

Feedback

We welcome feedback from New Zealand exporters on this report and invite requests for reporting from New Zealand's [network of Embassies and High Commissions](#). If you would like to be added to the weekly distribution list for this report, please also email us at exports@mfat.net.

Regional Updates

Australia and the Pacific

- On 22 March, **Australia updated its outward travel ban** to allow travel to **New Zealand**, in anticipation of future two-way Quarantine Free Travel (QFT) currently under consideration. States have also updated their border settings: **Queensland** has reinstated New Zealand as a “safe country”; and **South Australia** has designated New Zealand as a “Low Community Transmission Zone” meaning travellers from New Zealand can freely enter both states without quarantine (or testing requirements). **Travellers from New Zealand can now enter all Australian states and territories except Western Australia without quarantine or testing**. Tasmania, together with Air NZ, announced on 19 March its intention to commence direct (twice weekly) Auckland - Hobart flights once two-way QFT is possible and Federal regulatory approval (biosecurity, customs, immigration) for the airport to operate internationally complete.
- In early March 2021, **Samoa Prime Minister Tuilaepa Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi** launched [Samoa 2040](#), a **strategic framework** for Samoa's **economic growth and development** over the next 20 years. *Samoa 2040* sets out high-level ambitions and possible policy interventions to achieve higher growth, and the Government of Samoa (SGOV) has identified tourism, agriculture and fisheries, digital economy and labour mobility as the key areas where investment and regulatory reform can achieve this.

Asia

- In March, the **Malaysian Government** announced **new procedures** allowing **inwards business travel** from any country, subject to official pre-approval. This includes an option for business travellers to enter Malaysia for less than 14 days without quarantine, subject to following a pre-approved itinerary and with dedicated facilities at Kuala Lumpur International Airport to conduct on-arrival COVID-19 testing. Discussions are also under way with **Singapore** on facilitating travel across Malaysia's southern border. Following a visit to Malaysia by Singapore's Foreign Minister earlier this month, both countries have agreed to allow travel on compassionate ground from April onwards, while Singapore has indicated willingness to consider reopening its end of the Reciprocal Green Lane (suspended in late January following a rise in Malaysia's COVID-19 cases).
- **Singapore Transport Minister Ong Ye Kung** said in Parliament earlier this month that Singapore is pursuing the creation of **travel corridors** – for vaccinated passengers from places with low to moderate infection rates – in the second half of 2021. A trial programme with **Hong Kong** is currently being considered. Singapore's national vaccination programme is well under way, with over 1 million doses administered to citizens and long-term residents so far. The entire population is expected to be fully vaccinated in the next six months.

Europe

- On 2 March, the **UK's Trade and Agriculture Committee (TAC)** published its highly anticipated [advisory report](#) on the country's **trade policy**, including recommendations for the UK Government in regards to free trade agreements and settings. The TAC, an independent body, was originally set up in 2020 in response to stakeholder and lobby group concern that future trade deals could undermine UK agriculture

standards and threaten the ongoing viability of UK production.

Americas

- Following a review of existing programmes, the **United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)**'s **[Pandemic Assistance for Producers \(PAP\)](#)** programme was launched on 25 March. PAP absorbs the Trump Administration's Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) and introduces new programmes using residual funds from previous pandemic relief efforts. Secretary Tom Vilsack has said the package will "help get financial assistance to a broader set of producers, including to socially disadvantaged communities, small and medium sized producers, and farmers and producers of less traditional crops."

Middle East and Africa

- The container ship '**Ever Given**' was **successfully refloated** on 29 March after running aground in **Egypt's Suez Canal**, blocking the primary trade artery linking Asia and Europe. The ship blocked all maritime traffic for six days. Approximately 30% of global container ship traffic passes through the Suez Canal and insurers have estimated the blockage cost global trade US\$6-10 billion each day. Although the direct impact on New Zealand's imports and exports is uncertain, New Zealand cargo is likely to have been held up in the backlog of vessels or delayed 7-10 days if re-routed around the Horn of Africa. The indirect impact will see a further escalation of **global sea freight congestion** impacting New Zealand as global shipping schedules are disrupted and a reduced flow of empty containers from Europe to Asia adds to container shortages. We are aware of shipping lines temporarily restricting the availability of new spot rate bookings for exports out of Asia to all markets, including Australia and New Zealand, until they clarify the extent of the likely shortage.
- **NZTE** have launched a **business leverage programme**, to support Kiwi businesses maximise the opportunities **Expo 2020 Dubai** will provide across the Gulf (and beyond). The NZTE Expo Business Leverage Programme will be delivered in three key workstreams to support NZTE customers at different stages of their Middle East export journey. These are **Discover Middle East**, to assist up and coming businesses less experienced in the market; **Accelerate**, to support firms looking to solidify their current presence in the market; and a bespoke **Food and Beverage Programme** to expand connections for those in market and showcase New Zealand Food and Beverage in a range of onsite Expo experiences and retail opportunities. Technology and Maori business will be themes that run across all three streams. Delivery will take a hybrid approach with in country, virtual and New Zealand based activities on offer. Further information is available here [Expo 2020 Dubai Business Leverage Programme \(nzte.govt.nz\)](#).

Market reports released this week

- The previous global economic and trade update can be found [here](#).

External links

The following links may provide useful information to businesses:

- [NZTE](#) has a website focused on providing COVID-19 information for exporters. They've also launched [myNZTE](#), an interactive digital portal of insights and tools available to all New Zealand exporters.
 - The Treasury releases a [weekly economic update](#) every Friday. Stats NZ has published a [data portal](#) with near real-time economic indicators.
 - MBIE publishes a [sector reports series](#) which provides regularly updated reports on all industry sectors that make up the New Zealand economy. These include official economic data and the challenges and opportunities that face New Zealand's industry sectors.
 - [Business.govt.nz](#) provides tools and advice from across government to save small businesses' time and help make the business a success.
 - MFAT has created a [tariff finder](#) which is designed to help goods exporters and importers maximise benefits from New Zealand's Free Trade Agreements and compare tariffs in 136 other markets.
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More reports

View full list of market reports from MFAT at www.mfat.govt.nz/market-reports

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