

## KIWIFRUIT NEWSLETTER MID APRIL 2010

### EDITORIAL

Aongatete Coolstores Class 2 programme should again be a big advantage to our Growers.

Going on the amount of shape related rejects we will see in the industry this year, sheds that put class 2 and 3 into their reject tally will be handing out large reject penalties again.

It is noticeable that with our Class 2 and 3 being a saleable product and therefore not going into rejects, our reject rates have been very low to date.

The flow on of this is our rebate for fewer than 10% rejects. This is giving the majority of our Growers a large discount on the final packing price. It is not uncommon for our Growers to gain a further 5 – 7 cents discount off the packing price upon the completion of packing to date.

This then compounds as the average Aongatete Class 2 returns are currently double the industry average and in some cases Growers received between 25 -30cents per tray. We all know it is very hard to gain a few cents advantage, let alone 20 -30 cents plus the reject rebate.

It was interesting to note last year that some of our Class 2 payments were higher than the payouts on shares in individual packhouses, not including the cost of capital invested in shares, something to mention to other growers in those across the fence conversations.

This competitive advantage arises due to the fact that Aongatete Coolstores sees itself as being in a partnership with our Growers, and, clearly Growers have put in a lot of effort and expense to deliver quality crops that help us pack more efficiently, then the gains are shared.

Overall I would like to congratulate our Growers to date as they have delivered good quality crops in what is proving to be a very tough year.



All the best for harvest.

Richard Allen  
Client Services

### MATURITY TESTING

With the hectic end of the Kiwistart period drawing to a close the focus of fruit testing has shifted from finding early fruit to profiling crops for the Mainpack and CA season.

At this point in time there are a number of crops that are traditionally Kiwistart yet to be harvested. Our aim is to keep a close eye on these with testing, so that we can strike a balance between accumulating some additional dry matter and size, and harvesting them before they become over mature.

Along with this we are starting our first round of profiling to establish the rate of fruit maturation, as well as the rate at which flesh firmness is dropping before crops begin their storage life. In line with this we have started monitoring specifically for CA.

It is important for us to do several rounds of monitoring on any crops destined for longer term storage to establish their potential storage life before they go into inventory.

Jacki McCormack  
Horticulture Technical Leader



### LATE THINNING

For Growers who are carrying out a late thin or groom just before harvest please make sure you mulch the fruit on the ground.

This season has given reason for some very late thinning and as the fruit are still hard there is a Health and Safety risk for pickers where they can roll or sprain their ankles.

Please give Client Services a call if you have any questions regarding the mulching of late thinned fruit.

Many thanks.

## PACKHOUSE REPORT

To date our Green submit (Kiwistart) has, on a proportional basis, been above industry average, while that for Gold has been below.

We normally expect an above average level of Kiwistart Green, but this season it hasn't all come from the normal areas. Soils and microclimates have obviously responded differently to a cold spring and an Autumn drought! There is also some significant regional variation with Opotiki and Hawkes Bay being much later than Katikati this year.

Fruit is generally smaller, and dry matter levels are high. The average fruit size for Green has recently got bigger as a result of select picking while the remaining fruit is generally sizing slowly. On a number of monitored crops the dry matter accumulation is plateauing, and as a consequence brix levels are rising rapidly.

### Statistics:

Green:	Average size:	35.05
	Average Class I packout	
	Kg in/kg Class 1	90.1 %
	Class II Family Kiwi and NSS	7.5 %
	Rejects	2.4 %
Predominant defects are sooty mould (40% of the rejects), shape and Hayward mark.		
Gold:	Average size	34.21
	Average Class 1 packout	
	Kg in/kg Class 1	85.1 %
	Family Kiwi, Class II and NSS	10.5 %
	Rejects	4.4 %

Predominant defects are sooty mould (34.8%) and cosmetic. The fruit skin is tougher this year and physical damage is minimal. Picking and packing damage combined are less than 1% (0.88) to date.

Sooty mould is standing out as a major issue. Contrary to the belief of some, it can't be wiped off. Even quite small specks soon manifest themselves in the moist coolstore environment.

Passion vine hopper and cicada both deposit a residue that allows sooty mould growth. Jacki McCormack has been involved in a cicada control project while Zespri have a number of research projects committed to finding a solution.



Allan Dawson



Zespri Family Kiwi fruit gets loving attention from Peter Fanasia, (from the Solomon Islands), and Sione Maola and Veisia Afu, (Tonga).



From Tonga Vika Nuipalau and Tangisi Tonga enjoy their time looking after our Class 2 Grading.

Left is Ane Taumalolo, also from Tonga, with Zespri Green 10 kilogram boxes, preparing fruit for export market

## CLIENT SERVICES TEAM



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