



**New Zealand
Asparagus
Council**

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October 2017 Update

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2017/18 Levy rate

At the AGM in 2017 the motion was passed that the levy rate for the 2017/18 season be set at \$120 per planted hectare. This motion was ratified at the 2017 SGM. Invoices for levy for the 2017/18 season will be sent out at towards the end of October.

Commodity Levy Renewal

You should shortly be receiving in the post voting papers for the Commodity Levy Renewal. These papers include a ballot paper on why we are seeking a commodity levy, a voting paper, and a pre-paid return envelope addressed to the returning officer. In order for your vote to count it must be with the returning officer by 9 November 2017. For more information you can contact your District Association Representative.

Season update

It has been a very wet spring in most areas, with production well below historical levels. Demand from the markets is strong, and pricing is above historical averages.


At the moment labour supply is adequate, however there may be pressure on labour coming as many blocks have not started harvesting daily yet.

Export returns are poor at the moment. Australia is keeping prices down to Japan. With low field supply, exports may not start until November.

[Vegetables.co.nz](http://vegetables.co.nz)

As part of the marketing and promotion effort of NZAC, we have formally joined vegetables.co.nz. The benefits from this are: featuring as vegetable of the month in October; having a video produced educating how asparagus is grown, packed and produced (featuring Gordon McPhail in South Canterbury); and being featured on the vegetables.co.nz facebook page. They have an audience of over 13,000 people and Pip Duncan who works for vegetables.co.nz works closely with food writers, nutritionists, and schools to promote fresh, New Zealand-grown vegetables. [You can watch the video here.](#)

RESOURCES



With the damp weather you may have noticed that some of our favourite spring crops have been a bit slower than usual to hit the market shelves. The well above average rainfall has been affecting the ability to harvest potatoes, cauliflower and leafy greens including lettuces.

Unfortunately the lower than normal supplies has an impact on cost and availability, and whilst growers are doing all they can to supply fresh spring vegetables, the weather is not something they have control over.

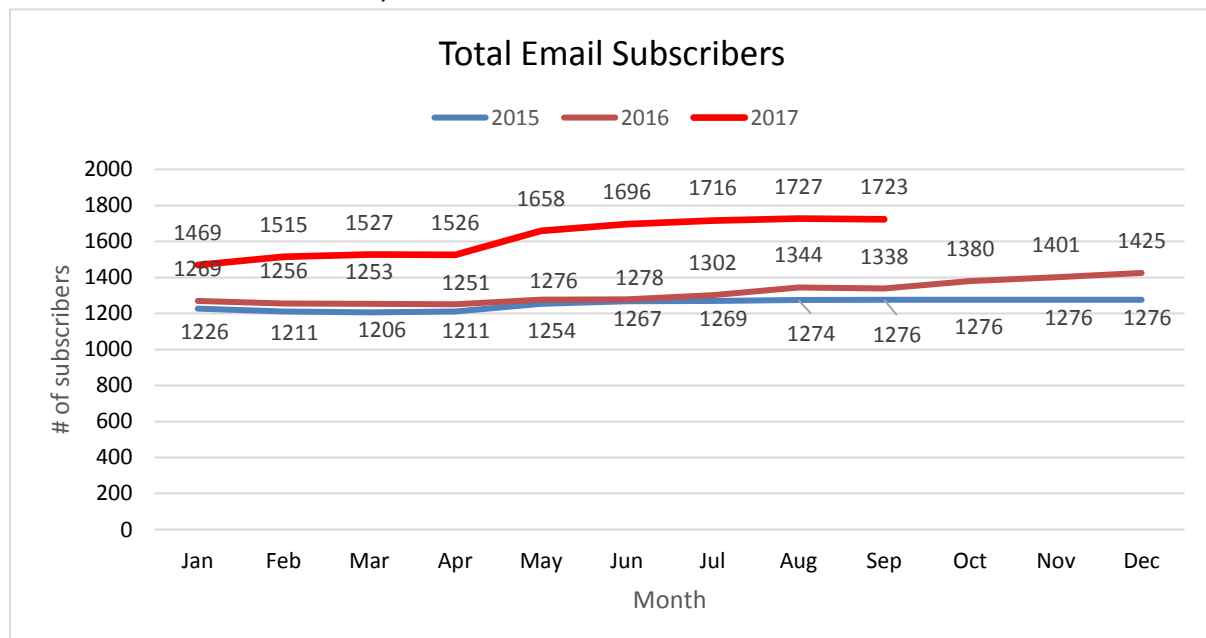
For information on seasonal availability please refer to our [2017 Seasonality Leaflet](#).

Do you know how long it takes to grow asparagus? Find out in our latest Meet the Grower video featuring Gordon McPhail.

For more information on asparagus visit the [Stems](#) page in our [Vegetable A-Z section](#) of our website.

Asparagus has featured twice already in their email newsletter: first as vegetable of the month, and then to highlight the asparagus growing video, asking people “do you know where your asparagus comes from?”

The email newsletter has 1,716 subscribers. The below graph shows the growth in number of email subscribers over the last three years.



Lindsay Kay on the cover of NZ Grower October edition

NZAC Hawkes Bay Director Lindsay Kay stars on the cover of the October edition of the NZ Grower magazine. Lindsay's interview talks about the future-focused activity of the industry and the opportunities for the growers.

Asparagus is featured as vegetable of the month in this edition of the magazine. Make sure you have a read. If you don't receive the Grower and would like a copy of this edition, contact Eve to have one posted out to you.



Dichlorvos Residue Assurance Programme (DRAP)

The DRAP registration process for 2017/18 is complete and export for those who are registered is able to commence.

Japan Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) are coming to New Zealand to visit a number of participants in the DRAP programme. They will be visiting a packhouse, grower and freight forwarder. The visit is being coordinated by MPI.

MPI are hoping to negotiate with MHLW again following this season for the removal of the DRAP programme now that the NZ MRL for dichlorvos on asparagus is lower than Japan so if they are happy with what they see, particularly around the management of pesticide residues, that will bode well for negotiating DRAP's removal.

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