

SUSTAINABLE AGRICHEMICALS FOR MINOR CROPS

PROJECT PART-FUNDED BY THE SUSTAINABLE FARMING FUND

The Sustainable Farming Fund is investing in a project that seeks to gain registration of newer, more selective types of chemicals that will fit into integrated pest management programmes and will be suitable for growing export-quality minor crops.

THE ISSUE OR OPPORTUNITY

Growers need to find alternatives to replace some older, less environmentally friendly agrichemicals they've been using to control pests and diseases.

However, for minor crops such as blueberries, avocados, persimmons, broccoli and celery the chemical companies are unlikely to be able to make enough money from sales of agrichemicals to cover the cost of getting the new chemicals researched and registered.

The Sustainable Farming Fund is investing in a project that seeks to gain registration of newer, more selective types of chemicals that will fit into integrated pest management programmes and will be suitable for helping grow export-quality minor crops into the future.

It builds on a previous Sustainable Farming Fund project during which the smaller horticulture product groups assessed current options and what problematic pests and diseases they needed new chemicals to control.

Crucially, this latest project brings together all key parties, including 12 grower groups, 6 agrichemical companies and the Government regulator – the Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicine (ACVM) service within the Ministry for Primary Industries.

Wellington-based company Market Access Solutionz is co-ordinating the project.

Part of the current project is focused on refining current Government policy to make registration more efficient, less costly and more achievable for small industry groups.

The project leaders expect that more than 20 new label claims should be made as a result of this work over three years.

An added benefit of this project is interest from other countries and the possibility of international collaboration in future.

RESULTS TO DATE

Six field trials are being conducted in the first year of the study. Crops were grown according to typical commercial practice (January to May 2012), but using the new agrichemicals, and then the harvested product is being tested for presence of residues. Three companies are running trials and a laboratory is doing the testing.

It is expected that at least five new label claims should result from the first year of trials.

AT A GLANCE

SFF project	11/053 Registration of sustainable agrichemicals for minor crops SFF investment: \$476,450
Other cash contributors	Product groups: HortNZ Vegetable Product Groups, Avocado Industry Council, NZ Citrus Growers, Passionfruit Growers Assoc., Tamarillo Growers, Persimmon Industry Council, Blueberries NZ, Feijoa Growers Assn Chemical companies: BASF, Bayer, Dow Agrosiences, DuPont, Syngenta, Nufarm
Total project value (including in-kind contributions): \$1.17 million	

June 2012

