



Horticulture™
New Zealand
Ahumāra Kai Aotearoa



2025 Board Member Election

**ELECTION OF
THREE BOARD
MEMBERS**

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Simon Cook

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Hi, my name is Simon Cook and along with my wife and three kids we grow both kiwifruit and avocados in Te Puke, in the Bay of Plenty. I am the third generation to grow kiwifruit on a property that has been in my family since 1950.

I have spent over 20 years as a grower and have been grateful for the lifestyle and the opportunities it has given me and my family. In the last 10 years I have sought to give back to this industry that I am so passionate about and have sought out numerous opportunities to share knowledge or advocate on behalf of growers. Key to this was the 10 years I served as a forum member of New Zealand Kiwifruit Growers Incorporated (NZKGI) including time on the Executive Committee.

I have also been a Director of Kiwifruit Vine Health (KVH) the kiwifruit industry's biosecurity body for eight years and Chair for the last two. This role has enabled me to grow strong networks both in Wellington and across the horticulture industry. I have also been a grower director of the kiwifruit industry supply entity Trevelyan Growers Limited for over a decade and currently serve as deputy Chair.

My time with both NZKGI and KVH has given me a thorough understanding of the vitally important role played by advocacy bodies like HortNZ at both the regional and national level engaging with councils and government.

I also owned and ran a kiwifruit and avocado spray contracting company for over 20 years. This experience has given me a strong appreciation for the ongoing need for access to new and existing chemicals and the social licence that is vital for growers to continue to use these tools. I was a key part of both the governance panel, and as a presenter, for the kiwifruit industry's successful response to the EPA review of hydrogen cyanamide.

In 2018 I was awarded a Nuffield scholarship and had the opportunity to travel globally studying horticulture and agriculture in all its many forms.

Whether it’s labour supply, access to water or access to agrichemicals, all growers across the horticultural spectrum need the strong support and leadership from our combined peak industry body HortNZ.

I believe my governance experience, coupled with the extensive time I have spent working with advocacy bodies will allow me, with your support, to make a strong contribution to the future of HortNZ.

Declaration of Interest	
Horticulture related companies or organisations where directorship or equivalent roles are held:	
Company name	My role
Kiwifruit Vine Health Incorporated	Chair
Trevelyan Growers Limited	Deputy Chair
Cottlevale Farms (growing Hayward and Sungold kiwifruit and avocados)	Owner
Zespri	Shareholder
Seeka	Shareholder



Shane Flynn

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I bring over 17 years of hands-on experience in the horticulture sector, shaped by a practical understanding of growing and managing orchards at scale. I currently work as a Business Manager – Development at Craigmore Sustainable, where I lead the delivery of large-scale orchard developments, assist with acquisitions, and contribute to strategic direction across the apple business. Prior to this, I held commercial and operational leadership roles at Kiwi Crunch and Freshmax.

My roots in horticulture run deep. I grew up on a family-run market garden in Hawke's Bay, where my parents operated a gate-sale produce shop. That early exposure taught me the value of hard work, connection to community, and the realities faced by growers - values that continue to guide me today.

In 2023, I was appointed as an Associate Director on the New Zealand Apples & Pears Inc. Board, providing governance support and an active grower voice. From 2018 to 2024 I was also an Executive Member of the Hawke's Bay Fruitgrowers' Association. In 2013, I completed the Horticulture New Zealand Leadership Programme, supported by a Horticulture New Zealand leadership scholarship - a valuable opportunity that strengthened my strategic and governance skill set.

Over my career, I've gained practical experience in orcharding, budgeting, labour planning, compliance, and technical orchard management. I've also supported smooth orchard integrations and transitions, helping maintain operations while encouraging innovation.

I'm passionate about grower-led leadership and believe the industry thrives when we work together with a clear focus on the future. If elected to the Horticulture New Zealand Board, I will bring a practical, commercially focused approach to help address grower challenges and improve returns for both current and future growers.

Declaration of Interest

Horticulture related companies or organisations where directorship or equivalent roles are held:

Company name	My role
New Zealand Apples & Pears Inc Board	Associate Director
DNA Lands Limited	Strategic Advisor
Craigmore Sustainables	Business Manager - Development



Tom Keefe

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Kia Ora, ko Tom Keefe tōku ingoa. I've worked in the horticulture sector for over 35 years navigating its challenges and celebrating its rewards. During my career I have gained experience in the production of apples, pears, summerfruit and citrus. This has included growing, packing operations, sales, category and business management, and leadership roles nationally.

I currently chair a board representing my iwi that ranks in the bottom quartile of nearly every negative social and economic indicator. Our iwi's fruit growing portfolio currently includes apples and citrus with plans in place to grow and expand even further. For me, horticulture is more than a business, it's a lifeline for many people - I believe in creating real opportunities by providing pathways to success through employment, education and succession giving our tamariki a viable, sustainable and prosperous future.

I'm actively involved in Māori agribusiness groups with a focus on the Aotearoa Horticulture Action Plan outcome of "Māori are Strong in Horticulture." To achieve this I see horticulture as a vehicle for transformation by giving our rangatahi the skills they need to succeed through on-going training and leadership opportunities. We need to grow not just crops, but confidence, capability, and hope in our people.

I believe some of our biggest gains in horticulture will come through Māori land development. Unlocking the potential of underutilised whenua. This will allow Māori an opportunity to lift communities and people up into intergenerational wealth. Doing so will help drive economic growth regionally and nationally. I am passionate to see this happen but understand Māori cannot do this in isolation. Real progress will require the support, investment and collaboration of the wider industry, not just as landlords, but as active partners in business.

Professionally, I serve as Business Development Manager for a large, family-owned operation in Hastings, specialising in post-harvest operations, relationship building and operational efficiency.

I have also served as an executive at the Hawke's Bay Fruitgrowers' Association.

I'm grateful for the full support of my employers, the Altham and Gardiner families, in pursuing this opportunity. I will bring to the Horticulture New Zealand Board a unique blend of governance experience, leadership, commercial insight, cultural perspective, and a deep commitment to people and whenua.

If elected you can be assured, I will support the needs of the wider fruit and vegetable sectors with absolute commitment, integrity and a genuine desire to see change for the better.

Declaration of Interest

Horticulture related companies or organisations where directorship or equivalent roles are held:

Company name	My role
Ngāti Pāhauwere Development Trust	Trustee
Heretanga Takato Noa Māori Standing Committee	Member
Ngāti Pāhauwere Commercial Development Limited	Director/Chair
Mohaka Rafting Limited	Chair
Trial Drainage Projects Hawke's Bay	Member



Dermott Malley

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With extensive experience in the commercial and horticultural sectors, I bring a wealth of knowledge in governance, strategic planning, finance, and sustainability. Currently, Chair of Onyx Capital Ltd, Deputy Chair of Kiwifruit Vine Health Inc, Director of Racetech Manufacturing Ltd, roles that have reinforced my expertise in leadership, industry advocacy, and innovation.

I hold numerous governance roles across both public and private sectors, providing strategic advisory support based on my merchant banking and investment finance background. As a Director and Shareholder in Onyx Capital Ltd - an integrated horticultural enterprise based in Northland - I actively contribute to the growth, management, and marketing of high-tech horticultural crops. Onyx, a family-owned business since 1994, has pioneered advanced growing techniques in kiwifruit, kiwiberries, and hydroponic berryfruit production.

Before kiwifruit and berries, Onyx was involved in apples, pears and stonefruit in Hawke's Bay, apple exporting through Orchard Crisp Co-operative, horticultural media in owning and publishing NZ Gardener magazine and ornamental nursery production.

My horticultural industry involvement includes:

- Biosecurity leadership through my role at Kiwifruit Vine Health.
- Governance in industry bodies, Chairman of the Zespri Taste Review Committee and the BerryCo Grower Relationship Committee.
- Other industry involvement includes serving on the NZKGI Forum and Hawke's Bay Fruitgrowers' Association.

I am deeply committed to the advancement of horticulture in New Zealand. My expertise includes:

- Financial and treasury management, strengthened by years in investment financing.
- Corporate governance and strategic planning, ensuring sustainable growth.
- Export logistics and trade management, supporting international market expansion.
- Biosecurity and traceability, promoting industry resilience and sustainability.

I am pursuing a Master’s in Agribusiness at Massey University and hold an Honours Degree in Zoology and Botany from the University of London. Additionally, I possess a Postgraduate Certificate in Farm Organisation and Management from Hampshire College of Agriculture and multiple industry qualifications, including Primary ITO Assessor accreditation.

I’m standing for the Horticulture New Zealand Board because we need strong, experienced governance to reset priorities and rebuild unity. That starts with enhancing Horticulture New Zealand’s role as a credible partner to government - at both Ministerial and MPI levels. Without that high-trust relationship, we won’t get the policy support horticulture needs to thrive.

Horticulture New Zealand needs to deliver tangible outcomes for all growers: labour certainty, land use protection, trade access, biosecurity and regulatory common sense.

Declaration of Interest	
Horticulture related companies or organisations where directorship or equivalent roles are held:	
Company name	My role
Onyx Capital Limited	Chair and Director
Maungatapere Packing Limited	Chair and Director
Kiwifruit Vine Health Inc	Deputy Chair, Director and Member of Audit and Risk Committee
Maungatapere Berries Breeding Limited	Director
Maungatapere Berries Limited	Director
Onyx Horticulture Limited	Director
Racotech Manufacturing Limited	Director
Racotech Properties Limited	Trustee Shareholder
Designers International Limited	Director
Onyx Horticulture Limited (horticultural advisory company)	Director



Lochie McNally

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Together with my wife Gretchen and three children, we own and operate a summerfruit orchard and packhouse in Clyde, Central Otago.

My contribution to the board will be from experience and knowledge gained from owning and operating a summerfruit business for the last seven years. My understanding of irrigation's importance and necessity with six years' experience as a Director and now Chair of our local irrigation's company. Lastly, from my previous corporate career in finance where I spent ten and half years as a rural agribusiness manager in Otago servicing clients across most primary industries including horticulture, dairy, and sheep and beef.

The three main issues I see being faced by growers currently are economics, access to reliable irrigation and land use change.

- Financial sustainability is essential and the priority for all growers, recently high on-farm inflation coupled with softer domestic demand has seen margins reduce.
- Access to reliable irrigation rights with longer renewal terms are more challenging with freshwater policies yet to be fully understood nationally and consistent regionally.
- Land use change, rural to residential (including highly productive land) must be managed in a manner that both protects our right to farm as much as it provides for people's right to housing.

I am a current member of The Institute of Directors New Zealand and have completed the following courses through them:

- Governance Essentials
- Not-for-Profit Governance Essentials

In 2024 I was selected to attend "*To the Core*" leadership and governance development programme, supported by Farmlands, Silver Fern Farms and LIC.

I have a Bachelor of Commerce in Agriculture majoring in Valuation and Farm Management from Lincoln University.

Declaration of Interest

Horticulture related companies or organisations where directorship or equivalent roles are held:

Company name	My role
Strode Road Orchard Limited	Director and Shareholder
Earnsclough Irrigation Company Limited	Chair
Fraser Dam Company	Director
Market Gardeners Limited	Shareholder



John Murphy

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I seek your support for the position of Director on the Horticulture New Zealand Board.

My family grow garlic and shallots, and I am the current Grower-Chair of Vegetables New Zealand. I am involved in industry representation because I want growers to benefit from their talent, grit and hard work. I am a grower because I love producing good food for New Zealanders and the world, and I enjoy working in a dynamic exciting business.

Growing up, my family grew buttercup squash, process vegetables, cherries and various other foods for domestic and international markets, before focusing on wine grapes and fresh vegetables. I have the growing background, governance skills and common sense to effectively represent the interests of growers – and I live the commercial realities of being a grower every day.

I am passionate about maximising our industry bodies impact for growers. We must be clear about who is responsible for what, and have a real determination to support each other's work. My role with a product group means I am in a good position to work through what Horticulture New Zealand's core role is, and where we should share responsibility to drive results.

We need a business environment that allows us to effectively and responsibly work with land, water, people and the environment. To be competitive we need to improve our access to affordable energy, and to the best agricultural inputs.

To do things the right way, growers need to commit to a long-term view of food production – and to have this approach supported by a government commitment to workable and enduring permitted activity for all producers of healthy fruit and vegetables.

If we do these things then fruit and vegetable growers can be the backbone of improving New Zealand's economic circumstance, social prosperity and the health of our people. I'm excited to work with Horticulture New Zealand to advocate strongly for vegetable and fruit growers.

Declaration of Interest

Horticulture related companies or organisations where directorship or equivalent roles are held:

Company name	My role
Murphy's New Zealand Limited	Shareholder/ Chief Executive
Vegetables New Zealand	Chair
United Fresh	Executive Committee Member
Growing Horizon Limited	Shareholder/ Director
Volunteer Marlborough	Trustee
Fairhall School Board of Trustees	Trustee



Carol Palmer

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I began my corporate career as an accountant with the then New Zealand Apple and Pear Marketing Board. I moved into management and leadership roles across manufacturing, IT, Tourism, the public sector and professional services. I held senior leadership roles, most recently with BDO Auckland, The Serious Fraud Office (SFO) and Grant Thornton Wellington. My area of expertise was delivering efficient corporate services, including Finance, HR, Marketing, Communications and Stakeholder Management, Strategic and Business Planning. Through my role with the SFO I built strong working relationships with key decision makers and influencers in the government sector.

In 2020 my husband and I purchased our avocado orchard in Katikati. This triggered a career change from the corporate world to working in and on the orchard, along with undertaking governance and consulting roles.

I am actively involved in the avocado industry: I am on the Board of NZ Avocado (elected August 2023) and am the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee. I am a Committee Member on the Apata Avocado Growers Committee (effective June 2025). I was a Grower Director on Trevelyans Avocado Growers Limited from September 2022 to June 2024. I belong to an informal growers' forum designed to share experiences and best practices. I also attend as many industry events as possible to understand the complexity of avocado growing and marketing.

This involvement has informed our thinking on how to transform our orchard through adopting best practice orchard management to consistently produce quality fruit for the export and local market, as well as to be economically sustainable.

Through my experience in the avocado industry over the past five years, I have developed a deeper understanding of the issues facing the wider horticulture industry. The range of factors impacting on growers, including global markets, climate, policy and regulation, increasing costs and reduced grower returns, all speak to the need to understand how the industry/product groups can work together to advocate for a strong and sustainable horticulture industry and to find efficiencies.

I offer the ability to advocate for grower interests alongside my extensive commercial experience in navigating complexity and ambiguity, taking a practical and pragmatic approach to problem solving.

I am a Chartered Accountant and an ICC Accredited Coach. I have a BBS (major in Accounting and Finance) and a DipBS (major in Accounting) from Massey University, Palmerston North.

Declaration of Interest	
Horticulture related companies or organisations where directorship or equivalent roles are held:	
Company name	My role
New Zealand Avocado Industry Limited	Director
Carat Investments Limited	Director and Shareholder



Erin Simpson

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My journey in the horticulture industry began with a weekend job sorting willow trees in Waitara in the early 1980s, which later led to an exciting cadetship opportunity under the old Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture (RNZIH) program. I then transitioned into the apple sector in Christchurch during the 1990s, followed by post-harvest roles in Nelson and Hawke's Bay in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

These experiences allowed me to learn from incredible industry leaders and mentors, shaping my understanding of horticulture in meaningful ways. Having taken on various roles - from employee to manager and eventually a business owner - I gained valuable insights into the industry through both its highs and lows, as well as its cyclical nature.

My role as a grower and advocate at New Zealand Apples & Pears Inc (NZAPI) enabled me to establish nationwide connections, bringing understanding to the challenges faced by growers. Striking a balance between cost-effectiveness and sustainability is becoming increasingly difficult due to non-regulatory controls and rising grower expenses.

My governance responsibilities have given me a grassroots perspective that enriches governance discussions and clarifies management's strategic objectives. With years of experience participating in various board meetings, I believe that being decisive, well-informed, and attuned to shareholder priorities is essential for driving significant advancements in our industry.

As a Chartered Member of the Institute of Directors New Zealand, I have the privilege of serving on several boards that reflect my commitment to the horticulture sector. I hold a strong and active view on our industry workforce priorities and hope to continue making a positive difference in this area.

My partner, Clare, and I are deeply connected to the industry through our current roles. We live on a 4-hectare mixed fruit farm in Mangateretere, Hawke's Bay, where our three sons have been fortunate to grow up connected to family and the land.

I am proud to be connected to Taranaki through my father, who was of Te Atiawa iwi and Ngāti Tawhirikura Hapū whakapapa, and to England through my mother, whose parents were from Salisbury in Wiltshire.

Declaration of Interest	
Horticulture related companies or organisations where directorship or equivalent roles are held:	
Company name	My role
Tātau Tātau Horticulture GP Limited	Director
Haumako-Tara GP Limited	Director
Hawke’s Bay Regional Labour Governance Group	Chair
People, Food and Fibre Workforce Development Council, Muka Tangata	Chair
Regional Labour Governance Group Collective	Chair
NZAET Growsafe	Independent Chair
REAP Aotearoa	Co-chair
Hawke’s Bay MSD Job and Skills Hub	Advisory/Group Chair



Shaun Vickers

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Raised in the Waikato with a strong connection to the land and the primary industries, my journey in horticulture began in the early 1990s as a cadet on a mixed pip and stone fruit orchard. It was there I discovered my passion for growing both produce and people.

In the late 1990s, I joined a large, multi-crop orchard near Cambridge, where I deepened my technical knowledge and began developing leadership skills. A defining moment came in 2006 when I won both the regional and national Young Grower of the Year competitions, these experiences remain close to my heart, and I continue to support the competition over the years as an employer of multiple entrants and winners.

Relocating to the Bay of Plenty with my wife and young family, and into the kiwifruit and avocado sectors, taking on senior leadership roles. My career includes time with Satara Co-operative as an Area Manager overseeing two post-harvest facilities, then with Ballance Agri-Nutrients as National Horticultural and Arable Business Manager gaining huge experience in nutrient management and currently, with Apata Group Ltd as General Manager – Clients, Orchards and Business Development. In this role, I lead several business units, including Apata GROW, managing over 530 hectares of kiwifruit orchards and developing more than 250 hectares across three regions.

I have always been a grower at heart but can now call myself a grower having a shareholding in a 14-hectare orchard near Edgumbe something I have worked hard for and, am extremely proud of, I'm also a director of a 61 hectares Gold3 orchard in Gisborne.

What continues to inspire me is the opportunity to grow people. I strongly believe in backing those who are willing to give their all and helping them become strong leaders. The horticulture industry has given me so much, and I'm now at an age and stage where I want to give back.

As a director, I bring a unique combination of hands-on experience spanning 30+ years, extensive cross industry knowledge, commercial and financial acumen and have developed and executed strategic plans.

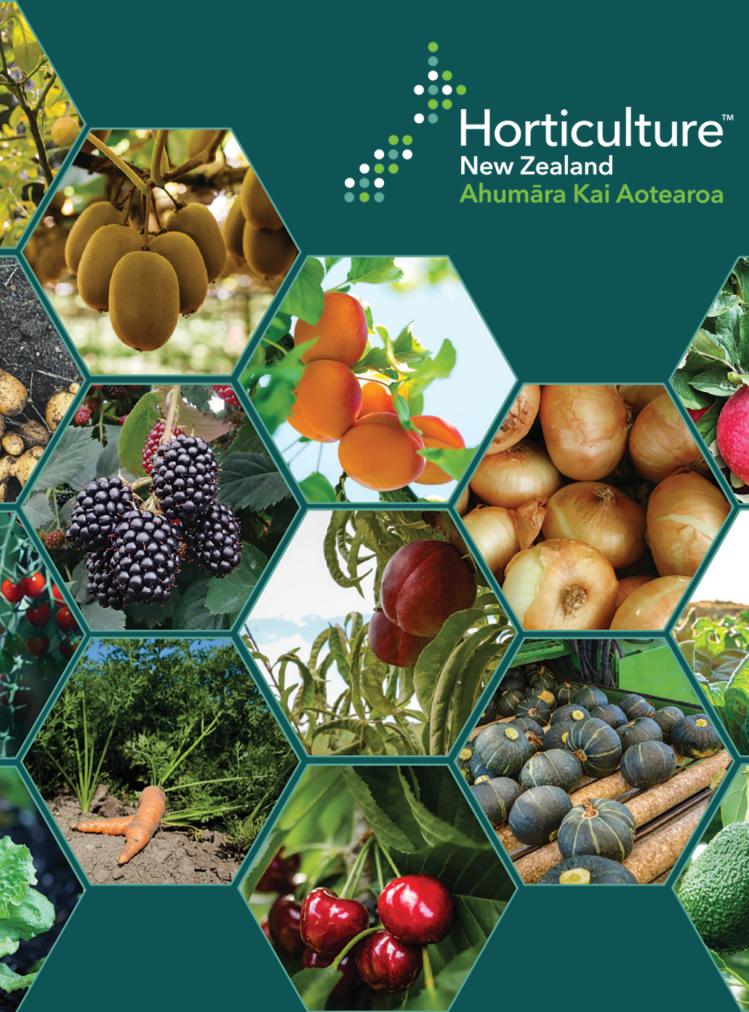
I am a quiet, more facilitative leader who listens, analyses and works with the team to find the right path. I've led major development projects, including a 111.5 hectares kiwifruit orchard, navigating complex regulatory and stakeholder environments across several regions. I believe in the importance of trust, transparency, and performance.

I respectfully seek your support to represent your voice on the Horticulture New Zealand Board—to ensure value for all levy payers, support sustainable growth, and strategically shape the future of New Zealand horticulture.

Declaration of Interest	
Horticulture related companies or organisations where directorship or equivalent roles are held:	
Company name	My role
Green is the New Gold Limited Partnership	Owner/ Shareholder
Rawhiti Orchard Limited Partnership	Director
Apata Group Limited	General Manager



Horticulture™
New Zealand
Ahumāra Kai Aotearoa



The Horticulture New Zealand Board members provide vision, governance and strategic direction for Horticulture New Zealand.

There are no allocated seats for product, sector or regional representatives on the Board.

We are asking you to elect the best three people for the job.

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