Proposed Pathway Management Plan for the kiwifruit industry

Consultation document: November – December 2019

Better prepared for the next big biosecurity event

Biosecurity is one of the kiwifruit industry's biggest risks and we must be prepared.

Our biosecurity activities are numerous. They have significantly increased and evolved as we've come to better understand potential risks and their pathways.

We can better manage these with a new Pathway Management Plan that gives you better protection, more value for money, and increased simplicity around rules and regulations.

This document explains what a new Pathway Management Plan is all about, as well as some of the specific changes KVH is proposing so that as an industry we are better prepared and have strengthened biosecurity protection.

Biosecurity affects you – have your say. This is the first of two rounds of consultation; this initial round is an early opportunity for us to hear from you so you can help shape what the new Pathway Management Plan will look like and what it will say (more on this below).

Better protection, more value for money, increased simplicity

A Pathway Management Plan (referred to as the Plan from here on) is a tool under the Biosecurity Act designed for managing pathways of risk.

Instead of focusing on a single pest, like Psa, the proposed Plan focuses on protection against the full range of biosecurity threats to our industry and provides for a consistent and pragmatic approach to managing pathway risks such as young plants, international visitors, high-risk second hand or imported equipment.

The proposed Plan is equivalent to the current Psa-V National Pest Management Plan (NPMP) but is more fit-for-purpose and makes sure all the right settings are in place so that we can detect anything new quickly enough to stop its spread, limit impacts, and aim for eradication.

KVH proposes that the Plan will replace the current Psa-V NPMP as it will retain the important elements needed for Psa protection (e.g. controlling movements of high-risk pathways to the South Island) but also provide much wider benefits.

Pathway plans enable an organisation like KVH to do things like setting clear objectives and rules for the industry and accessing powers needed to effectively manage risks. They designate a management agency responsible for the Plan, which in this case would be KVH.

They also enable the agency to raise funding through a levy if needed, although KVH is not proposing a new levy for this Plan. The intent is that the Plan will be funded with a single levy (the existing Government Industry Agreement Readiness and Response levy), with the Psa-V levy removed and the existing levy adjusted to maintain current KVH funding levels.

What it looks like and how it works

A one-page fact sheet that summarises the proposed Plan is available, or you can read more detail over the following pages. This is not the full proposal (which will be developed and tested in early 2020), but is a view of the proposal goal, objectives, benefits and areas of activity.

What the proposed new Pathway Management Plan for the kiwifruit industry will look like

The goal of the proposed new Plan is that the kiwifruit industry is better prepared for the next biosecurity event through effective pathway management. This is to give the industry the best shot at preventing establishment of new threats; cost-effective elimination; or minimal spread and impacts if elimination is not possible.

There are several objectives of the proposed Plan - they focus on reducing spread, early detection, ability to trace movements and improving our understanding of risks and how to manage these. There are also several proposed measures for the Plan, which are about how it will be put in to action and how it will be effective - they focus on raising biosecurity awareness and improving practices (including through setting clear standards and assurance), surveillance and monitoring, movement controls and treatments, and science application.

OBJECTIVES (the why)

- Detect biosecurity threats on kiwifruit industry pathways early.
- Reduce the spread of biosecurity threats on kiwifruit industry pathways.
- Ensure biosecurity threats can be rapidly traced (back and forward) on kiwifruit industry pathways.
- Improve understanding of kiwifruit industry pathway risks and how they can be cost-effectively managed.

MEASURES (the how)

- Growing awareness of pathway risks and improving risk management practice.
- Applying results of science and research.
- Implementing standards and programmes that include hygiene and traceability requirements.
- Carrying out surveillance, monitoring, and testing.
- Applying movement controls on high-risk goods, including to and from abandoned orchards and areas with wild kiwifruit
- Applying effective treatments to reduce risks.

There are also several potential areas of activity where there are likely to be simplified rules.

ACTIVITIES

- Reporting
- Providing information
- On-orchard biosecurity plans
- General hygiene when leaving and entering orchards
- Movement between the north and south islands
- Young and mature kiwifruit plants (and associated growing media)
- Seeds
- Budwood
- Pollen
- Soil and compost
- Abandoned orchards and wild kiwifruit

- **Reporting** - this is about responsibility and ease of reporting any new potential pathway risks or associated organisms.

- **Providing information** - this is about improving how information is gathered in limited circumstances, such as where it is needed to understand how an organism may have spread.

- **Implementing an on-orchard biosecurity plan** – this would align with the Kiwifruit Growers Biosecurity Guidelines and mean each grower can complete these.

- **Maintaining clean items before entering, and when leaving, orchards** – this would be around best practice for maintaining reasonable hygiene, guided by equivalent protocols that already exist.

- **Safe movement of young and mature kiwifruit plants (and associated growing media), seeds, budwood and pollen –** suppliers of these forms of kiwifruit plant material are guided by a clear and easily usable Kiwifruit Plant Certification Scheme (KPCS) that ensures risk is managed and material is traceable.

- **Safe movement of soil and compost** – management of commercial compost where kiwifruit plant material is used, and it would enable future testing for high-risk organisms across all types of commercial compost.

- **Safe movement of shelter belt species** – this would set clear management expectations for shelter belt species to ensure they do not spread soil pests and pathogens when planted near vines.

- **Increased education for orchard contractors** – this would establish biosecurity training and systems for contractors that relate to staff awareness/training, hygiene and reporting anything unusual/suspect organisms or pathway risks.

- **Managing movement of risk goods when entering or leaving abandoned orchards or areas with wild kiwifruit** – this would be around the control of wild kiwifruit and unmanaged orchards.

- **Managing movement of risk goods between north and south islands** – this would allow for management of any risk goods moving between the north and south islands. This will not only help to maintain area freedom from Psa specifically, but also prevent new and emerging issues, recognising that the Cook Strait is a very defendable boundary.

The following are areas where KVH is considering changes that will strengthen biosecurity protection. These will be enabled by the proposed Plan.

- **Expanding the KPCS** - the proposal is to expand the current KPCS so it covers all types of kiwifruit plant material, including young and mature kiwifruit plants and kiwifruit budwood, seed and pollen. Suppliers of kiwifruit plant material would need to be certified to a standard tailored to each of these pathways.

  A "grow for own use" option would be maintained for growers moving modest volumes of plant material to their own KPINs. The KPCS would become a one-stop-shop that gives growers assurance that biosecurity risks have been effectively and consistently managed before they accept all types of kiwifruit plant material.

- **Robust traceability** – the ability to rapidly and effectively trace movements is critical in any response. Recent cases have highlighted this is an area that needs to be significantly strengthened. The proposal is to include robust traceability within the expanded KPCS (as above) as well as for several other key pathways (compost/soil, young shelter belt plants and international visitors). The intent is to capture traceability information within existing KPCS and GAP systems, which are likely to require some improvements.

- **Biosecurity certification for orchard contractors** – there are a wide range of contractors that regularly move between orchards – both kiwifruit and others. Currently, they must be certified to demonstrate they comply with food safety, occupational health and safety, and labour requirements only. The proposal is to add a biosecurity component to existing certification schemes by creating a new biosecurity module that covers things like staff training, hygiene and reporting suspect organisms. KVH would develop supporting materials such as a short training clip and survey available online.

- **Managing compost** – compost use is growing in the kiwifruit industry and has the potential to spread soil-borne pathogens such as *Phytophthora* species. Management systems would be put in place for compost that includes any kiwifruit plant material. These would also provide for testing for any high-risk kiwifruit pathogens that could be spread through compost. KVH would recognise approved suppliers, so growers have assurance they are applying a safe product.

- **Movement of young shelter belt plants** – Shelter belt species are planted immediately adjacent to kiwifruit vines and have the potential to spread soil pests and pathogens, such as root nematodes and *Phytophthora* species. Requirements would be put in place that align with a new national biosecurity scheme for nurseries (the Plant Production Biosecurity Assurance Scheme). KVH would recognise approved suppliers.

There will be two phases of consultation on what the Plan says (planned for October 2019 and March 2020), how it is funded, and when it comes into effect so that everyone can take part. This is the first phase, which is about testing ideas and getting your early feedback. This will inform development of a full proposal, which we will test in the first half of 2020.

Let KVH know your thoughts on the proposed Plan. Speak to any of the team, send an email to info@kvh.org.nz or phone 0800 665 825. If you would like some guidance on how to provide feedback, consider the questions below and pass your answers on to KVH at info@kvh.org.nz.

Which parts of the proposal make sense to you, or raise questions or concerns? (Please briefly explain these and what will help to address any issues/concerns).

Do you agree the proposed areas to strengthen biosecurity will reduce biosecurity risk, and are there any other areas/opportunities you see? (Please briefly explain why you agree/don't agree).

Which of the proposals require minimal change for you or your organisation (because you are already actively addressing these), and which will require some change and innovation? (Please identify any opportunities you see for innovation).

Where do you see opportunities to align biosecurity requirements with other business as usual practices or systems?

Are there any specific issues or things you want KVH to consider/take into account as details of the Pathway Management Plan proposal are developed?