



SEE



CONTAIN



REPORT

A Guide to the New Zealand
Import Health Standard for
Sea Containers from
all Countries



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Contents

Contents	3
Introduction	4
Container Inspection Requirements	5
Biosecurity Clearance	5
Costs	5
Overseas Requirements	5
Inspection	5
External condition of sea containers	6
Certification	6
On-arrival Inspection Requirements	6
Requirements for Discharge and Holding of Containers	6
Exterior Inspection Requirements	7
High-risk containers	7
All containers	7
What to look for on the outside	8
Interior Inspection Requirements	9
Loaded containers	9
Empty containers	9
Interior container inspection procedure	10
Quarantine bins	10
Packaging and Cargo Inspection Requirements	11
Packaging	11
Cargo	11
Contamination	12
Clean and Contamination-free Containers	12
High-risk Commodities and Contaminants	12
Procedures to Follow if Contamination is Detected	12
Transitional Facilities and Operator Requirements	13
Registration of Transitional Facilities	13
Approved Transitional Facilities	13
Transitional Facility Operator	14
Minimum Requirements for Accredited Person/s	14
Record Keeping	14
Transitional Facility Charges	14
Compliance and Audit Procedures	15
Use of MAF Logo	15
Approved Equivalent Systems	16
Suspension or Termination of Approvals	16
Glossary	17
Appendix 1 - Quarantine Declaration to Accompany Containers to New Zealand	19
Appendix 2 - Application for Facility Approval and Operator Registration	20

Introduction

This booklet provides an overview and reference guide to New Zealand's biosecurity Import Health Standard (IHS) for Sea Containers from all Countries. Changes to this Standard came into effect on 1 September 2003.

The revised Standard outlines the requirements for managing the biosecurity risks of imported sea containers and their packaging into New Zealand.

Requirements relate to container pre-arrival, arrival, transportation and subsequent devanning of containers and cargo at transitional facilities.

In introducing this Standard, MAF seeks the co-operation of all individuals and companies involved in sea container importation.

Non-compliance with the Standard's requirements can lead to delayed distribution of containers while the risks associated with the non-compliance are dealt with.

Abiding by the requirements of the Standard is not only a legal requirement, it is also best business practice and, more importantly, will keep New Zealand free from unwanted and potentially damaging pests and diseases.

A full copy of the Import Health Standard for Sea Containers from all Countries can be viewed at:

www.maf.govt.nz/sea-container-review

Protect New Zealand

New Zealand is known for its clean, green image and reliance on agricultural, horticultural, forestry and tourism sectors. Controls must be maintained against unwanted insects, pests and diseases. So remember:



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SEE: learn the signs of contamination in containers or imported goods.

CONTAIN: contain possible pests by closing the container, packaging, vehicle or room. Remember, don't try to catch, touch or move any pests.

REPORT: call MAF Exotic Disease and Pest Emergency Hotline on 0800 809 966.

History of container cargo into New Zealand

Since the 1970s container use has increased as a mode of moving freight. Approximately half a million containers now come into New Zealand annually.

Some containers have high-risk cargo such as plant or animal products – or come from high-risk ports like Eastern Russia, where Gypsy Moth lay eggs on containers. MAF's Quarantine Service staff inspect these containers.

Pre-border and border controls reduce the likelihood of unwanted pests and diseases getting through the system.

Container Inspection Requirements

Container inspection requirements are based on four areas of biosecurity risk:

- exterior surfaces
- interior surfaces
- packaging in the container
- cargo in the container.

Please note: Cargo and some packaging materials may be subject to specific Import Health Standards.

Biosecurity Clearance

If a container and its cargo meet the conditions of the Import Health Standard, it will be given biosecurity clearance by a MAF Inspector under section 26 of the Biosecurity Act 1993. This means it can enter the country without restriction.

Non-compliance with the Standard's requirements can lead to delayed distribution of containers while the risks associated with the non-compliance are dealt with.

Deliberate non-compliance with the Standard's requirements is a breach of the Biosecurity Act. This can carry a fine of up to \$100,000 for an individual and up to \$200,000 for a company.

Costs

MAF will not charge an inspection fee if the container check is carried out by an accredited person.

Under the Biosecurity (Costs) Regulations 2003, a charge of \$8.75 per imported container applies to cover the monitoring and verification of shipping containers. This includes risk assessment, verification of documentation, some inspections, advice, identification of certain contaminants and formal clearance processes.

MAF inspections of non-complying shipping containers are charged at \$40.40 as per the Biosecurity (Costs) Regulations.

Auditing, site and process approvals for a Transitional Facility are charged at an hourly rate of \$72.30 – in keeping with Regulation 36 of the Biosecurity (Costs) Regulations.

Overseas Requirements Inspection

The exporter or packer loading a container destined for New Zealand is required to examine its interior and exterior to make sure it is clean and free from contamination.

Before loading the exporter or packer must:

- ensure the container is clean
- check carefully for contaminants such as pests, seeds, blood and soil
- remove all contaminants.

During loading the exporter or packer must:

- ensure the container does not become re-contaminated by soil on forklift wheels or footwear
- not leave container doors open for long periods of time or overnight, as pests may enter
- not use restricted packaging such as straw, used tyres and moss
- ensure the container loading area is free of pests.

If dunnage or wooden packaging is used (e.g. pallets, cases), the timber should be new, clean, dry, free of insects or signs of insect attack, bark, fungus, decay or rot. Treated timber is best. The treatment method should be described on accompanying container documentation.

Container Inspection Requirements

Overseas Requirements

External condition of sea containers

Containers should be loaded on a hard, sealed surface to keep them clean and as free as possible from contamination.

The exterior of all sea containers should be clean and free of:

- egg masses
- grass
- insects/pests
- nests
- seeds
- snails
- soil
- webs.

Certification

All containers must have documentation giving the following required information relating to the container and any cargo:

- container number
- origin (country where the container was packed)
- the port at which the container was first loaded aboard a vessel for shipment to New Zealand
- exporter name
- importer name and address
- destination address in New Zealand for the container and contents (must be a Transitional Facility approved for the devanning or storage of containers)
- a complete and accurate description of the contents, including packaging
- a quarantine declaration (see sample declaration at back of this booklet - Appendix 1) or available from www.maf.govt.nz/transitional-facilities
- treatment certification (if applicable)

- if the container or cargo has been fumigated then the fumigant, time, temperature and concentration must be supplied on an accompanying certificate.

A container cannot be removed from the port area until:

- MAF has been provided with the required information (as above); and
- MAF has notified the port company that the container can be removed.

Containers lacking the information will be considered high risk and treated accordingly.

On-arrival Inspection Requirements Requirements for discharge and holding of containers

When containers are discharged, those that are not approved by MAF for immediate delivery must be placed on a hard sealed area free from soil, weeds and vegetation.

A container will not be released from the port area until:

- the required information has been provided to MAF (containers lacking the information will be considered high risk and treated accordingly).
- the container and contents have been risk assessed by MAF
- the port of arrival accredited person check has been undertaken
- MAF has approved the removal of the container from the place of arrival.

Container Inspection Requirements

Exterior Inspection Requirements

A container will not be released from the port of arrival until it is free of external contamination.

High-risk containers

All sea containers identified by a MAF Inspector as high risk for external contamination must undergo the following procedures. Once MAF has notified the port company, these high-risk containers must:

- be brought to the MAF inspection area for six-sided inspection as soon as possible, but in all cases within eight hours after discharge; or
- be fumigated with methyl bromide at an approved rate, temperature and time; or
- be accompanied by official certification from an overseas National Plant Protection Organisation stating the container is free from external contamination of any type; or
- have undergone a decontamination or certification system approved by MAF.

All containers

An accredited person must check all sea containers for contamination on all visible external surfaces. This must be done during or as soon as possible after routine discharge and handling, or according to a MAF-approved system.

The check must be thorough enough to see the presence of insects and other contaminants.

The check must take place in suitable conditions (e.g. enough light). Special attention should be paid to the underside of the container during discharge and the area around the base of the container once on the ground.

Any contaminated container must be taken to a secure area and isolated. A MAF Inspector must be notified as soon as possible, but in all cases within four hours. The MAF Inspector is responsible for directing any action to be taken.

If live organisms are found on or in a container, phone the MAF Exotic Disease and Pest Emergency Hotline on 0800 809 966 immediately.

All contaminated containers are subject to MAF-approved decontamination procedures.

Accredited persons must keep records of all container checks, including the contaminants seen and actions taken. These records must be made available to MAF on request.

Decontamination (e.g. washing) or overseas certification systems approved by MAF may be used instead of inspection.

Containers covered by approved overseas systems will undergo MAF audit inspection on arrival.

Empty containers can be decontaminated externally and internally by an approved system instead of the external and internal inspection requirements.

Inspected containers or those free from external contamination will be directed to an approved transitional facility for devanning (loaded containers) or a facility approved for container devanning/inspection and/or cleaning (empty containers) or storage.

Container Inspection Requirements

What to look for on the outside

Door posts and sills can have soil, grass or insects in and on them.

Be on the lookout for:

- soil
- snails
- seeds
- mud
- grass
- webs
- nests.

Remember:



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Grain can be left on the inside of containers



Animals can be found in and on containers



Soil can get trapped in lug holes and sills



Webs with moth egg-masses

Container Inspection Requirements

Interior Inspection Requirements

Transitional facilities, Operators and accredited persons must be MAF approved.

Loaded containers

All loaded containers will be unpacked at a transitional facility approved for container devanning in the presence of an accredited person.

Containers of personal belongings can be unpacked at the importer's address as long as the container is placed on a sealed surface (if removed from the transport vehicle) and an accredited person is present.

The accredited person's check will take place immediately before, during, and at the completion of the unpacking of cargo. The check will include:

- all visible external surfaces of the container for contamination
- all internal surfaces for contamination (including live organisms)
- verification that the cargo is as stated in the manifest
- verification that no prohibited packaging material (e.g. straw or moss) is present
- verification that any wood is new, clean, dry, free of insects, bark, or decay.

If the unpacked container is found free of contamination, the accredited person will notify MAF and a clearance will be issued.

Empty containers

All empty containers will be checked by an accredited person at an approved transitional facility. The check will cover all visible external surfaces and internal surfaces for contaminants (including live organisms).

Alternatively, empty containers will be externally and internally decontaminated by a MAF-approved system.

The above checks, including any contamination detected and action taken, are to be recorded and made available to MAF on request.

If contamination, unmanifested cargo, infested/infected wood or prohibited packaging material is found during the above checks, the container must be isolated in a secure area or taken to the appropriate decontamination facility.

If live organisms are found on or in a container, phone the MAF Exotic Disease and Pest Emergency Hotline on 0800 809 966 immediately.

If contamination is found, the MAF Inspector is responsible for directing any action to be taken. This may involve the accredited person doing certain things for which s/he has received training as part of the accreditation process.

Certain cargo can contaminate the container. This includes items manufactured and stored outside before shipping, such as bricks, pipes, and steel form work. If contamination of either the cargo or container is found, MAF must be notified as specified above.

Container Inspection Requirements

Interior Inspection Requirements

Interior container inspection procedure

As doors are opened:

- you may see insects or other organisms moving
- spiders that are disturbed move and you will see their webs
- live spiders may indicate other insects are present. Spiders live on live prey.

At the door you may see:

- moving insects
- seed spillage
- signs of live insect activity – insects boring into wooden packing make piles of wood dust
- timber, bark or straw packing
- evidence of soil, plant and/or animal waste
- water deposits.

There are various types of packing materials that can pose a threat to biosecurity including straw, raw cotton, rice husks or used tyres.

Contaminants should not be discarded by sweeping them onto the ground. A quarantine waste bin is to be used for storage of waste materials other than timber dunnage. Wrapping or strapping material does not need to go into the quarantine bin unless it is contaminated.

Quarantine bins

Quarantine bins should have well-fitting lids that should remain on at all times. They should be made of strong material – such as steel or plastic.

Remember:



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Insect damage on wooden pallets



Seed spillage



Low risk/non-risk packaging



Quarantine bin

Packaging and Cargo Inspection Requirements

Packaging

Packaging is defined as packing material in a container such as crates, boxes, drums or cartons. It also includes material used to stabilise cargo such as dunnage, wedges or anything else used to hold or shore up the cargo.

All wood packaging in a container must be checked by an accredited person. The check must ensure the wood is clean, new, free of bark, live organisms, insect damage and decay.

If the wood does not meet these criteria, a MAF Inspector must be notified.

If supplied documentation does not indicate the container is free from restricted packaging, a MAF Inspector will inspect the container at the port of arrival or at a transitional facility.

Cargo

If during unpacking at a transitional facility the accredited person observes contamination of the cargo (as opposed to the container and packing) then a MAF Inspector must be advised.



Treated wood used to stabilise cargo



Treated wood used to pack cargo



Wooden packaging should have no bark



MAF Inspectors inspect all containers

Contamination

Clean and Contamination-free Containers

Contamination can pose a serious risk to New Zealand's biosecurity status.

You are advised to ensure your overseas supplier is aware of the requirements for clean and contamination-free containers. A brochure outlining these requirements is available online at www.maf.govt.nz/transitional-facilities

As a guide, the following items are considered to be biosecurity contaminants:

- animals, insects or other invertebrates (any life cycle stage)
- insect egg casings or rafts
- any organic material of animal origin (including blood, bones, fibre, meat, secretions, excretions, feathers etc.)
- plants and plant products (including fruit, seeds, leaves, twigs, roots, bark, or other organic material)
- soil
- water.

Please note: used meat, fruit and plant product cartons should be treated as a quarantine contaminant.

MAF Quarantine Officers have found a variety of contaminants inside supposedly empty or certified "clean" containers, including:

- dead animals such as rats
- infested/infected timber dunnage and packing materials
- seeds and grain
- signs of animal or human habitation such as faeces, food scraps and straw
- dead and decaying shellfish
- used fruit and meat cartons.

High-risk Commodities and Contaminants:

- live animals – reptiles, birds, mammals
- bird eggs
- live insects
- fresh fruit and vegetables
- live plants or fresh plant material.

Procedures to Follow if Contamination is Detected:

- close up the container
- advise others not to open the container
- **call the MAF Exotic Disease and Pest Emergency Hotline on 0800 809 966.**

Transitional Facilities and Operator Requirements

The Import Health Standard for Sea Containers from all Countries requires all sea freight containers imported into New Zealand to be taken to a transitional facility approved under Section 39 of the Biosecurity Act 1993.

A person or organisation wanting to set up a transitional facility for receiving, unloading and storage of sea containers must register with MAF to have their premises approved as a transitional facility and their staff approved as accredited persons.

The transitional facility must have an approved operator responsible for ensuring the facility operates in accordance with the Standard. The approved operator will also be the person that MAF will liaise with.

Registration of Transitional Facilities

All companies that unpack imported sea containers must apply to have their facilities and operators registered with MAF.

Facility approval will be given once the facility has passed an initial audit and the accredited person is approved after training.

You can apply to have your facility and accredited person/s approved either online at www.maf.govt.nz/transitional-facilities

OR by writing to:

Sea Container Facility Registration
MAF Quarantine Service
PO Box 1254
Auckland

Please note: Companies without an approved transitional facility and/or operator will need to send their containers to an approved facility where an accredited person is present.

Sea containers containing risk goods (e.g. fresh produce) must go to transitional facilities approved for those goods under the Transitional Facility Standard for Uncleared Risk Goods 152.04.03F.

For all general queries relating to the clearance of sea containers or registration of transitional facilities/operators please phone **MAF Quarantine on 0800 222 018**.

Approved Transitional Facilities

Please note the following information relates to minimum requirements only. Specific details on the operation and approval of transitional facilities are available in the border technical standard for transitional facilities Requirements of Transitional Facilities for Sea Containers available from www.maf.govt.nz/transitional-facilities

Approval of the transitional facility and the operator will be by the Director, Border Management.

The minimum requirements are:

- a hard sealed area (concrete asphalt or similar) on which the container is placed during devanning
- free of weeds or debris for three metres around the container
- a means of recording details of containers inspected, contaminants found and actions taken
- a supply of permethrin-based aerosol insecticide
- a secure quarantine bin for storing sweepings and other contamination
- an approved operator and accredited person/s.

Transitional Facilities and Operator Requirements

Transitional Facility Operator

A transitional facility operator:

- has the authority within the organisation to make appropriate decisions about the devanning of the container
- is responsible for ensuring the IHS for sea containers and the transitional facility standard is followed.

Minimum Requirements for Accredited Person/s

An accredited person:

- has undertaken and passed a MAF approved course in basic biosecurity awareness and container checking
- must be present at the transitional facility when containers arrive or are being unpacked
- must undertake the required biosecurity checks
- must be aware of and comply with the requirements of the Standard.

Please note: Only a registered approved operator can operate a transitional facility.

Record Keeping

A transitional facility operator must also keep records (for two years) on:

- all imported sea containers brought into the facility
- procedures to ensure the Standards are followed
- a copy of the transitional facility approval certificate
- a copy of the operator's approval certificate
- a list of accredited persons who can conduct container checks
- a copy of the current Transitional Facility Standard
- a copy of the current container Import Health Standard
- a copy of the Guide to the Import Health Standard for Sea Containers from all Countries (this document)
- records of any contamination found.

Transitional Facility Charges

Charges apply for the initial and ongoing audit of approved transitional facilities. These charges are based on the Biosecurity Act 1993 and the Biosecurity (Costs) Regulations made under the Act. No charges will be made until you have been contacted by MAF before the audit and you have confirmed your intent to gain approval as a transitional facility.

Compliance and Audit Procedures

MAF will conduct audits to ensure compliance with the requirements of both the Import Health Standard and the Biosecurity Act 1993.

MAF (or its representative) shall have access to any approved transitional facilities, staff and records at a reasonable time for auditing of the transitional facility, approved operator or accredited person/s.

Frequency of audits will be determined by the level of confidence attained through prior audits, but will normally be annually. MAF, or its representative, is not obliged to announce surveillance audits.

Audits will focus on declaration procedures, inspection procedures, facility and accredited operator systems and procedures and equivalent system (see page16) procedures.

Non-compliance may result in a facility or operator or accredited person having their accreditation suspended or cancelled (removing the ability to handle sea containers). Non-compliance could also result in a fine of up to \$100,000 for an individual and up to \$200,000 for a company.

Where a declaration under the Act is clearly false or intended to conceal a biosecurity breach, MAF will investigate and undertake appropriate prosecution action under the Biosecurity Act.

MAF will also audit equivalent systems. If a compliance breach is detected during audits (or at other times), MAF may suspend or cancel approval of the equivalent system.

If a compliance breach relates to external contamination of certified containers, MAF may require all containers from that source

to be six sided inspected at the port of arrival by a MAF Inspector.

If the non-compliance relates to internal contamination, packaging or cargo, MAF may require inspection during devanning at a specified transitional facility.

Use of MAF Logo

The MAF logo or the word MAF is **NOT** to be used. The words "Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry approved" can be used by a facility operator after approval is given. The wording must be specific to what the approval is for.

For example the following could be used on letterhead:

"Approved by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry as a transitional facility for container unpacking."

Compliance and Audit Procedures

Approved Equivalent Systems

New or different methods of dealing with biosecurity risks associated with containers may be approved by the Director, Border Management on an individual basis.

Approval may be given if the proposed system can provide an equivalent standard of biosecurity as required by the Standard.

Such systems could include inspection of containers before shipping, bilateral certification agreements with MAF's equivalent organisation in an overseas country, or decontamination on arrival.

Development of such systems does not obligate MAF to require their use where other methods suitable for reducing risks (e.g. inspection) are available.

Shipping companies or importers seeking approval for the use of equivalent systems must demonstrate to MAF the system's usefulness and how it might be monitored.

Suspension or Termination of Approvals

MAF may suspend or terminate the approval of:

- a transitional facility to receive containers
- an accredited person to carry out biosecurity checks.

This can occur at any time if evidence is found that the facility or approved person is not fulfilling the requirements of the Standard or other MAF Standards.

A facility operator or approved person/s may withdraw from being an approved transitional facility operator or approved person by applying in writing to:

Sea Container Facility Registration
MAF Quarantine Service
PO Box 1254
Auckland

Glossary

Approved - Approved by the Director-General MAF, or delegate, for the intended purpose.

Approved Operator - Has the authority within the organisation to make appropriate decisions regarding imported containers. Also responsible for ensuring the requirements of the transitional facility standard are followed (in some cases this may also be the accredited person).

Accredited Person - A person who has attended and passed a course in basic biosecurity awareness associated with imported sea containers and container checking, and has been Approved (see definition above) to conduct certain checks under this Import Health Standard. An accredited person will usually be the operator or staff member of a transitional facility. However an accredited person may be employed by another organisation and provide the accredited person services under contract to a port company or transitional facility.

Authorised - Permitted by a MAF Inspector.

Biosecurity Clearance - A clearance issued by a MAF Inspector under section 26 of the Biosecurity Act 1993.

Certification - A document that attests to the status of a container (see Phytosanitary Certificate and Quarantine Declaration definitions).

Check by an Accredited Person - Visual observation of a container to detect the presence of insects and other contaminants. The check is to be specific and focused (e.g. the accredited person is to actively check the container for biosecurity contaminants), and may be carried out while undertaking other duties such as unloading the container from

the vessel or loading the container onto land transport. The check must be carried out when conditions (e.g. weather and lighting) allow contamination to be seen. The accredited person is not required to take any further action as a result of a find of contamination other than to record it, ensure that the contamination is contained and report it to a MAF Inspector.

Container - A sea freight container built to specifications promulgated by the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO), or a similar structure.

Contamination - Visible forms of animals, insects or other invertebrates (alive or dead, in any lifecycle stage, including egg casings or rafts), or any organic material of animal origin (including blood, bones, hair, flesh, secretions, excretions); viable or inviable plants or plant products (including fruit, seeds, leaves, twigs, roots, bark); or other organic material, including fungi; or soil or water; where such products are not the manifested cargo within the container.

Decontamination Facility - A facility meeting the requirements of MAFRA 152.04.03 Appendix III (Cars, Car parts, Equipment and Containers [Decontamination]).

Director, Border Management - The Director, Border Management, New Zealand Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, or any person who for the time being may lawfully exercise and perform the power and functions of the Director, Border Management. This position is a Chief Technical Officer pursuant to section 101 of the Biosecurity Act 1993.

Glossary

High-risk Container - Containers which are risk assessed as having higher than average probability of being contaminated or carrying unmanifested cargo or unmanifested/prohibited packaging material. Such containers will be identified by risk profiling.

Inspection - A visual inspection by an Inspector, of sufficient thoroughness to detect the presence of other contamination that can be seen on or in the container. Such an inspection does not require magnification but may require additional lighting if the inspection is carried out at night or within a building.

Inspector - As defined by the Biosecurity Act 1993.

MAF - Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, New Zealand.

Packaging - Cargo packing material used in the container such as cases, crates, boxes, drums, cartons. This also includes material used to stabilise cargo within the container such as dunnage, wedges and other material designed to hold or shore up the cargo.

Phytosanitary Certificate - An official document that attests to the phytosanitary status of a consignment, including a container.

Port Area - The environs of those areas approved as places of first arrival for craft, and adjacent associated facilities at which the container arrived in New Zealand.

Quarantine Declaration - Declaration attesting to the interior and exterior cleanliness of the container and whether any restricted packing or packaging is used within the cargo or container.

Restricted Packaging Material - Soil, peat, raw green or contaminated moss, used sacking material, used tyres, hay, straw, chaff and any packing material contaminated with the above. Wood packaging is also included - materials such as cases, crates and pallets and wood used to separate, brace, protect or secure cargo in transit.

(see <http://www.maf.govt.nz/biosecurity/imports/forests/standards/non-viable-forest-produce/wood-packaging.htm>)

Transitional Facility (Containers) - A place approved as a transitional facility in accordance with section 39 of the Biosecurity Act 1993 for the purpose of inspection, storage, treatment, quarantine or holding of containers.

Transitional Facility Operator - A person approved as the operator of a transitional facility pursuant to section 40 of the Biosecurity Act 1993. Also known as approved operator.

Appendix I

Quarantine Declaration to Accompany Containers to New Zealand

Packer or Exporter Letterhead

Quarantine Declaration for Containers

Vessel Name:

Voyage Number:

Container Number or Numbers:

Cleanliness and Restricted Packing and Packaging Declaration

1. Cleanliness

At the time of packing, the container/s were inspected internally and externally, and are clean and free from contamination with live organisms, material of plant or animal origin, soil and water. -----> Y N

2. Packaging Materials

Has any soil, peat, raw green or contaminated moss, used sacking material, hay, straw, chaff or any packing material contaminated with the above been used within the container/s listed above? -----> Y N

3. Wood Packaging

Has any wood packaging been used within the container/s such as cases, crates, pallets or wood used to separate, brace, protect or secure cargo in transit? -----> Y N

3a. If yes to 3 above, has the wood been treated? -----> Y N

3b. If yes to 3a above, how was the wood treated? -----> Write answer in box 3b

3b

3c. Is a certificate for the treatment of this wood available? -----> Y N

NOTE: If the information required above is not supplied or is found to be erroneous, it may result in significant delays and increased costs on arrival in New Zealand.

I certify that the above is true and correct.

Signed:

Date:

Voyage Number:

Designation:

Appendix 2

Application for Facility Approval and Operator Registration

A person or organisation wishing to have their facility approved as a transitional facility for receiving, unpacking and storage of sea containers and register as the operator must make an application to:

Container Facility Registration

MAF Quarantine Service

PO Box 1254

Auckland

An electronic application may be made via the Internet: www.maf.govt.nz/transitional-facilities/registration

Alternatively the application can be made in writing on the form in Appendix 1 which may be mailed to the address above or faxed to **09 3569785**

For general enquiries regarding registration and trading phone **0800 222 018**.



Ministry of Agriculture
and Forestry
Te Manatū Ahuwhenua,
Ngāherehere



Protect New Zealand
Tiaki Aotearoa
www.protectnz.org.nz