

Profile Series: Border Interventions on Import Pathways

This series is intended to provide the kiwifruit industry with a greater understanding of how risks are managed at the border. It is important to remember that the border is just one layer of the biosecurity system, an over of the entire system is provided in the report “The NZ biosecurity system and how it operates” which can be found on the KVH website (www.kvh.org.nz/NZ_Biosecurity).

Use of detector dogs at the border

Last week KVH staff visited the Auckland Biosecurity Centre to see first-hand, MPI’s detector dog programme.

MPI have their own detector dog breeding programme which is a cost effective way of producing fit for purpose biosecurity detector dogs. The breeding programme has produced 27 litters since 1996, and now has 40 dog teams operating throughout New Zealand at various ports of entry. This includes cruise ships which have been a particular focus of KVH given the close proximity of these arrivals to our kiwifruit industry.

MPI now have detector dogs at all cruise ship first port of arrivals and many second ports of arrival. Detector dogs are now used to screen disembarking passengers from 150 cruise ships, resulting in the seizure of 500 risk items, of which 76% was fresh produce (of particular concern given its capacity to host fruit fly).



Detector dogs have been a fundamental component of biosecurity interventions at the border for many years. MPI is now also working to train a new line of dogs for a different purpose, post-border incursions. These incursion dogs can be used in the field and trained to detect any pest and may be especially useful for pests for which there are no pheromone traps available.

Statistics

Cruise ships:

- Detector dogs have been used on 150 cruise ship visits. MPI are now using dogs on all cruise ship first ports of arrival and many second ports of arrival.
- Use of detector dogs on these 150 cruise ships, resulted in interception of 500 biosecurity risk items; 76% of these were fresh produce, 9% were plant products.

Airports:

- Detector dogs intercept 4500 risk items at international airports each year.
- Fresh produce 47% of risk items intercepted by dogs.

Mail centre:

- Detector dogs intercepted 1800 risk items at international mail centre each year
- 23% of these risk items were plant products

Total interceptions:

Each year Detector dogs stop around 12,000 biosecurity risk items

- By pathway this is:
 - 55% mail
 - 41 % aircraft arrivals
 - 4 % cruise ships
- Where have dogs intercepted items:
 - 60% post x-ray
 - 17% green line
 - 16% baggage carousel
 - 7% cruise ships

Dog Development:

- Costs around \$30k to get a dog into the field
- Training consists of 8 weeks initial development exercises, 1 year with families in Auckland, 20 days basic pre-training then 8-10 weeks training in the field
- Dogs search for 10 basic odours when they enter the field training and up to 35 odours by the end of field training.