



on the vine

The 2011 OPAC Grower Newsletter

Issue 10

from the Managing Director

Well it seems the last month of warm dry weather has helped suppress the immediate damage and spread of Psa in a number of our orchards. Happily for all our Te Kaha, Gisborne and Hawkes Bay Growers they have also survived another month with Psa free status.

I am pleased to announce that Les Todd has been appointed to the position of Production Manager for OPAC Gisborne. Les will head up the Gisborne post harvest team for the 2012 Kiwifruit season. Les is not new to the Gisborne region, he has lived there for many years working in roles in the horticultural industry including significant experience in the kiwifruit industry. Les returns to Gisborne after a period of time with a large kiwifruit supplier in the western Bay of Plenty, where his responsibilities included Inventory Manager and Assistant Site Manager. OPAC is pleased to have this permanent position filled and in addition to the post harvest role Les will be available to our local growers to ensure we provide our total OPAC team support for Gisborne Kiwifruit growers.

It is very interesting that the weather conditions do seem to have helped slow Psa movement within orchards and districts. My recent trip to Italy certainly confirmed the huge help a long hot summer had been in Italy. Growers in Italy were much more positive but time will tell as autumn and winter pass and we see what happens next spring.

The local KVH group continues to meet regularly and discuss topics surrounding Psa. At this stage the discussion is around whether the current "bans" on plant material movement are still appropriate. This group is also working with members of the community to look into what is needed in regards to a support group for the region.

Spraying is still our best way in controlling inoculum levels and the group strongly recommends the use of coppers and/or biologicals. It was also good news to see Actiguard registered post flowering but a caution must be noted about continued applications of copper and Actiguard having negative impact on fruit sizing.

I would like to remind all growers about the Pastoral and Financial meetings scheduled for this week; these are jointly run by KVH and NZKGI and will provide information about the sort of support that is available.

Picking up on my trip offshore again, it was great to meet with the Zespri staff offshore and see how OPAC fruit had been received this year. The last vessel into Europe went very well at industry level and OPAC fruit was performing excellently.

The low fruit loss on shore for Green and Gold has been reflected by excellent offshore results as well. We will be presenting updates at this month's Grower meetings but you can be sure our performance is in the top tier of industry which will help Green growers to offset some of the lower Green OGR's this season as published recently by Zespri.

I have been involved in some discussions by a review group made up of Zespri, Suppliers and KGI leaders to find ways to save more costs in the supply chain, even more pressing given the state of Green grower's finances with current returns. Although there have been no radical findings, there seems to be agreement that more can be done to reduce costs around fruit loss. OPAC Growers have enjoyed some of these benefits already with our own internal changes made in the last 2 years but if the industry adopts processes that improve where these costs are borne (not all by the national pool) then I have no doubt OPAC growers will benefit.

Out on orchard the Gold crops are growing well and Green is now almost all at full flowering or fruit set. This is the key time of year to ensure timeliness of work programs and ensuring that we make the most of the early fruit sizing period.

Looking forward to catching up with you all during the next weeks of Christmas events and regular calendar updates.

Craig Thompson

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Key dates

**Gisborne Grower Xmas Dinner
Thursday 8th December
Gisborne Wine Centre**

**OGL Meeting
Wednesday 14th December
OPAC Opotiki
9am**

**Opotiki Christmas BBQ
Friday 16th December
Opotiki Surf Club**

***We wish all our growers a
very Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year!***



Technical Update

As we move into summer canopy management there are a few key points to keep in mind.

- Ideally spray before and after significant rain events (greater than 24 hrs continued leaf wetness)
- Maintain calendar cover of biological products no more than 21 days apart (even in fine weather conditions), apply a food source such as seaweed or fish oil with a biological.
- Target spraying around canopy management events and target canopy management around weather events (do not undertake canopy management during wet weather)
- Handgun copper onto wounds such as male pruning, girdling etc, reapply up to a week later if wet weather is forecasted
- Hand spray Serenade Max, or similar biological, onto pruning wounds from ripping or cutting of fresh season shoots
- Consider usage of Nordox or Kocide Opti once past first 70 days rapid fruit expansion and after sizing programs are completed
- Biological products are largely unproven and therefore a mix of products is sensible (Serenade Max, Triple X, Plant Shield etc)
- Actiguard has registration for up to 70 days pre-harvest (note that this can affect fruit size)
- Try to minimise the density of the canopy to enhance spray coverage



Grower Pool Update

	Gold November	Gold YTD
Average	\$0.90	\$6.57
Highest	\$1.34	\$10.20
Lowest	\$0.48	\$3.38

	Green November	Green YTD
Average	\$0.51	\$2.68
Highest	\$1.06	\$4.34
Lowest	\$0.20	\$1.38

Pastoral and Financial Psa Meeting

KVH and NZKGI are hosting a pastoral and financial support meeting for all growers and interested parties.

Date: Friday 2 December
Time: 10am -12noon
Venue: Opotiki Senior Citizens Hall

OPAC encourages all growers to attend to find out what services and support is available.

Global GAP Audits

We would like to get the GAP audits completed by Christmas.

To ensure any follow up actions from the audits also meet this timeline, they will need to be carried out over the next couple of weeks.

Linzi (ext 724) will be contacting Gisborne growers and Janet (ext 718) the Opotiki growers to arrange a suitable time.



Psa Update- 30th November 2011

This week we have received 21 new Psa-V positive results, bringing the total number of orchards with Psa-V to 889. Most of the new Psa-V results this week have been in the Te Puke and Tauranga regions.

- 79% of NZ's kiwifruit hectares are in a Priority Zone
- 35% of NZ's kiwifruit hectares are on an orchard with a Psa-V positive result – 50% of NZ Gold hectares and 32% of NZ Green hectares.

Psa-V positive KPINs by region

- 3 in the Franklin region
- 10 in the Waihi region
- 11 in the Katikati region
- 52 in the Tauranga region
- 748 in the Te Puke region
- 42 in the Whakatane region
- 23 in the Opotiki region



2012 Calendars

Thank you to those growers who submitted photos for the 2012 calendar. These will be available for growers in the next couple of weeks

Industry Updates

Latest Psa Knowledge Delivered to Growers

November's grower meetings – both the nationwide grower roadshows and the latest Psa Research and Development (R&D) update in Te Puke – were well attended. Topics discussed during the grower roadshows included: the progress of end of season sales and how that will impact on returns – it was expected GREEN returns will hold and GOLD returns may have some upside – how Psa and seasonal conditions will impact on next year's crop forecast, the global economic outlook and the foreign exchange outlook.

ZESPRI CEO Lain Jager also began an initial discussion with growers on possible pathways out of Psa, based both on observations of the disease in Te Puke and its impact on different varieties, and the growing knowledge of Psa learnt from the research and development programme.

Lain was very careful to stress to growers that knowledge of Psa was still incomplete, and any decisions on possible pathways had to be made with the understanding that much still had to be learned about the disease.

Further information will be provided to the industry after the ZESPRI December board meeting, which will consider a KVH/ZESPRI management recommendation to bulk up plant material to enable grafting in the 2012 June – August grafting period. The Board will also consider a recommendation to bulk up rootstocks and males over winter as a longer term option.

The latest Psa R&D update included the most recent observations on tolerance levels among different cultivars, latest information on Actigard™, the Psa product testing programme, risk of Psa from girdling and Psa R&D information from offshore research.

Plant & Food Research's Stuart Kay said

ongoing observations both in the lab and on the orchard showed there were cultivars and rootstocks showing good tolerance to Psa. While the findings were promising, the challenge remained to identify a cultivar which was both tolerant and has the right agronomic and consumer traits, such as yield, vigour, fruit quality, flower timing and pollen viability.

Research into the Psa risk created by girdling showed that while there was a potential for Psa to access via callusing wounds, it was no greater than from other practices such as pruning. Therefore, growers had to make their own choices on the balance between the risks and benefits of girdling. Good hygiene practices such as girdling during dry weather, not girdling stressed vines and using protectants would reduce the risk of Psa from girdling.

Joel Vanneste from Plant & Food Research provided an update on the bacteriophage work, saying it was unfortunate that the first round of testing had not worked but that round two would get underway shortly using different conditions to see if that generated a positive result.

Growers were also updated on the latest results from the Psa product testing programme. Several hundred products have been tested in the laboratory with new results being loaded onto the KVH website regularly. The next stage of the greenhouse testing will consider the impacts of different inoculum levels, multiple applications, different timing of applications and using a combination of products providing different modes of action. A number of products have now progressed to orchard trials.

Growers heard that Actigard™ has been approved for use post-fruitset, but only up until 70 days prior to harvest (refer to www.kvh.org.nz for more information). Latest research on Actigard™ indicated

that it does reduce leaf spot spread but doesn't appear to reduce longer-term progression to secondary symptoms.

Growers also heard that they need to carefully follow application guidelines because Actigard™ has the potential to reduce fruit size and delay harvest by 4-6 days. John Burke provided an update on a recent meeting with bankers, saying the banks were encouraged at how far the industry had progressed with identifying potential future pathways forward. A video of the meeting can be found on www.kvh.org.nz. For more information on the Psa R&D programme and latest updates on its progress visit www.kvh.org.nz/research_development

KVH and NZKGI Pastoral and Financial Seminars

Kiwifruit Vine Health (KVH) and New Zealand Kiwifruit Growers Incorporated (NZKGI) have organised a series of nine Pastoral and Financial Seminars for the Bay of Plenty Region for the week commencing Monday 28 November 2011. Topics of discussion on the programme are:

- Introduction and Overview
- Explanation of IRD position, Financial Tools and Support that are available
- Recognising and Coping with Stress
- Pastoral Support and Network
- General Discussion

The schedule of meetings is listed below with a more detailed copy of the programme available for download from NZKGI's Website. Read more here.

If you have any further queries please contact Tania Swain at KVH on 574 7588 or Toll Free 0800 665 825 or email Tania on Tania.Swain@kvh.org.nz.

Edgecumbe - 3pm and 6pm at the Awakeri War Memorial Hall Thursday 1 December

Opotiki - 10am at the Opotiki Senior Citizens Hall Friday 2 December



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