

## The Animal Welfare Act 1999

Leg-hold traps have been used in New Zealand for many years to trap pest animals such as possums, ferrets, stoats and feral cats, to protect our native plants and animals, and control bovine tuberculosis.

Internationally and within New Zealand, concerns have been raised over the humaneness of leg-hold traps. The main animal welfare concerns are injury and distress associated with being trapped, potential for escape of injured animals, and animals suffering if they are held in traps too long. Also, leg-hold traps set around residential dwellings and in other areas such as public walkways and picnic areas increase the risk of injury to pets.

The Animal Welfare Act requires that all leg-hold traps must be inspected within 12 hours of sunrise each day that the trap remains set, starting the day after the trap was set. Trapped animals must be removed, cared for or killed appropriately. Failure to comply with this requirement is an offence under the Animal Welfare Act.

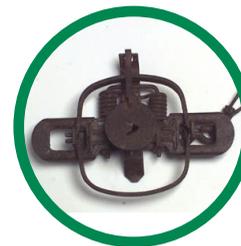
## Animal Welfare (Leg-hold Traps) Order 2007

The Animal Welfare (Leg-hold Traps) Order 2007 places restrictions on the sale and use of leg-hold traps to reduce risks to animal welfare. It supersedes all existing local bylaws governing the use of leg-hold traps. Under this Order:

- No leg-hold traps can be used within 150 metres of a dwelling without the express permission of the occupier or in any area where there is a probable risk of catching a pet.
- Sale of all leg-hold traps of size 1½ or larger is prohibited, with the exception of commercially made size 1½ padded-jaw, double-coil spring traps.
- The only leg-hold traps that may be used are size 1 long spring traps, size 1 double-coil spring traps, and size 1½ padded-jaw, double-coil spring traps.



Long-spring size 1



Double-coil spring size 1



Double-coil spring size 1 padded



Double-coil spring size 1½ padded

- Long spring traps that are size 1½ or larger, unpadded size 1½ double-coil spring traps, and double-coil spring traps larger than size 1½, cannot be used.



Long-spring size 1½ or larger



Double-coil spring size 1½ unpadded or larger than size 1½

- Traps that are not stamped with a size can be measured between the outer edges across the fully-open jaws at right angles to the jaw hinges. Size 1½ traps measure between 10.5 and 13.5 cm inclusive.
- An approval can be sought from MAF to sell or use a prohibited leg-hold trap. For more information visit: [www.biosecurity.govt.nz/legholdtraps](http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/legholdtraps)

**FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE REGULATIONS IS AN OFFENCE UNDER THE ANIMAL WELFARE ACT 1999 PUNISHABLE BY UP TO 12 MONTHS IMPRISONMENT AND/OR A FINE OF UP TO \$50,000 FOR AN INDIVIDUAL OR UP TO \$250,000 FOR A BODY CORPORATE.**



# LEG-HOLD TRAPS

## AND THE ANIMAL WELFARE ACT 1999

**Disclaimer:**

This brochure is an explanation of the legal restrictions relating to the use and sale of leg-hold traps. The actual regulations relating to this can be found at [www.legislation.govt.nz](http://www.legislation.govt.nz). While MAF has taken every effort to ensure that the content of this brochure is accurate, MAF, its employees and agents do not accept responsibility or liability for any errors, omissions of fact or law or any loss to any person resulting from reliance on this document. This document is not intended to take the place of professional legal advice.

**For more information visit**  
**[www.biosecurity.govt.nz/legholdtraps](http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/legholdtraps)**

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