

BIOSECURITY NEWS

RESPONSE SUMMARY

Black-grass detection in perennial ryegrass in Canterbury

Seed and Grain Readiness and Response (SGRR), the biosecurity entity for the arable sector, of which SGNZ is a member, is working with fellow cropping industry stakeholders and Biosecurity New Zealand on a response following the detection of black-grass (*Alopecurus myosuroides*) during a pre-export inspection of commercially grown perennial ryegrass from a farm near Timaru in the Canterbury region.

Black-grass is an invasive plant pest of arable crops and establishment in NZ could seriously affect our growers of seed and grain. Further information about black-grass can be found [here](#) or on Environment Canterbury's website available [here](#).

The response group is still working to determine how black-grass got into the affected crop.

The arable industry and Biosecurity New Zealand have previously responded to two black-grass seed finds in 2013 and 2016. Each of those responses resulted in successful eradication. An incursion, detected in a linseed crop in 2021, is on track for eradication.

Next steps

We'd like to remind all members to ensure that any contract growers you work with are familiar with the appearance of black-grass. Early identification is key to effective control and biosecurity. Further photos and information about black-grass can be found [here](#) or on Environment Canterbury's website available [here](#).

If any suspected pests are detected, it is vital they are reported immediately to the Pest and Disease Hotline: 0800 80 99 66.

Any questions can be directed to [Ivan Lawrie](#) or [Ashley Mills](#)



Background on the new detection

The export ryegrass was grown near Timaru using seed from a 1,000 kg batch of perennial ryegrass seed imported from the United States in December 2023.

SGRR and Biosecurity New Zealand are working to confirm whether the contamination is from this imported seed.

Three other farms also sowed the same US ryegrass batch in 2024, but the seed harvests from those properties has so far tested negative for black-grass.

Biosecurity New Zealand has been tracing other seed grown from the imported ryegrass seed and has already locked down any possibly affected seeds.

Work is underway to secure an export market for the dressed seed, which would reduce any risk of domestic spread.

Tracing to date has not determined a link between the current find and previous black-grass responses.

Brown marmorated stink-bug

There have been 38 live BMSB detected since the beginning of the 24/25 BMSB risk season, compared to 111 in the same reporting period last year. April 1st until April 30th saw one live adult detected post-border.

All border and post border detections were followed up by MPI's investigation team to manage any potential risk, confirm no further bugs were present and identify likely entry pathway where possible (i.e. recent travel or imported goods).

Fall Armyworm Management website is now live

To all those interested in maize and sweetcorn crops - please visit the new real-time FAW website www.fallarmyworm.nz . This website has been jointly released by FAR, Vegetable NZ, Process Vegetables NZ & MPI. The website focuses on FAW management in maize and sweetcorn and includes identifying characteristics of fall armyworm, managing chemical resistance and other useful information.

REGULATIONS SUMMARY

EPA's group standard for treated seed

The EPA has extended the assessment period for the proposed group standard for treated seed (APP204733). The new deadline has been extended under section 59 of the HSNO Act. A public hearing will now be held in November 2025, with a decision estimated for December 2025.

An informal meeting with the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) was held on the 19th June 2025 to discuss questions submitted by members concerning the proposed group standard for treated seed (draft standard available [here](#)) and any immediate implications for imported treated seed. A summary of questions has been shared with the EPA.

During the meeting, the EPA advised that the issues raised are still under active consideration. At this point in the process, they cannot provide specific responses.

The EPA is currently evaluating and analysing all submissions received (available [here](#)). Once this review is complete, an EPA staff assessment report will be made publicly available on the EPA website and shared with submitters. A hearing is anticipated in November 2025.

We will continue to keep members informed as further updates become available. If you have any additional questions or require clarification regarding the treated seed group standard, please email [Cressida Patrick](#)

Ministry for the Environment's Proposed product stewardship regulations for bags, agrichemicals and other farm plastics

The Ministry for the Environment sought feedback on proposed regulations to enable a national take-back recycling scheme for various farm waste products including small plastic bags (<40kg) and bulk woven polypropylene bags (>40kg). These bags are typically used for seed, feed, fertilisers, soil and other farm inputs. MFE consulted on two options to simplify and increase access to the take-back services and product stewardship.

Option 1: Introduce Waste Management Act regulations.

This option supported the accredited scheme for the in-scope products. This included small plastic bags and large polypropylene bags. The proposed fee rate per bag was \$0.20 for small bags and \$3.58 for large bags.

Option 2: No action (maintain the voluntary approach – Agrecovery/Plasback). No regulations would be made. The current schemes would continue with voluntary stewardship of agrichemical containers and other farm plastics including bale wrap, but continued provision of services could not be assured.

In a combined submission SGNZ and the New Zealand Seed Processors Association (NZSPA) supported Option 2 of the proposal (Status quo). Further information on the consultation can be found [here](#). Our submission is available [here](#).

Chlorpyrifos update

New Zealand's Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) is currently reassessing chlorpyrifos due to new information about its human health and environmental risks. The EPA expects to publicly notify the decision by 10th July 2025.

Separately from this on the 2nd of May the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Stockholm Convention adopted the decision to list chlorpyrifos in Annex A of the Convention with time-limited specific exemptions, thus agreeing to the global elimination of uses of chlorpyrifos. Once the Convention's decision is published, New Zealand, as a signatory party will implement the decision through an amendment of schedule 2A of New Zealand's HSNO Act and a prohibition on manufacture, import and use of chlorpyrifos after a transition period will come into effect.

Glyphosate in crops

New Zealand's Food Safety Authority has proposed an increase in the default MRL for glyphosate from 0.1 mg/kg to 10 mg/kg in cereals (wheat, barley and oat) and 6 mg/kg in dry field peas. SGNZ has not been actively involved with MPI's glyphosate review and did not submit on the proposed changes. The international Codex MRLs for glyphosate are 30 mg/kg (wheat, barley and oat) and 10 mg/kg for dry peas.

Gene Tech Bill

The Gene Tech Bill was proposed in December 2024. The Bill is aimed at establishing a new risk-based regulatory framework for gene tech & GMOs that is risk proportionate. The Bill seeks to modernise existing GMO legislation, enable innovation and support gene technology development. The Bill is currently before the Health Committee of NZ Parliament. The committee's report is anticipated to be the 31st July.

Young Radicles – takeaway points on GM use in global agriculture

The Young Radicles hosted a webinar featuring John Caradus on genetic modification (GM) in forage crops for the future. With a great turnout of 21 participants, the presentation outlined current technologies, potential applications, regulatory issues, and the broader context of GM use in global agriculture. These are some of the takeaways from the webinar.

NZ's gene technology laws are being reassessed taking into consideration the positive and negative effects this will have on our country. This change in law would only open the regulated GM methods, unregulated GM methods have been happening since the 1900's. GM crops are widely used globally, particularly for animal feed, but the use in New Zealand remains limited due to regulatory constraints.

Some modified forage crops under development in NZ aim to support lower methane emissions, nitrogen efficiency, and animal health. Consumer views and market expectations play a significant role in shaping policy and adoption, with varying levels of acceptance worldwide. The concept of co-existence managing GM and non-GM systems side by side is being used in countries like Australia and could inform NZ approaches.

Biosecurity act review

In 2024 MPI reviewed the Biosecurity Act with the intent of modernising the biosecurity law. The proposals were grouped into six topics including system-wide issues, funding and compensation, border and imports, readiness and response, long-term management and legislative interfaces.

SGNZ submitted comments on all of the proposals. In March 2025 MPI released its review of submissions. MPI are now analysing, revising and reviewing all proposals. Some proposals may be halted, and details of others may change based on feedback received.

Once complete, the revised proposals will go to the Minister for Biosecurity (Hon Andrew Hoggard) for review and approval prior to any policy being developed. Next steps will continue throughout 2025.

Contact Sarah or Cressida
if you have any questions
on any of the above.



Sarah Clark



Cressida Patrick

Events

Secure your registration for this year's **annual conference** in conjunction with the Australian Seed Federation 25th – 28th August.

- Monday 25th August: Seed Business Challenge
- Tuesday 26th August: Genetech Workshop; Business Group meetings, Annual General Meeting; Welcome Cocktail Function
- Wednesday 27th August: Guest Speakers, Gala Dinner & Entertainment
- Thursday 28th August: Field Tours

Thanks to overwhelming support, sponsorship and exhibitor packages for Seed Business 2025 have sold out!

Still interested in supporting Seed Business 2025? Convention Supporter packages are still available, which include:

- Quarter page ad in the convention handbook
- Digital branding on the convention website, social media promotion and throughout the convention
- Acknowledgement in the printed and digital convention
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[Click here to register:](#)

[Book accommodation here](#)

Short Seed Course: Advanced Course Christchurch October 2025

The Advanced Short Seed Course that was to be in Christchurch 10th – 11th June, Templeton, Christchurch was postponed due to low registrations.

The course will now be held **21st – 22nd October 2025**. However, there must be a minimum number of registrations for the course to go ahead in October. You can register here:

[Click here to register](#)

SGNZ Contact Details

President: [Charlotte Connoley](#)

Vice President: [Edward Luisetti](#)

Business Group Chairs

Forage & Turf Business Group: [Hugh McDonald](#)

Grains & Pulses Business Group: [Edward Luisetti](#)

Vegetable Seed Business Group: [Jo Townshend](#)

Services to Seed Business Group: [Steve Pugh](#)

General Councillors

[Tom Sherratt](#)

[Stephen Bennett](#)

Chief Executive: [Sarah Clark](#)

Biosecurity & Technical Manager: [Cressida Patrick](#)

Operations & Event Manager: [Sharon Dawe](#)

Meeting Schedule of SGNZ Executive Council

- Tuesday 22 July 2025 - Wellington

[If you have any matters to raise with the Executive Council, please contact Sarah Clark](#)