



## Ministerial briefing 2020

### Summary

- NZ Plant Producers Inc. represents the commercial nursery industry and related businesses.
- It is a voluntary membership organisation with 306 member businesses.
- Plant nurseries employ more than 3000 people across New Zealand and contribute \$334m to our economy.
- Our industry is essential to the success of horticulture, forestry, viticulture, garden centres, and many other plant-based industries.
- We also contribute to revegetation, riparian planting, landscaping, home gardens, and the plants that make our communities liveable.
- Our industry is now facing a period of unprecedented demand and growth. We anticipate this growth will continue for at least a decade. We are developing a strategy to make the most of this opportunity for our industry and New Zealand.

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### Our industry

New Zealand Plant Producers is the industry body for plant nurseries and related businesses. Our members produce the plants growing the food that Kiwis eat and export, regenerating New Zealand's forests, beautifying our urban landscapes and being planted by millions of Kiwis in their backyards.

#### Total economic contribution of the plant production industry\*:

**Income**      \$334 million

**Expenditure**    \$303 million

**Businesses**     510+

**Employees**    3050+

\*Totals exclude forestry nurseries due to ANZSIC categories. Source: 2019 ANZSIC data retrieved from StatisticsNZ, September 2020.

**Plant nurseries represent an excellent investment in land, water, and other resources.** This is because of the highly-concentrated nature of plant production – for example, a pine nursery covering one hectare produces enough seedlings to produce a forest block covering five square kilometres every year.

As well as being a major employer and economic contributor, our industry is spread across the country, providing jobs in all regions. It is protected against centralisation to some degree, by the ongoing demand for locally sourced and acclimatised plants.

**Our growth projections** for native trees – developed as part of the One Billion Trees programme – suggest that production will double in the decade 2019-29. We expect demand for other sectors in our industry will be comparable.

To put this projected growth into perspective, this requires year-on-year growth of 7.5%pa, every year for a full decade. Contrast this with our dairy boom, which has seen production double every 20 years – our boom will be twice as big!

Sustained growth across an industry needs a planned and co-operative approach, as we are recommending in our Generation Project.

Supporting long-term growth at an average of 7.5%pa across an entire industry will take planned commitment from the industry, government, financiers, training institutions, and other stakeholders if the projected growth is to be attainable.

## Our organisation

Our vision is for a vibrant plant production industry widely respected for its professionalism, innovation, and major contribution to New Zealand.

As of November 2020, NZ Plant Producers has 118 plant producer members employing about 2000 people, covering all regions of New Zealand. We have another 188 members in related industries, including plant retailers and materials suppliers, employing another 2000 people.

New Zealand Plant Producers is the trusted link between our industry and our government. In our 2020 member survey, 92% of respondents agreed that NZ Plant Producers is an effective advocate for their industry.

During the last term, NZ Plant Producers has worked with:

- MPI over COVID-19 planning and lockdown restrictions
- MPI on biosecurity and plant imports policy
- Te Uru Rakāu to support seedling supply for native planting projects

## **Our goals for this term**

This election we raised eight issues which must be addressed so our members can continue to thrive and produce the plants New Zealand so badly needs.

Our eight points are:

**1           Plant producers must get priority access to water**

We need an independent assessment of New Zealand's water infrastructure, to ensure it is adequate to fulfil future needs, and to identify regions at risk of water shortages. A National Water Strategy, backed by credible investment, is needed to guarantee a reliable supply of water.

**2           New Zealand needs access to the World's best plant varieties**

We ask that Government invests in the critical quarantine and laboratory facilities needed to enable more of this important plant material into New Zealand safely.

**3           The RSE scheme must be expanded with access to key workers from overseas**

We ask that the RSE scheme is expanded and that we work towards having access to key workers from overseas to fill the roles that are not able to be filled by New Zealanders.

**4           The Review of Vocational Education must be prioritised**

We ask that the Review of Vocational Education is prioritised to achieve the urgent improvements and investment needed in our industry training framework.

**5           Regulation and legislation must be reviewed and rationalised**

We need to reduce complexity and costs while better protecting our environment. NZ Plant Producers is calling for the HSNO Act's new organism provisions to be brought back under the Biosecurity Act to save duplicated processes, cost and delays.

**6           Biosecurity must be strengthened and supported**

We ask for recognition of the Plant Production Biosecurity Scheme in managing biosecurity risk arising from plant nurseries in New Zealand

**7           Investment in planting must be targeted at our most efficient producers**

We ask that this funding is managed in a way that maximises planting projects, and does not fund plant nurseries operated by not-for-profit organisations or Government itself. These undermine the commercial nursery industry, roll back innovation advances, ultimately costing businesses and downgrading permanent skilled jobs into volunteer roles. Our industry welcomes new participants, but experience shows that funded nurseries have a high failure rate and seldom achieve scale to produce meaningful quantities of plants, or long-term employment opportunities.

**8           New Zealanders deserve more green spaces in our urban areas**

After decades of neglect, New Zealand needs targets to increase green space and coverage in our urban areas, using both indigenous and exotic plants. This will improve health and wellbeing, control temperature, reduce air pollutants, regulate water flow, and absorb carbon emissions.