

## NZ's HortResearch, Crop & Food Research to merge

New Zealand's HortResearch and Crop & Food Research will merge into a new Crown Research Institute (CRI), on December 1, 2008. The two CRIs have been granted shareholder approval to merge, said Mr Pete Hodgson, Minister of Research, Science and Technology, Government of New Zealand. A name for the new CRI will be announced before December 1, 2008.

The Boards of the two companies initiated the merger to create a critical mass based on the combined strength in plant-based food research capabilities that are currently segregated in the two companies. The merger will combine the two companies' knowledge and expertise in nationally significant areas of sustainable production, elite genetics and smart breeding, and food and health, which will benefit wider national initiatives and strategies.

"This change is a bold and exciting step which will produce benefits for scientific endeavour and will enhance the contribution of the CRI sector to New Zealand's economic, social, and environmental well-being. The critical mass created through the merger will allow the combined CRI to better service key client needs, combine complementary skills, and share equipment," Mr Hodgson said.

There are no proposed closures of sites, although Crop & Food Research and HortResearch staff members in some areas may be brought together in the same location. Mr Jim McLean, current Chair of HortResearch has been appointed as Chair.

HortResearch currently has 541 staff and in 2007/08 earned revenue of \$65 million. It is acknowledged as a world leader in integrated fruit research and is responsible for a range of successful cultivars including the Zespri Gold Kiwifruit and Enza Jazz Apple.

Crop & Food Research currently has 380 staff and in 2007/08 earned revenue of \$56 million. Its key research focus is engaging with industry in producing and transforming high-quality raw materials into high-value foods.