



MPI Certification Standard: Assurance System Framework

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TITLE

Plant Export Requirement: MPI Certification Standard: Assurance System Framework

COMMENCEMENT

This Plant Export Requirement comes into force on the 1st June 2015.

ISSUING AUTHORITY

This Plant Export Requirement is issued

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Introduction

This introduction is not part of the Plant Export Requirement, but is intended to indicate its general effect.

Purpose

To provide the framework for the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) plant exports assurance system to meet New Zealand's international obligations in relation to phytosanitary, seed varietal, grade (for fruit & vegetables only) and food safety (e.g. residue) assurance of plants and plant products.

Background

MPI has developed a series of operating standards to manage the export certification of plants and plant products which can be found on the MPI website.

This standard contains an overview of the policies and general requirements for the MPI Plant Exports assurance system and relates to phytosanitary, seed varietal, grade (for fruit & vegetables only) and food safety (residue) certification.

The MPI Regulatory model for plant exports operates through authorised Independent Verification Agencies (IVAs) and MPI approved organisations (MAOs) undertaking services on MPI's behalf.

Who should read this Plant Export Requirement?

This standard applies to all organisations involved in the export of plant and plant products to countries requiring MPI official assurances.

Why is this important?

Operating other than in accordance with this standard may result in MPI not providing certification for exports of plant and plant products.

Document history

Previous Version Date	Current Version Date	Section Changed	Change(s) Description
1 June 2006	25 March 2015	Whole document	Full review and reissue of this standard.

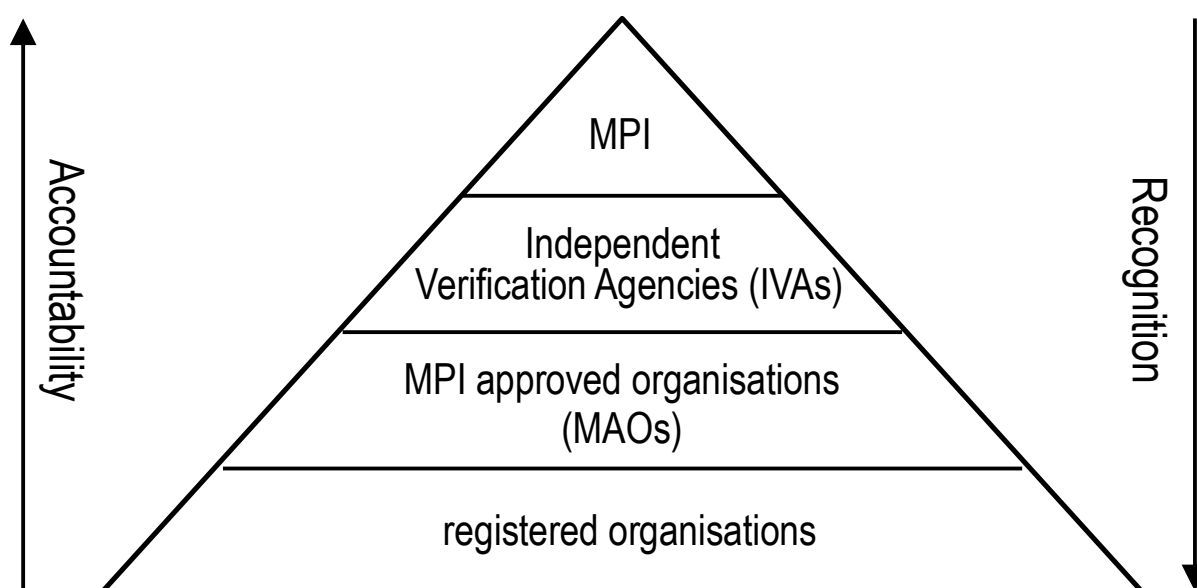
Part 1: MPI Regulatory Model

- (1) The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) has a set of overarching principles that drive the MPI provision of official assurances for agricultural, horticultural, forestry and food exports referred to as the MPI Regulatory model.
- (2) MPI's regulatory model is based on a partnership approach between government and industry. Under this model MPI manages the delivery of official assurances through authorising independent verification agencies (IVAs) and in some circumstances approving organisations to undertake services on its behalf.
- (3) This model reduces the level of direct government intervention, and places the responsibility for process control, systems management and achievement of required outcomes on industry. It achieves greater flexibility and economic control for individual business and allows government to focus its resources on verification thus improving the cost effectiveness and efficiency of certification.

1.1 MPI regulatory model for plant exports

- (1) The MPI regulatory model for plant exports operates through authorised IVAs and MPI approved organisations (MAOs) who undertake services on MPI's behalf. In some official assurance programmes (OAPs) MPI also registers organisations (e.g. growers) to perform specific activities.
- (2) Process control and risk management approaches are generally accepted worldwide for producing credible official assurances for plant and plant products. These systems based approaches are sometimes replacing end-point inspection as the principal method of providing official assurances such as MPI certification.
- (3) Although MPI authorises IVAs and approves organisations to undertake services on its behalf, accountability for the issuance of official assurances is retained by MPI. MPI maintains confidence in its assurance system through a comprehensive audit regime of both IVAs and MAOs.

Figure 1: The MPI regulatory model for plant products (simplified).



1.2 Roles and responsibilities

- (1) All organisations in the MPI regulatory model for plant exports have specific roles and responsibilities.

1.2.1 MPI roles and responsibilities for plant exports

- (1) MPI's primary roles are:
 - a) standard setting;
 - b) authorisation of IVAs and approval of organisation systems;
 - c) oversight of verification process;
 - d) consultation with industry on market access priorities and funding mechanisms;
 - e) maintaining a summary of importing country requirements (phytosanitary and maximum residue limits only);
 - f) establishing and recovering MPI fees.
- (2) MPI is responsible for the provision of accurate export certification to importing countries assuring them that their import requirements are being met for phytosanitary, seed varietal, grade (for fruit & vegetables only) and food safety (residues).
- (3) MPI's responsibilities as a competent authority for the provision of various types of official certification and or assurances are detailed in the following parts of this standard:
 - a) Phytosanitary certification (refer to Part 3 export phytosanitary certification);
 - b) Seed varietal certification (refer to Part 4 seed varietal certification);
 - c) Export grade certification (refer to Part 5 export grade certification);
 - d) Export agrichemical assurances (refer to Part 6 export agrichemical assurances).

1.2.2 IVA roles and responsibilities

- (1) An IVA's role for and on behalf of MPI is to provide independent inspection and verification services.
- (2) IVAs are responsible to MPI for:
 - a) providing appropriate resources and documenting their IVA system applicable to the scope of their MPI authorisation;
 - b) operating in compliance with their MPI authorised IVA system;

- c) maintaining their IVA system to meet the requirements of the applicable MPI certification and technical standards;
- d) ensuring their IVA system accurately verifies that plant and plant products comply with the importing country requirements.

1.2.3 MAO roles and responsibilities

- (1) The MAO's role is to provide MPI approved services that produce outputs complying with importing countries requirements and MPI standards.
- (2) MAOs are responsible for:
 - a) accurately documenting their organisation system to describe how their activities are actually undertaken;
 - b) gaining MPI approval for one or more of the service delivery options;
 - c) operating in compliance with their MPI approved procedures;
 - d) maintaining their organisation system to meet the requirements of MPI certification standards applicable to the scope of their MPI approval;
 - e) ensuring that their outputs comply with the appropriate importing country requirements.

1.2.4 Registered organisations roles and responsibilities

- (1) The registered organisations role is to accurately perform limited assigned activities while being monitored by either an MAO or an IVA:
 - a) their role is restricted to monitoring and recording (e.g. confirming product identification, keeping inventory control records to maintain traceability or monitoring risks);
 - b) registered organisations do not make decisions on product eligibility for export.
- (2) Registered organisations are responsible for:
 - a) registering their organisation and appropriate staff with MPI;
 - b) completing the activities as per the appropriate OAP or export programme;
 - c) notifying the IVA or MAO when activities commence and the frequency these activities are undertaken so that the IVA/MAO can monitor their performance.

1.2.5 Industry role

- (1) Export aligned industry bodies (e.g. Plant Market Access Council and Forest Products Exports Committee) and their constituent membership are responsible for:
 - a) monitoring operational performance of the MPI plant export certification system;
 - b) facilitating industry issues resolution;
 - c) consultation on priority setting for the development of importing country requirements;
 - d) facilitating the establishment and co-ordination of any technical advisory group;
 - e) providing consultation input with MPI on funding mechanisms.

Part 2: Principles of the MPI Plant Exports Assurance System

- (1) The MPI official assurance system for exported plants and plant products is focussed on addressing and meeting importing countries regulatory requirements.
- (2) The requirement for an official assurance and the form of this assurance is determined by the importing country concerned and reflected in the requirements of this MPI assurance system framework.

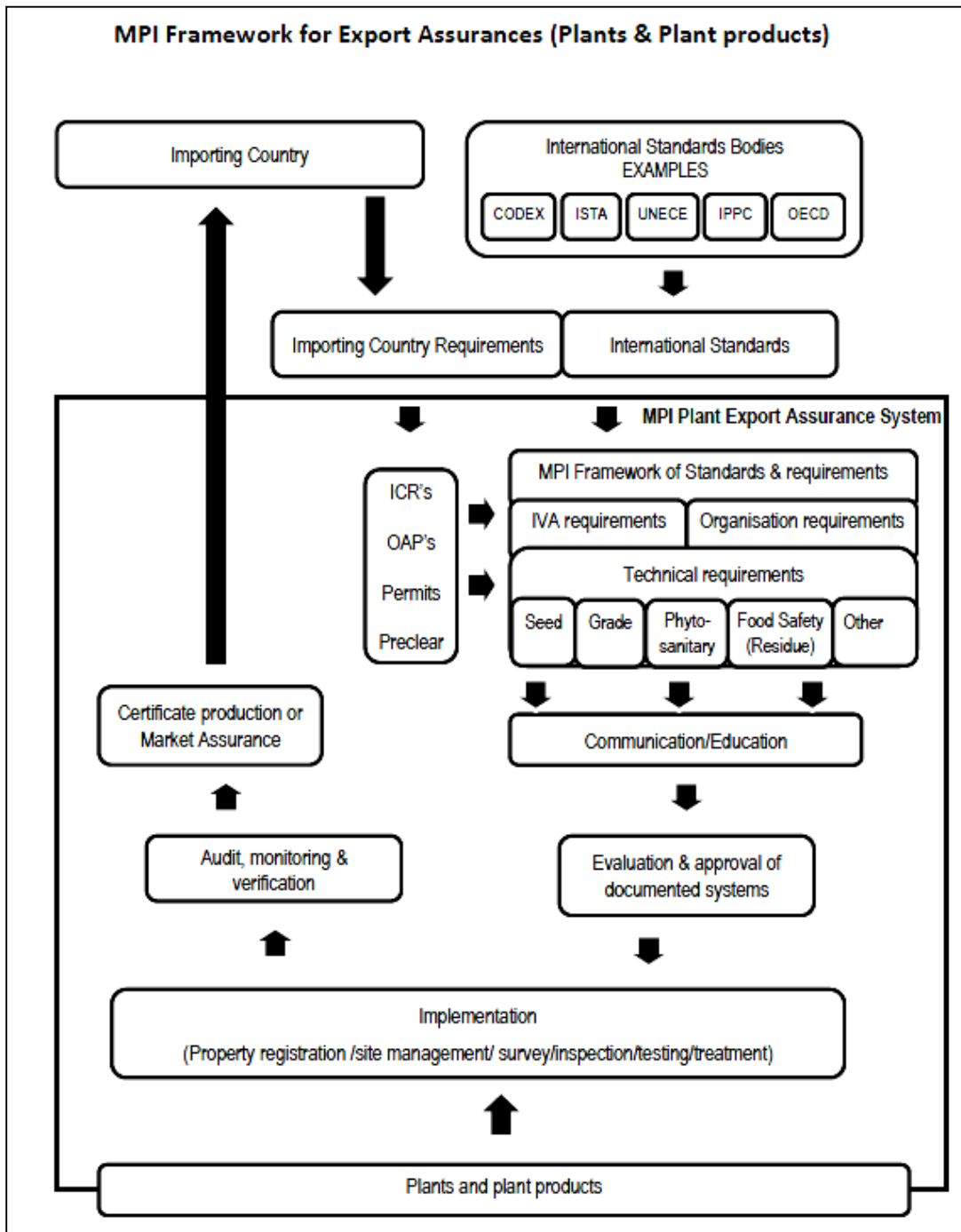
2.1 International obligations

- (1) New Zealand is a member of a number of international forums and recognises a range of international standard setting bodies. The relationship MPI has with various international regulatory bodies depends on the official capacity of the organisations involved and their relevance to New Zealand exports.
- (2) MPI recognises international standard setting bodies and incorporates these standards into the MPI plant export assurance system to provide credible MPI export assurances.
- (3) The plants and plant products export sector are primarily impacted by the phytosanitary standards body (FAO/IPPCC), however standard setting bodies associated with seed varietal (OECD), grade (OECD/UNECE/Codex), and residues (Codex) are highly influential on MPI's involvement in providing broader export assurances to the plants and plant products sector.
- (4) All MPI standards within the MPI Plant Export assurance system are based on international standards.

2.2 Framework for the MPI Plant Exports assurance system

- (1) The official assurances MPI provides for the export of plants and plant products currently include, phytosanitary, seed varietal, grade (fruits and vegetables only) and food safety (maximum residue limits only).
- (2) The MPI plant exports assurance system (Figure 2) describes how MPI provides an official assurance that plants and plant products meet the importing country's requirements.
- (3) Key operational features for the issuance of MPI export certification of plants and plant products are summarised in Figure 2:
 - a) MPI Plant Exports certification standards based on international standards, cover both the operating system requirements and the associated technical requirements for services;
 - b) clear MPI communication and education (provided through guidelines and workshops) are essential for the effective implementation of the standards;
 - c) MPI evaluates an IVA's documented system and authorises them to undertake recognised services on MPI's behalf;
 - d) IVAs evaluate and recommend applicant organisations for MPI approval;
 - e) IVAs and MAOs undertake various services they are authorised or approved to deliver;
 - f) MPI audits IVAs and IVAs audit MAOs to verify the services provided on MPI's behalf are complying with the relevant requirements;
 - g) IVAs verify the data in certificate requests are accurate;
 - h) MPI issues the export assurance/ certificate.

Figure 2: The MPI Plant Exports Assurance System



2.3 Principles of the verification process

2.3.1 MPI verification of IVAs

- (1) MPI requires IVAs to be accredited to ISO standard 17020 or 17065, and authorised against the applicable MPI Plant Exports certification standards. This is achieved through joint audits regularly undertaken by the ISO accreditation body and MPI with the audit findings shared between the two auditing parties.
- (2) MPI audits ensure products and services are compliant at each stage of the export pathway.

- (3) The dual oversight and communication between the ISO accreditation body and MPI ensures the delivery of a credible audit of the IVA.

2.3.2 IVA verification of MAOs

- (1) IVA audits of MAOs verify the export assurance system is working effectively and achieving the required outcomes. The following audit principles underpin the MPI assurance system:
 - a) audit frequency should be appropriate to the risk associated with the:
 - i) product type (e.g. fresh versus processed);
 - ii) MAO's performance;
 - iii) type of audit (e.g. system versus surveillance audits).
 - b) a performance based audit frequency encourages MAOs to deliver outputs that comply with importing countries' requirements;
 - c) critical non-compliance will result in an increased audit frequency;
 - d) increasing the number of audits gives the organisation the time and opportunity to correct their system whilst ensuring sufficient verification to confirm that:
 - i) exported product is compliant with the importing countries' requirements; and
 - ii) the non-compliance has been rectified.
 - e) suspension or termination of a MAO's approval occurs when confidence in their system is lost by MPI.

2.4 Requests for post-export official assurances

- (1) MPI will not provide en-route or post-arrival inspection and certification of plants and plant products that has not been inspected and/or verified in New Zealand.
- (2) When notified, MPI will inform the importing country authorities that MPI is unable to give any form of assurance as to the status of the consignment in question. Any decision as to what action (e.g. re-ship, inspect/accept, destroy) on arrival is solely that of the importing country.

Part 3: Export Phytosanitary Certification

3.1 Export phytosanitary obligations

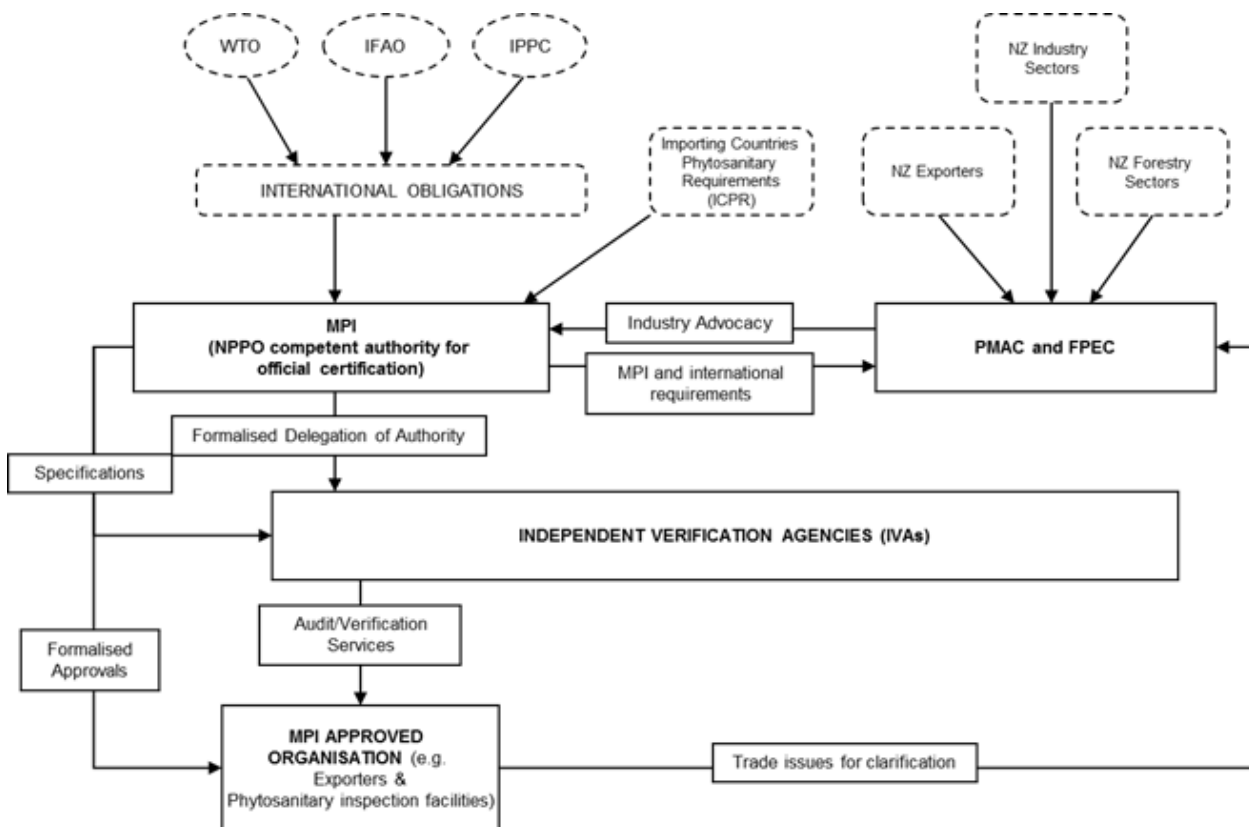
- (1) New Zealand is a contracting party to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). The IPPC is an international treaty that aims to prevent the spread and introduction of plant pests throughout the world by promoting the establishment of appropriate pest control measures.
- (2) The IPPC is recognised by the World Trade Organisation (WTO) under The Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement), as the international organisation responsible for phytosanitary standard setting and harmonisation of phytosanitary measures that affect trade. Most signatories require phytosanitary certification from exporting countries.
- (3) Part of New Zealand's commitment to the IPPC is to provide export phytosanitary certification to ensure New Zealand exports do not spread unwanted plant pests to countries where these pests do not already exist or are under official control.
- (4) The New Zealand Government has designated MPI as the National Plant Protection Organisation (NPPO) to ensure that New Zealand is meeting the requirements of the IPPC.
- (5) Under the IPPC a series of International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs) have been developed. These ISPMs provide guidance for export certification:
 - a) the IPPC and SPS require that any phytosanitary measures must be:
 - i) transparent;
 - ii) technically justified; and
 - iii) sufficient only to protect plant, animal or human life.
 - b) the phytosanitary certificate:
 - i) is a government-to-government certificate of compliance and must provide specific IPPC data elements;
 - ii) states that the produce has been inspected prior to export and meets the importing country's phytosanitary requirements;
 - iii) is issued by MPI as the NPPO.

3.2 MPI Plant Exports phytosanitary certification system

- (1) MPI as the NPPO has overall accountability for New Zealand's export phytosanitary certification system (refer to Figure 3).
- (2) MPI has adopted the IPPC framework of ISPM standards and the MPI Plant Exports phytosanitary certification system is based on ISPM 7 (Export Certification System).
- (3) MPI utilises non-governmental personnel to deliver parts of the phytosanitary certification system in line with ISPM 7. MPI has elected to authorise IVAs and approve organisations that operate under a formal MPI audit regime to ensure there is an appropriate level of oversight when they are performing their duties.
- (4) The MPI phytosanitary certification system is consistent with the MPI regulatory model for MPI Plant Exports described in Part 1.1;
 - a) MPI authorised IVAs and MAOs deliver services on behalf of MPI.
- (5) Phytosanitary certification can only be attained if the product is surveyed, inspected, treated and/or audited by competent staff from either an authorised IVA or an MAO.
- (6) Exporters can attain phytosanitary certification via one of the following:

- a) MAO systems providing phytosanitary activities on behalf of MPI:
 - i) MAOs operate under an audit regime undertaken by an IVA;
 - ii) IVA audits verify MAOs system of procedures comply with MPI Plant Exports standards and their plant products destined for export comply with the relevant importing country phytosanitary requirements (ICPR) and/or import permit.
 - b) IVA or MAO end point consignment inspection (EPCI):
 - i) each export consignment is inspected prior to export by an authorised IVA or MAO to confirm compliance with the applicable ICPR and/or import permit;
 - ii) both IVAs and MAOs inspection procedures are audited to verify implementation is compliant with their MPI approved system and MPI Plant Exports certification system standards;
 - iii) EPCI is the default option for attaining phytosanitary certification.
- (7) MPI issues phytosanitary certificates using an electronic certificate production system:
- a) an exporter submits a phytosanitary certificate request;
 - b) IVAs validate the accuracy of the information provided by the certificate requester;
 - c) MPI authorises and issues the certificates through approved print locations.

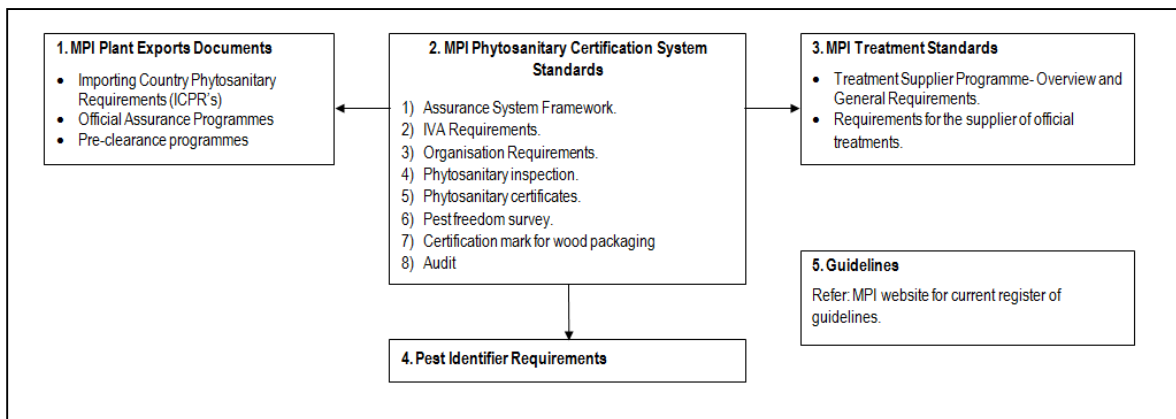
Figure 3: MPI phytosanitary certification system organisational relationships



3.3 MPI Plant Exports phytosanitary standards

- (1) MPI phytosanitary certification system is based on a set of mandatory standards (refer to Figure 4).
- (2) The standards which outline the operational specifications for both IVAs and MAOs, are outcome based and take into account the current ISPM requirements.
- (3) IVAs and MAOs operate a range of phytosanitary services which are reflected by the range of technical requirements.
- (4) Guidelines are advisory, voluntary and suggest general approaches. These guidelines are developed as needed to ensure the ongoing efficient implementation of the system.
- (5) Where necessary, official assurance programmes (OAPs) and/or preclearance programmes are developed jointly between MPI Plant Exports and industry sectors to meet specific importing country's phytosanitary requirements for some commodities.
- (6) The series of MPI standards and guidelines associated with this phytosanitary certification system can be found on the MPI website: <http://www.mpi.govt.nz/>.

Figure 4: MPI Plant Exports phytosanitary certification standards



3.3.1 Standards and technical requirements

- (1) **Certification Standard: Assurance System Framework**
This standard contains the overview, policies and general expectations for the MPI Plant Exports Certification System.
- (2) **Certification Standard: Independent Verification Agency Requirements**
This standard prescribes the system requirements, in addition to a suitable ISO standard, that must be met by an IVA to achieve and maintain authorisation by MPI for the provision of plant export certification services.
- (3) **Certification Standard: Organisation Requirements**
This standard prescribes the system requirements that must be met by an organisation undertaking export services on behalf of MPI to achieve and maintain MPI approval.
- (4) **Import and Export Plants Standard: Pest Identifier Requirements**
This standard prescribes the system and technical requirements that must be met by independent organisations providing pest identification services.
- (5) **Technical Standard: Phytosanitary Inspection**
This standard specifies the minimum technical requirements to be met by MPI authorised IVAs and MAOs undertaking phytosanitary inspection services.

- (6) **Technical Standard: Treatments**
The minimum technical requirements for organisations undertaking phytosanitary treatments are specified in the sections Treatment Supplier Programme- Overview and General Requirements and “Requirements for the supplier of official treatments”.
- (7) **Technical Standard: Phytosanitary Certificates**
This standard specifies the minimum technical requirements for the administration of phytosanitary certificate requests and approval of certificate print locations.
- (8) **Technical Standard: Pest Freedom Surveys**
This standard specifies the minimum technical requirement to be met by IVAs and MAOs to undertake survey services for specific pests to ascertain the pest status of an area, production site or crop.
- (9) **Technical Standard: Certification Mark for Wood Packaging**
This standard specifies the minimum technical requirements to be met by MAOs to undertake services associated with application of a MPI registered mark to wooden packaging material as per ISPM 15.
- (10) **Technical Standard: Audit**
This standard specifies the minimum technical requirement to be met by IVAs and MAOs to undertake auditing services.

3.3.2 Importing country phytosanitary requirements (ICPRs)

- (1) ICPRs are an MPI summary of the importing country’s phytosanitary requirements, and form the basis for providing export phytosanitary certification.
- (2) MPI translates, summarises, reviews and maintains ICPRs that are country specific (where information is available).
- (3) Where an importing country issues import permits to their importers, the import permit conditions take precedence over any technical conditions contained in the ICPR for that country except for the ICPR pest list.
- (4) The default maximum limits for pests, including soil can be found in MPI Plant Exports Certification Standard: Technical Requirements, Appendix 1, Table 1 - phytosanitary inspection.

Guidance

- Where MPI does not hold importing country phytosanitary requirements, exporters should ascertain the official requirements and provide official communications from the importing country (e.g. import permit) to the IVA before undertaking a phytosanitary activity.
- ICPRs can be found on the MPI website: <http://www.mpi.govt.nz/>.
- The Ministry for Primary Industries, its statutory officers, employees, agents and all other persons responsible for or associated with the compilation, writing, editing, approval or publication of the information:
 - i) Disclaim any and all responsibility for any inaccuracy, error, omission, lateness, or any other kind of inadequacy, deficiency or flaw in, or in relation to, the information; and
 - ii) Without limiting (i) above, fully exclude any and all liability of any kind on the part of all of them, to any person or entity that chooses to rely on this information.

3.3.3 Official assurance programmes (OAPs)

- (1) OAPs are developed to best manage complex phytosanitary requirements or importing country protocols for specific commodities on a need to know basis. OAPs are most commonly associated with production site pest freedom surveys and reflect product identification and traceability requirements for plant products from those sites at all stages of the export pathway.
- (2) OAPs may be instigated by:

- a) importing countries;
 - b) MPI and an industry sector agreeing on the need for a unique risk management plan across multiple pathway participants;
 - c) MPI where a commodity entry is under threat of 'entry suspension' for at risk commodities.
- (3) MPI develops OAPs in conjunction with the appropriate industry sectors using a systems approach to manage phytosanitary risks and to facilitate the provision of additional declarations.
 - (4) OAPs may contain additional requirements that are addressed and captured in the IVA and MAO systems. All procedures to address OAP requirements must be progressed through the MPI approvals process.
 - (5) Some OAPs may include requirements to be met by registered organisations. The registered organisation activities are monitored for compliance to the OAP requirements by the IVA or MAO as appropriate to the specific OAP.

Guidance

- OAPs can be found on the MPI website: <http://www.mpi.govt.nz/>. Access to these are password protected. Please contact MPI Plant Exports at this address: plantexports@mpi.govt.nz.

3.3.4 Principles for the provision of additional declarations (ADs)

- (1) An importing country may request specific additional information pertinent to the phytosanitary status of an export consignment.
- (2) ADs are to be provided only where:
 - a) there is a validated record of the importing country requesting the information be stated on a phytosanitary certificate;
 - b) there is evidence that justifies the provision of the additional information being requested by the importing country.
- (3) Where an importing country specifies they require 'surveyed', 'inspected' or 'tested and found free' from any pests, the area of production, or the crop or consignment must be surveyed, inspected or tested as appropriate prior to the specific additional declaration being provided.
- (4) **Country freedom ADs** may be given only where New Zealand records indicate that the specific pests, as specified by the importing country, are not recorded within New Zealand.
- (5) **Area freedom ADs** may be provided only where an official survey indicates the specific pests have not been detected within the geographical area the product is sourced from. Duration of an area freedom clearance following an official survey/test lasts for as long as:
 - a) officially recognised controls ensure there is no reasonable chance of infestation/re-infestation with the pests of concern; or
 - b) for a maximum of one growing season where there are no officially recognised controls that would prevent the introduction of the pest of concern.
- (6) **Consignment freedom ADs** from specific pests may be provided on the following basis:
 - a) where New Zealand pest detection records indicate that the specific pest has not been recorded in New Zealand; or
 - b) where the pest is known to be present in New Zealand and the crop is a known host, the crop has been surveyed/inspected/tested as appropriate and found free.
- (7) Deviations from any official AD will only be considered where MPI obtains, from the importing country's NPPO, final confirmation their wording for a specific AD may be modified.

Part 4: Seed Varietal Certification

4.1 Seed varietal obligations

- (1) New Zealand is a member country of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and is a participating member of the OECD Seed Schemes. Participation in these schemes has resulted in MPI being the national designated authority for the administration of the schemes rules. MPI is also the designated authority for the International Seed Testing Association (ISTA) which defines rules for seed sampling, testing and the ISTA accreditation of seed testing laboratories. The rules of these international standard setting organisations are integrated within the MPI New Zealand seed varietal certification system.
- (2) The MPI seed varietal certification system currently addresses some appropriate requirements of the IPPC, the rules of the OECD seed schemes, the seed directives of the European Union (EU), the rules of ISTA and the New Zealand Seed Quality Management Authority (SQMA) in relation to plant health and varietal trueness to type certification.

4.2 Seed varietal system framework

- (1) Within the MPI Plant Export seed varietal certification system, MPI is the New Zealand:
 - a) NPPO under the IPPC;
 - b) designated control agency for the EU seeds scheme;
 - c) designated authority for the OECD seed schemes;
 - d) designated authority for ISTA; and
 - e) certification authority for SQMA.
- (2) MPI operates in close consultation with SQMA for defining and maintaining the operational requirements of this seed varietal certification system and the integration of phytosanitary certification requirements. Delivery of seed varietal certification services is managed by SQMA in consultation with MPI.

4.3 MPI Plant Exports seed varietal certification standards

- (1) **Technical Standard: Seed Varietal Certification**
This standard specifies the minimum technical requirements to be met by seed lines seeking varietal certification;
- (2) In addition the MPI Export seed varietal certification system is supported by and operates through the following set of mandatory standards (i.e. co-shared with the MPI Plant Export phytosanitary certification system):
 - a) Assurance System Framework;
 - b) IVA Requirements;
 - c) Organisation Requirements;

Part 5: Export Grade Certification

5.1 Export grade obligations

- (1) There are a range of international standards bodies involved in the setting of grade standards for plant products. Those most common to New Zealand exporters are:
 - a) Codex Alimentarius Committee on Fresh Fruit and Vegetables (Codex),
 - b) Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) who run the OECD Scheme for the Application of International Standards for fresh fruit and vegetables,
 - c) United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and
 - d) European Commission.
- (2) New Zealand, represented by MPI, is a member of both Codex and OECD and is a special category member of the UNECE. MPI, in consultation with New Zealand industry sectors are proactive in these standard setting bodies.
- (3) In addition some individual countries prescribe and monitor compliance to their own grade requirements for plant products sold in their market. Examples include;
 - a) Canadian Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Regulations;
 - b) United States Standards for some fresh fruits and vegetables.
 - c) European Union (applying UNECE standards)
- (4) MPI provides an official grade certification programme in instances where there is a collective benefit to New Zealand Inc. In doing so, the provision of MPI grade certification is based on the official grade requirements of the importing country.

Guidance

- In most instances New Zealand exporters determine the applicability and commercial impact of grade standards on a market by market basis. This is a voluntary programme.

5.2 MPI Plant Exports grade certification system

- (1) MPI has published an OAP for Grade Certification of Apples, Pears and Kiwifruit that describes the system through which MPI provides grade certification to trading partners. This programme describes MPI's requirements for the issuance of grade certificates and enables MAOs to document and implement procedures that are evaluated by IVAs and approved by MPI.
- (2) MPI utilises non-governmental personnel to deliver parts of the grade certification system and in doing so authorises IVAs and approves organisations operating under a formal MPI audit regime to ensure compliance with the grade standards is achieved.
- (3) Exporters can obtain MPI export grade certification of their plant products via one of the following:
 - a) MAO systems providing grade inspection activities on behalf of MPI in which:
 - i) MAOs operate their grade inspection procedures under an audit regime undertaken by an IVA;
 - ii) IVA audits verify the MAO system of procedures comply with MPI Plant Export standards and the plant products destined for export comply with the relevant international grade standard or the relevant importing country's grade standard.

- b) IVAs or MAOs undertaking end point consignment inspection for grade in which:
 - i) each consignment of plant products destined for export is inspected by an authorised IVA or MAO prior to export to confirm the plant products compliance with the relevant grade standard;
 - ii) the IVA and MAO inspection procedures are audited to verify implementation is compliant with their MPI approved system and the MPI export grade certification system requirements.
- (4) MPI issues grade certificates using a manual certificate format.
 - a) an exporter submits a grade certificate request;
 - b) IVAs validate the accuracy of the information provided by the certificate requester;
 - c) MPI authorises and issues the grade certificate.

5.3 MPI Plant Export grade certification standards

- (1) MPI Official Assurance Programme for Grade Certification of Apples, Pears and Kiwifruit.
This OAP specifies the minimum requirements to be met by MAOs seeking export grade certification.

Part 6: Export Food Safety Assurances

6.1 Food safety obligations

- (1) All food, including fresh, frozen or processed plant products for human consumption and intended for export must first comply with the provisions and standards established under the NZ Food Act 1981 (and the Food Act 2014). These include the:
 - a) Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (standards relating to food composition, the presence and use of additives, preservatives, sanitisers, permitted levels of contaminants and microbial limits in food).
 - b) New Zealand Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) of Agricultural Compounds Food Standards (these enforce good agricultural practice (GAP) in the use of pesticides in the production of safe and suitable food).

Where importing countries have established more stringent standards, these must also be met.

The Food Act 2014 will enhance the current provisions of the 1981 Food Act by introducing a risk-based food safety system that will require the fresh, frozen or processed produce sector to operate under a national programme designed to identify, control, manage, and eliminate or minimise hazards or other relevant factors for the purpose of achieving safe and suitable food.

- (2) International food safety standards and guidelines have been adopted by the Codex Alimentarius Commission. These are recognised as WTO standards for international trade and include:
 - a) Pesticide Maximum Residue Limits (CCPR)
 - b) General Standard for Food Additives (CCFA)
 - c) General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed (CCCF)
- (3) Note: these are not recognised by all importing countries, particularly where national standards exist.

6.2 MPI export agrichemical assurances

- (1) MPI has developed an agrichemical assurance programme for fresh plant products for use should an importing country require official assurances that agrichemical residues comply with their maximum residue limits (MRLs) or where industry sectors request MPI to provide these assurances to facilitate market access.
- (2) This programme is based on the adoption of HACCP-based agrichemical management plans (AMPs) recognised and audited by MPI as suitable to support official MPI assurances that agrichemical residues comply with importing country maximum residue limits (MRLs).

6.3 MPI pesticide analytical laboratory recognition

- (1) MPI has developed a pesticide analytical laboratory recognition scheme for plant products that identifies analytical laboratories (and test methods) considered by MPI to meet acceptable criteria for competence (laboratories) and fitness-for-purpose (test methods) in the analysis of plant products for pesticide residues.
- (2) Food commodities covered under the scheme include mostly fresh fruit and vegetables (these being the major plant commodities managed by MPI Plant Exports) but other (minimally processed) foods of plant origin can also be accommodated under the scheme if the recognised test methods have been validated for these commodities.

- (3) Both the laboratory systems/procedures and the test methods used for determining pesticide residues in plant products must comply with ISO Standard 17025: General Requirements for the Competence of Testing and Calibration Laboratories.

6.4 MPI agrichemical assurance standards

- (1) Official Agrichemical Assurance Standard for Fresh Plant Products.

This standard specifies the minimum requirements to be met by operators seeking an export agrichemical assurance.

- (2) Recognised Pesticide Analytical Laboratories and Residue Test methods (Plants).

This standard specifies the performance standards and operational specifications for pesticide residue analytical laboratories wishing to become recognised by MPI for the residue testing of plant products.

Part 7: MPI Cost Recovery fees

(1) MPI recovers the cost of all work associated with the provision of export assurance/ certification.

Guidance

- The MPI Plant Exports fee structure is available from the MPI website: <http://www.mpi.govt.nz/>.

Appendix 1: References

MPI Plant Exports standards reference from the following documents:

- (1) International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) 1999 and its associated ISPMs.
- (2) Alinorm 95/13 (Annex to Appendix iii) - Guidelines for the Application of the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) System, Report of the 27th Session of Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH), October 1994.
- (3) ISTA (2015) International Rules for Seed Testing, Volume 2015.
- (4) Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Seed Schemes 2015 and all subsequent amendments for the Varietal Certification of Seed Moving in International Trade:
 - a) Grass and Legume Seed (Annex VI);
 - b) Crucifer Seed and Other Oil or Fibre Species Seed (Annex VII);
 - c) Cereal Seed (Annex VIII);
 - d) Sugar Beet and Fodder Beet Seed (Annex IX).
 - e) Subterranean Clover and Similar Species (Annex X);
 - f) Maize and Sorghum Seed (Annex XI);
 - g) Vegetable Seed (Annex XII)
- (5) Biosecurity Act 1993.
- (6) Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996.
- (7) Privacy Act 1993.
- (8) Trade Marks Act 2002.
- (9) AS/NZS ISO 8402:1994 - Quality management and quality assurance – Vocabulary.
- (10) ISO Guide 2:1996 Standardisation and related activities – General vocabulary.
- (11) AS/NZS ISO/IEC 17065: 2013: Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services.
- (12) AS/NZS ISO/IEC 17020: 2012; General criteria for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection.
- (13) AS/NZS ISO/IEC 17025: 2005; General Requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories.
- (14) ISO 19011: 2011; Guidelines for auditing management systems.
- (15) MPI Certification Standard: IVA Requirements.
- (16) Import and Export Standard: Requirements for the Authorisation of Independent Plant Pest Identifiers.
- (17) MPI Plant Export Certification Standard: Organisation Requirements.
- (18) MPI Technical Standard: Phytosanitary Certificates.
- (19) MPI Technical Standard: Phytosanitary Inspection.
- (20) MPI Technical Standard: Audit.
- (21) MPI Technical Standard: Preparation of a Pest List.
- (22) MPI Technical Standard: Pest Freedom Surveys.
- (23) MPI Technical Standard: Certification Mark for Wood Packaging.
- (24) MPI Technical Standard: Seed Varietal Certification.
- (25) MPI Standard: Requirements for the supplier of official treatments.
- (26) MPI Treatment Supplier Programme: Overview and General Requirements.

Appendix 2: Definitions

These definitions apply to the export phytosanitary certification system and have been referenced where appropriate from IPPC.

- (1) **Accredited**
The state of having been formally recognised by an international accreditation body as complying with the requirements of an international standard.
- (2) **Additional Declaration**
A statement required by an importing country to be entered on a phytosanitary certificate and which provides specific additional information pertinent to the phytosanitary condition of a consignment.
- (3) **Approved**
An organisation that has been formally recognised by MPI as competent to act on behalf of MPI and provide specific services in accordance with the requirements specified in the relevant MPI standard(s).

Note: Scope of approval only includes specific service delivery options for which the organisation has requested and agreed to undertake on behalf of MPI within the scope of MPI's Plant Export certification system.

- (4) **Assurance**
A positive declaration intended to give confidence.
- (5) **Audit**
A systematic and independent process for obtaining information and examining it objectively to determine the degree of conformity with prescribed criteria:
 - A **system audit** is an evaluation of the organisation's entire system for compliance with the certification system's requirements
 - A **surveillance audit** is an evaluation of specific parts of the organisation's system, to confirm that the outputs of their system meet(s) required specifications.
 - A **verification audit** is an audit by the IVA to confirm a MAO auditor has met the specified supplier audit requirements contained in the audit standard.
- (6) **Auditor**
A person with the competence to carry out an audit to determine conformity with prescribed criteria.
- (7) **Authorised**
An Independent Verification Agency that has been formally recognised by MPI as competent to provide a specific MPI Plant Exports certification system service(s) as an agent of MPI in accordance with the requirements specified in the relevant MPI standard(s).

Note: Scope of authorisation only includes specific service delivery options for which the IVA has sought authority for and agreed to undertake within the scope of this MPI Plant Exports certification system.

- (8) **Certificate**
An official document which attests to the status of any consignment affected by regulations.
- (9) **Certification**
All those activities leading to, but not including, the issuance of MPI certificates.
- (10) **Competence**
Demonstrated ability to apply knowledge and skills.
- (11) **Commodity pest list**
A list of all pests recorded in New Zealand associated with the commodity to be exported.
- (12) **Consignment**
A quantity of plants, plant products or other articles being moved from one country to another and covered, when required, by a single certificate (a consignment may be composed of one or more lots).
- (13) **Contract of approval**

A document formalising MPI's recognition of an organisation's competence to undertake specific services to meet an importing country's requirements and facilitate MPI's issuance of export certificates.

(14) **Contract of authorisation**

A document forming part of this MPI Plant Exports certification system which sets out the legally binding arrangement entered into by MPI and an IVA to formalise the delegation of authority to act on MPI's behalf to provide a specific export certification system service(s) in accordance with the requirements specified in the relevant MPI standard(s).

(15) **Control point**

A point or step in a phytosanitary risk management system (e.g. harvest, grading, packing, storage, handling, transport or preparation of export documents) where specific procedures can be applied to achieve a defined effect and can be measured, monitored, controlled and corrected.

(16) **Corrective action request (CAR)**

Action request raised by auditor requesting corrective action for non-compliance findings with prescribed standards.

(17) **Critical limit**

A value that separates acceptability from unacceptability.

(18) **Critical non-compliance**

Any non-compliance incident or finding that results in MPI losing confidence in the IVA's or MAO's system to deliver services or system outputs in compliance with an importing country's requirements or the requirements of MPI's Plant Exports certification system standards.

(19) **Declaration of conformity (DOC)**

Statement by an organisation that plant product conforms to the phytosanitary requirements of an importing country.

(20) **Defective unit**

A unit of plant product not meeting an importing country's specified requirements.

(21) **Devitalisation**

A procedure rendering plant products incapable of germination, growth or further reproduction.

(22) **Director**

Director of Plants, Food and Environment of New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI).

(23) **End point consignment inspection**

An officially recognised phytosanitary inspection process for plant product at a final point of storage prior to loading for export undertaken by the IVA or MAO.

(24) **Equivalence**

Phytosanitary and/or genetic purity measures which are not identical but have the same effect.

(25) **Event reports**

A written report submitted to MPI by an Independent Verification Agency in response to specific situations defined in the standard being followed.

(26) **Hazard**

The potential to cause harm; types of hazards can be divided into biological, chemical or physical.

(27) **HACCP**

Abbreviation for hazard analysis and critical control point, which is a system that identifies, evaluates and controls significant hazard(s) and the preventative measures for their control.

(28) **Homogenous lot**

A defined volume of plant product subject to the same pest management regime that has been produced within a pre-determined place of production, where the defective units within the lot occur independently of each other and the fraction of defective plant product is constant throughout the lot.

- (29) **ICPR (importing country phytosanitary requirements)**
These are maintained as a series of documents by MPI with each document identifying both general and specific phytosanitary requirements specified by an importing country's national plant protection organisation for imports of plants and plant products into their country. Refer to: <http://mpi.govt.nz/law-and-policy/requirements/icprs>.
- (30) **Importing countries requirements**
The official requirements of an importing country that are addressed by MPI on behalf of the NZ Government for the provision of official assurances.
- (31) **Independent**
Not having a commercial interest in the operation and not depending on another body for its validity.
- (32) **Independent Verification Agency (IVA)**
An organisation authorised by MPI to provide services on behalf of MPI in accordance with the MPI Plant Exports Certification Standard: IVA requirements.
- (33) **Inspection**
An official visual examination of plant products or other regulated articles to determine compliance with regulations. For phytosanitary certification, inspection is to determine if pests are present.
- (34) **Inspector**
A person recognised as competent to carry out inspection activities on behalf of MPI.
- (35) **Interception**
The detection of a pest during inspection or testing of an imported consignment that may result in the refusal or controlled entry of the consignment because of failure to comply with phytosanitary regulations.
- (36) **IPPC**
Abbreviation for International Plant Protection Convention.
- (37) **ISPM**
Abbreviation for International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures.
- (38) **Location**
An operational site within a MPI approved organisation's system:
- where MPI export certification activities are undertaken
 - where reference documents, records or fixed equipment are kept
 - a mobile facility where phytosanitary activity occurs.
- (39) **Mark**
An official stamp or brand, internationally recognised, applied to a regulated article to attest to its MPI certification status.
- (40) **Maximum pest level (MPL)**
The maximum percentage of plants or plant products infested with pests acceptable within each lot inspected, as determined by the importing country or the current information available to MPI at the time.
- (41) **Maximum residue level (MRL)**
The maximum concentration of pesticide residue (expressed as mg/kg) allowed in plants or plant products, defined by the importing country or the current information available to MPI at the time.
- (42) **Monitoring**
The provision of a level of oversight by a competent inspector of another person's control activities to confirm compliance with requirements. The level and intensity of monitoring oversight is normally described in MPI official assurance programmes (OAPs).
- (43) **MPI**

Abbreviation for New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries.

(44) **MPI approved organisation (MAO)**

The legal entity, be it an individual, partnership, company or other form of legal entity, responsible for the performance of their risk management system approved by MPI.

(45) **National Plant Protection Organisation (NPPO)**

Official service established by the government to discharge the functions specified by the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). In New Zealand MPI is the NPPO.

(46) **Non-compliance**

Failure to comply with requirements specified in the relevant MPI standards, or importing country's specifications.

(47) **Official**

Established, authorised, approved or performed by MPI.

(48) **Official treatments**

Official treatments are those required by MPI for import risk goods and for export goods to comply with an importing country's phytosanitary requirements (ICPR).

(49) **Organisation**

A legal entity, be it an individual, partnership, company or other form of legal entity, responsible for the performance of their operational activities.

(50) **MAO system**

The organisational structure, responsibilities, operational procedures, processes and resources for implementing activities associated with surveys, inspections, audits, tests, treatments or the preparation of export documents for the provision of MPI export certification of plant products.

(51) **Organism**

Any biotic entity capable of reproduction or replication in its naturally occurring state.

(52) **Other non-compliance**

An incident or finding that creates doubt or decrease MPI's confidence in an IVA's or MAO's system to deliver services or system outputs in compliance with an importing country's requirements or the requirements of MPI's Plant Exports certification system standards.

(53) **Output**

The result of the certification system activity, which may be a plant product, request for certification or record of activity, linked to the plant product.

(54) **Pathway**

Any means that allows the entry or spread of a pest.

(55) **Pest**

Any species, strain or biotype of plant, animal, or pathogenic agent that is injurious to plants, plant products or animals.

(56) **Pest categorisation**

The process for determining whether a pest has, or has not, the characteristics of a quarantine pest or those of a regulated non-quarantine pest.

(57) **Pest free area**

An area in which a specific pest does not occur as demonstrated by scientific evidence and in which, where appropriate, this condition is being officially maintained.

(58) **Pest free place of production**

Place of production in which a specific pest does not occur as demonstrated by scientific evidence (e.g. official survey) and in which, where appropriate, this condition is being officially maintained for a defined period.

- (59) **Pest free production site**
A defined portion of a place of production with clearly identified and mapped boundaries in which a specific pest does not occur as demonstrated by scientific evidence and in which, where appropriate, this condition is being officially maintained for a defined period and that is managed as a separate unit in the same way as a pest free place of production.
- (60) **Pest record**
A document, recognised by MPI, providing information concerning the presence or absence of a specific pest at a particular location at a certain time, within an area (usually a country) under described circumstances.
- (61) **Phytosanitary Certificate**
Certificate patterned after the model certificate of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC).
- (62) **Phytosanitary certification**
Use of phytosanitary procedures leading to the issue of a phytosanitary certificate.
- (63) **Phytosanitary procedure or activity**
Any officially prescribed method for implementing phytosanitary regulations including the performance of inspections, tests, surveillance or treatments in connection with regulated pests.
- (64) **Phytosanitary security**
Maintenance of the integrity of plants and plant products and prevention of their infestation and contamination by regulated pests, through the application of appropriate phytosanitary measures.
- (65) **Place of production**
A single contiguous area of land as identified by a property valuation number(s) operated as a single production or farming unit on which the plant material for export is grown.
- (66) **Plants and plant products**
Any material of plant origin.
- (67) **Plant pest identifier**
A person with specialist knowledge undertaking pest identification in one or more of the scientific disciplines of entomology, mycology, bacteriology, nematology or virology.
- (68) **Point of export**
Time and place where the consignment is loaded on a vessel or aircraft.
- (69) **Pre-clearance**
Phytosanitary certification and/or clearance in the country of origin, performed by or under the regular supervision of the NPPO of the country of destination.
- (70) **Procedure**
A document that specifies the purpose and scope of an activity:
 - what shall be done and by whom
 - when, where and how it shall be done
 - what materials, equipment and documentation shall be used
 - how it shall be controlled and recorded
- (71) **Quarantine pest**
A pest of potential economic importance to the area endangered thereby and not yet present there, or present but not widely distributed and (is) being officially controlled.
- (72) **Recognised individual**
An individual within a MPI authorised IVA or approved organisation who is recognised by MPI as competent, by way of their staff competency assessment process, to act on MPI's behalf to provide export phytosanitary services and activities in accordance with the requirements specified in the relevant MPI Plant Exports certification standards.
- (73) **Registered organisation**

For the purposes of this MPI Plant Exports certification system these organisations have formally notified MPI of their intent and received MPI recognition as meeting the unique specific requirements within a pre-export certification programme (e.g. OAP).

(74) **Registration fee**

A fee, payable by the appropriate organisation, that contributes to the MPI management costs associated with export certification.

(75) **Regulated article**

Any plant, plant product, storage place, packaging, conveyance, container, soil and any other organism, object or material capable of harbouring or spreading pests, deemed to require phytosanitary measures, particularly where international transportation is involved.

(76) **Regulated pest**

A quarantine pest or a regulated non-quarantine pest.

(77) **Risk goods**

Means any organism, organic material or other thing or substance that (by reason of its nature, origin or other relevant factors) it is reasonable to suspect constitutes, harbours or contains an organism that may cause unwanted harm to natural and physical resources or human health in New Zealand; or interfere with the diagnosis, management or treatment in New Zealand of pests or unwanted organisms.

(78) **Sample**

One or more units selected from a population of units, or a portion of material selected from a larger quantity of material.

(79) **Seed categories**

For the purposes of seed variety trueness to type certification in New Zealand, the following seed certification categories apply:

- “Breeders seed” - Seed produced from nucleus material grown by the plant breeder.

Note: within the OECD Seed Schemes this category of seed is known as ‘pre-basic seed’ (i.e. any generation of seed between parent material and ‘basic’ seed under the responsibility of the breeder).

- Basic seed - Seed produced from plants sown with breeder’s seed (i.e. the seed is produced by selected growers under the supervision of the breeder or their agent).
- Certified Seed 1st Generation - Seed derived from areas sown with Basic seed.
- Certified Seed 2nd Generation - Seed derived from areas sown with Certified Seed 1st Generation.
- Commercial (uncertified) Seed - Seed line that has either failed the New Zealand seed certification scheme, or has not been part of this certification scheme.

(80) **Specification**

Part of a document that prescribes a specific requirement with which the product or service has to conform.

(81) **Standard**

Document established by consensus and approved by a recognised body that provides, for a common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results aimed at the achievement of the optimum degree of order in a given context.

(82) **Subcontractor (Supplier)**

An organisation (not being an MAO) undertaking specific pre-export certification activities as per an IVA’s or MAO’s procedure(s).

(83) **Supervision**

Oversee, through direct line of sight observation, pre-determined activities being undertaken by another party (not exceeding 3 persons at any one time), to confirm compliance with specifications and/or procedures.

- (84) **Surveillance**
An official process that collects and records data on pest occurrence or absence by survey, monitoring or other procedures.
- (85) **Survey**
An official procedure conducted over a defined period of time to determine the characteristics of a pest population or to determine which species occur in an area.
- (86) **Systems approach(es)**
The integration of different risk management measures, at least two of which act independently, and which cumulatively achieve the appropriate level of risk management to facilitate issuance of MPI certification (e.g. phytosanitary protection and/or compliance with an ICPR).
- (87) **Test**
Official examination, other than visual, to determine the presence/absence of unwanted pests (or to identify the species of pests present) or chemicals.
- (88) **Trace-back investigation** - An MPI request to gather relevant information relating to an export consignment pest interception by the importing country.
- (89) **Treatment**
An officially authorised procedure for killing, removal of or rendering pests infertile.

Note: For the purposes of this certification system, treatment also includes rendering the pests and/or plant products non-viable or devitalising a consignment of plant products.

- (90) **Treatment supplier**
Refer to organisation.
- (91) **Treatment technician**
A person competent to carry out treatment methods and procedures, the objectives of the treatment and the audit of the treatment results but operate under effective oversight by the treatment supplier.
- (92) **Treatment certificate**
A uniquely numbered certificate issued by a treatment supplier verifying that an approved treatment has been completed in accordance with the appropriate MPI standard and includes a description of the treatment.
- (93) **Unit**
The smallest discrete portion in a lot, which will be withdrawn to form the whole or part of a sample. Units are identified as follows:
- Fresh fruits and vegetables: Each whole fruit (e.g. an apple, a blueberry), vegetable (e.g. an asparagus spear, onion, potato tuber) or natural bunch (e.g. grapes, red currants), will form a unit. Individual fresh fruit or vegetables must not be cut or broken to produce units
 - Flowers and foliage: A stem is regarded as a unit
 - Nursery stock: The individual plant/cutting is the unit. The individual plants must not be cut to produce units
 - Grain, seeds and grain products: The individual unit is that which is created with a MPI approved sampling device
 - Sphagnum moss, bark chips, wood chips and inert material: The individual unit is that which is created when obtained with a MPI approved sampling device.
 - Wood and wood products: The individual piece is the unit. A unit may be made of pieces that are permanently fixed together (e.g. a chair, a pallet and reconstituted wood products such as plywood and MDF).
- (94) **Verification**
Confirmation by examination and provision of objective evidence that specified requirements have been fulfilled.