

# Biosecurity Business Pledge Insights Report

**“Managing business  
biosecurity risk creates  
economic value”**



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October 2021

# Contents

1	Introduction to the Biosecurity Business Pledge and this report
3	The Biosecurity Business Pledge
4	What the Pledge membership base looks like
4	Methodology and participants
7	Key themes from member companies
7	More on member company key themes
14	Key themes from business and industry associations
16	Examples of practice against each of the Pledge commitments
21	Recommendations
24	My thanks



# Introduction to the Biosecurity Business Pledge and this report

## History of the Biosecurity Business Pledge

Minister Damien O'Connor joined business leaders to launch the Biosecurity Business Pledge in late October 2019. The Pledge aims to enable a more proactive approach to biosecurity by improving the partnership between government and business. At launch there were 57 founding signatory businesses and supporting business organisations who have made a number of commitments detailed later in this report.

The Biosecurity Business Pledge was designed to sit under the Biosecurity 2025 strategy and, in particular as a business contribution to building a biosecurity team of 4.7 million. The intent was to enhance the biosecurity interaction between the Ministry of Primary Industries and the business community, and between businesses, to support and encourage proactive biosecurity practices and to help engage wider New Zealand to take biosecurity responsibility in their day-to-day lives.

By supporting better biosecurity outcomes the Pledge directly contributes to the Productive and Sustainable goals of the *Fit for a Better World* strategy. New Zealand's relative freedom from many pests and diseases has long-supported our primary sector productivity and reputation for quality food and fibre production. It also safeguards the environmental characteristics central to the 'NZ Inc brand'.

The Inaugural Pledge Members Forum was scheduled for March 2020. It was intended to start an enhanced conversation between businesses committed to the Pledge and Biosecurity New Zealand. The incursion of Covid-19 stopped the event from occurring and put the work on a hiatus until the end of 2020 when work commenced again.

## Background to this report

In October 2020, the Steering Group and Biosecurity New Zealand agreed to fund an independent progress report on how the Biosecurity Business Pledge programme is working, despite the interruptions, with the intention to identify and share lessons/ insights at the Members Forum scheduled for November 2021.

The task was to look at what actions members are taking on their commitments and identify any gaps in practice or what needs to be addressed to deliver greater impact. The overarching mandate was to be constructive to help improve performance across sectors; this was not an audit in approach or style.

Despite the challenges delivered by Covid-19, the Pledge is delivering on its intent, demonstrating value to members and strengthening practice

There have been many highlights this year including strong attendance at the inaugural Members Forum in February and peer-to-peer online learning sessions with open sharing of practices and tools between large and small companies and sectors. Membership has almost doubled in size.

By managing individual business risk, risk in sectors or regions, each signatory is also helping protect our economy. The network being built by the Pledge is strengthening business practice and will strengthen New Zealand's resilience for future responses should and when incursions occur. There will be in place an even stronger existing network of relationships and a broad set of experience and diverse skills to build on.

In this report a range of insights have been drawn from interviews with half of the Pledge signatories. There are also recommendations which may be a bit daunting. They can be taken over time and they are made to assist the programme's ongoing development.

The key opportunity is maintaining momentum, delivering greater value to current members and scaling the work. However, the biggest challenge is Covid-19 which is distracting members and the model is at risk of losing pace.

Now is the time to ensure a sustainable model with the right resourcing levels to continue strengthening members' practice while also enabling business and government to work together co-developing solutions for a stronger biosecurity system.

Congratulations to those who foresaw the need for this collaborative platform and way of working.

# The Biosecurity Business Pledge

The Biosecurity Business Pledge gives businesses a framework to be part of the biosecurity team protecting New Zealand from pests and diseases. The Pledge has been created by business for business.

It aims to take a more proactive approach to biosecurity by improving the partnership between government and businesses, to help prevent unnecessary costs and disruptions for businesses, communities and the broader New Zealand economy.

Businesses pledge to integrate proactive biosecurity practices into their operational activities and supply chains.

Taking a proactive approach to biosecurity helps protect New Zealand's economy, unique natural environment and its way of life for future generations.

A broad intent of the Biosecurity Business Pledge includes two-way information sharing between Biosecurity New Zealand and committing businesses.

## Signatory company commitments

They commit to being an active part of New Zealand's biosecurity team of all New Zealanders by integrating proactive biosecurity practices into their operations and supply chains.

They also commit to:

- Actively seeking to understand and manage the biosecurity considerations associated with their business activities;
- Promoting a culture of proactive biosecurity management within their operations, across their business, around their board tables, and across their teams;
- Incorporating biosecurity into their procurement policies that guide the selection of goods, travel, logistics, and service providers;
- Taking opportunities to support their customers, staff, suppliers and stakeholders to understand the importance of biosecurity and what good biosecurity practice looks like; and
- Approaching biosecurity with the view that it is everyone's responsibility, that risk is best managed offshore, and that they will actively engage with the Ministry for Primary Industries to support better biosecurity outcomes for New Zealand.

Committing and Supporting Organisations could be broadly expected to:

- Promote the Pledge to their members;
- Support the Pledge;
- Demonstrate leadership on programme initiatives;
- Encourage other sectors to join;
- Promote good biosecurity practices in member communications;
- Bring in biosecurity related speakers to their member events; and
- Prioritise the schedule of member events.

“Only as strong as your neighbour and other players in the system”

## What the Pledge membership base looks like

The Pledge's membership is becoming increasingly broad and diverse. Large and small businesses are represented across the primary sector in food and fibre production and their supply chains. There are logistics and freight forwarders, retailers, other importers and exporters and our ports of first entry where passengers and cargo arrives in the country. Members are importing from and exporting to all corners of the world. Membership is increasingly getting broader than its primary sector foundational base.

Many are leading brands and carry significant risks to their businesses should an unwanted exotic pest or disease arrive in the country – or an endemic pest or disease be transmitted from another site or location within New Zealand.

Broadly members can be broken into the following:

- Eighty commercial entities, including dairy and meat companies, horticulture/viticulture linked companies, a handful of retailers, ports/airports, and transport/logistics and travel/airline companies.
- Twenty-four business associations or industry organisations, of which 14 are also Government Industry Association members (an important and complementary mechanism for the nation's readiness and response situations).

## Methodology and participants

The desire was to ensure this process was not onerous on members as many were just recovering from the impacts of New Zealand's first Covid-19 lockdowns in 2020. The Terms of Reference were established and distributed to members inviting them to appoint someone as their point of contact.

At commencement, we said that the process might include interviews, review of publicly available information such as annual reports and websites, an online survey, review of documents supplied from signatories such as policies, suppliers and site visits for case studies.

Initial emails went out to signatory companies with an immediate and pleasing response. A range of chief executives, members of leadership teams, managing directors/owners, operational practitioners right through to the shop floor participated in interviews.

From initial interviews, it was quickly apparent that this partnership has a perceived and actual value. Members appreciated the interview process itself. In having a safe and honest dialogue with members, I could identify gaps in practice and connect them to other businesses for help. This in itself has resulted in a recommendation. While not a typical review practice, this was discussed with Biosecurity New Zealand team members and the Steering Group. We focused primarily on the interviews, site visits and online publicly available information to draw themes.

Fifty-four interviews of varying depth were conducted across businesses and supporting member associations. Additional companies were prepared to be interviewed, but the emergence of the Delta variant of Covid-19 in the community and the recent nationwide level four lockdown commencing on August 17<sup>th</sup> saw the process essentially come to a halt with interviews and the remaining site visits cancelled.

With the lockdown and interruption to business when I was drafting the report, I did not go back out to signatories to check I had reflected all details accurately in the examples I have chosen to highlight. My apologies for any errors contained, and I hope there is understanding that I share them with the intent of inspiring other businesses. I also acknowledge the specialist knowledge, whereas I was a novice to the topic as I traversed the industries and unique issues each faces. There is a vast depth of knowledge to tap into in the Pledge membership.

While I have listed the following companies and organisations that I spoke to, this is not a true reflection of those who expressed their interest in engaging with me. Many had to cancel with the level four lockdown.

## Member Companies

Air New Zealand	Mondiale
Auckland International Airport Limited	Northport
AFFCO	Norwood
Alliance	New Zealand Biosecurity
Allied	New Zealand Farmers Livestock
Business Jet	Oceanbridge
Cargo Plus	Oceania New Zealand Dairy Company
Countdown	Ovation
Dairy Goat Co-operative	Pernod Ricard
Elite Pest Control	PTS Logistics
First Global Logistics	Rockitt Apples
Fonterra Co-operative Group	Silver Fern Farms
Foodstuffs	T & G Global
Jenkins FPS	Tasman Cargo
Livestock Improvement Corporation	United Fresh
Lyttelton Port Company	Wedderspoon
Mainfreight	Westland Milk Products
MG Marketing	

“We have made a commitment and put our reputation on the line, so now we have to make sure we deliver on the Pledge commitments”

## Business and Industry Associations

Apiculture New Zealand

Beef + Lamb New Zealand

Custom Brokers and Freight Forwarders  
Federation of New Zealand

Dairy Companies Association of  
New Zealand

Egg Producers Federation New Zealand

Federated Farmers

Horticulture New Zealand

Kiwifruit Vine Health

Meat Industry Association of New Zealand

New Zealand Apples and Pears

New Zealand Council of Cargo Owners

NZ Pork

NZ Winegrowers Association

Poultry Industry Association of New Zealand

Summerfruit NZ

Tamarillos Growers Association

“We are all collectively responsible for biosecurity, and we cannot assign that away. As an importer, I cannot let that responsibility lie on the shoulders of my freight forwarders – I own it, and all of us must get better at making stringent requirements on our suppliers”



## Key themes from member companies

1. The partnership is delivering on its intent and is having an impact
2. Further investment to scale impact and ensure ongoing momentum
3. As expected, businesses and sectors are in different stages of their biosecurity journey
4. The commitments are seen as compliance and may not stretch some signatories
5. Companies want to learn from each other
6. Biosecurity New Zealand's insight sharing is of huge value to advance business practice
7. Strength is in the breadth and diversity of the signatory members
8. What good looks like is opaque at times, and not many have clarity on how to measure performance
9. Approaches and solutions by sector or region
10. We need to increase engagement with the top table
11. Positioning of biosecurity is essential and could be weighted equally to health and safety
12. Awareness/communications and stakeholder engagement is a priority with work underway
13. Training is a gap and already noted for future work
14. Feedback on Biosecurity New Zealand.

## More on member company key themes

### The partnership is delivering on its intent and is having an impact

The Pledge is delivering on its intent of an effective working partnership between Biosecurity New Zealand and business; and is a platform for open collaboration, information and lesson sharing.

The singular focus on biosecurity and the collective mission to reduce business risks delivers real economic value to businesses. Members value this as a pre-competitive platform and forum to share insights to protect NZ Inc and its businesses regardless of company size. They are openly sharing practices, tools and materials and other companies are picking these up and strengthening what they are doing.

“Significant impact if New Zealand doesn't do biosecurity well”

The majority of members stated that they have committed to the Pledge to demonstrate their commitment to the 'NZ Inc brand', which is vital for import and export status, our communities and way of life.

There is recognition that we do not have a lot of pests and diseases that exist in other countries and that this is a significant commercial advantage for us as a nation. Business appreciates this and the need to work together to maintain this status. They also recognise that "we are only as strong as other players in the system, or that you are only as strong as your neighbour's practices, or that your sector is only one plane flight away from disaster."

A key to this partnership model is that it is safe, Chatham House Rule exists, and it is in the pre-competitive space. We are witnessing competitors sharing practices in the interests of the greater good. Frequently I heard that since joining, businesses have been able to implement new, additional or improved practices due to engaging in sessions.

The Pledge also supports the activation of the Biosecurity 2025 team of 5 million as businesses are reaching outside of their operations into their supply chains and other stakeholder groupings. The promotion of biosecurity by Pledge members at the 'Fieldays' event is a good example of collectively reaching out to the almost 130,000 attendees.

Many interviewees also said they signed up because they wanted a working relationship with the Ministry.

There is potentially room to extend this business-government partnership with the Pledge to other agencies with overlapping interests. For example, good biodiversity starts with/goes hand-in-hand with good biosecurity (Department of Conservation), the passenger pathway is a key risk area (Tourism New Zealand) and biosecurity underpins trade arrangements (MFAT).

### Further investment to scale impact and ensure ongoing momentum

There is a willingness and desire to see this programme embed and grow. However, as Covid-19 continues to distract and interrupt business, it impacts the pace of delivery of the programme primarily because the model relies heavily on volunteer time. This time is utilised at the Steering Group and in business-led projects.

The opportunity and challenge will be how to invest in it to help current business signatories embed and improve practice and scale this programme. This process demonstrated value in having someone engaging with members, gaining trust and having an open dialogue and is an area where further investment will deliver greater value as the programme membership grows.

### As expected, businesses and sectors are in different stages of their biosecurity journey

For some signatories, the Pledge commitments are what they do every day, and it is compliance. While others are not as mature in their approach, they are simply starting and are keen to learn from those more experienced.

There are different levels of resourcing and sophistication in approaches. Some have accountability held at the top level of their organisation and biosecurity features on their risk register. They may have a plan covering all aspects of their commitments (and more) and have some committed resourcing.

It would appear that more businesses are moving beyond an operational focus to reach into their supply chains and broader stakeholders. There was evidence that some members are actively recruiting companies in their supply chains to join the Pledge and collectively improve practice.

Some sectors work together on biosecurity issues that affect them as a whole. They co-fund and develop approaches and tools for the betterment and protection of all. For example, the New Zealand Farmers Assurance Programme for the red meat sector has standards and practices that include biosecurity. Other sectors may not collaborate so much and value the Pledge platform to share and learn without competitive issues.

Some companies would gain value from having a more cohesive biosecurity strategy or approach reaching into all parts of their operations.

A one-size-fits-all programme offering or approach won't work with such a broad and diverse membership in differing places in their practice. Different methods developed and owned by businesses in general, able to be tailored are vital. It has to be noted that this is the approach being taken already in the three member opt-in projects underway.

### The commitments are seen as compliance and may not stretch some signatories

For some, the commitments are seen as simply daily practice. They told me the commitments do not stretch them beyond compliance with their regulatory requirements, for example, in animal health and welfare, in food production and processing, at transitional facilities and for transport and logistics. They have regulatory requirements and standards that they have to meet. They are still interested in improving performance and learning from one another but say they are already meet all their commitments.

A challenge for the Pledge governance therefore is how to help stretch performance in these signatories, or perhaps how to foster a culture of continuous improvement to ensure that the current commitments are not viewed as static.

A few of these companies did suggest that there is scope to reach into their supply chains and out to other stakeholder groups to build biosecurity knowledge and awareness.

Other member companies are not in such a strong place and value learning from each other. This finding is in line with expectations due to the breadth and depth of the expanding membership.

“I quite like those forums – they're quick, easy, perfect for personal/professional development. Enjoy them”

## Companies want to learn from each other

There is enormous perceived and received value from businesses sharing their insights and tools through the learning sessions. All members expressed a desire for more of these, whether online or in person. Members also expressed their desire to network with each other and do more in person when the time is right.

Some companies have joined the Pledge to learn from those better resourced and further along in the biosecurity journey. The sharing of best practices from signatories who are exposed to and see the most risk, such as the ports, airports and prominent players like Fonterra, was acknowledged as helping to improve awareness and practice elsewhere.

## Biosecurity New Zealand's insight sharing is of huge value to advance business practice

Members place a high value on Biosecurity New Zealand's active participation, including regularly sharing insights. It is better equipping businesses with the information needed to address emerging risks. The specific and practical nature of the information makes a difference, for example, knowing that there is an increased level of document fraud occurring and what to look for. Steve Gilbert was consistently referred to as straight-shooting and helping businesses target efforts.

Many interviewees commented on the importance of a good working relationship with Biosecurity New Zealand as one of the drivers for signing up. They are looking forward to more opportunities to collaborate or co-design solutions to strengthen what business does.

Some commentary was made around the value of Biosecurity New Zealand officers visiting sites to share lessons and insights, not as an audit, but as a confidential conversation and way to improve practice.

## Strength is in the breadth and diversity of the signatory members

There is benefit in having a platform with open sharing from a range of business types with differing biosecurity risks and challenges sharing their insights and practices – the mistakes they have made, along with what works. The Pledge platform means some businesses hear of risks and concerns from other sectors that they had never considered. As a result, they are now thinking about how their company operates and the threat they pose to others.

Businesses reported that they value learning from peers, whether in the same industry and sector or from other unrelated companies. Peer support is key to this model and business speaks the same language.

“Can't let your guard down, and it is important to note that sometimes you are reliant on downstream biosecurity practice”

## What good looks like is opaque at times, and not many have clarity on how to measure performance

There was a general lack of knowledge of what good metrics would be and if anyone is using any. This is already an area of work identified in the February forum and underway in the member opt-in project on governance.

Not only was that a challenge for business, but it exists for the programme also. How do we measure performance when the intent was to create a collaboration platform, and many businesses are clearly in different stages of their biosecurity practice journeys? For this piece of work, I have taken the evidence from members of exchanging ideas, changing practices, introducing new things to the scope of their work as being evidence. In the next phase of work, a more sophisticated approach may be desirable.

## Approaches and solutions by sector or region

Some Chief Executives expressed an interest in engaging on sector or regional issues, while others are activating cross-sector learning because of similarities in requirements, challenges and lessons to share. For example, the Port of Lyttleton offered to host all ports, airports and airlines for a sector day.

Some members of the live animal/animal health sectors also expressed interest in a session catering to lesson sharing and tackling issues that are key to them and not to others, such as horticulture.

It is important to note that the breadth of the Pledge membership means that while some members will be involved in sector discussions due to their Government Industry Agreements involvement, others won't.

## We need to increase engagement with the top table

Covid-19 delivered a health-related incursion across our borders, something that many of the senior leaders described as "the aha moment" that resulted in them escalating other biosecurity issues to the top table. Reducing risk and safeguarding business continuity is a critical motivator for senior teams to continue to focus on biosecurity.

It was, however, surprising that accountability for biosecurity risks does not always sit at the most senior levels of leadership. Frequently it sat lower in the organisation. Additionally, biosecurity is not always on risk registers, and operational leads reflected that they "struggle to work out how to engage and integrate at their board level." Biosecurity should be on all large business's risk registers with regular reporting and discussion at senior levels.

The business leaders I did engage with are keen to continue building a common and specific understanding of the critical risks for New Zealand and from each other's business practices. They recognise that the pathway for their most significant biosecurity risk may be via someone else's pathway. Therefore it makes sense to have cross-sector collaboration to determine where we can work together better.

## Positioning of biosecurity is essential and could be weighted equally to health and safety

Many businesses described this as just what they do and part of their animal welfare or food safety initiatives critical to their companies. Others focus due to trade and legislative requirements, being a part of first entry and, to a lesser extent, link this to their government relations or sustainability work.

Others described how this is similar to or linked to their health and safety, risk and environmental work. I heard that the weighting and focus should be the same as that given to health and safety.

“The good thing about the Pledge is that it has kept the topic on our priority list. It has helped us to elevate it to the front of our priorities along with other key things like health and safety”

## Awareness/communications and stakeholder engagement is a priority, and work is underway

One of the most repeated themes was that we collectively need to get better at storytelling around biosecurity and its intrinsic values. We need to keep the topic alive, authentic and constantly engaging. We need to identify and focus on points in the value chain where certain players have contact with farmers/producers/markets who can be conduits and tell the story of the why and help improve practices.

There was strong agreement that New Zealand's exporters trade-off the natural advantages of our location and clean-green image. Yet, they were not aware of any storytelling or collateral that they could use. This is one of the member opt-in projects underway.

Members would utilise resources to help engage varying audiences as well as keeping the topic fresh and relevant.

There is an opportunity to improve information to offshore agents and returnees on what is required on arrival in New Zealand. Additionally, what you can and cannot bring here. Any materials developed should be downloadable and easily shared.

A small number of interviewees suggested that there is a gap in biosecurity awareness by architects and engineers. This should be addressed to ensure that biosecurity factors are considered in the design stage for building such as transitional facilities and distribution centres.

## Training is a gap and already noted for future work

Training is a gap where businesses could do with some help to improve what is out there. It is a compliance requirement for many – but what is not clear is what it should look like and how often? They are not all sure what is a good approach to biosecurity training and content. Many smaller organisations do not have human resources available to create content and reported struggling to deliver learning on this topic.

## Feedback on Biosecurity New Zealand

There is general agreement that in the last 18-24 months, Biosecurity New Zealand has become more open and consultative and that this programme is forging a new way of working together.

But there were also comments that Biosecurity New Zealand is often too paper-based, manual and old-fashioned, overcomplicated, and needs to utilise more technology that interfaces with systems businesses use to help with tracking shipments from high-risk regions. A specific example shared a couple of times concerned the new container tracking processing is manual and involves double entering data for some organisations and it does not allow visibility for different operators within an organisation. There is some concern with the cumbersome nature of this, and it is an area where Pledge members and Biosecurity New Zealand could potentially collaborate and identify improvements.

There were also comments about the risk-averse culture and that it doesn't speak business-speak. Perhaps that is something that will evolve with collaborating more.

Those businesses with ex-Biosecurity New Zealand or MPI staff note that this benefits them as they can use that person's specialist and institutional knowledge as well as the relationships they hold inside the Ministry. This also helps them know what to do and where to go for information if required.

There were a handful of comments on how hard the Ministry's website is to navigate and find the relevant information. Sometimes there is overwhelmingly too much information on it.

Not one person I interviewed referred to Biosecurity New Zealand – they all use MPI. While the rebranding of the Biosecurity New Zealand branch of MPI is still fairly new there is room to continue build brand awareness and the reason why it has been differentiated.

Some signatories talked about some Biosecurity New Zealand officers being challenging to deal with. What would be helpful and valuable is to have some open and safe dialogue to help identify areas for improvement rather than only having interaction at the time of an audit. I heard that Customs had taken this approach recently.

However, the key feedback was that insight sharing, increased communication in recent times, and the ability to work together via the Pledge is hugely valued.

From working with Biosecurity New Zealand through this process, it is clear that ample opportunity lies in continuing to build on this goodwill and use this network to co-design or test solutions.

It is worthy to also relay that Jo Darby was noted by members as being a tireless and passionate driver behind the Pledge. She was referred to as show-casing collaboration in her style of working with business.

## Key themes from business and industry associations

The Pledge was initiated by a group of key associations, including Dairy Companies Association of New Zealand, Meat Industry Association, Council of Cargo Owners, Customs Brokers and Freight Forwarders Association and Horticulture New Zealand.

These members continue to be active and committed today, including participation and membership on the steering group. This collective knowledge and access to membership bases have been vital to the successful establishment of the Pledge and the programme of work this year.

It is to be noted that the Chair of the group, Kimberly Crewther, has committed significant personal and work time to driving the partnership and programme.

### Business and industry associations are effectively collective burden-sharing

The business and industry associations are, of course, acting in the interests and priorities of their members. For most of these associations, biosecurity has long been topical for their sectors, with some experiencing incursions that have had a significant impact in recent years, for example, in the Beef, Dairy, Kiwifruit, Poultry and Tamarillo sectors. Therefore, most identify risks for their industry and provide education/awareness materials, tools and resources to mitigate them. This centralised resourcing developing strategies and tools essentially shares some of the burdens and helps members improve practice faster.

Through the discussions and review of public and online materials, it was clear that the associations are conducting a range of activity including actively promoting the Pledge to their members, supporting the Pledge through steering group membership, promoting good biosecurity practices in member communications and at member events.

However, the smaller associations expressed frustration that they often cannot provide the tools, templates, and information their members want and need due to budget and resource constraints. One smaller association said that “while biosecurity is normally our number one issue, at present the border closure has created a situation where labour supply is, we may not be able to pick our crops.” Therefore a challenge for the Pledge as it proceeds is how to assist better/equip these smaller associations to reach their members.



Twenty-four supporting organisations should collectively provide an opportunity to pool resources and amplify what they would be able to achieve individually for their memberships. This opportunity has been identified by the Steering Group and a conversation is being initiated.

The Pledge is seen as complementary to the Government Industry Agreements. The Pledge is tangibly strengthening individual business readiness. One association leader stated, “The Pledge neatly ties in as a mitigation measure and a way to stop business/New Zealand getting to the stage of needing a response.”

Interestingly during the interview process, some spoke about how some industry groups only grudgingly share information. The Pledge’s pre-competitive platform appears to help these group’s share information.

There is a significant opportunity to build direct contact and engagement within each association’s own membership. Value lies in direct engagement in the learning sessions and peer-to-peer networking rather than relying on the association to disseminate information.

“Engaging with other companies in the Pledge is helping me share my concerns in person, rather than through my industry body. BMSB is a real threat to my business and keeps me up at night. I need importers to be vigilant or I may lose everything”

## Examples of practice against each of the Pledge commitments

In this section examples are provided to illustrate what is being done under each commitment. These are not in any way an exhaustive list of what companies are doing, merely a limited sample to highlight different activity.

### Commitment 1

*Signatories commit to being an active part of New Zealand's biosecurity team of all New Zealanders by integrating proactive biosecurity practices into their operations and supply chains.*

By signing the Pledge, the signatories are actively demonstrating that they are committed to being a part of New Zealand's biosecurity team. However, they are at different parts of their biosecurity journey and have differing sophistication, resourcing, and approach. But they are a part of the team, there to collaborate and learn from one another.

#### Auckland International Airport Limited

During the interviewing process, Auckland Airport was repeatedly referenced as the Pledge exemplar member for its active participation, cohesive strategy reaching inside and outside of its operations, approach, openness in sharing its lessons and materials such as online training. Members recognised this contribution as adding significant value to the programme, and many members have advanced practice as a result of Auckland Airport.

### Commitment 2

*Actively seek to understand and manage the biosecurity considerations associated with their business activities*

Most businesses clearly understood the biosecurity considerations associated with their business activities and targeted their strategies and actions around their operations. The business and industry organisations play a significant role in identifying and disseminating information to their members on specific risks and mitigating measures for their sector, such as Foot and Mouth disease or the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug. They also help their sectors strengthen practice around these risks.

#### Fonterra

This co-operative business is well aware of its key risks and, as a result, has a more sophisticated and multifaceted approach than many. The biosecurity strategy supports Fonterra's business strategy, which supports farming families and New Zealand.

Biosecurity is on the risk register. Biosecurity challenges are seen in two ways: first, those endemic to New Zealand and those that may be an exotic incursion for animals and food sources. The second area is those biosecurity risks at the supply or farm level and their production activities.

Fonterra and the Dairy sector are progressing towards management of farm risks through 'Integrated Farming Plans' as part of collaborative work under the 'Dairy Tomorrow' industry strategy, which also involves other dairy companies and industry organisations (DairyNZ, Federated Farmers, DCANZ and Dairy Women's Network). They also have Risk Organism Response Plans and Business Continuity Planning, which are tested regularly with topics including biosecurity on a rotating basis. Their incident management team manage these and their readiness plans.

As a Biosecurity Business Pledge member, Fonterra is openly and actively engaging and recently shared its newly developed travel training module at an online forum. This was noted by several members as being helpful and has prompted the revision of and commencement of training elsewhere.

### Pernod Ricard

However you view winemaker Pernod Ricard, it is an industry leader in size, scope and influence. It is also an exemplar signatory that can demonstrate its commitment to the Pledge across all facets of its operations.

Pernod Ricard senior leader has ownership and accountability. There is committed resourcing, policies, procedures, training, materials for visitor awareness, requirements on contractors such as in grazing contracts – and more.

While there are requirements due to regulation and certification, such as ISO, the business uses a continuous improvement approach to stay above compliance. This applies to all areas, including environmental management, health and safety, quality and food safety and risk management, within which biosecurity is well embedded.

Pernod Ricard works closely with its Industry body and utilises the resources provided. Like many signatories, they talked of the challenges of ensuring team members implement and keep the topic fresh and alive and have a range of activities to promote to staff.

Biosecurity is included in business continuity testing, which is conducted regularly. They tested their response to the Covid-19 Delta variant scenario a week before the nationwide lockdown in August. A timely reminder of the importance of managing risks to minimise business disruption.

## Commitment 3

*Promote a culture of proactive biosecurity management within their operations, across their business, around their board tables, and across their teams*

### T&G

T&G has biosecurity well-embedded into the business and its operations. The Pledge commitments are fundamental and simply what it does on a day-to-day basis. I have chosen the following example as some signatories asked how they could demonstrate that a biosecurity culture was alive and well. Proof of a biosecurity culture can be illustrated through individual ownership and action. Late one Friday afternoon, a T&G team member found what he thought was a Brown Marmorated Stink Bug (BMSB) in some equipment imported from Italy. He immediately contacted their biosecurity lead, their Market Access and Compliance

Manager, who was not working that day but who then, within an hour of discovery, had the bug and took it to the Plant and Food lab for identification. Pleasingly it was not the high-risk BMSB. It was shared with me to demonstrate that if there is any concern, then action will be taken instantly and that all of the team feel a part of protecting the business and industry.

## Commitment 4

*Incorporate biosecurity into their procurement policies that guide the selection of goods, travel, logistics, and service providers*

### Silver Fern Farms

Silver Fern Farms has biosecurity embedded as a core area in its business strategy. It reduces and mitigates risks that could impact its operations and NZ Inc. Like many signatories, the company is a leading brand and goes beyond compliance in its areas of activity and wants the topic to be a part of its DNA. It has a procurement policy and clause within its contract that talks to regulatory compliance. At the time of interviewing, they were strengthening this clause and will align the policy concurrently.

## Commitment 5

*Take opportunities to support their customers, staff, suppliers and stakeholders to understand the importance of biosecurity and what good biosecurity practice looks like*

### Jenkins FPS

A challenge to many organisations is how to keep topics alive and fresh and achieve staff buy-in. Jenkins FPS was developing a new Whistle Blowing policy and procedures and included biosecurity within it. They supported the policy's launch with a funny and informative video to engage staff which landed well. Not many companies are supporting work with digital visual communications.

### Oceanbridge

This was a great example of a signatory encouraging key customers to sign up to the Pledge, including Foodstuffs North and South Island, as well as CargoPlus. Reaching into the supply chain, whether domestically or offshore, to encourage participation in the Pledge is one way to strengthen the entire system. Oceanbridge also empowers its staff to put their hand up and say if something is wrong, whether biosecurity or a customs issue. They also encourage whistleblowing if staff members wish to use this as a channel.

### Lyttelton Port

The Lyttelton Port Company is the largest port in the South Island and a critical gateway for goods. One way that the company ensures the topic of biosecurity is kept top of mind is through the involvement of staff in biosecurity simulation exercises. The Port Company openly shared its experience and lessons during one of the peer-to-peer sessions recently. I heard during the interviewing process that other companies have subsequently evolved their own simulation exercises as a result of the Port's lessons. All organisations conducting similar exercises reported the importance of doing these on a regular basis as a way of ensuring employee buy-in and continuous improvement in practice.

### Outreach in external communications

Not all signatories are promoting their involvement in the Pledge. However, there were good examples in a range of external communications such as annual reports, on websites and in social media by the following companies and industry associations.

Auckland International Airport Limited	Kiwifruit Vine Health
Fonterra	Horticulture NZ
Jacson3	Meat Industry Association
Livestock Improvement Corporation	NZ Pork
Miraka	NZ Winegrowers
Port of Tauranga	Tomatoes NZ
Silver Fern Farms	Vegetables NZ
Forest Owners Association	

### United Fresh

A pan-produce organisation with 92 members across the whole supply chain, it acts in many areas, including awareness and capability building of its members and as a conduit for information when there is an incursion. It is highlighted here as it has a **technical advisory group biosecurity portal** that outlines everything they have done with the Pledge. Every signatory could have one to help build awareness of the Pledge.

### Biosecurity champions promoting best practice

During the interviews, Kristina Cooper at Auckland International Airport was cited numerous times as a biosecurity champion and an exemplar in openly sharing to build capability across any sector or business. She is on the Steering Group and was involved from the outset in the design of the Pledge and its commitments to ensure it was workable for business and in particular for the ports of first entry.

As noted elsewhere, the Airport company's approach to biosecurity risk management was frequently cited as outstanding or best practice by Pledge members.

A second champion Pledge member referenced was Sophie Badland at New Zealand Winegrowers – noted as being open and sharing templates and tools. There could be value in identifying a range of existing and potential biosecurity champions to help drive the cause.

## Commitment 6

*Approach biosecurity with the view that it is everyone's responsibility, that risk is best managed offshore, and that they will actively engage with the Ministry for Primary Industries to support better biosecurity outcomes for New Zealand*

By signing the Pledge, it may be seen that the signatories are actively demonstrating this commitment in attending forums and online sessions and by extending practices beyond their operations into their supply chains. There is a mix of actual practice, but with time and more capability sharing and resource sharing, more organisations will reach out into their supply chains offshore.

### Countdown and Foodstuffs

Collaboration with the Ministry for Primary Industries/Biosecurity New Zealand was topical for many industries and businesses interviewed due to its role as regulator. As large importers and retailers, it was pleasing to hear how important biosecurity is to the supermarket chains and how they are actively collaborating with the Ministry to identify risks in their practices and make improvements, whether at their distribution centres or in-store.

## Recommendations

It is important to note that the Steering Group and Biosecurity New Zealand have been building momentum in the programme alongside this review process. Some recommendations made are already under consideration or underway.

### Programme, model and funding

Build on the willingness to improve performance, embed and scale the impacts of this partnership.

1. Review the current model, including governance and resourcing, and ensure it has the structure and financial backing to be sustainable for the future.
2. Consider a model that ensures business is more involved in owning and leading work to help deliver on its needs and the levers business has as part of the system.
3. Consider the extension of government involvement to other agencies such as Department of Conservation, Tourism New Zealand and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

### Value to members and growth of the programme

Continue to build knowledge across the membership and actively recruit more widely.

1. Ramp up engagement activity such as more forums, case studies and more insights sessions to give more value to existing members and continue to grow membership.
2. When the time is right enable more in-person sessions as a priority to enable network building and knowledge sharing.
3. Target marketing communications to grow membership.
4. Establish a communications/marketing network from the member companies to better use members' internal and external channels.
5. Actively drive membership by encouraging all members to engage their supply chains.
6. Assist the smaller associations to promote the work and actively recruit their members onto the Pledge.
7. Consider setting a target for the membership of business and industry associations to become Pledge signatories.
8. Consider employing a specialised resource to actively work with members, assisting them in areas for improvement, connecting them to other members or sharing relevant info.
9. Seed and encourage more regional collaborations with Pledge members.
10. Develop a members contact database available to all in the members' portal under development as a basic way to strengthen the network and enable direct interaction.

## Engaging CEs/Boards and future biosecurity champions

Escalate the conversation to the governance of industry and co-design solutions that can be owned and led from the top table.

1. Conduct bi-annual CE sessions bringing leaders together to identify their concerns, risks/pathways and co-develop solutions such as sector guidance.
2. Encourage business leaders to engage their peers and bring them into biosecurity discussions.
3. Consider some less likely and next-generation biosecurity champions to help keep the topic alive beyond the traditional Primary Sector players.
4. Continue the work of the member opt-in project on governance.
5. Consider the development of a biosecurity risk management template, acknowledging that one size will not fit all, enabling organisations to develop their own customised strategy/approach covering all potential aspects of operational practice. The approach should include some areas of best practice such as where accountability should lie.

## Measurement and ongoing reporting on the programme

Develop an approach to the measurement of the programme which accounts for the breadth and depth of membership.

1. Create an evaluation framework and model for this programme and signatory performance. Potentially revisit the wording on some commitments to make it easier to measure performance, but keep in mind that the Pledge is non-judgemental and was designed to share insights and enhance practice and a working relationship between business and the Ministry. Consider whether to weave continuous improvement into the approach to viewing Pledge commitments.
2. Conduct a 'performance review' every two years to identify areas for continuous improvement.

## Templates, resources and other stakeholders to include in biosecurity education and awareness

Provide resourcing and tools to help business engage more widely.

1. Continue to support the member opt-in project on stakeholder engagement. Ensure ongoing delivery of resources and materials that users can tailor for their business or sector – e.g. red meat vs retailers. These should also be simple, visual and reflecting that audiences may have English as their second language. Consider video and digital visual communications and if possible, some multi-lingual materials would help, especially with the shop floor and out in the field.
2. Build awareness offshore (supply chain and point of origin) of what can and cannot be imported into New Zealand. Also, use the offshore network of government officials and agencies such as NZTE and their stakeholders/functions to build knowledge in offshore markets. Similar information



can be supplied to freight forwarders/shippers for people moving to New Zealand (and returning Kiwis).

3. Consider other onshore touchpoints that could promote and spread the message, for example, livestock agents and buyers.
4. Signatory members should be encouraged to share what they are doing under the Pledge commitments in their public-facing communications. An excellent example of this in practice is on the United Fresh website.

## Building operational capability/learning in practice

Develop an approach to learning and development to accelerate practice, help keep the topic alive and embed into company culture.

1. Consider engaging a learning expert to develop a framework and some basic guidelines in the next phase of the Pledge work programme. Conduct a stocktake of existing materials and offerings in member companies. Embed some key messaging from the stakeholder engagement work.
2. Consider a hybrid Accredited Persons course that targets those who are more office-based could help build more comprehensive knowledge and capability in organisations along with helping embed a biosecurity culture. The Agriculture Trade Policy 101 course DCANZ offers its members would be a great template to follow. The one hour a month offering covers different subject matter foundations.

## Biosecurity New Zealand leadership and practice

Continue to deliver value, embed practice and provide additional leadership.

1. Consider how Biosecurity New Zealand can build on using this Pledge network to test or consult and collaborate on new frameworks/tools/policies being developed.
2. Consider whether the new container tracking is an area where Pledge members and Biosecurity New Zealand could potentially collaborate and identify improvements.
3. Consider creating a role that has a proactive element of visiting businesses outside of audit purposes to openly build biosecurity capability within companies and help identify risk areas and mitigating actions.
4. Consider whether there are any lessons on this proactive way of working with business for engage wider Biosecurity New Zealand teams with client facing roles.
5. Biosecurity New Zealand should lead by example and ensure it has biosecurity requirements in its procurement contracts, supply and funding agreements, HR induction, etc.

## Other

1. Target the significant architectural and engineering firms that may design Distribution Centres and Transitional Facilities to consider biosecurity requirements in the design process.

## My thanks

Thanks to Biosecurity New Zealand for commissioning me to conduct this work and to all of those who made time to discuss such an important topic.

I was fortunate to speak with signatories who have focused their careers and are specialists on this topic. I thank them for their thoughts on the value of the programme and desire to see it build.

My thanks to Chair of the Implementation Steering Group Kimberly Crewther, Executive Director Dairy Companies Association of New Zealand, for her direction and support for this work. I also appreciated the wisdom and input of Jo Murray, Executive Officer, New Zealand Council of Cargo Owners and Sirma Karapeeva, CEO of the Meat Industry Association, in the development of the Terms of Reference.

Additional thanks to Tim Fraser and Jo Darby at Biosecurity New Zealand for their support during this process – the Biosecurity Business Pledge is also a success because of your passion and tireless efforts.



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