

### TOP REGIONAL INSIGHTS



**The seasonal nature of Horticulture drives the key workforce issues across the region.** The lack of permanent employment impacts the sector by making it difficult to attract and retain local workers. This is particularly stark when factoring in that current demand for labour outstrips supply and is forecast to continue doing so for some time.

**The current business model is based on this short-term operation.** This is problematic for workers planning their futures and for businesses who are constantly scrambling to fill gaps in their workforce. This has historically been the case, however it is surfacing more since the border closure as the sector found one of its main seasonal labour pools restricted.

**The Kiwifruit sector has put significant effort to shift reliance away from migrants and onto locals.** This is mitigating the effect of the border closure to some extent. This means kiwifruit is faring better than other sectors in the region.

**Over 70% of the Kiwifruit sector's permanent staff are locals.** This is a demonstrable change for that sector and the wider industry is actively working to replicate the same re-balancing within its seasonal workforce. This is happening through a number of initiatives such as career progression co-ordinators and an attraction strategy. However, underpinning this are the skill shortages that remain across the industry.

### TRENDS AT A GLANCE



3.4%

Expected growth per annum in Labour demand for the sector.

0.9%

Expected growth per annum in Labour Supply for the sector.  
(Between 2020-25)



106,000

The number of Maori in the Bay of Plenty, representing 29% of the population.

9%

The share of Kiwifruit land owned by Maori Entities (nationally).



80%

The proportion of total Kiwifruit land that is in the Bay of Plenty. Northland is next largest at 4%.

11,000

The number of hectares planted in Kiwifruit in the region.

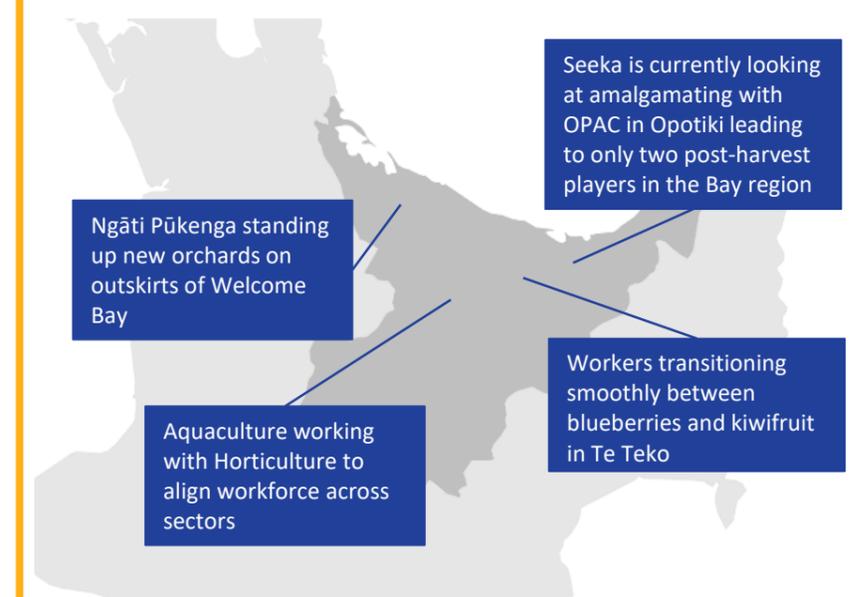
### TOP LABOUR MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

- The Kiwifruit sector is engaging widely to discuss options to mitigate the sector risks.** They are keenly aware of the limitations of the current business model and are engaging via key industry players to surface the issue internally with sector stakeholders and externally with stakeholders such as the iRSLG.
- Iwi are engineering and surfacing their own solutions to the Horticulture challenges.** The orchards being stood up in Welcome Bay by Ngāti Pūkenga are a good example that could benefit the wider industry.
- Flexible approaches to working are being investigated to better leverage the in-region domestic labour pool.** Various mechanisms are being considered to better utilise the people who currently work in the sector. This includes multi-employer contracts, banked hours, and re-structuring semester breaks to allow tertiary students to line up with seasonal demand.
- Collaboration across sectors is providing opportunity to share labour resources.** The Aquaculture and Horticulture industries are trialling working in tandem, with fish farms co-ordinating the timing of their harvest to free up labour for Horticulture across the Bay.

### TOP LABOUR MARKET CHALLENGES

- The current business model limits the sector by over-reliance on short-term contracts.** It does not support permanence of employment due to its over-reliance on small scale growers and a contractor model that lacks the scale to offer more permanence to workers.
- Sourcing labour from outside the region is a double-edged sword due to housing pressures.** The Bay of Plenty has undergone population growth from internal migration and is expected to keep growing. Regional economic development agencies are reticent to encourage domestic migration to avoid further exacerbating the pressure.
- The industry needs support to close the gap between what the industry needs and what the education system is currently delivering.** There are ongoing conversations in the region/sector to accurately surface the problem, and it appears the gap centres around better support to access micro-credentials and improved access to higher skills training.
- Keeping local workers engaged and productive on a day-to-day basis requires more than just better wages.** The sector has provided feedback from across its sub-sectors that this is a wide spread issue. The Kiwifruit sector has trialled approaches such as raising wages and found that workers simply work fewer hours to make up the same pay packet instead of working a full week.

### THE BAY OF PLENTY REGION



### OUR FOCUS FOR THE NEXT 2 MONTHS:

- Setting up the full RSLG
- Wood Processing and Healthcare