

Circular From GARD

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New Zealand And Australia Issue Stink Bug Warning

The 2019/20 Brown Marmorated Stink Bug season is here and vessels arriving in New Zealand and Australia from countries with established stink bug populations must prepare for increased surveillance and inspection. Last season, New Zealand turned away four contaminated vessels from its waters.

Why is the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug a problem?

The Brown Marmorated Stink Bug (BMSB), or *Halyomorpha halys*, is an agricultural pest that feeds on, and can severely damage, fruit and vegetable crops. The pest has spread from its native range in East Asia to form established populations in North America and Europe but is not yet established in Australia and New Zealand. If the pest were to find its way to New Zealand or Australia it could seriously harm the countries' agricultural economies and unique environments.

Like the [Asian Gypsy Moth](#), the BMSB is considered a 'hitchhiker pest' that can spread via oceangoing vessels in international trade. BMSB adults seeking shelter from cold weather during winter months tend to find their way into vehicles, machinery and other types of cargo.

New Zealand and Australia join forces to keep the bug out

In response to the rapid expansion of BMSB throughout Europe and North America, New Zealand and Australia have now strengthened their measures to keep these bugs out of their countries. And, in order to make compliance easier for those bringing cargo into both New Zealand and Australia, the two countries have worked closely together to ensure seasonal measures are consistent where possible. For the 2019/20 BMSB risk season, this include:

- Introduction of a joint 'Offshore BMSB Treatment Providers Scheme'. A list of approved treatment providers is jointly maintained by New Zealand's Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) and the Department of Agriculture in Australia and published on both websites.
- Alignment of treatment options. While the three treatment options, heat treatment, methyl bromide fumigation and sulfuryl fluoride fumigation, remain the same, it is important to note that some treatment application rates have changed.

The list of countries known to have established populations of BMSB is the same for both Australia and New Zealand and is referred to as the "actionable BMSB countries" in New Zealand and "target risk countries" in Australia. The list has grown for the 2019/20 BMSB season:

Countries known to have established populations of BMSB		
Albania	France	Netherlands
Andorra	Georgia	Romania
Armenia	Germany	Russia
Austria	Greece	Serbia
Azerbaijan	Hungary	Slovakia
Belgium	Italy	Slovenia
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Kosovo	Switzerland
Bulgaria	Lichtenstein	Spain
Canada	Luxembourg	Turkey
Croatia	Macedonia	United States
Czech Republic	Montenegro	Japan

However, differences in the requirements and enforcement actions between the two countries remain. One key difference is that the Australian Department of Agriculture will continue to permit treatment on arrival for containerised goods. In addition, the 2019/20 stink bug season in Australia is a month longer than in New Zealand. This is because warmer climatic and daylight conditions could allow the stink bug to establish later in Australia.

New regulations in New Zealand

On 22 July 2019, the New Zealand Ministry for Primary industries (MPI) released new versions of the *Import Heath Standard for Vehicles, Machinery and Parts* and the *Import Heath Standard for Sea Containers form All Countries*.

Both standards include major changes to the requirements for importing certain goods to New Zealand from countries known to have established populations of BMSB. To summarise:

- The new requirements apply to certain goods exported from one of the actionable BMSB countries on or after 1 September 2019 and that arrive in New Zealand by 30 April 2020.
- All new or used vehicles, machinery and parts exported from one of the targeted risk countries during the BMSB season, both as break-bulk cargo and in sea containers, must be treated before they arrive in New Zealand.
- In addition, all sea containers from Italy, including those containing goods other than vehicles, machinery and parts, must be treated before they arrive in New Zealand.
- Used vehicles from Japan are also subject to special requirements. Due to the large export volumes, and the additional need to manage risks posed by other pests outside of the BMSB season, e.g. the Asian Gypsy Moth, the import of used vehicles (including motorcycles) from Japan must be managed under an **MPI-Approved Used Vehicle and/or Machinery System** year round.
- All treatment of cargo, offshore or onshore depending on the cargo shipped, must be carried out by an **MPI-approved treatment provider**.

Ship operators are referred to New Zealand's website "[Brown marmorated stink bug requirements](#)" for additional information and guidance. Schedule 1 of the *Import Heath Standard for Vehicles, Machinery and Parts* provides an overview of all targeted goods. Reference is also made to its "[Stink bug warning to importers](#)" of 1 August 2019.

Seasonal measures in Australia

Below are some of the activities announced by the Australian Department of Agriculture ahead of the 2019/20 BMSB season:

- All roll-on roll-off (ro-ro) vessels will be subject to heightened vessel surveillance.
- Certain goods exported from one of the target risk countries on or after 1 September 2019 and that arrive in the Australian territory by 31 May 2020 will be subject to BMSB intervention.
- Goods categorised as 'target high risk goods' require mandatory treatment for BMSB risk. If the goods are shipped as break-bulk cargo, they must be treated before they arrive in Australia. For containerised goods, onshore treatment may be permitted.
- Goods categorised as 'target risk goods' do not require mandatory treatment but will be subject to increased random inspections onshore.
- All treatment of cargo, **offshore** or **onshore** depending on the cargo shipped, must be carried out by a treatment provider approved by the Australian Department of Agriculture.

Ship operators are referred to the Australia's website "[Seasonal measures for Brown marmorated stink bug \(BMSB\)](#)" for an overview of all current target high risk and risk goods, as well as the applicable measures to be complied with. Reference is also made to industry Advisory Notice 128-2019 "[Treatment requirements for the 2019-20 Brown marmorated stink bug \(BMSB\) risk season](#)" of 7 August 2019.

Unwanted in Chile too

Similar BMSB management measures also apply to vessels arriving in Chile. The Chilean Agriculture and Livestock Service (Servicio Agrícola y Ganadero (SAG)) declared BMSB as a **quarantine pest** in 2011 and has since then required control and fumigation of certain imported products, mainly coming from the United States. Following recent interceptions in shipments of used clothing, toys, shoes and vehicles, a new resolution (**No. 971/2018**) took effect on 10 February 2018 which requires fumigation of such goods arriving in Chile from the United States. The resolution was further amended in 2019 (**No. 5607/2019**) to include measures applicable to used vehicles and vehicle parts. For an overview of Chile's actions to manage the BMSB risk (in English), click [here](#).

Recommendations

Even though the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that potentially contaminated cargo arrives at its destination as clean as possible rests with the importers, the consequences for ship operators may be significant if stink bugs are intercepted at the border. Last season, New Zealand turned away four contaminated vessels from its waters.

Members and clients with vessels trading to Australia, New Zealand and Chile should ensure that masters

and crew are familiar with the BMSB seasonal management measures applicable at any given time. Cleaning or treatment of goods/cargo in the country of origin may be required. It is also important that all crew members remain vigilant to the presence of BMSB and other exotic insects onboard and report any onboard detections to the relevant quarantine authorities at the destination.

Not sure if the insect onboard your vessels is a Brown Marmorated Stink Bug (BMSB)? Click [here](#) to find out.

Source of Information: Gard P&I Club

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