

Pests and Biosecurity on the Chatham Islands



Importing bulk building and gardening supplies to the Chathams?



The importance of biosecurity

The Chatham Islands has a Pest Management Strategy to help protect the unique environment and economy from unwanted pests and diseases.

The construction of fences, buildings, roads and landscaping on the Chathams often requires that bulk materials are imported. These have the potential to bring in unwanted pests, diseases and weeds.

What types of pests can be carried in bulk supplies?

Building aggregate, sand and roading chip

The source of this material is usually gravel pits and riverbeds which can have a diverse number of weed species. Broom, gorse, lupin and nodding thistle have been common finds in aggregate destined for the Chathams.

Bark and soil

Soil, bark and compost can contain seeds of a huge number of potential pest plants. One recent study found over 30 different weed species growing on one topsoil stockpile intended for distribution to customers.

Significant agricultural and garden weeds including broom, nodding thistle, convolvulus, twitch and deadly nightshade are common weed seed in topsoil.

Ants and lizards are significant hitchhiker pests in bark, soil and bulk potting mix.

Round wood (fence posts) and rough sawn timber The risk posed by these regular imports to the Chathams is by way of 'hitchhiker' pests. Packs of timber can easily become home to lizards, ants, wasps and rodents while stored either at the timber yard or port awaiting shipping.

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.

For more information please contact the Biosecurity Officers on 03 305 0013 or email Kerri.Moir@ecan.govt.nz and Robin.Seymour@ecan.govt.nz



What can you do?

Aggregate

Order from a supplier that uses a pit quarry rather than riverbed sources. (Currently the only supplier near to a port that meets this requirement is Fulton Hogan, Timaru.)

Bulk Lime ex Napier can be purchased from Hatuma Lime Company Limited, Waipukurau who are part of the approved supplier's surveillance programme.

Screened material like roading chip and sand obtained from beach quarrying operations or that has been washed is a lower risk than building aggregate however hitchhiker pests can still make their way into the bags used for transport.

Soil, bark and bulk potting mix This type of material is considered high-risk in regard to carrying pests. Contact the Chatham Islands Biosecurity Officer if you intend to ship large quantities. A risk assessment of the material can be made well before it is purchased and shipped.

Building supplies

Contact the Chathams Islands Biosecurity Inspector if you intend to purchase timber, posts, battens and other wood products as they can advise you of approved suppliers in the North and South Islands whose sites are inspected to assess and reduce pest risk. One of the key ways you can assist in preventing pest establishment is by being observant when unpacking or using building supplies.

- If you notice any animals, insects or weed seed/ soil contamination, contain it the best you can and contact the Chatham Island Biosecurity Officer.
- After a building or fencing project has been completed keep an eye open for weeds that may have sprouted where imported bulk material was stored, unpacked or used.

If you are in any doubt about import risks or suspect contamination of imported bulk material please contact the Chatham Islands Biosecurity Officer.

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