

Joint Media Release

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TAKING THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO A NEW LEVEL – AgroFresh and Plant & Food Research

Two organisations that have worked together in New Zealand for more than 14 years to help grow the apple industry are taking their relationship to a new level in establishing a formal Science, Technology and Business Co-operation Agreement.

The Agreement is seen as a win-win for **AgroFresh** and **Plant & Food Research** as they aim to leverage their strengths in adding value to and growing New Zealand’s horticulture exports, especially apples and kiwifruit.

As part of the Agreement a new Technical Support Scientist employed by Plant & Food Research will work primarily on AgroFresh applied research and technology assessment projects, in support of its customers, as well as fundamental science in which AgroFresh has an interest, such as the effects of ethylene on fruit quality.

In celebrating the Agreement in Hastings today AgroFresh and Plant & Food Research spokespersons Nick Sanders and TC Chadderton (respectively) agreed: “The success of our Agreement will be judged on the ability of New Zealand growers to optimise the use of proprietary technology that grows the Pipfruit Industry”.

AgroFresh is a global leader in the development and provision of proprietary technologies and products for horticulture markets. Its signature post-harvest technology, SmartFresh™ has been used commercially in New Zealand for 12 seasons with stored apples to slow respiration and ripening to maintain fruit quality. It is also used with kiwifruit.

Plant & Food Research is a New Zealand-based science company recognised globally for the quality of its research, development and technical support services to the horticulture industry and has undertaken research with AgroFresh for more than 14 years, initially in support of the registration of AgroFresh’s SmartFresh technology in New Zealand. In subsequent years Plant & Food Research has been engaged on a project-by-project basis to refine the use recommendations of SmartFresh by apple varieties, including for the challenging Braeburn and Cox’s Orange Pippin varieties, as well as demonstrating the technology’s value to customers in managing superficial scald and reducing energy costs.

Under this Agreement, Plant & Food Research will make a dedicated scientist available to work with AgroFresh and its customers, and AgroFresh will make its global research network available to the Institute. The participating parties believe it establishes a solid platform for co-operatively supporting their mutual customers and sustaining the growth New Zealand’s horticulture.

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Plant & Food Research Operations Manager, Food Innovation, TC Chadderton says the agreement represents the start of a new era in its relationship with AgroFresh, allowing the businesses to combine global and local knowledge of a proprietary technology that represents the biggest advance in storage and shelf-life technology for decades.

“We have one common goal in mind: Working with the customers of AgroFresh to optimise their use and value of SmartFresh and other related AgroFresh technologies. This Agreement will allow us to do this without detriment to our wider obligations to support the development of New Zealand’s horticulture industry.”

AgroFresh Commercial Regional Manager, Australia & New Zealand, Nick Sanders says the new relationship with Plant & Food Research as defined in the text and spirit of their Agreement is to ensure AgroFresh can meet customers’ technical expectations and maximise the value of their harvests.

“We want to better meet their technical needs which we have identified in discussion with customers. This is a step beyond the research we do and the seminars we hold.

“Delivering a superior fruit-eating experience and gaining repeat business requires that growers and marketers actively manage the entire process from harvest to consumer. As a supplier of the leading edge SmartFresh technology we have a role here, which Plant & Food Research can help us satisfy in a real and scientifically-robust way.

“The success of New Zealand’s horticulture and the contribution it makes to the economy have come out of the shadows in recent years. Sustaining that growth and continuing AgroFresh’s success in New Zealand is dependent on our ability to help make growers and export more successful.”

Sanders says Plant & Food Research is already helping AgroFresh with the development of its pre-harvest technology, Harvista.

“We plan to conclude trials in the forthcoming seasons that will lead to its registration and commercial application in New Zealand.”

The Agreement was celebrated at a small function involving some of AgroFresh’s customers and other stakeholders at Plant & Food Research’s facility in Havelock North.

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