



A LIGHTER TOUCH

Progress report for the period April to June 2021

www.a-lighter-touch.co.nz

A Lighter Touch is well into its second year of operation. Top priority for the *A Lighter Touch* team has been to get our Proof of Concept projects ready for PGG approval at its July meeting. This objective was achieved as a collaborative effort from the whole *A Lighter Touch* team, and three Proof of Concept and one Enhancing agroecosystems for biological control projects being endorsed by the Industry Representative Group for PGG approval. As well as the focus on Proof of Concept projects, the rest of the work programme has advanced quickly and largely to plan.

Achievements from this period include:

- Excellent grower response to *A Lighter Touch* at the FAR conference, with 75% of those present saying they are interested in adopting *A Lighter Touch* approaches on their farm.
- Syngenta and Corteva Agriscience sign the funding agreement with *A Lighter Touch*
- The first Consumer Focus report completed
- Three Proof of Concept and one Enhancing agroecosystems for biological control projects prepared for PGG approval
- Concept proposal developed for upscaling biopesticides and biological control agents
- Feature article from Ray Smith, MPI Director General, in the newsletter highlighting the importance of the programme and synergies with initiatives such as *Fit for a better world*.
- Crop protection gaps and priorities workshop held, and programme priorities identified
- Resistance management strategy workshop held, priorities identified, and a secretariat structure developed under the umbrella of Agcarm for long-term maintenance of the strategies
- Successful outreach to international minor use organisations for data sharing purposes
- Evaluation of Zespri integrated pest management proposal and potential for increased programme investment by Zespri
- Confirmation by Summerfruit NZ that they will be signing the *A Lighter Touch* contract, with associated discussion on the range of projects and potential increased investment
- Extensive outreach activity, holding workshops with programme participants, and meetings with NZ Agritech and NZ Biotech, and attendance at the FAR and Lincoln Bio-protection conferences.

Investment Summary:

	Industry Contribution	MPI Contribution	Total Investment
Programme to date	650,225	234,184	884,408

Right: FAR's Jo Drummond asks the question "Based on what you have heard, are you interested in adopting *A Lighter Touch* approaches on your farm".

