

Horticulture Policy Summit 2008



Summit Program

8:30 am **Registration & Networking coffee:** 8:30 am

Morning session:

9:00 am Welcome by HAC Chair, Stuart Swaddling

9:30 am Official launch and Opening Address by the Minister for Agriculture,
The Hon. Tony Burke

10:00 am **Keynote Speakers** (see below for Speaker biographies):

Peter Silcock - CEO, Horticulture NZ

Sefita Hao'uli - Ministry for Labour, Industries & Commerce, Tonga

Lionel Kaluat - Commissioner of Labour, Republic of Vanuatu

10:45 am **Morning Tea**

11:15 am **Interactive debate - Expert Panel**, and the audience. Panel Members are: the Keynote Speakers (Peter Silcock, Sefita Hou'uli & Lionel Kaluat); Manjula Luthria (World Bank); and Ros Smerdon (Rural Woman of the Year for 2008, and avocado & custard-apple grower from the Sunshine Coast).

1:00 pm **Lunch**

Afternoon session:

2:00 pm **HAC Member-only** (and members of Members-only) policy development session

4:30 pm **HAC Annual General Meeting** and Member Forum

Evening session: **All welcome**

6:30 pm Cocktails; and

7:00 pm Summit Dinner (Black-tie).



Keynote Speakers:



Peter Silcock is the Chief Executive of Horticulture New Zealand, the industry representative body for New Zealand's 7000 commercial fruit, vegetable, berryfruit and olive growers. Peter's knowledge and understanding of the commercial horticulture sector in New Zealand is considerable, and highly respected by growers, colleagues and government agencies. He began work in the industry in the mid 1980s. Peter is a member of the New Zealand Biosecurity Ministerial Advisory Committee, the Ministerial Advisory Group on Trade Negotiations, an executive member of United Fresh New Zealand, Joint Chair of the Horticulture/Viticulture Seasonal Labour Governance Group and Chair of the Plants Market Access Council.

One of the most significant challenges Peter has faced in his career has been the implementation of New Zealand's Recognised Seasonal Employer immigrant work scheme launched in April 2007. Peter's challenge has been to convince reluctant growers that the scheme could work, while keeping the Immigration Service, the Department of Labour, the unions and various Pacific Island nations around the same table and get them to see why growers had issues with the scheme, and how the issues could be resolved.



Lionel Kaluat, Commissioner of Labour, Republic of Vanuatu, has held this position for the last 5 years. He has an extensive Industrial relations background. His main role is to regulate labour laws; and his Ministry's core function is to minimize any industrial threat and promote all ILO standard practices at the work place. As part of his role, Lionel also oversees Vanuatu's participation in the NZ RSE scheme.



Sefita Hao'uli was engaged by Tonga's Ministry of Labour Commerce and Industries following an involvement in the initial development of the Recognised Seasonal Employer policy by the Pacific Division of the Department of Labour in New Zealand. He provides advice to the Ministry and implements Tonga's response to RSE throughout New Zealand. For the last two years, he has managed the placement and support for more than 800 Tongan workers and their employers in New Zealand. Sefita moved from Tonga to New Zealand more than 40 years ago and his background is in media. He worked as a journalist in television, radio and in newspapers in Auckland for more than 20 years and was seconded for a period to work in the Prime Minister's Department in Wellington in the 1980s.

Other Panel Members:



Ros Smerdon is an avocado, custard apple and macadamia nut grower from Glasshouse Mountains in Queensland. Ros is also Chair of Natures Fruit Company, a grower owned co-operative with a shareholder base Australia wide. Ros is also Vice President of the Australian Custard Apple Industry. She was part of the Growcom Horticulture Industry Workforce Plan Steering Committee, which submitted its final report and recommendations to government in June 2008. Ros has considerable involvement within the horticulture industry and was awarded the RIRDC Qld and Australian Rural Woman of the Year in 2008. As both a grower and representative of grower organizations, Ros has a sound understanding of the issues and concerns facing growers in regard to the Pacific Island labour proposal.



Dr. Manjula Luthria joined the World Bank in 1998 and is currently the Senior Economist for the Pacific Region, based in the World Bank office in Sydney, Australia. Her responsibilities involve attention and assistance to the member states on issues of macro policy such as public debt and enhancing the effectiveness of public expenditures as well as to micro-foundations of growth through improvements in the business environment and trade integration. In 2006 she completed a research project examining the case for greater labour mobility in the Pacific region; and is now following up with policy advocacy as well as facilitation assistance to help countries devise successful labour export strategies. Dr. Luthria attained her PhD in Economics from Georgetown University.

Prior to her current assignment, Dr. Luthria worked on the economics of intellectual property rights; quantifying the value of patents in developing countries and analyzing the impact of stronger regimes on technology importing countries; assessing and strengthening industry-academia linkages to enhance the technological competitiveness of institutions in countries such as India, Turkey and Malaysia.