



**PATHWAY ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR MEXICAN
LIMES FROM NEW CALEDONIA**

6 August – 11 August 2013



Fresh Produce Imports Team
Plants, Food and Environment Directorate
Standards Branch



Contents

Page

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
PATHWAY ASSESSMENT	2
Background	2
Entry Meeting	3
Orchard Visit	3
Pack House Review and Findings	4
Exit Meeting	5
Appendix 1 - MPI Itinerary	Error! Bookmark not defined.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the visit was to assess the pathway for the import of Mexican limes (*Citrus aurantiifolia*) for consumption from New Caledonia, to assist MPI's development of the import health standard (IHS) and appropriate phytosanitary measures. The visit was hosted by SIVAP-DAVAR, Chamber of Agriculture¹, Arbofruits² and the exporter [REDACTED]. The visit included a field visit to a Mexican lime orchard and a visit to the exporter's pack house. A number of commodities including Tahitian lime (*Citrus latifolia*) are successfully imported into New Zealand from New Caledonia under an IHS with few if any issues. From the exit meeting, there were a number of actions noted for the; grower; Arbofruits; The Chamber of Agriculture and SIVAP-DAVAR. These are outlined in the travel report below.

PATHWAY ASSESSMENT

BACKGROUND

The Fresh Produce Imports Team is currently progressing work on New Caledonia's market access request for Mexican limes to New Zealand. Some of the significant pests of concern to New Zealand are ;*Bactrocera curvipennis*, *Bactrocera psidii*, *Bactrocera tryoni*, *Bactrocera umbrosa*, *Dirioxa pornia*, *Ceroplastes rubens*, *Eutetranychus banksi*, *Thrips palmi* and *Wasmannia auropunctata*.

The purpose of the visit was to gain an in-depth understanding of New Caledonia's phytosanitary export system for other commodities similar to Mexican limes (e.g. Tahitian limes) and to gather information on the pest management practices currently implemented for Mexican limes.

¹ [REDACTED]



ENTRY MEETING

A brief meeting was held with SIVAP-DAVAR [REDACTED]

The Chamber of Agriculture ([REDACTED])

Arbofruits [REDACTED] the Institute Agronomique Neo-Caledonia [REDACTED] and the exporter ([REDACTED]). The meeting outlined that the purpose of the visit was to gain an in-depth understanding of New Caledonia's phytosanitary export system for other comparable commodities (e.g. Tahitian lime) and to gather information on the pest management practices currently implemented for Mexican limes.

ORCHARD VISIT

MPI officials visited one Mexican lime grower, [REDACTED], in Pouembout, New Caledonia. The grower operates a 100 mixed tree orchard, which includes two rows of Mexican limes and two rows of Tahitian limes. The grower operates an adjacent packhouse facility. During packing the grower sorts lime fruits for domestic and/or export markets based on colour and quality. In-field pest management comprises fruit fly male annihilation traps, monthly summer oil spray applications, weed control, glue around the base of the plants to prevent ants colonising trees. Over ripe fruit or infested fruit are removed from the orchard and disposed of in an adjacent field. Arbofruits is responsible for ensuring growers are sufficiently trained in implementing the spray programme and keeping and maintaining spray records.

Issue	Recommendation
Grower was disposing of over ripe fruit or infested fruit in an adjacent field	SIVAP-DAVAR and their official representative were advised that discarded fruit needed to be burnt or buried to minimise pest species habitat.
Grower supplies both Tahitian and Mexican limes to the pack house. At times documentation only referred to "lime" MPI clarified that documentation would need to specify the species of lime was being exported in case a trace back investigation was required.	Grower to ensure documentation specifies whether produce is Mexican or Tahitian limes and includes the botanical species name.
The grower was able to show MPI the "The obligatory treatment programme for green Tahitian limes intended for export to Australia and New Zealand." This programme captures the sprays growers must apply and the time of year these need to be applied. When questioned on how the grower was trained Arbofruit informed MPI that they were SIVAP-DAVAR's official representatives and were responsible for training. A new training scheme has been implemented in 2013, with the Arbofruits inspectors being trained in the initial launch of the scheme. It is Arbofruits intention to roll out training for the growers in 2013-2014.	Arbofruit to ensure growers are sufficiently trained in implementing the spray programme and keeping and maintaining spray records.



It was noted that the growers spray diary was not being signed and stamped by Arbofruit following verification. MPI clarified that a signature and stamp were needed to show that the spray diary had been verified by the appropriate authority.	Arbofruit to ensure they sign and stamp the treatment application record
The grower had a mandarin tree in the middle of the Mexican lime row. Mexican limes are accepted as a conditional non-host, mandarins are regarded as a host.	It was recommended that the grower is either to remove the tree or utilise the tree as rootstock for grafting Mexican lime. SIVAP-DAVAR and Arbofruit to oversee this recommendation. Orchards with conditional non-hosts and host species in a single row are not eligible for export registration.
Because the orchard registering for exports is a mixed orchard, MPI has specified mixed orchards will implement male fruit fly annihilation systems under the supervision of SIVAP-DAVAR or under the official supervision of an approved SIVAP-DAVAR representative.	SIVAP-DAVAR or an approved official SIVAP-DAVAR representative to ensure the implementation of a male fruit fly annihilation system for non-host/host mixed orchards, including male fruit fly annihilation trapping in the field and in the surrounding wind breaks.
Currently the system for determining weight differs between the orchard packhouse and the export packhouse. This was leading to weight discrepancies in the documentation.	Growers and exporters to standardise a weighing system, to ensure traceability if a trace back investigation was needed.

PACK HOUSE REVIEW AND FINDINGS

The exporter's pack house was a clean and well maintained facility for produce destined for New Zealand distribution and other markets. The facility maintains and provides all records concerning facility hygiene, product traceability, insecticide treatments etc. to a high standard. The pest inspection area was well lit with a lamp above the desk and a magnification lamp fixed to the desk. The facility also provided an insect-proof room as well as two cool stores. Limes (Tahitian and Mexican) destined for New Zealand are packed in closed, new cardboard boxes.

Issue	Recommendation
Currently the system for determining weight differs between the orchard packhouse and the export packhouse. This was leading to weight discrepancies in the documentation.	Growers and exporters to standardise a weighing system, to ensure traceability if a trace back investigation was needed.
There were no pest identification posters, documents, books etc at the pest inspection area at the packhouse.	SIVAP-DAVAR to provide the exporter/or oversee the creation of identification material/posters of pests of concern at the pest inspection area.



EXIT MEETING

MPI presentation on New Zealand's import process was provided to SIVAP-DAVAR [REDACTED] [REDACTED] – [REDACTED] [REDACTED] The Chamber of Agriculture [REDACTED] Arbofruits [REDACTED] and the Institute Agronomique Neo-Caledonia [REDACTED] MPI was able to address a number of questions SIVAP-DAVAR had and provided background information on how market access requests were prioritised and the information New Zealand considers during pathway assessments and during the creation of import health standards.

Following the presentation a meeting was held with SIVAP-DAVAR [REDACTED] [REDACTED], The Chamber of Agriculture [REDACTED] Arbofruits [REDACTED] the Institute Agronomique Neo-Caledonia [REDACTED] and the exporter [REDACTED] The meeting outlined MPI's recommendations for the grower, pack house and specifically for SIVAP-DAVAR. No major issues, concerns were raised by SIVAP-DAVAR, Chamber of Agriculture.

Issue	Recommendation
There is a comprehensive treatment schedule poster and mature green Tahitian lime poster. SIVAP-DAVAR indicated they will create similar posters for Mexican limes. SIVAP-DAVAR did mention that it is currently in the process of reviewing their Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) and indicated that it was likely the Tahitian treatment schedule could be amended. SIVAP-DAVAR also indicated it would want to align the Mexican lime treatment with the reviewed MRLs.	SIVAP-DAVAR to create a treatment schedule and mature green Mexican lime poster similar to the current one for Tahitian limes
There were no pest identification posters, documents, books etc at the packhouse.	SIVAP-DAVAR to provide the exporter/or oversee the creation of identification material/posters of pests of concern at the pest inspection area.