



Custom Compost - December 2023



We recently wrote to our key suppliers sharing a situation that was beyond the realm of anything experienced before. In short we discovered in September that a person of trust had been using our payment to suppliers to steal from us.

This person will remain nameless at this point out of legal necessity but had been employed by Lyndale Custom Mix Ltd since Lyndale Nurseries Auckland Ltd was sold in March 2022.

An employment agent of good repute had been employed to find a suitable person, and provided us with someone who came with excellent credentials, references and a police background check.

One appearance in court has been made with more to follow, however, behind it all is a gambling addiction which has seen that position of trust used in many ways to divert funds from Custom Mix into their own accounts.

Possibly the worst side effect resulting from this theft was the absolute carnage created in our accounts as the ongoing theft was covered up and hidden from oversight even by our accountants.

My motive in sharing this today is to create awareness that white-collar crime is huge, largely unreported, and as in our case, was happening right under our nose.



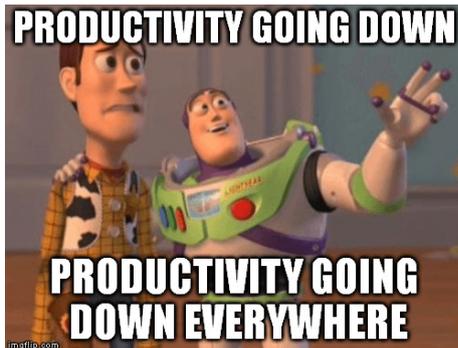
Rainbows

For every dark cloud there is a rainbow, and for us in this instance this rainbow is called Caroline Atchinson.

Most all of you will be familiar with Caroline's cheery voice on the phone at Lyndale Nurseries for many years.

Caroline has now joined the Custom Mix Team running our office accounts and assisting with sales which is fantastic news all round.

Having been familiar with all the systems and customers in the Custom Mix world, Caroline is a perfect match and will blend her ideas and creativity with our team, who are excited to welcome her back.



More Rainbows

The election campaign and election itself is behind us at last (thank goodness). Much has been made of the cost of living but it's all too little too late. Inflation may slow but its effects will remain. At the crux of it is that we have increased the minimum wage by \$6.95 an hour or a 44% increase in just six years.

Driving up the minimum wage can be a good thing, but it needs to correspond with an increase in productivity.

Otherwise as we can now see, you are paying more for the same result. Sadly, in New Zealand our productivity per person has gone down not up.

Here's the thing, wages don't go down. Once pegged at a certain level they are either destined to stay there or to continue to rise. But they never go down.

The best way to break out of this downward spiral is to grow our economy.

To do that we need to find new and innovative things to do, as well as doing more of what we already do well.



In horticulture, that means more different crops or different and better versions of what we

already sell

already sell.

That means new innovations in plants. Creating new ones that can feed our already successful produce streams such as kiwifruit, berries and apples, to name a few.

However, breeding is the key. We need the raw building blocks of breeding to get some new innovations happening in NZ.

To do that we need to remove plants from the HASNO Act and allow importation of plants that we know are not going to prove harmful to the environment but may create that next kiwifruit (equivalent) sensation.



Christmas Is Upon Us

Our thoughts turn to sun, sand and holidays, however not all nurseries stop over Christmas, so let us know your plans.

At Custom Mix we are planning to close down between Christmas and New Year 27th 28th and 29th December. However, we can potentially meet your requirements over this time with a bit of forward planning.

Caroline will be phoning around to see what potting mix you might want for your Christmas and New Year planning.

It certainly has been a challenging year for the industry at large and for Custom Mix with our special situation outlined earlier.

For now from the team at Custom Mix many thanks for your continued support and wishing you all a fantastic and safe Christmas season followed by an exciting and prosperous 2024.

Kind Regards

The Custom Mix Team



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