

## Potato spindle tuber viroid (PSTVd)

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) is responsible for setting the import conditions that must be met when importing seeds and live plant material into New Zealand. The import conditions are put in place to prevent new pests and diseases that may threaten New Zealand's environment, economy, or human health from entering New Zealand.

MPI have recently become aware that the plant disease *Potato spindle tuber viroid* (PSTVd) may infect ornamental plant species, including *Dahlia* and *Chrysanthemum*. Based on this new information, MPI have changed the import conditions for a number of commonly imported seeds and plants, including capsicum seeds, and dahlia, chrysanthemum, and petunia plant material.

The measures come into effect on 1 September 2014, so all members of the public and commercial importers will need to make sure that the seeds and plants that they are importing meet the new import conditions.

A full list of the affected species and a summary of the new import conditions are included below.

### What is *Potato spindle tuber viroid*?

PSTVd is one of the most destructive diseases of potatoes worldwide and can cause severe yield losses in some varieties of potato and tomato. The viroid also infects a wide range of other plants including capsicums, dahlias, chrysanthemums, and petunias. PSTVd only infects plants, so is not a concern for animal or human health.

### What are the changes to the import requirements?

#### Seed for sowing:

- The changes apply to seeds of
  - *Capsicum* (e.g. chilies, bell peppers)
  - *Brugmansia*
  - *Solanum jasminoides*
  - *Physalis peruviana* (Cape gooseberry)

A phytosanitary (plant health) certificate will be required from the exporting country to certify that the seeds have been sourced from a pest free area or pest free place of production free from PSTVd, or tested and found free of PSTVd prior to import.

- The full import conditions can be viewed in the import health standard 155.02.05: Importation of Seed for Sowing (<http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/files/ihs/155-02-05.pdf>).
- There will be no changes to the measures that are already in place for PSTVd on imported tomato (*Solanum lycopersicum*) and potato (*Solanum tuberosum*) seed.

#### Live plant material (nursery stock):

- The changes apply to whole plants, cuttings, dormant bulbs, and tissue cultures of
  - *Argyranthemum*
  - *Browallia*
  - *Brunfelsia*
  - *Calibrachoa*
  - *Cestrum*
  - *Chrysanthemum*
  - *Dahlia*
  - *Diascia*
  - *Fabiana*
  - *Lochroma*
  - *Nierembergia*

- *Petunia*
- *Scopolia*

A phytosanitary (plant health) certificate will be required from the exporting country to certify that whole plants, cuttings, or dormant bulbs have been sourced from a pest free area or pest free place of production free from PSTVd. For tissue cultures, the phytosanitary certificate must certify that the parent stock has been sourced from a pest free area, pest free place of production, or has been tested and free of PSTVd.

- The full import conditions can be viewed in the import health standard 155.02.06: Importation of Nursery Stock (<http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/files/ih/155-02-06.pdf>).
- There will be no changes to the measures that are already in place for PSTVd on imported potato (*Solanum tuberosum*) and avocado (*Persea*) nursery stock.

### **More information**

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