BIOSECURITY 2025
Making it happen

Issue 3 | October 2017

Welcome

Glenice Paine

Welcome to *Biosecurity 2025: Making it Happen*, where we'll keep you regularly updated on what's happening to implement the Biosecurity 2025 Direction Statement.

It's your gig too

Biosecurity 2025 has given clear direction – we are now putting together the detail on how to get there. But the only way we're going to achieve the goals set out in Biosecurity 2025 is for the community to work together and share information and ideas. This e-newsletter has been developed to capture and share this information so we're really keen to hear what's happening out there and welcome your input and ideas for future issues.

A message from Glenice Paine

Got a story to share? *We'd love to hear from you. If you'd like to be profiled or have a story included in the next issue, please email us*

Implementation planning update

The Biosecurity 2025 programme team are working with over 80 external stakeholders from across the system to develop the Implementation Plan for the Biosecurity 2025 Direction Statement.

Since July the Working Groups have meet 15 times to develop their work plans for their Strategic Direction. The Steering Group has met six times to provide oversight of the development process for the individual work plan and to make sure they are aligned and connected. These plans will inform the draft Implementation Plan. In the November issue of this newsletter we will share much more detail on the five strategic direction work plans.

The strategic directions are:

SD1: A biosecurity team of 4.7 million - A central theme which focuses on sharing the responsibility – so every New Zealander becomes a biosecurity risk manager and every business manages their own biosecurity risk

Supporting this audacious goal are:

SD2: A toolbox for tomorrow (harnessing science and technology)

SD3: Smart, free-flowing information (intelligence and powerful data analysis to underpin biosecurity risk management)

SD4: Effective leadership and governance (system-wide leadership, inclusive/effective oversight and governance)

SD5: Tomorrow's skills and assets (a capable/sustainable workforce and world-class infrastructure).

You can download a PDF of the Biosecurity 2025 Direction Statement to find out more about how we are making it happen.

Northland's biosecurity champion

Don McKenzie, Biosecurity Manager Northland Regional Council with wild ginger tuber.

Winner of the Ministers Biosecurity Award, Don McKenzie, Biosecurity Manager at Northland Regional Council, has been leading a light in Northland biosecurity for the past 10 years.

Working tirelessly to empower his team, his council, and his community, Don has also been part of the team developing a range of world leading land and sea biosecurity programmes – including a programme for hull fouling.

Northland's natural environment is something special. There is more than 3000kms of coastline and 1.26 million hectares of land to keep safe from pests and diseases. The marine environment is particularly fragile and often at risk. "When it comes to marine pests my team is incredibly busy throughout Northland, Whangarei and Opua in particular, as they are the main entry points for ships and yachts clearing the New Zealand's border", says Don. 'They are managed by MPI and our focus is on domestic vessels to prevent the spread of marine pests, particularly through hull fouling.

"The risk of them carrying pests is very high, meaning my team is inspecting vessels all year and making sure vessel owners are very aware of the rules.

"Our council works closely with communities in the North so that they can be our eyes on the ground. It is amazing to see what empowered communities taking pest action can achieve, and our staff feel a part of this. With so many great leaders out there succeeding it continues to inspire me and my team," says Don. "The North is filled with passionate people who are making a positive difference in their backyard and Northland every single day. By allowing these communities and local industries to take action, the council is helping build a strong and sustainable biosecurity system for our region.

"It is really important the community is up to speed on everything and know what to look for. Being well informed means they can make the call: the tipping point between stopping an incursion to controlling its spread or managing it.

> *…the North is filled with passionate people who are making a positive difference in their backyard…*

"Pests pose a very real threat to the environment and lifestyles enjoyed by Northlanders and the council has put a large amount of time, effort and money on behalf of its communities into biosecurity on the land, freshwater and marine environments", concluded Don.

Don's award was not the only recognition for the council. Its long-running and multi-pronged Marine Biosecurity Programme also secured a 'highly commended' award in the Awards' government category.

Under Don's leadership, the council is stepping up all aspects of its marine biosecurity programme and will activate this year New Zealand's first integrated Regional Pest Management Plan and Pathways Plan surveying 2000 vessels – a thousand more than last year. At the same time, innovative technologies and processes, such as bubble technology to prevent bio-fouling in marinas, are being progressed

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NEW ZEALAND BIOSECURITY AWARDS

Recognising our biosecurity team of 4.7 million

Beating the Great White Butterfly

The Department of Conservation (DOC) earned the Supreme Biosecurity Award and the Government Award at the inaugural New Zealand Biosecurity Awards. This double award whammy celebrated DOC's innovative methods and 'world-first' achievement of eradicating the Great White Butterfly (GWB) pest from New Zealand.

DOC Nelson staff check commercial brassica crops for signs of the Great White Butterfly.

Picking up the story of this 'world-first', international magazine the New Scientist, published information about the successful four-year eradication project. A significant pest of brassica crops in Europe and western Asia, the GWB caterpillars feed voraciously in groups, rapidly reducing host plants to a skeleton.

First found in Nelson in 2010, it was a major threat to New Zealand's 79 native cress species, especially the 55 at risk of extinction, commercial brassica crops, farm forage and home gardens. Getting rid of it meant DOC needed to create an approach that could be modified as the eradication plan took shape.

The approach taken demanded ongoing commitment, creativity, excellent management and communication, top-notch community engagement, wide collaboration with numerous organisations (government, public, scientific and primary industry), and the ability to rapidly adjust tactics as circumstances changed.

It required a combination of integrated tactics: prioritised, targeted insecticides and herbicides applications, community education, rapid response to public reports of sightings, lures and nets, biocontrol agents releases and mathematical modelling of spatial and temporal changes in GWB populations.

During the 4-year period, DOC continued to refine its strategy as new information and tools became available. New methods for luring, trapping and killing butterflies were conceived, trialled and, when useful, implemented. DOC systematically searched priority areas using evidence collected over a period of time. Key to this was community involvement and the well-publicised one-off bounty scheme - $10 for butterflies.

DOC was supported by MPI, AgResearch, Plant and Food Research, Entecol, Vegetables NZ and the Nelson community.

Facts and figures

- first discovered in Nelson in 2010
- DOC and MPI declared GWB eradicated on 23 November 2016.
- repeated searches of over 29,000 properties with 263,900 searches in 3.5 years
- accessed wild host plants in difficult terrain - i.e. cliff faces
- GWB would have cost between $43 million and $133 million per year to control
- it threatened 79 native cress species and 55 species of these are already threatened (3% of New Zealand's flora)
- $5 million was spent to rid New Zealand of GWB
- every step was carefully recorded
- a $10 bounty for dead netted GWB during the 2013 spring school holidays

During the school holidays it was dollars for butterflies and local Nelson school children were out in droves.

KVH and Zespri prepare for stink bugs

A simulation exercise held in August and hosted by KVH and Zespri, was well attended by observers from across the horticulture industry and the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) with the aim of being 'ready' for the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug (BMSB).

If established, this 'stinky' unwanted pest could cost our horticultural industries hundreds of millions of dollars, and be a significant public nuisance pest - it would live in homes and industrial buildings over winter.

Technical, response, operational, research, and communications staff worked together to test the industry's level of readiness for two scenarios – an incursion and long term management. Working through what would need to happen under both scenarios, the teams focused of providing the right advice so decision making was more efficient, the impacts were managed, and the flow of information was communicated at the right time to the right people so that the right capability could be mobilised at the right time.

A joint KVH/Zespri working group developed a readiness plan which identified activities to mitigate impacts of BMSB across the supply chain which was used during the exercise to guide thinking.

Key exercise take-outs

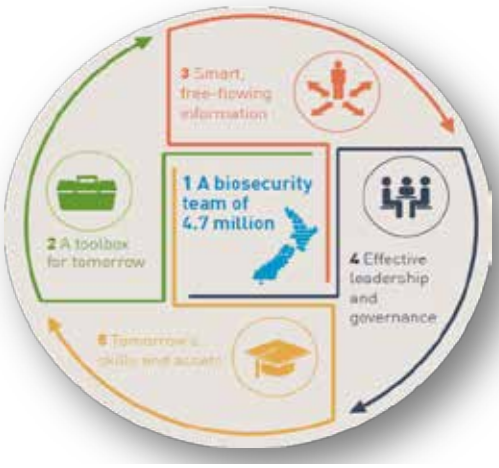
- the bugs fly so movement controls are difficult and non-kiwifruit activities are beyond their control
- compensation issues need to be clarified in advance if a kiwifruit orchard has to be sprayed
- industry and government systems are well aligned but it is still vital to have help from local councils, iwi and community groups
- local groups must be consulted during a response
- responding on-the-ground is a large logistical exercise and Kiwinet will help make it happen
- other support or volunteer networks should also be included.

What next?

- KVH and Zespri will continue to develop protocols for post-harvest operators for contingency planning
- a framework for coordinated long term approaches will be developed
- by using the framework, activities and decisions will be better aligned - including working with international experts such as Dr Tracy Leskey.

To see just how much damage BMSB can do to a Kiwifruit orchard watch this video made in Italy.

Working together to deliver better biosecurity



A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between KVH and Horticulture New Zealand (HortNZ) to improve biosecurity for growers was finalised at the end of August. The MOU will help protect the kiwifruit industry from unwanted pests and diseases by streamlining resources and taking part in readiness and response activities to support the growers for better biosecurity.

It is envisaged that HortNZ will be a support network for KVH during the Ministry for Primary Industries Wellington-based activities, and allow KVH to utilise HortNZ's influence to strengthen biosecurity protection and preparedness.

HortNZ and KVH share the same biosecurity goals and by aligning their activities and messages, they can play a more effective advocacy role in government, as well as increasing grower biosecurity awareness and on-orchard practices and provide robust biosecurity policy and submissions to the kiwifruit industry.

#dogswithjobs

Brad and Milo (the Conservation Predator Dog) were a feature of Northland Regional Council's Biosecurity Month earlier this year. The duo do amazing work by helping to protect Northland's offshore islands from feral cats, as well as local forests with Bay Bush Action in the beautiful Bay of Islands. #Northlandheros #ConservationDogs.

Got a great video you can share of biosecurity in action? Is your local community doing great things? Let us know and we will profile your video here *in the next issue, please email us.*

Social changes how Northlanders engage in biosecurity

In 2015 the New Zealand Biosecurity Institute launched Biosecurity Month in an effort to raise awareness around biosecurity issues. Three years ago the team at the Northland Regional Council took on the challenge of getting 'Northlanders' involved and launched their 'Biosecurity Month' using Facebook as the main channel.

Over the last couple of years the Council has worked with their biosecurity officers to help people understand what they do and why. "Social media has been of huge benefit to our Biosecurity team," says Ashlee Lawrence, Biosecurity Officer (Pest Plants & Fish), at Northland Regional Council. "It has allowed us to connect with the public at a different level as it 'humanises' what we do.

"Our following has built steadily over the last three years with 2017 turning out to be a stellar year. The turning point was introducing videos which showcased our biosecurity staff in action and then shooting videos of 'local heroes' who are co-ordinating local pest control efforts.

"One of our most successful methods was the use of the 'Facebook live' tool, featuring our staff live streaming onto social media channels, answering questions from the public and tackling controversial issues such as: who is responsible for roadside weeds. Combined with our videos featuring well-known locals, we reached over 70,000 people in just the first week of this campaign," concluded Ashlee.

The short, informative less than a minute videos are extremely popular with the public, and the council has found that using social media has changed how ratepayers view what the Council does and how they respond to queries.

> *…the turning point was introducing videos of staff and local heroes…*

The theme of this year's Biosecurity month was: 'Capital Results, Working Together' in light of the predator-free by 2050 goal, that will involve all New Zealanders taking part in Biosecurity action. This year the Council stepped up its game with this theme and constructed their most interactive campaign yet. This truly resounded with the council's followers because the council staff took time to reply to them individually through a public forum, and solve individual issues. This resulted in the highest ever social media engagement levels: 162,471 people reached during the month.

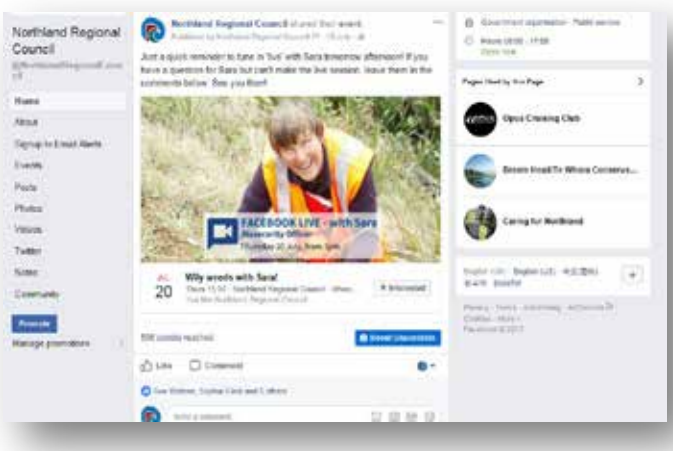
They also used hashtags so they could:

- track how popular posts were
- inject a little humour into what would otherwise be a bland or uninteresting post (biosecurity doesn't appeal to everyone)
- collate the hashtags to track engagement
- tag other relevant agencies to increase reach and encourage sharing.

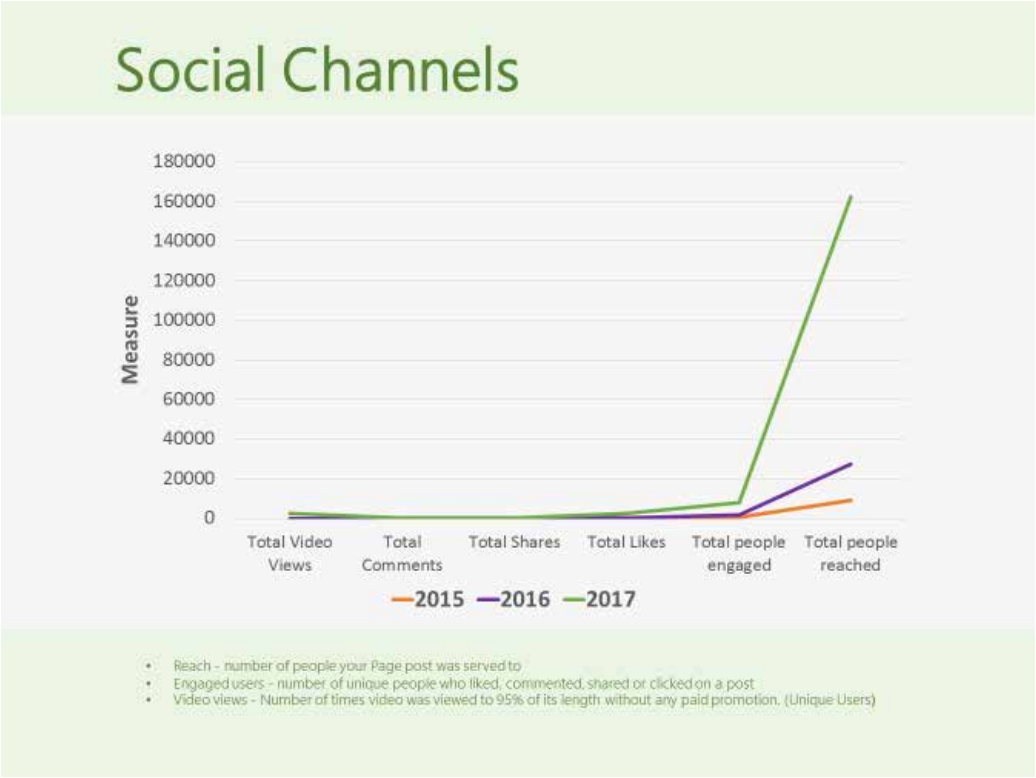
The Council showcased the lesser known aspects of Biosecurity to educate Northlanders on issues that they may not have known about. They also used competitions, giving away a free traps, and different ways to highlight issues or to persuade followers to provide feedback

The Council now has a booming You Tube channel and a well visited Facebook site.

Two Facebook post that helped to create a climb in engagement and reach across Northland



It was a slow start to the level of engagement the Council now enjoys until it started to feature its people and 'Local Heroes' online.



Biosecurity is an investment not a cost

Summerfruit New Zealand and the Meat Industry Association are the latest organisations to sign the Government Industry Agreements for Biosecurity Readiness and Response deed, joining 15 other industry sectors that have agreed to work with government and each other to combat the threat of a pest or disease to New Zealand.

GIA provides the foundation for the primary industries to be more informed and to collaborate on the biosecurity system with the Ministry for Primary Industries and other GIA industry partners. Collaboration is key to the successful implementation plan for the Biosecurity 2025 Direction Statement.

Representing the collective interests of apricot, cherry, nectarine, peach and plum growers, Summerfruit NZ is working with the sector to safeguard the value of their production — expected to be $250m by 2035 — as the growers face a large number of biosecurity threats that could damage their livelihoods.

The NZ meat industry see biosecurity as fundamental to its success as it underpins New Zealand's reputation as a producer of safe, high quality meat products and a large-scale biosecurity incursion, like foot and mouth disease could devastate the meat sector and seriously impact the economy.

The recent Mycoplasma bovis incursion in South Canterbury highlights how even a relatively unknown disease can have a big impact on the industry. The meat sector exports were worth around $8 billion annually and are NZ's second largest export and single largest manufacturing sector.

Biosecurity was a feature on a number of stands and was very prominent on the MPI, DOC and Pipfruit New Zealand sites.

Māori are part of the biosecurity system

Te Tira Whakamātaki (TTW) – the Māori Biosecurity Network – was established in 2015 to embed Māori interests, knowledge and values into New Zealand's biosecurity system.

The Network, whose name means "the watchful (vigilant) ones", was established to:

- make sure Māori have a voice in New Zealand's biosecurity systems and Government Industry Agreements (GIA)
- guard biosecurity processes to ensure the Māori voice is being heard, and Māori are included
- petition for biosecurity research to include Māori perspectives and solutions
- promote the effects of biosecurity threats and policy on Māori social policy, political strategy, economic interests, technology, and culture.

The network is made up of Māori scientists, researchers, environmental technicians, biosecurity specialists and traditional ecological knowledge holders. It also includes support from plant pathologists, ecologists, biochemists, geneticists, entomologists, environmental managers and conservationists.

Since 2015 the Network has worked with Māori on various issues including Myrtle Rust and the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug. Māori already have a responsibility to protect species considered taonga exercising their kaitiakitanga (cultural authority), as well as being the largest landowners in New Zealand. The Crown, and increasingly industry, recognise that Māori have an integral part to play in the sustainable development of New Zealand's primary sector and in the protection of the country's biosecurity status.

> ***...Māori already have a responsibility to protect species considered taonga exercising their kaitiakitanga (cultural authority)...***

In July 2016, TTW was awarded the inaugural Dave Galloway Innovation Award by the New Zealand Biosecurity Institute (NZBI), and in August 2017, was awarded the inaugural Māori Biosecurity Award by the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI). These Awards recognise the efforts of the Māori Biosecurity Network encouraging awareness of threats and developing strategies to build a healthy future for New Zealand's biological heritage.

Working across the system on biosecurity research priorities, TTW is driving the development of biosecurity processes that are mutually advantageous for hapu/Iwi and biosecurity research that embraces Māori perspectives.

As Māori increase their involvement, representation in governance and decision-making and biosecurity research informs Iwi (forums), highlighting the effects biosecurity threats and policy have on Māori social policy, political strategy, economic interests, technology, and culture. The strategic relationships will develop further and go some way to recognising the role of mātauranga Māori and kaitiakitanga (guardianship) in the biosecurity system.

Keeping New Zealand Stink Bug free

Spring has sprung, and the public awareness campaign for the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug (BMSB) has begun. Every spring and summer this stinky pest (think sweaty socks) has an opportunity to hide out in New Zealand and MPI has created a new advertising campaign to target both the general public and industry groups.

The general public campaign highlights how these bugs can infest homes and garden while the industry groups – including fruit growers, pack houses, transitional facilities and importers – shows an apple with the physical damage that the BMSB have on fruit.

The channels being used are: online, magazines, at international airports, and posters distributed to transitional facilities, orchards, and garden centres. To give it additional emphasis, Ruud 'the bug man' Kleinpaste will be BMSB specialist in social media and on TVNZ and TV3 onDemand video services.

This campaign backs up the recent MoU between HortNZ and KVH to help protect the kiwifruit industry from unwanted pests and diseases by streamlining resources and KVH and Zespri taking part in a simulation exercise readiness and response biosecurity exercise.

Remember, if you think you've seen a BMSB: catch it, take a photo and call pest hotline 0800 80 99 66. For more info: www.mpi.govt.nz/stinkbug

Myrtle Rust Reminder

MPI continues to remind gardeners that if they have recently bought myrtle species plants – for example, pōhutukawa, ramarama, mānuka, Lilly Pilly, feijoa – they should check these plants for any signs of the disease.

Everyone is encouraged to keep an eye out for signs of myrtle rust. It appears as bright yellow/orange powdery patches on leaves of myrtle plants. Affected leaves may buckle or die off. You will find more information on MPI's website and PDFs you can download and print out.

If you think you've seen myrtle rust, don't touch it or try to take a sample. Instead, take a photo, including of the affected plant, and contact MPI on 0800 80 99 66.

Upcoming events

NZ Grain and Seed Conference
18-20 October, Wellington

Transforming Biodiversity Conference
14–16 November, Napier

Canterbury A&P Show
15-17 November, Christchurch

3rd B3 Conference 2018
Tentative dates 7-8 May 2018, Te Papa, Wellington

Pass it on

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We'd love to hear from you

If you've got any stories or updates you'd like to share in our next issue, please **email us**. Although the newsletter is published by MPI, it's a collaborative effort.

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