



New Zealand Kiwifruit Seasonal Labour Report 2024/25



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5-Year Orchard Outlook

2024

vs

2029

Producing Hectares

15,400

Producing Hectares

17,380

Seasonal Workforce Required

24,000

Seasonal Workforce Required

27,500

NZKGI is the representative body which advocates for New Zealand's 2,800 kiwifruit Growers. There are over 3,388 registered orchards in New Zealand and more than 15,400 hectares of kiwifruit in production. 80 percent of New Zealand-grown kiwifruit comes from the Bay of Plenty.



Kiwifruit is New Zealand's largest horticultural export, making up 40% of the total horticulture export revenue in 2024, the equivalent of \$2.9 billion contributed to the NZ economy.

In the next 5 years, the kiwifruit industry is expected to increase by 13 percent, driven by 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 14%*. This growth is projected to lift New Zealand's supply global sales from \$4.5 billion in 2024/25 to an estimated \$5.5 billion by 2029. A stable and efficient workforce is required to support this growth so that our supply chain is future-fit to meet this demand.

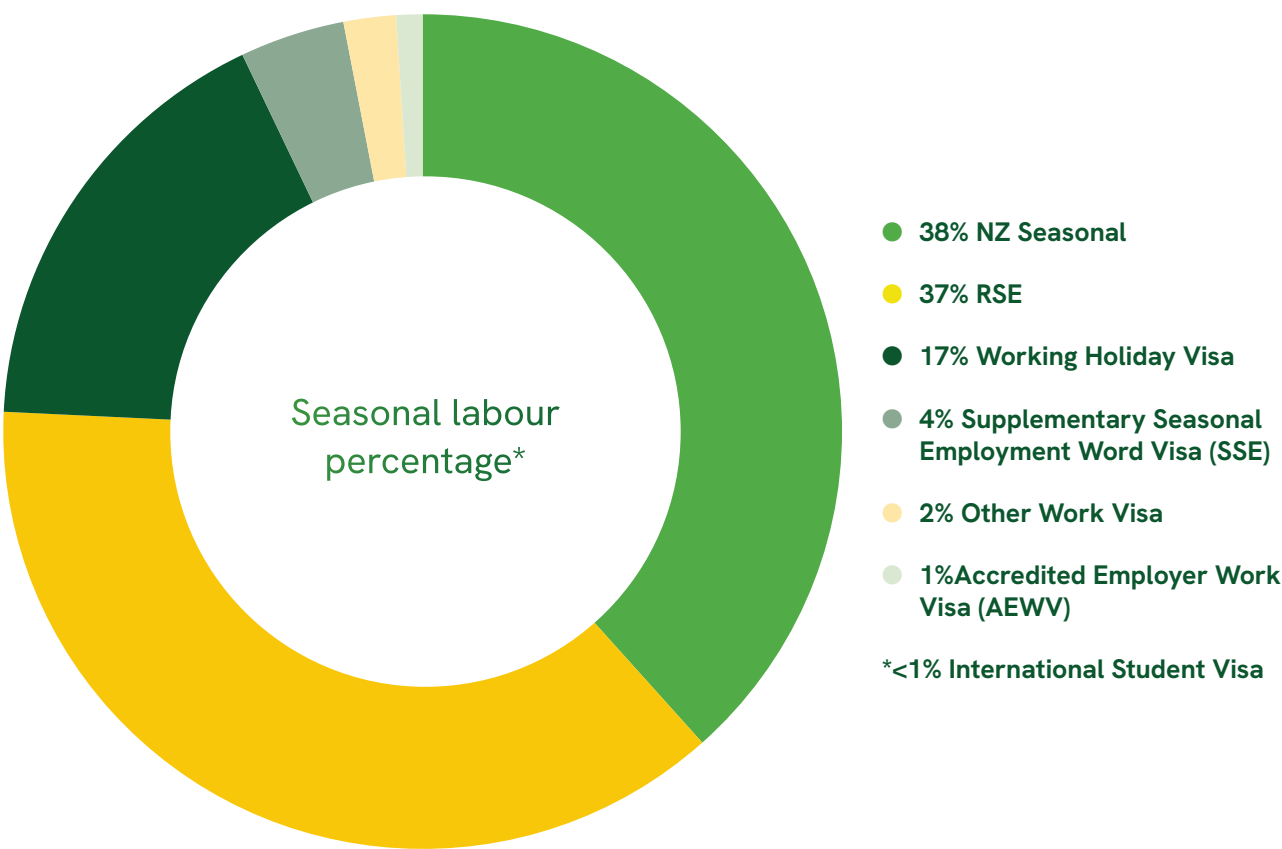
While the kiwifruit harvest does not begin until late February, the industry is working hard year-round

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 in orchards. In 2025/26, over 10,000 individuals will be required across New Zealand's kiwifruit regions 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 in 2024.

*Subject to license release decisions.

Seasonal workforce

Efforts to recruit are focused on New Zealand workers first, with Working Holiday Visa (WHV) holders and Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) workers playing crucial roles in strengthening the seasonal workforce. The composition of the workforce includes 38% New Zealand workers, 37% RSE workers, and 17% WHV holders.



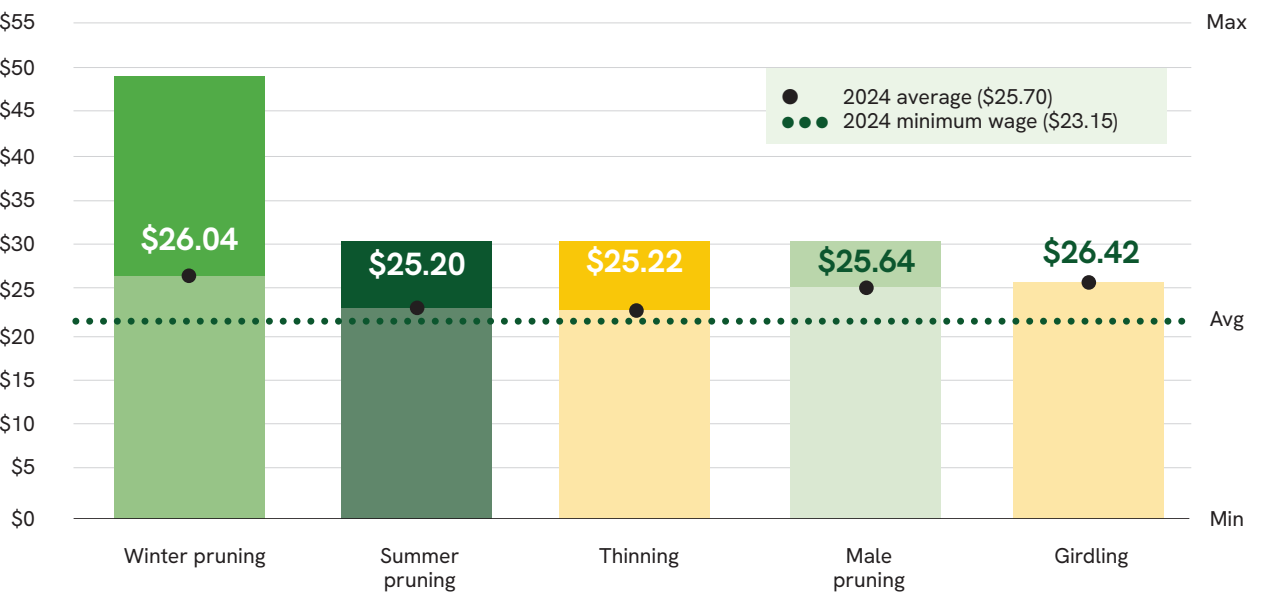
Length of employment by seasonal worker type

Type	Accredited Employer Work Visa (AEWV)	International Student Visa	New Zealand Seasonal	Other Work Visa	RSE	WHV
3 or less weeks	-	50%	-	-	-	-
3 to 12 weeks	-	-	50%	-	-	82%
3 to 6 months	-	50%	44%	67%	23%	18%
6+ months	100%	-	6%	33%	77%	-

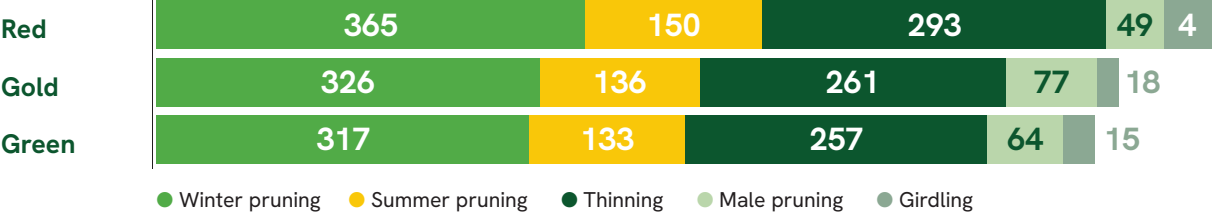
Pay rates

Pay rates for on-orchard tasks average 11% more than minimum wage, around \$25.70 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 an increase of 3% in 2024.

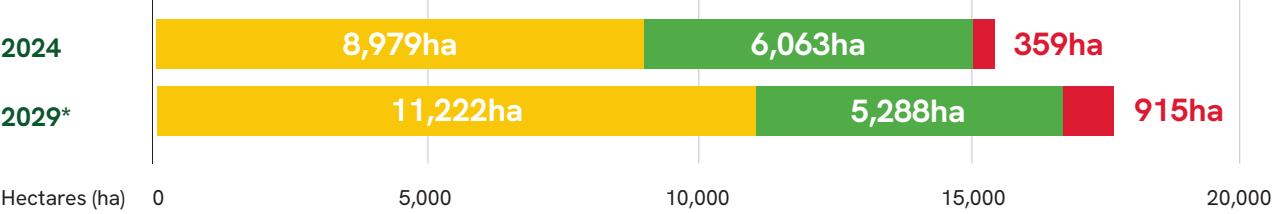
Hourly pay rates per task



Hours per hectares for each task



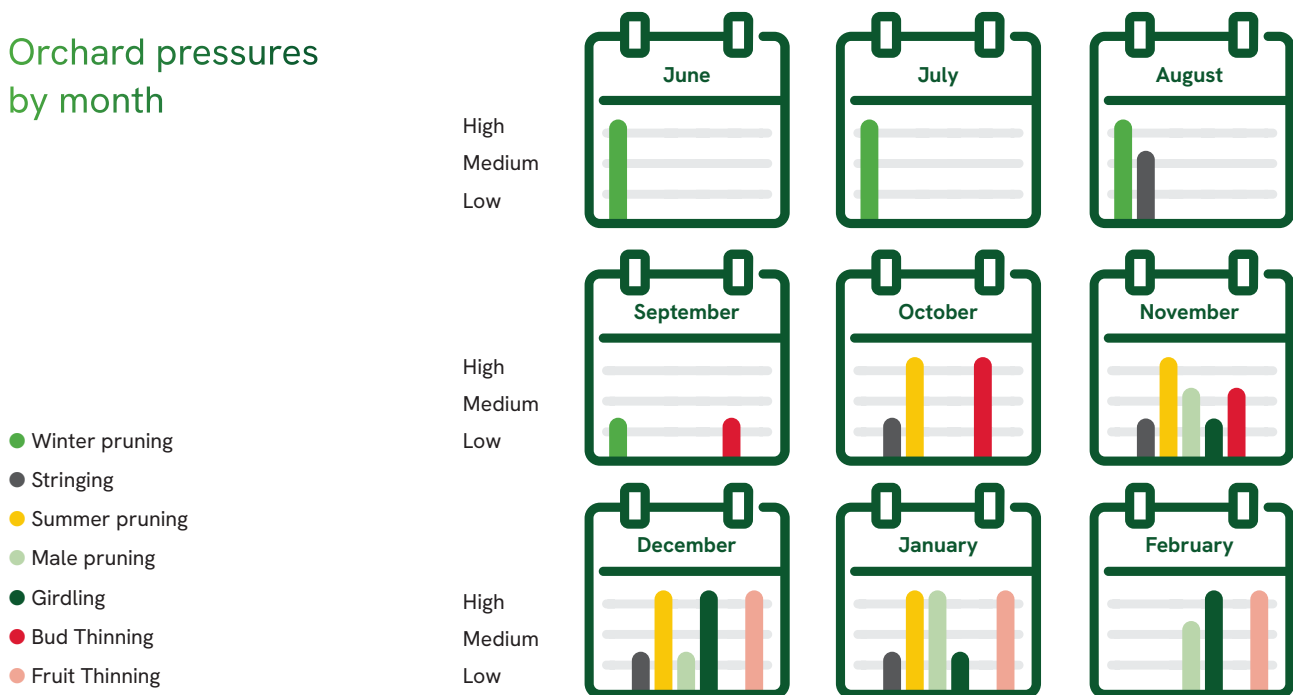
2024 producing hectares vs 2029 estimate producing hectares



Permanent workforce

With projected industry growth, seasonal task periods are expected to become more concentrated and intensive, creating greater demand during peak times. This shift will also support expanded year-round work opportunities and contribute to the growth of the permanent workforce.

Orchard pressures by month



Summer and winter demand for seasonal workers

