



on the vine

The 2011 OPAC Grower Newsletter

Issue 1

from the Managing Director

Firstly welcome to the 2011 year! It is hard to believe but based on our current fruit monitoring and in spite of all the drama around Psa, we may well be packing in the first week of March. My comment regarding the "in spite of Psa" is not to be flippant but to remind all of us of the job at hand-picking and packing the 2011 crop.

There are some very nice crops of Green and Gold kiwifruit amongst OPAC's supply in 2011 and the OPAC team are focused on maximising the potential for these crops. Current crop estimates indicate a big lift in Gold volumes for OPAC Growers and the industry. We will have a reduced Green crop but a steep increase in the amount of New Varieties coming through this year with around xx trays estimated to be packed by OPAC.

It is very pleasing to see as the numbers emerge from our competitors that OPAC Growers can be very proud of their orchard performance compared to industry averages this last year. Comparing OGR results is always challenging but I would suggest that in most cases our Growers can be very comfortable with how 2010 results have emerged. I hear some of you challenging me that OPAC needs another good year on Gold to make up for the last couple but with Green we now have some very consistent upper quartile results over recent years, measured by low fruit loss and low repacking costs.

As you read this newsletter OPAC's harvest contract will be released with a focus on maintaining costs and getting more efficient in our processing systems. More importantly OPAC Management are focused on repeating the inventory management

levels of 2010 which helped generate the great financial and operational performance.

This year already looks to be shaping up to deliver more variability and inventory challenges than normal from climatic circumstances let alone issues that may come about from Psa segregation and a large volume of fruit to pick, pack and ship. This year also looks to be more challenging for canopy management, dry matter accumulation and maturity development but the lessons learnt in the last few years will still work to help us get the best result possible.

Craig Thompson

from Post Harvest

With the season almost upon us we are busy recruiting for seasonal staff to work at both Factory Road and Gisborne sites. With an increased number of applications this year we have been running interviews to ensure that we get the best people for the jobs.

Gisborne has been busy putting the sizer back together after it underwent a complete clean and service. This will undoubtedly be a positive for the Gisborne production line.

As Craig has already mentioned the possibility of packing in Week 9 (the first week of March) has kept us on our toes to ensure that as soon as that fruit is ready to be harvested our facilities can process it.

We look forward to the 2011 packing season and the challenges that it will bring to ensure we are getting the best out of the inventory for our Growers and for OPAC

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Key dates

**ZESPRI Roadshow
Thursday 3rd March
Bushmere Arms
5pm**

**ZESPRI Roadshow
Friday 4th March
Opotiki Citizens Club
10am-12noon**

**OGL Meeting
Wednesday 9th March
OPAC Opotiki
9am-12 noon**

**Grower Update
Wednesday 30th March
OPAC Opotiki
4pm-6pm**

Whats happening on Orchard in February

The biggest impact that you as a grower can have on your final fruit quality now is the level of canopy management that you attain.

Keeping an open canopy with good light levels getting through will help dry matter accumulation and will also improve the quality of the cane that you have chosen to keep as next years fruiting cane.

With the summer rains we have had the canopies have thrown a lot of vegetative growth, the males in particular have had a lot of growth in the last few weeks. I would recommend going through your canopies and breaking out any new growth on both males and females, if opposing female then focus on that centre metre. If your males have spurred nicely then I would break out any new shoots, if not then consider crush tipping some of the shorter canes so that you will still have enough floral wood for next year.

Some early testing that we have done this season has shown that dry matter in the eastern bay orchards is behind

2011 Harvest Contract

OPAC management and your grower directors on OGL spent the early part of the year looking at OPAC's 2010 charges and OGR performance compared to our Post Harvest competitors, and we are pleased to be able to deliver a 2011 contract and OGL policies that hold costs steady and overall contain very little change from last year. Key points that will have been presented in detail at the pre harvest briefings by the time you read this are:

- Change to the Gold pool split now 50/50. No change in the Green
- The announced \$0.25 increase in the statutory minimum wage will be absorbed by OPAC
- There are no changes to OPAC charges for picking, base packing, reject surcharges, logistics or administration
- Moving to a flat base Coolstorage charge for all harvest dates and varieties

where it was at this time last year. This doesn't come as a surprise given the amount of rain that we have had this summer, majority of the growth has gone into the canopy. This makes it important to use any tools we have to maximise dry matter accumulation. Some ideas would be to minimise irrigation from mid February, girdling if not already done, keeping canopies open.

All indications are that Zespri will be procuring very few, if any size 42 gold this season. This could have a big impact on your reject levels and therefore packing price if you have substantial numbers of smaller fruit. The best option is to thin all smaller fruit off in cosmetic thinning round prior to picking. If you would like to discuss this further or would like to know a weight to thin to then Mark or myself are available to go through this with you.

New Varieties:

Hopefully all new varieties have got good leaders established and are well on the way to developing a good canopy for next season. Keep an eye on

- Increasing the OPAC Supply Incentives for weeks 16-18 harvest

Unfortunately as we are a few weeks earlier getting the contracts prepared this year the bin transport charges are still being negotiated. We are hopeful of maintaining 2010 costs and we will let you know as soon as possible whether there will be any changes in this area.

Mark and Brendan will be visiting growers with the new seasons contract in the next couple of weeks and will start to collate your information with respect to girdling practices, CA/BS storage options, Gisborne packing, and pool options. If you have any questions on any aspects of the contract please give Ian or Brendan a call.

any pest pressure building up in these blocks. Even though passion-vine hopper wont do a lot to your developing canopy if left it will allow the population to build and often the blocks that we are converting are adjacent to producing vines. As they are non-producing plants you aren't restricted to what you can apply to control insects but be mindful of any over spray that may carry to producing blocks.

It would be a good idea to start training the male plants to a spur wood style. Any vigorous growth can be pruned back or crush tipped if not already too long, button stubs can be useful to develop spurs.

Another job that needs to be done if you haven't already is to remove the tape from around the graft. With the humid conditions that we have had there are rots starting to develop under the tape.

Industry Meetings

From Tuesday 1 March through to Friday 11 March, CEO Lain Jager, the grower services team and various directors and executive staff members will travel around the country to discuss the latest hot topics with growers and industry members.

A market summary, including a global situation and foreign exchange outlook, will be followed by operational and new varieties updates. Other timely topics, such as changes to the loyalty agreement, the United States Marketing Strategy and a brief overview of the 2010 grower survey will also be outlined and discussed.

Kiwifruit Vine Health and New Zealand Kiwifruit Growers Incorporated representatives will also be updating and informing growers of their latest news and priorities. All industry members are encouraged to attend to keep informed and participate in the discussion.

Gisborne Thursday 3rd March Bushmere Arms @ 5pm
Opotiki Friday 4th March Opotiki Citizens Hall @ 10am

Grower Pool Update

	Gold January	Gold YTD
Average	\$0.30	\$9.07
Highest	\$0.40	\$11.62
Lowest	\$0.21	\$7.09

	Green January	Green YTD
Average	\$0.15	\$4.07
Highest	\$0.24	\$5.63
Lowest	\$0.08	\$2.36

Industry Updates

KVH Update

Continued orchard monitoring is critical

Growers and post-harvest operators across all regions of New Zealand are urged to remain vigilant in monitoring orchards for early symptoms of Psa infection and to report through to KVH.

If primary symptoms are identified for the first time, photos should be taken and a Symptom Monitoring Sheet completed (available at www.kvh.org.nz or www.zespricanopy.com) and emailed to contactcanopy@zespri.com.

Orchard hygiene practices on all New Zealand kiwifruit orchards have been stepped up to ensure we protect orchards from the inadvertent spread

of Psa. Growers are recommended to adopt more stringent orchard hygiene practices when conducting normal operations. This means that equipment and vehicles leaving grower properties are subject to wash down procedures and materials and personnel must be checked to ensure there is no plant material being transferred.

Sprays help to prevent Psa spread

The application of protective copper-based sprays or Serenade Max (a biological spray) can help to reduce the inoculum load on Psa-affected orchards and minimise the spread of Psa. Sprays are best applied prior to periods of heavy rain and wind.

Growers in or near the Psa Priority Zone are urged to be proactive in minimising any potential new infection:

- Orchards with the Italian-like isolate are advised to apply spray to minimise spread; and
- Orchards without the Italian-like isolate are advised to apply protective sprays.

No Justified Approval is required for copper-based sprays or Serenade Max applications in the Psa Priority Zone. Justified Approval is required for orchards outside of the Zone, although it will not be unreasonably

withheld. All growers must record the application of spray in their ZESPRI Electronic Spray Diary.

For the latest Technical Update about Summer Protective Sprays for Psa go to www.kvh.org.nz or The Canopy.

Need further information?

- Information for growers can be found at www.kvh.org.nz or www.zespricanopy.com.
- General grower enquiries should be directed to ZESPRI Grower Contact Centre (0800 155 355 or contactcanopy@zespri.com).
- Psa affected growers should contact Dave Smith, Psa Grower Liaison Manager (027 501 9666 or dave.smith@kvh.org.nz) or your dedicated Case Manager.

We are going to start a bulletin board section in our monthly newsletter if you would like to advertise items for sale, items that you are wanting to buy or services that you offer please email the details through before the 10th of every month and we will publish them in our bulletin board section in "on the vine". Email Katie on katie.storey@opac.co.nz



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