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NZ primary industry launches blockchain consortium



Chris Claridge, image via Potatoes NZ

New consortium aims to enhance reputation and competitiveness of New Zealand's primary industry sector

Trust Alliance New Zealand (TANZ), New Zealand's first national blockchain consortium focused on the primary sector, has officially launched at the recent Primary Industries Summit, held on 23 November.

The new consortium will work to enhance the reputation and competitiveness of New Zealand's primary industry sector by connecting participants and providers across the entire primary sector value chain.

Trust Alliance had its beginnings late last year when a small group of organisations came together to establish a trusted digital platform for New Zealand producers, growers, exporters, retailers and consumers to easily share verified and trusted data. It now has 22 members and is growing every month.

Chair of the Trust Alliance and chief

executive of Potatoes New Zealand, Chris Claridge, said it provides a platform for sharing data, to prove provenance, authentication and food safety as well as biosecurity tracking and tracing.

"We think there's a real opportunity to address some of the key issues common across the sector, including data interoperability, productivity, efficiency and compliance," said Claridge.

"There are benefits to be gained at every point in the value chain: from producers and growers, through processors, distributors and exporters, to suppliers, retailers and right to end consumers.

"Worldwide, consumers are becoming ever more mindful of the ethical and environmental impacts of their purchases. TANZ aims to enhance the global and domestic competitiveness of New Zealand's primary sector by providing the assurance people want,

underpinned by verifiable, unchangeable data," he added.

The formation of the Trust Alliance followed a series of workshops which identified issues around data integrity, data sharing and data interoperability that if solved, would significantly reduce cost and friction in the marketplace for all participants.

TANZ will connect data silos and allow the sharing of data in a secure, trusted and permissioned manner. The Trust Alliance digital platform is being built by TrackBack, a decentralised technology provider. TrackBack is providing the blockchain technology that underscores the data sharing and interoperability of the TANZ consortium.

Trust Alliance members will be able to validate critical data elements including compliance, provenance, traceability and engage with customers via the

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TrackBack platform. Connecting growers with consumers will allow them to tell their grower story and get useful direct feedback to improve customer satisfaction and loyalty.

TANZ consortium manager and head of sales at TrackBack, Semanie Cato, said that building trust, maintaining data privacy and protecting digital rights are the cornerstones of Trust Alliance.

“TrackBack has developed a toolkit to address the issues common to all Trust Alliance members – based on their input. Members will all be able to easily verify and share data

securely, and benefit from the increased efficiency and productivity of the consortium,” she said.

“Trust Alliance not only enables farmers and producers to keep control of their data. It also helps businesses utilise blockchain technology to solve problems and take competitive advantage of opportunities.

“Innovation, collaboration and competition are key elements to Trust Alliance’s success. Together we are focused on growing the agricultural sector and enhancing sustainable primary industries.

“Trust Alliance has the potential to be replicated in other sectors and industries, ensuring value for producers and increasing consumer trust in the products they purchase,” concluded Cato.

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