BEFORE THE HEARINGS PANEL APPOINTED BY KAIPARA DISTRICT COUNCIL

IN THE MATTER	of the Resource Management Act 1991 (**the Act**)
AND	
IN THE MATTER	of the hearing of submissions on the proposed Kaipara District Plan Hearing Stream 17: Ecosystems and Indigenous Biodiversity Hearing Stream 18: Natural Character

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INDUSTRY STATEMENT OF SARAH CAMERON FOR HORTICULTURE NEW ZEALAND

15 May 2026

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

1. This industry statement responds to the Section 42A report recommendations in regard to the Horticulture NZ submission on the Proposed Kaipara District Plan:

    - Hearing Stream 17: Ecosystems and Indigenous Biodiversity
    - Hearing Stream 18: Natural Character.

INTRODUCTION

2. HortNZ is the industry body for the horticulture sector, representing growers who pay levies on fruit and vegetables sold either directly or through a post-harvest operator, as set out in the Commodity Levies (Vegetables and Fruit) Order 2013.

3. On behalf of growers, HortNZ takes a detailed involvement in resource management planning processes as part of its national and regional environmental policy response.

4. My name is Sarah Cameron. I am a Senior Policy Advisor at Horticulture New Zealand (HortNZ). I am in involved in HortNZ's national, regional, and district planning processes across New Zealand. I have been in this role since 2 May 2022.

CLEARANCE FOR BIOSECURITY PURPOSES

5. There is a need for a rapid response in the event of a biosecurity incursion of an unwanted organism (i.e. a plant pathogen or pest). Vegetation removal, burial, burning and spraying of material are methods that may be used. In those cases, infected or infested host plant material must be removed to eliminate or contain and prevent spread of the organism.

6. The year 2020 marked 10 years since the plant pathogen *Pseudomonas syringae pv. Actinidiae* (PSA) (the kiwifruit vine canker disease agent) infected New Zealand kiwifruit vines and crippled the kiwifruit industry. At the time of the event, it was evident that regional and district plans can unintentionally be regulatory hurdles to rapid response through provisions such as limiting earthworks for burying infected material or clearance of infected vegetation.

7. Only when a biosecurity emergency is declared by the Governor-General on the recommendation of a Minister (s144 Biosecurity Act[1]), can the

[1] https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1993/0095/latest/DLM316395.html

emergency provisions in the Biosecurity Act override the RMA provisions. Such a declaration has never been made.

8. In other situations, a Chief Technical Officer can notify the MPI, Director-General about an unwanted organism, but the biosecurity response mechanisms are still subject to RMA plan controls. With such a declaration, the regional and district plan rules still need to be met regarding the disposal of infected material. Given the urgency required in such a situation, it is not practical to have to obtain resource consent.

9. In the 2010 PSA incursion, only a Chief Technical Officer declaration was made, so regional and district plan requirements still needed to be met. This presented challenges in terms of timely and appropriate destruction of material which is what resulted in the rapid spread of and destruction from the disease.

10. If an incursion of an unwanted pathogen was unable to be appropriately managed due to regulatory barriers, it could have a significant impact on the region and the local economy.

11. The effects of a biosecurity incursion are not just limited to rural production. Such incursions can also affect wider biodiversity and indigenous flora and fauna. It is therefore appropriate that exclusions are provided for within the policy and planning framework which allow for the clearance and burial of any vegetation (including indigenous and that of significance) in the event of a biosecurity emergency declared under the Biosecurity Act or by a declaration of a Chief Technical Officer.

12. As Mr Hodgson has referenced in his evidence, The Northland Regional Pest and Marine Pathway Management Plan[2], an unwanted organism may not be a declared pest under the Pest Plan and there are significant omissions in the Pest Management Plan that are likely to impact the horticulture sector.

<u>Pseudomonas syringae pv. Actinidiae (PSA)</u>

13. Psa is a bacteria that can result in the death of kiwifruit vines. It was first discovered in New Zealand in November 2010 and rapidly caused widespread and severe impacts to New Zealand's kiwifruit industry.

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[2] https://www.nrc.govt.nz/media/uhudlio4/northland-regional-pest-and-marine-pathway-management-plan-2017-2027.pdf

14. First detected on a Te Puke orchard, Psa has since been identified in numerous kiwifruit growing regions across New Zealand including Northland.

15. Growth of Psa bacteria outside/inside of kiwifruit vines can result in leaf spotting, cane/leader dieback and vine death.

Picture one: Damage to kiwifruit vines from PSA

16. PSA infected 80% of kiwifruit orchards nationwide and is estimated to have cost the industry up to $1billion in lost exports[3].

17. While PSA is not included in the current Northland Pest Management Plan it is an unwanted organism and is included in the Northland Regional Council environment – weed and pest page[4] on their website including ways to report sightings immediately such is the risk to the region.

<u>Halyomorpha halys</u>

18. Halyomorpha halys (Brown Marmorated Stink Bug)[5] is an agricultural and horticultural pest found in Asia, notably China, Japan, and Korea. It has aggressively invaded the US and Europe and has been caught at New Zealand borders many times.

Picture two: Brown Marmorated Stink Bug

[3] https://newsroom.co.nz/2018/06/29/kiwifruit-psa-decision/

[4] https://www.nrc.govt.nz/environment/weed-and-pest-control/pest-control-hub/?pwsystem=true&pwid=145

[5] https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/10784-Brown-marmorated-stink-bug-fact-sheet#:~:text=It%20severely%20disfigures%20fruit%20and,but%20is%20a%20public%20nuisance.

19. This insect feeds on more than 300 hosts, primarily fruit trees and woody ornamentals but also field crops.

20. The bug is rapidly emerging as one of the most significant biosecurity threats to the New Zealand horticulture industry. The risk of this pest entering New Zealand is now considered extreme and if it were to arrive eradication would be a significant challenge with a low likelihood of success.

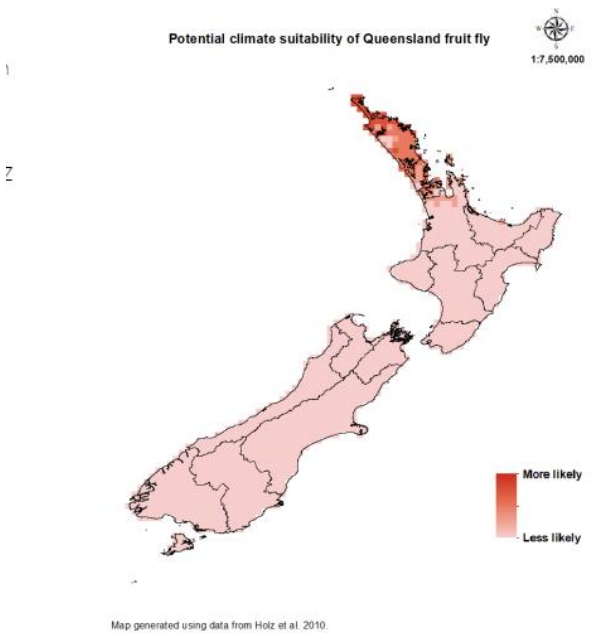
21. Brown Marmorated Stink Bug is included in the weed and pest page[6] of the Northland Regional Council website including how to immediately report any sightings however is not included in the Northland Pest Management Plan.

<u>Bactrocera tryoni</u>

22. Bactrocera Tryoni (Queensland fruit fly) would jeopardise New Zealand's multi-billion-dollar horticulture industry, with 80% of New Zealand's horticulture crops susceptible to attack.

23. The fruit fly is a major and frequent pest and activity is greatest in warm humid conditions.

Picture three: Shows the suitability in New Zealand of a fruit fly outbreak



[6] https://www.nrc.govt.nz/environment/weed-and-pest-control/pest-control-hub/?pwsystem=true&pwid=1056

24. Fruits and vegetables attacked by Queensland fruit fly are inedible and any fruit and vegetables would be subject to trade restrictions. The insect is an unwanted and notifiable organism.

25. In 2014, a male fruit fly was found in a surveillance trap in Whangarei[7] and 10 male flies were caught in Auckland 2019[8]. Surprisingly the fruit fly is not included on the weed and pest page[9] of the Northland Regional Council website.

EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL MEASURES

26. As mentioned in Mr Hodgson's evidence, HortNZ promotes erosion and sediment control measures focusing on reducing soil loss from cultivated land, protecting waterways, and maintaining soil health through a code of practice[10]. Key erosion and sediment control measures include:

Vegetated Buffer Strips: Riparian buffers that slow runoff water, filter sediment, and can reduce nitrogen/phosphorus loads by up to 90%

Sediment Retention Ponds/Traps: Constructed earth bunds or ponds at the base of slopes that act as a barrier to trap sediment from runoff

Uncultivated Setbacks: Leaving buffer zones near waterways, acting as a minimum standard for immediate implementation to stop sediment directly entering water bodies

Cover Crops/Green Manure: Planting crops after harvest to stabilize bare soil, reducing water and wind erosion

Contour Farming: Cultivating across the slope of a field rather than down it, which is highly effective on hills

Stabilized Entrances/Washdown Pads: Using metaled tracks or washing down vehicles to prevent sediment being carried off the farm.

27. Overall, these measures are practical, well-established, and widely recognised as effective tools for managing erosion and sediment risks. Enabling the establishment and maintenance of these controls supports improved freshwater outcomes and aligns with the broader objectives of sustainable land management.

28. Imposing overly restrictive limits on earthworks dimensions or volumes may inadvertently constrain the ability of growers to implement appropriately designed erosion and sediment control infrastructure. Such limitations may also reduce the sector's ability to respond effectively to biosecurity events, where rapid earthworks, containment measures, or land management responses may be required to prevent the spread of an incursion.

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[7] https://www.mpi.govt.nz/news/media-releases/fruit-fly-find-under-investigation-in-northland/

[8] https://www.mpi.govt.nz/biosecurity/exotic-pests-and-diseases-in-new-zealand/pests-and-diseases-under-response/queensland-fruit-fly/

[9] https://www.nrc.govt.nz/environment/weed-and-pest-control/pest-control-hub/?pwsystem=true&pwid=1056

[10] https://www.hortnz.co.nz/assets/Resources/Codes-of-Practice/ESC-Code-of-Practice-2025.pdf

CONCLUSION

29. A biosecurity response needs to be rapid. If an incursion occurs there needs to be a permitted activity framework in place that supports a rapid response.

1. I support the evidence of Mr Hodgson in this regard.

Sarah Cameron

15 May 2026