



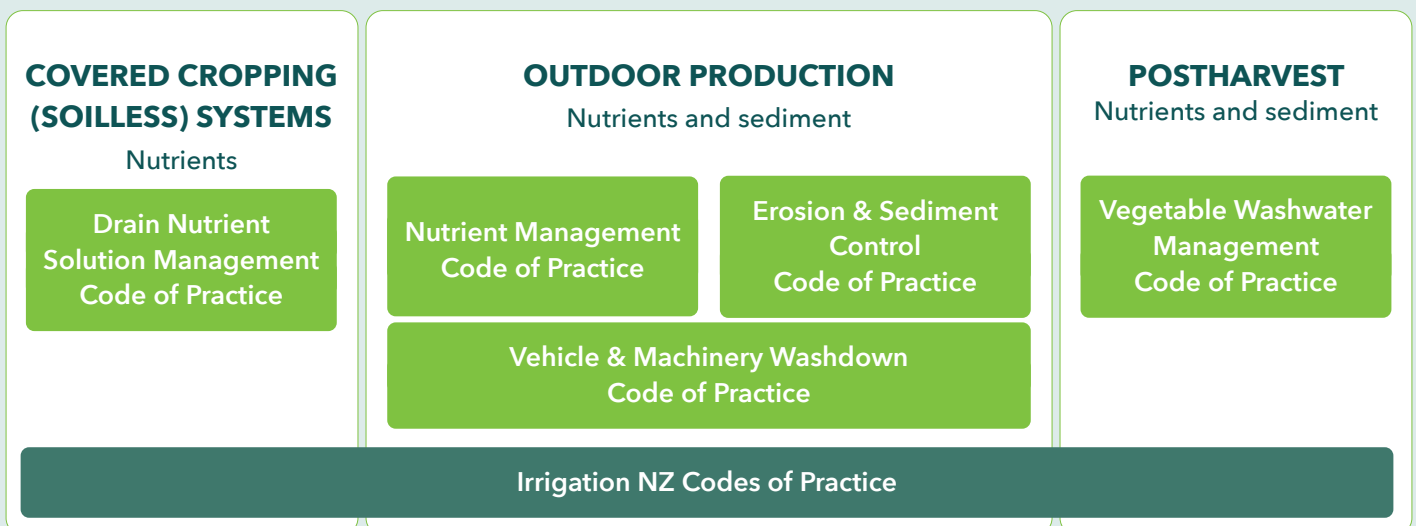
Your Guide to the 2026 HortNZ Codes of Practice

AT A GLANCE

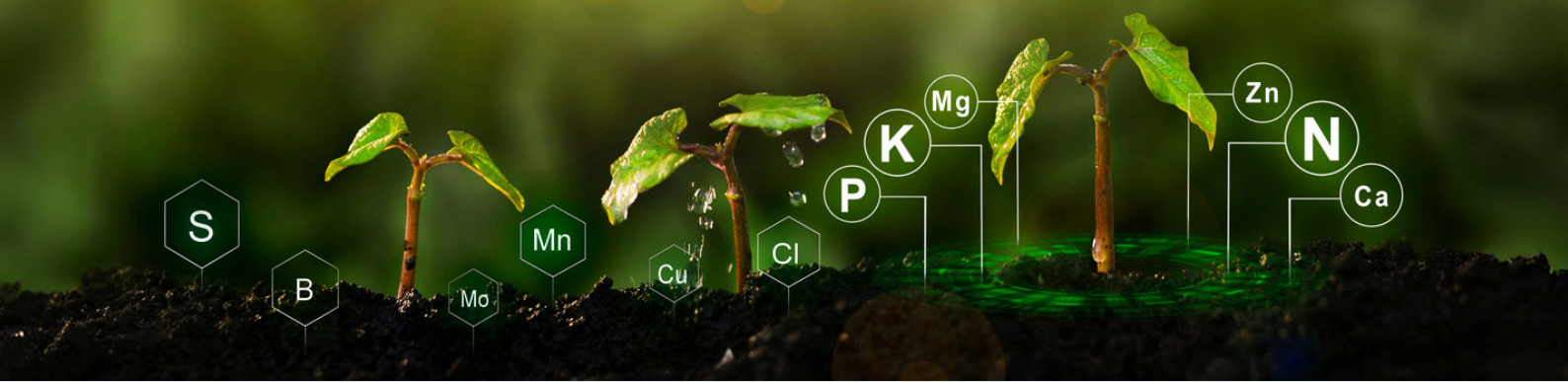
- HortNZ reviewed and updated a suite of environmental codes of practice in 2025-2026. The latest versions were published in June 2026.
- The codes provide practical, step-by-step processes to manage risks to freshwater from horticulture. Growers develop management plans to manage nutrient and sediment losses from their operations.
- The codes underpin updates to the NZGAP Environment Management System Add-on (EMS). The EMS is being updated to also reflect freshwater farm plan requirements.
- The review and update were undertaken as part of the Growing Change project, funded by HortNZ and the Ministry for the Environment, under the Essential Freshwater Fund.

The graphic below illustrates which Code applies to different sectors within the horticulture industry:

Freshwater farm planning: Managing risks to freshwater



Key: HortNZ code of practice Other industry codes of practice



KEY CHANGES IN THE 2026 VERSIONS

Risk-based management

Practices to manage nutrient and sediment losses are now more aligned to the level of risk to freshwater. There is no one-size-fits-all approach – a coordinated range of complimentary practices is needed to manage risks over time. Management plans provide a framework to assess and manage risk, and the flexibility to adapt over time as things change. The codes include minimum levels of practice, and additional practices to consider.

Improved support with tools and resources

Three of the codes have complimentary Excel workbooks. These help growers to develop a management plan and keep it updated. The plan documents risk assessment results, practices and evidence of implementation.

Expanded guidance

The Codes include more detailed and practical information on management practices. Practices link to relevant risk factors, decision-support tools, and other resources. This helps growers understand the “why” behind requirements and make informed decisions.

Stronger alignment with NZGAP EMS v2 and Freshwater Farm Plans

The codes underpin the updated NZGAP EMS v2. This version is being designed to reflect new freshwater farm plan requirements. The EMS will support growers to meet both national and regional farm plan requirements. The EMS is available as an add-on to GLOBALG.A.P. and NZGAP certified growers.

WHAT GROWERS NEED TO DO

- Become familiar with the updated Codes of Practice** relevant to your operation.
- If you require a farm environment plan or freshwater farm plan** you can register for the EMS as an add-on to your core GAP certification. Refer to the NZGAP website for updates about EMS v2. Begin to prepare your documentation to align with the new codes. Use the Excel workbooks for support.
- If you are part of the NZGAP EMS programme** stay up to date on the EMS review to keep track of key dates and when you will need to have the codes integrated for your next audit.
- If you are operating under consent conditions referencing the previous codes of practice**, continue to follow those requirements until your consent or the regional plan is updated to reference the new codes.
- Speak with an advisor or extension manager** to understand what the changes might mean for you.

WHERE TO FIND MORE INFORMATION

- **HortNZ Codes of Practice webpage:** Access the updated codes via the HortNZ website. Previous versions of the codes remain available on the HortNZ website, as some of these are referenced in operative regional resource management plans.
- **HortNZ grower support:** Contact your regional representative for further guidance.
- **HortNZ weekly newsletter:** Subscribe for upcoming webinars and new information.
- **NZGAP & EMS updates:** Refer to NZGAP communications for updates.

