



# Import Health Standard

## Research samples (excluding animal samples)

RESEARCH.IHS

13 February 2023

## **TITLE**

Import Health Standard: Research samples (excluding animal samples)

## **COMMENCEMENT**

This Import Health Standard comes into force on 13 February 2023.

## **REVOCATION**

This import health standard revokes and replaces all prior versions of and amendments to the Import Health Standard: Research Samples (excluding animal samples).

The amendment history to this import health standard is set out in Appendix 2.

## **ISSUING AUTHORITY**

This Import Health Standard is issued pursuant to sections 24A and 166A of the Biosecurity Act 1993, and incorporates amendments made in accordance with s 24B(1)(a) of that Act.

Dated at Wellington, 13 February 2023

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## Introduction

This introduction is not part of the Import Health Standard (IHS), but is intended to indicate its general effect.

## Purpose

This IHS specifies the requirements that must be met when importing samples of plants, plant materials, inorganic matter, organic matter (excluding animal matter), soil, water, and microorganisms associated with them, or any microbial cultures for research into New Zealand.

## Background

An IHS issued under the [Biosecurity Act 1993 \(the Act\)](#) specifies the requirements to be met to effectively manage biosecurity risks associated with importing risk goods, including the risks from incidentally imported new organisms. IHSs include measures that must be applied in the exporting country before the risk goods are exported. IHSs also include requirements that must be met by importers during importation, including while the risk goods are in transit to New Zealand and held in a transitional/containment facility.

Post-clearance conditions may also be specified in an IHS.

## Who should read this?

This IHS should be read by anyone involved in importing samples of plants, plant materials, inorganic matter, organic matter (excluding animal matter), soil, water, and microorganisms associated with them, or any microbial cultures for research or anyone who has an interest in importing those samples into New Zealand.

## Why is this important?

It is the responsibility of the importer to ensure that risk goods comply with the requirements of the relevant IHS. Risk goods that do not comply with the requirements of an IHS may not be cleared for entry into New Zealand and may be directed for treatment, re-export, destruction, or further action deemed appropriate by a Chief Technical Officer (CTO). The pathway may be suspended if certain types of viable regulated pests or weed seeds are intercepted on the consignment.

Importers should take all responsible steps to ensure that the goods comply with this IHS (section 16B of the Act). Importers are liable for all associated expenses.

## Equivalence

A CTO may consider an application for an equivalent phytosanitary measure to be approved, different from that provided for in this IHS, to maintain at least the same level of protection assured by the current measure(s).

Equivalence will be considered with reference to the [International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures \(ISPM\) 24: Guidelines for the determination and recognition of equivalence of phytosanitary measures](#).

## Document History

Refer to Appendix 2 for the amendment record for this IHS.

## Other information

This is not an exhaustive list of compliance requirements, and it is the importer's responsibility to be familiar and comply with all New Zealand laws, particularly the following:

### **Hazardous Substances and New Organisms (HSNO) Act (1996)**

Imported goods that may be, or may contain, a substance defined as a hazardous substance under the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms (HSNO) Act 1996, may require an approval from the [Environmental Protection Authority \(EPA\)](#).

Imported goods that are, or contain, a new organism (e.g., plants and microorganisms, including seeds, spores, pollen, cells, or other propagules) where those new organisms are essential and integral to that importation (i.e., intentionally imported) may require a HSNO approval from the EPA.

### **Trade in Endangered Species (TIES) Act (1989)**

The importation of plants and plant products of some plant species is regulated under the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora ([CITES](#)), to which New Zealand is a signatory. The Trade in Endangered Species (TIES) Act (1989) implements the CITES in New Zealand.

A permit or certificate issued by the Department of Conservation may be required to import specimens of species covered by the TIES Act. Importers are advised to contact the [Department of Conservation](#) for further information.

### **Domestic and international transport requirements**

It is the importer's responsibility to ensure that the exporter is informed of the international and domestic requirements concerning the safe handling, transport and labelling of risk goods.

## Part 1: General Requirements

### 1.1 Application

- (1) This IHS applies to the import of research samples, including samples derived from plants, plant materials, inorganic matter, organic matter (excluding animal matter), soil, water, and microorganisms associated with them or any microbial cultures for research (hereafter referred to as 'research samples'), from all countries into New Zealand.
- (2) The following items are out of the scope of this IHS and are eligible for import under other IHSs:
  - a) [Test kits except those that contain viable microorganisms](#)
  - b) [Materials derived from animals](#)
  - c) [Laboratory animals](#)
  - d) Invertebrates ( [new](#) or [non-exotic](#) invertebrates)
  - e) [Human cell cultures \(genetically modified\)](#)

#### Guidance

- This Standard only applies to samples imported for research.
- Samples for research may be eligible for import under another import health standard, if all import requirements of the relevant standard are met.
- To import a laboratory specimen or laboratory material under this Standard, importers need to apply for a permit (2.1(1)).
- Only trade samples of fruits, vegetables, grains, and coco peat are covered under this IHS.

### 1.2 Incorporation by reference

- (1) The following documents are incorporated by reference under section 142M of the Act:
  - a) [HSNO approval code NOC002466 \(application code NOC04018\)](#)
  - b) [Index Herbariorum](#)
  - c) [ISPM 5. Glossary of Phytosanitary Terms](#)
  - d) [MPI Plant Biosecurity Index](#)
  - e) [Official New Zealand Pest Register \(ONZPR\)](#)
  - f) [The International Air Transport Association \(IATA\) Dangerous Goods Regulations](#)
- (2) Under section 142O(3) of the Act, it is declared that section 142O(1) does not apply. That is, a notice under section 142O(2) of the Act is not required to be published before material that amends or replaces any material incorporated by reference has legal effect as part of those documents.

### 1.3 Definitions

- (1) Definitions are listed in Appendix 1.

### 1.4 General requirements

- (1) Research samples must be free of animal material unless that material is also eligible for importation under an applicable IHS.
- (2) Research samples that constitute, or contain, intentionally imported viable organisms must be accompanied by a description of those organisms including, where applicable, the scientific name and taxonomic authority.

- (3) Research samples must be securely packaged to prevent:
  - a) any accidental loss of contents, or
  - b) escape of organisms, or
  - c) cross contaminations during transportation.
- (4) Packaging materials must be inert, clean, and free from contaminating materials.
- (5) Packages must be clearly labelled to identify the general nature of the contents (e.g., plant material, water, soil, microorganisms), along with the names and contact details of the recipient and sender.
- (6) Required documentation must be attached to the exterior of the package so that the primary package does not have to be opened to access the documentation.

## 1.5 Permit

- (1) A permit is required where specified in Part 2: *Specific Requirements* of the IHS.

### Guidance

- A permit will specify:
  - whether the research samples are eligible for biosecurity clearance on arrival;
  - whether the research samples should be directed to a transitional facility or containment facility on arrival, the standard(s) that facility must comply with, and physical containment level, where applicable;
  - any special conditions necessary to show the requirements of this IHS are met; and
  - any special conditions that effectively manage the biosecurity risk.
- To apply for a permit, fill out the [Application](#) for a Permit, and send it to Plant Imports at [plantimports@mpi.govt.nz](mailto:plantimports@mpi.govt.nz).

## 1.6 Biosecurity clearance

- (1) Research samples are eligible for biosecurity clearance if the relevant clearance requirements set out in this IHS are met.

## Part 2: Specific Requirements

(1) Research samples may be imported under one of the following categories:

- a) Laboratory specimens and laboratory materials ([Part 2.1](#))
- b) Herbarium specimens ([Part 2.2](#))
- c) Trade samples ([Part 2.3](#))

### 2.1 Laboratory specimens and laboratory materials

- (1) A permit is required for importation of laboratory specimens and laboratory materials (Refer to [Part 1.5](#)).
- (2) Laboratory specimens and laboratory materials that constitute, or contain, any organisms that fall into one or more of the following categories must be imported into a containment facility or transitional facility that will manage the biosecurity risk as provided for in the permit:
  - a) unwanted organism; or
  - b) regulated pest; or
  - c) an organism which is listed as “entry prohibited” in the MPI Plant Biosecurity Index; or
  - d) unidentified organism; or
  - e) new organism (unless incidentally imported).
- (3) Exceptions to Part 2.1 (2), direction to a containment or transitional facility is not required to manage the biosecurity risk as provided for in the permit, when:
  - a) a new organism is granted a conditional release; or
  - b) an unwanted organism permission does not require direction to the facility.
- (4) Laboratory specimens and laboratory materials that constitute, or contain, an organism that falls into one or more of the categories listed in Part 2.1 (2) must be packaged according to Packing Instruction 650 of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) Dangerous Goods Regulations.
- (5) Propagation of microorganisms from laboratory specimens and laboratory materials that constitute, or contain, an organism that falls into one or more of the categories listed in Part 2.1 (2) must only be carried out in:
  - a) a containment facility or transitional facility approved in accordance with the standard: [Facilities for microorganisms and cell cultures 2007a](#); or
  - b) a containment facility or transitional facility that will manage the biosecurity risk as provided for in the permit.
- (6) Propagation of plant material must only be carried out in:
  - a) a containment facility or transitional facility approved in accordance with the standard: [Facilities for microorganisms and cell cultures 2007a](#); or
  - b) a containment facility approved in accordance with the standard: [Containment facilities for plants: 2007](#); or
  - c) a containment facility or transitional facility that will manage the biosecurity risk as provided for in the permit.

#### Guidance

- Processed or preserved laboratory specimens and laboratory materials without viable organisms (e.g., plant material preserved in formalin, microscopic slides, gamma radiated soil) are not considered ‘risk goods’ and do not need to meet the requirements of this IHS.
- Laboratory specimens and laboratory materials containing non-regulated organisms may be eligible for biosecurity clearance on arrival. The full list of regulated and non-regulated pests for New Zealand can be found in the [Official New Zealand Pest Register \(ONZPR\)](#).



- The physical containment level for research using laboratory specimens and laboratory materials with new organisms (including genetically modified organisms) or unwanted organisms might be specified in the HSNO approval or the unwanted organism permission.
- The physical containment level for research using laboratory specimens and laboratory materials containing regulated pests may be specified in the permit.
- Packing Instruction 650 of the IATA Dangerous Goods Regulations states that risk goods must be triple-packaged, with the packaging constructed and closed to prevent any loss of contents during transportation.
- Laboratory specimens and laboratory materials that meet the definition of dangerous goods will need to be transported in accordance with the [Land Transport Rule - Dangerous Goods 2005](#).
- Laboratory specimens and laboratory materials can be stored and maintained in a facility indefinitely if they are held securely, and all requirements continue to be met.
- Laboratory specimens, laboratory materials and any material or waste from them may be:
  - rendered non-viable and granted biosecurity clearance; or
  - rendered non-viable and disposed of in accordance with the relevant facility standard, any approval, and/or permission granted; or
  - re-exported following an MPI inspector's authorisation; or
  - granted biosecurity clearance if the plant samples meet the requirements specified under the IHSs for importing of nursery stock (155.02.06) or seed for sowing (155.02.05) following an MPI inspector's authorisation.

## 2.2 Herbarium specimens

(1) A permit is required for importation of herbarium specimens (Refer to [Part 1.5](#)).

(2) Herbarium specimens must:

- a) be free from live insects; and
- b) only be imported from:
  - i) registered herbaria on [Index Herbariorum](#); or
  - ii) qualified botanists.

(3) The outer package of imported herbarium specimens must be labelled:

- a) as 'Herbarium Specimens'; and
- b) with the direction that the package should not be opened at the border.

(4) *[Repealed]*

(5) Material from herbarium specimens must not be propagated or multiplied.

(6) Herbarium specimens are eligible for import under one of the following options:

**Option 1: Herbarium specimens that constitute, or contain, new organisms**

- a) Herbarium specimens must be imported under a HSNO Act approval.

**Option 2: Herbarium specimens that constitute, or contain, plant pathogens**

- b) Herbarium specimens must:
  - i) be packaged in accordance with packing instruction No. 650 of the IATA Dangerous Goods Regulations and Land Transport Regulations, and packages shall only be opened within the transitional facility or containment facility; and
  - ii) be imported into a transitional facility or containment facility; and
  - iii) be maintained within an area in the transitional facility or containment facility where there are no living or propagated plants; and
  - iv) undergo mandatory cold treatment at -18°C for seven consecutive days before the primary packaging is opened.

**Option 3: Herbarium specimens that do not constitute, or contain, new organisms or plant pathogens**

- c) To be eligible for biosecurity clearance, herbarium specimens must be accompanied with a declaration specifying:
- i) the scientific name of each specimen; and the herbarium accession numbers or collectors' details/identifiers; and
  - ii) the specimens did not have any visible symptoms and/or signs of diseases or pests prior to packaging.
- d) The declaration must:
- i) be signed on behalf of a registered herbarium (on Index Herbariorum) or a qualified botanist; and
  - ii) include the date of issue.

**Guidance**

- The HSNO Act approval NOC002466 covers importation of herbarium specimens derived from new organisms belonging to the Kingdoms Plantae (Plants), Mycetae (Fungi), Protista (Protists) and the Phylum Cyanobacteria, that contain viable material (e.g., seeds, pollen and spores).
- Partially dried herbarium specimens or herbarium specimens that do not meet the requirements of Part 2.2 may be eligible for import as laboratory specimens under Part 2.1 of this IHS.
- If the herbarium specimens are not accompanied by the declaration specified under Option 3, they may be treated as containing plant pathogens under Option 2.

## 2.3 Trade samples

- (1) A permit is not required for importation of trade samples.
- (2) Trade samples of the following commodities are eligible for importation:
  - a) fruits and vegetables; and
  - b) seeds and grains; and
  - c) coco peat (coir pith, coir peat).
- (3) Propagation of/from any material imported as a trade sample is prohibited.
- (4) Trade samples must be labelled as 'Trade Samples'.
- (5) Trade samples and the package in which the samples are contained must be free of visually detectable regulated pests.
- (6) Inspection must occur within an approved transitional facility or biosecurity control area appropriate for the inspection of trade samples.

### 2.3.1 Trade samples of fruits and vegetables

- (1) Trade samples of fruits and vegetables must not exceed 30 kilograms of any particular commodity per consignment.
- (2) Trade samples of fruits and vegetables must not constitute any of the following:
  - a) an organism that is listed as "entry prohibited" in the MPI Plant Biosecurity Index; or
  - b) a new organism.
- (3) Trade samples of fruits and vegetables must be free of any visible signs of pest infestation or disease infection.

- (4) On arrival, trade samples of fruits and vegetables must be directly transported to a transitional facility approved for inspection of fruits and vegetables under the [Standard for Transitional Facilities for General Uncleared Risk Goods \(TFGEN\)](#).
- (5) Trade samples of fruits and vegetables must undergo 100% inspection at the transitional facility by a MPI inspector.
- (6) Trade samples of fruits and vegetables and packaging must be destroyed in accordance with the facility standard and to the satisfaction of the MPI inspector within 48 hours of importation.

**Guidance**

- To ensure timely inspection of trade samples of fruit and vegetables, you need to:
  - apply for a biosecurity authority at least 48 hours before the samples are expected to arrive; and
  - contact your local MPI office to arrange a biosecurity inspection.

**2.3.2 Trade samples of grains and seeds**

- (1) Trade samples of grains and seeds must be derived from a species eligible for import under the import health standard for [Grain and Seeds for Consumption, Feed or Processing \(GCFP.IHS\)](#).
- (2) Trade samples of grains and seeds must be free of any visually detectable live regulated pests.
- (3) Trade samples of grains and seeds must be directly transported to a transitional facility approved for holding or processing grains and seeds under the [Standard for Transitional Facilities for General Uncleared Risk Goods \(TFGEN\)](#).
- (4) Upon completion of the testing, trade sample of grains and seeds must be rendered non-viable, and the packages must be destroyed in accordance with the facility standard.

**2.3.3 Trade samples of coco peat**

- (1) Trade samples of coco peat must not exceed 5 kilograms per consignment.
- (2) On arrival, trade samples of coco peat must undergo 100% inspection by a MPI inspector.
- (3) To be eligible for biosecurity clearance, trade samples of coco peat must be free of visually detectable seeds, soil, animal material, plant material and live regulated pests.

**Guidance**

- Trade samples that do not meet the requirements of Part 2.3 may be eligible for import as laboratory specimens and laboratory materials under Part 2.1 of this IHS.

## Appendix 1: Definitions

Definitions have the same meaning as defined by the Act and ISPM 5. *Glossary of Phytosanitary Terms*, unless set out below:

**Herbarium specimens**

Processed (e.g., dried, mounted, preserved) samples from three kingdoms (Plantae, Mycetae (Fungi), Protista), and also Cyanobacteria.

**Index Herbariorum**

A global directory of the herbaria and their associated staff.

**Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI)**

The National Plant Protection Organisation of New Zealand.

**Non-regulated organism**

An organism that has been assessed by a CTO to be either present in New Zealand, or unlikely to ever establish in New Zealand, or unlikely to cause significant harm if it does become established.

**Plant Biosecurity Index**

A register, maintained by MPI, identifying the import approval status for importing plant species into New Zealand.

**Permit**

A document issued by the Director-General pursuant to section 24D(2) of the Act.

**Plant materials**

Materials derived from species belonging to the Kingdom Plantae, including cells, tissue cultures, seeds, fruits, vegetables, pollen, roots, bark, cuttings, bulbs, flowers, tubers, foliage, wood, pulp, and timber.

**Primary packaging**

Packaging in direct contact with the product itself which contain, protect and/or preserve the product, particularly against contamination.

**Qualified botanists**

Persons trained (or certified) to collect, prepare and package herbarium material in accordance with recognised herbarium practices.

**Regulated organism**

An organism that has been assessed by a CTO to be of potential importance to New Zealand and not yet present here, or present but not widely distributed and being officially controlled, or a vector for another organism that is regulated. The CTO identifies actions required to manage any risk of entry and establishment from specific regulated organisms.

**Research**

Refers to activities related to testing, assessment, analysis, diagnosis, education, and evaluation, which may include propagation of organisms.

**Trade sample**

A portion or piece of a good imported for sensory evaluation, assessment and testing for future trade.

## Appendix 2: Document History

No.	Date of Issued Amendments	Amendment(s) Description
01	04 August 2021	Part 1.1- Guidance box: Provided more clarification on the scope of the IHS
02	13 February 2023	Deleted axenic (pure) cultures of microorganisms from 'out of scope' under Part 1.1(2)(f) Changed the title of laboratory specimens to laboratory specimens and laboratory materials across the document. Clarified the requirement for specifying the scientific name and accession number of herbarium specimen imported under Option 3, Part 2.2(5)(c). Fixed hyperlinks and typos across the document.