

Healthy Rivers CSG8 2 December 2014



PUKEKOHE *Vegetable* GROWERS
ASSOCIATION

Pukekohe Vegetable Growers Association

The Pukekohe Vegetable Growers Association (PVGA) is a local organisation representing grower members from Warkworth in the north to Te Kauwhata in the south, with some grower members growing throughout many areas of New Zealand. This includes both indoor and outdoor vegetable crops.

The organisation was founded in the early 1900's. We have continued to represent the interests of growers since then and are privileged to have current members on the Executive Committee who are third generation grower members.

The PVGA is very active and represents some of the pre-eminent contributors to domestic and export vegetable production in NZ. We are affiliated to and enjoy a positive working relationship with Horticulture NZ Inc, our peak industry body.



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Our Resources

The geographic area represented by the PVGA covers some of the most unique and important land resource in New Zealand. The combination of the valuable elite soils, favourable climate (that is relatively frost-free), access to sustainable water resources, and proximity to large populations means that the greater Franklin District is and will remain into the foreseeable future one of the most important areas of food production in New Zealand.

For growers, the land, soil and water are the fundamental elements of their livelihoods that allow them to intensively and sustainably grow fresh vegetables. There is no doubt that any negative impact on any of these key elements would have a detrimental impact on their businesses. The PVGA works closely with our grower members to help ensure that we are proactive and looking for ways to continually improve the way we manage the resources entrusted to us. We see ourselves as “tenants” of the land, with which comes the responsibility of ensuring the land is looked after and maintained for future generations of growers.



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Who we represent...

The PVGA is heavily engaged with its members and providing them representation.

We represent a very wide and diverse range of growers. The Franklin District has a very multicultural history in terms of its founding members and families of Chinese, Indian and European origin have all played significant parts over the past 120 years of vegetable production in the local district, and wider. This still remains the same to this day – with all of these ethnic groups prominent, as well as the addition of several other ethnicities.

Our members range from small niche orientated growers to large growers operating on a national basis. The majority of vegetable growing entities within the district have commonality in that they have very strong family bases.

Our industry is one of the largest employers in the Franklin District, both for permanent and seasonal labour. Once again, this encompasses a very wide ethnic mix.



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Activity

The PVGA Executive Committee meets monthly, on a purely voluntary basis, to discuss current issues that directly affect the growing community. A wide range of topics and issues are covered at these meetings, including:

- Environmental Matters
- Legislative Matters
- Market Related Topics
- Industry Research and Development
- Council – submissions and bylaws



The PVGA will often engage with other organisations at these meetings. We regularly meet with local body representatives - primarily for discussions in the areas of environmental and resource management issues. The PVGA is very effective at liaising with and communicating back to its members. Regular newsletters and emails are sent to growers and information can also be accessed via the association's website.

Activity

- Water Matters

Working closely with regional authorities and Iwi on water resource matters.

- 4 Year water Use Efficiency Project – Environment Waikato.
- Resource Allocations.
- Water Quality.
- Developing a Pukekohe / Pukekawa Long Term Vision (35 Year Outcomes).
- Represented on the Healthy Rivers Collaborative Stakeholder Group (CSG).
- Working with HortNZ to establish the South Auckland Fresh Water Enhancement Society.

- Auckland Spatial Plan

The PVGA were actively involved in ensuring that the rights of growers are continually protected. Our goal is to ensure that growers can continue to sustainably produce clean safe food for the nation.

Activity

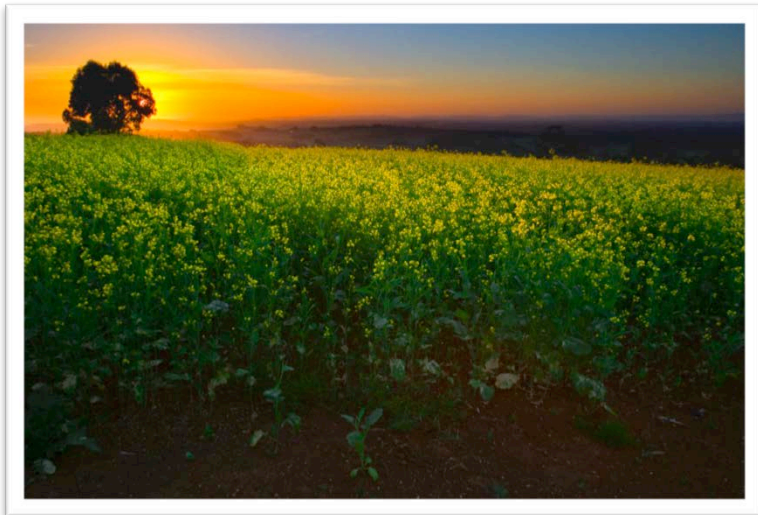
- Auckland Unitary Plan
Submission on behalf of grower members to deal with the specific needs of the local growing community and ensure growers are protected from changes due to urban sprawl.



Sustainability

Growers today are farming smarter and in a more sustainable manner. Greater knowledge and new technologies have allowed changes in areas such as:

- Crop Rotations/Land Swapping.
- Greater use of cover crops.
- Reduced fertiliser applications.
- Enhancing farms and environments through riparian planting.
- Improvements in irrigation technology that allow for water efficiency.



Achievements

The PVGA has achieved much in recent years, particularly in the area of environmental proactivity. The FSP “Doing it Right” is a world class document developed by the PVGA and was well ahead of its time. It has been recognised and referenced by many Regional Councils throughout NZ and in several cases has been adopted by their policy makers in whole or part. This is a testament to the vision shown by the PVGA and the members involved in this project.

- Franklin Sustainability Project
 - Development (“Doing it Right” document)
 - Implementation
 - Green Ribbon Award (Ministry for the Environment)
 - Update of document – now renamed as Erosion and Sediment Control for Vegetable Production.



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The Future

The PVGA aims to remain proactive on behalf of its growers. We seek to engage with our members, as well as key stakeholders, and look for ways to remain at the forefront of sustainable food production for local and international consumption.

