



# market update



27 DECEMBER 2019

**North Island**

Hawke's Bay seems to be stuck in an easterly weather pattern and will be this way for a bit longer yet. This will slow the ripening process and perhaps return harvest dates to more normal timings. Over the post-Christmas period this could be a good thing. The rain that has been suggested has not turned up and PET, potential evapotranspiration, is in the 2-4mm range for the next few days. Growing Degree Days are OK but not as spectacular as they have been. Summer has taken a rest for now. A couple of the Bay View growers that I monitor closely are all but finished for the season, and report that the post-hail storm doom and gloom while bad is not a total disaster. In the worst cases perhaps 40% of a full crop, but with little rain there has been no rots and no splitting, so pack outs are good and there is very little wastage at retail. Hawke's Bay pack houses are taking a break for a couple of days and inventory is generally low.

**South Island**

Blenheim has survived last week and is still picking cherries and is probably getting the best weather of the three districts. A few more days until holiday time for the growers.

Central Otago has continued the pattern of damp and mild. Some seem to be weathering the situation and still sending cherries, while others will re-evaluate after the Christmas break. The wider industry is hoping that the lessons learned in 2017 are being remembered, where too much low-quality fruit impacted on the market for an extended period of time. Quote of the day; 'remember the scars of 2017'.

**cherries** LOW MED HIGH

- Volumes are perhaps a bit behind demand in the North Island but OK in the South Island. Truck drivers like to have Christmas at home with their families.
- Almost all of the Hawke's Bay harvest is done. There may be a bit of a tidy up after Christmas if the prices hold up.
- Blenheim is picking and packing Lapins and Sweetheart.
- Central Otago has Samba, Sonnet, Stella, Sam and Dawson at the end phase of harvest with Bing and Lapins in the main pick phase. There is not much being exported.

**apricots** LOW MED HIGH

- Sundrop will have a bit of a cleanup pick post-Christmas, and, Cluthagold and Trevat harvest has begun. Both are looking pretty good even with the apparent hail damage. Another new variety, to me anyway, is Gabriel.
- Limited volumes of Kyoto are available.
- As the Hawke's Bay fruit will finish soon and Central Otago is yet to start there will be a gap in supply.

**nectarines** LOW MED HIGH

- Spring Bright has mostly moved through the system as has the Early Star. Other varieties that are available include Diamond Bright, Queen Giant and Red Bright in the classic yellow flesh space. Kay Pearl and Crystal white fleshed nectarines are varieties available.
- Mid Star will be harvested shortly. Firebrite is a little way off.

**peaches** LOW MED HIGH

- Rich Lady and Coraline are the peaches of the moment. There is some of the white fleshed Donut and Alba available. I was interested to learn that peach is a harder to sell category at this time of the year and will pick up further into the holiday season. Lady Red has another pick and there is some Amber Sister still available.
- Improved Flavorcrest may start harvest at the end of the week, with Scarlet O'Hara not too far away.

**plums** LOW MED HIGH

- Plums are generally hard work and from my observations are the category that is most showing the hail damage. Rose Zee is finishing and Billington is available, Black Amber and a little Black Splendor is being picked. Purple Majesty is starting now and will carry on later in the week. A very early block of Fortune will start next week.
- The main crop plums will be with us next year.

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Note: The information supplied is based on communication with summerfruit growers, marketers, retailers and other relevant industry parties. Information supplied on cherries, apricots, nectarines, peaches and plums can alter after publishing due to unexpected weather events, market forces, and other events relevant to the industry. Seek daily advice on supply from your summerfruit supplier.