Recommendation for amendment of the MAF Import Health Standard Importation of Seeds for Sowing

Background

The MAF Import Health Standard “Importation of Seeds for Sowing” specifies the phytosanitary requirements for seeds which are imported to be sown in the New Zealand environment. The proposed amendment would enable Japan to be added as an approved country from which *Zea mays* (corn) seeds for sowing could be imported to New Zealand. The pests and diseases associated with corn seed from Japan, and their likelihood of entry and establishment via this pathway has been considered.

Two new fungal pathogens which are Regulated in New Zealand have been added to the pest list for *Zea mays*. MAF Biosecurity New Zealand (MAFBNZ) are recommending that importers obtain a phytosanitary certificate stated that the *Zea mays* seed is sourced from a “Pest free area” for the two additional regulated fungi or are treated with one of the fungicide combinations currently listed in the schedule. No further changes have been made to the risk management measures that are in place to prevent other pests on the list.

**Inclusion of Japan as an approved country for *Zea mays* seed for sowing**

A pest list of corn from Japan was provided to MAFBNZ. The pests identified as Regulated in New Zealand, which are also seed-borne or capable of transmission by seed, were identified. Two additional fungal pathogens have been added to the pest list for corn. These are:

*Gloeocercospora sorghi* (Bain & Edgerton ex Deighton): *zonate leaf spot*.

Reported from southern USA, Central and South America, tropical Africa, Australia, India and Japan (Farr *et al.*, 1989). This is a minor disease of maize but a more serious disease of sorghum. It is seed-borne on sorghum (Ciccarone, 1949), and may also be seed-borne on maize. General fungicide treatments are noted to be effective on this fungus (Neergaard 1979, Holiday 1980).

*Pythium sylvaticum* (Campbell & Hendrix): *seed rot*.

This is a cosmopolitan species which is considered to be responsible for seed rot of maize in Japan. General fungicide treatments are effective on this fungus (Kondo *et al.*, 1986).
References.


