Feijoa information sheet
Contents

1. Why Feijoa in New Zealand? ............................................................................................................. 4
2. Why Feijoa in the Tararua District? ................................................................................................. 5
3. Crop description ................................................................................................................................ 5
4. Current market profile ...................................................................................................................... 5
5. Potential market developments ........................................................................................................ 7
6. Varieties and yields ........................................................................................................................... 8
7. Potential revenues and returns ......................................................................................................... 9
8. Risks ................................................................................................................................................... 9
9. What can Tararua District Council offer potential Feijoa growers? ............................................. 10
10. Market contacts ............................................................................................................................ 11
Acknowledgments ................................................................................................................................. 11
The GO! Project is a Tararua District Council initiative that has identified several crop options that are highly suitable for the Tararua district. The aim of the project is to provide meaningful information for people wanting to diversify their cropping and broaden their potential revenue base.

The information is intended for smallholders, lifestyle block owners and farmers looking for alternatives to traditional crop options.

The GO! Project offers the Tararua district community increased opportunities for job creation, biodiversity, sustainable farming systems and increased family business incomes.

1. Why Feijoa in New Zealand?

Feijoa are a relatively easy to grow, low maintenance and frost hardy crop (to -5°C). Feijoas are gaining popularity in New Zealand and overseas as fresh produce and for processing-grade fruit. Feijoa are suitable to grow as individual trees or as hedges and once established may provide shelter for other crops as part of a diversified cropping option. Feijoa prefer a sheltered position as the trees can be affected by wind damage.
2. **Why Feijoa in the Tararua District?**

Research has shown that the Tararua district is well suited to Feijoa, as it has ideal climate conditions including an evenly distributed rainfall, and few pest and disease issues. Soil and climate conditions indicate Feijoa as a viable commercial-scale crop option for the Tararua district.

3. **Crop description**

See HortResearch report.

See also ‘Growing Feijoas’ by Ray Hollis.

4. **Current market profile**

There is increasing demand from supermarkets and at farmers markets for early and later variety fruit so that the Feijoa season can be extended. Most commercial crops come on the market at the same time, usually March-May, but with different cultivars the season could be extended from February–June.

Premium prices are paid for fresh fruit that meets the New Zealand Feijoa Growers Association (NZFGA) quality standards and has been picked and handled to meet market expectations. The processing market pays the lowest price for fruit that is used in juices, processed goods and confectionary.

Most fresh Feijoas are sold through farmers’ markets, grocery retailers, wholesalers and organic supermarkets. The juice market takes large volumes of fruit, though the price paid for juice-quality Feijoas is consistently much lower than that paid for fresh fruit.

Experienced growers suggest that growers can increase the size of contracts and sales if they group together. Planting a range of varieties that fruit at different times will also extend the sales channels available to growers, especially if approaching the market with critical mass for secure supply.

There are currently only a few commercial Feijoa growers in the Tararua and Hawke’s Bay districts, which indicates that there is scope to develop new production units to service the fresh fruit market in the wider districts.
New Zealand Feijoa Growers Association


The New Zealand Feijoa Growers Association (NZFGA) is the Feijoa industry body and is funded through a compulsory levy under the Commodity Levies Act and through member subscriptions.

The activities of the Association are industry good activities and include the provision of information for growers, newsletters, an AGM and field day, facilitating and funding research projects, undertaking a promotion programme, liaising with exporters and government officials.

The membership kit provided to new members when they are accepted into the association includes our book 'Feijoa Manual: Improving Fruit Size & Yield', Local Market Quality and Handling Standards, Export Market Quality and Handling Standards, and a Fruit Maturity Guide.

The cost is $140 for a new member and $40 for an existing member (including GST).

(NZFGA website)

New Zealand Tree Crops Associations

www.treecrops.org.nz

The New Zealand Tree Crops Association is a membership based organisation that specialises in information sharing and education for a range of tree crops across New Zealand. There are regional branches of the organisation including the Hawke's Bay, Wairarapa and Central districts. Field days and training are some of the New Zealand Tree Crops activities and new members are offered support from experienced members and growers.
5. **Potential market developments**

There is growing potential in the organic produce market for Feijoas, as well as for fresh produce and juice markets.

Feijoas can be damaged in transit to markets and retailers if the fruit is not carefully picked and handled. Research into packaging, storage and transport of Feijoas may mean that the fruit can be transported over greater distances, which can extend market access and distribution options.

This market extension will benefit the developments of an export trade in fresh Feijoas, as current difficulties in transporting the fruit overseas has limited activity in the export market. Biosecurity issues (detection and eradication of insects on fruit) also affect export potential and again solutions to this problem are under investigation.

**Putting growers in touch with Processors**

The New Zealand Feijoa Growers Association is working on innovative approaches to connect growers with potential buyers and sales channels. With fluctuations in yield, quality and time of harvest the Association has established an online marketplace so that the flow of product through the market can be enhanced and larger commercial activities can be encouraged.

The New Zealand Feijoa Growers Association is regularly approached by growers who are seeking a buyer for their processing Feijoas, and also we are asked by processors where they can obtain a supply of Feijoas. The Association encourages the formation of grower groups so that they can represent significant fruit supply volumes.¹

6. Varieties and yields

Feijoa Varieties

Trees mature from 4-5 years and can produce 20-30kg of fruit per year depending on the variety, climate and maintenance of the trees. Trees can remain productive for up to 16 years. Heavy pruning on a rotational basis across the orchard can extend tree life and reduce tree replacement costs.

Commercial Nurseries

E.g. Waimea Nursery: www.waimeanurseries.co.nz

There are several commercial nurseries that provide information on Feijoa varieties and their suitability to various areas. Varieties of Feijoas that may be suitable for commercial production include:

- **Anatoki**: A very promising extremely early ripening variety, starting 2-3 weeks before Unique. Good size smooth fruit with sweet mild flavour. Compact habit. Bred by Roy Hart. Trees exclusively available from Waimea Nurseries.

- **Kaiteri**: A prolific early cropper with large smooth fruit on a vigorous tree. Starts ripening before Unique, but carries on for longer. Bred by Roy Hart. Trees exclusively available from Waimea Nurseries.

- **Kakariki**: Exceptionally sweet, large fruit, ripening early in the season. Bred by Roy Hart.

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2 www.waimeanurseries.co.nz
7. Potential revenues and returns

Average seasonal prices for fresh Feijoas can range from $4.00-$5.00 per kg. The price is affected by the relationships that are built with distributors and retailers, the timing of the harvest and the quality of the fruit. As many sales are to local outlets, trust and experience are important influences in the continuity of sales and supply channels and growers need to manage these relationships.

8. Risks

New growers need to consider the following:

- Climate is an important consideration in the selection of varieties. It is recommended that new growers research specific varieties that have been shown to be proven and reliable performers in their particular geographic area and local knowledge should be sought from the New Zealand Tree Crops Association and the New Zealand Feijoa Growers Association.

- Caution needs to be taken with late season varieties. If fruiting is too late in the season and cold weather stops the Feijoas maturing, then the crop will be diminished or lost, with a potentially significant impact on crop-related income. A mix of early, mid and late season varieties may provide a lower risk profile and greater likelihood of viable returns.
9. What can Tararua District Council offer potential Feijoa growers?

Tararua Feijoa grower-led network development

Tararua District Council is interested in supporting and developing a network around the GO! Project crop options, including Feijoa. The network would be a vehicle to link producers to key information and knowledge and create a central point of contact for other organisations or businesses interested in forming partnerships with the Tararua Feijoa growers. The network would be grower-driven and supported by Council.

If you are interested in the network concept please contact:
Lianne.Simpkin@tararuadc.govt.nz
10. Market contacts

Tararua District Council recommends that new growers or growers looking to improve their Feijoa production systems contact experienced growers for detailed information and advice before commencing or expanding their Feijoa production.

Below is a list of suggested contacts that may be of assistance. Information on contract growing is available from most of these contacts.

This list is not exhaustive.

www.Feijoa.org.nz
www.waimeanurseries.co.nz
www.treecrops.org.nz

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Other growers and retailers were contacted and their contributions are greatly appreciated.