

Title           A quality assurance system for the New Zealand cut flower industry?  
Author         Brash, D., Walker, S. and Mattson, L.  
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### **Abstract**

Quality assurance (QA) systems strive to ensure products meet customer expectations. QA systems evolve to meet a wide range of needs, product appearance and shelf life, safety concerns over agrichemical use and microbiological hazards, product traceability and/or environmental and social integrity of production. This paper documents the introduction of QA into the New Zealand cut flower and foliage industry. It examines the roles of growers, retailers and government in the evolution of a QA system appropriate to the needs of the industry. The importance of 'inclusiveness', of 'ownership' of the QA system by the participants and of the 'brand' will be assessed. We conclude that QA must be a marketing tool promoting good horticultural practice and aimed at selling more flowers.