



# PRE-HARVEST *Kiwifruit* SEASONAL LABOUR REPORT 2023/24

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Presented by

**NZKGI**

NEW ZEALAND KIWIFRUIT GROWERS

# 5-YEAR ORCHARD OUTLOOK

2023 — vs — 2028

Producing Hectares

**14,500**

Producing Hectares

**16,000**

Seasonal Workforce Required

**24,000**

Seasonal Workforce Required

**28,000**



NZKGI is the representative body which advocates for New Zealand's 2,800 kiwifruit Growers. There are over 3,000 registered orchards in New Zealand and more than 14,000 hectares of kiwifruit in production. 81 percent of New Zealand-grown kiwifruit comes from the Bay of Plenty.

# KIWIFRUIT IS NEW ZEALAND'S LARGEST HORTICULTURAL EXPORT, MAKING UP 55% OF THE TOTAL HORTICULTURE EXPORT REVENUE IN 2023, THE EQUIVALENT OF \$2.5 BILLION CONTRIBUTED TO THE NZ ECONOMY.

In the next 5 years, the Kiwifruit Industry is expected to increase by 56 percent, driven by the thousands of new hectares that have been planted and will start producing. Over the next 5 years, the hectares of orchards producing New Zealand's kiwifruit are expected to increase by 65%. This increase will contribute to a global sales figure which is forecast to almost double from \$3.9 billion in 2022/23 to \$7 billion by 2030. A stable and efficient workforce is required to support this growth so that our supply chain is future-fit to meet this demand.

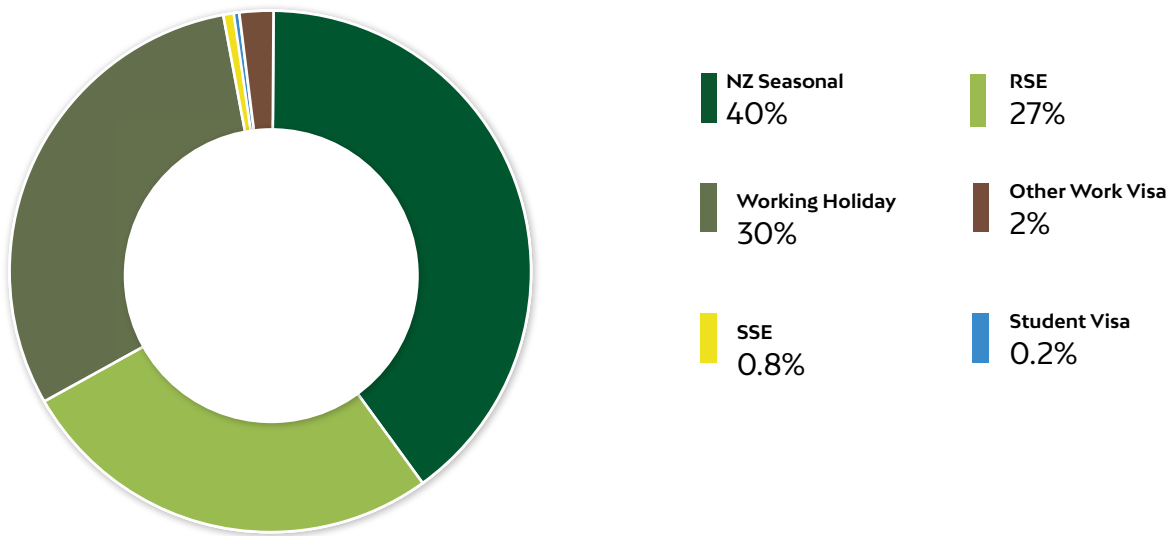
While the kiwifruit harvest does not begin until March, the industry is working hard year-round to prepare for and nurture the next season's crop. This includes on-orchard tasks such as pruning, thinning, and girdling which are done by both seasonal and permanent labour. Seasonal labour plays a crucial role during the summer period (October – January), which marks the peak workload for orchards. In 2024/25, approximately 27,000 individuals will be required across New Zealand to meet the demands during this time. This document has been prepared to showcase the pre-harvest tasks that take place on orchard and the seasonal labour that completes it, using data collected from the industry from June-December 2023.



# SEASONAL WORKFORCE

Efforts to recruit are targeted at New Zealand workers first, however in an economy where New Zealand worker supply is sparse, both WHV holders and RSE workers are vital additions to the seasonal workforce. The New Zealand worker percentage sits at a 40% of the workforce, whereas RSE is at 27% and WHV is at 30%.

## Seasonal labour percentage



## Average weeks worked (in pre-harvest season)

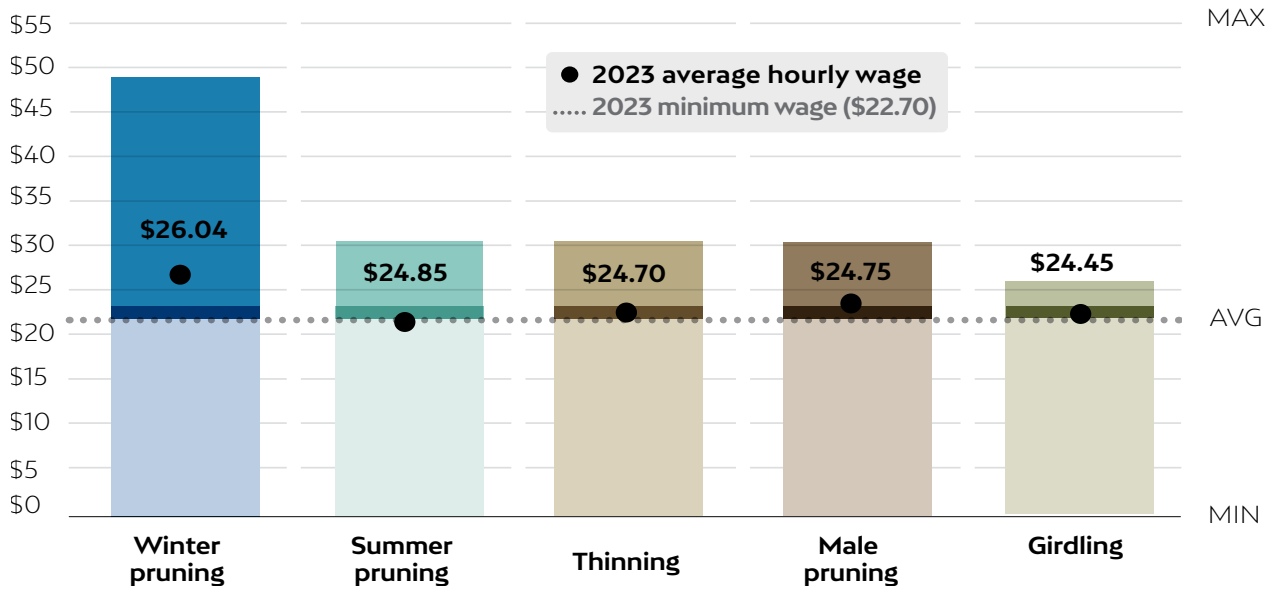
Type	New Zealand Seasonal	RSE	Working Holiday Visa	SSE	Student Visa	Other
3-12 weeks %	37.5%	-	64.3%	100%	-	25%
3-6 months %	29.1%	36.3%	35.7%	-	100%	50%
6 months + %	33.4%	63.7%	-	-	-	25%

# PAY RATES

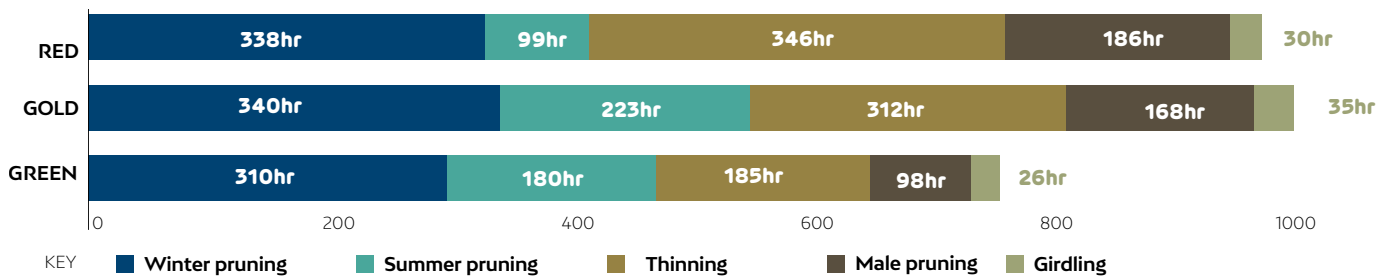
Pay rates for pre-harvest tasks average at 10% more than minimum wage, around \$25 an hour.

These pay rates do vary depending on the skill and experience of the individual and the mix of work. The average pay rates experienced a slight decrease of approximately 6% compared to 2022.

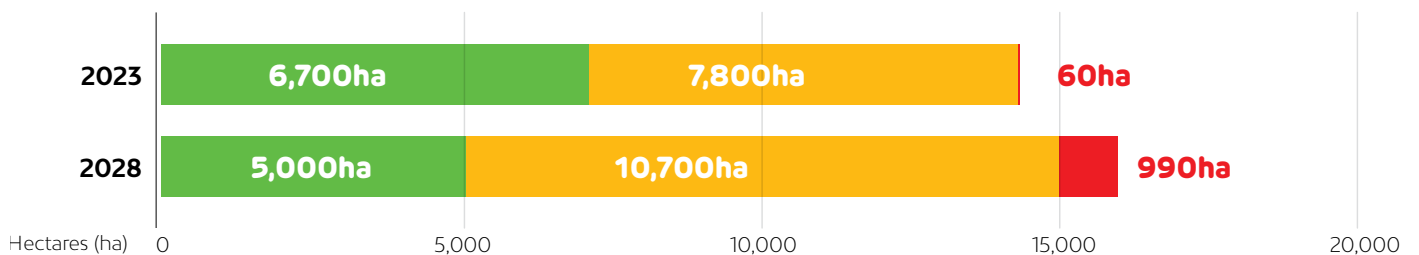
## Hourly pay rates per task



## Hours per hectares for each task



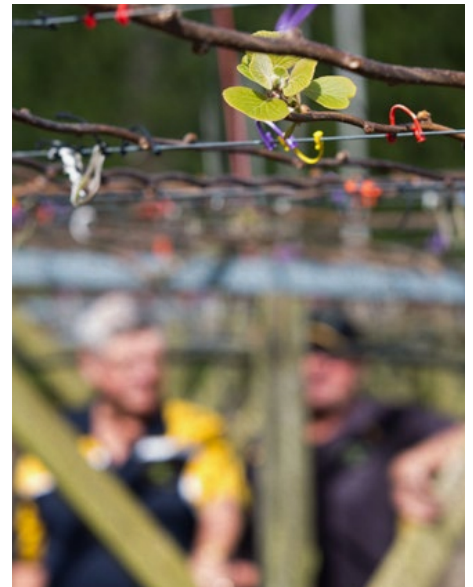
## 2023 producing hectares vs 2028 producing hectares



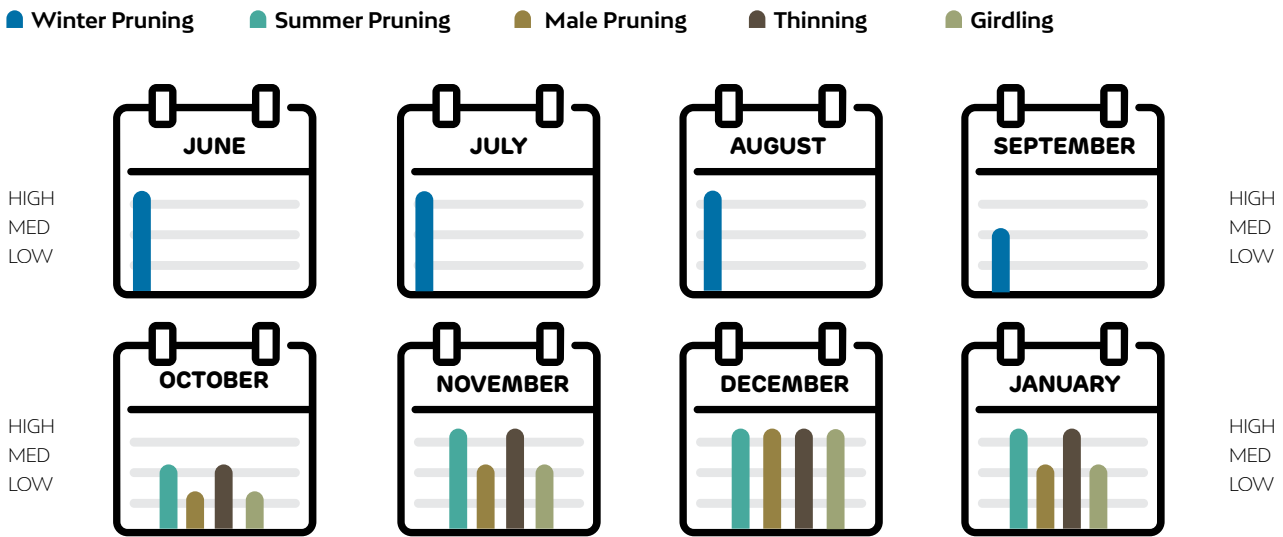
# PERMANENT WORKFORCE

With the estimated growth in the industry, seasonal task periods will be spread over a longer time, leading to an increase in year-round work options, and a growth in the permanent workforce.

While there will still be a need for seasonal workers, especially in peak periods, this opportunity puts us in competition with other industries offering permanent roles.



## Orchard pressures by month



## Summer and winter demand for seasonal workers

