



## **Phytos news and work updates – September**

***Welcome to another Phytos update. Another busy couple of months as we continue to make progress protecting and enhancing market access options for our members.***

### **MPI consultation: Single-dose application (phosphine)**

Members will be aware that Phytos has actively funded scientific Vaporph3os research and supported the approval of a single-dose application of phosphine in ship holds for logs. Thanks to those members who have been in touch and/or submitted on the MPI consultation document. Phytos understands that MPI are in the process of deciding next steps, one of which could be seeking additional technical advice in order to cover off some of the issues raised in submissions. On behalf of the industry Phytos continues to advocate for an efficient and helpful outcome.

### **Updated pest interception data**

Exporters will now be in receipt of the latest pest interception data from China (via MPI). MPI's position is that it will only provide data directly to each exporter and so what exporters have received is individualised (exporter only) data, not the wider industry picture. Phytos believes it is beneficial to build an industry picture of the data to allow us to monitor industry trends and therefore assess what action, if any, is required (e.g. the national Debarker Quality Assurance Program). If individual members consent, Phytos is happy to act as an independent collector and analyser of data on a confidential and anonymous basis. Feel free to give me a ring to progress that initiative.

### **Debarking – response to increased pest interceptions**

The most recent pest interception data reinforces that, as an industry, we must remain vigilant to pest interception notifications and issues emanating from China. In response to previous communication from China, members will be aware that Phytos commissioned the 2023 debarking audit. In consultation with MPI, outcomes of that audit have been 1) a minor change to MPI's Official Assurance Program (OAP) and, 2) a commitment by industry to develop and implement its own quality assurance system for debarking by the end of 2024.

Our industry working group now has a draft quality assessment programme and plans to meet on the 20th of September to make further progress on this important initiative.

Along with the work to protect and enhance phytosanitary pathways to China, Phytos continues to make good progress on its recommencement plan for India. The key work updates are summarised as below;

### **India – recommencement plan on track**

Members will be aware that India currently accepts Mbr as a phytosanitary treatment for NZ logs. India does not currently approve the use of phosphine or debarking.

New Zealand's log trade to India has steadily increased under the approved phytosanitary pathway (ie, Mbr fumigation on arrival) which was negotiated by MPI with support from Phytos towards the end of



2023. The industry remains hopeful that export log receipts will trend up towards their peak of \$250M (in 2019) over time. To further support an increase in the sustainable trade of logs with India, Phytos and MPI have also been working on two more phytosanitary treatment options (ie, Systems approach and EDN).

Members will be aware that Phytos represented the NZ forest industry in India (August 2023) as part of the Ministerial/NZ business delegation culminating in the submission of a 'system approach phytosanitary pathway for logs utilising phosphine'. The positive response from India led to Phytos overseeing a technical response to a limited number of queries posed by India's Directorate of Plant Protection, Quarantine and Storage (PPQS). The second (enhanced) proposal was delivered to the Indian Minister of Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal, by Minister McClay during their trade meeting last month.

The third potential (and longer term) phytosanitary treatment option for exporters is EDN. Phytos is working with MPI and Draslovka to progress a review of the EDN pest and pathogen efficacy data set with a view to proposing an initial 'logs in container' trial to India.

### **MPI Consultation: Fixed Dates for the Arhopalus ferus flight Season**

MPI is seeking industry input through a consultation period on proposing fixed dates for the start and end of the Arhopalus ferus season for sawn-timber exports to Australia. The consultation period closes at 17:00, Friday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2024. Feel free to get in touch with any questions about that also.

### **Phytos AGM**

Phytos will hold its AGM on Thursday the 21<sup>st</sup> of November in Tauranga. Meeting papers will be distributed to members by the 31<sup>st</sup> of October.

As members will be aware, the Phytos constitution requires it to have three 'log exporters' as Board members. At this year's AGM the largest 2 exporters by volume will be entitled automatically to nominate a representative on the Board, while the remaining exporter representative will be a nominee of the other exporters. On that basis Phytos will be completing a log exporter nominee and voting process to have that third Board member position confirmed prior to the AGM.

I would like to thank members for their continued support of Phytos and the associated 'industry good' that the organisation funds and manages on your behalf. Please get in touch with any queries or questions.

Regards  
Matt Hill  
Executive Officer / Research Director