

Report to Forest Biosecurity Consultative Committee

Update on Current Biosecurity New Zealand Forest-related Surveillance and Incursion Response Activities for meeting 18 October 2006

PAINTED APPLE MOTH and FALL WEBWORM, AUCKLAND (Eradication)

- PAM and Fall Webworm were declared eradicated on 20 March 2006.
- All traps in West Auckland have been removed.
- Surveillance targeted around recent moth captures in South Auckland continues until April 2007. This is a precautionary measure.

DUTCH ELM DISEASE, AUCKLAND (Disease Management programme)

- BNZ and currently affected TLAs implemented an interim Dutch elm disease (DED) management programme in 2005/06, pending decisions on national pest management priorities. The objectives of the 2005/06 programme were to control the disease impacts in greater Auckland and to prevent or stop the spread of the disease.
- While BNZ has committed to continue baseline funding in 2006/07, an additional funding commitment is required to maintain the current level of operations.
- BNZ has asked Regional Councils throughout New Zealand to assist with identifying all potentially affected TLA's so that the full range of options and implications are clearly communicated, opportunities identified, and informed decisions on involvement, including funding, made for the 2006/07 year.
- BNZ is currently running consultations with TLAs affected and potentially affected in order to secure sufficient funds for implementation of the DED control operations in 2006/07, while national pest management priorities are being assessed.
- It is important that all Regional Councils and TLA's, both currently affected and potentially affected, are clear about what the risks to their tree asset base are if the DED programme in the 2006/07 year is (a) continued in its current form; or (b) run with reduced field operations; or (c) not continued at all.

GUM LEAF SKELETONISER (Transition to pest management)

- As of 1 July 2007 MAF management of the programme has been transitioned to members of the GLS Stakeholder Advisory Group.
- Information on GLS can be found on the Biosecurity New Zealand website, via the Gumleaf Skeletoniser information booklet and through various written articles.
- Biological control research continues. Funding to continue this research through to completion is still being sought.
- GLS moths have been trapped in Katikati and Warkworth.

SUBTERRANEAN TERMITES NELSON

- A colony of Australian subterranean termites, *Coptotermes acinaciformis*, was reported in late January 2006 from a single property in Richmond, Nelson.
- A delimiting survey has been completed and activity appears confined to two neighbouring properties.
- The main response to the termites is implementation of the Sentricon bait system – this was successfully used at Otorohanga and is one of the main methods used internationally for eliminating subterranean termites.
- After going through an application process MAF has been provided with approval from ERMA to use the active ingredient hexaflumuron, which is the bait used in Sentricon.
- In May 2006 Sentricon bait stations were placed at the two properties where termite activity is present.
- In late June additional bait stations were installed at four neighbouring properties. This was on advice from a number of termite experts. The purpose being to provide reassurance that the termites are confined to two properties and to enhance surveillance.
- The bait stations have been inspected three times.
- The last inspection was on 10/11 October and active termite feeding was found in three bait stations. The amount of bait consumed by the termites would be sufficient to eliminate the colony over a 12 week period.
- A delimiting survey and further inspection of bait stations will be carried out in late November.

RED IMPORTED FIRE ANT - WHIRINAKI

- On June 7th 2006 *Solenopsis invicta* (Red Imported Fire Ant – RIFA) was identified from Pan Pac Forest Products Ltd, Whirinaki. The nest was thoroughly treated with an insecticide drench and toxic ant bait on June 9th.
- The nest has been estimated to be approximately two to three years old with the potential for some dispersal flights to have occurred.
- This form of RIFA is more likely to disperse by walking short distances rather than flying but is also capable of human-assisted dispersal. We are taking measures through surveillance, movement control and tracing to cover all three possibilities.
- Before winter surveillance was carried out to 200 m from the nest site, and at some additional high risk sites beyond 200 m, with no further RIFA nests found.
- A Controlled Area has been declared out to a 2 km radius from the nest site with restrictions on the movement of all risk goods for RIFA spread including soil, gravel, hay and goods that have been in contact with the ground for more than 24 hours (except operational cars).
- The RIFA Technical Advisory Group was reconvened in September to provide independent advice to the CTO on the proposed plan.
- Tracing has enabled identification of further sites for surveillance.
- Ground based attractant surveillance out to a 2 km radius from the nest will begin shortly as temperatures reach suitable levels.
- Baiting with insect growth regulator baits and toxic bait is planned for high risk areas that are inaccessible for attractant surveillance.
- A Cabinet paper will be submitted at the end of the month to seek funding for a full three year eradication programme for RIFA at Whirinaki.

This is the third detection of a RIFA colony in New Zealand, both previous finds were eradicated. Genetic analysis has confirmed that the Whirinaki colony is unrelated to the previous incursion at Port of Napier in 2004.

PHYTOPHTHORA KERNOVIAE (Update to presentation 6 July 2006)

- Soil samples collected from 75 sites in the *Pinus radiata* forest surrounding Tokoroa, based on information contained in a MSc thesis from the 1970s, have revealed that *P. kernoviae* is present at 16 sites and may be present at a further 12 sites.
- Experimental work undertaken by ENSIS at Rotorua has concluded that the *Phytophthora* observed in the 2006 study at Tokoroa is the same as the “Tokoroa” *Phytophthora* described in the 1970 MSc thesis of McAlonan.
- The results obtained from the Tokoroa survey indicate that *P. kernoviae* has a north to south distribution of approximately 20 km.
- Roots of Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) were not shown to be a host of *Phytophthora* “Tokoroa” (McAlonan thesis).
- *Phytophthora* “Tokoroa” was only “mildly pathogenic on the roots of *P. radiata* and was considerably less pathogenic than either *P. cinnamomi* or *P. citricola* at conditions that were optimal for *Phytophthora* “Tokoroa” (McAlonan, 1970).
- Notification of this detection will appear in issue 71 of Biosecurity Magazine.

SUMMARY

- *Phytophthora kernoviae* has only been recorded from one species of plant in New Zealand; cherimoya (*Annona cherimola*).
- *P. kernoviae* has been detected at 3 sites in Northland. One of these sites was detected as a result of tracing activity surrounding the distribution of cherimoya plant material. No detections of *P. kernoviae* were made associated with cherimoya either at the original nursery (Kaitaia) or at the Whangarei site.
- *P. kernoviae* has been detected at 16 sites in *Pinus* forest near Tokoroa. No symptoms were observed on any plants at the sites (75) examined.
- No reports of disease, consistent with symptoms described by McAlonan, have been observed in *Pinus* nursery stock, and no symptoms have been observed on other *Pinus radiata* plants.
- *Phytophthora kernoviae* has not been isolated from lesions associated with kauri die-back.

Phyllosticta abietis

- Detected during HRSS.
- Eastwood arboretum – Gisborne.
- Fungus – host of *Cedrus atlantica* (Atlas Cedar). Also, Douglas fir.
- Identified – May 2006.
- Associated with premature casting of needles.

- Minor significance on host.
- Wood is not a carrier.
- No concerns form trading partners.
- Surveys will be carried out during HRSS to monitor any changes to host species (incl D. fir) in the vicinity of the find.