



# Social differences/similarities between kiwifruit orchardists: implications for industry



# Outline

## What we know about the kiwifruit sector:

How do we know?

Who are the orchardists?

Green, Organic and Gold

Other distinctions

What are they responding to?



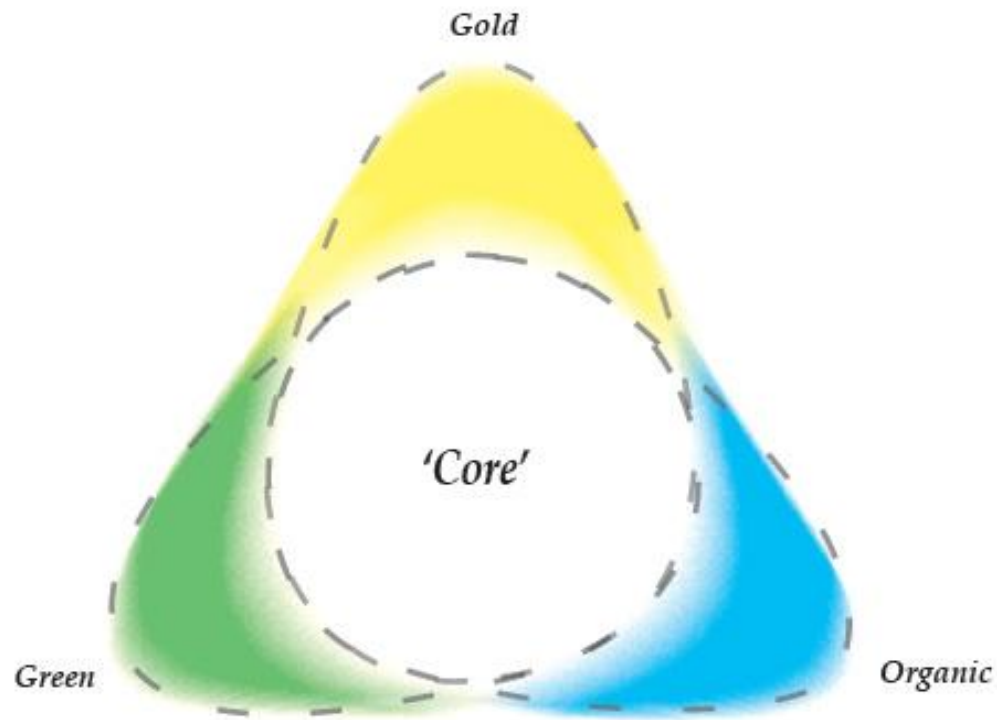
# ARGOS Social Objective Methods:

Two interviews – 2004, 2005

Sketch map – 2003-4

National surveys – 2004, 2008

Causal maps – 2006, 2008



## Ovoid ideal types



# Green KF orchardists – Bedrock

## Why kiwifruit?

- Orchard as investment in land
- More likely to see (rural) living *on* orchard and orcharding as part of retirement plan
- Likely to have spent less time on the orchard and come to orcharding from another career – explains greater dependence on ZESPRI and packhouses, weaker links to local communities





# Green KF orchardists cont.

## Orientation to management

- Tidiness (control of nature/humans; mowers/appearance) often as important as quantity of production.
- Compete with other green orchardists – production and tidiness. (Dairy farming background?)
- More environmentally conservative than proactive. Biodiversity *is* birds.



## Green KF orchardists cont.

### Implications for social and environmental engagement

- See threats to orchard and wellbeing from both inside and outside
- More entrenched management options – more conservative, innovation needs to be proved by others, reliant on established guidelines (ZESPRI and packhouses)



# Organic Green orchardists – moral compass

## Why kiwifruit?

- Lifestyle *in* orchard, family needs important
- Greater use of family labour.
- Less likely to be from a farming background – hence orchard ownership not facilitated by previous farm ownership or inherited land.





# Organic Green orchardists, cont.

## Orientation to management

- Orchard as means for positive impact on environment and society
- Broader goals, fruit embodies intangible qualities
- Compete with non-organic peers to show viability of organic. More likely to be involved/active in a KF grower group – COKA



## Organic Green orchardists cont.

- Work with nature, things seen as negotiable and associated with awareness of impact on environment
- More concerned about future, quality of environment; greater involvement with the environment,
- Broader range of feedbacks



# Organic Green orchardists cont.

## Implications for social and environmental engagement

- Seek difference through ‘being’ organic
- Innovative – experiment with alternative practices: soil, pruning, biodiversity, alternatives to bud break sprays (less infrastructure focused)
- Most receptive to alternative practices. (But options reduced by BioGro requirements.)



# Gold orchardists

## Why kiwifruit?

- Less likely to live on the orchard – lifestyle as commodity, associated with living in the region and off-orchard activities, family needs important,
- More likely to be managed
- More concerned about costs, making the most of the investment in the land (orchard as production factory)



## Gold orchardists cont.

### Orientation to management

- Know less about ‘their’ orchard
- Very competitive, desire to be ‘the best’, to be responding to the biggest challenge
- Feedbacks: production (quantity), quality and size and signs of innovation.
- Biodiversity – production focused, thus birds as a threat to fruit





## Gold orchardists cont.

### Implications for social and environmental engagement

- Innovation –scientific focus (technological ‘fix’). To do with shelter/infrastructure, pruning. Look forward to new KF cultivars.
- Concerned about off-orchard care of fruit – storage etc.
- Receptive to more options than Green orchardists.



# Management Challenges

Location can be source of stress – wind, frost, altitude, winter cooling

Auditing requirements of GlobalGAP as challenge or stress. Compliance challenges identity as orchardists because involves indoor book work and legitimacy of organic

Meeting TasteZESPRI requirements challenges identity as an orchardist as it is about more than production and is an ‘invisible’ quality. Requires ‘unthinkable’ practices.



# Character of response: Gold

## Positioning

- status gained by confronting the greatest challenge  
for example, growing the most difficult plant
- taking the greatest risk
- being the most entrepreneurial
- being the best

## Change trajectories

- appeal to status; provide challenge
- allow for differentiation through response to risk
- more immediate response to financial incentive



# Character of response: Green

## Positioning

- image of as solidity, reliability
- safe investment for the future
- visible signs of good practice
- social responsibility – supplying world with healthy food

## Change trajectories

- appeal to positioning and identity
- change presented as improvement on existing practice
- allow for visible evidence of good practice

for example, replace mowing with moderately physical activity that makes it look cared for in his/her eyes.



# Character of response: Organic

## Positioning

- producing the most healthy fruit ('Zespri-plus')
- fruit qualities attributed to their care
- social responsibility: reduced impact on local environment and supplying superior product

## Change trajectories

- appeal to moral positioning
- promote environmental and social benefit
- attach differentiated quality claims to fruit





## Promoting resilience

- Allow for a diversity of approaches to adoption of ‘best’ practice
- Instil awareness of continual change in context of evolving market demands
- Reinforce innovative aspects of Organic and Gold orchardists’ positioning
- Move beyond entrenched markers of good practice among Green orchardists



## Issues

- Alternatives to financial incentives?
- What are visible indicators of quality?  
environmental care? social responsibility?
  - for example, early start fruit as visible achievement
  - but, among orchardists, ‘taste’ is an invisible quality in fruit
  - are there any ways around this?
- How do we evaluate production? tidiness?