

For fresh fruit and vegetable marketing and distribution in Asia



By Liam O'Callaghan

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End to Zespri's New Zealand kiwifruit season



Final four containers of the its successful 2019 crop are on their way to Asia

The last of Zespri's 2019 New Zealand kiwifruit crop has been shipped, with four containers of Zespri Green leaving Tauranga bound for Hong Kong and Taiwan.

The final shipment of around 70 tonnes of kiwifruit was loaded onto APL Denver in the last week of November and is expected to reach the first port in 15 days.

Blair Hamill, chief global supply officer of Zespri, said 147m trays of kiwifruit were shipped offshore this season to more than 50 countries, with record numbers of consumers creating unprecedented levels of demand.

"Our premium Zespri SunGold and green kiwifruit are more popular than ever, and over the course of the season we've moved 44 full charter shiploads and 17,160 containers, or more than 500,000 tonnes in total, to our markets," Hamill said.

While the number of containers shipped was slightly down on the previous record

year, the 2019 season was still the second-largest crop ever harvested by New Zealand's kiwifruit growers.

It also marked the first season the Zespri exported more SunGold than green.

"This was a significant milestone for the industry. Zespri SunGold was developed through Zespri's partnership with Plant and Food Research, after many years of research and significant investment by New Zealand growers," noted Hamill.

"Owned by Zespri it's generating strong returns to New Zealand communities and to our licensed growers offshore and we're excited about the international demand for it."

Hamill said that amidst another busy season, it was great to see fruit arriving in Europe and China earlier in the season than the previous year, helping to meet demand.

"The 2019 season saw our kiwifruit mature earlier meaning we could ship our kiwifruit to consumers earlier in the year and get the season started with a lot

of momentum, delivering for consumers around the world," he added.

"We've also received feedback from the markets that the fruit is one of our best-ever tasting crops."

In total, over 74m trays of Zespri's SunGold and 73m trays of green kiwifruit were supplied to global consumers and customers from New Zealand this season.

"As we come to the end of the sales programme for New Zealand fruit we're transitioning to Northern Hemisphere production. With that crop harvested and being packed we're forecasting a total of just over 19m trays through our partnerships with growers in Italy, France, Japan, Korea and Greece driving strong returns to those communities," Hamill explained.

He also confirmed that planning was already underway for the start of next season's New Zealand crop, with the first vessel expected to export the new season's fruit in March 2020.

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

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