

## Horticulture New Zealand calls for sector to be included in Emissions Reduction Plan

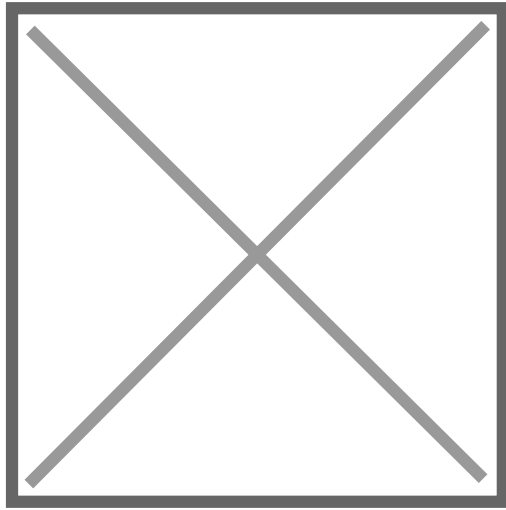
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Horticulture New Zealand (HortNZ) is urging the Government to incorporate the horticulture sector into its second Emissions Reduction Plan. The current plan, outlining actions to reduce emissions between 2026 and 2030, makes no mention of horticulture, fruits, or vegetables.



“It is concerning that the Emissions Reduction Plan (ERP2) overlooks horticulture entirely. The sector is crucial for meeting emissions reduction targets and supporting land-use change to horticulture is one of the many solutions New Zealand should be leveraging. Horticulture is already a low-emissions land use that provides food for New Zealanders and the global market, contributing \$7.48 billion in value across domestic and export markets. This is achieved on less than 0.1% of New Zealand's land area while accounting for only 1.1% of the country's greenhouse gas emissions. To ensure a low-risk pathway to net-zero, the Government should develop a diverse portfolio of emissions reduction policies, rather than relying heavily on a few uncertain technological advances” explains Michelle Sands, acting chief executive of HortNZ.

The Climate Change Commission has included 14,000 hectares of land use to horticulture in its demonstration path to meet the second emissions budget. HortNZ wants ERP2 to include clear policy direction supporting this transition. This should involve recognising diversification into horticulture as a key policy and elevating 'enabling the supply of fresh fruits and vegetables' to a matter of national importance under the Resource Management Act (RMA) and its replacement legislation. Additionally, ERP2 include the policy aim to establish a national framework for commercial vegetable production to address the challenges posed by unworkable regional regulations.

With the Government Investment in Decarbonising Industry (GIDI) Fund officially disestablished under ERP2, HortNZ is also calling for the creation of a new fund to reinvest Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) proceeds into greenhouse decarbonisation.

“There is an urgent need for policy mechanisms that facilitate horticultural expansion as a strategy for low-emissions food production, and that provide resources for the sector to further decarbonise. HortNZ urges the Government to commit to doubling the horticulture sector's value by 2035 as part of its emissions reduction strategy, aligning with the goals of the Aotearoa Horticulture Action Plan, a strategy co-owned by government, industry, science, and Māori” adds Sands.

Horticulture New Zealand represents the interests of approximately 4,500+ commercial fruit and vegetable growers across the country, who produce around 100 different fruit and vegetables. The horticultural sector supports over 40,000 jobs.