



8

CHAPTER EIGHT PEOPLE

It is estimated the industry will need another 7,000 seasonal employees in order to reach its growth targets of 229 million trays by 2029. However, this future growth is dependent on the ability to attract and retain people. This chapter will cover topics such as labour, health and safety and examine industry regulations to show how stakeholders can look after one of the industry's most important resources: Its people.

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8.1 LABOUR

Employment Statistics

A 2017 NZKGI survey found there were 15,678 seasonal workers employed in the kiwifruit industry which is forecast to expand to 27,880 people by 2027. As the kiwifruit industry strives to take advantage of increased global demand, shortages of seasonal labour will be a challenge for the kiwifruit industry. To read more on the shortage of seasonal labour, read the NZKGI 2018 Seasonal Labour Report on the NZKGI website at <https://www.nzkgi.org.nz/new-zealand-kiwifruit-labour-shortage-report-for-the-2018-season/>

In previous years, over 50% of seasonal workers were New Zealanders, 13.5% were RSE workers and the rest were made up of non-RSE visa holders e.g., Working Holiday or backpackers.

Current estimations are that there are around 10,000 people in permanent employment in the kiwifruit industry. This number will also need to increase as the industry expands. Read more in Ch 9 about initiatives to encourage more people into kiwifruit careers.

RSE Workers

The Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme came into effect in April 2007. The policy currently allows the horticulture and viticulture industries to recruit workers from overseas for seasonal work when there are not enough New Zealand workers. There is an administrative limit or cap on the number of RSE places that can be taken up in any one year. This cap was set at 5,000 places when the scheme was established in 2007, but the success of the RSE scheme has led to increased demand from employers and the cap was increased to 14,400

in 2019. Unless employers can show they have preestablished relationships with workers from other countries, they may only recruit workers under RSE policy from the following eligible Pacific countries: Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. Workers must meet health and character requirements and provide evidence of arrangements to leave New Zealand at the end of their stay. People employed under the RSE policy may stay in New Zealand for up to seven months during any 11-month period. Exceptions to this are workers from Tuvalu and Kiribati, who can stay for nine months because of the distance from New Zealand and the cost of travel.

With the March 2020 lockdown, many RSE workers already in the country were unable to return home, and many others that were expected to arrive were excluded (along with foreign backpackers). This changed the mix of workers for the 2020 kiwifruit harvest, with the industry making up the balance with New Zealanders that had been displaced from their previous jobs. Immigration New Zealand had to modify visa conditions for those RSE's remaining and they were kept in employment as much as possible. Repatriation flights to the Pacific Islands were able to go ahead later in the year, but some RSE workers chose to remain in New Zealand. The Government retained the 14,400 cap in 2020, but under Covid-19 border restrictions only 2000 RSE workers will enter the country in January and February 2021. These workers will be shared between horticulture and viticulture employers around New Zealand.

Right:
In 2019, 14,400 RSE workers
came to New Zealand



8.2 HEALTH & SAFETY

The Health and Safety at Work Act 2015

The Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 (HSWA) is New Zealand's workplace health and safety law that came into effect on 4 April 2016 and is part of a reform package aimed at reducing the number of serious work-related injuries and deaths. The HSWA shifts the focus from monitoring and recording health and safety incidents to proactively identifying and managing risks so everyone is safe and healthy.

HSWA ensures that everyone has a role to play and makes everyone's responsibilities clear:

- Businesses have the primary responsibility for the health and safety of their workers and any other workers they influence or direct. They are also responsible for the health and safety of people at risk from the work of their business. Officers (company directors, partners, board members, chief executives) must do due diligence to make sure the business understands and is meeting its health and safety responsibilities.
- Workers must take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that their actions don't adversely affect the health and safety of others. They must also follow any reasonable health and safety instruction given to them by the business and cooperate with any reasonable business policy or procedure relating to health and safety in the workplace.
- Other people who come into the workplace, such as visitors or customers, also have some health and safety duties to ensure that their actions don't adversely affect the health and safety of others.

More information can be found in the 'Keep safe, keep growing' guide on the WorkSafe website:

<https://worksafe.govt.nz/topic-andindustry/horticulture/keep-safe-keepgrowing-how-to-be-healthy-and-safe-in-horticulture/>

NZKGI & Zespri Health & Safety Guidance Material

In collaboration with Zespri, NZKGI has created guidance material to help growers understand their obligations as a PCBU ('person conducting business or undertaking') on the orchard. This four-step guide sets out the steps growers need to take to manage their health and safety obligations on the orchard and includes a decision tree for growers to confirm their role as a PCBU. The Health & Safety wheel and associated materials are located on the NZKGI website at:

<https://www.nzkgi.org.nz/what-we-do/health-safety/>

Right:
A typical Health & Safety briefing on orchard.



8.3 CERTIFICATION FOR GLOBALG.A.P. AND GRASP



Putting Food Safety and Sustainability on the Map

G.A.P. stands for Good Agricultural Practice, and GLOBALG.A.P. is the worldwide standard that assures it. GLOBALG.A.P. is a global organisation with a crucial objective: safe, sustainable agriculture worldwide. GLOBALG.A.P. is an important aspect of orchard management affecting everyday activities around growing kiwifruit. Further, it is a compliance programme with a range of modules growers must complete to meet the industry standard and achieve certification.

GLOBALG.A.P. has mandatory requirements that follow legislation and voluntary requirements that promote best practice. However, although the organisation has set voluntary standards for the certification of agricultural products around the world, an increasing number of producers, suppliers and buyers are aligning their certification standards to match. There are a range of activities growers must adhere to in order to achieve certification, from good record keeping through to correct spray management practice.

There are two certification options for New Zealand kiwifruit growers:

Option 1 certification - For a single producer (with or without a Quality Management System).

- Growers that need certification for multiple crops must be option 1
- Less than 100 kiwifruit Management System Owners (MSO) are option 1 certified
- MSO's get their own GLOBALG.A.P. certificate

Option 2 certification - Multiple producers with a mandatory Quality Management System (Group certification).

- A group of producers with a shared mandatory Quality Management System (QMS) receives one certification for the entire group following a successful audit of the QMS and random sample inspections of some of the producers by a GLOBALG.A.P. approved certification body
- Option 2 is Crop specific meaning option 2 covers kiwifruit only
- Over 95% of New Zealand's kiwifruit growers are certified through option 2

GLOBALG.A.P. and GRASP for Kiwifruit Contractors

Contractors have a vital role within the kiwifruit industry and therefore play a major part in growers' G.A.P. compliance. Growers are required to ensure that everyone working on the orchard is compliant with G.A.P. requirements at all times.

For G.A.P. purposes, a contractor is defined as anyone hired to undertake work that is addressed by one or more requirements in the G.A.P. and GRASP checklists. This includes all contractors and sub-contractors.

All kiwifruit contractors are required to be inspected against the orchard activities that they take part in. They

are also responsible for ensuring that anyone they employ complies with these requirements. It is also the contractor's responsibility to ensure that all requirements as set by legislation are met, specifically in regard to health, safety and employment. Contractors must provide the grower with a CAV (Compliance Assessment Verification) issued by an approved inspector before they undertake any work. These need to be kept on file by the grower for their inspection.

Food safety is also a critical part of some contractor operations. On entering the orchard, contractors and their employees must be healthy and adhere to good hygiene practices whilst handling fruit in order to avoid contamination of the product or the spread of disease. Contractors are responsible for ensuring that orchard hygiene procedures are adhered to, that all staff are appropriately trained, that risk assessments are undertaken, and that training is documented.

“ GLOBALG.A.P. is an important aspect of orchard management affecting everyday activities around growing kiwifruit. ”

GRASP

A Commitment to Workers Health, Safety and Welfare

GRASP stands for GLOBALG.A.P. Risk Assessment on Social Practice and is a voluntary social responsibility module of GLOBALG.A.P. GRASP was developed to assess social practices on the orchard and the module consists of 11 questions which can be added to the annual GLOBALG.A.P. audit. GRASP is an assessment only, not a full social audit.

During the GRASP Assessment, the Following Topics are Checked:

1. Confirmation that there is an Employees' Representative
2. Confirmation that there is a complaints procedure for employees
3. Self-Declaration from the orchard owner on good social practices (including commitment to the International Labour Organisation core labour conventions)
4. Access to national labour regulations for workers
5. That workers have signed contracts (employment agreements)
6. That there are regular payments of employees' wages, with evidence (pay slips)
7. Payment of at least national minimum wage
8. Non-employment of minors
9. That children of workers who live on the orchard have access to compulsory school education
10. Time recording system for employees
11. Safe working hours and adequate breaks

GRASP helps growers establish a good social management system on their orchard. It offers consumers added assurance that they are purchasing a product that has been ethically produced. And it helps protect one of the orchards most important resources: Its people.