

Biosecurity Bites

Central Issue

WINTER 2017

Submissions invited on Proposal for Regional Pest Management Plan

The Proposal for the Canterbury Regional Pest Management Plan has been notified for public submissions. Animals and plants declared as pests can threaten the natural environment and livelihoods. We need to make sure the right rules are in place to manage existing pests and new pests.

We want to:

- Protect biodiversity and the natural environment
- Protect production activities from the impact of pests
- Be able to better respond to pests as soon as they get here
- Be better equipped to respond to changes in climate and land use, new tourism opportunities, changes in freshwater habitats and water movement.

Some of you have been involved in community discussions to date and responded to last year's discussion document. You can now make a submission on the resulting Proposal. The Public Notice at www.ecan.govt.nz/pests tells you how to do this. Submissions close on 3 July 2017.

Plan to import new strain of rabbit calicivirus



Environment Canterbury is part of a national consortium of agencies leading a programme that proposes to import and release a new strain of rabbit calicivirus, RHDV1 K5. The consortium includes regional councils, Federated Farmers, the Department of Conservation and Land Information New Zealand. It is targeting a release date of March 2018.

The targeted release timeframe is later than first anticipated, as further work has been required to address the regulatory requirements that will allow the legal importation of the new strain.

Before it can be imported and released, approval is required from the Ministry for Primary Industries under the Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines Act and the Biosecurity Act.

The revised timeframe will allow the consortium to learn valuable lessons from the Australian release, which is currently underway. A successful release of this new strain would help landholders achieve control objectives in the Regional Pest Management Plan.

Boneseed - Project complete

The Central area boneseed project is complete for this financial year. Two extra staff were engaged to undertake boneseed search and control along the coastal dunes from Brooklands to Southshore Spit. They destroyed over 2000 boneseed plants in the area.

A Weedbuster event at Southshore Spit with representatives from Environment Canterbury and the Department of Conservation took place after finding so many plants in the dunes.

The group visited residents near the Spit to check home gardens for boneseed plants and provide information about the threat it poses.

Further boneseed search and control operations were undertaken on Banks Peninsula at Birdlings Flat, Port Levy, Robinsons Bay, Purau Bay and Akaroa.



Boneseed



Boneseed flower

Stop the spread of pests: Keep it Clean!



If it can move, it can carry diseases, pests and weeds. For this reason vehicles and machinery pose a high biosecurity risk to farms and should be managed accordingly. To stop the spread of pests, make sure all vehicles and machinery that visit your property are clean. You should also limit the number of vehicle access points and keep track of who has entered. Simple actions like these can greatly reduce the risk of a new pest incursion to your farm.

New officer



Kristi Andreassen Biosecurity Support Officer

Kristi joined the Biosecurity team in September last year, having moved to New Zealand from the Sunshine Coast. She comes from a long background of mining/ construction administration and more recently in aged care. Kristi is loving living in New Zealand, especially seeing snow for the first time. She is a rugby league fan who enjoys exploring the country. Kristi is based with the Northern team at Amberley, and undertakes the administration role for the three Biosecurity teams.

Saffron Thistle



Saffron thistle is a threat to New Zealand's agricultural industry. Once established it can form dense stands, preventing stock movement, competing with pasture species and reducing stock-carrying capacity. Stock can suffer injuries to the eyes and mouth from the sharp spines which can also get stuck in wool.

Readily distinguishable from the purple flowers of Scotch and nodding thistles by its bright yellow flowers, saffron thistle is spread by stock, water, vehicles and in soil to other locations. Seed can remain viable for up to 8 years.

This year's search programme found saffron thistle plants at a new site in Springston. The Biosecurity teams are working hard to eliminate saffron thistle from the region. Please contact the local team if you see this plant.

To help you identify saffron thistle, go to www.ecan.govt.nz and search on the pest name.

Be on the lookout for the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) is asking the community to be on the lookout for the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug. Adults are about 1.7 centimetres long, with a distinctive brown shield shape. The underside is white/tan, and the legs and antennae are brown with white banding. Young nymphs are yellowish brown, mottled with black and red. Older nymphs are darker, with the banding pattern on legs and antennae starting to appear.



If you find one, catch it and call MPI on 0800 80 99 66.

What's the Biosecurity team up to?

It's been a busy few months in the Central team as additional search for nassella tussock is being undertaken in the Selwyn area this year. The Selwyn foothills between the Waimakariri and Rakaia Rivers is an area ideally suited to nassella with its sunny, nor' west facing ridges, but has never been checked for the pest before.

Nassella tussock monitoring, which provides data on whether the objective of progressively reducing nassella is being met, has just been completed.

Officers go to several properties and walk transects to count the number of plants on these monitoring lines.

More gorse and broom compliance inspections are also being undertaken this season. A number of aerial searches have been completed. First inspections indicated many occupiers have good plans in place to keep their gorse and broom contained. Inspections are generally undertaken through late autumn, winter and early spring each year.

For information on gorse and broom, go to www.ecan.govt.nz and search on pest name. Alternatively, contact Customer Services on ecinfo@ecan.govt.nz for a pamphlet. For information on control options, please call your local Biosecurity team.

Time to book your nassella contractor

Now is a good time to book your nassella contractor to make sure they can complete your control work before 30 September. If you grub early, you can have an early inspection. When you have finished your control work, complete your compliance return form and post or email it to the Central team. They can then contact you to arrange a date to carry out an inspection.

For a list of contractors who carry out this work, contact Environment Canterbury's Amberley Office via 0800 324 636.

Who do I call?

For all pest enquiries, please contact the Central Biosecurity team via 0800 324 636 or email biosecurity@ecan.govt.nz