

NZ Plant Producers Inc (NZPPI)

# Election Manifesto 2023

New Zealand Plant Producers Inc. is the industry body representing commercial plant nurseries and related businesses.



Our members produce the plants growing food Kiwis eat and export, regenerating New Zealand's forests, our urban landscapes, and being planted by millions of Kiwis in their backyard.



Our industry underpins the success of New Zealand's thriving primary industries, including forestry, horticulture, viticulture, and farming.

**Employing approximately 4000 people, New Zealand's plant production industry is worth an estimated \$500 million each year.**



NZPPI is funded by our members as proof of their commitment to our industry and the benefits it produces for New Zealand's economy and well-being.



**300+**  
members

NZPPI is a voluntary membership organisation with more than 300 members, representing New Zealand's most respected nursery leaders and businesses.



## Enabling access to the world's best plant material

This means the best genetics and high health germplasm. In the absence of local programs for plant breeding and plant health, New Zealand relies on other countries to provide us with elite, high quality, clean plant material. This is for the domestic food supply, horticulture exports and greenlife plants in urban areas and home gardens. Biosecurity is critical and New Zealand needs a world class system for protecting ourselves from new diseases. However, a world class system needs to be more than just tightening restrictions on plant imports. We need better systems and technology that manages risk through the whole process, offshore and here within New Zealand.

### We request that Governments:

- Invest in rebuilding New Zealand's plant health capability, including technology, surveillance systems and qualified people.
- Support the proposed investment in upgrading our quarantine and plant health facilities.
- Ensure that import health standards are up to date and that new standards are completed in weeks, not decades.



## Training a new generation of plant producers

Skilled people are key to the future success of our industry. NZ's horticulture education system is in disarray with outdated programmes and a lack of trainees. To meet the future demand for skilled workers our industry needs to attract and train a new generation of horticulturalists and operations specialists. The training framework needs to be upgraded, with new models that are regional and include new approaches like 'learn as you earn' and Apprenticeship Degrees.

### We request that Governments:

- Long term strategies to attract people into horticulture careers, supporting a new generation of horticulturalists to fill skilled roles and replace those that are retiring.
- Support Muka Tangata to accelerate its work to build a modern, fit for purpose vocational education system in horticulture.
- Enable access to skilled horticulturalists and operations staff from overseas to fill the immediate skills gap and to help us train the next generation of horticulturalists.



## Rebuilding Horticulture Research & Innovation

Historically, our industry has been a world leader in plants research and innovation. In recent years New Zealand's horticulture research has been focused on the export industries, like kiwifruit and apples at the cost of domestic sectors, like local food, greenlife and afforestation. New Zealand needs strategic investment in research, development and capacity building in our domestic plants sectors to enable greater innovation, productivity and resilience for our domestic economy.

### We request that Governments:

- Support local horticulture with a targeted strategy and investment plan for research, development and innovation.
- Adopt international models for university led extension and research that is open access, producer centered and based in the regions.



## Accelerating native and urban plantings

New Zealand needs to increase plantings in our natural and urban areas using both indigenous and exotic plants. This will improve the environment, our health and wellbeing, protect land and absorb carbon. Recent flooding and erosion events highlight the need for strategic, long-term investment in permanent land stabilising afforestation and natural infrastructure. There are many strategies for planting programmes across various government agencies and councils but these are ad-hoc and short term, meaning progress is inadequate.

### We request that Governments:

- Develop a long term (10 year) natural infrastructure strategy and investment plan that recognise natural infrastructure as a public asset, not a cost.
- Accelerate the implementation of policies for urban and rural development that require councils to meet targets for plantings.
- That Government agencies work with industry to establish long term contracts for seedling supply that include planning and production standards.



## Fit for purpose regulation

Legislation affecting the biological and land-based sectors need to be comprehensively overhauled to ensure it is fit for purpose in the 21st century. NZ Plant Producers supports the reviews of the Biosecurity Act, the Plant Variety Rights Act, and the Resource Management Act. The fourth piece of legislation which majorly impacts our plant-based industries is the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act. This has not been substantively reviewed since it came into force 25 years ago. The Act is now widely recognised as a major handbrake to innovation.



## CONTACT US:

If you would like more information about any of these topics, or to arrange a visit to one of our members in the plant production industry, please feel free to contact our Chief Executive:

**Matthew Dolan**  
**NZ Plant Producers Inc**  
Level 5, 23 Waring Taylor Street, Wellington  
P: 027 622 9255 E: [matthew@nzppi.co.nz](mailto:matthew@nzppi.co.nz)