

**BEFORE THE HEARINGS PANEL APPOINTED BY FAR NORTH DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**

**IN THE MATTER**

of the Resource Management Act 1991  
**(the Act)**

AND

**IN THE MATTER**

of hearing of submissions on The Proposed  
Far North District Plan

Hearing Stream 6/7 Light and Noise

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**INDUSTRY STATEMENT OF SARAH CAMERON FOR HORTICULTURE NEW  
ZEALAND**

**7 October 2024**

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## PURPOSE

1. This statement responds to the Section 42A report recommendations in regard to the Horticulture NZ submission specifically:
  - NOISE - R8 Audible Bird Scaring Devices
2. HortNZ sought an amendment to amendment to PER-1 where audible bird scaring devices can be used half an hour before sunrise and after sunset.
3. The S42 author has recommended a change to the rule framework such that Audible Bird Scaring Devices are only used between sunrise and sunset. Both the S42A author and the Marshall Day Acoustics have also advised that the use of bird scaring devices half an hour before sunrise and half an hour after sunlight may be appropriate. However, it was recommended to the panel that additional evidence be provided before this relief is accepted.

## AUDIBLE BIRD SCARING DEVICES

1. Audible Bird Scaring Devices (ABSD) are used on orchards and vegetable crops at different times of the growing and crop cycle. In fruit orchards they can be used to scare birds during bud break. In commercial vegetable growing operations, ABSD can be used to avoid birds damaging certain crops.
2. Birds can destroy an entire crop if not managed. This [video](#) shows a bird decimating buds on a kiwifruit vine.
3. Bird activity on orchards can differ depending on the bird species, the crop type and the food sources available nearby.
4. In 2022 from August to October, Zespri undertook a study to monitor bird activity on 18 kiwifruit orchards and to understand foraging behaviour of bird species to determine when bud feeding occurred.
5. The study used a number of measures including bird surveys, focal watches, and trail cameras that showed bird activity outside of sunrise and sunset hours.

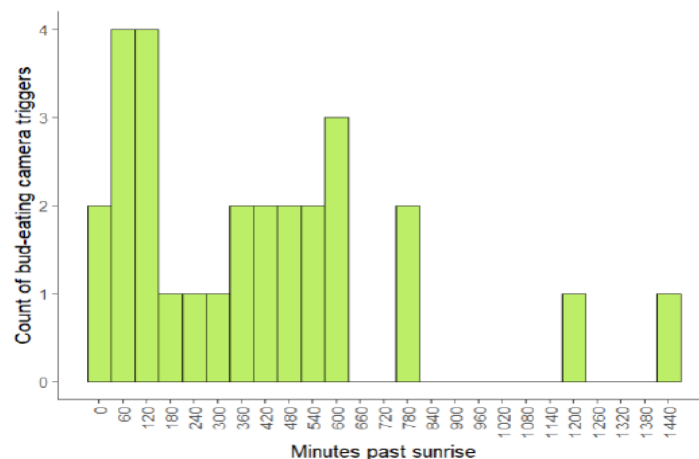


Figure 5. Count of bud-eating trail camera triggers by minutes past sunrise.

6. While a small sample of orchards were monitored, the findings provide evidence that bird activity is present around prior to sunrise and after sunset.
7. To help reduce bud eating in districts where there are significant orchard activity, it has been our experience that the regulatory response typically applies operational times for ABSD that are set at half an hour before sunrise to half an hour after sunset. Examples include:

Table one: Main orchard growing regions and operational timeframes of ABSD

District	Time
Western Bay of Plenty District Council	Half an hour before sunrise to half an hour after sunset
Whangarei District Council	Half an hour before sunrise to half an hour after sunset
Hawkes Bay Central District Council	Half an hour before sunrise to half an hour after sunset
Central Otago District Council	Half an hour before sunrise to half an hour after sunset
Whakatane District Council	Half an hour before sunrise to half an hour after sunset
Selwyn District Council	Half an hour before sunrise to half an hour after sunset

8. This is a practical response to known bird activity that can have devastating effects on the food production system. Applying a 7.00am to 7.00pm does not relate to the feeding pattern of birds nor account for other variables like seasons, crop type, daylight savings.

## CONCLUSION

9. HortNZ continues to support a rule framework that enables the operation of ABSD half an hour before sunrise to half an hour after sunset.