

MEMORIAL SERVICE

With the Memorial Service for our five Tongan brothers lost in that tragic accident on the 2nd of August, held on Saturday 26th of November, we were all looking anxiously to the very wet skies on Friday afternoon. Well, would you believe that on Saturday the skies were clear and the sun was shining.

A crowd of just over 100 turned up to Honour 'our boys', with special guests being, Samuelas's wife Epinisa Taukatelata and children Lusitania, Kalino and Malialupe,

Sione's wife Alisi Teulaka and their child Sione

Sitavena's wife, and Koli's mother, Lamona and children Naua, Teisina, Olive and Susana,

Halani's mother Mele Gordon.

Clive led the service sharing some thoughts out of Psalm 23 and Allan gave a warm welcome to everyone including the Katikati Fire Service, some who were in attendance on that tragic night. The singing was amazing especially those harmonies.

The Local choral group "Long Journey" sang two numbers and we then dedicated the Memorial Garden to the Glory of God and to the Honour of 'our five boys'.

The service finished with Fire Chief Joe Manukau offering a stirring speech in Maori, and the bringing of gifts to the families of our boys. The families responded by the giving of gifts from Tonga to Aongatete. Fireman Rev Brendon Gibbs brought the Benediction.

We then all enjoyed a huge feast in the Aongatete Cafeteria, a special thanks to all those who brought food and helped in the kitchen.

Thank you to John Yorke, Nell and others who made the Memorial Garden a reality. Our garden is at the entrance to the Aongatete main road site, you are very welcome to stop off at any time, sit on the seat and reflect on the lives of these five wonderful men who we all miss ever so much.

Kia Kaha Arohanui.



Clive leading the Memorial service



John Yorke and Allan with families and friends

PSA

With all the wind we've been experiencing there has been an increase in Psa infection via leaf spotting on orchard so please maintain a good Psa protection programme to help combat this, and with the warmer weather we should see a decrease of new cankers and exudates occurring. Die back and leaf spotting will be the main symptoms seen out there. Remember to be vigilant on tool hygiene.

If you need any assistance with monitoring or advice on Psa control strategies, feel free to call or email one of our experienced technical team, we're happy to help.

Ethan England

Hort Technical Team Leader; 021 0215 7062; ethan@coolstore.co.nz

KIWIGREEN

With G3 flowering completed and Hayward flowering almost done, now is the time to start planning summer pest monitoring. Aongatete offers a complete KiwiGreen service that involves orchard monitoring, microscope work, and reporting for GAP compliance. A letter has been sent out offering our services for KiwiGreen pest monitoring, including leafroller and scale monitoring. Please contact me if you don't receive this letter.

Aongatete participates in special programs to Thailand and Israel which attract premiums. For your fruit to be eligible for these programs one requirement is a thorough pest monitoring program that adheres to the Zespri KiwiGreen guidelines. A copy of these guidelines can be found on the Canopy website.

WE REQUIRE YOUR FRUIT SET DATES FOR ALL VARIETIES, this is so we can correctly schedule the monitoring programme. We do ask that even if you do not require our pest monitoring services, you still return your Fruit Set Date to us for future planning and spray diary purposes.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to get in touch with our technical team.

Ethan England

Hort Technical Team Leader; 021 0215 7062; ethan@coolstore.co.nz



Magnified image of Greedy Scale

POLLINATION OBSERVATIONS

With the last day of November coinciding with the last drop of beehives into our late flowering Hayward orchards it's time to reflect on how everything has gone.

G3
The majority of our local orchards were in full bloom by the end of the first week of November. Orchards at altitude and in late areas followed suit once they started flowering – reaching full bloom within 2-3 days of 20% flowering.

The synchronicity between male and female flowers was near perfect this year – high floral numbers on both M33 and M91 males resulted in plenty of freshly opened flower throughout all stages of flowering.

Bee activity was fantastic in G3 orchards – this is a trend that has been noticed since trials began on the variety. Given the level of bee activity that can be seen before hives are introduced to the orchard some growers are considering lowering the stocking rate of hives per hectare. Keep an eye out for Plant and Food's research on this topic.

Early Hayward

Early November saw some Hayward orchards beginning to flower – precocious flowering was seen in older varieties of males (such as Matua, M56) with some in full bloom before females reached 20% open.

Favourable weather conditions, for the most part, have resulted in a good fruit set with the flower development and fruit set being fairly uniform.

Mainpack/Late Hayward

Wind has been an issue for most local orchards this year – with late flowering orchards being the most vulnerable. Young growth, in comparison to earlier sites, has been damaged with some more severe cases expressing Psa symptoms following the weather events.

Late Hayward (particularly at altitude) has been slower to develop once flowering begins – estimated to reach full bloom about 7 days following 20% flower open.

Areas within an orchard that flower either much earlier or later than the norm need to be noted as this could result in either a pollination issue or fruit variability during maturity testing.

Beehives

Hives are audited as part of our pollination process and results have shown that despite difficult conditions during early spring hives used by Aongatete have been well above the minimum standards.

Pollen

There is some concern around pollen supply for next year due to lower male flower numbers this year and lower than normal recovery rates at pollen milling facilities.

Whilst our start point for next year will be similar to this year – we encourage growers to explore options around purchasing pollen as security.



Males in full flower

Fruitset Date

Please ensure that you have recorded your fruitset date or at least your full bloom date. This is a crucial date for girdle timing, KiwiGreen monitoring and ensuring that spraying over summer is done within the appropriate timeframe,

Aaron Hokopaura

GETTING STARTED ON 2017

A couple of things for next year....

I realise Xmas shopping is probably to front of mind for most growers, but we had a meeting last week at which next year's harvest was discussed, and yes, I know it's still only 2016 but it is only 4 short months until we fire up the tractors, clean out the bins and don the picking bags.

Loadout Areas

I'm sure most of you have relegated last year's harvest to a distant memory but it's never too early to begin preparation. One of the major challenges for us were orchard load out areas. We had significant issues with poorly (or totally unprepared) load out areas, in particular areas too small for the volume of fruit and size of orchard, as well as areas not prepared with a sound all weather base.

Muddy loadout pads and dangerous truck and tractor access were major concerns from last year, and not only impacted on fruit quality through contamination of fruit but posed risks to worker health and safety with machinery and people working in difficult conditions. This year we will be moving to plastic bins for the majority of harvesting, and while they provide significant improvements in fruit quality and transportation logistics, they do need a level compact load out pad to gain the most value.

Over the coming summer months is the ideal time to undertake work on your loadout area. In particular if you are needing to do some ground work prior to metaling the base. Metal applied now also has time to settle and compact through use. If you are considering doing work please also think of hazards that exist around your loadout area - such as banks or tracks – and make sure these are clearly marked and fenced off. If you need to level your site now is a good time to do this also as it allows time for the ground to settle and compact.

If you would like any advice or wish to talk about what would work best on your orchard, please feel free to contact me.

A well prepared load out yard



Harvest Tractor Drivers

On a slightly different matter we are currently recruiting tractor drivers for our 2017 harvest. If anyone is looking for work from early March to early June driving a bin trailer tractor, we would be keen to hear from you. Ideally we are looking for experienced tractor drivers who can work flexible hours and have their own transport. The work is primarily in the local Katikati area. If you are interested, or know of someone who might be please get in touch.



Bruno Rootstock 2017

A quick reminder also that now is the time to order your Bruno Rootstock for 2017, changes to KVH Nursery registration and accreditation procedures have seen a reduction in the number of nurseries who are growing rootstock for open market supply and securing plants is getting more difficult, we already know of one major supplier who has sold out for next year!! It's also critical to plan your plant replacement programme to ensure you have good healthy rootstock coming on for re-grafting and replacement purposes.

If you would like us to order some rootstock on your behalf please give me a call as soon as possible.

On behalf of the Hort Department we would like to wish you all a great Christmas, and a prosperous New Year and look forward to working with you for a successful 2017.

Derek Edwards
Hort Business Manager, 027 543 0741