



NZ Plant Producers Inc. submission on the MPI Risk Management proposal: Amendments to Vitis import health standard.

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Submitted by:
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Introduction:

New Zealand Plant Producers Incorporated (NZPPI) is the peak industry body for the businesses that propagate and grow plant for forests, ecology, food, wines and amenity plantings. Plant production is also referred to as 'nursery' production.

Our members produce the plants that the grow food that Kiwis eat and export, that regenerate New Zealand's forests, beautify our urban landscapes and are planted by millions of Kiwis in their backyard.

Our industry underpins the success of New Zealand's thriving primary industries, including forestry, horticulture, viticulture and farming.

Employing approximately 4000 people, New Zealand's, the plant production sector has experienced rapid growth over the past 5 years, driven by growth in the plant-based sectors: horticulture, wine and forestry and the demand for greenlife (landscape, amenity) and native plants.

This growth is set to continue as markets and government policies drive a shift in our primary industries, to higher value and highly sustainable production systems, which include more horticulture and forests.

The plant production sector is critical in producing forestry and native seedlings to meet the Government's target to plant one billion trees by 2028.

Supplying seedlings for riparian plantings, erosion control and carbon sinks will enable the government and the primary sector to achieve its targets for freshwater quality, climate change and biodiversity.

Our sector is a success story in regional New Zealand and is growing rapidly, providing high skill jobs and career opportunities in the areas that need it the most.

Our sector is worth an estimated \$500 million per annum.

Submission:

NZ Plant Producers appreciates the chance to provide feedback on the proposal to amend the *Vitis* import health standards:

1. Addition of 3 viruses to the regulated pest list for Vitis imports

NZ Plant Producers supports the addition of 3 viruses to the pest list, to be regulated by PCR during post-entry quarantine.

2. Removal of the option to import Vitis plants sourced from mother plants grown in open-field plantations from offshore MPI-approved facilities.

NZ Plant Producers acknowledges the Offshore Facility Standard excluded material from open-field offshore MPI-approved facilities in November 2019. The proposed amendment aims to create clarity by removing this option from the *Vitis* import health standard.

Most clean-plant *Vitis* cultivars of interest to the New Zealand industry are held in open-field accessions offshore. There are additional risk-management options which could give an equivalent level of assurance. Level 2 PEQ facilities contain and manage the risk of insect-vectored viruses and *Xylella fastidiosa*, for example, and further PCR verification testing could be completed in New Zealand to verify the disease-free status of plant material.

We acknowledge that there are currently no MPI-approved offshore facilities for *Vitis*, however the loss of the Level 2 open-field option means the only viable pathway for importation is into Level 3B PEQ-facilities in New Zealand. We are concerned that the Level 3B option duplicates much of the clean-plant testing which has already been done offshore and space in Level 3B facilities is very limited.

We welcome a future review of the Offshore Facility standard to re-consider the risk of *Vitis* budwood from open-field facilities. We understand that this option would be described in the amended Offshore Facility standard if permitted in future.

ENDS.