

Changes to KVH regional boundaries

Q&As: June – July 2018



Frequently asked questions and answers

During the KVH consultation and presentations to growers about proposed changes to KVH boundaries there will be many important questions asked. To make sure this information is made available to all growers and industry, and able to be easily accessed and shared, KVH will record and publish all questions and answers.

Why are you proposing the changes?

Current regional boundaries were set up when the National Pest Management Plan (NPMP) was put in place and Psa was much less prevalent. Over time Psa has become more widespread and most regions have been classified as Recovery regions. There are still some regions with little or no Psa and it is important to protect these, but also remove some inequities around plant material biosecurity risk management and movements, especially between Recovery regions.

KVH is consulting with growers and the industry on removing within Recovery region boundaries to help remove these inequities in the short term, while a bigger piece of work is underway to review the Kiwifruit Plant Certification Scheme (KPCS).

When do you propose the changes will come into effect?

Dependant on the results of the consultation, KVH is proposing to implement the changes from Monday 16 July 2018.

What are the definitions of each of the different types of regions?

Growing regions are classified as Exclusion, Containment or Recovery, based on the level of Psa infection. Exclusion regions either have no Psa identified, or Psa has recently been identified for the first time. A Containment region has only limited Psa infection. A Recovery region is where Psa is already widespread.

How will you protect my area from resistant or new strains of Psa if we are all one Recovery region?

We have been learning more about resistance and the genome changes that lead to it developing. Our monitoring for resistant Psa strains has identified Psa isolates which show low level resistance (in the lab) in all current Recovery regions. If we identify any additional genome changes that lead to a new more resistant Psa strain, we can use a control area notice to restrict movements from that area. This would be put in place until we understand more about the change and the level of risk.

Why don't you make the whole of the North Island (except for the Exclusion zones) a Recovery region?

The regional boundaries were put in place when the NPMP was established in 2013 and cover current kiwifruit growing regions. We do not want to create unintended consequences by placing requirements on areas where no kiwifruit is grown. We will review regional boundaries if there are kiwifruit plantings in new areas.

Why aren't you making any changes to the zones in the South Island?

Currently there is no Psa in the South Island and the main growing region of Nelson/Motueka is defined as an Exclusion region. We may look to review the regional boundary if we see kiwifruit grown in other parts of the South Island.

What do I need to do if I'm a grower in one of the areas affected by the change?

The change does not require growers to take any action.

What do I need to do if I own a nursery in one of the areas affected by the change?

Nurseries complying with the KPCS do not need to make any changes.

I'm from the Hawkes Bay/Gisborne. I feel like this is loosening the rules and I'm less protected.

This change will enable some kiwifruit nurse plants to move into your region that previously could not. But, budwood and pollen can already move into your region and carry a similar disease risk. It is important to remember that on-orchard biosecurity procedures, maintained by individual growers/orchard owners, are integral to managing the risk from pest and disease threats.

Are the rules being loosened so much that the NPMP isn't needed anymore?

The Psa NPMP is still needed to protect those regions with no or little Psa. It also enables KVH to ensure the small percentage of growers who need encouragement continue to take the appropriate Psa management precautions.

Over the next few years KVH will be looking at what is the best framework to meet the wider biosecurity needs of the industry going forward and will bring to the industry a proposal to use an alternative regulatory framework in the future.

Are you still going to be looking at the bigger picture and a potential KPCS review? Why not make these changes then?

This change to Recovery regions removes inequities immediately. It is being treated separately from other pieces of work to review the KPCS, Exclusion regions, and how we treat non-kiwifruit growing regions, as these are complex and will take some time to complete. They are however expected to be complete before the end of the year and we will keep growers informed as they progress over the coming months.

Are nurseries selling KPCS fully certified plants at a commercial disadvantage because of the policy change?

KPCS fully certified nurseries plants are high health plants which are less likely to carry unwanted pests and diseases. KVH believes there will always be a demand for quality plants from nurseries.

Is this a lowering of the standard in certification because within region only certified plants are now able to be sold to the same areas as fully certified plants?

Plants with Psa that have tested free of non NZ Psa strains and are free of resistance strains will now be able to be sold across a wider area, but there is no change in the KPCS standards for independent testing and monitoring of movement.

Does this potentially create some loss of traceability of plant material?

The proposed change has no impact on traceability as nurseries and growers still need to record plant movements, including registering with KVH for movements of both pollen and budwood. *Mycoplasma bovis* has highlighted the need for good traceability and we will be putting more emphasis on raising awareness around the importance of this within the industry.

Could this increase the potential spread of new biovars (undetected) or resistant strains of Psa?

No, all nurseries need to have their plants tested for these strains before they obtain certification and can be sold.

Does KVH actually follow up on non-compliance? How?

All nurseries, packhouses, pollen mills and fruit processors are audited annually, and any noncompliance is followed up. KVH also investigates any cases of alleged illegal movements that we become aware of.