

NZGSTA Newsletter May.June 2020



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COVID 19 - Update

Almost two months on from the Government response to COV-19 and associated lockdowns, we are currently sitting at ALERT LEVEL 2.

Reflecting over the past several weeks we are pleased that the Government recognised plant breeding, seed production and its supply chain as essential businesses.

Without a doubt, the seed trade continues to be essential for NZ food and nutrition security and our long term economic prosperity.

From the Association's perspective we understand the domestic movement and international shipments of seed are secure. There have been little or no difficulties in importing seed or difficulties in seed production and processing. There has been some disruption to seed company staff being unable to attend to field trials however these activities have been largely caught up.

Other sectors have indicated that finding freight, clearing customs, obtaining export and import permits, getting phytosanitary certificates, have been challenging.

We want to hear from members, so please let the Association know of any impacts to your business and how we can best support you at this time.

Finally, industry members are to be commended for their resilience during the pandemic and as we transition into the new response phase we must remember the ongoing importance of isolation distances, maintaining hygiene practices, keeping records for contact tracing and above-all keeping our staff and customers safe.

Plant Variety Rights Act Reform - Update

Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) has advised that prior to the COVID-19 pandemic work towards drafting the Plant Variety Rights Amendment Bill had commenced however, there remain a number of issues for inclusion in the Bill that they will need to further consider and consult on. Most

notable will be the recommendations from the Waitangi Tribunal. In addition, further consultation on administrative/operational issues relating to the PVR Office will also be necessary.

Because of the current COVID-19 response, MBIE has advised that will be delaying further consultations until later this year. At this stage, they do not anticipate this will impact the overall timeline for the implementation of the new legislation which is to come into effect on 1 December 2021.

FAR Maize Levy Order

The Foundation for Arable Research (FAR) has advised that the Maize commodity levy for 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 will be \$1.00 per 10,000 seeds (unchanged from the previous year).

ISF Congress CANCELLED



The ISF World Seed Congress 2020 in South Africa, planned for June, has been postponed due to the COVID-19 public health crisis.

AIMI Cereal Report



The latest Arable Industry Marketing Initiative (AIMI) survey reporting the estimated size of the 2020 NZ harvest of the 6 key cereal crops as at April 1, 2020, found:

- **Milling wheat:** Total tonnage of 109,200t was up 31% compared to last year's harvest 83,100t
- **Feed wheat:** Total tonnage 371,300 t was up 18% compared to 315,600 t
- **Feed barley:** Total tonnage 285,200 t was down 6% compared to 301,800 t
- **Malting barley:** Total tonnage of 87,200 t was up by 25% compared to 69,700t
- **Milling oats:** Total tonnage of 12,600 t was down by 34% compared to 19,250t
- **Feed oats:** Total tonnage of 7,500 t was up by 5% compared to 7,150t

The total crop harvest tonnage in 2020 of 873,000t was up 8.8% compared to 796,000t in 2019.

The total area under crop in 2020 of 98,000h was down 6% compared to 104,000h.

MPI Consultation: Apiaceae Seed

Late last month MPI advised that they intend to remove the Apiaceae schedule from the Import Health Standard - Seed for sowing (IHS) because there was insufficient evidence that seed to seedling transmission of 'Candidatus *Liberibacter solanacearum*' occurs in species of Apiaceae.

The Association is fully supportive of this move as it means importers will no longer be required to re-clean or reship contaminated seed lots.

Industry members have until 28 May to provide feedback to MPI.

MPI Emergency Measures: Eggplant Seed

On 31 March MPI implemented emergency import measures to address the potato spindle tuber viroid (PSTVd) an unwanted pathogen detected on imported *Solanum melongena* (eggplant) seed.

The measures follows multiple detections of PSTVd on imported *Solanum melongena* (eggplant) seed lots from different countries of origin that were tested onshore. The urgent measures involve an amendment to the Import Health Standard 155.02.05 Seeds for Sowing (IHS).

The amendment involves a change of import requirements in *Solanum melongena* seed. The import specification has now been changed on MPI's Plants Biosecurity Index (PBI) from 'Basic' to 'see 155.02.05 under Solanum'. Therefore *S. melongena* seed being imported into New Zealand will now require a phytosanitary certificate with additional declarations as per the *Solanum* schedule of the IHS.

IHS Amendments

MPI advises that there are amendments to the Import Health Standard (IHS) 155.02.05: Seeds for sowing concerning the:

- Adoption of hot water treatment performed onshore at an MPI-approved facility as a phytosanitary measure for regulated bacteria on *Apiaceae* and *Cannabis sativa* seeds for sowing.
- Adoption of molecular testing as an offshore phytosanitary measure for *Tomato brown rugose fruit virus* on *Capsicum* and *Solanum lycopersicum* seeds for sowing.
- Addition of an option for importers to provide a non-GMO declaration to meet the genetically modified (GM) requirements for *Petunia* seeds for sowing.
- Removal of requirement for 'appropriate common name' to be specified

on phytosanitary certificates for *Petunia* seeds for sowing.

Budget 2020

In last week's Budget 2020 announcements the Government allocated some new funding to assist the plants industry.

Specifically, funding for MPI was earmarked to increase their capacity in:

- Risk assessment with "increased staff" and "speeding up delivery of" Import Health Standards development; and
- Accelerate the design and business case development of a new Plant Health diagnostic laboratory and Level 3 Post-Entry Quarantine facility.

MPI says these combined developments will speed up the safe importation of new plant germplasm and breeding material and allow access to more high-value products and markets.

Maize Hybrid Trials – FAR Withdrawal

The Foundation for Arable research (FAR) has advised that it is withdrawing from the Maize Performance Trials (MPT) from the close of this season.

FAR says their decision was based on feedback from grower surveys conducted prior to Xmas and their Board's view that a focus on environmental research would provide greater benefits to their levy paying growers.

The results booklet for the 2019/2020 season will be available from the end of June.

Arable Sector joins GIA



The arable industry, through the Seed Grain Readiness and Response (SGRR) entity became the latest primary sector to take a proactive stance protecting its valuable industry from pests and diseases by joining the GIA biosecurity partnership by signing the GIA Deed on Thursday 25 March 2020.

Being party to the GIA means the sector has agreed to work with Government, and each other, to deal with pests or pathogens specific to our industry sector

The SGRR members include: Federated Farmers Arable, Foundation for Arable Research, Flour Millers Association, United Wheat Growers and the NZ Grain & Seed Trade Association.

SCIS Development Update

The first stage (Investigation, design and planning) of the SCIS project has now been completed and now work is underway with stage two (Delivery / build) by Provoke Solutions to develop the new Seed Certification Information System for the New Zealand Seed Industry. The first round of development work is expected to take about 14 weeks and will be completed in early August. There has been a fairly intensive period of meetings between the NZSA project team and Provoke Solutions to get the initial design work agreed and finalised so that development could begin as per schedule. Evan Johnston is co ordinating the user acceptance testing of the SCIS as it is being developed so he will be inviting industry experts to participate in this testing in the months to come. Concurrent to this work, the NZSA is also preparing a paper for the Ministry of Primary Industries on proposed policy settings for official certification processes and identifying to MPI how verification can be provided at every critical step. Industry engagement and consensus will be critical in applying the proposed policy settings so a round of regional consultation workshops is being planned in August.

Your NZGSTA representatives involved in this project are Evan Johnston and George Gerard and you are welcome to contact them about the SCIS project.

NZGSTA Grain & Pulses Forum

Due to the ongoing uncertainty regarding restrictions as part of the government's response to Covid-19, the NZGSTA Executive Council has agreed to CANCEL this year's Grains & Pulses forum.

NZGSTA Conference October 2020 – Queenstown



The NZGSTA Executive Council has confirmed that the 2020 Annual conference will take place in Queenstown from 21 to 22 October, as planned.

At the Crowne Plaza (directly opposite the steamer wharf), we will have excellent meeting facilities and a stimulating conference atmosphere in this fabulous high country lakes location.

We will start proceedings off with our section meetings and you will get the latest information on specific technical issues and relevant policy subjects. As usual, our Conference plenary sessions will feature high-level keynote speakers who will address topical priorities for the seed sector.

We hope that you will join us again at our key event for the NZ seed sector. You can reserve your place and register via the Conference website at:

<https://www.nzgsta.co.nz/nzgsta-conference-2020/> which will be available from 2nd June 2020. WE WILL SEND THROUGH A REMINDER TO YOU.

Industry News

PGG Wrightson Seeds has announced the expansion of its seed processing operations in the Wairarapa. The company has entered into a long-term agreement to lease the site and equipment from property owners Masterton Vegetable Seeds. It will be recalled that MVS was forced to suspend its operations in December 2018 following the implementation of a three year pea-growing ban, due to the detection of the Pea Weevil pest.

New Member - Proseed Processing Ltd



The Association is the national trade body comprising around 80 member companies. Its members are involved in a range of activities including: research and development, seed production, seed multiplication, seed processing and sales and marketing.

The Association is working to foster the best business environment for our grain and seed industry members and is pleased to announce the following company has applied to join the NZGSTA.

All members are being notified of this application here through this newsletter. If you have any reason as to why Proceed Processing should not be a member please contact us now.

Seeds of Success - a History of the Association



"Seeds of Success" (now discounted) – a history of the Association written by Dave McKinnon is available for purchase from the Association.

You can place orders on the [NZGSTA site](#) from \$20.00 per book.
The book is ideal as a gift to domestic and overseas customers, and for anyone interested in the history of the trade.

[Meeting Schedule of NZGSTA Executive Council for 2020](#)

to be held at the Seed Industry Office unless otherwise stated:

- 9am, 21 July 2020 tbc
- 9am, 20 Oct 2020 tbc

Please advise Thomas Chin of any matters you wish to have discussed at a meeting.

Phone: 03 349 8430

Email: thomas.chin@seedindustry.co.nz

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

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