

# on the vine

## The 2011 OPAC Grower Newsletter

Issue 5

### from the Managing Director

This week sees the end of an "interesting" harvest season. With a June 17th finish we are a week behind where we thought we would end up and this of course is largely due to the incredible amount of rain that we have experienced. Despite the rain we are still comfortable with how the fruit has handled and are still expecting some good results from the OPAC 2011 crop.

Taking the weather out of the equation the harvest season has gone very smoothly, largely as a result of the well constructed and executed harvest process and the large amount of communication that occurred between all parties. Thank you to all OPAC growers for your patience as we all worked around the constraints of weather and fruit maturity to pick your orchards.

Now that harvest is finished the emphasis moves to winter pruning to set a good foundation for the 2012 crop. As we all know PSA is an ever present threat now, OPAC will continue to implement rigorous protocols on orchard to minimise risk – this will include painting all pruning cuts and post pruning copper sprays so unfortunately there will be higher costs to running our orchards from now on.

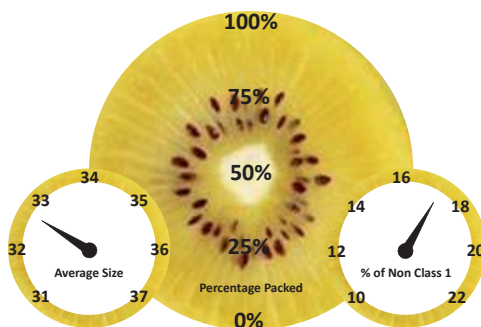
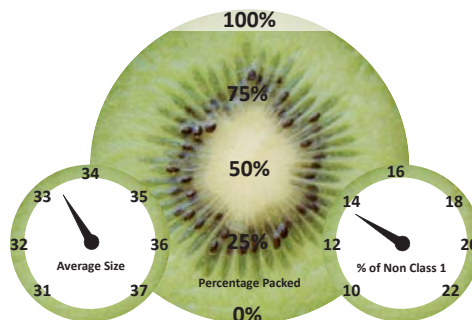
Also the tenders are about to open for the Zespri New Varieties. As you may be aware at this stage Zespri are releasing 200 ha Gold3 and 200 ha Green14. It seems that despite the excellent sensory tests there remains a few questions around certain characteristics of G9 (like shrivel) so Zespri is seeking to gain a better understanding from 2011 storage trials before possibly releasing more hectares in February 2012. If you do have any questions about

this year's tenders or the process please contact Mark who will be able to help you with this.

Early information back from the markets suggests the fruit is selling reasonably well in the tough economic environment in major markets of Europe and also recovering well in earthquake and tsunami hit Japan. In August Zespri will release the first forecast for the 2011 crop which will give a better picture of how things are progressing. Once this forecast has been released OPAC will prepare your detailed OGR forecasts and make them available through the OPAC website.

Craig Thompson

### OPAC Dashboard



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### Key dates

**OPAC Grower Update**  
Wednesday 29 June @4pm  
OPAC Opotiki

**OGL Meeting**  
Wednesday 13 July @ 9am  
OPAC Opotiki

**OPAC Grower Update**  
Wednesday 27 July @4pm  
OPAC Opotiki

End of Week 23	Gold		Green	
	2011	2010	2011	2010
OPAC Packed	1,824,461	1,350,000	2,702,997	3,228,296
OPAC Avg Size	32.51	33.23	33.29	33.47
Industry Packed	30,167,141	21,411,385	79,279,413	75,707,514
Industry Avg Size	32.43	33.06	33.27	33.47

## Technical Update

Winter pruning is the single biggest influence that you can have on your next seasons crop. Winter pruning is all about:

- Vine structure
- Bud targets – consistency
- Cane and spur selection
- Tying down – consistency

Just by maximising your bud numbers does not mean that you will maximise your crop, bud quality is more important than quantity.

Research has shown that buds on late grown canes are up to 50% less fruitful than early season growth and 36% less fruitful on canes that have been shaded over summer, as opposed to those that have been in full sunlight. A range of between 25-30 buds per m<sup>2</sup> should be your target, reduce the buds to this range if they are too high by removing the weakest wood and adjusting spacing. A suggested cane spacing would be around 35cm for Hayward and 30-40cm in Hort16A dependant on the quality of wood. We are seeing generally thinner diameter wood this year with closer internodes. There will be a balance that you will need to try and achieve between trying to fill the canopy and ensuring that you will not be trying to crop off weak wood. This may mean having to tie the weaker cane in to give canopy coverage and more leaf area but then removing the flower buds in spring from anything under pencil thickness. Winter bud quality is going to be especially important if we end up with a mild winter.

## Opotiki KVH Action Group

The Opotiki KVH Action Group has been formed. It comprises of Growers, who supply both locally and outside the region, and representatives from the three local Packhouses. The members of this group:

### Opotiki Psa Regional Group

Adrian Gault (Chairperson)	027 225 5587
Ian Craig	027 562 8819
Jeff Enckevort	027 499 3499
Ray Sharp	027 476 1642
Stuart Rentoal	027 321 1506
Craig Thompson	021 595 184
Doug Brown	027 244 2525
Kim Woolsey	027 488 2608
Tony Hawken	027 497 1796

### Technical Team

Brendan McQuade	027 536 8946
Ross Steele	027 479 4224
Doug Brown	

Over the coming weeks there will be a number of written and verbal communications on ways of achieving the group's main objective to: **"Keep Psa V out of Opotiki"**

## OPAC Harvest Images



## Technical-Psa Update

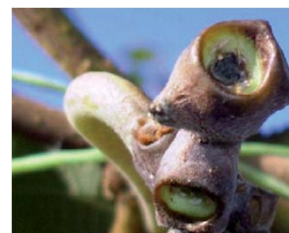
### *Infection Risk – damaged canes, leaves and fruit stalk scars*

A protectant copper spray programme after harvest and prior to commencement of leaf fall is recommended. A summary of various products is provided in Table 1. At least one protectant spray should be applied, as soon as practically possible, after harvest to protect fruit stalk wounds. The relative risk of fruit stalk infection is unknown. However, fruit stalks are an easy spray target and spraying should be considered, especially if no other Psa spray programme has been in place throughout the season. This spray also provides the opportunity to protect leaves from infection, however achieving good spray coverage of the entire canopy later in the season is challenging. A combination of aerial and ground spraying is likely to be required, especially in thick canopies or strung blocks. Spray coverage should be assessed prior to the commencement of spraying. Coverage of the underside of leaves is especially important as this is where infection through the stomata occurs. Copper based sprays are relatively “sticky” so repeat applications are unlikely to be required if good coverage is achieved.



### *Infection Risk – All leaf scars*

Leaf fall is considered the highest infection risk period for vascular infection of Psa. Prolonged wet periods increase this risk. Spray practices should aim to ensure all leaf scars are covered with a persistent copper spray as soon as practical after the leaf abscises. This will require multiple applications of copper. Key techniques to manage this include:



- Ideally wait until some natural leaf fall is occurring.
- Apply copper sulphate to hasten defoliation. Typical rates are >12kg Copper sulphate per ha with high water rates (> 2000l/ha).
- Apply defoliation sprays when a prolonged dry period is expected. Multiple applications may be required in thick or strung canopies.
- Apply a persistent copper spray once a significant number of leaf scars are exposed. Multiple applications may be required to ensure complete coverage. As a guide consider sprays at 50% and 100% leaf drop, apply additional sprays if leaf drop is extended, especially under high risk situations.
- Presently there is no comprehensive data on the relative effectiveness of persistence of different copper products on kiwifruit wood. Research is underway to answer this. All registered copper sprays are likely to be effective. The key is to focus on good coverage.

An alternative approach suitable for orchardists with strung canopies is to undertake cutting off the old fruiting canopy and painting all pruning wounds immediately. Canopy can then be removed, mulched and sprays applied to the strung cane, either while it is still erected or once dropped if this is possible. This technique removes the need to attempt to cover all old leaf scars.

### *Infection Risk-Pruning Cuts*

The relative risk of pruning cuts to Psa infection is unknown. However, good horticultural practice dictates sensible precautions should be undertaken.

#### Approaches:

- Apply a protectant copper prior to pruning.
- Ideally only prune when wood is dry to touch and rain is not imminent, and tie down as you prune (implementing this will depend on labour supply and risk profile).
- Ensure equipment is sharp and appropriate tools are used for the size of cuts, to avoid bruising of remaining wood.
- Prune to minimise the need for summer intervention (refer to the Winter Canopy Management Bulletin to mitigate Psa infection).
- Sterilise tools between orchards. If possible between vines (refer to Table 2 for sterilising agents).
- Sealants should be used on all saw cuts and large leader cuts (refer to Table 3 for sealant options).
- Apply a protective copper spray as soon as practical after vines are pruned. Be aware of a negative interaction with HC (refer to Compatibility section).
- Finely mulch all pruning to aid rapid breakdown.



Orchardists in high risk situations should consider spraying all wounds with a copper based product immediately after pruning. Achieving this objective needs to be balanced with costs and staff resource. In lower risk situations, applications should be made before the next wet period. The need for, and effectiveness of, various wound protectants is presently unknown. The key consideration is to apply a protective barrier prior to a potential infection period. The risk of infection from the mulching of non-symptomatic but infected materials is unknown. In high risk areas where widespread but only leaf spots symptoms have been seen, considerations should be given to removal of all pruned material as this material may be infected.

## Industry Updates

### Budwood Precautions for 2011

Psa spreads through the movement of infected plant material, therefore ZESPRI are taking all precautions to remove the risk of spread through new variety budwood.

All budwood collected for 2011 will undergo a process to ensure clean budwood is distributed to growers. Budwood will not be taken from any Psa-V or Psa-LV orchards or from within the Psa Priority Zones. All orchards where significant graftwood collection will occur are being looked at now for plant health and sites will be Psa tested prior to leaf drop.

There is full traceability of all budwood distributed by ZESPRI to-date on Gold3, Gold9 and Green14 back to each mother plant at the clonal blocks and Plant & Food Research. Growers are asked to only use their own budwood on their own orchard. It is a breach of the ZESPRI Kiwifruit Variety Licence to share or trade budwood or other plant material. ZESPRI will make budwood available to all owners who are successful in the upcoming allocation process.

All budwood will be collected and separated by KPIN, area and variety. All budwood collected regionally will be given back to that region first and the remainder brought back to the Mount Maunganui coolstore, in an industrial area away from orchards. During collection, hygiene practices will be in place for all ZESPRI budwood team members and their vehicles, as advised by KVH. All budwood will be dipped on orchard in a bio-cide product prior to processing at the coolstore. Collection, distribution and coolstorage for the regions will be managed at various sites throughout the country. All budwood from the western

Bay of Plenty will be processed at the Mt Maunganui coolstore. Each KPIN will be processed separately and full wash down and cleaning procedures will be followed.

It is anticipated that budwood from other regions will be required to meet 2011 demand in the Bay of Plenty. Treating the budwood in a water heat treatment to kill internal pathogens is also being investigated. Details and results should be available in the next couple of weeks and will be updated on The Canopy and in the June Kiwiflier.

### 2010 Season Boosts Returns to Growers

A strong 2010 kiwifruit season has lifted total payments to growers above season forecasts, with a particular highlight being an increase in returns to GREEN kiwifruit growers.

ZESPRI total returns to growers in 2010/11 improved from \$849.0 million to \$883.3 million compared to the prior year, an increase of four percent, with average per hectare. Orchard Gate Returns to ZESPRI® GREEN growers increasing nine percent to \$32,234. Net global kiwifruit sales increased one percent to \$1.511 billion in 2010/11, despite the global volume of ZESPRI® Kiwifruit sold falling one percent in the same period.

ZESPRI's Chairman John Loughlin said the results were particularly pleasing when considering the challenges facing kiwifruit growers. "A stuttering global economic recovery, rising oil prices, seasonal challenges in New Zealand, the impact of Psa on ZESPRI's orchards in Italy and the confirmation of Psa in New Zealand, meant a tough environment in 2010/11," John said. "Against this backdrop, delivering increased total returns to growers is a testament to the New Zealand kiwifruit industry's ability to keep innovating and

keep delivering."

"The increased return to GREEN kiwifruit growers was a highlight because average orchard yields were down by four percent, freight costs due to rising oil prices were up five percent and the New Zealand dollar strengthened through the year." "The industry is benefiting from strong growth in Asian markets particularly China and Southeast Asia. John said ZESPRI's net profit had fallen significantly, from \$25.9 million to \$7.3 million. The fall was primarily due to contributing \$12.9 million to the response to Psa in New Zealand, and increasing the loyalty payment to growers from 15 cents per tray to 25 cents per tray. The Board has announced an intention to declare a final dividend of four cents per share to be paid in August 2011.



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