



7 May 2026

Weekly news update from the KPMG Agribusiness Network

Welcome to this week's issue of Field Notes, a summary of Agribusiness news from across the sector, prepared by the KPMG Agribusiness network.

Week in review

[Zespri Group's latest kiwifruit licence auctions have delivered record prices](#) [4 May, Farmers Weekly]. Unrestricted RubyRed (Red80) licences cleared at NZ \$457,000/ha, whilst unrestricted SunGold licences reached NZ \$684,000/ha, exceeding prior years values.

[Beef + Lamb New Zealand and the Meat Industry Association have released their 2026 election manifesto ahead of New Zealand's general election](#) [29 April, Beef + Lamb New Zealand]. The manifesto outlines nine policy priorities, including trade and market access, biosecurity, supply chain resilience, and regulatory certainty.

[The Government has reported that the NZ-EU Free Trade Agreement is delivering strong export growth across primary sectors, with exports to the EU increasing 29% to NZ \\$8.8 billion in the year to December 2025](#) [1 May, Rural News]. This growth was driven by strong increases in dairy (+58%), meat (+38%), and fruit and vegetable exports (+29.3%).

[Masterton District Council has agreed to consult on extending the Ōpaki water race for a further 12 months, delaying its planned closure](#) [5 May, Local Democracy Reporting]. The extension provides time to establish an independent entity and secure the necessary consents for a post-June 2027 takeover, whilst maintaining water supply for the 52 users.

In International news...

[The Australian government has released details of a mandatory wine-grape code of conduct, replacing the current voluntary system from January 2027](#) [30 April, ABC News]. The code seeks to rebalance grower-winemaker relationships by mandating pricing transparency, publishing payment terms, and binding pricing offers.

[The Farmers' Union of Wales is calling for a UK-wide food law to strengthen domestic food production amid rising global volatility](#) [1 May, FarmingUK]. The call follows a significant increase in farm input costs, with fertiliser prices up 20-30%, red diesel in some cases doubling, and energy costs continuing to rise.

[The European Commission has decided to exclude leather, hides and skins from the EU's anti-deforestation regulation following industry pressure](#) [4 May, Reuters]. The law, effective from December 2026, will still require companies selling commodities such as beef, soy, coffee, and palm oil into the EU to prove products are deforestation-free.

Spotlight stories

Innovation Spotlight: [How Robotic Dogs are Guarding Ag Assets](#) [30 April, The Scoop]

US agritech company Asylon Robotics has developed DroneDog, an autonomous robotic security service designed to protect agricultural assets and infrastructure. Customers subscribe to a managed service in which patrol routes are first manually mapped and then autonomously monitored, with human oversight via Asylon's remote command centre. DroneDog provides live video and sensor data, enabling detection of intrusions, wildlife movement, and infrastructure damage such as broken fences.

AI Spotlight: [Western states are increasingly using AI to spot wildfires](#) [5 May, Associated Press]

Pano AI, a US-based wildfire detection company, is expanding its AI-enabled camera networks across wildfire-prone western states to improve early fire detection. The technology combines high-definition cameras, satellite data, and automated monitoring, with alerts verified by human analysts. Last year, the system had detected 725 wildfires in the United States and issued alerts ~45 minutes earlier than 911 calls, enabling faster deployment of aircraft and ground crews.

This week's headlines

[New fertiliser plant in Taupō harnessing geothermal energy](#) [1 May, RNZ]

Total Nutrient Use Efficiency has opened New Zealand's first nitrogen fertiliser manufacturing facility in Taupō, using geothermal energy to produce controlled-release urea. The fertiliser releases nitrogen over 60-90 days, compared with 20-30 days for conventional urea. This steady release limits nitrogen losses from leaching during rainfall, and improves nutrient use efficiency, reducing the need for repeat applications and thus lowering fertiliser and diesel usage.

[Singapore, New Zealand sign world's first legally binding supply chain resilience pact](#) [4 May, Channel News Asia]

Singapore and New Zealand have signed the world's first legally binding bilateral supply-chain resilience agreement, committing both countries to keep essential goods flowing during crises. The Agreement on Trade in Essential Supplies covers food, fuel, healthcare, and chemical and construction materials, with both sides pledging not to impose unnecessary export restrictions. The deal will be incorporated into the existing bilateral free trade agreement once domestic approvals are completed and sets out processes for information-sharing and consultation during supply disruptions.

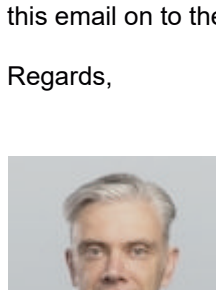
[ADAS launches tool to reveal true cost of crop rotation choices](#) [5 May, Farming UK]

British agricultural consultancy company, ADAS has launched a free Crop Planner tool to help growers assess the true financial and environmental trade-offs of different crop rotation choices. Developed under the Nitrogen Climate Smart project, the tool uses data from the Yield Enhancement Network to model impacts on greenhouse gas emissions, gross margins, nitrogen balance, and energy and protein output.

At KPMG, we believe that the future success of New Zealand depends on our ability and willingness to add value to our primary produce and take it to the world. Keeping informed on the latest news and discussions is just one of the ways to make this happen for New Zealand's most significant contributor to prosperity.

If others in your organisation would find this publication useful, please forward this email on to them. They can then [subscribe](#) to our weekly newsletter.

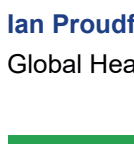
Regards,



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