

Palm Kernel Imports

Q & A's

What is palm kernel meal?

Palm Kernel Meal (PKM) is a by-product from the extraction of oil from the kernel of the palm seeds of the oil palm, *Elaeis guineensis*. The kernels are found inside the shell of the fruit after flesh has been stripped away. PKM is the mashed solid part of the seed kernels left remaining after oil extraction, which involves many stages.

How does palm kernel extract (PKE) differ from palm kernel meal (PKM)?

There is essentially no difference here. The name PKE is based on the fact that the seeds have undergone extraction by an expeller process for the oil and this is the residue, whereas the name PKM is more aligned with the physical state of the "meal" like product.

Where do our palm kernel imports come from?

Exporting Country	Annual Volume (Tonnes): August 2008 to July 2009	Percentage (%)
Indonesia	373,183	56.4
Malaysia	286,334	43.3
Solomon Islands	1,547	0.2
Papua New Guinea	642	0.1
TOTAL	662,030	100.0

How much is imported into New Zealand each year?

PKM has been imported as a stock feed for more than 10 years, particularly for dairy cows. In the last few years quantities have increased significantly in line with the increase in dairying activity. It is quite common for single consignments to be shipped in bulk carriers or in up to 25 containers. Latest figures show New Zealand agents imported approximately 662,000 tonnes from August 2008 to July 2009. This figure has dropped from the volume of around 825,000 tonnes which was imported for the year from April 2008 to March 2009.

What is it used for?

Stock feed.

Do palm kernel imports pose a biosecurity risk?

Palm kernel meal is a pure homogenous processed material produced under high temperatures which should present minimal biosecurity risk by the finish of production. The import requirements ensure measures are in place to protect product from sources of contamination.

PKM is currently imported under Section 7.3 of the Import Health Standard BNZ-PAFP-IMPRT Importation of processed animal feeds of plant origin:

<http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/imports/plants/standards/bnz-pafp-impert>.

The general requirements are:

- Consignments must be free from pre-processing and post processing contamination with any animal protein, animal products, regulated pests, viable seeds and unprocessed plant material.
- Official documentation with specific statements from the exporting country attesting to handling, storage and inspection of the product post production and inspection of the product prior to export are required.
- Certification of fumigation given prior to or during shipment for all consignments.
- On arrival in New Zealand all consignments are inspected by MAFBNZ. If biosecurity risk material is found in the product an appropriate treatment is undertaken where possible or the consignment can be reshipped or destroyed.

Changes to the Import Health Standard covering PKM are constantly reviewed. Recent changes to the standard earlier this year involved an increase in the required exposure time for phosphine fumigation, clarification of the fumigation method to be used, and an increase in the number of containers inspected by MAFBNZ staff.

What treatments are carried out on palm kernel before it crosses the border?

Fumigation with phosphine is mandatory and all consignments are inspected on arrival before being given clearance by MAFBNZ. If insects or other contaminants are found, an approved method of treatment is undertaken to mitigate any biosecurity risk at the cost of the importer.

Rumours exist involving insects or pests in palm kernel consignments?

Reports of insects being found after biosecurity clearance have been found to be stored product pests as identified in the recent MAFBNZ survey of bulk animal feed stores (March 2009). The facility inspections resulted in 106 identifications, representing 52 pests, all of which were already present in New Zealand and are non-regulated.

In all cases, the interceptions of live insects found during mandatory inspection by MAFBNZ border staff have been dealt with appropriately using methyl bromide fumigation. Only one regulated pest has been identified on PKE in the past 2 years (from Malaysia), resulting in fumigation of the entire consignment. There have been no reports of regulated pests found in PKE consignments after biosecurity clearance has been given.

What should the public do if they see or suspect palm kernel to be infested/biosecurity risk?

Every New Zealander needs to be biosecurity conscious and, if they have information, regarding a biosecurity risk, they should call the MAF Biosecurity New Zealand pest and diseases **hotline on 0800 80 99 66**. All calls are treated as confidential.

We have the best biosecurity protection of any country in the world, and that is as it should be but our borders will never be hermetically sealed. Constant surveillance and the active partnership of farmers and the rest of our community are vital if we are to maintain our high biosecurity standards.

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