



By Matthew Jones

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## Zespri set for strong Northern Hemisphere season



Overall production up 25 per cent on 2018/19, as kiwifruit marketer continues to explore production options in China

**Z**espri anticipates the packout from its Northern Hemisphere crop will top 19m trays this season.

The performance would mark a 25 per cent overall increase on the 15.4m trays recorded in 2017/18, with SunGold volumes set to climb to 10.5m trays, up from 6.3m trays last year. Conversely, around 8m trays of green are forecast to be produced this season, down from 9m in 2017/18.

Zespri's chief international production officer, Sheila McCann-Morrison, said the increased production volume reflected the progress being made on the marketer's global supply strategy.

"Zespri is looking forward to completing the New Zealand season by the end of the year while transitioning to supply from our Northern Hemisphere locations," McCann-Morrison said.

"Growth in our offshore supply allows us

to meet increasing consumer demand for our premium quality kiwifruit and ensure that our brand remains top of mind in the three-to-four months of the year when our New Zealand-grown kiwifruit is unavailable."

Zespri has developed long-term partnerships with growers in Italy, Korea, Japan and France.

Europe remains Zespri's most significant source of non-New Zealand-grown kiwifruit, with Italy supplying more than 90 per cent of the marketer's total volumes and more than 9m trays of SunGold.

"In addition to expanding our production in current key European locations, particularly in Italy, we are running trials in new growing locations to determine whether we can successfully diversify our supply. We believe this will allow us to mitigate risks like pests and adverse weather events and also bring our supply closer to market," McCann-Morrison explained.

Outside of Europe, Zespri expects to see continued growth in Asia and is focusing on increasing the supply of SunGold in Japan and Korea to meet strong demand.

Zespri also continues to explore the potential for a 12-month supply programme in China. A proof of concept trial in China is nearing completion, working with local partners to assess local Chinese varieties to determine whether they can sustainably grow Zespri-quality fruit.

Zespri has also started production trials in Oregon and California in the US, which has become one of Zespri's most significant new growth markets due to demand for SunGold.

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<http://www.fruitnet.com/americafruit/article/1474/parts-of-san-diego-quarantined-as-psyllid-count-mounts>

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