



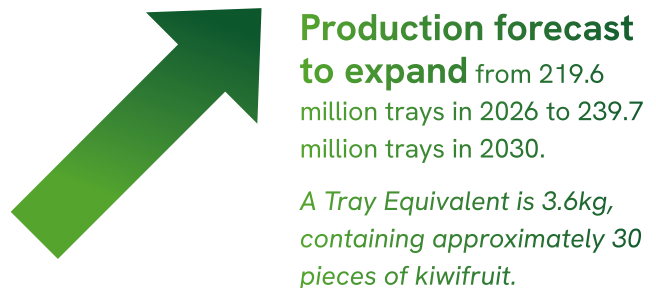
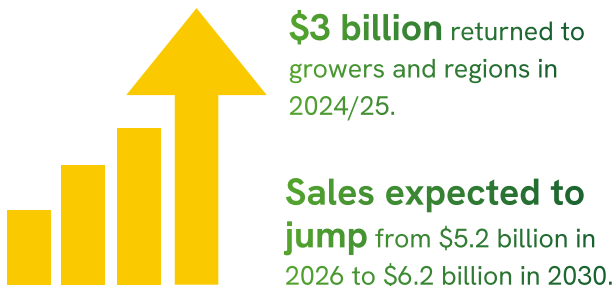
New Zealand's kiwifruit industry

Harvesting success for all
New Zealanders

Our kiwifruit industry's contribution to New Zealand & Pacific Island communities

New Zealand's kiwifruit industry: Growing stronger communities

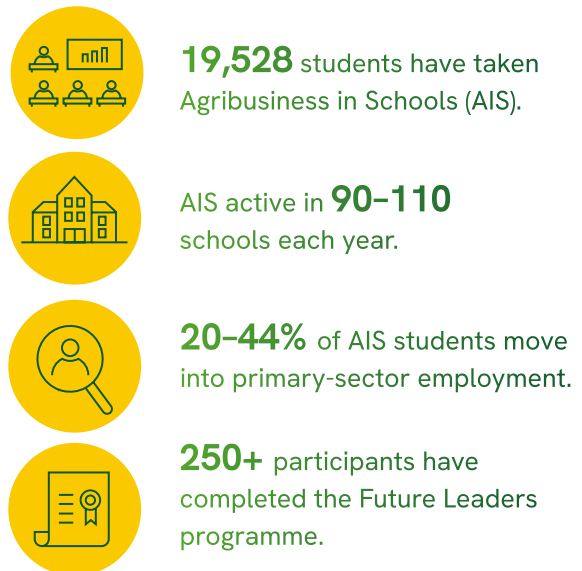
Strengthening regional economies



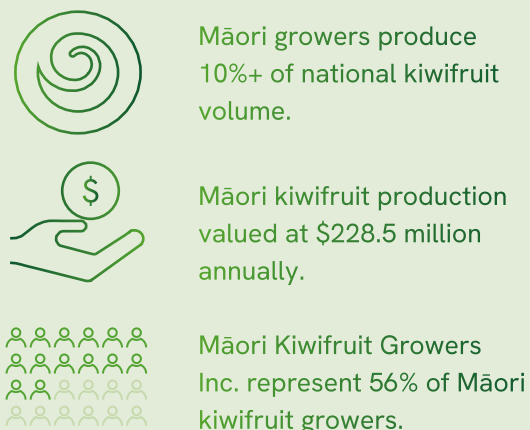
A thriving workforce



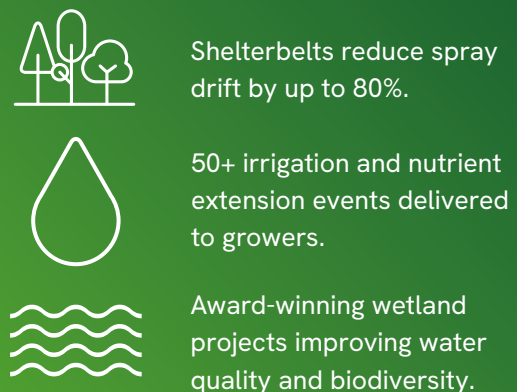
Inspiring the future generations



Strengthening Māori success



Caring for our land and waterways





The partnership between the kiwifruit industry and the regions where fruit is grown has helped build our largest horticultural export. Together, growers, communities, and industry partners have turned challenges into progress, and today the benefits of that collaboration are felt across New Zealand.

The kiwifruit industry plays an essential role in New Zealand's economy, contributing almost \$3 billion to regional communities each year. This strong foundation is supported by sustained global demand. Zespri's Five Year Outlook forecasts supply increasing from 219.6 million trays in 2026 to 239.7 million trays in 2030 - a 9% rise that reflects the industry's long-term growth trajectory and ongoing confidence in New Zealand-grown fruit.

This success brings with it a responsibility to maintain the trust and support of the communities we operate within. Part of this requires transparency on our part to demonstrate what happens behind the shelter belt. It is important that our industry partners are knowledgeable about how the kiwifruit industry takes accountability as good stewards.

Whetu Rolleston, NZKGI Chair

As part of our commitment, this publication highlights a selection of the many ways the kiwifruit industry engages, invests, and operates. It is not an exhaustive list, but rather a snapshot of the wide range of community, environmental, economic, and cultural contributions made across the industry every year.

We also note that many growers and industry organisations assess and report on their conduct, often through the production of annual sustainability reports aligned with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards, reflecting a shared commitment to continuous improvement, responsible practice, and transparency.

We invite you to use the examples within this publication in conversations with your neighbours and wider community. By sharing our commitment to initiatives that promote economic prosperity, strong rural communities, employment, and positive environmental outcomes for New Zealand and the Pacific, we aim to strengthen the bonds that underpin a resilient kiwifruit industry and a stronger New Zealand.

Colin Bond, NZKGI CEO

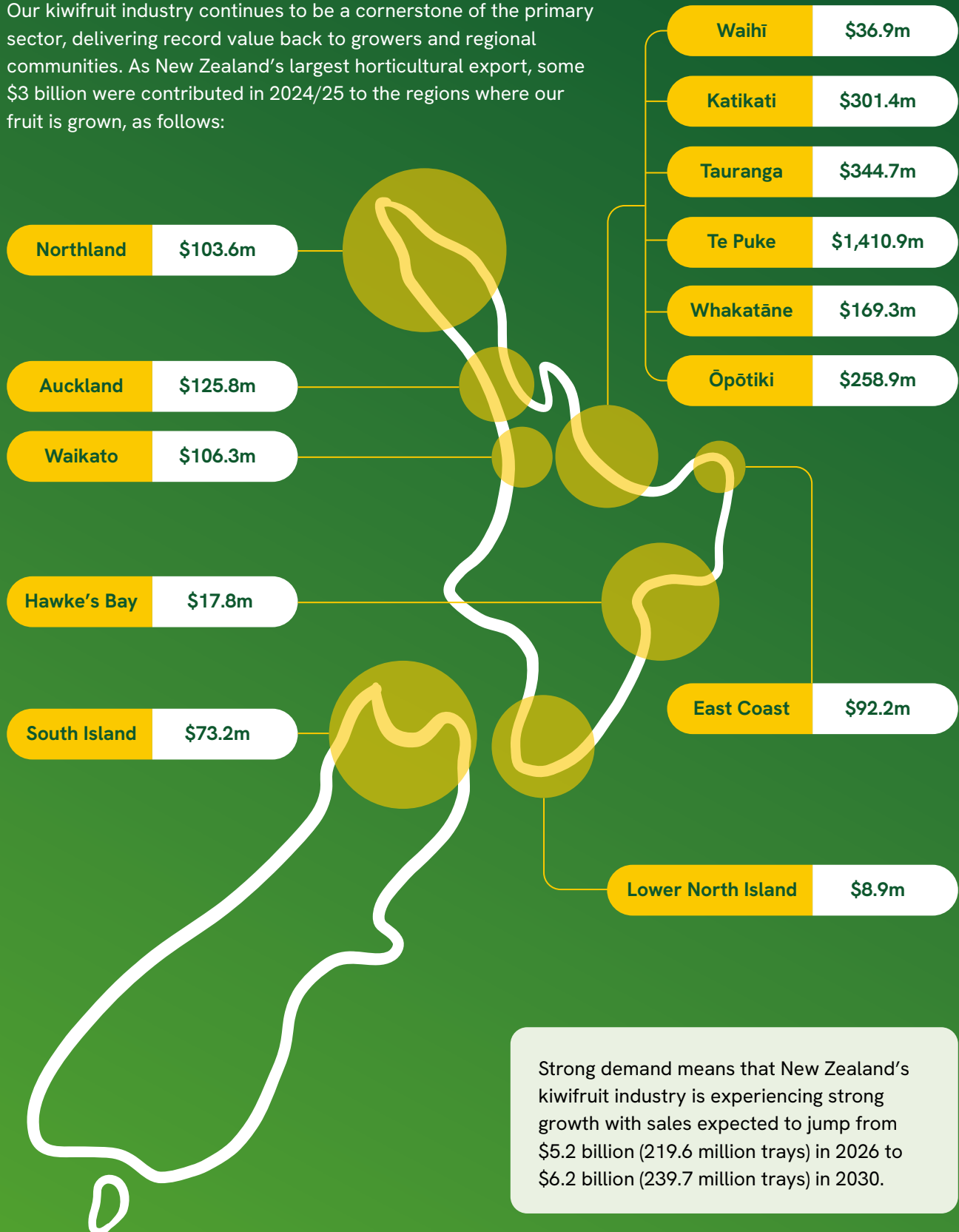
New Zealand Kiwifruit Growers Inc.

Our vision is for New Zealand kiwifruit growers to be the most successful and future-ready producers in the world.

NZKGI represents kiwifruit growers, giving them their own voice in industry and government decision making. Our work to support growers falls under six portfolios - Industry Stability, Performance & Insights, Communications, Labour & Education, Environment & Policy and Organisational Management.

Strengthening communities through our economic contribution

Our kiwifruit industry continues to be a cornerstone of the primary sector, delivering record value back to growers and regional communities. As New Zealand's largest horticultural export, some \$3 billion were contributed in 2024/25 to the regions where our fruit is grown, as follows:



Growing stronger communities together

Case study

Aims Games

Zespri strengthens the kiwifruit industry's commitment to communities through its sponsorship of the Zespri AIMS Games, Australasia's largest junior sporting event. The 2024 games brought together 12,660 athletes from 395 schools, including international participants, offering a positive, community-centred platform that showcases the industry's commitment to youth, wellbeing, and regional development. Notably, the 2024 event saw 31 athletes with disabilities competing—the highest in the games' history—highlighting Zespri's support for inclusivity and equal access to sport. By investing in an iconic event that brings families, schools, and communities together, Zespri demonstrates tangible social value beyond the orchard, reinforcing trust, visibility, and goodwill toward the kiwifruit industry.

Case study

Supporting businesses and employment

A Berl report found that the average total national expenditure generated from kiwifruit growing was \$4.3 billion per year. It also found that the total national employment supported by kiwifruit growing was 48,499 FTEs.

Berl 2023, Economic Impact Assessment. Nick Robertson, Hugh Dixon, and Hugh Parsons.

Our environmental commitments

Caring for our highly productive land

We want to maintain highly productive land for growing food while recognising our responsibility to look after it, and our neighbours. The industry helps achieve this by supporting responsible land-use practices—for example, providing growers with clear guidance on water, shelter and safe spraying to ensure orchards operate safely and respectfully alongside nearby communities.

Supporting strong grower–community connections

Positive grower–community relationships are central for the industry to operate. NZKGI helps strengthen these relationships through plain-English guidance on environmental good practice and by ensuring growers have access to the right tools, resources, and support. For neighbours, NZKGI provides simple, open contact channels for questions and feedback. Community members can reach us directly or use Zespri’s confidential Speak Up line, giving them confidence that any concerns will be heard, logged and followed up. This approach reinforces transparency, accountability and responsiveness, and helps ensure growers and communities stay connected, informed, and supported.

NZKGI’s details to provide feedback about orchards are available here.



Using sprays responsibly and transparently

The kiwifruit industry recognises that it must be transparent, responsible, and demonstrate continual improvement in the use of agrichemicals. While agrichemicals remain essential for protecting vines and ensuring reliable production, the industry is committed to minimising environmental and human-health risks wherever possible.

To support community confidence, NZKGI provides clear public information on key agrichemicals—such as its detailed hydrogen cyanamide factsheet, which outlines safe use, regulatory controls, and industry stewardship expectations. NZKGI also operates a dedicated spray-compliance phone line, enabling the community to seek information or raise concerns. Most enquiries relate to spray drift or notification, and all complaints are passed to Zespri for investigation and appropriate follow-up. By providing transparency, encouraging accountability, and responding proactively to concerns, the industry demonstrates its commitment to responsible agrichemical management—an essential element of earning and maintaining its ability to operate.

NZKGI’s hydrogen cyanamide factsheet is available here.



Creating safe, well-managed orchard environments

One of the most significant community concerns relating to the kiwifruit industry is the risk of agrichemical spray drift and its potential impact on human health and the environment. Recognising this, the industry has implemented robust systems to minimise drift and by developing Principles of Shelter—guidelines that encourage the use of effective shelter around orchards. These shelter practices not only reduce the visibility of spraying but can also cut spray drift by up to 80%, providing increased

assurance to neighbouring communities. By taking proactive, transparent steps to manage agrichemicals responsibly, the kiwifruit industry demonstrates its commitment to protecting both people and the environment, helping maintain the trust that underpins its operations.

The principles of shelter are available on the NZKGI website here.



Protecting and respecting our waterways

The kiwifruit industry recognises that protecting freshwater resources is fundamental to maintaining its social licence to operate. Water is a taonga, and the industry’s commitment to kaitiakitanga is reflected in ongoing efforts to improve on-orchard nutrient and water management. Through multiyear research, science partnerships, and innovation programmes,

industry partners are actively building the knowledge required to reduce environmental impacts and ensure sustainable production systems that align with community expectations and future regulatory standards.

This commitment was formalised in 2019 through the launch of He wai mō Āpōpō, Water for the Future, a collaboratively developed water strategy that places guardianship at the centre

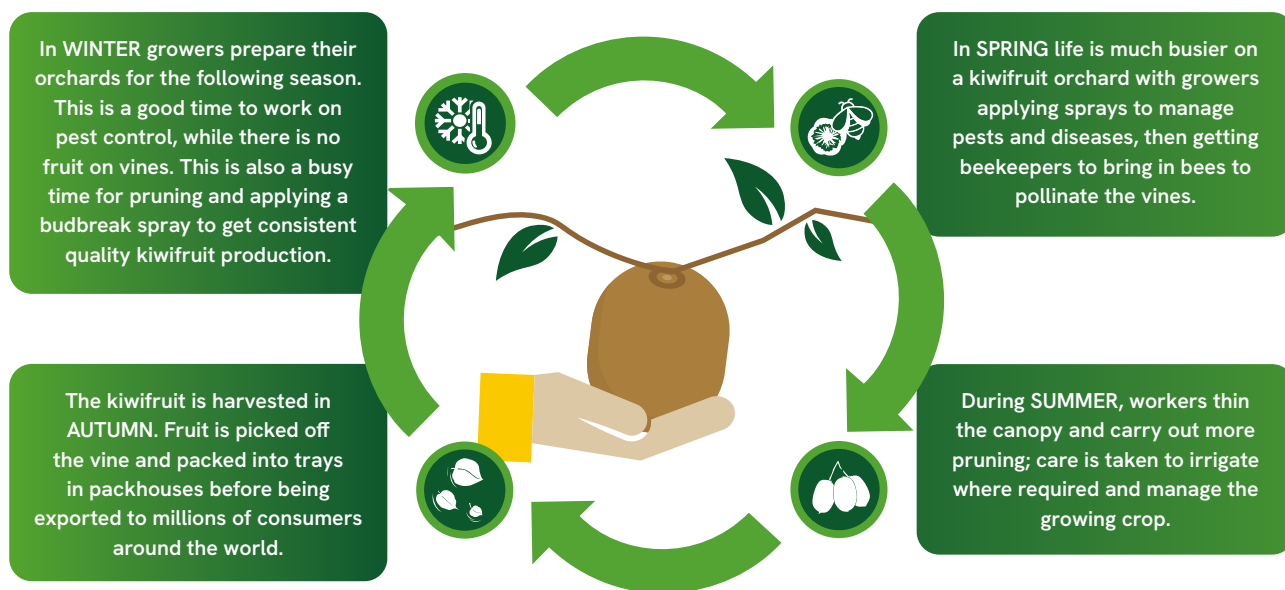
of industry practice. Since then, the sector has delivered a significant body of work to strengthen grower capability and transparency, including more than 50 irrigation and nutrient-focused extension events, practical tools and calculators available through the Zespri Canopy platform, and continued advocacy to ensure policy settings support responsible water and nutrient use. Regular Kiwifruit Journal articles and active involvement in community-led catchment restoration initiatives further demonstrate the industry's willingness to share information, adopt good practice, and remain accountable to the public.

This leadership in environmental stewardship is also reflected in award-winning restoration

efforts. The conversion of farmland to constructed wetlands in the Bay of Plenty's Waihi Estuary catchment—including wetlands owned by the Hickson family, who are kiwifruit growers—earned the Environmental Sustainability Project Award at the 2025 Water New Zealand Excellence Awards. Wetlands, described as the “kidneys of the landscape,” provide natural filtration by removing sediment, nutrients, and bacteria before they reach sensitive waterways, while also restoring biodiversity, enhancing cultural values, and contributing to climate mitigation through carbon storage. Projects like these demonstrate the sector's commitment to tangible environmental gains and reinforce the trust and confidence that underpin confidence with local communities.

Key seasonal orchard activities

A kiwifruit orchard is a hive of activity throughout the year, from pruning and fertiliser spreading to thinning and harvesting.



Case study



Ballance Farm awards

The Ballance Farm Awards celebrate farmers and growers who lead the way in caring for Aotearoa's land, water, and communities, inspiring others through innovation and sustainable practice. Kiwifruit growers regularly feature as winners in regions which kiwifruit is grown.

Left: Charles Russell and Tom Heeney of Mātai Pacific Iwi Collective located in TePuke are 2026 Bay of Plenty Regional Supreme Winners of the Ballance Farm Environment Awards, recognised for building a large-scale kiwifruit operation grounded in cultural values, environmental stewardship and strong commercial performance.

Our people & workforce impact

The kiwifruit industry is proud to be a major contributor to regional employment, with forecasts showing it will provide around 24,900 seasonal jobs by 2030. This growing workforce is supported by a positive employment environment: NZKGI's 2025 Labour Survey found over 73% of workers were satisfied with work availability, pay and conditions, and 81% were satisfied specifically with the availability of work. Importantly, 96% said they would return to the industry—an impressive 5% increase since 2023, reflecting strong employer–employee relationships and enjoyable workplace experiences.

To help ensure workers can thrive, NZKGI works closely with councils such as the Western Bay

of Plenty District Council to support access to high-quality seasonal worker housing and advocate for transport improvements. These efforts help workers get to and from orchards reliably and safely, enhancing both wellbeing and productivity.

Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) Scheme

Although New Zealanders are the kiwifruit industry's first priority when it comes to picking and packing kiwifruit, it is not always possible to fill all available positions. RSE employees make up a small but crucial proportion of New Zealand's horticulture workforce, filling the gaps that New Zealanders and working holiday travellers are unable to meet.

Pacific countries from which employers in the RSE scheme can hire RSE workers are the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu.



Up to 20,750 workers can be employed under the scheme each year, with more than 19,000 Pacific workers currently supporting New Zealand's horticulture and viticulture sectors.

The scheme is built on ethical recruitment, strong pastoral care, and genuine mutual benefit. Workers typically earn upwards of \$20,000 in a single season—income that many families use to pay school fees, improve housing, start small businesses or support church and village infrastructure in their Pacific Island communities.

Employers further strengthen this impact by helping workers set long-term goals, providing disaster-recovery support, and facilitating voluntary savings contributions.

Providing safe, comfortable living environments

Accommodation standards are also rising, with compulsory warm, dry, compliant housing and new rent-cap rules from 2026 to ensure fairness. Innovative developments such as the Paengaroa North K Trust's marae-inspired accommodation show how cultural care and manaakitanga can enhance worker experience.

Committed to ethical labour practice

Strong labour compliance frameworks—including GLOBALG.A.P and GRASP certification and strict Compliance Assessment Verification (CAV) requirements—ensure safe, fair, and transparent conditions across the workforce. Zero-tolerance responses to non-compliance reinforce trust with workers, retailers and communities.

Together, these initiatives demonstrate a positive, people-centred commitment to create shared prosperity for workers, growers, and communities.

Case study

Supporting health & wellbeing

The industry continually invests in worker health and wellbeing. Recent onsite immunisation programmes protected more than 1,000 RSE workers in Hawke's Bay and 200 in the Bay of Plenty from measles, supported by employers and public health teams.

Our support for Māori success

Māori play a vital and growing role in New Zealand's kiwifruit industry.

Today, Māori growers produce more than 10% of the national crop, with aspirations to increase this to 20%. Māori ownership spans around 7% of all horticultural land, and Māori kiwifruit production is valued at approximately \$228.5 million each year. Kiwifruit is also a major employer, with 933 Māori growers working in the sector—more than in any other crop—highlighting its importance for whānau, regional economies, and future opportunities.

Māori entities continue to expand their presence by developing orchards and transitioning whenua into high-value horticulture. These investments lift economic returns, create skilled employment, and support long-term land productivity. This growth demonstrates a

commitment to kaitiakitanga, community wellbeing and intergenerational stewardship.

Māori Kiwifruit Growers Manatōpū (MKGM)

Established in 2016, MKGM represents 60 members across 135 KPINs—56% of all Māori growers. MKGM provides a strong collective voice, ensuring Māori interests are reflected in industry strategy, policy, governance and long-term planning. Guided by Kotahitanga, Mana Whakahaere and Whai Hua, MKGM supports its members through leadership pathways, access to data and insights, and industry-wide collaboration. This unified Māori voice strengthens equitable participation and ensures cultural values are embedded in decision-making.

Ahuwhenua Awards

The prestigious Ahuwhenua Trophy celebrates Māori excellence in agribusiness, recognising leadership, innovation and sustainable land stewardship. Although historically centred on sheep, beef and dairy, its influence now extends to horticulture, showcasing Māori success in high-value food production. The awards build pride, reinforce Māori leadership in environmental and cultural guardianship, and highlight the long-term, values-based approach Māori bring to land management.

Together, these initiatives reflect a positive and accelerating Māori contribution to the kiwifruit industry—one grounded in partnership, sustainability, cultural strength and shared prosperity.

Case study

Sustaining Kaupapa

MKGM participate in the global value chain through the Collaborative Marketing framework. Working alongside Zespri, MKGM helps protect the provenance and cultural identity of Māori-grown kiwifruit, while creating opportunities for indigenous trade relationships. Revenue generated through their fruit sales help sustain MKGM's kaupapa, creating a model where commercial success reinforces cultural and community outcomes.



Our self-reliance to stay safe and strong

The kiwifruit industry takes pride in coming together and standing strong when it comes to biosecurity and emergency readiness and response. Our sector has built robust, well-organised systems that allow us to respond quickly, confidently, and effectively to pest and disease incursions as well as significant adverse events - demonstrating that growers, pack-houses, and industry bodies are proactive guardians of the land, the crop, and our communities.

Kiwifruit Vine Health (KVH) leads this work with a purpose-built, industry-driven biosecurity framework. As the only dedicated primary-sector biosecurity agency in New Zealand, KVH ensures growers have the tools, training, and information they need to prevent, detect, and manage

threats early. This capability is complemented by the biosecurity partnerships in place with the government and other industries, to achieve better outcomes together.

Emergency readiness is equally self-driven. Through the kiwifruit industry's Emergency Response Management (ERM) framework, with KVH at the helm, growers are supported by clear action plans, trained response teams, regular simulations, and communications systems that activate immediately when needed. These structures facilitate a co-ordinated and cohesive approach to supporting growers and maintaining business continuity, and support local communities during times of need - without waiting for external intervention.



Case study

When challenges arise, we're ready

Recent responses to biosecurity detections, including yellow-legged hornets and fruit flies, have shown the strength of these systems in action. Through established partnerships we're able to mobilise quickly, share information, and implement mitigation measures—reflecting a culture of preparedness and shared responsibility. This readiness builds confidence with growers, consumers, and trading partners, showing that the sector can manage risks responsibly.



Our commitment to future generations

Schools – Contributing Plants

The kiwifruit industry supports horticultural education in secondary schools, including ongoing donations of kiwifruit plants for hands-on learning. These plantings help students develop skills in propagation, orchard management and applied plant science. Recent expansions at Hauraki Plains College enhance practical learning and connect students directly with industry practice. This investment in youth development builds regional capability and reinforces long-term community trust by demonstrating that the industry is actively cultivating its future workforce.

Agribusiness in Schools (AIS)

AIS broadens this commitment by exposing students nationwide to real-world science, commerce and problem-solving within primary industries. With 90–110 schools participating annually and over 19,500 students having studied Agribusiness, AIS has become a proven pathway builder. Students engaged in AIS are significantly more likely to enter tertiary agricultural programmes or primary-sector employment, and strong participation by female students and those from lower-decile schools shows its contribution to diversity and equitable access. This widespread involvement strengthens the sector's connection with families, teachers and communities, helping ensure a resilient pipeline of skilled, informed young people.

Young Grower Competition

The annual Young Grower competition showcases the professionalism, skill and ambition of emerging horticulturalists. Through technical challenges, leadership exercises and public speaking, participants demonstrate the standards that underpin the sector. These events raise the visibility of young talent and highlight the innovation driving modern horticulture, reinforcing confidence in the industry's future.

Cultivate Your Career

This flagship programme provides hands-on exposure to the breadth of opportunities across the kiwifruit value chain. Students engage directly with professionals across science, technology, logistics and orchard management. Its integration with the Young Grower competition has allowed students to observe top young horticulturists in action.

Future Leaders

Established in 2014, Future Leaders is a volunteer-led community developing the next generation of industry leaders, with hundreds of active members across the sector. The programme delivers free professional development through workshops, industry tours, leadership experiences and community volunteer days, providing practical opportunities to learn, connect and build strong networks.

For more information about NZKGI, visit www.nzkgi.org.nz



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