

## Amit Pathak

*"The kiwifruit industry in New Zealand is unique because of its marketing set-up. There is a lot of emphasis on developing new growing and handling techniques to improve fruit quality and productivity. I really enjoy being part of this – working hard to grow top-quality Gold3 on the orchards I manage. It's even more pertinent after seeing the terrible impact of Psa on the Hort16A variety and now seeing the come-back in volumes through Gold3 production."*

### **Current position in the kiwifruit industry -**

*Orchard Manager*

#### **Who do you work for?**

*DMS Progrowers Ltd. DMS controls over 450 hectares of orchard through ownership, leasing and management of crops. DMS has two post-harvest facilities: DMS Pukepack (Te Puke) and DMS Te Puna (Te Puna) where they, pack and coolstore kiwifruit and avocados.*

#### **What does your role involve?**

*I am responsible for growing around 45 hectares of kiwifruit. This includes Gold3 and Hayward kiwifruit. I am also responsible for developing around three hectares of new orchard. My work involves all the physical on-orchard activities, as well as financial planning and budgeting. During harvest, I work as a bin yard operator at the packhouse. This involves co-ordinating bin movements in the yard and packhouse and producing electronic inventory reports.*

#### **What was your career path?**

*I completed a Master's degree in nuclear physics and was a teacher in India for three years before moving to New Zealand. I have worked from the ground up in the New Zealand horticultural industry, starting as a labourer on kiwifruit orchards in the Bay of Plenty. After a year, I joined the Paengaroa North K Trust, a kiwifruit growing business in Te Puke, as an orchard cadet. Paengaroa North K Trust played a vital role in my training and professional development. During my years there, I completed a cadetship programme from BOP Polytechnic and began a Diploma in Horticulture from Lincoln University.*

*In 2011, I started as an Orchard Manager with DMS in Te Puke and in 2013, I moved to their Te Puna site. Last year, I was awarded the 2014 place on the Bruce Stowell Exchange Scholarship from Zespri. This programme invites an applicant from New Zealand and an applicant from one of Zespri's off-shore growing regions to visit each other's growing region, to work together and exchange information. I went on a three-week trip to South Korea and Japan, where I learned about Korean and Japanese kiwifruit growing operations and made contacts in the wider kiwifruit community.*

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