

Pests and Biosecurity on the Chatham Islands



Importing plants to the Chathams?



chatham islands council



What you need to know ...

The Chatham Islands environment is unique and beautiful and the economy is highly dependent on farming and fishing. The Chatham Islands are free of many pests and diseases which cause economic and environmental problems on mainland New Zealand.

The importance of biosecurity

Living in a unique environment like the Chatham Islands brings many challenges and rewards. The Chatham Islands have a Pest Management Strategy to help protect the unique environment and economy from unwanted pests and diseases.

Plants used for gardens shelterbelts and woodlots have the potential to bring unwanted diseases or become pests themselves.

Pest plants

Over 75% of New Zealand's weeds were originally introduced as garden plants. These introductions now cost farmers, growers and foresters millions of dollars every year in herbicides and lost production. They can also threaten the long-term survival of some native animals by changing or destroying habitats.

Many common garden plants could potentially become weeds on the Chatham Islands and it is not always easy to know what species could pose a risk.

Contact Alison Turner, the Chatham Islands Biosecurity Officer, if you are unsure about a plants pest status.

Alternatively a list of potential weeds can be viewed in the Chatham Islands Pest Management Strategy available on Chatham Islands Council website cic.govt.co.nz

Plants carrying unwanted pests and diseases

It is difficult to manage pest insects and plant disease once they arrive, so it's important for us to take care to prevent them establishing in the first place. Many plants (both native and exotic) in other parts of New Zealand carry unwanted diseases and insects or harbour pests in the growing media (soil, bark, potting mix).

For more information please contact the Biosecurity Officers on 03 305 0033
or email info@chathamislands.govt.nz



Other plant risks to consider

Of the 320 indigenous plants on the Chathams at least 29 species are found nowhere else in the world.

Even species which are native to other areas of New Zealand have the potential to become weeds or interbreed with endemic Chatham Islands species.

When possible choose locally grown native plants.

What can you do?

One of the best ways to reduce the risk of transporting plant pests to the Chathams is to purchase from an approved commercial nursery who is part of the C.I surveillance programme. Please contact the Chatham Islands Biosecurity Inspector for the details of which nurseries are approved in the North and South Islands. Should you choose to get a plant from another source such as a garden, please choose only healthy specimens which are free from disease and insect attack.

If in any doubt about the pest status or health of any plants please contact the Chatham Islands Biosecurity Officer.

Check the soil

The soil around your plant may also carry unwanted insects and organisms.

The best way to avoid soil contamination is to purchase from a credible commercial nursery rather than source your plants through private contacts.

Should it be advantageous to dig up a plant from its natural environment please choose only healthy specimens which are free from disease or insect attack and ensure they are treated and or shipped bare-rooted.

For more information please contact the Biosecurity Officers on 03 305 0033 or email info@chathamislands.govt.nz