

BIOSECURITY NEW ZEALAND (PLANTS) STANDARD

Importation of Coco peat and Coir fibre Products.

Issued as an import health standard pursuant to Section 22 of the Biosecurity Act 1993

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Endorsement

The MAF Biosecurity New Zealand Standard: Importation of Coco peat and Coir fibre products is approved and issued in accordance with Section 22(1) of the Biosecurity Act 1993.

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Date

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Review

This Biosecurity New Zealand import health standard is subject to ongoing review and amendment.

New Zealand import health standards are updated and published as necessary with the most recent version on the MAF Biosecurity New Zealand web site at:

<http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/commercial-imports/plant-imports/introduction>

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 SCOPE

This import health standard states the phytosanitary requirements for the importation of coir from all countries as follows:

A. Coco peat (also known as Coir pith or Coir peat) for use as a growing medium in various grades and finished products for horticultural/agricultural use e.g. grow slabs, grow bags, bales, blocks, discs, pots, starter cubes and small blocks. Coco peat as used in this standard includes the products known as “chips” and “crush”, derived from the whole chopped and crushed husk pieces. Product may be compressed or non-compressed.

B. Coir fibre products made from large coir fibres for a variety of uses e.g. Mattress matting, basked liners, erosion and weed control matting, fibre blankets, domestic mats, brushes and fillers for industrial uses. Also includes clean coir twine or fibre rolls.

1.2 EXCLUSIONS FROM THE SCOPE OF THIS STANDARD

This standard does not cover the requirements for importation of the following plant commodity classes:

- Excavated peat. See importation of soil, rock, gravel, sand, clay, peat and water, covered in BMG-STD-SOWTR Soil, rock, gravel, sand, clay, peat and water from any country. <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/imports/non-organic/standards/bmg-std-sowtr.htm>
- Mats and fibres derived from other plants (in preparation).

1.3 REFERENCES

The following Acts, Regulations and MAF Biosecurity standards are referred to, or complement, the implementation of this import health standard:

- International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), FAO, Rome 1997
- International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures Publication 5; Glossary of Phytosanitary Terms, IPPC, 2007.
- New Zealand Biosecurity Act 1993
 - Biosecurity (Costs) Regulations 2006.
- New Zealand Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996 (HSNO Act 1996)

1.4 ABBREVIATIONS, ACRONYMS, DEFINITIONS

Additional declaration

A statement that is required by an importing country to be entered on a phytosanitary certificate and which provides specific additional information on a consignment in relation to

the regulated pests.
[IPPC]

Biosecurity clearance

A clearance under Section 26 of the Biosecurity Act (1993) for the entry of goods into New Zealand.

Coir

Fibre derived from the husk of coconuts.

Consignment

Unaccompanied goods being moved from one country to another and covered by an airway bill/bill of lading or consignment note.

Contamination

Unwanted presence in a commodity, storage place, conveyance or container, of any material (including a regulated organism) that may pose a biosecurity risk.

MAF

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

MAF Biosecurity New Zealand (MAFBNZ)

That part of MAF responsible for leadership of regulatory biosecurity functions.

MAFBNZ Inspector

A person appointed under Section 103 of the New Zealand Biosecurity Act 1993 to undertake administering and enforcing the provisions of the Biosecurity Act. (Explanatory Note: An Inspector is appointed to undertake administering and enforcing the provisions of the Biosecurity Act and controls imposed under HSNO).

National plant protection organization (NPPO)

Official service established by the government to discharge the functions specified by the IPPC (FAO 1990). **Note: MAF is the NPPO of New Zealand.**

Permit to Import

Official document authorizing importation of a commodity in accordance with specified phytosanitary requirements (Biosecurity Act 1993).

Pest

Any species, strain or biotype of plant, animal or pathogenic agent injurious to plants or plant products [FAO, 1990; revised FAO, 1995; IPPC, 1997]

Phytosanitary certificate

A certificate patterned after the model certificates of the IPPC (FAO (1990)). A certificate issued by the exporting country NPPO, in accordance with the requirements of the IPPC, which verifies that the requirements of the relevant import health standard have been met.

The phytosanitary certificate must contain all information as detailed in the "model phytosanitary certificate", ISPM#12 – Guidelines for phytosanitary certificates, Appendix Model phytosanitary certificate, April 2001. This can be found at the following web site:

https://www.ippc.int/servlet/BinaryDownloaderServlet/16199_ISPM_12_E.pdf?filename=1146658528409_ISPM12.pdf&refID=16199

Plant products

Unmanufactured material of plant origin (including grain) and those manufactured plant products that, by their nature or that of their processing, may create a risk for the spread of pests. (FAO, 1990; revised IPPC, 1997).

Retting

Soaking for a period of many weeks to help separate fibres. Used for brown fibre products.

Standard

Document established by consensus and approved by a recognized body, that provides, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results, aimed at the achievement of the optimum degree of order in a given context [FAO, 1995; ISO/IEC GUIDE 2:1991 definition].

Transitional facility

Any facility approved in accordance with Section 39 of the New Zealand Biosecurity Act 1993 for the purpose of inspection, testing, storage, treatment, quarantine, holding or destruction of uncleared goods.

Treatment

Official procedure for the killing, inactivation or removal of pests, or for rendering pests infertile or for devitalisation [FAO, 1990, revised FAO, 1995; ISPM No 15, 2002; ISPM No 18, 2003; ICPM 2005]

2. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

It is the responsibility of the importer to ensure compliance with this standard. Products not complying will be treated prior to biosecurity clearance (if a treatment is available) or may be reshipped or destroyed.

Wood pallets or packaging must also comply with the standard:

<http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/imports/forests/standards/non-viable-forest-produce/wood-packaging-ihs.htm>

2.1 GENERAL INFORMATION FOR COCO PEAT PRODUCTS (as described under A of Scope)

- Coco peat must be kept clean and free of seeds, pests, soil, animal material and any other contamination.
- No imported coco peat is to be produced from the traditional method of retting husks in open troughs or ponds.
- Washing or rinsing of coco peat, chips or crush must be carried out with bore water, not pond or dam water.
- Coco peat drying areas must be buffered underneath from contact with soil.
- A plant free buffer zone of 3 metres must be maintained around the coco peat drying areas unless concrete walls are built on the perimeter of concrete pads.

2.2 GENERAL INFORMATION FOR COIR FIBRE PRODUCTS (as described under B of Scope)

- Coir fibre products must be kept clean and free of seeds, pests, soil, animal material and any other contamination.

2.3 TRANSIT REQUIREMENTS

All consignments must be packed and shipped in a manner to prevent possible in-transit contamination by regulated pests.

3. COMMODITY SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

3.1 ENTRY CONDITIONS FOR COCO PEAT PRODUCTS (as described under A of Scope)

(i) Documentation

Phytosanitary certificate: a completed phytosanitary certificate issued by the NPPO of the exporting country must accompany all coco peat exported to New Zealand.

Import permit: an import permit is required. Applicants must provide information describing the quality processes used in manufacture and full supplier's details as prescribed in Appendix 1. MAF reserves the right to decline an application. To apply for a permit, complete the form "Application to Import Plant Products" available on the website: <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/commercial-imports/plant-imports/forms>

3.1.1 Standard Option for all coco peat products and Option to import into a glasshouse transitional facility

(ii) Phytosanitary requirements

Before a phytosanitary certificate is issued, the NPPO of the exporting country must be satisfied that the following activities required by MAF have been undertaken.

The consignment has been

- inspected in accordance with appropriate official procedures and found to be free of any visually detectable soil, contaminant animal or plant material and other extraneous matter.

AND

- randomly sampled and tested by a grow-out test showing freedom from viable seeds based on a sample size of 1%.

(iii) Additional declarations to the phytosanitary certificate

If satisfied that the phytosanitary requirements have been undertaken, the exporting country NPPO must confirm this by providing the following additional declarations to the phytosanitary certificate:

"The coco peat consignment has been:

- inspected in accordance with appropriate official procedures and found to be free of any viable seeds, visually detectable soil, regulated pests, contaminant animal or plant material and other extraneous matter.

AND

- randomly sampled and tested by a grow-out test showing freedom from viable seeds.

If visually detectable pests are found, the certifying NPPO must establish their regulatory status prior to issuing the certificate. This information is available in MAF's "Biosecurity Organisms Register for Imported Commodities": <http://www.maf.govt.nz/biosecurity/pests-diseases/registers-lists/boric/>

If a visually detectable pest is not listed in this register, the certifying NPPO must contact MAF (official contact point listed above) to establish the regulatory status of the pest.

If seedlings are found from the grow-out test, the consignment must be rejected for export to New Zealand, unless treated with ethylene oxide or heat as in Section 3.1.2 (if available and approved for use in the exporting country).

3.1.2 Treatment options given as an alternative to a grow out test in the exporting country and inspection on arrival at the border.

Ethylene Oxide

Treatment with ethylene oxide in the country of origin (if available).

One of the following rates must be used:

Under initial minimum vacuum of 50 kilopascals at 1500g/m³ for 4 hours at 50°C; or 1500g/m³ for 24 hours at 21°C.

Heat treatment with low humidity heat in the country of origin (if available).
The following rate must be used: 85°C core temperature for 15 continuous hours with 40% relative humidity.

Autoclaving in the country of origin (if available)
The following rate must be used: 121°C for 30 minutes at 100KPa.

Other rates of steam, other fumigants or other treatments that can be proven to devitalise seeds will be given consideration on application.

Note: Any treatment should be given before insertion of a product into grow slabs/grow bags if the treatment will not permeate the bags.

If satisfied that heat treatment has been undertaken, the exporting country NPPO must confirm this by recording the treatment in the “Disinfestation and/or Disinfection Treatment” section of the phytosanitary certificate.

Treatment must be given within 21 days of arrival. Inspection on arrival will not be required. Consignments must be held securely post treatment to prevent re-contamination.

3.2 ENTRY CONDITIONS FOR COIR FIBRE PRODUCTS (as described under B of Scope)

(i) Documentation

Phytosanitary certificate: Not required unless a treatment has been given.

Import permit: Not required.

(ii) Phytosanitary requirements

Exporters must ensure that consignments are free of pests and extraneous matter.

4. ENTRY REQUIREMENTS ON ARRIVAL AT THE BORDER

4.1 DOCUMENTATION UPON ARRIVAL

Where required in the entry conditions, consignments must be accompanied by correct documentation.

All consignments of Coco peat and Coir fibre products which are not inspected immediately on arrival in New Zealand, must be stored in a transitional facility until such time as they are inspected.

All consignments not complying or suspected of not complying with the specifications detailed in this standard must be stored in a transitional facility until such time as they can be inspected and/or treated, given biosecurity clearance, reshipped or destroyed.

4.2 INSPECTION

The MAFBNZ inspector will inspect the commodity to check for the presence of pests, signs or symptoms of pests, soil, seeds or any other visually detectable contaminants. Inspections must be carried out in a transitional facility or biosecurity control area that has been approved by MAFBNZ as suitable for inspecting plant products.

4.3 SAMPLING AND INSPECTION OF COCO PEAT PRODUCTS

(as described under A of scope)

4.3.1 Sampling

Consignments will be randomly sampled by a MAFBNZ inspector at a rate of 1%. The samples will be destructively broken down and examined for seed presence in accordance with a MAFBNZ process.

4.3.2 Option to import into a glasshouse transitional facility.

Under this option growers may apply to MAFBNZ to become registered transitional facilities for using coco peat grow slabs and grow bags. The coco peat will remain under MAFBNZ control until disposal at the end of the growing cycle.

Inspection on arrival will not be required.

4.4 INSPECTION OF COIR FIBRE PRODUCTS

(as described under B of Scope)

4.4.1 Processed products heated during manufacture

The following products processed involving high heating are exempt audit inspections on arrival:

Manufactured by Toyo Cushion Lanka (PVT) Ltd, Sri Lanka: Coir rubberized moulded basket liners and rubberized sheets for mattress making

4.4.2 Processed products not heated during manufacture

Inspection audits will be required on a regular basis at the importer's expense for these products. The remainder of the consignment is not to be held during the audit process.

MAFBNZ will sample one in every ten consignments of like coir fibre product per lot per importer, on a regional port basis.

4.5 INTERCEPTIONS OF PESTS AND CONTAMINANTS

If more than 2 seeds that are of a new, prohibited or regulated species are detected, the importer is to be given the options of heat treatment (or other effective treatment if available) of the consignment, in accordance with the MAF Standard BMG-STD-TREAT: Approval of Suppliers Providing Treatments of Risk Goods and Forestry/Plant Related Material for Export <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/border/transitional-facilities/bmg-std-treat.pdf>

or reshipment or destruction. If 2 seeds are found that are not of a new, prohibited or regulated species the importer is to be given the option of a second sampling. If no seeds are found in the 2nd sampling, the consignment may be given biosecurity clearance.

If live organisms other than seeds are detected, the importer may be given the option of pest identification. If the organism is regulated, the product may be treated (if available), reshipped or destroyed as directed by the MAF inspector. The product may be given biosecurity clearance if the pest identified is classified as non-regulated.

If other contaminants are detected, any treatments given will be in accordance with the MAF Standard BMG-STD-TREAT. If signs or symptoms of pests are detected, the MAF inspector will determine the action to be taken.

5. BIOSECURITY CLEARANCE

A biosecurity clearance shall be issued by an inspector for each consignment cleared for entry into New Zealand.

APPENDIX 1 QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COCO PEAT SUPPLIERS

Please provide responses to the questions outlined below. Feel free to skip those questions which are not applicable to the products you intend to import. All information supplied to MAFBNZ will be handled confidentially.

1. What is the brand or trade name of the products?
2. Is it intended that the products will receive heat treatment or ethylene oxide fumigation before export? If so, please give full details of the treatment.
3. What is the method of storage of husk pieces in supplying copra factories?
4. What is the method of transport and storage from supplying copra factories (e.g. in clean bags used only for coconut husks or coco peat)?
5. How frequently are coconut husk pieces delivered from supplying copra factories to your processing factories or your fibre mill suppliers?
6. Do you have a factory handling husks pieces to the finished product that produces products specifically for growing media?
7. Do you buy coco peat from the wholesale market, including material used in these products? If so, is it handled in the same processing premises as materials destined for New Zealand?

8. How many suppliers of dried coco peat supply your production process?
9. Please describe the area where the coconut husks are delivered on your premises or on the premises of each of your suppliers of dried coco peat.
10. Is there a plant-free buffer zone where husks are delivered and where the coco peat is dried for each supplier or premises? If so, please provide details, including how frequently these zones are monitored.
11. Are any of the production or processing sites susceptible to flooding?
12. What are the measures taken to keep all storage areas free of contamination (including arthropods and rodents)?
13. At what points in the production system are samples taken to inspect for contamination?
14. How frequently do you take samples and undertake grow-out tests for seed contamination? Please give details of the methods undertaken for the grow out tests (e.g. sample size, length of grow out period).
15. Do you maintain records of grow-out tests? If so, where do you hold these records?
16. Is there any rinsing with water of plant material in the production process? If so, what is the source of water used (e.g. bore water, nearby stream)?
17. Are there any live organisms added to any of the products? If so, please provide the names of these organisms.
18. What is the method of storage of dried coco peat before compressing and packaging?
19. Do you have any quality system audited by a third party e.g. RHP? If so, please provide details about this quality system.
20. Do you source any of your products from another company? If so, please state which products and the name of the company who produces them.
21. Do you export the products produced from your premises to countries other than New Zealand? If so, please state which countries.