

TROPICAL FRUIT

Organisations

- Tropical Fruit Growers of New Zealand (TFGNZ)
- Grower2Grower
- Bananas of New Zealand Aotearoa (BONZA)
- Other...



Visions

Tropical Fruit Growers of NZ Reclaiming the tropical fruit market with homegrown

BONZA ...on a mission to establish a New Zealand banana industry – right from growing the fruit to marketing and product development

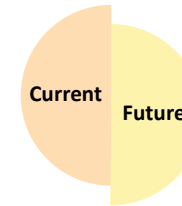
25ha
Of commercial bananas growing in Northland (approx.)

72,000 tonnes
Bananas imported into NZ every year (approx.)

10-15 years
Time before New Zealand could become self-sufficient in bananas if continue planting (approx.)

These include:

- Incredible Edibles, Tallyman Bananas & other suppliers
- NorthTec
- Tai Pukenga Ltd (Gisborne) and AgResearch joint venture



- MBIE
- NZTE
- Ngawha Innovation and Enterprise Park
- ...are there others?

Collaborators



Initiatives

Previous National Northland

- Tropical Fruit Growers of NZ – founded in 2017 to serve commercial and hobby growers; coordinated purchase and distribution of banana stems to members in Northland; strong presence at A&P shows
- BONZA – founded in 2019 in Whangarei, as a group of colleagues wanting to develop a banana industry in NZ

Current

- Tallyman Bananas – selling banana stems for small or large plantations; providing advice; supplying local restaurants and cafes
- BONZA – R&D e.g. developing tissue culture, testing growing methods and systems, conducting product trials including organics
- Northland Inc – Savour Northland, promoting Northland's food & beverage industry

Planned

- TFNZ – Developing new plantations, increasing synergies with dairy/beef (e.g. cattle fodder), working with iwi to plant bananas, e.g. in Rawhiti; annual stem sales






Challenges

- **People** – TFGNZ is currently run by volunteers; some different perspectives within the wider sector on a way forward
- **Supply** – hard to obtain source banana plants
- **Wind** – protecting bananas from damaging wind (banana trees only produce about one leaf per month)
- **Infrastructure** – protected cropping (greenhouses) and supplementary heating is likely to be required to produce many tropical crops effectively – especially pineapples
- **Competition** – high quality local banana varieties would be competing against cheaper imported bananas
- **Production systems** – lack of scalable banana production systems in NZ (although potential for yields to be scaled up at an acceptable price)
- **Biosecurity** – the risk of fruit fly incursion, pests e.g. rats

Opportunities

- **Growing membership** – TFGNZ membership has soared
- **Supplying NZ** – NorthTec economic study highlighted positive impact of coordinating & increasing Northland banana production to supply bulk of NZ's requirements
- **Climate** – Northland growers have already proved that the climate can successfully grow pineapples, bananas, sugar cane & coffee on a commercial scale
- **Locally grown benefits** – e.g. more nutritious
- **Synergies with dairy** – banana plantations can help clean surroundings of dairy effluent ponds; all parts of the plant are edible for cattle, so could potentially replace imported stockfeed e.g. PKE
- **Investment** – is it time for central government to invest?

Potential cross-sector collaboration

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 - **Make the most of synergies** – collaborate with dairy, beef & sheep sectors by using banana plantations to help clean waterways & the surrounds of effluent ponds, as well as providing feed for cattle & improving biodiversity; opportunities for diverse production systems
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 - **Identify cost-benefit of establishing a freeze-drying processing plant in Northland** – collaborate with other sectors that might also be able to benefit from such infrastructure, e.g. berryfruit, citrus, kiwifruit, avocado etc.
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 - **Establish access to local markets** – could work with the vegetables sector to provide cafes and restaurants with fresh local produce (currently all word of mouth and farmers markets)
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 - **Share learnings with other niche sectors in NZ** – through collaborating with MBIE and/or NZTE
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 - **Undertake R&D** – could tropical fruit work with Ngawha Innovation and Enterprise Park, for example to explore potential to grow sugar cane, mangoes and papaya (hydroponically) in greenhouses?

References

