

# **MATURITY CLEARANCE FAQ'S**

## **Can I ask for a sample to be collected at a certain time of the day?**

No. Requests for samples to be collected on the same day as harvest are strongly discouraged. Agfirst must collect samples in the most logical order to maximise sampling capacity and as a result cannot respond to special requests. It remains the packhouse's responsibility to ensure that all sampling is completed prior to starting picking.

## **Can Growers request clearance samples directly with Agfirst?**

No. All clearance sample requests must be done through a grower's nominated packhouse for two reasons:

1. Growers and packhouses are encouraged to discuss these requests to ensure that picking and packing follows smoothly after a clearance.
2. To keep the number of people AgFirst need to support to a minimum

## **When is the deadline for clearance sample requests?**

Sample requests should be made by 7:30pm the night before you want them collected. If a sample is requested today, AgFirst reserve the right to collect it today. It is up to the requester to select the 'to be collected' date as the next day rather than today if they are requesting earlier in the day.

## **Can a clearance sample request be cancelled?**

There should be no need to cancel a clearance sample request as all requests should be made in consultation with the grower. If this becomes necessary, packhouses can do this themselves on the Agfirst website so long as the sample has not been assigned to a sampler. After samples have been assigned, Agfirst may be able to cancel a sample. Requests to cancel a sample should be made to [support@agfirstbop.co.nz](mailto:support@agfirstbop.co.nz) including grower number, maturity area and sample number.

- If a sample request is withdrawn prior to the sampler being dispatched to the orchard then there will be no charge.
- If a sample request is withdrawn after it has been dispatched but prior to the sampler arriving at the orchard a \$20 cancellation fee will apply.
- If a sample is cancelled when a sampler has reached the orchard then a sample collection fee will be invoiced.
- If a sampler arrives at an orchard with a locked gate the sample will not be collected and the full sample collection fee will be invoiced.
- If it is cancelled when the sample has reached the laboratory it will be completed and a full charge invoiced.

## **Where can I find the detailed sampling hygiene protocols?**

The detailed sampling hygiene protocols are available at <http://agfirstbop.co.nz/media/docmgr/orchard%20hygiene.pdf>.

## **Can a growers own equipment such as a quad bike be used for sample collection?**

No. Unfortunately Agfirst are not able to accept grower's offers to supply machinery for sampling due to health and safety, this is regardless of how well maintained the machinery is or any training that the grower may provide.

### **Is sampling performed in the rain?**

Yes. The Kiwifruit clearance and harvest time window is very short so available sample collection time needs to be maximized. Growers who do not want sample to be collected in the rain need to arrange for any applicable samples to be cancelled – cancel fee applies.

### **What sampling method is used?**

Every maturity clearance sample will be collected using the grid sampling method. A detailed description of the grid sampling method is available at <https://canopy.Zespri.com/EN/supply/quality/Documents/Grid-sampling-method.pdf>.

### **Is the GPS track of the sampling method available for review?**

No. Any concerns about the sampling method need to be advised to Zespri [maturity@Zespri.com](mailto:maturity@Zespri.com). Zespri will investigate these concerns including the GPS sampling track if relevant. The request is to include: Grower Number; maturity area name; sample number; concerns about the sampling method.

### **What will happen if the sampler arrives only to find that picking has started in the MA?**

It is not acceptable to start picking a MA without a passed clearance. If picking has started, Zespri has instructed Agfirst not to take the sample. It remains the packhouse's responsibility to ensure that the sampler has been before picking commences. A collection charge will still be charged in this situation.

### **What are audit samples?**

Audit samples are randomly selected 90 fruit samples that measure the season's between sample dry matter variability and can be used to identify areas of improvement for future seasons. Growers are compensated for the fruit value of the sample as an offset against the maturity clearance charge. The results of audit samples are not available to Growers or their Packhouse and do not count towards a Grower's TZG.

### **What are sample retests?**

Sample retests are generated when unexpected results occur on a sample, for example, TZG reduces between one sample and another. The best result from the original sample and the retested sample is applied to the Grower. Growers are compensated for the fruit value of the sample retest as an offset against the maturity clearance charge.

### **What are Gold3 size targeted samples?**

For maturity areas that have size bracket sub-samples that may potentially not do not meet the relevant count dry matter (CDM) requirements including the higher Kiwistart dry matter requirement, a new sample type has been introduced: the 90 plus 60 sample. This combines the standard 90 fruit piece random size sample and a 60 fruit piece size targeted sample across medium and small fruit.

In addition, as a last resort for Mainpack only, a 180 fruit size targeted samples can be requested on a particular size bracket if that size bracket is struggling to meet the Minimum Taste Standard (MTS) of 16.3% average dry matter. Once a maturity area size bracket achieves the MTS or Kiwistart CDM criteria on a size targeted sample (either a 90 plus 60 sample or a 180 fruit sample) that acceptance is guaranteed i.e. future samples cannot override that acceptance.

### **Can I split my MA after I have commenced picking it?**

No, except under extenuating circumstances. This does not limit a grower/facility from monitoring the remaining (un-harvested) fruit on a part picked MA. However, due to the possibility that potentially poor TZG components of the MA can be picked with inflated taste results before stopping picking, and then (through retest), the grower can increase further their TZG on the remaining unpicked portion, **no new clearance dry matter tests can be conducted on that maturity area**. Monitor samples can obviously be requested.

In exceptional circumstances and subject to audit, and generally as a result of a significant delay in harvest of a part-picked MA, a new MA can be created. **For clarification, splitting will not be permitted for minor weather delays of less than a week.** Splitting is also permitted where supply caps have closed and no further submit is allowed under the existing clearance protocol e.g. after end of KiwiStart.

**No further submit will be permitted against the existing MA once a clearance test on the new MA has been taken. No previous results from the existing MA are carried forward to the new area and the new area must pass on its own merits.**

Where a significant delay in harvest is planned (such as select picking), the two maturity areas should be set up prior to harvest (with appropriate notation in the maturity area setup). To utilise this, the packhouse can contact Zespri via email ([maturity@Zespri.com](mailto:maturity@Zespri.com)) outlining the reasons for requiring a retest. These will be considered by Zespri and approved or declined. The information required is:

- Grower Number
- Original MA name and blocks
- Proposed new MA name and blocks
- Whether you consider the portion of the MA already harvested to be similar to that remaining
- A map showing the portions of the MA harvested.

If the new MA is made up of parts of a block ensure that you create a part block or blocks that clearly describe this and if necessary upload a new map to ensure that the sampler can find the block(s). Please do not just write as comments against the MA or sample.

### **Can I request a colour-only test for GOLD, GOLD3 or GOLD9?**

No.

### **Can I request a dry matter only sample?**

Hayward:

No, during the Kiwistart period or under supply cap or contract allocation. After these constraints a dry matter only sample can be requested.

HORT16A, GREEN14, GOLD3, GOLD9:

No. All Clearance samples for these varieties must be tested for Colour, Pressure, Dry Matter, Brix Eq All Fruit. This includes retests where a Maturity Area has already passed.

### **Are there advanced clearances available?**

Hayward and Green14:

No.

Hort16A, Gold3 and Gold9:

Advanced / delayed clearances of up to 2 days will be applied for the most inferior harvest protocol (Protocol A for Gold3 and Gold9, Protocol B for Hort16A). If a MA does not meet the standard protocol threshold but meets the delayed criteria (as outlined in the Maturity Clearance sub-section, Harvest Management section of the Zespri Quality Manual), it will automatically be upgraded to the protocol with the clearance date postdated by up to 2 days. Example:

If your clearance sample is collected on Day 1, then the result is likely to be available the next day (Day 2). If the sample Green Fractile misses by 0.1 of a Hue angle (and provided it has met the  $\leq 110^\circ$  Hue sample average) then a postdated clearance will be issued with the clearance date as Day 3. If the sample Green Fractile misses by 0.2 of a Hue angle (and provided it has met the  $\leq 110^\circ$  Hue sample average) then a postdated clearance will be issued with the clearance date as Day 4. If the sample fails to meet the sample average Hue of  $110^\circ$ , then it will not be eligible for an advanced clearance.

AgFirst will issue a postdated delayed clearance on completion of the sample (note this will have sufficient alerts and warnings that the clearance is a delayed clearance). Once the postdated date is reached the Agfirst system will change its status from Delayed to Cleared.

### **When can I do my own main season brix test?**

Packhouses are able to do their own main season brix testing after the end of ALL supply caps or from the start of week 19.

**If I have 2 tests taken for either Hayward or Green14, and pass for black seeds in one, but fail for Brix, and then pass for Brix in the second, but fail for black seeds, can I combine the results for a composite pass?**

No. There are no instances of composite pass for Hayward or Green14. In order to get a pass, all criteria must be satisfied for the same 90-fruit sample.

**If I have a passed clearance for Gold3, Gold9 or Hort16A and get a retest and my colour result means the test fails, will my passed clearance be invalid?**

No. A passed clearance will not be taken away from a MA that is re-tested. However, the MA must not be changed in any way. The protocol for the previous sample will normally be carried forward automatically, if this does not happen please contact Agfirst by email [support@aqfirstbop.co.nz](mailto:support@aqfirstbop.co.nz) including the grower number, MA and sample number to have this changed.

**If I have a passed clearance for Gold3, Gold9 or Hort16A and get a retest and my brix result means the test fails, will my passed clearance be invalid?**

No. A passed clearance will not be taken away from a MA that is re-tested. However, the MA must not be changed in any way. The brix for the previous sample will normally be carried

forward automatically, if this does not happen please contact Agfirst by email [support@agfirstbop.co.nz](mailto:support@agfirstbop.co.nz) including the grower number, MA and sample number to have this changed.

**If I have a Passed Hayward Kiwistart clearance and retest and the 2<sup>nd</sup> sample fails will I lose my clearance?**

No, so long as the last sample has a Dry Matter  $\geq$  MTS you retain the original clearance, the highest and latest TZG of all valid clearance samples (pass or fail) will apply

**If my KiwiStart or Modified Brix clearance is  $\geq$  6.2 can I use this when submitting fruit under main season criteria?**

Yes. Now that all brix testing for clearance samples is equatorial this is permitted; please note that for main season, as well as requiring an average brix  $\geq 6.2$  there must be no more than 9 fruit  $\leq 5.7$  in a 30 fruit sample.

**If my packhouse has cleared my MA for main season Brix, does another dry matter test have to be done or can I use a previous DM result (even if the test failed)?**

In the situation where you have cleared your own 6.2 Brix, yes you are able to use the dry matter result for a previous clearance sample regardless of if it was cleared or failed for kiwistart, modified or main season criteria (remember only valid clearance samples are eligible for taste payments, this includes dry matter results on a sample that has failed).

If the previous clearance sample was cleared no further action is required by Agfirst. If the previous clearance sample was failed, facilities testing their own BRIX must request conversion of the previous test to a Dry Matter Only pass by emailing [support@agfirstbop.co.nz](mailto:support@agfirstbop.co.nz) including the grower number, MA and sample number to have this changed.

In all cases facilities testing their own BRIX must also update their EDI data at the time of fruit submit (TC record) and maintain internal individual fruit records from these tests.

**I have submitted fruit to Zespri before Agfirst have sent Zespri the latest test results, can I get these test results loaded?**

It is the packhouse's responsibility to make sure that they don't submit fruit until all test results are loaded at Zespri. Zespri are notified by an automated email when Agfirst try to submit test results and fruit has already been submitted. If this occurs packhouses are required to submit a written request to Zespri stating the reasons why this happened and Zespri will consider these on a case by case basis.

**Can a Maturity area lose its Class 1 status if its final Dry Matter result is below the Minimum Taste Standard (MTS)?**

Yes. The MTS is a Grade standard requirement for Class 1 Kiwifruit. If the most recent test is below the MTS then that line no longer meets Class 1 requirements and will not be accepted for export as Class 1. This means if an area has had a test which is above the MTS and then gets another later test below the MTS, the most recent result applies when assessing Grade status and the fruit will not be accepted as Class 1.

**What is the Gold3 No Kiwistart Size indicator?**

The No Kiwistart Size indicator is used to identify Gold3 size brackets above the MTS but below the CDM of 17.5 required for Kiwistart. These large (size 33+), medium (sizes 36 to 39) and small (size 42) size brackets will not receive Kiwistart payments during the Kiwistart period. The values of the indicator are:

L – Large, medium and small size brackets are not eligible for Kiwistart Payments

M – Medium and small size brackets are not eligible for Kiwistart Payments

S – Small size bracket is not eligible for Kiwistart Payments

N – Not applicable

**How is the highest TZG determined for a partial Gold3 clearance for grower payment purposes?**

The highest TZG for Zespri payment purposes is determined based on the TZG history for the size brackets that have cleared. For example, if the Medium/Large size brackets have cleared, the highest TZG for the maturity area's Medium/Large bracket is used.