[°]Together. Stronger.

NEWS FROM MG MARKETING

FROM THE BOARD.



SUPP

Bruce Irvine Chair

A MOMENT WITH NEWLY ELECTED CHAIR, BRUCE IRVINE

B ruce Irvine will be known to most as a longstanding member of the MG Board of Directors. During his tenure, he has worked alongside other Board members and management to guide the Cooperative to its position of current strength. In his new role as Board Chair, he has a clear and compelling message around what's required to ensure the continued success of the Co-operative and delivering sustained returns for the grower shareholders.

"Today's consumer is really defining our business like never before. Of greatest impact is the expectation that "seasonal produce" is no longer seasonal and will be available in all seasons, 365 days of the year, together with the ongoing quest for new eating experiences. Both present significant challenges given our traditional growing model and the associated impact of climate change on our growing seasons, and the long lead-in times around developing new varieties. But ultimately, we exist to satisfy the consumer, and satisfying the consumer is a job never done!

"MG's single most important focus must therefore be on ensuring we are assisting our growers in meeting these customer demands by being an integrated part of their business, providing support around planning, marketing insight, delivering their product in line with customer expectations and the development of fresh IP. The up-shot of doing all these well will be the competitive advantage that ensures the ultimate sustainability of our growers, our customers, and therefore ultimately, our Co-operative. And we can only do this by continuing to employ the best people in the industry.

"We need to be creative, identifying new opportunities for our shareholders and customers, take controlled risks and remain passionate about what we do. Our success in satisfying the consumer will be determined by our ability to:

- 1. Align 100% to our growers.
- 2. Continue to develop IP that will both address grower challenges and open up new categories.
- 3. Attract the right people into the industry. People who are philosophically aligned with the grower, understand the challenges facing our customers, and have the skills to deliver that game-changing innovation.

"Horticulture is not an industry for the faint-hearted, but then again, it never has been. Our business has gone from strength to strength over the past 95 years and if we focus on these three areas for the now, then the outlook for the Co-operative, our customers and the consumer is nothing but bright."

PROCUREMENT.

A CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR

Procurement should not merely be about buying and selling.

While matching supply with demand is a key function of MG's procurement team, their role goes far beyond a transactional one.





Our emphasis is on developing strong relationships that allow for mutually beneficial outcomes for growers and customers that will support the sustainability of growing operations as they ride the highs and lows of the market.

e are fortunate to have a team of individuals within the procurement team who truly believe in the importance of this philosophy. Their dedication to growers is evident to all. It is always disappointing when one of the team chooses to follow a different path but reassuring when their expertise is not lost to the industry. After 24 years with MG, Richard Cameron has left the Co-operative, to join 45 South, New Zealand's largest cherry grower and packer, as Marketing Manager. This is absolute testimony to the value that Richard has brought to 45 South's business as a member of MG's procurement team. Richard will be an outstanding asset to the company. We wish him the very best with his new role and look forward to building on our existing relationship.

Andrew Cross, formerly marketing representative for MG's Christchurch branch,

has been appointed as Richard's replacement. Andrew brings 20 years within the industry to the role, the past ten years of which has been with MG. Andrew's portfolio will include responsibility for cherries, citrus, South Island potatoes, carrots and onions.

Scott Mason, formerly marketing representative for MG's Christchurch branch, has also been seconded into the procurement team. With more than 27 years in the business, his knowledge will be an invaluable asset to growers. He will assume responsibility for procurement of a number of categories; specifically tomatoes, capsicums, eggplant, telecucumbers and kumara. Scott will also retain responsibility for selling tomatoes and avocados to MG's key accounts within Christchurch.

CONIFER PETE'S









eter Collinge has been in the business since the 1970s and has learned a trick or two about what works and what doesn't when it comes to providing quality consumer-focussed Summerfruit.

Peter started-out in the industry working with his father on the family's property which originally grew conifer trees, and explains the evolution of the business name into the current Conifer Pete's. He took over full management in the early '90s and has built the operation into a 22-hectare business – now exclusively growing Summerfruit (peaches, nectarines, apricots and plums), and employing up to 16 people in season.

"I've always been striving for three things: quality, quality and quality. For me, I want 100% stand-out produce and that begins with attention to detail throughout the process of being an orchardist. This is a multi-stage production business: from variety and stock selection to pruning and thinning, irrigation and fertilisation, plant protection and harvest – if you miss a step, you suffer in the end product," Peter explained. "With some aspects of the process there simply is no better alternative than doing things by hand and by experienced eye – and this is why we took the decision to not use grading machines for peaches and nectarines, for instance. With hand-grading we aim to get the fruit as close as possible to perfect."

"Growers can have all the ducks in a line for producing quality product, but one thing that cannot be controlled is the weather, and there has been a definite change in weather patterns in the 40 years that I have been in the business. Back in 1986 hail really impacted our crops – and I take a deep breath every time we encounter any hail storms."

Peter's family has been supplying MG since the late 70's and sees this as a mutually beneficial partnership, where the seller sells, and the grower grows: "we work together and get the best result from, and for, each other," Peter said.

"MG has also given us really superb IP Summerfruit varieties, which are unique to MG and would now make up 65% of volume of what we produce. Out of the 35 varieties we grow, 14 are MG exclusive. As a grower, MG IP Summerfruit varieties have the best taste and yield. For us game changing varieties include Sweet Dream, Early, Mid and Late Star, Purple Majesty."

But Peter and his team are still tuned into direct voice-of-consumer: "We have gate sales on the property, which allows us to have contact with the end consumer. I will prick up my ears when folks comment on the look and taste of various varieties, and this helps us choose which varieties we continue to grow," he added.



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SCOTTFRESH



en Scott has been growing and supplying MG with a range of green produce since 2004, when he took over the day-to-day operations of the business from his father, Robert Scott.

Susi Boehm, Spotswood farm manager and Ben Scott, owne

Scottfresh operations now total 160 hectares over three properties in Darfield, Conway Flat, and Spotswood. The company produces iceberg lettuce, cos and frills lettuce, broccoli, baby leaf crops and coriander.

Ben attributes the company's success to a mixture of great people, strategic investments, and being nimble enough to roll with the punches when and where they hit.

"We are fortunate enough to have our three properties managed by teams who treat our operations as their own," with Ben providing in his own words - very much a supporting role. "Attracting and retaining talent is one of our biggest issues," Ben says. "We have really great people working for us, and we do whatever it takes to keep them. Right now, we are on the hunt for machinery operators. We want people who work hard, are efficient and are team-players," said Ben.

"I also think I was very fortunate to have industry experts like John Watson being just over the fence from our old Marshlands Road operation, so very early on I could see how a pro, like John, would grow produce to perfection, and we'd try our best to emulate that," Ben recalls.

Mother nature has also posed some challenges of her own, most recently being the Kaikoura earthquake, 18 months ago. "When the quake hit we faced two major hurdles. We did whatever we could to mitigate the effect of the earthquake on our team and their families, so we had to be flexible enough for our folks to help them work around whatever issue the quake and its devastation had. Plus, the quake was so massive it also really impacted our logistics. At their worst, some roads were totally unusable or under repair, and we had to find solutions ourselves to get our product to market. Basically what that meant is we needed to charter our own trucks to get our product into the distribution network. You can imagine that this was an unexpected issue and cost which we simply had to bear until things were up and running as per normal," Ben added.



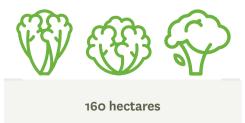
"We also made some strategic investments in infrastructure too, at crucial points in our development, that went a long way in supporting our growth. We use specialised machinery for fertiliser placement, and back in 2008, we purchased a vacuum chiller which has been the backbone of success for the bagged lettuce component of the business.

The partnership with MG has helped Scottfresh focus on their business and leave Ben and his team to do what they do best, leaving the marketing to MG, who also provide great advice on what consumers want. "Over the years, and through our really

strong relationships with MG, we give very careful thought to planting product that we know MG will sell for what it is worth," said Ben. "If there had not been a degree of consolidation in the industry, our biggest concern would have been lots of growers, growing a lot of produce, just for the sake of it and without any strategic view on what the market wants. That is where MG adds real value in advising us on market needs, and knowing how best to promote and sell our product after it leaves our fields and makes it into the hands and mouths of consumers," he added.

From a small vegetable grower on the outskirts of Christchurch to an operation of 160 hectares, Scottfresh has seen tremendous growth, and

maintaining financial viability has been a challenge, says Ben, "at times keeping the business alive and viable has been absolutely gruelling, but with the right people and the right attitude I am really proud of what we have been able to build, in terms of product, quality and brand."



HEALTH AND SAFETY IN THE DIGITAL AGE

s we approach the two-year anniversary of the introduction of new Health and Safety legislation, rural businesses are catching on to new tools and technologies that minimise paperwork and streamline processes in health and safety management.

Without a doubt, the reform that came into place in April 2016 brought with it numerous changes for the agricultural sector, many of which were arguably well overdue. As an industry, our record of fatalities in the workplace has traditionally been high, with 119

lives lost between January 2011 and October 2017. To put that in perspective, the second highest rate of workplace fatalities was in the construction industry, with 39 deaths over the same period. While numerous causes have no doubt contributed to these statistics, the fact remains that this is simply too many people not returning home to their families at the end of the working day. To be most effective, health and safety needs on-going attention with active participation from management and staff.

Health and safety doesn't just happen, it takes

engagement from everyone involved. Organisations such as Horticulture New Zealand and WorkSafe New Zealand are working toward creating a safer environment for everyone in the industry via the development of an online health and safety toolkit. Launched in July last year, the toolkit is available at www.hortnz.co.nz

There's an app for that

While the use of web applications to simplify growing processes is not new, applying these initiatives to health and safety procedures can be a useful time-saver. As with any system, the information you get out is only as good as the information you put in, so while they won't magically take care of an ACC claim, or automatically alert you to a hazard, at least you'll have an immediate means of communication and a verified paper trail should the need ever arise.

Below are a few of the products currently available that have been rated based on their various features.

Words supplied by Compliance Partners, Ruralco Supplier.

Health and Safety App Review

	Customisable	Ease of set up	Visitor induction	Risk register	Incident reporting	Emergency procedure	Team training and participation	Hazard map
Agrismart	••	•••	••	•••	•••	•••	•••	•
My Farm	•••	•••		••	••	••		
OnSide	•••	••	•••	••	••	••	•	•••
Orange cross	•••	•••	—	•••	••	•••	•	•
Tribal Risk Management	••	•••	—	•••	•••	•••	•••	••
Zero harm farm	••	•••	••	•••	••	••	•	••

🔵 Does the task, but not that well 🛛 🌑 Does this task satisfactorily 🔵 🌑 🔵 Does this task very well ----- Doesn't have this function Key: Note: Information included in these reviews was current at the time of publication and only agricultural-specific apps have been reviewed, there are many more available which are generic to all industries. Health and safety is constantly evolving and the apps are continually updating functionality to reflect this so please check the app websites for the most up to date information. For a more in-depth review of farm-specific health and safety apps, please visit www.dairynz.co.nz

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE REGULATIONS

December 1, 2017, signalled changes to the management of hazardous substances in the workplace. These changes are captured under the newly created Health & Safety at Work (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 2017. Responsibility for compliance with the new regulations now sits with WorkSafe NZ.

It is recommended that you fully familiarise yourself with the key areas of the regulations. The following are of particular relevance to the horticultural sector:

Hazardous Waste

- product/chemical name and UN number where available
- maximum quantity ever likely to have onsite at any given time
- precise location of substance
- storage or segmentation requirements

In addition to this, you need to ensure that there is adequate signage alerting staff and the public to the fact that hazardous substances are stored onsite.

Training & Information

Certified Handlers

Certified Handlers replace "Approved Handlers" under the new regulations and there is now a narrower range of substances for which a Handler is required. A Certified Handler is now only required for explosives, fumigants and toxic agents, along with Class 6.1A and 6.1B (acutely toxics). Please note that Handlers are no longer required for Classes 2 through to 5, 6.1C, 6.7A and 8.2A.

Regulations around hazardous substance also apply to waste product. Therefore, all waste product must now be appropriately labelled and included in the overall inventory of hazardous substances held onsite in the workplace.

Inventory

This is an important new requirement where you must keep a list of all of the hazardous substances you use, handle, manufacture or store at the workplace; including any hazardous waste substances. It is vital that the inventory is readily accessible to emergency services and to a WorkSafe inspector or certifier, either electronically or in a hard copy form.

Critical things to include when creating an inventory are:

safety data sheet

Safety Data Sheet

A safety data sheet (SDS) must be immediately accessible for all hazardous substances held on site. A SDS should be provided by the supplier at the time of initial supply of the substance and resupplied if there is an amendment to the SDS.

Labelling

All hazardous substances must be labelled in English with the original label intact and clearly visible on the container. If you decant or transfer a substance into a smaller container, then this too must be appropriately labelled, unless it's a very small amount of substance decanted for immediate use.

An amendment to previous regulations requires that all staff are informed of the use of hazardous substances in the workplace and, specifically, within their area of work. Staff also need to know where to access information about each hazardous substance onsite, including the safe handling and storing of the various substances. They also need to be trained in the event of an emergency involving a hazardous substance. All training must be site specific and documented.

Emergency Management

HSNO emergencies continue to be a requirement of your emergency plan. There are also some additional items that now need to be included.

Storage of toxic and corrosive substances (Class 6.1A, 6.1B, 6.1C, 8.2A, 8.2B).

If you hold quantities onsite that exceed the threshold for any of these substances, then you need to create a hazardous substance location (HSL). A HSL requires you to have certain controls in place and to obtain a location compliance certificate.

For more information: www.worksafe.govt.nz or call Compliance Partners on **0800 BIZSAFE.**

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WE NEED WATER TO GROW FOOD

or a country with a plentiful supply of water, it seems wrong to say that we are progressively facing water shortages. But we are. It is essential that we engage now in planning based on science and logic so that we can ensure food supply for New Zealand into the future.

If fruit and vegetable growers cannot access a reliable and sustainable water supply, that could put our domestic food supply under pressure. No water means plants die and as a result, fresh fruit and vegetables are unavailable and prices go up because demand is higher than supply.

Last winter, spring and summer are prime examples of what may be coming our way in the future. A cold and wet winter that hampered vegetable production was followed by a hot and very dry summer that saw many areas going into drought. Some fruit and vegetable growers had to make decisions about which plants and trees they may not be able to plant or harvest, and which may need to be left to die as scarce water supply was used to keep other plants alive. Replacing these plants is not simple, for some crops there are waiting lists of several years for trees, for example, cherries and avocados.

In New Zealand, we have times when there is an abundance of water and then times when there is not enough water. A little known fact is that, according to NIWA, of the average of 550 billion cubic metres of rain each year, 80 percent flows out to sea (18 percent of rainfall evaporates, and around two percent is used for irrigation, urban and industrial use). The logical solution is to store water when it is plentiful for the times when it is scarce.

Aquifers are nature's way of storing water and there are projects running where the aquifer is

re-charged when there is plenty of water available. But the more traditional way to store water is in dams and ponds.

Relying on water to fall from the sky simply isn't enough. We need to be more proactive in capturing and storing that water to ensure sustainability of supply during times of drought. In addition to supporting horticulture, dams also benefit streams and rivers by reducing flood risk and keeping flows up during dry periods, which protects aquatic life.

Providing water when it is dry also has enormous benefits for our rural communities and that, in turn, helps the financial viability of our urban communities. Without water, production stops and jobs are lost. In the November 2014 NZIER report to the Ministry for Primary Industries, (Value of Irrigation in New Zealand), it was estimated that in 2011 / 2012, irrigation contributed \$2.17 billion to net farm gate GDP. That figure is increasing every year and has been estimated by Irrigation NZ to increase to \$3.5 billion by 2021. NZIER believes that New Zealand's real GDP would be 2.4% lower (\$4.8 billion less) without irrigation and all households in New Zealand would earn lower wages.

So this is not just something that affects rural communities. It impacts all of New Zealand. We all need water to survive - humans, animals and plants. New Zealand's economic prosperity is linked to water being in plentiful supply all year around.

Words by Mike Chapman Chief Executive Horticulture New Zealand

"Without sustainable water supplies we cannot feed New Zealand and grow the produce that drives our export returns."

- Mike Chapman Chief Executive Horticulture New Zealand

GDA Improving Business Efficiency

G's Grower Delivery Advice (GDA) web portal is now well established; with close to 60% of all growers using the facility and well over 75% of all produce currently supplied now being pre-receipted online.

A number of enhancements have been made to the GDA programme since its introduction to improve its ease of use and overall efficiency. For those growers who have their own stock control/ dispatch software programmes the GDA portal can receive EDI files.

MG is also exploring a cost-effective alternative to

the online programme for those growers who do not have computer or internet access at or near their packing shed/dispatch area.

The efficiencies that GDA brings to the business have proven to be significant and the company is looking to have all growers actively using the GDA web portal, or an EDI alternative, by 31 December 2018.

Over the next few months, the procurement team will be visiting growers who are either not yet using the facility or not using it on a regular basis. If you would like to know more about this or would like to discuss how the GDA programme could benefit your operation, please contact **lan Reisima** from MG's procurement team. **021-749-644**

HEALTH & SAFETY.

HEALTHY WORKERS = SAFE WORKERS!

New Zealand experiences a high rate of work related disease - we've experienced consistent numbers for about the past 20 years.

ew Zealand experiences a high rate of work related disease - we've experienced consistent numbers for about the past 20 years. WorkSafe NZ report that between 600 to 900 people a year die from disease that has resulted from the work that they carry out. More than 80% of that are men, and about 50% of deaths are from cancer. They also report about 30,000 a year suffer from work-related health conditions or disease - and about a fifth of these end up in hospital. In 2004, the National Occupational Health and Safety Advisory Committee presented a report which estimated that there were roughly 700 – 1000 deaths a year from occupational disease, particularly cancer, respiratory disease and ischaemic heart disease and that there are 17,000 – 20,000 new cases of work related disease reported each year.

The issue is that a lot of these diseases are termed 'latent diseases' - that means it can take days, months or even years for these work-related illness or disease to become visible.

The agriculture industry factors high into this rate of illness and disease. Exposure to sun, noise, dust, chemicals, substances, vibration, stress, fatigue and animals can disrupt the way our body's work. This can lead to things like respiratory failure, hearing, skin conditions, zoonoses, occupational cancers, cardiovascular disease, ongoing musculoskeletal conditions and mental health concerns.

One of the focuses of the Health & Safety at Work Act is to try and remedy this - to keep you the farmer, and your

workers, well and healthy. Because try as we might it can be very difficult, if not impossible, to eliminate these hazards. Majority of these mean we provide our workers with safety gear. This means that we need to consider the requirement to monitor our workers' health. This is now a requirement under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 and General Risk and Workplace Management Regulations 2016. This requirement is part of your duty of care as a PCBU - to monitor worker health as far as is reasonably practicable if exposure to a health risk warrants it. The results are an important step to make sure the safety gear that you are using, is working!

What is Health Monitoring?

Put simply, Health Monitoring means keeping a check on your workers' health to identify any changes because of exposure to certain hazards from doing their everyday work. Health Monitoring can include lung function tests. hearing tests, vision checks, blood tests and drug and alcohol testing. All Health Monitoring must be carried out by a Doctor/Registered Nurse or Nurse Practitioner with the appropriate skills, knowledge and experience. Workers must be consulted about the testing to be carried out and sign a consent prior.

A typical health monitoring regime would involve:

- Identifying all the environmental hazards workers may face:
- Sending workers for a 'baseline' medical test within 3 months of them starting work;

- An annual health check to see if exposure is worsening their health.

Wellness?

Monitoring can also aim to detect early signs of ill health or disease (i.e. diabetes) by including other wellness checks around blood pressure, BMI, cholesterol and glucose. This testing is not part of the legal requirement. However, it is the area that can identify current illnesses or warning signs for other illnesses. It is a worker's wellness, or general health, that can directly affect their ability to work well, or simply function well, in daily life. Mental health is also a large part of this wellness as sustained stress or fatigue can have a negative impact on health and wellness. Wellness can improve the health of workers by encouraging healthy habits, which can prevent, or lower the risk, of serious health conditions developing. Wellness is linked to greater productivity, less absenteeism and fewer sick days for the employer and increased self-confidence and overall life satisfaction for workers.

Ensuring your workers are fit for work - that is they can physically, and mentally, perform the tasks that you are assigning to them competently and safely - is paramount.

For more information to help you get this health and safety business sorted contact Compliance Partners -Jane Fowles on 021 942 150 (Town) or Lisa Norrie on 021 947 730 (Country).

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THE FUTURE IS GLOBAL

The New Zealand horticulture industry is a \$8.8 billion business. We export 60% of what we grow to 124 countries around the world. We also receive top dollar for our produce in off-shore markets.

ur ideal growing climate and soils, continual investment in R&D around new varieties, focus on forever evolving best-practice and our proximity to key global markets positions the New Zealand horticultural industry in very much the sweet spot. Overlay global trends in eating behaviours and heightened environmental consciousness among consumer and our industry has enormous growth potential yet.

In their quest to seek out a more balanced lifestyle, not only is today's consumer making healthier choices around what they do and don't eat, they are willing to justify why they will or won't eat something based on their belief systems and concern for a sustainable planet. While fresh has become synonymous with good-for-you, consumers are increasingly seeking information around country of origin, the company behind the produce, and organic vs non-organic practices of said company.

This puts the New Zealand horticulture industry in the box seat when it comes to future export opportunities. Not only does Brand New Zealand have a strong, clean green value-based story but our growers, too, have a great story to tell.

We are early adopters of science and technology and in recent years have been at the cutting edge of innovation. We have successfully leveraged this to drive in-market efficiencies and to keep abreast of, and in some cases lead, trends in consumer demand.

The Government's continued commitment to R&D within the industry will further enhance our ability to innovate, develop new varieties and to then leverage these commercially.

Many of our growers are also intergenerational family businesses with a lifetime of experience in balancing cropping regimes with caring for the environment. They are emotionally invested in ensuring their business is a sustainable proposition for generations to come. To this end, significant investment is being poured into evolving environmental bestpractice and traceability initiatives.

Forming collaborations and joint ventures internationally is also important for continued innovation and global success. For some time now, we've seen offshore companies leading innovation programmes around the development of new varieties investing in New Zealand operations. Leaving the door open for these types of opportunities can only be a win-win and will only enhance the pool of knowledge and expertise within the New Zealand industry but help maintain New Zealand's reputation as a market leader on the world stage.



STANDPOINT.

You will perhaps have noticed a recurring theme in the articles in this edition of SupplyLine - the importance of continual investment; be that in infrastructure, R&D, trialling different ways of doing things, or investment in people.



f you acknowledge the exciting times ahead for our industry, then you'll likely turn your thoughts to who'll shepherd the industry through the next five to ten years. With the current age profile of the majority of growers, it's well understood that if we're to keep abreast of succession planning and on top of our game, both as a co-operative and as a marketing organisation, we need to attract fresh, young blood into the sector as well as continuously invest in upskilling those already

overestimated, nor can the value that a millennial's perspective has on the industry, and we will continue to offer such programmes in the future, further building on the foundations laid to date.

I have often said that MG's commitment to the industry begins at the front gate. As a grower, you'll be only too well aware of the expertise within the MG team and of our commitment to work in partnership with you to develop growing programmes, new market and product opportunities and best business practices. We have also made a significant investment in the grower development programme, partnering with organisations such as Lincoln University, to offer our growers access to some of the latest thinking and learning within the sector. We are currently looking at ways that we can evolve this programme, potentially include elements from our graduate and sales programmes and add value around some of the more pressing on-farm challenges with an over-arching objective of supporting our growers to grow their business sustainably.

involved.

For some time now, investment in our people and in our growers has been part of our strategic business plan and a number of unique initiatives have been developed as a result. MG's graduate programme and sales academy are key examples of how we have attracted young people to the industry. The director internship has added a further layer of insight into what the industry has to offer. Each one of these initiatives have proven to be of tremendous value to both individuals and the Co-operative as a whole. The benefit that comes from mentoring received on the job cannot be

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Peter Hendry CEO