

Delytics Helps Zespri Predict Right Colour, Taste and Time



The decision support tools provided by Delytics have added significant value to Zespri International Limited by helping growers in multiple countries predict the right time to pick three varieties of Gold kiwifruit.

By making it easy for growers to determine the best time to harvest for optimum colour and firmness, the decision support tools are helping Zespri secure markets early and maintain a consistent quality for their high value Gold crop.

Zespri International General Manager of Science and Innovation, Dr David Tanner, says the majority of Zespri's growth has come from their Gold kiwifruit business.

“Being able to segregate our crop so we can find the portions of the crop that are ready to harvest early provides significant value for Zespri.”

He says, “Delytics, through its decision support tools have been integral in achieving much of this growth by allowing our Gold industry to take our fruit off the vine earlier and deliver them to market, meeting the market need of right colour, right taste and right time.”

Zespri is the world's largest marketer of kiwifruit, supplying approximately 350,000 tonnes of kiwifruit into 60 countries each year.

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Dr David Tanner, Zespri International General Manager of Science and Innovation.

harvest early provides significant value for Zespri. We need to have an early season and a late season, and the Delytics tools give us the ability to make the right inventory management decisions to achieve that. If we had to wait until an average crop was ready we would miss some opportunities.”

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The Delytics team have been working with Zespri since 2004. They were initially engaged to help predict colour development for the Hort 16A Gold variety. They have since customised the decision support tools they developed for Hort 16A Gold to suit the newer less PSA-prone Gold varieties, Gold 3 and Gold 9.

Dr Tanner says the Delytics team's ability to tailor their decision support tools to suit specific cultivars has been vitally important for Zespri.



The Delytics decision support tools are helping Zespri optimise the colour and firmness of their Gold kiwifruit.

He says, "Every cultivar is different. Whilst they all sit in the Gold category for us, one is an earlier maturing and earlier colouring gold-fleshed variety than one of the others so we needed adaptable systems and defined parameters for each variety. The Delytics team were able to adapt the system reasonably quickly and have allowed us to have the same general maturity clearance classification system with each sub-component focused on the individual variety."

The key focus of the customised decision support systems is to get the colour right for each cultivar without the kiwifruit getting too soft. The system analyses complex crop data collected on orchards and turns it into easily interpreted graphs and harvest date predictions. The information provided by the system has been integrated into the maturity clearance reports provided to kiwifruit growers.

Dr Tanner says, "The decision support tools Delytics has delivered for us have changed the way we do business. A grower can take a quick look at the graphs and know whether it's a good idea to harvest the crop now or wait for it to develop more sugar content or colour to give more value to the market. If the graphs indicate the fruit is going to get too soft before the colour is right, the growers will likely make the call to harvest the fruit

greener and let it colour off the vine. Some people in our industry would be lost without these tools."

The Delytics® decision support tools are available to all horticultural businesses through a user friendly web-based platform that can be easily adapted to suit any crop variety. These tools can help growers and packers achieve similar benefits to Zespri by making it easy to identify the right time to pick fruit that will consistently meet crop quality specifications.

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Dr Tanner says, "Decision support system tool development is mission critical for us. It takes complex answers and problems and builds them in as systems and processes that our industry can utilise to make better decisions about inventory management, about harvest, about delivery of fruit to market."

"Zespri Innovation have absolute confidence in the Delytics team to deliver and highly recommend them to other primary industries."



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