Keeping an eye out for unwanted invaders

Early in 2000, a live snake was observed in a pile of rubbish at a container park at Seaview, Wellington. Following a call on the 24-hour free phone service, the EDRC dispatched a staff member to the property and an immature female Eastern Brown snake was captured, killed and identified. As part of the pre-planned response programme, the Ministry of Health shipped in from Australia and stored at a local hospital, snake anti-venom for both people and dogs. Investigations were then carried out as part of the post-incursion response to establish how the snake got to New Zealand, where it came from and whether others had survived. The answers to these questions would determine the need for a full-scale snake eradication programme.

“We brought in detector dogs that had been trained on snake skins and carried out several inspections of the site. We looked in vegetation and other places where snakes might hide and collected information about their habits and likely times of the day they might appear,” explains Derek Belton, who was then programme manager with the Authority’s Surveillance and Disease Response team.

Belton says these field examinations established that no other snakes were in the area. The Seaview discovery was followed by the discovery of several more snakes in other areas, attracting considerable media attention. This media interest has been valuable in raising public awareness of the threat. Currently developing standards in this area.

Coping with snakes

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Keeping an eye out for unwanted invaders

The discovery of several live snakes this year has highlighted the systems for detecting incursions of unwanted pests and diseases. Good surveillance – in the form of field observations and laboratory examinations – helps MAF Biosecurity deal quickly and effectively with such incidents.

This article looks at the Authority’s surveillance programmes for animals and plants and the activities underway to monitor our biosecurity.

Surveillance is a vital element of New Zealand’s biosecurity system, providing a basis for reporting the health of our animal and plant populations internationally, as required by treaty and other obligations.

Surveillance provides evidence of freedom from unwanted organisms, allowing us to justify and apply import controls. It represents a vital mechanism for detecting incursions of unwanted pests and diseases, enabling containment and control measures to be instituted.

New Zealand has sophisticated pest and disease surveillance systems to detect unwanted pests and diseases. These involve field examinations and laboratory tests to monitor the health of animals and plants.

Surveillance for animals

Exports of animal products remain the livelihood of the New Zealand economy.

Early warning of suspected cases of exotic diseases such as foot and mouth disease is therefore vital.

Passive surveillance programmes for animals capture information obtained in the course of field or laboratory examinations conducted for other reasons.

Animal owners and veterinarians play a central role in alerting MAF Biosecurity about unusual developments. The success of surveillance programmes therefore depends on good systems for collecting and sharing information. This passive information is supplemented by targeted surveys designed to detect a specific agent that may be present in the New Zealand animal population, or to provide additional evidence that New Zealand is indeed free of the targeted agent.

MAF Biosecurity draws on a range of organisations and surveillance services to help it monitor the health status of animals. The Authority sets the standards for these services, purchases them and audits their delivery.

Central to the Authority’s work in the area of animal health surveillance are the New Zealand Animal Health Reference Laboratory (NZAHRIL) and the Exotic Disease Response Centre (EDRC), based at the National Centre for Disease Investigation near Wellington.

Staffed by veterinarians, scientists and technicians, the NZAHRIL provides specialised diagnostic services and carries out animal disease surveys.

A seamless transition is made between ‘surveillance’ and ‘exotic disease response’.

Veterinarians within the EDRC are responsible for designing and delivering disease detection and response systems. All suspected exotic, new or emerging diseases of animals, bees or fish are logged at the centre via a 24-hour free phone service.

Between 700 and 800 calls a month are received in this way.

Surveillance for plants

The plant health system is based largely on an active surveillance programme. It involves surveys or other sampling and testing procedures to define the specific health status of particular plant populations.

Laboratory facilities maintained at the Lincoln and Lyndfield Plant Protection Centres are used to identify new pests and organisms.

A formal notification system for reporting new pest identifications has been established. Pest identifications are forwarded for inclusion in the Plant Pests Identification Network (PPIN) from a wide range of institutions. Collected in accordance with specifications set by the Chief Plants Officer, information is received in the form of either a validated expert identification, or a sample that is then identified by an expert.

Certain species of fruit fly represent the greatest threat to New Zealand horticulture (see page 17). A fruit fly monitoring system is maintained around the major ports of entry and in major horticulture areas.

Annual crop surveys are undertaken on behalf of MAF Biosecurity to determine the pest status of major New Zealand horticultural species.

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.

All MAF staff can be contacted by e-mail, and the standard format for all addresses is surname initials@maf.govt.nz. For example Ralph Hogarth would be hogarthr@maf.govt.nz (There are slight exceptions for people with similar names, but these addresses are given where necessary.)
Biosecurity pre-clearance: returning our troops from East Timor

During November MAF quarantine officers travelled to East Timor to pre-clear New Zealand troops returning after deployment with the international peacekeeping force. This article looks at how MAF ensured the troops and equipment came home minus any exotic seed.

MAF was pleased to help when the Ministry of Defence requested assistance with the return of troops from East Timor. By inspecting soldiers’ personal effects and equipment before they came home, potentially damaging pests and diseases could be excluded before they got anywhere near New Zealand.

New Zealand has about 660 troops serving with the peacekeeping force as part of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). Our battalion is based in Suai, securing the southwestern border with Indonesian-controlled West Timor.

Staff are also based in Dili, the capital, involved in liaison and logistics support. Also at Suai is the RNZAF No.3 Squadron operating Iroquois helicopters. They support our soldiers with transport and medical evacuation to the New Zealand field hospital at Suai.

The troops working in the field are literally rolling in siam weed and picking up its seeds. Hitch-hiking insect pests (ants, termites, scorpions, and mosquitoes) are common, especially where ground contact occurs.

Preparing the battalion for return home at the end of their six-month deployment was a big job. A force extraction team (FET) was assembled to travel from New Zealand and process troops. The FET included medical staff to take blood samples and dispense medicine, psychologists to do debriefs, stores people to check gear and control weapons issue, defence movements staff to coordinate packing, loading and transport arrangements, and administration staff to handle pay and personnel issues. MAF quarantine officers were also part of this team.

Troops were collected by helicopter from their border post locations near Suai and transported to the wharf at Hera. This is a small fishing village 14km east of Dili. The Hera facility is a special transit camp that provides accommodation, meals, and inspection facilities.

The big job was to get all equipment cleaned using steam cleaners, washing machines and enormous amounts of water. MAF inspections started shortly after cleaning. The trunks and packs were inspected first. Officers looked at each item of clothing and equipment, turned over socks inside out, and dismantled webbing and pack frames. The trunks were checked inside and out before repacking.

An individual took about 30 minutes to complete this part of the MAF inspection process. As each item was approved it was sealed with inspection tape and placed in a pre-cleaned and residual insecticide sprayed container for shipment home.

The roll bags and carry-on day packs (accompanying troops home) were inspected on the final day in the same way. These were taken away after inspection and assembled on an aircraft pallet. Care was taken to avoid recontamination by hitch-hikers or siam weed seed for the trip to the airport. On departure day each carry-on bag was rechecked for its ‘passed inspection’ sticker at Dili airport. Immediately before boarding the aircraft a footwear inspection was done on the tarmac and spiny seeds brushed off. Up to ten percent of the boots needed re-cleaning. Processing the 660 troops in groups, sometimes exceeding 220, in the three or four days available, kept the MAF team busy. This involved between four and six officers working all the daylight hours available.

In keeping with initiatives to work more closely with our Australian counterparts, the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service (AQIS) was asked to help. They have some staff permanently based in Dili and had just completed an Australian Defence Force rotation prior to our Kiwi troops going through Hera camp. The combined team learnt new ideas from each other and this cooperative approach ensured that AQIS officers stationed in Darwin had confidence in the pre-clearance programme when our troops passed through Australia.

Seizures intercepted by quarantine officers included lots of siam weed seed, ants, prohibited rations and some hitch-hiking insect pests. A couple of the more interesting items required treatment. A goat skin picture was presented to the New Zealanders by the Indonesian army unit based on the opposite side of the border. A ceremonial sword with animal hair attached was presented to one of our senior army officers by Falintil commanders (the military bush-based fighters that opposed Indonesian occupation). Two MAF staff wearing surgical gloves spent 7 hours unpicking and removing siam weed seeds from militia weapons and personal belongings.

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What we were looking for

East Timor is home to countless species that could have serious consequences for New Zealand if they hitch-hiked back here with our troops. These are just some of them:

Weeds: siam weed (Chromolaena odorata), cow itch (Mucuna pruriens), red spangletop (Lepachochea chinensis), tar vine (Boerhavia erecta), mile-a-minute (Ait킨ia micrantha) and giant sensitive plant (Mimosa invisa).

Pests: fruit fly mosquitoes, giant african snail, asian honeybee, giant honey bee, screw-worm flies, scorpions and snakes.

Animal diseases: classical swine fever, newcastle disease, haemorrhagic septicemia, bluetongue, canine ehrlichiosis and possibly rabies.

Human disease risks are equally concerning, and include malaria, Dengue fever and Japanese encephalitis. A number of parasitic worms (including Lympatic filariasis, cause of elephantiasis) are recorded in East Timor.

Source: Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service, Canberra ACT, Australia, January 2000.
$2.8 million to get the public's attention

A total of $2.8 million (GST inclusive) of new government funding over the next 18 months will provide a timely boost for public awareness of biosecurity issues. Public understanding and support is crucial to the success of any biosecurity programme.

“The buy-in and cooperation of travellers, importers, farmers, industry groups and the public is the cornerstone of any effective biosecurity initiative,” says MAF Biosecurity Authority Group Director, Barry O’Neil.

Education is an important component of New Zealand’s biosecurity programme as it increases public support for biosecurity initiatives. Education can change behaviours that create risks at the border, encourage the public to report pests and diseases and increase cooperation with pest management programmes.

Currently, MAF spends a small annual budget maintaining biosecurity signage and amnesty bins at international ports, printing brochures for air travellers, and screening an in flight video. A 1999 Massey University study recommended that further funding for a comprehensive programme was required to achieve the full benefits of raising biosecurity awareness.

The new biosecurity awareness programme will take a much wider approach to education, focusing both on the border and beyond. An improved border awareness programme will target individuals and groups associated with the four major risk pathways – passengers, vessels, mail and cargo. Initiatives will be targeted to specific audiences highlighting biosecurity risks associated with particular pathways and points of origin.

The public plays an important role in the early detection of new organisms arriving in New Zealand. The incursions in Auckland of white-spotted tussock moth and painted apple moth were both brought to the attention of authorities by concerned members of the public. Once sponsors are underway, the understanding and assistance of the public are required to carry out effective surveys or management programmes.

Education and awareness programmes will be put in place so that the public knows how they can contribute to the success of New Zealand’s biosecurity programme. The programme will emphasise the importance of biosecurity in maintaining New Zealand’s unique plant and animal populations and protecting the country’s primary producers.

The programme is in its planning stages and it is hoped implementation will get underway early in the new year.

The team’s aim is to provide comprehensive, well-researched and fully consulted advice to Ministers on when and how much government involvement is appropriate in biosecurity. This requires careful assessment of the costs and benefits of any particular decision to ensure the Government is investing wisely and consistently.

As well as its special project work, the team also advises Ministers on long-term funding and legislative arrangements for biosecurity. An amendment to the Biosecurity Act is planned for next year, and consideration is being given to the appropriate split of biosecurity costs between the Crown and third parties.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry is a leader in using internet technology to deliver information to its stakeholders. Since March 1997, MAF has built up a large resource of information on its website (www.maf.govt.nz).

MAF is now working to improve its web sites, and contribute to the wider effort to make information more available and accessible across all arms of government.

MAF is helping to put in place the vision of e-Government – helping “New Zealanders gain access to government information and services and participate in our democracy using the internet, telephones and other technologies as they emerge”.

As part of that effort, MAF participates in the e-Government MetaData Standards Working Group – developing ways to link similar types of information in various government agencies. The aim is to make it easier for relevant and related material to be retrieved.

Over the past 6 months, MAF has been working to establish metadata standards across all MAF businesses. This is complemented by an intensive MAF-wide effort to classify its information and services according to how they would be used rather than by which business produced them. This more user-centric approach should be seen in an updated web site in 2001. A recent modest site revamp has resulted in the faster loading of pages that are easier to print and identify.

MAF Biosecurity provides an extensive web site at www.maf.govt.nz/biosecurity with details about the Authority and the groups within it, as well as information it produces. This resource includes:

• import health standards detailing the import conditions for live animals and animal products into New Zealand;
• phytosanitary standards that maintain New Zealand’s plant health status;
• animal welfare codes of recommendations and minimum standards;
• New Zealand standards for forestry and biosecurity; and
• sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) notifications.

In some cases you can access information direct from a MAF database, for example:

• Unwanted organisms database - a searchable register of organisms that have been determined unwanted by Chief Technical Officers of government departments with biosecurity interests: www.maf.govt.nz/UD/index.htm

• Plant pest list - maintained by MAF on behalf of the industries involved to list pests for some of the major crops exported from NZ at: www.maf.govt.nz/Standards/plants/plantEX/phoyo/pestlists.htm

• Plant biosecurity index - an outstanding resource of plants and their biosecurity status: www.maf.govt.nz/cgi-bin/bioindex/bioindex.pl; and

Country freedom list: Some countries require additional declarations on phytosanitary certificates stating that New Zealand is free from an organism. These can only be provided after MAF Biosecurity Authority has confirmed the current status of the organism in New Zealand with an official search. The result is then added to the country freedom list for future reference. The list can be searched at: www.maf.govt.nz/Standards/plants/plantEX/phoyo/clip.htm

Some of these resources require that you register with MAF to receive a password. This can be obtained by filling out the form at: www.maf.govt.nz/Standards/plants/plantEX/phoyo/index.htm#6

"The Biosecurity Policy team"

Since 1998, MAF has had a team of people dedicated solely to providing policy advice to the Government on agriculture and forestry biosecurity. The establishment of the Biosecurity Policy Team reflects the increasing importance of biosecurity to New Zealand, and the potential of increased success of initiatives if governments have shown in ensuring the appropriate level of biosecurity protection is achieved.

The team is located within MAF’s Policy Group, and focuses on matters of strategic importance and national significance. Since its inception, the team has provided Ministers and Cabinet with advice on a range of new and emerging issues including:

• cost recovery for passenger and cargo border clearance services
• government responses to the incursion of varroa bee mite and painted apple moth
Accreditation of suppliers providing treatment of imported risk goods and forestry/plant related material for export

A review will soon be completed of the requirements for a supplier to become accredited to carry out treatments on behalf of MAF Biosecurity. These treatments are either directed by the MAF Quarantine Service on imported risk goods, or done to meet the requirements of importing countries for export certification of plants, plant or forestry products. The standard can also be used for animal products when required.

The treatments covered are any officially authorised procedures for the killing, removal or rendering infertile of pests and also rendering non-viable or devitalising a consignment of plants, forest or plant products, and animals.

To become accredited, a supplier will need to apply to the appropriate Director within MAF Biosecurity depending on the predominant products being treated.

The application is to include:
• a description of their treatment procedure
• the critical control points for each stage of their system.

The supplier’s ‘Operator System’ documentation is to be submitted to the chosen independent verification authority (IVA) for evaluation. (Suppliers must demonstrate independence from the chosen IVA.)

Each treatment type and location must be audited successfully at least three times, on separate dates, (no major or critical non-compliances) before accreditation is given.

Suppliers wanting accreditation for pre-shipment export treatments must sign an agreement of accreditation but those treating imported goods are covered under the Biosecurity Act 1993.

The supplier is required to have an effective quality system, appropriate to the type, range and volume of work performed, and adhere to that system. The suppliers will be audited by MAF Biosecurity or an IVA to a prescribed level (ranges from twice a year to one in five treatments) depending on the type of treatment and the performance of the supplier.

The standard specifies that treatments will be monitored in a way that verifies the application of the treatment, such as a Fumoscope with gas or a thermometer with heat.

The MAF treatment supplier’s standard does not replace or interfere with other legislation administered by other government departments such as the Fumigation Regulations 1967.

Each supplier will be assessed for competency in the treatment being applied.

When suppliers are approved by MAF Biosecurity to carry out particular treatments the following apply to advising their services as being Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry approved:
• “Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry” must be used in full;
• the claim must be specific and truthful; and
• do not use the MAF logo.

For example, the following would be acceptable: “Approved by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry to carry out quarantine fumigation of imported goods.”

Import health standards for table grapes

MAF has completed investigations into the recent post-border interceptions of live red-backed jumping spiders in Californian table grapes. There is no evidence to support a treatment systems failure.

As a result of the recent spider interceptions, MAF Biosecurity Authority, in conjunction with the Ministry of Health and Department of Conservation, has increased the product inspection requirements for this pathway. MAF has also requested that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) conduct audits of export pack houses to confirm that the agreed sulphur dioxide/ carbon dioxide fumigation treatment, required for the control of poisonous spiders, is being effectively implemented in accordance with current NZ MAF standards.

Further mitigating measures are being considered with a view to implementation for the 2000/2001 season.

MAF has initiated development of a combined government border agency/ industry working group to review the current import health standard (IHS) for the importation of table grapes from California, and other supply countries (e.g. Australia, Chile and Mexico). The following additional pre-export activities are being considered and may provide greater protection:
• increased product sampling
• regular application of residual pesticides to post-harvest treatment and cold storage areas
• fumigation of cartons and pallets used for the packaging/transportation of fresh table grapes
• direct supervision/monitoring of post-harvest fumigation treatments.

Concurrent to the IHS review, MAF is actively reviewing the pest risk assessments for two high profile organisms associated with table grapes, namely Xylella fastidiosa (Pierce’s disease) and Hormodendron coarctatum (glassy-wing sharpshooter).

Draft IHSs, including associated phytosanitary measures, should be published by early March 2001.

Airports as Places of First Arrival

MAF Biosecurity has developed a draft standard outlining the requirements for an airport to be approved as a Place of First Arrival.

Airports are important focal points for New Zealand’s biosecurity activities. Over three million international passengers pass through our airports annually. Many are carrying in their baggage risk goods that could adversely affect our biosecurity status. The aircraft themselves pose risks such as the galley waste landed in New Zealand or flying insects which may have made their way into the cabin area or cargo holds, while the cargo also poses a risk.

The Biosecurity Act 1993 requires that the Director-General of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry be satisfied with all the biosecurity-related arrangements and facilities at international airports (and ports). This requires a formal document outlining what facilities and arrangements are actually needed. This is to ensure that there is national consistency (as far as possible) and to ensure minimum standards are met and able to be audited. A draft standard covering airports has been developed and copies are being distributed this month to interested parties.

The draft standard has been divided into three areas:
• what is required at an airport to handle the risks posed by the aircraft itself
• what is required for processing passengers and crew
• what facilities are required to manage the risk posed by the cargo.

The Director-General may limit the approval as a Place of First Arrival to certain types of aircraft or cargo. The airport itself may wish to have the approval limited to providing facilities for passengers or to handle both passengers and various types of cargo.

These requirements will be used as a standard for auditing existing airports and will also be used for the approval of new international airports.

Barbara Brown, National Adviser, Pest Management (Risk Assessment), phone 04 408 9403, fax 04 474 4257, email: brownb@maf.govt.nz

Technical Adviser, Plants Post Management

George Gill is a Massey University Zoology graduate. For the last nine years George has been at the former MAF Technology and HortResearch at Whangarei. Here he was involved in research on the biology and phenology of insect pests of kiwifruit, avocados and citrus.

George will be involved in the management of new plant pest records in New Zealand, assisting with industry-based surveillance and post response contingencies for notifiable organisms and maintaining existing arrangements for fruit fly surveillance and response.

George Gill, Technical Adviser, Plants Post Management, phone 04 474 2742, fax 04 474 4257, email: gilg@maf.govt.nz
MAF beefs up exotic animals response capability

Unwanted immigrants as diverse as frogs and venomous snakes have been hitting the headlines in recent months. MAF has launched a number of practical initiatives to strengthen its capacity for detecting and dealing with the invasions.

**Exotic animal specialist Amelia Pascoe** is MAF Biosecurity’s new Programme Coordinator, Exotic Animal Response. This new position has been created to ensure successful management of exotic animal incursions that are not covered by the current disease response standards.

Amelia will be responsible for the provision of technical advice on:
- animals of regulatory concern to New Zealand, for example snakes
- other exotic animals, such as banjo frogs or crocodiles
- proposed or existing pest management strategies for the control and/or eradication of exotic animals.

In addition to developing technical standards for handling exotic animal responses, Amelia will focus on strategies for dealing with the threat from exotic animals that have started to establish here. The new position will also be used to aid inter-departmental coordination where an incursion is of interest to more than one agency, including the Department of Conservation, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Fisheries, the Biosecurity Council, regional councils and non-governmental organisations.

Amelia has come to MAF with wide experience, especially in exotic animal research and control. She has designed and conducted field studies and research projects with an emphasis on conservation, land- and pest-management issues through Otago and Canterbury Universities, the Department of Conservation and Manaaki Whenua: Landcare Research.

Voluntary work with Conservation International in a remote camp in the Bolivian rainforest bought her into close contact with numerous exotic (and often deadly) species.

Before joining MAF, Amelia gained important resource management, environmental legislation and planning experience as a consents investigating officer at Environment Canterbury.

The team recently attended a course in Australia to improve both their practical skills and their knowledge about snakes. The course covered snake handling, surveillance skills for snakes, Australian snake biology and toxicology. The snake-busters also learnt about clothing and equipment for dealing with snakes, and first aid for snake bite victims.

**Snake-busters ready for action**

The National Centre for Disease Investigation, MAF-Quarantine Service and the Department of Conservation have combined forces to create a team of ‘snake-busters’.

Members of the team are called out to investigate reports of snake sightings throughout New Zealand. In the past year, these callouts have taken the team everywhere from ports and commercial premises to residential suburbs and even to Porters Pass in the Southern Alps.

The investigation involved the Bolivian rainforest bought her into close contact with numerous exotic (and often deadly) species.

Before joining MAF, Amelia gained important resource management, environmental legislation and planning experience as a consents investigating officer at Environment Canterbury. Amelia Pascoe (right) doing some field work on the Chatham Islands. The control boards distribute bait over a wide area to avoid disturbing the local penguin colonies.

**Assessment of biosecurity risk to indigenous flora and fauna**

As part of the New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy, MAF has been allocated an additional $1.7 million over the next five years. This funding will be used to assess the biosecurity risk to indigenous flora and fauna, focusing on the imports of end-of-the-biosecurity continuum.

MAF Biosecurity plans to create two positions in 2001 to carry out this work.

**Snake-buster Dave Voice of the MAF Quarantine Service stands dialled in personal with his object during a training programme in Australia.**

**New Zealand is free of Brucella canis**

A significant number of false positive reactions to a diagnostic test for Brucella canis led to an intensive investigation by MAF, which confirmed that:

- New Zealand is still free of Br. canis.
- There may be a source of cross-reactivity in New Zealand dogs to the screening test that has been used up until now.

Further research will be focused on developing screening test capability to overcome the cross-reactivity.

Since August 2000 MAF has been investigating unexpected clinical signs and serology results in dogs to determine whether the bacterial pathogen Br. canis had been introduced into New Zealand. This investigation focused on interpreting laboratory diagnostic test results in light of a suspected false positive results (Biosecurity 23:110).

The investigation involved the high-risk dog based upon history, clinical signs and serology. One hundred and thirteen dogs were tested using a commercial card agglutination test kit at MAF’s National Centre for Disease Investigation (NCID), and 54 gave positive results. This level of test positives was much higher than expected, leading to suspicions of false positive serology results. Thirty-five dogs were subjected to serial blood culture, considered the gold standard confirmatory test. After five weeks’ incubation, no isolates of Br. canis were detected. Forty-seven serum samples were sent to Cornell University in the United States for serological testing, using two tests different to the serological test used here. In addition, a polymerase chain reaction assay (PCR) was developed at NCID and used in the investigation.

The interpretation that best fits the evidence is that:
- None of the dogs were truly infected with Br. canis.
- There may be a source of cross-reactivity in New Zealand dogs to particular serological techniques for Br. canis in particular card agglutination techniques like those used up until now.

The source of the cross-reactivity to card agglutination tests for Br. canis in New Zealand is unknown. It could result from stimulation of the canine immune system from a variety of potential sources: the environment, food, an infectious agent, or vaccines, for example.

MAF assumes that the cross-reactivity is inconsequential aside from its impact on interpreting positive results to the card agglutination test. Therefore, we are focusing further research efforts on developing screening test capability to overcome this interaction.

MAF is concerned about reported distributions of infected and infected domestic dogs to reputations, particularly within the St Bernard owning and breeding community, and regrets these impacts. The St Bernard owning/breeding community and the New Zealand Kennel Club deserve congratulations and thanks for their assistance and cooperation, which has been vital to the investigation.

Matthew Stone, Programme Coordinator Exotic Disease Response, Animal Biosecurity, phone 04 498 9864, fax 04 474 4133, email: stonem@maf.govt.nz

**Government approves two-year intermediate management plan**

The Government has approved a $7.5 million plan to manage the area bee mite over the next two years. The aim of the plan is to keep the South Island varroa-free for as long as realistically possible, and to minimise the economic impacts in the North Island. During the two years a long-term management strategy will be developed. MAF varroa programme coordinator Paul Bolger will be working with representatives from affected industries and others to develop the strategy. A progress report on the longer-term strategy is due with Government in December 2003.

MAF consulted widely in developing the two-year plan.

Some elements of the plan are already well under way. Treatment of high-risk hives used in pollination commenced in October/November to reduce the risk of infected hives spreading the mite to the lower North Island. Provision has also been made for another round of treatment of known infected hives in the North Island this coming autumn.

**Varroa update**

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**Surveillance and research**

A comprehensive surveillance programme is planned for the South Island in the first year of the programme. A grid system will focus on high-risk areas like ports. Additional random samples will be collected from low-risk areas to help ensure nothing is missed. If varroa were found, MAF would immediately start a determining survey and define an eradication strategy.

Effective planning will enhance the probability of successful eradication. Funding for research has also been approved so further progress can be made in relation to:

- establishing a decision-making framework.
- compiling additional information to support decision-making
- preparing an incursion response plan, including industry consultation and discussion
- establishing memoranda of understanding with the Department of Conservation, the Ministry of Health and regional councils on issues affecting their responsibilities
- undertaking further research into depopulation of feral bee colonies.

An advisory group will assist the Director of Animal Biosecurity with determining these and other research priorities.

In the North Island, surveillance will provide information on the spread of varroa. This provides an ‘early warning’ so beekeepers can attend to newly infected apiaries.

**Movement controls**

New movement control restrictions

For the New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy:

email: wilsonm@maf.govt.nz

phone 04 498 9865, fax 04 474 4133, email: stonem@maf.govt.nz

To report a snake sighting, please phone the Exotic Disease and Pest Emergency Hotline 0800 809 966.

Matthew Stone, Programme Coordinator Exotic Disease Response, Animal Biosecurity, phone 04 498 9864, fax 04 474 4133, email: stonem@maf.govt.nz

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Matthew Stone, Programme Coordinator Exotic Disease Response, Animal Biosecurity, phone 04 498 9864, fax 04 474 4133, email: stonem@maf.govt.nz
Biodiversity and phytosanitary systems

ICPM and biodiversity

The Interim Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (ICPM) develops standards under the IPPC. This organisation considered at its second meeting the concept of invasive species and the work of the CBD. It was recognised that invasive species was an area of considerable interest to the ICPM, and that some form of coordination or collaboration was called for. Consequently the ICPM held an exploratory working group on phytosanitary aspects of genetically modified organisms, biosecurity and invasive species in June 2000.

The report of this meeting is available on the website of the ICPM (www.icpm.int). The meeting noted that although the ICPM has applications to the spread of pests associated with international trade, the convention is not limited in this respect. Plant pest concerns presented by LMOs and products of modern biotechnology do fall within the scope of the ICPM. The established standards and procedures of the ICPM that are designed to prevent the introduction and spread of pests of plants and plant products will cover invasive species.

The meeting recommended that the ICPM develop a standard to address the plant pest risks of LMOs and modern biotechnology. The meeting noted the overlap of the provisions of the IPPC with the draft interim guiding principles of the CBD, and recommended the ICPM develop a supplementary standard to address the environmental risks.

These and other recommendations will be presented to the next meeting of the ICPM in April 2001.

Joint activities

The chair of the ICPM (John Hedley of MAF) and its secretary attended a meeting of the Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP) in September 2000. At this meeting officials of the CBD discussed with the ICPM secretary and chair the need for collaboration between the two organisations to avoid duplication of endeavour. The experience of the ICPM in a number of areas was recognised. These included legal frameworks, technical assistance with developing countries, assessing and managing potential plant pest risks, protecting areas that may be threatened by plant pests, certifying the application of risk management procedures, cooperation between countries to minimise the impact of plant pests, and detection, controlling and eradicating pest in agricultural and wild flora.

This practical application of procedures has not yet been achieved by the CBD, so the ICPM experience will be valuable. These discussions will be followed up at a further meeting of officials in February 2001. This meeting will go into more detail on how the ICPM standards can be used or modified to assist the work of the CBD. The meeting will attempt to map out a programme of joint activity for the CBD and the ICPM in the area of invasive alien plant pests.

The substance of these discussions will be reported to the sixth meeting of SBSTTA in March 2001 and the third meeting of the ICPM in April 2001.

MAF contributed recently to a ‘virtual conference’ on sustainable agriculture production, via a workshop, Safeguarding animal and human health and welfare and global trade. This was one of a series of workshops held in Germany in association with the Expo 2000 world trade fair. Conference and workshop recommendations were presented at a plenary session, in mid-October, to the German Federal Minister of Agriculture Herr Funke, who coincidentally made an official visit to New Zealand in early November.

Virtual conference

Sustainable agricultural production is one of the major challenges facing the world’s ever-increasing population. In October 1999, as part of an initiative supported and funded by the German Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the German Federal Environment and numerous private firms, scientists from the German Federal Agricultural Research Centre, the Universities of Goettingen and Vechta and the Hannover School of Veterinary Medicine established an international scientific discussion on the complex issues involved. This involved the following 10 forums:

• Animal production and world food supply;
• Globalisation, production siting and competitiveness;
• Product safety and quality assurance;
• Livestock farming and the environment;
• Health and welfare of farm animals;
• Advances in biotechnology in livestock;
• Animal breeding and animal genetic resources;
• Animal nutrition: new challenges, new concepts;
• Safeguarding animal health in global trade; and
• Bonds between animals and humans.

The goal of the project was to develop a vision of animal husbandry and health grounded in scientific fact, as a basis for guaranteeing the supply of food of animal origin worldwide.

‘Real’ workshops

From June to October 2000, in association with the Expo 2000 world trade fair in Hannover, these topics were further developed in a series of real workshops based on the original 10 topics. These workshops included a number of invited international speakers including MAF’s Director Animal Welfare, David Bayvel. David was invited to speak on Animal welfare and global trade as part of the workshop on Safeguarding animal health in global trade.

Other presented papers, and participants, at each workshop included the following:

• Introductory statement J Westergaard, European Commission
• The current trade environment A Thiermann, United States Department of Agriculture
• Environmental concerns J Hartung, Hannover Veterinary School
• The impact of unknown, new and emerging diseases
  • Fin fish and shell fish farming B Hill, Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture, United Kingdom
  • Impact of wildlife on the health status of our industries T Walton, United States Department of Agriculture

Safeguarding animal and human health and welfare

The minister of agriculture recently invited Professor John Marbrook and appointed Barbara Benson to the National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee.

Professor Marbrook has served on the committee for eight years and is its deputy chairman. He was originally nominated by the Royal Society of New Zealand.

Head of the science department at the Dunedin College of Education, Barbara Benson was nominated by the Ministry of Education. She brings to the committee experience of education issues, particularly in relation to the use of animals in schools.

John Marbrook

Barbara Benson

Biosecurity update

between the upper and lower North Island were notified in November 2000. The control line still runs from Taranaki to East Cape, but has been revised.

Movement of bees and bee products from the North Island to the South Island is still subject to permit and restrictions. However, a more detailed risk analysis is being undertaken to confirm the most likely way varroa might enter the South Island. Enforcement activities will be complemented by ongoing information campaigns for beekeepers and the public.

Treatments

To preventmites from developing resistance to control products, it is important that varroa management follows the principles of integrated pest management (IPM). Both general and organic beekeeping require at least two treatment products with different modes of operation so they can be regularly rotated.

The approval process for treatment products involves consideration of efficacy, safety and residue issues. There is usually a commercial incentive for companies to seek approval for their products, and they supply the necessary data. MAF intends to process applications as quickly as possible to ensure sufficient products are available to implement IPM.

Education

An extension programme will proceed to ensure beekeepers get the knowledge they need. A book about managing beekeeping with varroa under New Zealand conditions is also being produced. The Government has granted the National Beekeepers’ Association $40,000 over the next two years, to purchase its own specialist technical advice. This cooperative approach between industry and Government has been a feature of the varroa response to date.

Paul Bolger, Varroa Programme Coordinator, phone 04 474 4144, fax 04 474 4133, email: bolgerp@maf.govt.nz

John Hedley, National Adviser, International Agreements, phone 04 474 4170, fax 04 470 2370, email: hedleyj@maf.govt.nz

John Hedley, National Adviser, International Agreements, phone 04 474 4144, fax 04 474 4133, email: bolgerp@maf.govt.nz

Report back and recommendations

During a plenary session in mid-October results of, and recommendations arising from, the conference and workshops were presented to the German Federal Minister of Agriculture Herr Funke. Conference and workshop outcomes will be communicated to agricultural scientists, veterinarians, farmers, consumers and the general public and are accessible on the internet (see below). There will be periodic updates after Expo 2000 and proceedings will also be published conventionally.

David Bayvel, Director Animal Welfare, phone 04 474 4251, fax 04 498 9888, email: bayveld@maf.govt.nz

Biosecurity People

www.agriculture.de

Appointments to the National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee

The Minister of Agriculture recently appointed Professor John Marbrook and appointed Barbara Benson to the National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee.

Professor Marbrook has served on the committee for eight years and is its deputy chairman. He was originally nominated by the Royal Society of New Zealand.

Head of the science department at the Dunedin College of Education, Barbara Benson was nominated by the Ministry of Education. She brings to the committee experience of education issues, particularly in relation to the use of animals in schools.

Linda Cannons, Senior Policy Adviser, Animal Welfare, phone 04 470 2746, fax 04 498 9888, email: cannons@maf.govt.nz
Codes of welfare have new significance under Animal Welfare Act

The Animal Welfare Act 1999 provides for the issue of codes of welfare. These set out the minimum standards of care for the welfare of animals and also provide guidelines and recommendations for owners of animals and people in charge of animals. Codes have legal status and can be used as evidence to support both prosecutions and defences under the Act. Six of the existing voluntary codes were deemed as codes of welfare under the Act when it became law on 1 January 2000.

Detail found in codes of welfare

The Animal Welfare Act 1999 sets out the fundamental obligations for people who have animals in their care. These obligations are written in general terms, however. The detail of how these obligations should be met is found in the codes of welfare. Codes also provide educational information on the welfare of animals. Codes allow a more rapid response to changes in society’s views, scientific knowledge and technology. By enshrining specific procedures in legislation, standards and practices can be amended quickly in line with changing knowledge or expectations.

The original codes of recommendations and minimum standards for the welfare of animals were prepared by the former Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (AWAC). The committee was established in 1989 by the then Minister of Agriculture to advise him on matters concerning animal welfare. The codes were voluntary and had no legal standing under the Animals Protection Act 1960. They were primarily to inform and educate people who owned or cared for animals. AWAC prepared 21 voluntary codes and included codes on transportation, sheep, bobby calves, circus animals and dairy cattle. Six of these codes have been deemed as codes of welfare under the new Act. They were deemed because some of the practices they cover may be inconsistent with the obligations under the Act. The codes have been saved for a transitional period of three years. It is expected that these codes will be reviewed and replaced by mid-2001.

Role of NAWAC

The Animal Welfare Act established the National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (NAWAC) which replaced AWAC. One of NAWAC’s responsibilities is to recommend to the Minister of Agriculture that a code of welfare be issued. Codes are issued by the Minister, who must be satisfied that the codes meet the purposes of the Act.

How codes are developed

Any person or organisation (including NAWAC or the Minister of Agriculture) may develop a draft code. It is then submitted to NAWAC which checks that the draft meets criteria stipulated in the Act such as clarity, compliance with the purposes of the Act, and prior consultation with those affected by the code. If it meets these criteria, NAWAC publicly notifies the code and calls for submissions. This is done through the daily newspapers in the four main centres. MAF (which provides secretarial support to NAWAC) also sends out copies to interested organisations and individuals. After taking into account any submissions received, good practice and scientific knowledge, available technology and any other relevant matters, NAWAC may then recommend that the Minister issue the code.

Public consultation is a new requirement of the Act. It has been included to ensure that the public can comment on draft codes and that the final code takes into account society’s expectations. Where a specific industry is readily identified by a representative group, for example the pig and poultry industries, then that industry will take responsibility for drafting a code. Where an industry cannot easily recognise a code or that a code of welfare is desirable, then it will develop such a code, eg for more generic issues such as transportation of animals.

Currently NAWAC has given top priority to the six deemed codes—pigs, layer hens, broiler chickens, zoo animals, circus animals and rodeos. There are also a number of other codes under review or development including slaughter, transportation, dairy cattle, beef cattle and an ostrich and emu code. Codes have to be reviewed within a 10-year period but may be reviewed sooner, especially where there is a change in scientific knowledge, technology or society’s expectations.

Biosecurity strategy

The government recently approved the process and terms of reference for the development of a Biosecurity Strategy for New Zealand. The terms of reference for the strategy are outlined on page 15 (opposite). A strategy development team has been established with a fulltime project leader, two fulltime secondments from within MAF, a half-time secondment from the Treasury and a fulltime administration assistant. The team started work on 11 December 2000.

The strategy aims to provide direction and guidance for all agencies involved in biosecurity, and to gain agreement on areas of priority for biosecurity activities. Further details on the process for its development will be outlined in a future issue of Biosecurity.

Terms of reference for the development of a biosecurity strategy for New Zealand

Introduction

The Government has agreed to the development of a biosecurity strategy for New Zealand, and to provide $0.96 million over the next three years for its development and publication.

Definition of biosecurity

‘Biosecurity’ means protection from the risks posed by organisms to the economy, environment and people’s health, through exclusion, eradication and control.

Specific matters

In developing the strategy, consideration will be given to:

i. how offshore risk management could be enhanced

ii. how biosecurity decision-making could be enhanced

iii. how post-border surveillance could be enhanced, drawing on the outcomes of a strategic review of biosecurity surveillance planned by the Biosecurity Council

iv. how exotic pest and disease response capability could be enhanced

v. how compliance with biosecurity regulatory requirements could be enhanced, including through awareness and enforcement programmes

vi. how new technology could increase the effectiveness of biosecurity measures

vii. identification and management of information needed to support biosecurity decision-making

viii. the respective biosecurity roles of central government, regional government, primary production industries, and landowners

ix. how effective stakeholder involvement in biosecurity policy and regulatory decision-making can be assured

x. how an appropriate level of biosecurity protection can be maintained in the face of increasing volumes of trade and travel

xi. the strengths and weaknesses of the Biosecurity Act 1993 and where improvement is needed

xii. whether New Zealand is placing appropriate emphasis on biosecurity when developing its international policy positions on trade and transport

xiii. how New Zealand can best promote the coordination of biosecurity in the Oceania region

xiv. how New Zealand can minimise the risks that its exports pose to importing countries

xv. any other specific matters agreed with the Minister for Biosecurity.

Outcomes

The outcomes of the strategy will be:

a. an agreed policy framework for biosecurity decision-making

b. agreement on New Zealand’s appropriate level of protection against biosecurity risks

c. agreement on biosecurity programmes and areas of priority

d. agreement on responsibilities for action

e. identification of appropriate structural arrangements

f. identification of resource needs

g. agreement on an appropriate legislative framework

h. identification of biosecurity research requirements

i. increased awareness of biosecurity among stakeholders and the general public

Resourcing

A person will be engaged to facilitate the development of the strategy. This person will be located in the Biosecurity Secretariat within the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry’s Biosecurity Authority. Administrative support will be provided from within the Biosecurity Secretariat.

27 November 2000

Biosecurity Strategy

The strategy will:

a. reflect a New Zealand-wide perspective on biosecurity

b. take account of both central and local government’s interests

c. take account of Maori interests and values

d. take account of environmental, primary production, public health and trade and travel sector interests

e. apply to all New Zealand, including its offshore islands and territorial waters

f. apply to New Zealand’s terrestrial, freshwater and marine environments

g. apply to the protection of both indigenous and valued introduced flora and fauna

h. have regard to international obligations.

Sue Cotton, Biosecurity Secretariat, phone 04 474 4283, email: cottons@maf.govt.nz
MAF lobbies for kiwi apple access to Australia

MAF officials are working hard to secure economically viable access to the Australian market for New Zealand apples.

New Zealand apples have been banned from Australia for almost 80 years in a bid to protect the Australian industry from the disease fireblight which attacks pipfruit. This is despite scientists maintaining that the risk of mature fruit carrying the fireblight disease into Australia is negligible.

New Zealand growers were given a small boost when Australian officials released their draft import risk assessment last month, proposing to lift the outright ban.

The risk assessment did, however, impose strict controls on apples from New Zealand requiring 10 different phyto sanitary measures for fireblight.

These include 2 years of orchard freedom from fireblight (determined by three inspections per season), sterilisation of bins used for transporting fruit and a chlorine dip to surface sterilise the fruit.

Dr Stephen Ogden, MAF’s National Adviser, Export Phytosanitary Standards and Negotiations, says these conditions are the strictest in the world, are not technically justified and will need to be eased to make the export of New Zealand apples to Australia economically viable.

MAF is working with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the pipfruit industry on a submission that will be presented to Biosecurity Australia this month. Dr Ogden says the submission aims to set the record straight on the true level of risk to Australian growers.

“International scientific research indicates that the risk of transmission of the disease via apple fruit is negligible,” says Dr Ogden. “And our figures also show that the economic impact is not as extreme as the Australians are claiming.”

Submissions from all stakeholders (New Zealand and Australia) were due with Biosecurity Australia early this month. The final import risk analysis released by Biosecurity Australia will address any issues raised in submissions from stakeholders and will give a final decision on the conditions under which apples can be exported to Australia from New Zealand. This final analysis is not likely to be released for some months.

Dr Stephen Ogden, National Adviser, Export Phytosanitary Standards and Negotiations, Plants Biosecurity

Phone 04 474 4164,
email: ogden@maf.govt.nz

Sean Newland

Technical Adviser, Export Phytosanitary Standards and Negotiations

Sean is responsible for the management of Export Phytosanitary Standards that outline importing country requirements. Questions about importing country requirements should be directed to either Sean Newland or Nikki Johnson.

Phone 04 474 4100,
email: newlandc@maf.govt.nz

MAF plant exports team responsibilities

The following guide will ensure you are talking to the right person in the plant exports team within the MAF Plants Biosecurity Group.

Stephan Ogden

National Adviser, Export Phytosanitary Standards and Negotiations

Stephen is the team leader for the plant exports team and is responsible for negotiating market access for New Zealand products. He can answer questions about the technical justification of importing country requirements.

Phone 04 474 2732,
email: collins@maf.govt.nz

Lisa Collins

Administration Assistant

Lisa looks after enquiries about the Orchard Registration System (ORS) and the status of operator accreditations.

Phone 04 474 2732,
email: collins@maf.govt.nz

Nikki Johnson

Technical Adviser, Export Phytosanitary Standards and Negotiations

Nikki manages commodity and country freedom pest lists and assists Stephen Ogden with market access projects. For importing country requirements, your primary contact is either Nikki Johnson or Sean Newland.

Phone 04 498 9872,
email: johnsonn@maf.govt.nz

Peter Johnstone

National Adviser, Export Operations

Peter is responsible for the development of MAF Plants Biosecurity Operational Standards for export certification and pre-clearance programmes for crops to the United States. Peter is the primary contact for communication with PMACC (Plants Market Access Consultative Committee) and the NZ SQMA (Seed Quality Management Authority) for the MAF Seed Certification Programme. Peter can also answer questions about accreditation of operators, facilities or staff.

Phone 04 474 4130,
email: johnstonp@maf.govt.nz

Matt Spence

Technical Adviser, Export Operations

Matt assists Peter Johnston in the development of MAF export operational standards. He is primarily involved in:

- the evaluation of Independent Verification Agency (IVA) procedures for accreditation;
- coordination of pre-clearance crops to Australia, the bulb and cherry programmes to Japan and the audit programmes of accredited IVAs.

Phone 04 474 4182,
email: spencem@maf.govt.nz

Fruit fly eggs intercepted on Australian citrus

Routine inspection at the New Zealand border revealed fruit fly eggs and larvae on a consignment of Australian citrus.

The interception resulted in a week’s suspension of trade pending species identification.

The fruit fly species was Dirioxa pornia which is not regarded as high risk; the consignment was subsequently treated and released. Importing of Australian citrus was immediately reinstated following the confirmed identification.

On 1 November 2000 MAF Quarantine Service (MQS) detected eggs and larvae on the skin of Valencia oranges imported from Australia. Oranges from Australia are in high demand, with over 80,400 cartons imported every year.

Routine inspection

It was during a routine inspection that MQS detected the eggs and larvae attached to the fruit skin. These eggs are very small and hard to see; detailed scrutiny is required for each fruit inspected.

The eggs and larvae were sent to AgriQuality, Lynfield for preliminary identification and the tests confirmed that the specimens belonged to the fruit fly family, Tephritidae. This had immediate implications:

- The offending consignment was fumigated with methyl bromide and held under secure custody by MQS.
- All other Australian citrus consignments awaiting biosecurity clearance were held by MQS until further diagnosis could be completed.
- The species of fruit fly needed to be determined and was sent to Lincoln National Plant Protection Reference Laboratory (NPPRL) for DNA diagnosis.
- New Zealand fresh produce importers were advised of the interception and interim measures imposed.

- MQS reported to MAF Plants Biosecurity on the consignment where the fruit fly material was found. This information included the phytosanitary certificate, PC number, location and timing of discovery.
- MAF Plants Biosecurity advised the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) of the interception.
- AQIS issued an industry advice notice in which all export certification of citrus from the Sunraysia District of Queensland and pest free areas was suspended. Riverland AQIS also undertook a consignment traceback.

From Sunraysia district

The DNA diagnosis of the fruit fly material concluded that it was not one of the fruit flies listed on the Plants Biosecurity Quarantine: Risk group 2 and 3 registers. Independent verification of this result was completed by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) Laboratory in Canberra. During this time AQIS had completed its consignment traceback concluding that the offending consignment had been sourced from eight different growers throughout the Sunraysia District.

The eggs and larvae were identified as Dirioxa pornia (Island Fruit Fly), which has a status of Quarantine: Risk group 1 (RG1). RG1 pests are quarantine organisms which are of concern to New Zealand MAF but are not regarded as high risk pests.

The offending consignment was subsequently released as the required treatment for Dirioxa pornia (i.e. methyl bromide) had already been carried out.

All other Australian citrus being held was also released.

If the pest had had a quarantine status of either Risk group 2 or Risk group 3 there would have been serious trade implications. These would have resulted in re-negotiation of the existing phytosanitary measures between AQIS and New Zealand MAF.

Justin Ovens, Technical Adviser, (International Operations - Plant Imports), Plants Biosecurity

Phone 04 474 4119,
fax 04 474 4257,
email: ovensj@maf.govt.nz

Biosecurity issue 24 • 15 December 2000
Gum leaf skeletoniser

The discovery of the insect within the boundaries of the Omapu Golf Course is not, in itself, surprising. All gumleaf skeletonists found over the last two years have been within 300 metres of the infested tree. The newest find may be attributed to a residual population of adult moths relocating from a previously infested shelterbelt located nearby. As directed by MAF Forest Biosecurity, the shelterbelt trees were destroyed in December 1999. Surviving moths may have flown to host trees within the immediate vicinity when the shelterbelt was destroyed.

The latest survey indicates that the gum leaf skeletoniser has not extended its range outside the known infested area. As such, eradication is a distinct possibility. Further surveys have been scheduled for 2001.

MAF Forest Biosecurity

Pheromone research

MAF contracted HortResearch to initiate pheromone research. There are now two colonies of moths being reared by HortResearch and an additional second component material will soon be available for testing. A third component has also been confirmed as being biologically active. It is hoped that the synthetic pheromone will be available for use in the 2000/01 programme. Pheromone research continues to reinforce the current approach to the eradication effort. In the absence of a trapping system, MAF undertook a comprehensive survey to obtain a trapping system service provider. A regular caged-moth trapping system, with an initial array of 200 traps being placed within the infested area, has been scheduled for 2001.
The following new import health standards (IHSs) have been issued by the Director Animal Biosecurity and are available for use. Any previous IHSs covering these combinations of country of origin and commodity/species have been revoked.

Dairy product samples for evaluation

Following the receipt of a letter from the Japanese authorities, clause 5.4.5 has been amended by reinstating Japan as a country of origin. Following an outbreak of foot and mouth disease in Uruguay, that country has been removed as a country of origin from clause 5.4.5.

Frozen Nile Perch (Lates niloticus) skinsides, boneless fillets for human consumption from Kenya, Tanzania or Uganda (Lake Victoria)

This standard was advertised in Biosecurity 21:20. The risk analysis concluded that, given the highly processed nature of this product, the risk of introduction of exotic fish diseases by importation of this product is negligible.

Specified products for human consumption containing dairy products, eggs or meat

Following the receipt of a letter from the Japanese authorities, clause 8.3 (private consignment of beef products) 8.4 (private consignments of cowine velvet and sheep/goat/cowine meat and meat products) and 8.9 (private consignments of dairy products) have been amended by reinstating Japan as a country of origin. Following an outbreak of foot and mouth disease in Uruguay, that country has been removed as a country of origin from clause 8.9. Clauses 8.3 (private consignments of beef products) and 8.9 (private consignments of dairy products) have been amended by reinstating Argentina as a country of origin.

Cattle meat products for human consumption from Argentina

This import health standard was temporarily suspended following an incursion of foot and mouth disease in Argentina. The import health standard will now be reinstated following:

• the decision of the Office International des Epizooties (OIE) to continue to recognise Argentina as a country free from foot and mouth disease and where vaccination is not practised; and
• a lapse of 3 months since the last case of foot and mouth disease.

Frozen sheep pituitary glands from Australia

This standard was notified for public consultation in Biosecurity 22:19. These products must originate from a government-licensed slaughterhouse. The standard specifies that slaughterhouse workers for human consumption and that operates under government supervision. The products must also be derived from animals that passed ante-mortem and post-mortem inspection at the time of slaughter.

Unprocessed animal fibre from Australia, Chile, United Kingdom

Animal fibre for testing from all countries

These IHSs were notified for consultation in Biosecurity 21:20 and are based on the generic risk analysis Unprocessed fibre of sheep and goats, ISBN: 0-478-07980-X, November 1998.

New Zealand origin animal fibre returning from all countries

This new IHS details the requirements for animal fibre being returned to New Zealand. The fibre must be:

• within the original unopened packaging on arrival, and
• identifiable as being of New Zealand origin.

Kerry Mulqueen, National Adviser, (Import Management), Animal Biosecurity, phone 04 498 0625, fax 04 474 4132, email: mulqueenk@maf.govt.nz

www.maf.govt.nz/animalIHS

Draft import health standards for consultation

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

Proven rabbit meat and meat by-products for pet food from Australia

This standard is based on The importation into New Zealand of meat and meat products - A review of the risks to animal health, ISBN 0-477-0849-9, dated March 1991. The products must be derived from Australian origin, originate from a government-licensed establishment that processes animals for human consumption and operates under government supervision and the animals must be subjected to post-mortem inspection.

Porcine semen from Finland

This standard has been updated and now includes further safeguards against the introduction of the porcine respiratory and reproductive syndrome (PRRS). It is based on European Council Directive 90/429/EEC of 26 June 1990 laying down the animal health requirements applicable to intra-Community trade in and imports of semen of domestic animals of the porcine species.

Jean-Marie Derouet, Technical Adviser, International Trade, phone 04 498 9897, email: derouet@maf.govt.nz

Scoured fibre from various countries

This new draft standard relating to the importation of animal fibre from sheep, goats, and lamroids (alpacas, llamas, vicuna and guanaco) is now available for comment. Development of this standard follows the completion of the generic risk analysis Unprocessed fibre of sheep and goats, ISBN: 0-478-07980-X, November 1998.

Sarah Peters, Technical Adviser, International Trade, phone 04 474 4136, fax 04 474 4227, email: petersa@maf.govt.nz

www.maf.govt.nz/AnimalIHS/risksanimal.htm

The deadline for submissions is 1 February 2001.

Import health standard revoked

The following import health standard (IHS) has been revoked.

Ruminant bovine serum from Australia

The standards for the importation of ruminant bovine serum from Australia to Salmon Smith Biotab Ltd and to Lowe Walker Hawera Ltd have been replaced by a generic standard.

Kerry Mulqueen, National Adviser, (Import Management), Animal Biosecurity, phone 04 498 0625, fax 04 474 4132, email: mulqueenk@maf.govt.nz

Argali sheep

MAF’s Director-General has approved an application to import frozen argali sheep (Ovis ammon) tissues and semen into New Zealand. The tissues and semen must be held in a nominated transitional facility until a disease risk analysis and import health standard for progeny have been completed. Progeny derived from the semen or tissues will have to remain in containment until the Environmental Risk Management Authority of New Zealand gives a release approval.

The application was made in 1999 under the Animals Act 1967 and was continued under the transitional provisions of the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996.

Jim Edwards, National Manager, (International Trade), Animal Biosecurity, phone 04 474 4138, fax 04 474 4227, email: edwardsj@maf.govt.nz

Ruminant protein control programmes start in new year

Operators of feed mills or rendering plants that produce feed for ruminants in the same premises as feed containing ruminant protein are required to adhere to an approved code of ethical conduct.

If businesses do not wish to implement a registered control programme, they may either stop making feed for ruminants, or substitute non-ruminant protein across the board so that meat and bone meals are no longer used or stored on the premises.

New import health standards issued

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


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15 December 2000

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National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee annual report published

The National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee annual report has been published and distributed. To receive a copy of the report or to be added to the mailing list for future reports contact:

Pam Edwards, Executive Coordinator, Animal Welfare, phone 04 474 4129, fax 04 498 9888, email: edwardsp@maf.govt.nz

Animal manipulation statistics due

All organisations/individuals with a code of ethical conduct or who have an arrangement to use another organisation’s animal ethics committee are reminded that their annual return of animal manipulated during 2000 is due to be submitted to MAF by 31 January 2001.

Pam Edwards, Executive Coordinator, Animal Welfare, phone 04 474 4129, fax 04 498 9888, email: edwardsp@maf.govt.nz

Minor amendments to codes of ethical conduct

Code holders may make minor amendments to their code of ethical conduct. Code holders are reminded that if they have made any minor amendments during 2000, they are required by law to notify MAF in writing of the changes as soon as practicable in 2001 and by 31 March 2001 at the latest.

The Animal Welfare Act 1999 defines a minor amendment as one that would not materially affect the purposes of the code.

Linda Carson, Senior Policy Adviser, Animal Welfare, phone 04 470 2746, fax 04 498 9888, email: carsonl@maf.govt.nz

Codes of ethical conduct - approvals, notifications & revocations since the last issue of Biosecurity

All organisations involved in the use of live animals for research, testing or teaching are required to adhere to an approved code of ethical conduct.

Codes of ethical conduct - approved

Nil

Notifications to MAF of arrangements to use an existing code of ethical conduct

– Anon (Consultants) (to use Lincoln University’s code)
– Internet Ltd (to use AGMET Consultants Ltd’s code)
– Post Control Research Ltd (to use Lincoln University’s code)

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New to New Zealand: No new incursions verified during this period.

Organism | Host | Location | Submitted by | Comment
--- | --- | --- | --- | ---
Farniaria hirsuta | Eucalyptus ovata | Buller | Forest Research | Other PPIN host records include E. leucocarya
Acrocarpus lacinifolius (black butt leaf miner) | Eucalyptus calophylla | Auckland | Forest Research | Other PPIN host records include E. bridgesiana and Eucalyptus sp.
Farniaria hirsuta | Eucalyptus leucobalanus | Wellington | Hawke’s Bay | Forest Research | Other PPIN host records include E. ovata
Botryosphaeria dothidea | Cupressus sp. | Taupo | Forest Research | Other PPIN host records include 4. manihot, 3. papaya, 3. pumpkin, 3. squash, 2. watermelon, 2. zucchini

Extension to distribution reported

Organism | Host | Location | Submitted by | Comment
--- | --- | --- | --- | ---
Stigmella thyriata | Chaenomeles japonica | Auckland | Forest Research | Other PPIN distribution records include 4. ranunculaceae, 3. rosacea, 3. verbenaceae, 2. malvaceae, 2. plantaginaceae
Vermiformia nemus-querceae | Eucalyptus delegatensis | Auckland | Forest Research | Other PPIN distribution records include Southland.

New to New Zealand: No new incursions verified during this period.

Commodity class: Nursery stock. Commodity sub-class: Bud Wood/ Cuttings (stem only.) Vitis vinifera was drafted on 4 October 2000.

**New import health standards issued**

The following new import health standard (IHS) has been issued by the Director, Plants Biosecurity and is available for use.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Date notified</th>
<th>Summary of content</th>
<th>Comments deadline</th>
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<td>R</td>
<td>17/10/00</td>
<td>Risk analysis on apples from New Zealand</td>
<td>11/12/00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
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<td>13/11/00</td>
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<td>11/10/00</td>
<td>Additional measures for ware potatoes from Egypt</td>
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<td>Plant quarantine regulations</td>
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<td>R</td>
<td>24/10/00</td>
<td>Pest risk analysis for solid wood packaging materials for hatching</td>
<td>15/02/01</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Update continued from page 21**

**Codes of ethical conduct resolved or arrangements terminated**

- Karamu High School (Massey University AEC)
- Approvals by the Director-General of MAF for the use of non-human teratoids Nil
- Approvals by the Minister of Agriculture of research or testing in the national interest: None
- Approvals by the Director-General of MAF for the use of non-human teratoids: Nil
- Approvals by the Minister of Agriculture of research or testing in the national interest: None

**Linda Caneens, Senior Policy Adviser, Animal Welfare, phone 04 470 2746, fax 04 498 9888, email: caneens@maf.govt.nz**

**Draft import health standards for consultation**

The following draft generic import health standard (IHS) has been developed by MAF Biosecurity and is available for public consultation.

**Import health standards issued**

The following new import health standard (IHS) has been issued by the Director, Plants Biosecurity and is available for use.

**Commodity sub-class: Fresh Fruit/Meatables, Capricorn annum (capsicum) from the Netherlands issued 6 October 2000.**

Laraine Beaven, Technical Adviser, Import Health Standards (General), Plants Biosecurity.

- phone 04 474 4216, fax 04 474 4257, email: beavenl@maf.govt.nz
- Joan Breach, National Adviser, Import Health Standards (General), Plants Biosecurity.

- phone 04 474 4248, fax 04 474 4257, email: breachj@maf.govt.nz

For further information contact the New Zealand SPS Notification Authority by quoting the ‘country’ and ‘reference’ number of the legislation that you are interested in.