

Nicola Mauchline

"The industry is constantly responding to challenges including changes to key markets and compliance standards, insect and disease incursions, removal of chemicals from crop protection programmes, and the addition of new varieties."

Current position in the kiwifruit industry –

Applied Entomologist

Who do you work for?

Plant & Food Research, Kiwifruit Entomology team

What does your role involve?

My role involves contributing to the development and improvement of sustainable insect management tools and techniques for kiwifruit and other industries. This involves leading and contributing to research to identify, develop and test control strategies, tools and knowledge for managing insect pests that lessen environmental impacts and increase market access of pre-existing control options. The Kiwifruit Entomology team's research has three main focus areas: an applied focus, a fundamental focus, strategic focus. These layers of research are not always visible to the public but are essential for developing tangible and sustainable solutions for industry.

What was your career path?

I graduated from Massey University with a Master's degree (1st Class Honours) in Plant Protection (Entomology) in 2001. In 2002, I joined Plant & Food Research (formerly HortResearch) as a Research Associate for the Kiwifruit Entomology team and in 2008 was promoted to Scientist within the same team. My career goal is to enhance the development and use of sustainable pest management strategies and technologies for primary industries. Nature has provided us with an array of tools that can be used in innovative and sustainable ways. My research is focused on the development and use of such tools against pests of fruit and vegetable crops. Most recently I have been contributing to the development of bio-pesticides for the kiwifruit industry for use against chorus cicada and armoured scale insects, and I have had involvement in developing a biological control agent for use against Psa.

What do you like about working within the kiwifruit industry?

The kiwifruit industry is a challenging and dynamic industry. Our science capabilities, knowledge and tools help to support the kiwifruit industry to increase its resilience in an ever-changing environment. The Kiwifruit Entomology team has a significant role in the development of the integrated pest management programme for the kiwifruit industry, known as 'KiwiGreen'. This has enabled the New Zealand kiwifruit industry to maintain market access and meet the growing consumer demand for safe, high-quality food, and since its widespread adoption the use of broad-spectrum pesticides has been reduced by approximately 70 percent.

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a black polo shirt with a small logo on the chest and white pants, stands in a kiwifruit orchard. The background is a blurred view of the trees and foliage.

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Zespri Kiwifruit is one of the most nutritious fruits, with a powerful combination of fiber, antioxidants, vitamins and minerals without the calories