

New Zealand Kiwifruit Growers Incorporated (NZKGI) 2023

1. The cost of growing kiwifruit is increasing significantly. A major driver of these costs are regulations from local and national Government which are putting Growers under increased financial stress. What will your party do to reduce these costs for growers?

The Green Party is focused on a plan to rebalance wealth with a fairer tax system, which will reduce income taxes for almost all taxpayers – including workers in the horticulture sector.

2. Labour: Access to People. Despite investment into automation, a lack of access to seasonal workers means that can't achieve the sustainable growth that our industry needs in areas where automation is currently unavailable. The increasing costs and immigration processes for seasonal workers are causing uncertainty and negatively impacting business confidence. What will your party do to increase access to good people?

The Green Party supports improving immigration processes for a quicker turnaround of visas.

3. The RSE Policy has been vital in addressing labour shortages in the horticulture and viticulture sectors, but like any policy, there is always room for improvement. How does your party plan to further progress the RSE policy review to ensure it remains relevant, robust, and adaptable to changing dynamics in the labour market, global trends, and industry requirements? Can you highlight specific areas that your party will focus on in terms of amendments or refinements to the existing policy to cater to both the welfare of the seasonal workers as well as the needs of the growers?

The Green Party supports a full review of the RSE policy, with a particular focus on making sure that it upholds the rights of workers coming to Aotearoa on the scheme.

4. In recent times, the availability of proper accommodation for the seasonal workforce (e.g. WHV and New Zealanders relocating for seasonal work) has emerged as a pressing issue, with direct implications on the welfare of the workers as well as the operational capabilities of the growers. How does your party plan to improve access to affordable, safe, and decent accommodation for the seasonal workforce, and consequently, foster a more stable and sustainable working environment in the industry?

The Green Party supports planning rules to enable more housing close to where people work and live, and scaling up modular construction to deliver warm, dry, energy efficient housing at scale.

5. Significant changes for growers are underway with regional councils working hard to update their freshwater policy and notify their regional policy statements and regional plans by the end of 2024, along with the phased rollout of the freshwater farms. Would your party make any changes to the legislation that is driving these requirements? If so, what would those changes look like?

The Green Party supports updating the NES on Freshwater Management to introduce a dissolved inorganic nitrogen limit.

6. Can you please share your party's views around the potential to use precision breeding or gene editing to reduce the time taken to find new cultivars?

The Green Party does not support gene editing to create new cultivars.

7. What is your parties' stance on the RMA reform?

The Green Party supported the Natural and Built Environment Act and the shift to a more cohesive planning framework.

8. What support will your party offer to growers affected (past, present and future) by severe weather events?

Green Party Co-leader James Shaw has been leading work on climate adaptation. As severe weather events become more frequent, a durable cross-party approach is needed to deal with damage from climate disasters in a fair and equitable way, including ensuring insurance settings are fit for purpose for crop loss to horticulture.

10. How will your party support New Zealand Kiwifruit Growers?

We will ensure contract terms with supermarkets are fair for food suppliers in the grocery sector – so that big supermarkets can't squeeze grower margins while charging a huge markup to buyers.

11. Does your party support the Single Point of Entry?

The Green Party acknowledges this remains the preferred model for the industry and has no plans to change it unless that was initiated by growers and supported by a majority.

11. Any final comments.

N/A