

News Release: NZ seed exports worth \$250 million

5 February 2021

The value of New Zealand seed exports increased by 4.6% in 2020 compared to a year earlier, to record \$250m in receipts according to the NZ Grain & Seed Trade Association (NZGSTA).

Latest data issued by StatsNZ, shows seed export values have grown 44% from \$173m five years ago.

Whilst NZ exports more than 30 different seed types internationally pasture seed and vegetable seed were the key export categories.

Ryegrass and clover seed provided \$131m in sales.

Vegetable seed namely carrot seed, radish and beet seed and other brassica seed contributed \$114m.

And cereal seed earned a further \$5m.

More than 80% of NZs seed production is in the Canterbury region centred in and around the Ashburton district encompassing almost 40,000 hectares of certified crop.

Key markets for kiwi-seed include Continental Europe, Australia, the USA, China and Japan. Together they account for around 75% of the total exports.

NZ Grain and Seed Trade Association general manager Thomas Chin says despite the COVID-19 pandemic, NZ seed exports returned a fantastic result for the NZ economy which indicates the underlying importance of the sector to the country.

“During the COVID-19 lockdown period the seed trade was deemed an essential business and remained in operation to supply seed to both domestic and overseas markets.

“Importantly the seed industry will remain a driving force in the government’s post-Covid economic recovery strategy”.

Chin adds that the key to fostering a healthy export pipeline is having access to the very best seed for multiplication and plant breeding and research purposes. The Government’s imminent reform of the Plant Variety Rights Act will be critical to the sector’s future success and that of our farmers, growers and users of seed products and crops.

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