



Carla Emms – Horticultural Consultant



Highlight of the job: Every day is different and you're not locked in the office all day.

Income range: \$40k – \$50k but with experience plus a percentage of consultation fees.

Pathway: College, Napier Girls High School. Year 13 subjects: english, economics, calculus, chemistry, statistics.

Carla Emms enjoys working as a Horticultural Consultant and seeing the crops she has had an input on go through the packhouse or finished as a bottle of wine.

Working as a Horticulturist is not a nine-to-five job, it's a job where you put in 120% from October through to May. You really need time management and problem solving skills as you don't learn everything from the text book and need to apply principles to the current situation.

"If a client's got a problem with a tree, you can't just look in a textbook and say, 'Oh, that's that pest'."

A difficult aspect of the job is when things go wrong financially for clients.

"It's not a pleasant part of the job, but you're there to help them do the best they can. If the crop is so low it's not worth picking, one of the options could be harvesting it for juice."

Besides getting satisfaction from helping her clients, Carla also enjoys seeing her work literally come to fruition.

"Summer's great! I like the Hawke's Bay heat. It's harvest time, everything builds up to that time and you can see whether you've got a good crop or not, and whether all your work's paid off."

How Carla became a Horticultural Consultant

- Completed a conjoint Degree in Science and Business BSc (Hort Sc) and BBS (Finance)
- Worked at an orchard during summer picking and packing fruit
- Worked during university holidays at a Horticultural Consultant firm
- Was offered full-time work at the firm as a Horticultural Consultant



Dominique Zivkovich-Brady – Science Technician

Highlight of the job: Having my manager mentor me and push me which has allowed me to achieve more than I ever did at school.

Income range: Starting salary \$35 – \$40k.

Pathway: College, Kerikeri High School. Year 13 subjects: PE, english, calculus, art painting and biology.

Dominique started out picking lemons but soon found there was much more to working in a citrus orchard, and plenty of places to go. Now she is leading research and quality for a company that grows citrus fruit for New Zealand and overseas markets.

"The turning point came when I got into quality control and started to see that it wasn't all just about picking, pruning and thinning. My employers saw potential in me. They gave me other tasks and I proved myself time and time again and moved my way up."

Today the core of Dominique's job is research, covering everything in citrus regarding quality and tree health. She also carries out and reports on technical monitoring covering crop estimates, fruit growth measurements, fruit internal quality, soil and leaf nutrient analysis, general tree health and climate measurements.

The cool thing about this industry that Dominique enjoys is getting to see the end results.

"It is challenging but at the end of it you've got a product and you can say, 'That lemon looks fantastic and I did that because we controlled this pest, or we pruned the trees well so there were fewer diseases'."

How Dominique became a Science Technician

- Worked on an orchard picking lemons
- Worked as a Quality Controller
- Completed a National Certificate in Horticulture (Level 4)

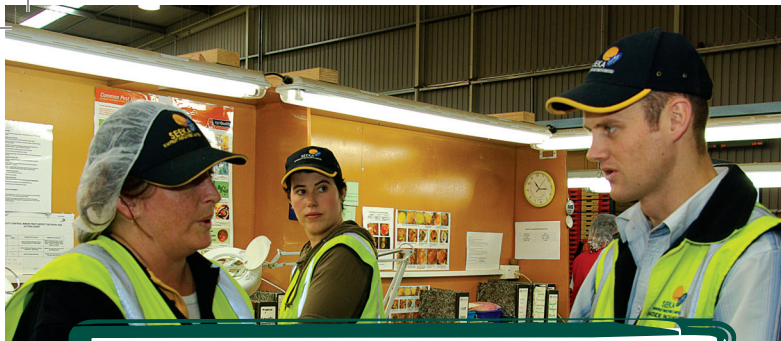
Careers in horticulture



These are just some of the cool career opportunities in horticulture. Check out www.careers.govt.nz for more information or visit www.hortcareers.co.nz



Our Growth Industry



Robert Humphries – Packhouse/Coolstore Manager

Highlight of the job: I like the challenge of the job and the variety of people I work with.

Income range: \$35k – \$60k depending on experience and size of operations.

Pathway: College, Southland. Year 13 subjects: chemistry, tech drawing, statistics, calculus, agriculture/horticulture.

Robert Humphries always knew he wanted to work with plants but it wasn't until he shifted from his home in Southland to Otago Polytechnic that he developed a passion for the hairy green fruit.

"I stumbled onto kiwifruit, got hooked and decided to pursue it as a career."

Robert is now a Packhouse/Coolstore Manager for Seeka Kiwifruit, a Bay of Plenty company that packs and stores kiwifruit for local and overseas markets. The packhouse operates six months of the year.

"We're operating three grading machines here and about 23 coolstores. The main kiwifruit season starts in early April and finishes by mid-June. Last year we employed 600-700 employees over a 24-hour period."

During the season Robert can be doing anything from spreadsheets for budgets and organising packing schedules, to chasing up contractors and ensuring they have enough staff on-site.

Through his employer, Robert was lucky enough to go and work in Italy for four months packing out the green Italian crop for a New Zealand/Italy joint venture.

How Robert became a Packhouse/Coolstore Manager

- Studied Fruit Production and Nursery Horticulture at Otago Polytechnic and qualified with a Diploma in Horticulture
- Moved to the Bay of Plenty to work with kiwifruit as a Trainee Orchard Manager, and then Orchard Manager
- Became a Packhouse Manager and was promoted to Assistant Site Manager
- Moved into a job specialising in inventory management, controlling the quality of fruit being exported



Kris Robb – Orchard Manager

Highlight of the job: I like that my job is outside most of the time and that I meet a wide range of people.

Income range: \$45k plus a percentage of the orchard profits.

Pathway: College, Logan Park High School, Dunedin. Year 13 subjects: PE, statistics, english, chemistry, biology.

Kris Robb is an Orchard Manager and believes growing good fruit is an art form.

"I like the challenge of being dictated to by the weather. You have to be a practical person and be able to think on your feet. I don't think fruit growing is a science, it's more of an art. There is no manual to say this is how you do things, so you have to be flexible."

Kris grew up in the city, he enjoys working outside, meeting people, the rural lifestyle and how his job allows him to continue learning.

"The job and technology constantly evolves. You are always learning and if you start thinking you know everything then things are going to turn to custard on you."

Orchard work is dictated by the seasons, with tree pruning in winter, fruit thinning in spring and harvesting during the summer. Harvest is the most satisfying time for Kris.

"I get a huge amount of satisfaction going down to the packhouse when they are packing our fruit. I enjoy watching it go through when there is a low reject rate and it's looking good in the boxes."

How Kris became an Orchard Manager

- Had a casual summer job picking fruit in an orchard in Otago for eight weeks – and stayed for two and a half years
- While working at the orchard he did some papers through the Horticulture ITO
- Completed a Bachelor of Commerce with a Management major, while still working at the orchard during summers
- Was offered a full-time job as a supervisor at the orchard after finishing his degree
- Did higher-level papers through the Horticulture ITO and Open Polytechnic, then became an Orchard Manager



Gareth Holder - Crop Manager

Highlight of the job: The variety of the work, every day is different.

Income range: \$55k – \$70k.

Pathway: College, Napier Boys' High School. Year 13 subjects: biology, statistics, economics, agriculture, english.

Crop Manager Gareth Holder enjoys the challenge of working with nature.

"You are so dependant on the environment and I guess it's the challenge of not quite knowing what is going to happen tomorrow. You have to think fast and adjust."

Gareth manages 1600 hectares of vegetable and grain crops each year in Hawke's Bay. His key responsibility is to ensure that all the crops are grown to export quality.

"There is a lot of focus on the quality of the product rather than the quantity. We only get paid on the quality of the fruit that arrives at its final destination."

Being a Crop Manager means more than just planting. Prior to planting a lot of evaluation takes place where Gareth looks at the overall performance on a paddock by paddock basis.

Gareth uses growing software so he can keep track of everything and gets a real buzz once the crop is harvested and its all coming off well.

"The positive feedback from the buyers at the final destination is a big tick for me. I don't consider the job done until it has arrived, they've paid the money and there is a happy customer at the other end."

How Gareth became a Crop Manager

- Being promoted to overall management of the cropping division
- Completed a Bachelor of Applied Science majoring in Horticulture and one year of Honours Research in Horticultural Management, Production and Science
- Worked at Heinz Wattie's during university holidays gaining practical knowledge
- After leaving university he began working immediately in the vegetable industry, beginning as a field manager before being promoted to Crop Manager