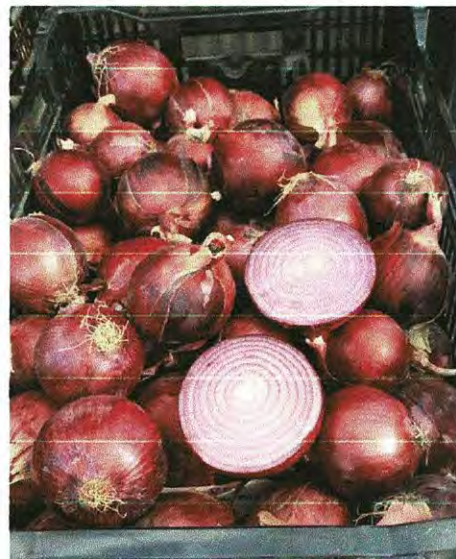


Good morning, my name is Bharat Jivan. I have been involved in our business for over 30 years and my family has been growing vegetables in the franklin region for around 70 years. I am also a P.V.G.A. committee member and past president.

We grow potatoes, onions, lettuce, broccoli and pumpkins for fresh consumption. Our produce is sold predominately around the North Island markets, but during spring, our early new season potatoes are sold in the South Island. We supply both the supermarket chains and Independent retailers. We pride ourselves in producing high quality vegetables which are nutritious, safe to eat and grown sustainably.



22 regular staff rely on Jivan Produce for employment, and we also employ additional staff during the summer harvest. We crop on 250 hectares of both leased and owned land. We are based in Pukekohe, but 70 % of our land is in the Waikato region.

## *Sustainability*

We see ourselves as custodians of the land. We make a living off the land and we treat it with the utmost respect.

All the Growers in the Pukekawa, Waikato region own their own earth moving equipment so we can maintain silt traps and keep the precious top soil on the farm and out of waterways.



We have all adopted the erosion mitigation techniques from our “Doing it right “manual. This manual was produced from the Franklin Sustainability Project, an initiative of the P.V.G.A back in the 1990’s.

We try to use cover crops whenever it is possible and practical. Cover crops have multiple functions. It soaks up residual nitrogen, prevents soil erosion during winter months and when cultivated, it adds organic matter and generally improves the soil health.



Mustard cover crop



Mustard being chopped back in. This Mustard is a Bio-Fumigant.



Oats sown into potato moulds to hold the soil and soak up residual nitrogen.



Jivan Produce is part of a group of like-minded Growers in the Pukekawa Region. We do joint beautification plantings on our road frontages and sponsor local school events.



### *Production*

We are accredited to NZ Global Gap, a good agricultural practice program which is recognised worldwide. Global Gap is audited annually by a third party, either S.G.S. or Assured Quality. Jivan Produce has been accredited for the last 14 years.

Global Gap ensures that we adhere to Good Agricultural Practice or Best Practice.

There are many components to Global Gap which cover almost all aspects of our business.

We are required to be sustainable and environmentally conscious.

We have to justify all our chemical and fertiliser applications and ensure that there is comprehensive recording and documentation.

On our farm, we annually get all individual fields soil tested. The tests are evaluated by my agronomist and or a Balance Fertiliser representative. Together we decide what we need to apply.

Fertiliser application is key to producing a profitable crop and more importantly a marketable crop of quality.

We agonise when deciding on the day how much nitrogen we are going to apply. We have to consider how the crop is looking and how much rain we have had or are going to have. If you do not apply enough, your crop will suffer malnutrition and not yield well. Conversely, if you apply too much it will be too lush and soft. A lush crop will not store, have no shelf life and will go rotten. This is particularly critical when we are growing onions which we want to store for 9 months or send overseas, half way around the world. Hence, we only use very high-quality fertilisers, no Urea is used in our operation. The rule in our industry is to sacrifice yield for quality. Nobody gets paid for poor quality produce.

In my 30 years, I have seen a lot of change in fertiliser use or should I say refinement. Back in the 1970's my father used to apply 3 tonnes a hectare as a base fertiliser for growing potatoes. We now currently apply 1.2 to 1.5 tonnes per hectare. Father used to sidedress with urea, we now use C.A.N. which releases nitrogen slowly, allowing better absorption by the plant.

Fertiliser application is a real science in our industry, and we are constantly looking at how we can influence marketable quality and yield by tweaking applications.

At Jivan Produce we don't rest when it comes to improving on farm efficiencies. Two years ago, we invested in a fertiliser spreader which uses GPS to apply the fertiliser accurately and precisely. This cost us \$35k when a regular spreader would cost \$14k. This season, we purchased another fertiliser applicator that will blow fertiliser to just below the potato seed. We hope to reduce our fertiliser use even more by targeting the fertiliser more accurately.



New Spreader for this season

As you can see Pukekohe Vegetable growers have been doing their utmost to minimise nitrogen use since the 1980's and we are still striving for efficiencies.

We feel the unproven land restrictions in P.C.1 to be detrimental to our sustainability. We need to be able to acquire and crop land unhindered and without too much unnecessary "red tape".

We need more land to improve our crop rotations, as we are already very intensive. Under the proposed rules this will be made too difficult. This year we purchased another existing vegetable farm to not grow more produce, but to de-intensify our cropping operation. I worry the hurdles being put in place will drive many of the small family enterprises out of our industry. We are practical people with an affinity for the land. We don't like being burdened with paperwork, filling out forms and being stuck in offices.

At a time when the consumers are turning to a more plant-based diet, we will need to be growing more vegetables, not less. Also, restricting production will only drive food affordability upwards and we will see more frozen vegetables being imported from countries that don't have the same food quality assurance programs in place as we have here.

The Council needs to acknowledge its social responsibilities and the unintended consequences from its well-intended policies.