



November 2019 Update

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Season update

Domestic Supply - Pricing has stayed a lot stronger than normal but that's caused by reduced volumes in the market place. All retail chains have been promoting non-stop which has help keep supply moving quickly.

Demand on all seasonal products has remained strong but that's mainly attributed to low volumes with the cooler spring we all have experienced.

Market is starting to become sticky as we get into a traditionally tough time of year with retail slowing down before Xmas. Hopefully we can see some export to keep the local market strong.

South West North Island: We have seen cooler than normal spring temperatures which has led to quite consistent growth without any flushes. The quality has been very good and would have easily met export spec had the export demand been there. The supermarket chains are showing a real empathy towards the need to pay a higher price if there is to be an asparagus industry in NZ in the future. Some disappointing pricing coming out of the South Island in the past week/fortnight but other regions appear to be managing their peak supply into the market.

Hawkes Bay: Market has remained positive up until about 1 week ago. In general returns increased by more than say double digit percentage points. Pressure downwards always comes from asparagus from outside of region as per normal. It appears those selling direct to other outlets are getting a good return.

Waikato: Apart from a week long flush supply still slightly down on average. Labour supply holding for now, but increasing pressure from soft fruit. Markets a little soft but this is standard for this time of year. Seems to be some very cheap gear available in some markets. Blocks still quite clean but very dry. Size starting to drift off and an increase in seedier heads. Export basically non-existent.

South Island: has been enjoying settled temperate weather conditions meaning only one or two small growth flushes have occurred recently. This in turn has meant sales have been in balance with crop production and product is good quality and nice and fresh. Production is likely to reduce from now on towards the end of the season but supply should remain up to Christmas. It will be interested to see what develops in the export markets.

North Island grower visits

Mike Arnold (NZAC Chair) and Karen Orr (Business Manager) are visiting key North Island areas to catch up with growers on their challenges and opportunities in order to update NZAC priorities. Meetings are being held as follows:

Wednesday 20th November:

- Horowhenua – Tendertips 10.15am-11.45am
- South West North Island – Mangaweka Asparagus 1.30pm-3.00pm
- Hawkes Bay Asparagus Growers – 7.30pm-9pm Jarks, 118 Maraekakaho Rd, Hastings

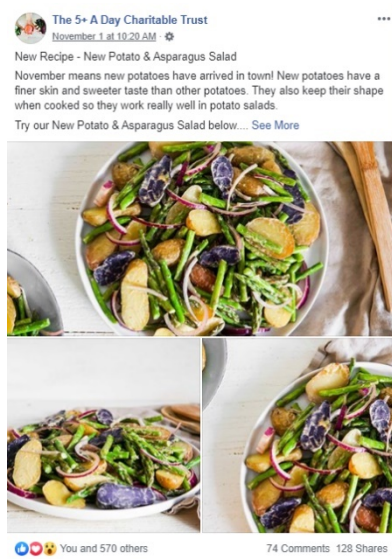
Thursday 21st November

- Waikato Asparagus Growers – 4pm-5.30pm Good George Pub, 98 Victoria St, Cambridge

Please come along to your local area meeting or call Karen on 021 926 890 to discuss.

Promotion

The 'NZ Grown, in Season Asparagus' campaign to get more New Zealanders to buy asparagus and raise awareness on the season has been gaining some interest and is tracking to plan, with further advertising on facebook planned for end November/early



December. Currently the facebook page set up at the campaign start in September has 264 followers, and Instagram has 142 followers. A full report on the campaign will be made available in December.

5+ A Day are getting great coverage with their social media and also had some radio advertising on The Hits & Newstalk ZB 4th to 17th Nov.

And vegetables.co.nz had asparagus on the menu at the NZ Food writers annual conference at Zealong in the Waikato late October.

eatwell

15 ways with asparagus

By: Warren Elwin
13/10/2014



Make the most of the short asparagus season with Warren Elwin's fresh ideas.

Asparagus in the media

A change of lifestyle

Moving out of professional careers in Auckland and taking over Kaimai Fresh, an asparagus operation just out of Matamata, has provided couple Matt and Rose Carnachan with a change of lifestyle – and a few challenges.

Matt grew up on a farm before going into the commercial property game. Rose is a member of the well-known Pukekohe Bula Bros family. Seven years ago, the couple took up an opportunity to get into horticulture in an existing 30ha asparagus operation near the iconic Waikato river.

After three seasons the original raised block was returned to Bula Bros and a new 30ha area of asparagus 'beds' established. There, the business grew mostly Jersey Giant, with a smaller quantity of Pacific 2000 varieties.

Initially, Kaimai Fresh had cropped about 6 tonnes a hectare but are now up to a 16t tonne if some due to increasing yields, Matt explained.



For five years, chair of the Waikato Asparagus Growers' Association, Carnachan said the industry was giving its focus on better varieties and the use of improved harvesting machinery to improve labour productivity.

"We are now making use of new tools to drive productivity. The old method of harvesting had workers picking into buckets on their hip. Now they unload directly into the tractor. We are looking internationally. Russia

November's NZ Grower magazine includes an article on Matt & Rose Carnachan of Kaimai Fresh in the Waikato. Asparagus also features as the vegetable of the month. If you don't get the magazine and would like a copy please let [Karen](#) know and she'll add you to the distribution list.

Congratulations to Geoff Lewis who was inducted into the Horowhenua Hall of Fame in October. Great recognition of your achievements Geoff – well done!



Below are links to some reason articles on asparagus published in local and international media FYI:

Water jet cutting technology:

<https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9162520/water-jet-cutting-of-asparagus-allows-minimal-waste/>

Geoff Lewis on labour & automation:

https://issuu.com/ruralnewsgroup/docs/hn_7_november_2019

Export to China of Australian asparagus:

<https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9162074/this-year-s-exports-of-australian-asparagus-to-china-are-limited/>

NZ asparagus season:

<https://www.freshplaza.com/article/9161178/new-zealanders-developing-a-taste-for-purple-asparagus/>

Asparagus Commodity Levy 2019 /20

Levy invoices for the 2019/20 season were sent out late September. The levy rate is \$120 per planted hectare (excl. GST). Along with the invoice we are asking for information on the production block including age and hectares, and number of people you employ to help with providing aggregated industry information and forecasting. The invoices are due for payment by 30th November 2019. Thanks to those growers who have responded with their information already. If you have any queries on the invoice please [contact us](#).

Climate Change legislation and Farm Environment Plans

The Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Bill was passed unanimously in Parliament last week. It establishes targets to ensure that New Zealand meets its Paris Agreement commitment to limit warming to no more than 1.5 degrees.

These targets include a net zero target for long lived gases, including nitrous oxide from fertiliser carbon dioxide from the fossil fuels used for heating greenhouses and transporting produce. There is also a separate target for methane.

The Bill establishes the Climate Change Commission, which has the responsibility for establishing national emissions budgets to be managed within the Emissions Trading Scheme. At the same time, the Government is consulting on the Climate Change Response (Emissions Trading Reform) Amendment Bill. The Bill gives effect to decisions to price agricultural livestock emissions at farm level, and **fertiliser emissions at processor level, from 2025.**

At the same time, the Government has endorsed the Primary Sector Climate Change Commitment (He waka eke Noa). This commitment sees the primary sector leading the development of farm level emissions reporting. It commits all growers and farmers to knowing their emissions by 2022. **By 2025, all growers must have an audited Farm Environment Plan in place and there must be a system for farm-level accounting and reporting of agricultural emissions.**

Horticulture New Zealand is running a series of workshops on Farm Environment Plans and have an introduction to Farm Environment Plans and the New Zealand Good Agricultural Practice (NZGAP) Environment Management System (EMS) framework workshop in Pukekohe on Wednesday 27 November, between 5.30pm and 8pm, at the Pukekohe Indian Hall. If you're interested attending or would like further information please contact [Karen](#).

Further workshops are planned around the country over the next year and once the schedule is known we will provide details. Workshops in Levin started a couple of months back due to the area's consideration as a sensitive catchment and Tendertips are involved with this as a case study for the asparagus industry. We will be sharing information learnt from this with asparagus growers as it progresses over the next few months.

Upcoming meetings

Next NZAC executive committee meeting will be held by teleconference on 29th November, followed by a full board meeting in late January.

If you have any feedback and content suggestions for the newsletter or meetings please contact [Karen](#) or a member of the Executive team.

New Zealand Asparagus Council Executive Members 2019/20

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