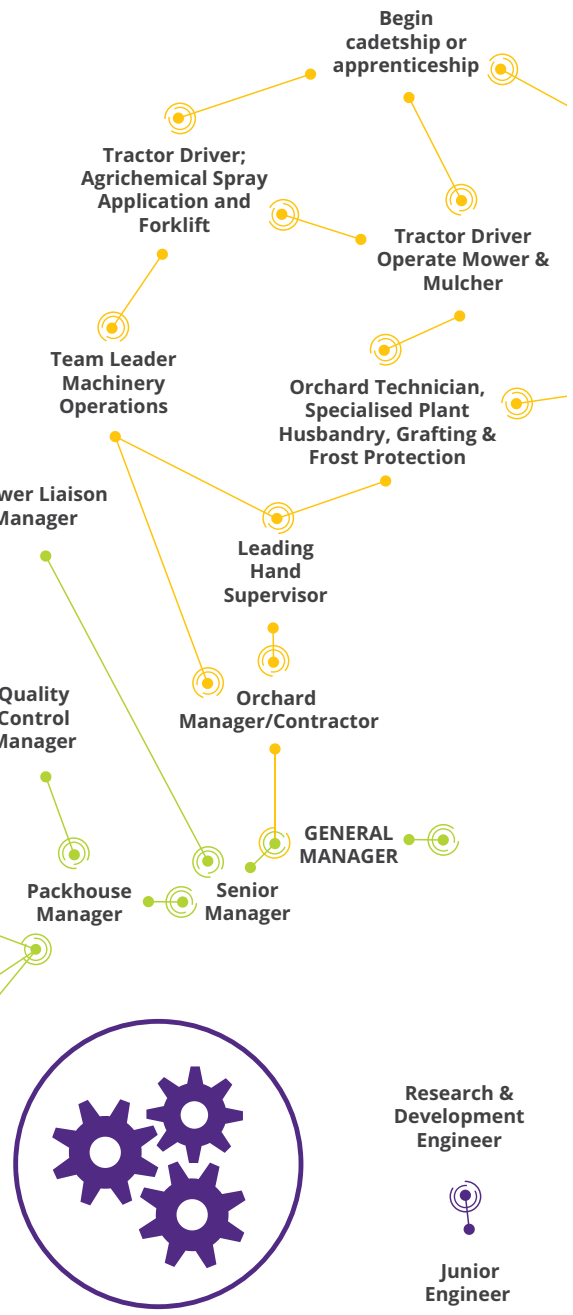
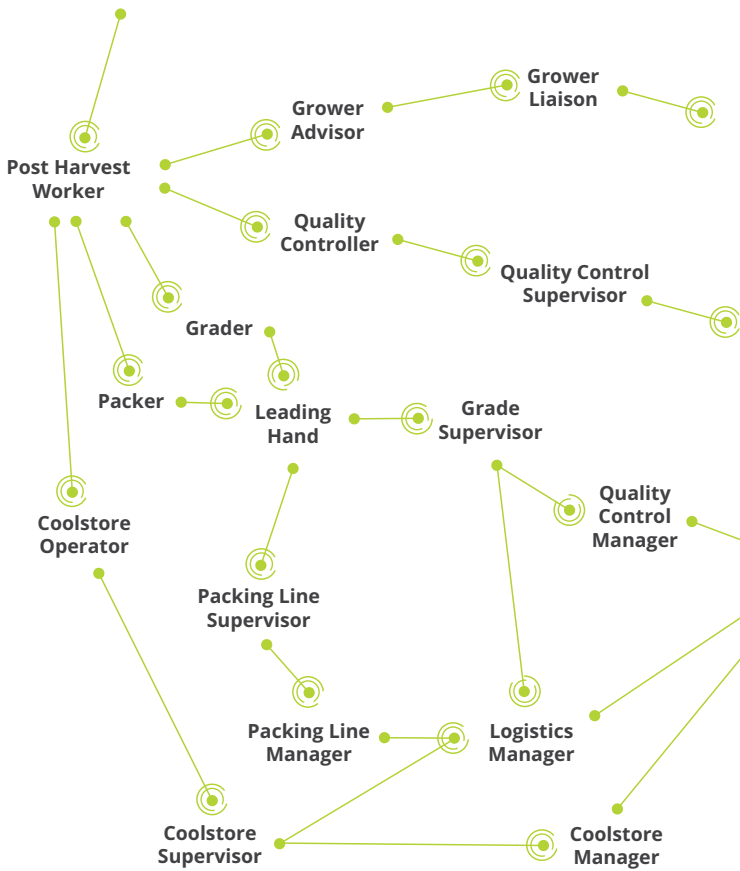
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9.1 HORTICULTURE CAREER PATHWAYS



START HERE FOR A POST HARVEST CAREER

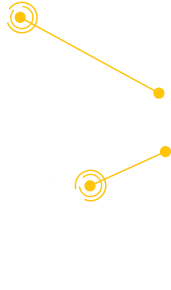


START HERE FOR AN ENGINEERING CAREER

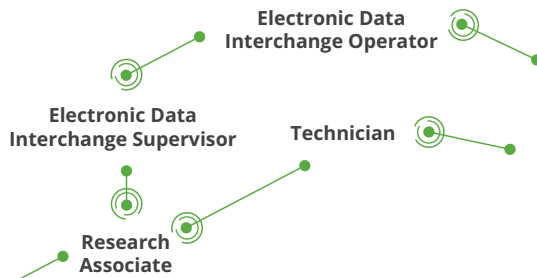
OBTAIN A ENGINEERING DEGREE:
 ROBOTICS/AUTOMATION
 SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT
 PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT



START HERE FOR AN ORCHARD CAREER



Orchard Worker
- Harvesting,
Plant Care and
Construction



Electronic Data
Interchange Operator

Electronic Data
Interchange Supervisor

Technician

Research
Associate



START HERE FOR A SCIENCE CAREER

OBTAIN A SCIENCE DEGREE:
BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES
FOOD SCIENCE AND NUTRITION
MICROBIOLOGY
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES
DATA SCIENCE



GROWER DIRECTOR CEO

Scientist

Senior
Manager

GENERAL
MANAGER

Human
Resources
Manager

Supply Chain
Manager

Human Resources
Advisor

Human Resources
Coordinator

Supply Chain
Coordinator

Communications
Manager

Communications
Coordinator/ Advisor

Office
Manager

Executive
Assistant

Administrative
Assistant

Senior
Accountant

Junior
Accountant

Financial
Manger

Senior
Business
Analyst

Business
Analyst

Marketing/Sales
Manager

Marketing/Sales
Executive

Marketing Sales
Coordinator



START HERE FOR A BUSINESS CAREER

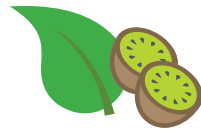
OBTAIN A BUSINESS DEGREE:
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMUNICATION
MARKETING
FINANCE/ACCOUNTING
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
SUPPLY CHAIN

As indicated in the horticulture career map on the previous page, there are a number of ways to enter the industry whether it be through direct employment, part time study and employment, or full-time study.



Full-Time Employment

Roll up your sleeves and hit the ground running by entering the industry directly to get valuable work experience. Once you are in the industry, many employers offer study opportunities so that you can advance on the job.



Part-Time Study/Employment

Earn while you learn by working within a kiwifruit orchard, packhouse or kiwifruit-related business. There are study options to suit everyone from Level 1 Horticulture through to apprenticeships.



Full-Time Study

Study a range of subjects such as business, engineering, science and horticulture all of which are applicable to a career in the kiwifruit industry.

The next page will provide career profiles of people who have entered the kiwifruit industry by way of full-time study, part-time study/employment and direct employment.



9.2 CAREER PROFILES



CAMPBELL WOOD

Role/Organisation: **Director of Pivot Horticulture**

Pathway: **Cadetship/Apprenticeship/Further Industry Study**

What I enjoy about this industry is the diversity of working with lots of people coming from a range of cultures and places around the world. The kiwifruit industry offers a huge range of professional development opportunities which have helped advance my career and I am passionate about attracting young people to the industry so that they too can experience the amazing opportunities that are available.

What I like to tell younger versions of myself deciding what career path to take is this:

- Knuckle down and stick to an industry - ride out the highs and multiple lows
- Do the hard yards - work harder than expected, invest in doing more than required, don't be afraid "to sweep the factory floor"
- Push yourself out of comfort zone on a regular basis - take on challenges where you think you're out of your depth and own the outcome be it positive or negative

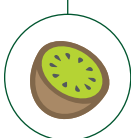


HIRAINA TANGIORA

Role/Organisation: **External Relations Coordinator at Zespri**

Pathway: **University Degree**

I love working in the Kiwifruit industry as it is full of passionate, creative and intelligent people all working collaboratively to achieve the same goal. Due to the variable nature of kiwifruit, you must constantly think on your feet and be highly adaptive to changes; however, it means no two days are the same and provides a great amount of variety and diversity. I encourage anyone looking for a fulfilling career to consider the kiwifruit industry - there is more to the industry than meets the eye!



WAI DE FLAVELLE

Role/Organisation: **Inventory and Logistics Coordinator at EastPack**

Pathway: **Direct Employment**

I started out in the industry working in the packhouse at EastPack located in Te Puke and within those five years I have worked in a range of roles including; Packer, Packhouse Team Leader, Allocations Coordinator, Field Technician, Crop Assessment Team Leader, Inventory Assistant and finally to my current role as Inventory and Logistics Coordinator. I have found that in this industry, if you are a hard worker you can progress very quickly! There are so many opportunities within the kiwifruit industry to learn, grow and develop a meaningful career.



MEGAN FOX

Role/Organisation: **Orchard Technical Advisor, Southern Cross Horticulture**

Pathway: **University Degree**

I love working in the kiwifruit industry because there is a huge network of supportive people both within my workplace, and externally, that are always willing to lend a hand or impart valuable knowledge. Further, it is an exciting industry to be a part of as there are a lot of opportunities to move laterally across the industry as well as huge potential to move up very quickly. Currently we are planting 700ha per year of G3, and the average orchard manager is managing 50ha, meaning we need to hire 14 new orchard managers every year to help with our growth- the demand for skilled labour is huge. I would recommend anyone to consider entering the kiwifruit industry to gain access to some amazing career opportunities!

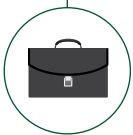


GAVIN STAGG

Role/Organisation: **Labour Coordinator, New Zealand Kiwifruit Growers Incorporated**

Pathway: **Direct Employment**

Until I joined the kiwifruit industry, the longest I'd held a job was two years. In this business, no two days are the same, so it keeps me interested! Prior to kiwifruit, I trained as a chef, joined the army, and held various other positions, mostly managing people. My first role in kiwifruit was as an employment officer for a packhouse. As my industry knowledge grew, I was promoted to Packhouse Operations Manager in a year. From there, I secured a new role as an Operations Manager for a different packhouse which involved managing the entire site. I left that role in early 2019 to start my current role with NZKGI. The highlight of this role is the different people that I get to interact with, from contractors, growers and packhouses through to government agencies.



BRYCE MORRISON

Role/Organisation: **Technical Services and Innovation Manager at Fruition Horticulture**

Pathway: **University Degree**

Whatever field of work you are interested in, horticulture has a place for you. Whether its law, mechanics or marketing, these all play a role in our industry. In my role, I manage a small team of technicians who help deliver services such as crop estimates, irrigation advice and fruit measuring. I also manage some of our major projects, working with the likes of Zespri and Plant and Food Research. The best part about working in horticulture is the balance between office and field work. Every week I am getting out of the office to go and look at a property or meet with a client.



9.3 'DIARY OF A GRADUATE KIWIFRUIT TECHNICIAN'

Written by Ben Luke, Zespri

With a last-minute position needing to be filled, I was given the call up to spend two weeks at sea monitoring 1.2 million trays of kiwifruit bound for Japan. With three days' notice I fervently prepared for the journey. I underwent intensive training with the Zespri team and spent the night before boarding watching 'Captain Phillips' to prepare for the worst and to potentially pick up some handy tips if any pirates boarded. Fresh faced, nervous yet excited, I was ready to board the Atlantic Erica on 3 June.

Right:
Ben Luke standing next
to the Atlantic Erica



I soon got into the swing of things on board with the Filipino crew, with a typical day beginning by avoiding mysterious goo covered meats or fish for breakfast, and instead chowing down my trusty cereal and milk. After breakfast, I would hike up three flights of steep stairs to the bridge to see the Chief Officer. He would organise one of the crew to accompany me down into the cargo holds and let me know if the conditions were safe enough to collect the fruit for assessment. The monitoring process included collecting a total of 320 pieces of fruit, both green

and gold, from eight different libraries which gave me access to four different pallets from four different grower lines. Before being loaded onto the ship, each library was chosen to ensure it was representative of the hold it was in. It's designed like this so if the temperature in the hold is adjusted based on the monitoring results, the rest of the fruit in the hold should ripen in the same way. The fruit collecting process took me around 50 minutes, which to the crew was probably very slow. It was as if they learnt how to climb ladders before learning how to walk.

I methodically checked the temperature, firmness and brix of the fruit collected which took around seven hours. The crew popped in every now and again to check everything was ok and once I finished testing all the fruit, I filled in my daily log, checked the data, save the file onto a USB stick and took it to the Captain to send back to Zespri New Zealand. The Zespri team in NZ then analysed the results and sent back instructions about any temperature changes to be made in the hold to ensure the fruit doesn't over ripen or ripen too slowly.

“ No communication or sight of land for two weeks was an interesting experience but amazing at the same time. ”

The highlight of my trip included enjoying a day with the crew on the Captain's birthday. Everyone indulged in a few brews, various meats and took a dip in a self-made pool at the back of the ship. The crew could not have been friendlier to me. Constantly offering me beers, inviting me to watch movies and treating me as if I were one of their own made me feel very welcomed. No communication or sight of land for two weeks was an interesting experience but amazing at the same time. Seeing a log floating in the vast empty ocean half way through the trip even made me excited. I'm not itching to get back on a ship, but it was definitely an experience I will never forget. I certainly have a new-found respect for the team of technicians that come back year after year to spend weeks on end at sea, all to get our fruit to the other side of the world in optimal condition.

Right:
The crew on board Atlantic Erica celebrating the Captains's birthday

