

**GREASE / OIL ON POCKET PACKS?**

You will have heard in the news that grease / oil has been found on pocket packs that Zespri kiwifruit has been packed into. This has cast doubt on 1.7 million trays of kiwifruit which have had an embargo placed on them pending a review. As we use a different New Zealand based supplier for our pocket packs Aongatete have no direct problem as a result of this find. However we have had fruit that was loaded on a shipment that had to be unloaded, sorted and reloaded as a result of this issue. We will ensure that our Growers are not unfairly penalised for potential fruit quality issues as a result of this less than optimum handling at shipment.

**Tracey Chinnery**Footnote:

*This is a significant threat to our market and Zespri has committed huge resources to deal with the issue. By the time you read this Zespri should have the results from the grease analysis (initial tests were inconclusive) and be in a position to make a decision on the possible repacking of this fruit.*

*In the meantime significant progress has been made on developing a process to identify the grease. Zespri and Seeka have been working on several solutions. Seeka now have operating what seems to be the optimum repack solution, a UV-C lamp with a 254 nm narrow band pass filter that produces a very targeted band of wavelengths that produce a high level of florescence. Fruit don't need to be removed from the pocket pack but because the light is dangerous results must be viewed by a T.V. monitor.*

*There is industry discussion on how to utilise this technology for all affected product should the decision be made to allow repacking.*

*In the meantime there has been very little discussion over who should bear the costs of this contamination.*

**Allan Dawson****Aongatete Orchard and Grower Services Teams****Derek Edwards**

Horticulture Bus Mgr  
derek@coolstore.co.nz

**Graeme Philp**

Field Operations Mgr

**Tracey Chinnery**

GS Manager

**Aaron Hokopaura**

GS Rep  
aaron@coolstore.co.nz

**Andrew Dawson**

GS Rep  
andrew@coolstore.co.nz

**Richard Allen**

GS Rep  
richard@coolstore.co.nz

**Madeleine Rudge**

GS / Human Resources  
madeleine@coolstore.co.nz









Aongatete Coolstores Ltd  
2380 State Highway 2  
RD4, Katikati 3181  
New Zealand  
P / +64 7 552 0916  
F / +64 7 552 0671  
E / enquiry@coolstore.co.nz  
W / www.coolstore.co.nz

# AONGATETE NEWS



APRIL 2016 | ISO WEEKS 14-17 www.coolstore.co.nz | enquiry@coolstore.co.nz

**THIS ISSUE:**

-  PACKHOUSE CARPARKING
-  A VERY DIFFERENT YEAR
-  FAILURE TO MEET MTS
-  PACKING SEASON SO FAR
-  BRIGHT SUNSHINE ANOMALY  
1 February — 28 February 2016
-  GREASE / OIL ON POCKET PACKS?

**Packhouse Visitor Carparking during Harvest—New Signage**

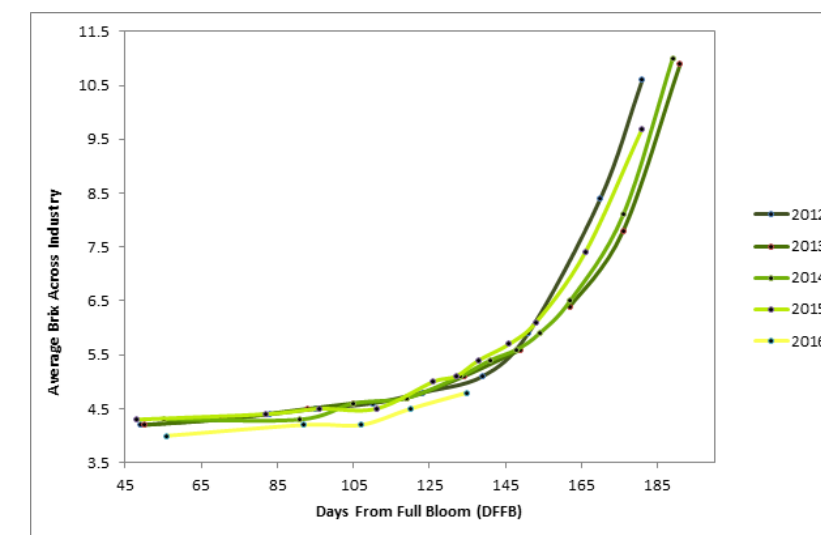
During harvest if you are visiting the packhouse you will notice the new driveway layout and signs. For safety reasons, as there is no parking up alongside the building during the season, please follow the staff parking sign and you will find carparks closest to the tar seal truck driveway with car parking signs marked "Visitor" or "Reserved". From here you can access the packhouse via the stairs up from the carpark.

**A VERY DIFFERENT YEAR!!!**

*(For simplicity much of the information in this article relates to the Hayward variety however Sungold is experiencing similar delays for the same reasons this year.)*

Many traditionally Mainpack Growers may not be aware of what is happening in the industry this year, we are facing the challenge of a poorer dry matter year with slow climbing brix levels.

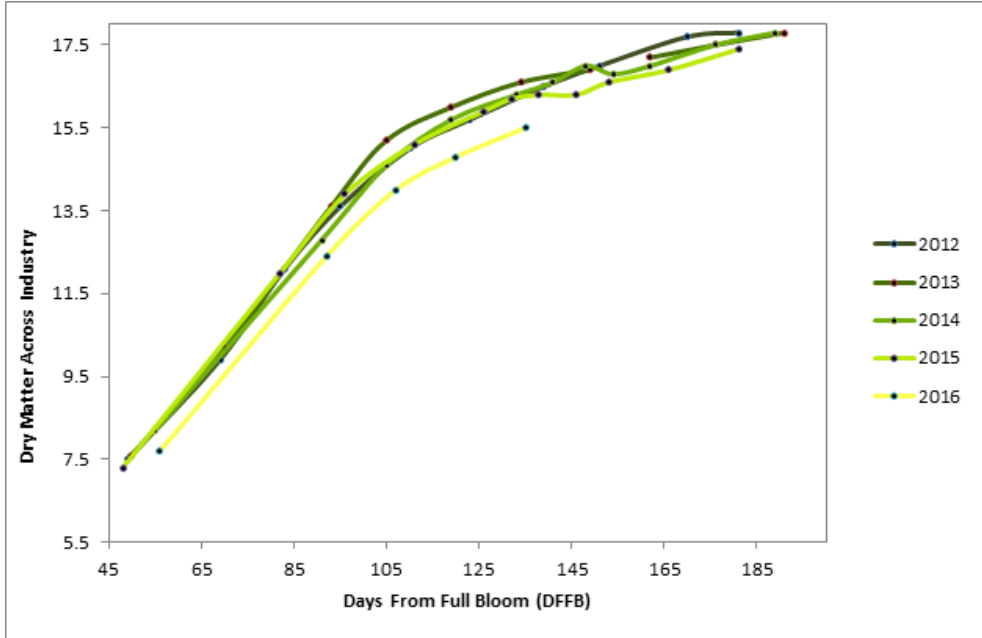
Last month Aaron explained in our newsletter how far behind brix and dry matter levels were to the previous year. The HW graphs following show how this year is tracking compared to the last five. This slower accumulation of dry matter and delayed brix movement has meant that the Industry is way behind targets for Kiwistart. This year as at 4am 13 April only 813,348 trays of Hayward have been submitted into inventory compared with 10,935,131 trays at the same time last year.

**AVERAGE BRIX LEVELS FOR HAYWARD**

Tracey Chinnery—Aongatete Grower Services Manager 021 664 276



A VERY DIFFERENT YEAR continued...



AVERAGE DRY MATTER LEVELS FOR HAYWARD

Zespri wants fruit to fill shipments, the Packhouses are testing like mad, hoping fruit that is close to maturity will finally make clearances and not much packing is going on. The Kiwistart payment for Hayward have been moved backwards to encourage growers to pick as soon as fruit makes the grade for the earlier shipments. What we are seeing currently is fruit maturing generally at least 2 weeks behind average timing. We expect this trend to continue as we enter the Mainpack window although it could close up a little later on.

Tracey Chinnery

FAILURE TO MEET MINIMUM TASTE STANDARD (MTS)

A number of estimates have been made to determine the volume of fruit that won't meet the MTS. One of these estimates suggests five million trays of Hayward and two-three million trays of Sungold. However the estimates are extremely sensitive—both in growing conditions over the next few weeks and “Grower behaviour”, e.g. girdling and / or just leaving the crop on the vine which may be past its optimum brix. Some of the “at risk of failing to meet the MTS “ KPINS have already received an April girdle. This action will likely mean the vines are more at risk of Psa and some of these Growers are taking additional measures to minimize this.

Many Sungold crops are failing MTS on the smaller sizes and fortunately this is usually only a small percentage of the whole KPIN. Aongatete is well placed with its Near Infra-Red Technology (NIR) capability to deal with these failures for its Growers and in fact has “clawed back” a significant proportion of Class I fruit in the smaller Sungold sizes already. Allan Dawson

PACKING SEASON SO FAR

With the delayed start to the season some interesting things have emerged. The Sungold (GA/G3) has consistently been at a more advanced maturity in comparison to the Green and Sweet Green. So in a low sunshine year where we are over 200 hours short of sunshine for the summer period in the Western Bay of Plenty, the effect has been much greater on the Hayward Green than the Sungold. There may well be some other reasons for this performance but on the surface of it, it does appear to tick yet another box for the Sungold variety.

So, while we are 400,000 trays behind in our planned Green First Past the Post (FPP) packing, we are ahead by 100,000 of what we expected to be with Sungold.

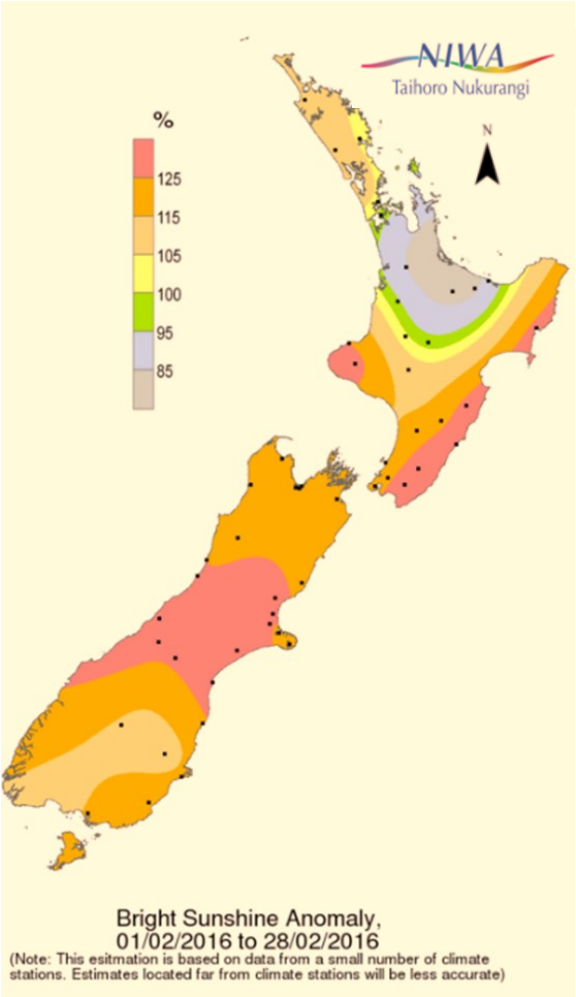
The Near Infra-Red Technology (NIR) , as per Allan's comment above, has been of great benefit this year firstly in Sungold but will also be used for low Dry Matter in Green fruit— a real advantage for Aongatete Growers.

Nell Dawson— Aongatete Operations Manager 027 549 4998

BRIGHT SUNSHINE ANOMALY 1/2/16 to 28/2/16

With the Kiwistart fruit targets not being achieved it will put more fruit into the mainpack window where storability is extremely important. To maximize storage potential fruit should be picked at brix levels of under 8. Growers need to be prepared that their dry matter may not achieve usual levels and that harvest times could easily be 2 weeks later than normal. The key will be to harvest at the optimum brix where possible.

The season has certainly had it's ups and downs. A cooler winter saw a fantastic budbreak and floral return. This was followed by a cooler pollination period for Hayward which appears to have greatly impacted on fruit shape. Summer followed with a very wet warm growing period and another key factor, greatly reduced sunlight hours for January, February and March, especially in the Western Bay of Plenty.



The image from NIWA reflects the Sunshine Anomaly for February this year and we have information pointing to similar anomalies for January to March.

While the whole Industry appears to be behind this year, the impact of the lower sunshine hours may be the key to why the Western BOP appears to be the hardest hit.

Aongatete are committed to helping our growers to achieve maximum returns for your crops. Our maturity team are working hard to assess fruit and put in clearances when they believe timing is right. Please expect testing on your orchard to be later than usual. Results of monitoring tests are available on the Agfirst website and you can contact your Grower Services reps if you have any questions. As your orchard gets closer to clearance time our maturity team will liaise with you about submitting clearance tests and discussing the results.

Aongatete Packhouse is set up better than most to help those who are faced with uncharacteristically low dry matters. With the use of our NIR Near Infra-red system we have already packed thousands of Class 1 Sungold fruit that would not have made Zespri's standards without segregation by our team.

Tracey Chinnery—Grower Services Manager 021 664 276