

UPDATE ONE

August 2024



The Aotearoa Horticulture Action Plan – a vehicle for collective progress

**GROWING
TOGETHER
2035**

Aotearoa Horticulture Action
Plan

The Aotearoa Horticulture Action Plan – a vehicle for collective progress

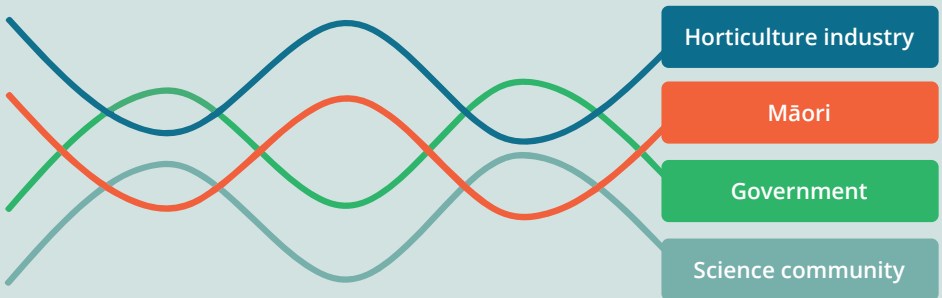
The Aotearoa Horticulture Action Plan (AHAP) was launched in 2023 to provide a framework for sector transformation. It acts as a guiding compass to achieve the ambitious goal of *doubling the farmgate value of horticultural production by 2035 in a way that improves prosperity for our people and protects our environment*.

The plan was developed collectively, with input from industry, government, Māori and research providers. It belongs to everyone involved in the New Zealand horticulture sector.

The quad partnership framework

The plan enables organisations and individuals associated with the industry to align their efforts and investment towards a series of united actions to grow the horticulture sector sustainably.

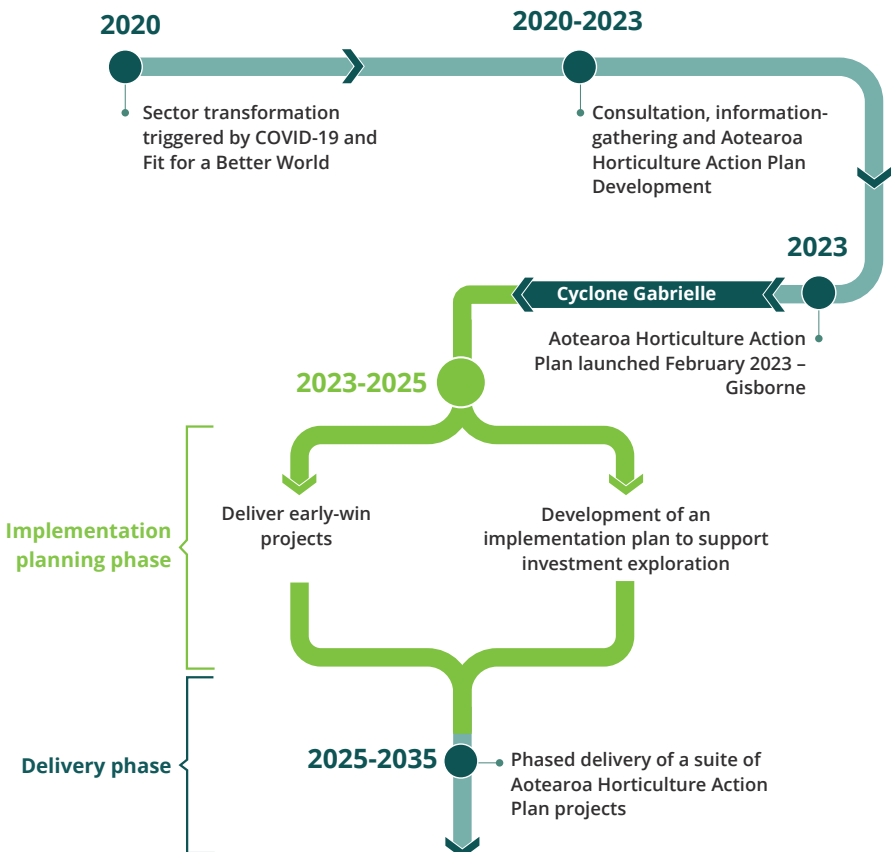
Benefits from the framework are being seen already – many partners and stakeholders are actively aligning their strategic plans and work programmes to deliver on the collective aspirations of the AHAP.



The journey to date

An initiative of this size and nature requires a collaborative and flexible approach. The AHAP is much too big for one entity to do it all, and that was never the intention. Many entities, stakeholders and partners are involved in New Zealand’s horticulture sector. There is a role for everyone to contribute to the Plan.

Since the launch, core AHAP activities have been driven by a small collaborative programme team, spanning industry, government and science. Good progress has been made on two concurrent streams of AHAP work: delivery of a suite of early-win projects, and development of the wider implementation plan to scope priority projects and seek investment to deliver these.



Current operating environment

Shortly after the launch, growers were hit by adverse weather events that delayed the start of the programme as the industry's focus was on recovery. This meant that, in the short term, government and industry funding was also redirected to cyclone recovery and not readily available for a strategic long-term programme such as the AHAP. However, these events reinforced the need for a collaborative strategy to build a resilient sector that could shoulder further climatic events.

The focus of the Government on easing the burden of regulation, re-examining the rules for gene technology, and doubling the value of exports over the next decade aligns with the actions identified in the AHAP. In addition, the primary sector has strong representation at the heart of government with four agricultural Ministers and, for the first time, a dedicated horticulture Minister.

“The coalition Government has an ambitious goal to double the value of exports over the next decade. It’s great to see that the horticulture sector already has a collective vision to achieve sustainable growth through the Aotearoa Horticulture Action Plan. I look forward to seeing it come to fruition.”

Hon Nicola Grigg,
Associate Minister of Agriculture



Four types of projects fall under the AHAP umbrella



Early-win projects: Short and sharp projects that deliver on an AHAP action that can be completed with existing resource during the implementation planning phase.
UNDERWAY NOW.



Aligned partner projects: AHAP-relevant project work that is underway or planned across industry, government, Māori and the science community that delivers against the AHAP outcomes. These self-sufficient pieces of work will sit alongside the AHAP and their important contribution to AHAP outcomes will be noted.
UNDERWAY NOW.



Impactful discrete projects: Smaller-scale tangible projects identified and delivered via the AHAP programme that provide strategic gains towards AHAP outcomes.
NEXT.



Transformational projects: A suite of projects scoped and initiated by the AHAP programme to fill identified gaps – areas of the AHAP where there is little or no significant work underway and where the most need / potential for impact has been identified.
NEXT.

Achievements to date

The programme team has:

1. **Completed a stocktake** – this has collated the work that is already underway across government, science, Māori and industry that supports AHAP priorities as well as recently completed projects. This will ensure effort is not duplicated. The stocktake revealed that there is a significant amount of good work taking place.
2. **Generated a gap analysis** – the analysis has highlighted parts of the plan where activity has been limited to date, allowing areas of most need and potential for impact to be identified.
3. **Developed an evaluation framework** – this will measure progress and evaluate outcomes from the programme over time.

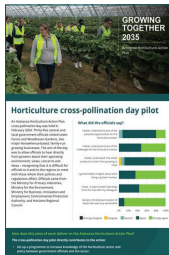
In addition, five early-win projects have been completed via the AHAP:

PickNZ website update



Contributes to key priority 5.1

Cross-pollination day pilot



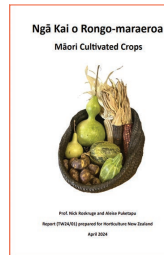
Contributes to key priority 1.4

Stand out marketable attributes



Contributes to key priorities 4.4, 2.2

Cultivated Māori crops reference list



Contributes to key priorities 2.2, 3.5

National labour Governance Group



Contributes to key priority 5.2



The next leg of the journey

The next step is to prioritise the gaps identified and scope and cost a suite of AHAP projects to seek funding. The overarching goal of this phase is to prepare for the delivery phase – the 2025–2035 ‘decade of delivery’. Now is the time to transition from aspiration to implementation.

AHAP actions and outcomes are grouped under five pillars



**Grow
sustainably**



Optimise value



**Māori are strong
in horticulture**



**Underpinned
by science and
knowledge**



Nurture people

The AHAP has **24** key priority areas, **56** outcomes, **76** actions.



**80+ crops within scope
of the AHAP**

New Zealand grown fruit,
vegetables and nuts for human
consumption



**22+ stakeholder
engagement presentations**

13+ in 2023
9 so far in 2024



11 early-win projects

5 complete
6 underway



1 decade (2025–2035)

Remaining lifespan of the plan



22 indicators

developed to track AHAP
impact over time

What have the stocktake and gap analysis revealed?

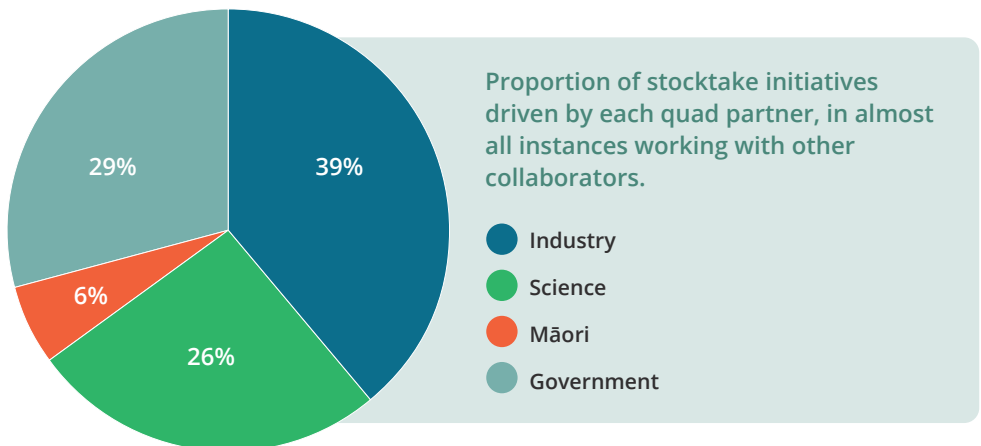
The stocktake and gap analysis have provided a range of useful insights that will inform next steps. While the information used to inform the stocktake and gap analysis was comprehensive, there is still more data to capture.

Significant efforts are already underway

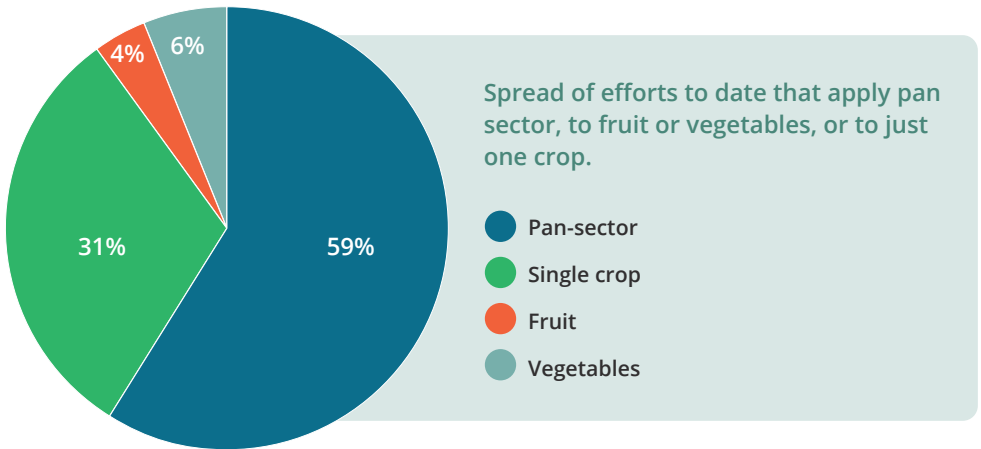
The stocktake highlighted that there is a plethora of work taking place across industry, government, Māori and the science community that delivers on the AHAP. The stocktake process identified over 530 discrete initiatives (complete, underway or planned) that align with AHAP actions. The stocktake and subsequent gap analysis showed that a large portion of AHAP actions are well in-hand with activities already underway. These areas are therefore not likely to be a focus of the implementation plan.

Collaboration is common

There are many players operating in the horticulture environment. Over 130 entities (spanning industry, Māori, science, government and more) were identified as being involved with initiatives captured by the stocktake. Almost all initiatives identified are collaborative, involving two or more parties, often from different parts of the quad partnership.



There are many cases where existing work undertaken by a crop or region could be used as a template or case study for extending to other regions/crops.



Gaps are spread across the quad partnership

Gaps have been identified across all five pillars. The nature of the gaps is variable. Some of the gaps are large (complex issue, pan-sector), some are medium (require some scoping, relevant to a portion of the sector), some are small (targeted, relatively well-defined and clear-cut or relevant to a small portion of the sector).

Many gaps, particularly those that are small or medium, logically fall within the remit of a quad partner. It will likely be most efficient and appropriate for the relevant entity or organisation to progress the action as an aligned partner project.

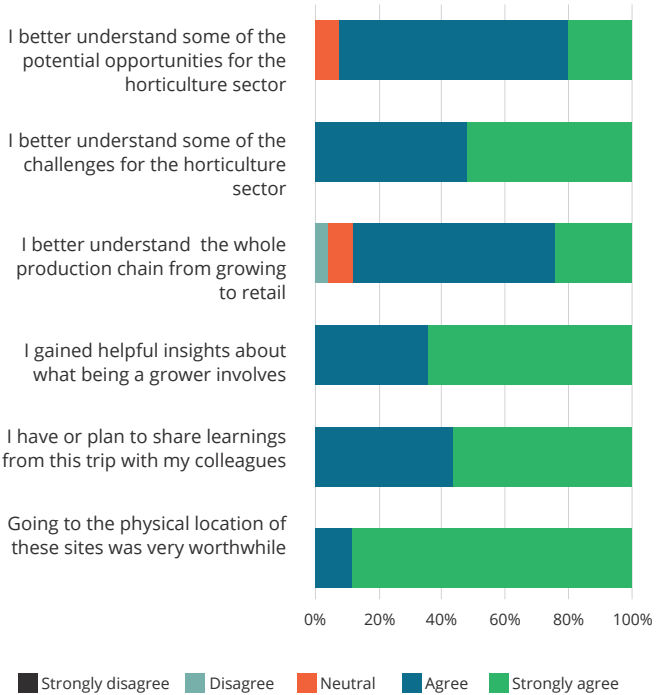
The AHAP programme intends to focus on large projects with no logical lead entity, and where there is most potential for impact.



Horticulture cross-pollination day pilot

An Aotearoa Horticulture Action Plan cross-pollination day was held in February 2024. Thirty-five central and local government officials visited Lewis Farms and Woodhaven Gardens, two major Horowhenua-based, family-run growing businesses. The aim of the day was to allow officials to hear directly from growers about their operating environment, views, concerns and ideas – recognising that it is difficult for officials to travel to the regions to meet with those whom their policies and regulations affect. Officials came from the Ministry for Primary Industries, Ministry for the Environment, Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment, Environmental Protection Authority, and Horizons Regional Council.

What did the officials say?



The cross-pollination day pilot directly contributes to the AHAP action:

- Set up a programme to increase knowledge of the horticulture sector and policy between government officials and the sector.



Aligned partner project – Growing Change

Growing Change is a collaborative project co-funded by the Ministry for the Environment and Horticulture New Zealand and is now entering its final year of a three-year initiative.

The Growing Change project helps growers to navigate Resource Management (Freshwater Farm Plan) Regulations. Freshwater farm plans are a way for growers to identify and manage freshwater risks from their growing operation using a toolbox of actions. On-farm actions are tailored to each farm based on the landscape, activities, and local catchment. Growing Change is delivering catchment projects to support growers with freshwater farm plans in 10 regions. There are dedicated Regional Extension Officers to support growers through the catchment projects. By signing up, growers receive the following support free of charge:

- NZGAP Environment Management System (EMS) add-on registration and mapping
- One-on-one advisor support time to complete the EMS add-on (available to all GAP (Good Agricultural Practice) certified growers)
- Technical workshops for additional support.



Feedback from growers and product groups has been overwhelmingly positive, with many adopting proactive measures in environmental farm planning. This includes integrating the GAP assurance programme's EMS add-on, which aids in documenting mitigation strategies in a GAP-farm environment plan (FEP) to comply with freshwater farm plans.

The training programme under development is another crucial component, aiming to educate growers, horticulture advisors, and auditors on managing freshwater risks. This micro-credential is being designed in partnership with Muka Tangata, the Food and Fibre Workforce Development Council, and Te Pūkenga Primary ITO, ensuring that the skills standards and learning outcomes are rooted in industry environmental codes of practice.

The Growing Change project directly contributes to two AHAP actions:

- Ensure extension and training programmes are in place to meet regional needs
- Maximise use of existing industry and global assurance schemes that reduce the compliance burden and achieve outcomes for social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing.

How will success be evaluated?

The AHAP's goal is ambitious and important: *To double the value of horticultural production by 2035 in a way that improves prosperity for our people and protects our environment.*

The AHAP programme team has defined a set of measures (or indicators) to track changes in the wider sector that relate to the five pillars in the AHAP. These measures will help the sector to understand the direction of travel and, ultimately, whether horticulture is making progress towards the AHAP's goal. This includes the way horticultural crops are grown (people, finances, environment, inputs, knowledge and skills), the crops that are produced (volumes and value), and the wider context of the sector (policy, workforce).

These measures will be reported on periodically over the lifespan of the AHAP and will detect change across the horticulture value chain (from inputs to impacts).

Monitoring progress will help keep the AHAP on track, the sector informed and help identify other actions needed to support and accelerate progress.






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Indicators

of progress against the five AHAP pillars

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Main indicator</p>	 <p>Grow sustainably Number of growers and area with GAP certification.</p>	 <p>Optimise value Value of horticulture exports</p>	 <p>Māori are strong in horticulture Māori farms share of NZ total horticulture land area</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Secondary indicators</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of growers and area with GAP fresh-water farm plan certification • Covered crop emissions • Number of new crop protection tools available in NZ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total area in horticulture production • Changes in market access • Farmgate value of products • Domestic value of fruit and vegetables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value of Māori horticulture farms • Number of Māori horticulture businesses • Number of Māori in horticulture • Māori representation across product groups
<p>Case studies and project-specific indicators In-depth case studies and indicators for specific AHAP linked project/s and their impact</p>			



Underpinned by science and knowledge

Change in number/value of tier 1, 2 and 3 crops



Nurture people

Number of growers and workers covered by GAP social practice certification

- Number and type of Plant Variety Rights filed and granted
- Annual investment in public and co-funded R&D and breeding in horticulture
- Productivity per person in horticulture sector
- Number of horticulture workers
- Workforce by resident status and visa type (NZ/RSE/visas)
- Horticulture qualification enrolments



How can you be involved?

There are many ways to contribute to the AHAP. These include:

- Being an AHAP advocate and raising awareness of the plan amongst your networks
- Aligning your work programmes with the AHAP actions wherever possible
- Talking with members of your product group about ways to support the AHAP, including by providing your input, views and expertise when needed
- Contributing resources (funding / people) for relevant AHAP projects
- Proactively connecting with the AHAP programme team about any new projects or ideas that will deliver against an AHAP outcome
- Sharing your research and findings across the sector
- Finding like-minded people in the sector to collaborate with on projects by combining resources and knowledge.

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For more information visit

www.hortnz.co.nz/about-us/aotearoa-horticulture-action-plan/
or contact the AHAP Programme Manager, Anna Rathé.