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NZ agrees kiwifruit export levy

Government approves a levy that will help the industry cover the costs of managing the Psa vine disease



The New Zealand government has approved a levy on kiwifruit exports that it hopes will ease the cost pressure on the industry, as it copes with the ongoing threat of the deadly Psa vine killing disease.

According to scoop.co.nz, the cabinet has agreed a 1 cent per tray levy on green kiwifruit and a 2 cent per tray levy on gold kiwifruit, while handing over NZ\$3.5m (US\$2.9m, €2.2m) in a specially arranged NZ\$25m fund for Kiwifruit Vine Health (KVH) to manage the ongoing outbreak.

"This will help cover disease

management, monitoring, plant material movement and dealing with unmanaged and abandoned orchards," explained primary industries minister Nathan Guy in a statement. "This plan means that primary responsibility for Psa is now moving to the industry themselves as they are best-placed to coordinate and lead the response."

National grower representative body New Zealand Kiwifruit Growers Incorporated (NZKGI) praised the government's decision to approve the pest management plan, calling it a "vital tool" for the industry to help reduce the impact of the disease.

"As an industry, we have to accept that Psa is here to stay," NZKGI president Neil Trebilco told scoop.co.nz. "As a result, we have had to change the way we manage our orchards and for most growers, this has meant extra work on the orchard and extra financial challenges."

The latest KVH update, released on 8 May, showed that 2,102 orchards are now infected with Psa-V, affecting some 9,753ha.