



SUSTAINABLE AGRICHEMICALS FOR 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, six 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 were conducted in the first year of the study and are currently in the registration process. A further four trials are underway in the second year and plans are in place for further trials in 2013/14. In the trials crops are grown according to typical commercial practice but using the new agrichemicals. The harvested product is being tested for presence of residues. Three companies are running trials and two laboratories are doing the testing.

The first label claim from the year one trials is expected by the end of June 2013 and others will follow as the registration process concludes. The project is working well and has the full support of all participants.

AT A GLANCE

SFF project	11/053 Registration of sustainable agrichemicals for minor crops SFF investment: \$476 450
Other cash and in-kind 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

PROJECT PART-FUNDED BY THE SUSTAINABLE FARMING FUND

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