

Chairman's Report—Peter Ombler

KVH Annual General Meeting 2014

It is now four years since Psa was first confirmed in New Zealand. This period in our industry's history has been tremendously challenging so it is heartening that to date, growers and the industry have come through the Psa-V crisis with sturdy resilience and the industry's future pathway is looking more positive than ever.

With the help of many research organisations, including Zespri's Innovation Team and Orchard Productivity Centre, and Plant & Food Research, we now have a tool box for controlling Psa-V and a much better understanding of best-practice management to remain profitable in a Psa-V environment.

The support from growers and postharvest, who have adopted these new management techniques, and the efforts and contributions from all corners of the industry and the New Zealand Government to implement them, means we are much more engaged and prepared for future biosecurity risks.

Psa-V has taught the industry many things, and the importance of being prepared for future biosecurity outbreaks is one of them. Therefore it is essential we don't forget the lessons learnt from Psa-V and we consider them for future biosecurity planning.

While KVH was initially established to lead the Psa-V response, it has more recently been given the mandate to lead wider biosecurity on behalf of the kiwifruit industry.

With the change in readiness and response policy under Government Industry Agreements (GIA), KVH has been the leading industry body in seeing the benefits of a partnership with government. As such we were the first industry to sign the GIA Deed with the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI), with many more primary industries now following.

While we recognise the role of MPI, we strongly believe that together with industry the biosecurity outcomes will improve from what MPI can achieve alone. As an industry that has been seriously impacted by a major biosecurity event, we must be doing everything we can to stop this happening again.

We are very focused on the risks to our industry from a potential fruit fly incursion, and KVH has taken the lead in the development of a fruit fly operational agreement along with others in the horticultural sector and MPI. The agreement is in the process of being finalised and will be signed by the parties involved in early 2015. This will provide a higher level of protection to our industry.

KVH has also identified the other known major biosecurity risks that could impact on New Zealand kiwifruit production and is in the process of developing preparedness and response plans should they be identified here. In addition, KVH has been proactively engaging with MPI to ensure the pre-border and border efforts are focused on keeping biosecurity threats out of New Zealand.

While we acknowledge that it may not be possible to stop every biosecurity risk to our industry, we will however do everything we possibly can to reduce the chances of another major biosecurity event happening.

Over the past four years the KVH team has changed to meet the tasks the industry has set it to do. However, it remains a small team and is committed to working in partnership with growers and other in the industry identifying and minimising biosecurity risks that could harm our industry; and strengthening our readiness and response plans should such an incursion occur.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank some key people in the industry who have contributed enormously to KVH.

Firstly my thanks to retiring Board Directors: Tony Murray from MPI, Mike Chapman from NZKGI and Paul Jones from suppliers. I'd like to acknowledge Paul Jones for his contribution and efforts on the Psa Steering Group in addition to his KVH Director role. While Mike Chapman has retired from the Board, we're pleased to retain him as the Board Secretary.

Zespri's Innovation Leader, Dr Dave Tanner, leaves Zespri at the end of this year to pursue his own business. Dave has led the Psa R&D programme since the get-go four years ago. The fight against Psa has always been underpinned by a world-class Research and Development programme led by Dave and his team. On behalf of KVH I'd like to farewell him with our best wishes for future success.

Finally, I'd like to extend our thanks again to all New Zealand kiwifruit growers for their support. It has been a difficult four years for most and growers have been forced to make tough decisions quickly and adopt new varieties and management practices.

However, I believe the industry is stronger now, not weaker, than four years ago. And this is reflective of the strength and unity within our industry. Having such an integrated industry has meant we have achieved an enormous amount in a relatively short space of time.