

New Zealand apple crop expected to be up on last year, labour remains a concern

Detail Introduction :

The New Zealand apple harvest got off to a slightly later start compared to the past few seasons for the earlier harvested varieties, but the later varieties appear to be similar in timing.

"Volumes of newer varieties are up and the traditional older types are down as the industry continues its transition to newer cultivars," explained Terry Meikle, CEO of NZ Apples and Pears. "Overall size is similar to the last few years."



"We expect the potential crop to be up on last year but with no backpacker workers we are relying on Pacific Island RSE workers. They have been amazing over the past few years and we owe them so much gratitude. Many businesses would not have survived without them and their remittances back home to their families have helped the Pacific economies endure through the past two years."

In 2021 the market share of New Zealand apple exports was Asia 54%, Europe 16%, UK 10%, US 8%, and East 4%.

"New Zealand growers are trying to mitigate the labour shortages by moving faster to automation and planting orchards that are more effectively harvested through augmentations systems such as platforms. We have got our RSE migrant worker programme with the Pacific back up to its pre COVID number."