



**CLAYTON
HOPS™**

claytonhops.co.nz



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FARM SUSTAINABILITY INSIGHTS

July 2025

INTRODUCTION



At Clayton Hops, sustainability is more than a commitment – it's a responsibility.

We strive to work in a way that benefits the environment, our employees and the broader community.

Through innovative practices and ethical business operations, we are shaping a future where hop farming is both productive and sustainable.

Our approach is grounded in guardianship of the land, continuous improvement and a deep respect for the craft of hop growing and processing.



ETHICAL EMPLOYMENT & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



We believe sustainability begins with people.

Our commitment to ethical employment ensures that every worker is treated with fairness, dignity and respect.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Our vision and mission are to improve end-to-end employment quality, to industry leading standards, and establish a rights-respecting baseline that ensures competitiveness is not at the expense of workers.

We're committed to decisive and collaborative action to drive ethical business practices, developing best practices to support resilient, future-focused supply chains that prioritise workers' voices, safety and human rights.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

Employees are offered continuous learning opportunities through training programs and skill-building workshops, with clear pathways for progression.

We work closely with Primary ITO – an enterprise helping New Zealand's primary sector flourish by growing people's skills – to provide work-based training to our employees.

Our team is encouraged to enrol and is supported throughout the program – from entry level through to Level 4 apprenticeships. Currently, we're proud to be the only hop growers participating in the program.

We're also the first hop farming operation to have a contestant enter the Horticulture New Zealand Grower of the Year competition, blazing a path for future hop professionals.

COMMUNITY SPONSORSHIPS

Our deep roots in the community are reflected in our ongoing support of local sporting clubs and regional development projects, reinforcing our belief that strong communities and sustainable businesses grow together.



NZGAP CERTIFICATION

Clayton hop farms are proud members of NZGAP (New Zealand Good Agricultural Practice), a nationally recognised assurance programme that promotes safe, sustainable and socially responsible farming.

Our certification demonstrates that we meet rigorous standards across food safety, environmental stewardship and worker welfare. It also provides our customers and partners with confidence that our operations are independently audited and aligned with best-practice horticultural systems.

Being NZGAP certified reinforces our commitment to continuous improvement and transparency – core values that underpin everything we do.

100% BIODEGRADABLE STRING

We've transitioned fully to using biodegradable material to string hop vines up the trellis. These strings are mulched directly into the soil post-harvest, eliminating plastic waste and contributing to soil health.

The biodegradable string ensures durability during the growing season while breaking down naturally afterward.

This change has removed thousands of kilometres of synthetic material from our waste stream annually and supports our broader commitment to sustainable inputs.

HOP WASTE COMPOST PROGRAM

Our composting initiative transforms post-harvest left over green matter – including spent vines and biodegradable string – into nutrient-rich compost. This organic matter is reintegrated into our fields, improving soil structure, water retention and microbial activity.

We're also investing in systems that combine hop waste with sawdust and green waste to optimise the carbon-to-nitrogen ratio, accelerating decomposition and ensuring consistent compost quality.

HARVESTING WINTER WATER FOR IRRIGATION

We harvest water during the winter period i.e. during the wetter time of the year, by collecting and storing it in on-farm reservoirs.

These reservoirs are then used during the summer growing months to augment irrigation water supply. We are very fortunate in that our farms have plenty of water when the hop gardens need it.

BIODIVERSITY INITIATIVE

In partnership with a major NZ brewery we're supporting efforts to restore biodiversity and protect waterways across Te Taihū (the top of the South Island of New Zealand).

This regional initiative, led by The Nature Conservancy and the Kotahitanga mō te Taiao Alliance (KMTT), aims to bring landowners and industry together to regenerate native ecosystems while maintaining productive landscapes.

Our own on-farm work includes riparian planting with native species, soil stabilisation and habitat creation for pollinators and beneficial insects. These efforts not only enhance biodiversity but also improve water quality and long-term soil health, ensuring that our region can continue to support sustainable hop growing for generations to come.

We continue to explore regenerative land management techniques that restore soil structure and increase carbon sequestration.



DRIPLINE IRRIGATION & FERTIGATION

Our dripline irrigation system delivers water directly to the root zone, significantly reducing evaporation and run-off. This precision method allows for targeted fertigation – applying nutrients through irrigation – which enhances uptake efficiency and reduces leaching.

Compared to overhead sprinkler systems (being the irrigation system for the majority of New Zealand hop growers), drip irrigation uses up to 40% less water and supports a “little and often” approach that aligns with hop plant needs.

We monitor soil moisture and nutrient levels in real time to fine-tune application rates, ensuring optimal plant health with minimal environmental impact.

LIVESTOCK FOR WEED CONTROL TO REDUCE HERBICIDE USAGE

We integrate sheep into our hop gardens during the season to manage undergrowth naturally. This reduces herbicide use, lowers fuel consumption from mechanical mowing and introduces organic matter into the soil through manure.

The sheep also help aerate the soil and suppress weed seed germination. This practice reflects our commitment to low-impact, circular farming systems that work in harmony with nature.

NO FUNGICIDE USAGE AND MINIMAL PESTICIDE USAGE

We do not use fungicides.

We maintain one of the lowest pesticide application rates in the global hop industry. In some seasons, we achieve zero pesticide use.

We rely on biological controls, such as predatory mites, and cultural practices like canopy management, to prevent outbreaks of the one pest we have in New Zealand, being an insect which can reduce hop cone yields.

Our approach ensures compliance with stringent international residue standards and supports the production of clean, natural hops.

CARBON FOOTPRINT REDUCTION



We are actively reducing emissions across our operations.

All our farms have been designed with centralised on-farm harvesting facilities to ensure a reduction in transport movements and emissions, especially evident during the harvest period. We are exploring renewable energy options for our farms too.

We are fortunate in New Zealand in that 80-85% of grid electricity is generated from renewable energy sources like hydro, geothermal, wind and solar.

TRANSPARENCY & FUTURE GOALS

We are committed to measuring and reporting on our sustainability performance.

In the coming year, we aim to publish key environmental metrics, including water use efficiency, compost output and emissions reductions. We are also exploring third-party certifications to validate our practices.

Our vision and mission is to lead the industry in sustainable hop farming and processing, setting new standards for environmental stewardship and social responsibility.

