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The seventh and final article in the series on MAF’s Animal Biosecurity group discusses the international environment in which the group works, and how its links with international organisations benefit New Zealand exporters.

As a trade-dependent nation, New Zealand is part of a global marketplace. Our exporters seek to obtain the best price possible for their products in valuable long-term markets. The work undertaken by MAF’s Biosecurity Authority internationally helps to assure our trading partners of the safety of what is being supplied.

To improve trade access for New Zealand products and foster international linkages, MAF Biosecurity contributes to a number of international groups. This article looks at that international work in relation to animal biosecurity.

MAF dedicates significant resources to complying with international trade agreements and lobbying our trade partners for favourable market access.

The world organization for animal health, or OIE
Animal Biosecurity plays an active role in the activities of the Office International des Epizooties (OIE), or the world organization for animal health. Staff participate in a number of OIE specialist groups and a technical specialist from the Animal Biosecurity group recently chaired an OIE working group preparing a draft code on import risk analysis.

The OIE was reviewed in the previous issue of Biosecurity (15: 4-5). It:
- provides information about the spread of animal diseases and control methods;
- promotes and coordinates veterinary research; and
- develops standards for international trade in animals and animal products.

The animal health quadrilateral group
The quadrilateral countries are New Zealand, Australia, Canada and the USA. Specialists in animal health policy meet annually to discuss and develop consistent policies in areas of common interest related to animal health. The group works particularly on developing momentum for ideas to be progressed in the OIE and in the World Trade Organization SPS committee, and doesn’t deal with trade concerns that are particularly bilateral in nature.

Similar groups work in the areas of plant health and food safety.

MAF veterinary counsellors
MAF has veterinary counsellors based in Brussels and Washington DC. The counsellors work to maintain and improve trade access for our animals and animal products to important markets in the European Union, Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, and North and South America.

The counsellors also promote the removal or modification of unjustified technical trade barriers to overseas markets, and manage issues that might affect New Zealand exports.

The World Trade Organization and the sanitary and phytosanitary agreement
New Zealand is a member the World Trade Organization (WTO), which implements a rules-based system for international trade. The WTO actively requires its 135 member countries to remove import prohibitions and reduce import tariffs. One of the multilateral agreements entered into by WTO member countries, and the one that has the greatest significance for New Zealand’s primary producers, is the agreement on the application of sanitary and phytosanitary measures (the SPS agreement).

The SPS agreement sets out how to apply sanitary (human and animal health) measures and phytosanitary (plant health) measures. It establishes principles which countries are committed to uphold when they work to protect health while trading in plants, animals and their products. It governs all SPS measures relating to international trade.

This agreement requires all SPS restrictions on imports to be scientifically justified. Governments cannot impose import restrictions on New Zealand’s biosecurity: international linkages
Zealand products unless there are sound reasons for doing so. Using import measures to simply protect domestic producers from overseas competition is not considered a sound reason.

The Biosecurity Authority has particular responsibility for the obligations and opportunities for New Zealand under the SPS agreement. It:

- advances New Zealand’s policy interests in international forums (including the World Trade Organization committee on SPS measures, and standard-setting bodies for animal health);
- participates in international standards development for animal health;
- manages trade issues involving animal biosecurity, including liaison with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and with overseas government agencies;
- develops and maintains relationships with key officials in counterpart agencies in New Zealand and overseas, and relevant international agencies.

The new trading rules: major challenges for a domestic industry

The advent of the new WTO rules have created challenges, as well as opportunities, for our primary producers. Brian Milne from the New Zealand Pork Industry Board explained the concerns of his industry at MAF’s SPS seminar earlier this year.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss with you what was originally titled ‘The downside of new trading rules for some industries’. However I think the revised title, ‘The new trading rules – major challenges for a domestic industry’ gives a much more positive spin. And challenges there certainly are, since the introduction of the WTO rules opened the pork import floodgates.

I’d like to open by reminding ourselves of the definition of equivalence: “Members shall accept the sanitary and phytosanitary measures of other members as equivalent, even if the measures differ from their own, or from those used by other members trading in the same product.”

But I have to say at the outset that I am somewhat sceptical about the whole WTO process, when you consider the following issues.

Issues where science has taken a back seat:

- New Zealand’s attempts to get apples into Australia;
- New Zealand lamb into the USA;
- The EU/USA trade war over bananas;
- USA/EU fight with growth promotants;
- EU ban on in-feed antibiotics;
- New Zealand’s ban on trout imports.

With all of them, science appears to have taken a back seat. You wonder, if you are a New Zealand pork producer being seriously disadvantaged by imports, whether the pursuit of free trade is not just a lot of bureaucratic nonsense with the naive hope that we will collectively benefit as New Zealanders.

But, I began by saying that we see the WTO rules as a challenge, so let’s look at what has been happening to the New Zealand pork industry over the past four years.

Trends in New Zealand pork

- Imports have climbed to 30% of domestic demand for pork.
- Average farm gate prices have dropped 30%.
- The number of producers registered with the board has dropped from 900 to 480 over the past four years.
- Per capita consumption of pork has increased to an all-time high of 17.6kg, from 15.5kg four years ago.

The industry is facing its most serious challenge for decades and, as a consequence, we will see a much smaller number of much larger units. We will also see a greater commitment by commercial producer groups to branding and marketing, and to vertical cooperation through strategic alliances to compete with imported product.

But let’s go back to the challenges of the WTO agreements. When we embarked on this WTO trail, did we collectively take into account the need to act fairly and equitably to all of the industries likely to be affected?

Sure it is important that we use the WTO agreements to give us access (based on science) to export markets, but have we given enough consideration to the impact on domestic industries if the WTO provisions are not applied fairly?

Let me give you some examples of where the pork industry is currently being disadvantaged.

Residues

Bear in mind that “members shall base their SPS residues on measurable science”. When can we move to Codex MRLs? For example, for oxytetracycline in New Zealand the MRL defaults to 0.1ppm, yet the Codex MRL is 0.6ppm.

Secondly, we are concerned about mercury in fishmeal, and we advise our producers not to use New Zealand sourced fishmeal because of the high mercury residues that have been picked up in pork in New Zealand. However this high mercury level fishmeal is sold to Australia and is reputed to be used in pigs. Does that mean that the imported Australian pork has higher mercury levels?

Aujeszky’s disease

The OIE procrastinates, and we are still not [at the time this talk was given] internationally recognised as being Aujeszky’s disease free. We have eradicated the disease at an industry cost of over $500,000, but I understand the US is just embarking on an eradication programme yet they are allowed to export their pork to New Zealand.

Subsidies

The Australian pork producers get an $A19 million subsidy from their government, the American producers $US130 million, and there is an overall $1.5 billion package available to Canadian farmers. Where is the equity under WTO in that?
Safeguards
Why does New Zealand not have legislation to implement ‘safeguard action against imports’ which is available to the Australians, Americans and Canadians?

Registration of minor use animal remedies
Why can’t we adopt equivalence with registration of these products in other competing countries? It gives the Americans a competitive advantage because they can use products which, although registered in the US, are not available for registration in New Zealand. Instead we have the new bureaucracies of ERMA and ACVM which will limit access to New Zealand of new animal remedies.

Because of the larger market in these overseas countries for these new products, the manufacturers there are prepared to fund the registration process. The producers there have a competitive advantage as these same products will not be registered for use here.

Animal welfare
And what of the animal welfare issues? We are members of the animal welfare advisory committee (AWAC). Do we know that exporting countries have equivalent codes? For example, pig castration is widespread in Canada, but is not an acceptable practice in New Zealand.

Importations
The abattoirs in Australia are now free to export Australian-killed pork to New Zealand, but we don’t have equivalent regulations here to export pork from New Zealand abattoirs. And of course the Auckland pie manufacturer found that he couldn’t export to Australia because our New Zealand regulations prevented it.

The protocols for the importation of pork into New Zealand are developed by the New Zealand Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry which uses the scarce resources and time of officials. Previously the local industry wasn’t advised of requests from overseas suppliers for access to the New Zealand market, but I must say that MAF Biosecurity Authority now keep us informed of applications to import, and gives us the opportunity to make submissions on the risk analysis protocol.

However, in this process no account is taken of the cost/benefit of such imports, and I wonder if it’s good enough for developing countries that are members of the WTO to be given time to adjust whether or not “it’s a fair go” to give the domestic pork industry time to adjust to further pork imports from new applicants. One has to ask the question, “who is our government working for?”.

The New Zealand pork industry does not want hand-outs, but we do want to be treated equitably by our fellow New Zealanders. It seems to us that the whole thrust of the WTO is towards exports with “damn the consequences” for our domestic industries.

I’d like to point out that the pork production at farm gate is worth $134 million and at retail about $450 million. We employ over 3,000 people and we support a wider rural infrastructure, including grain production; 200,000 tonnes of New Zealand-produced grain is consumed by pigs.

So we ask ourselves the following questions about the WTO:

Questions
- How can we be sure that the other countries are playing the game? Why don’t we do residue tests on imported meat, when we know for sure that the Americans test our meat on arrival there?
- How can we expedite the residues issue by harmonising our MRLs with Codex?
- When will we formally declare that we are Aujeszky’s disease free?
- How can we maintain access to new animal remedies which our competitors have access to in a larger market?
- Why can’t we use some of the WTO so-called ‘green rules’ which enable countries to gradually adapt to massive imports; provisions such as “safeguard action against imports”.

On the positive side of the WTO
- We have actively been involved in the development of risk analysis protocols for the importation of porcine semen to protect what we all value: the high health status of the New Zealand national pig herd.
- We have developed an exotic disease response system in association with MAF Biosecurity Authority. Which, hopefully, we will never have to use, but which clearly sets out how we and MAF Biosecurity will work together to minimise the impact of an exotic disease outbreak.
We have agreed to the scrapping of the garbage feeding regulations, having developed confidence that New Zealand’s biosecurity systems will prevent the importation of an exotic disease through garbage. We’ve worked with MAF in the development of a protocol for the handling of commercial food waste which has been endorsed by the Auckland regional council.

Now before I finish, I’d now like to look at what I’ve called “the jargon gap”. This is a plea for better understanding at the grass roots or producer level of what this WTO is all about. If you ask the average producer what SPS or even sanitary and phytosanitary stands for, he wouldn’t have a clue. It is our collective task to get through to producers to explain what it’s all about, but I often think that the language, jargon, and protocols developed here in Wellington sound like gobbledy-gook to the producers in the provinces.

We’ve created bureaucracies to handle market access and to spearhead free trade, but what does it all mean to the farmer, and his hip pocket. You could, and probably will, say that without the WTO the New Zealand farmer is worse off. But nobody has really explained to him why it’s in his interest to do this to him, certainly not to the New Zealand pork producer.

Maybe one of the outcomes of this seminar will be a commitment to better explain to the grass roots producer what SPS is all about.

How many producers/farmers are here today? Let’s remove producer scepticism, by developing simple yet effective explanations, and encourage commitment and celebrate success for both the export and domestic industries.

In conclusion, New Zealand Pork supports the general thrust of the WTO agreements, and we can see major benefits to the whole New Zealand economy. Let’s build on what we have achieved so far, but let’s not deal away all the cards too soon.

And please give the pork industry some greater assurances that the WTO can work for us, by devoting just a little more attention to resolving the issues which I have highlighted today.

Brian Milne, Chief Executive, New Zealand Pork Industry Board, PO Box 4048, Wellington, phone 04 385 4229, fax 04 385 8522

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Ruminant protein regulations

**Regulations prohibiting the feeding of ruminant protein (other than dairy produce) to ruminants come into force on 1 January 2000. Ruminants include cattle, sheep, goats, alpacas and deer.**

The Biosecurity (Ruminant Protein) Regulations 1999 manage the risk to New Zealand of an outbreak of a transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE). New Zealand livestock are completely free of TSEs, but it is prudent nonetheless to learn from the BSE epidemic in Britain. BSE was spread when feed supplements that contained ruminant protein were fed to cattle.

The new regulations consolidate and extend the provisions of the voluntary feed ban that MAF negotiated with the New Zealand Feed Manufacturers Association (NZFMA). Since May 1996 the NZFMA member companies have substituted alternative protein in those products for ruminants that require protein supplementation.

**Labelling**

The regulations require that from 1 April 2000 certain products are to be labelled as suitable or not suitable (as the case may be) for feeding to ruminants. This label information will be standardised.

Feed that may not be fed lawfully to ruminants (e.g. most pig and poultry feeds) must carry the following label:

| Notice: not to be fed to sheep, cattle, deer, alpacas, goats or other ruminant animals. |

Only feed produced under a MAF-registered programme will be able to carry one of the two types of ‘suitable’ label:

| Notice: suitable for feeding to (insert name of ruminant species). |
| Notice: suitable for inclusion in feed intended for ruminants. |

**What is ‘feed’?**

The regulations define ‘feed’ as any matter that is either produced as, or part of, food for animals in premises that render, produce or utilise ruminant protein. Tallow is excluded from the definition, as is pet food packaged for retail sale and labelled for feeding to dogs or cats.

**Registered control programmes**

Feed millers whose product range includes feed intended for ruminants must develop, and submit to MAF during 2000, their own ruminant protein control programme to manage and minimise the risk of contamination by ruminant protein at each step in the manufacturing process. Each programme will name an independent auditor whose annual verification audit will be sent to MAF for scrutiny.

**Obligations**

The main impact of the regulations is on the operators of mills producing feed suitable for ruminants, but there are duties imposed on all feed suppliers and all owners of ruminants. These duties include:

| ■ ensuring their staff are fully informed about the feed ban; |
| ■ cleaning vehicles and containers before using to transport or store bulk feed intended for ruminants; |
| ■ storing feed intended for ruminants to avoid any contamination with ruminant protein; |
| ■ preventing access by ruminants to pig and poultry feeds, pet food and meat scraps. |

A feed supplier may be required to keep particular records. Ruminant producers who are suspected of breaching the regulations may be required to keep records of their feed inventory.

MAF will audit compliance with the regulations and enforce its provisions.

Ashley Edge, Policy Adviser, Biosecurity Policy Coordination, phone 04 474 4213, edgea@maf.govt.nz
MAF has a Y2K programme aimed at maintaining existing levels of service during the date changeover at the end of this year. There will be no reduction in biosecurity standards. There are alternative arrangements in case there is a suspected case of exotic animal disease at the same time as a Y2K-related telecommunications failure.

Key exotic animal disease response phone numbers will have priority access to the Telecom network during the new year period. The 0800 number for notifying suspected exotic animal diseases is one of these.

If there are communication difficulties at the same time as an exotic animal disease response, priority will be given to communications that directly affect disease containment and control. General updates and notifications may not be able to be sent until normal communications have resumed.

If there is a Y2K-related telecommunications failure, nominated AgriQuality New Zealand veterinarians will be authorised to investigate and manage a suspect case until communications are re-established.

Every AgriQuality New Zealand office will have a notice posted on public entrance doors (covering the period 25 December 1999 – 4 January 2000 inclusive), listing key exotic disease staff contact details should normal reporting channels to MAF fail.

If you suspect an exotic disease, first try 0800 80 99 66. Then contact your nearest nominated AgriQuality veterinarian, from the lists posted on AgriQuality New Zealand office doors.

**Background**

MAF has a Y2K programme in place. The programme's objective is to maintain existing levels of service during the transitional period into the new millennium. The programme has six projects running simultaneously, covering:

- Information technology infrastructure;
- Applications development;
- Business continuity planning;
- Implementing preventative management practices;
- Property management;
- Business partner liaison.

MAF is requiring standards to be met, even if there are Y2K-related disruptions. No biosecurity clearances, export certification or surveillance reports will be issued until MAF is satisfied that the relevant standards have been met.

However, because of the nature of the Y2K issue and MAF’s reliance on external suppliers (such as telecommunications and electricity), MAF does not guarantee the business processes will not be disrupted.

MAF has asked key contractors to advise MAF on their Y2K readiness. Where appropriate, MAF has worked with key contractors on continuity plans in order to maintain service levels if Y2K-related failures occur. Business continuity plans include having hard copies of information available, reverting to manual methods, relocation if a site becomes uninhabitable, and back-up contingencies in case the usual means of communication fail.

The transitional period will be monitored particularly closely. The New Zealand Y2K Readiness Commission and the New Zealand Ministry of Emergency Management will be combining their web sites during the first few days of January 2000, to ensure that there is one authoritative view of New Zealand’s Y2K status. MAF’s status will be reported on both those websites as well as our own. In addition, the New Zealand Y2K Readiness Commission will provide information to the International Y2K Global Status Centre in Washington, USA.

For MAF’s Y2K status:
www.maf.govt.nz/Y2k

For New Zealand’s Y2K status:
www.y2k.govt.nz or
www.watchnz.govt.nz

For global information: www.iy2kcc.org

Elizabeth Stoddart, Technical Adviser (Import Management), Animal Biosecurity, phone 04 498 9634, stoddarte@maf.govt.nz
New Zealand's recognition of South Africa's scrapie-free status has meant an early release for some goats in quarantine.

In 1995 South Africa was not recognised by New Zealand as scrapie-free, and imported goat embryos were subjected to quarantine and the associated scrapie freedom assurance programme. That country is now recognised by MAF as scrapie-free, and some goats have been released two-thirds through a quarantine period.

Two slow virus diseases were also subject to surveillance during this period: pulmonary adenomatosis and maedi-visna. There was no evidence for these diseases in the flock, and the probability for their occurrence is negligible because of the safeguards in place.

Importation

Angora goat embryos were imported from South Africa in 1995 and 1996, under the scrapie freedom assurance programme. This flock was held at the only quarantine facility in New Zealand holding goats from South Africa.

Under the quarantine protocols the scheduled release date was August 2000, being three years after the birth of the last offspring originating from the imported embryos.

South Africa recognised as scrapie free

In November 1999 South Africa was recognised by New Zealand as being scrapie-free (see p 11). This action finally put Australia and New Zealand on a common basis in relation to imports of sheep and goats from South Africa.

The sentinel goats in the flock holding the 1995 and 1996 importations were at the end of the three-year observation period. They remain in good health, and if scrapie were present clinical signs would have been seen by now. The incubation period for this disease is shorter in goats than sheep, and signs of scrapie could be expected before 12 months after inoculation.

Surveillance for pulmonary adenomatosis and maedi-visna

Although scrapie has been the primary focus of the programme, surveillance was also required for two virus diseases with relatively long incubation periods: pulmonary adenomatosis and maedi-visna.

Sheep pulmonary adenomatosis or jaagsiekte is a contagious neoplasm that affects the lungs of sheep and goats. It is primarily a disease of sheep and it appears that goats are less susceptible. There is no suitable diagnostic test for use in live animals.

Maedi-visna is an Icelandic name which refers to the two most common forms of the disease, maedi, the difficult breathing associated with the progressive interstitial pneumonia, and visna, the wasting associated with a chronic brain infection. Transmission is mainly via colostrum or milk but may also occur between adult sheep under conditions of close contact.

Evidence for freedom from pulmonary adenomatosis and maedi-visna

There are several factors associated with this importation that minimise the likelihood of pulmonary adenomatosis and maedi-visna being present in these goats. They include:

- Pulmonary adenomatosis has not been reported in goats in South Africa.
- There is good evidence that pulmonary adenomatosis is not transmitted via embryo transfer.
- There was no evidence of maedi-visna in the donor or teaser animals, or their flocks of origin. The donor and in-contact animals were shown to be serologically negative during collection of the embryos.
- There has been no evidence of pulmonary adenomatosis or maedi-visna in the two flocks of origin in South Africa for the 4 years and 8 months since the first embryo collection.
- The goats in New Zealand quarantine remained free of clinical signs of both pulmonary adenomatosis and maedi-visna.

It may be concluded that the probability that either of these two diseases is present in this flock is negligible.

Kevin Corrin, National Manager (Import Management), Animal Biosecurity, phone 04 474 4136
**Draft import health standards for consultation**

The following draft import health standards (IHSs) have been developed by MAF and are available for public consultation.

**Horses from New Caledonia**
This standard is based on New Zealand’s current policy for the importation of horses as well as Australia’s import policy for horses from New Caledonia.

**Mink fibre from the United Kingdom**
This draft import health standard requires certification that the fibre has been heated in water at 100°C for 15 minutes prior to importation. This requirement reflects safeguards recommended for anthrax, the hardest organism potentially associated with inedible animal products.

> Jean-Marie Derouet, Technical Adviser (International Trade), Animal Biosecurity, phone 04 498 9897, derouetj@maf.govt.nz
> http://www.maf.govt.nz/AnimalIHS
> The deadline for submission is 1 February 2000

**Risk analysis for consultation**

The following risk analysis is available for consultation.

**Tropical butterflies into containment**
An analysis of the biosecurity risks posed by the importation of tropical butterfly pupae into New Zealand will soon be available for public consultation, following the completion of an independent scientific review. The risk analysis has been completed by the applicant, with MAF overseeing it to ensure the risks were adequately assessed.

An import health standard already exists for importation of tropical butterflies from Australia. This risk analysis would allow importation from any country, as long as certain conditions were met. The pupae would be imported into a MAF-registered transitional facility, and the adults removed to a MAF-registered containment facility on hatching.

The analysis concludes that the risk of diseased butterflies being released from the transitional facility into containment is low, and the risk of pathogens escaping the containment facility, contacting New Zealand insects, and establishing infection is negligible. MAF recommends that an import health standard be issued, with a number of safeguards to ensure that disease risks are reduced and that the butterflies will never be released into the New Zealand environment.

> Anna Blair, Technical Adviser (International Trade), Animal Biosecurity, phone 04 474 4116, blaira@maf.govt.nz
> http://www.maf.govt.nz/AnimalIHS
> The deadline for submissions is 15 January 2000

**New import health standards issued**

The following new import health standards (IHSs) have been issued by the Director of Animal Biosecurity and are available for use. Any previous IHSs covering these combinations of country of origin and commodity/species have been revoked.

**Anseriforme (duck, goose, swan or Muscovy duck) hatching eggs from the United Kingdom**
This standard was notified for comment in Biosecurity 12: 9 and contains the same safeguards and is consistent with the standard for the importation of anseriforme (duck, goose, swan or Muscovy duck) hatching eggs from Canada, the issuing of which was advised in Biosecurity 11: 7.

**Cattle, deer, sheep and goats and their genetic material**
These standards dated 27 September 1999 have been amended following the promulgation of the Biosecurity (Imported Animals, Embryos and Semen Information) Regulations 1999. The intention to introduce this amendment was publicly notified in Biosecurity 10: 7.

The import health standards have been amended to include a clause about the obligations in these regulations, which were described in Biosecurity 15: 9.

The following standards have been amended:

**Live cattle from:**
Canada, New Caledonia, northern Australia, United States of America, South Australia.

**Cattle embryos from:**
Australia, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Eire (Republic of Ireland), Finland, France, Germany, Japan, North America (Canada and United States of America), New Caledonia, The Netherlands, Norway, Sabah and Sweden.

**Cattle semen from:**
Australia, Austria, Belgium, Channel Island of Jersey, Denmark, Eire (Republic of Ireland), Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, North America (Canada and United States of America), New Caledonia, The Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland.

**River buffalos (Bubalis bubalus) from:**
Italy.

**River buffalo (Bubalis bubalus) semen from:**
The Netherlands.

**River buffalo (Bubalis bubalus) embryos from:**
The Netherlands.

**Bisons from:**
Australia (bisons that were born in and remain continuously in Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, Western Australia, south of 26° latitude south), Canada.

**Bison semen from:**
North America (Canada and the United States of America).

**Bison embryos from:**
North America (Canada and the United States of America).
Deer from:
Australia (born and continuously resident in Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, Western Australia, south of 26° latitude south).
Australia (New South Wales, Queensland, Northern Territory, Australian Capital Territory, Western Australia, north of 26° latitude south), United Kingdom.

Deer semen from:
Eire (Republic of Ireland), United Kingdom.

Deer embryos from:
Eire, (republic of Ireland), United Kingdom.

Goats from:
Australia (New South Wales, Queensland, Northern Territory, Australian Capital Territory, Western Australia, north of 26° latitude south), Australia (born and continuously resident in Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, Western Australia, south of 26° latitude south).

Goat semen from:
Australia.

Goat embryos from:
Australia.

Sheep from:
Australia (New South Wales, Queensland, Northern Territory, Australian Capital Territory, Western Australia, north of 26° latitude south).
Australia (born and continuously resident in Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, Western Australia, south of 26° latitude south).
Sweden.

Sheep embryos from:
Australia, Israel.

Sheep semen from:
Australia.

Animal repellent containing bovine/porcine origin blood meal from Sweden
This standard was notified for consultation in Biosecurity 14: 8. The blood meal contained in this product must be derived from animals that have received ante- and post-mortem inspection by an official veterinarian from the Swedish government.

Samples of untanned cattle/sheep/goat/deer hides from approved countries
This standard was altered by adding Uruguay has a source country for samples of untanned hides.

Specified products for human consumption containing dairy products, eggs or meat
Following receipt of a letter dated 8 November 1999 from the Ministry of Health, clauses 8.1 and 8.2 of this standard have been altered by including private consignments of beef products originating from the United Kingdom.

Argentine has been added to clause 8.4 for the importation of beef and beef products.

Bovine embryos from Italy
Buffalo (*Bubalus bubalis*) embryos from Italy
Buffalo (*Bubalus bubalis*) semen from Italy
These standards were advised for consultation in Biosecurity 14: 8 and are based on current policy for the importation of cattle semen and cattle embryos from the European Union.

Marine fish for pet food from all countries
This standard has been created to reflect current formatting and replaces outdated standard 152.10.08.503 for the importation of marine fish for pet food.

Shelf-stable pet foods containing animal products
This standard has been created to reflect current formatting and replaces the following standards 152.10.07.101 for the importation of canned pet foods:
- for the importation of *Ligamentum nuchae* via Australia;
- for the importation of dry cat and dog food;
- the list entitled “These pet foods are not risk goods”.

Giraffe from Australia for New Zealand zoological gardens
This standard was advised for consultation in Biosecurity 14: 8 and is now current. After consultation, the testing regime was altered to include a complement fixation test for Q fever, and alternative proven anthelmintic products may be used in place of ivermectin. The giraffes no longer need to be treated with dihydrostreptomycin as they are kept in containment.

Processed animal products for use by airlines and the military for flights leaving New Zealand
Clause 7.3.4 was added to allow the use of commercially packed honey on flights only.

Clause 8 was altered from MAF Regulatory standard 152.04.03F requirements for holdings and processing transitional facilities to MAF Regulatory standard 152.04.02F requirements for flight kitchens for disposal of quarantine refuse.

Importation by Air New Zealand of specified meat products from Australia and France for use on flights leaving New Zealand
Clause 9 was altered from MAF Regulatory standard 152.04.03F requirements for holdings and processing transitional facilities to MAF Regulatory standard 152.04.02F requirements for flight kitchens for disposal of quarantine refuse.

Dairy product samples for evaluation
Clause 10 was altered to include MAF Regulatory standard 154.02.17 transitional facilities for biological products.

Kerry Mulqueen, National Adviser (Import Management), Animal Biosecurity, phone 04 498 9625, fax 04 474 4132, mulqueenk@maf.govt.nz

www.maf.govt.nz/AnimalIHS
Team work eradicates major pig disease from New Zealand

Joint effort by the pork industry and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry has succeeded in ridding New Zealand of an important viral infection in pigs, Aujeszky’s disease, also known as pseudorabies.

The Group Director of the MAF Biosecurity Authority, Barry O’Neil, and the Chairman of New Zealand Pork, Neil Managh, announced on 17 November 1999 that New Zealand has completed eradication procedures and declared national freedom from the virus infection.

The declaration of freedom has been sent to the world organisation for animal health in Paris, the OIE. The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the United States Department of Agriculture has already formally recognised New Zealand as being free of Aujeszky’s disease.

Aujeszky’s disease was first found in the North Island of New Zealand in 1976, and appeared to have been present in a mild form for a few years. By the mid-1980s the disease had spread more widely in the North Island, while the South Island remained free.

The pork industry then decided to take the initiative and undertake an industry-funded eradication programme. A low-cost strategy using vaccination and ‘test and cull’ was developed, and implemented jointly from 1986 by New Zealand Pork and MAF.

The eradication strategy was highly successful, and infection was eradicated from the last herd by 1997. Subsequent intensive monitoring and investigation of both domestic and wild pigs confirmed freedom from the virus in both islands; the South Island had never become infected.

New Zealand Pork Chairman Neil Managh said he was delighted that eradication had been completed successfully. “This removes an infection which was spreading and causing problems in some herds, and was a barrier to movement of New Zealand pigs and pig products overseas”, said Mr Managh.

“It provides a good model of the potential for some diseases to be eradicated as an industry initiative, not solely by government decision. New Zealand pigs have possibly the best overall health status of any country in the world, and we hope to reap the benefit of this in future years.”

Public asked to keep eyes and ears open for banjo frog

Members of the public are being asked to keep an eye – and an ear – out for the eastern banjo frog or pobblebonk (Lymnodynastes dumerilii), which was found in a stream in the Waitakere Ranges in Auckland recently.

Following the initial discovery, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Auckland Regional Council and Department of Conservation conducted a survey of five catchment areas in the ranges. The survey found no frogs, froglets or tadpoles. The survey team then returned to the original site at which the froglets and tadpoles of the frog were found, and combed the full length of this and neighbouring streams for pobblebonks. Again no Lymnodynastes tadpoles, froglets or frogs were found in this intensive search of the primary site.

Dr Mike Tyler, an Australian expert on pobblebonks, has visited the primary site and considers it unlikely that L. dumerilii will establish a breeding population in that environment. Nevertheless an ongoing surveillance programme at the primary site will continue, and public help is sought to report hearing or sightings of unusual frogs. Pictures and the distinctive banjo-like sound this frog makes are available on: www.parks.tas.gov.au/wildlife/frogs/tbanjof.html.

Anyone wanting to report hearings or sightings of suspected Lymnodynastes frogs in the Auckland region should call the Auckland Regional Council Arataki Call Centre (09 817 4993) or ARC Enviroline (0800 80 60 40). Outside the Auckland region they should call the MAF Exotic Disease and Pest Hotline (0800 80 99 66)

Derek Belton, Programme Manager (Surveillance & Disease Response), Animal Biosecurity, phone 04 474 4155, beltond@maf.govt.nz

Derek Belton, Programme Manager (Surveillance & Disease Response), Animal Biosecurity, phone 04 474 4155, beltond@maf.govt.nz

Neil Managh, Chairman, New Zealand Pork, phone: 06 328 8818, fax: 04 385 8522.
Recognised South Africa’s scrapie-free status

MAF has now recognised South Africa’s claim to be free from scrapie.

MAF announced in August (Biosecurity 13: 9) that experts had studied South Africa’s claim and concluded that claim was at least as good as New Zealand’s and Australia’s. Submissions on the issue were invited. No submissions were received by the 15 September deadline.

Recognition of South Africa’s scrapie-free status means that MAF does not need to impose restrictions on the importation of sheep and goats from Australia, which has already recognised South Africa’s scrapie freedom.

However, as pointed out in the August announcement, acceptance that South Africa is scrapie-free will not immediately lead to the importation of sheep or goats directly from that country. There are other diseases of importance which need to be considered in a formal risk analysis.

Definitions of biosecurity terms

A number of terms are in use relating to new discoveries of undesirable organisms. These terms do not always mean the same thing to different people. The Biosecurity Technical Forum, a sub-committee of the Biosecurity Council, has therefore agreed to the following definitions to encourage consistency in their use among government agencies interested in biosecurity.

‘Interception’ means a detection of an organism in a transitional facility or a biosecurity control area, on or in risk goods. Organisms intercepted are normally those detected at the border or in quarantine before they have time to present a significant risk to New Zealand’s biosecurity.

‘Incursion’ means an occurrence of an organism not previously known to be established in New Zealand, and does not include interceptions. An incursion occurs when an organism is discovered beyond the border, but where there is still an element of immediacy surrounding its discovery. A programme would usually be undertaken to determine its current distribution and to prevent further spread. A decision would then be made on whether eradication or containment are possible, cost-effective, and desirable.

This definition of ‘incursion’ also covers organisms recorded for the first time in New Zealand. In many cases after further investigation it would be determined that no response is necessary.

‘Established’ means perpetuation, for the foreseeable future, of an organism within an area after entry. Established organisms are those breeding or multiplying naturally in the wild in New Zealand, and which are widespread. Undesirable established organisms may not be able to be eradicated using present knowledge or technology, but may require ongoing control to reduce their impacts in some situations. Established organisms may be established in only one location, in several discrete locations or ubiquitously throughout New Zealand.

ID system approved

The MAF Imported Animal Identification System has been approved for the purposes of the Biosecurity Act 1993.

The Director Animal Products, MAF Food, administers the system for the identification of imported sheep, cattle, deer and goats. Numbered white plastic ear-tags and matching metal ear-tags are issued for each animal specified on a permit to import. Both tags are inscribed ‘MAF IMPORT’.

In conjunction with the imported animals information regulations (see Biosecurity 15: 9), the identification system is critical to maintaining market access for some animal products. It enables imported animals to be traced, located and eliminated as the possible source of an exotic disease outbreak.

The approval means that it becomes a serious offence to remove, alter, imitate or deface an ear-tag issued under the MAF imported animal identification system.

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Sue Cotton, Biosecurity Secretariat, phone 04 474 4283, cottons@maf.govt.nz
These animal health regulations have been either proposed or implemented by members of the World Trade Organization, and have been notified under the SPS agreement (the WTO agreement on the application of sanitary and phytosanitary measures) between 16 October and 30 November 1999.

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Keawe Woodmore, Technical Adviser, International Agreements, phone 04 474 4226, sps@maf.govt.nz

How to contact us

Everyone listed at the end of an article as a contact point, unless otherwise indicated, is part of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry Biosecurity Authority. The group within the authority to which they belong is also identified.

All MAF staff can be contacted by e.mail, and the standard format for all addresses is surnameinitial@maf.govt.nz. For example, Ralph Hopcroft would be hopcroftr@maf.govt.nz. (There are slight exceptions for people with similar names, but these addresses are given where necessary.)

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