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19th June 2009

## **NOTICE TO CUSTOMERS**

### **BIOSECURITY/QUARANTINE DECLARATION FOR COOK ISLAND CARGO**

To our valuable customers,

We have received notification from the Cook Island Ministry of Agriculture implementing the Biosecurity Act effective 1<sup>st</sup> of July 09.

All containers to be discharged in the Cook Islands must have a completed Quarantine Declaration as per attached.

Also, for your info and guidance attached is the letter from the Ministry of Agriculture regarding Sea Freight containers and Import Health Standards for Containers.

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# Ministry of Agriculture

## BIOSECURITY SERVICE

P.O. Box 96, Rarotonga, Cook Islands Phone: +682-28710 Fax: +682-21881 Email: quaranti@oyster.net.ck

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10 June 2009

**To: IPPC Contact Points, NPPOs, Accreditation Container Facilities, Shipping Agencies, Customs Brokers, Commercial Import & Export Agents, Ports Authorities**

### **NON-COMPLIANCE OF SEAFREIGHT CONTAINERS**

Dear Sir/Madam,

The inspection and clearance of sea containers in recent times has been less than satisfactory due to containers arriving into the Cook Islands without the proper **Biosecurity or Quarantine Container Declaration** documentation. For the past 18 months, the Ministry of Agriculture held a number of public consultations in the area of quarantine awareness on issues that pose risks associated with the movement of containers and cargo. Also, one of the key topics during the consultations process was introducing the new Cook Islands Biosecurity Act passed by Parliament last September and which came into effect on 1 January 2009.

This notice is to inform our customers that effective as from 1 July 2009, implementation of the biosecurity procedures outlined in the Act will be strengthened to safeguard the country from intrusion of pests and disease via sea-freight containers and cargo.

It is very important that importers observe those conditions set out in the **Import Health Standards for Containers** attached to this letter. Failure to comply with these requirements may lead to unnecessary delays and significant costs while the container is held for inspection, cleaning or other necessary treatments.

We look forward to your continuous support and thank you for your time.

Sincerely, .....

Ngatoko Ngatoko  
Director

**Cook Islands Biosecurity**  

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**Import Health Standards for Container**  

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**Biosecurity Act 2008, part 4**

**1.0 General Conditions**

- 1.1 It is the responsibility of the exporter, master, owner or operator of any vessel who imports or carries any container into the Cook Islands to ensure compliance with this standard.
- 1.2 Every container imported into the Cook Islands shall be accompanied by a Biosecurity or Quarantine Declaration as per prescribed form in section 4 of this document.
- 1.3 Any container found contaminated with any plant material or other quarantine risk item is subject to the Biosecurity Act 2008, will be subject to such treatment to the satisfaction of a biosecurity officer, the cost of such treatment being borne by the owner or importer.
- 1.4 There are a number of other provisions in the Biosecurity Act 2008 which may affect you. If you commit an offence against the Biosecurity Act 2008, heavy penalties under section 94 of the Act might apply.
- 1.5 For enquiries:

Biosecurity Service  
Ministry of Agriculture  
P. O. Box 96  
Rarotonga  
Cook Islands  
Telephone: + 682 28711 or 28710  
Fax: + 682 21 881  
E mail [quaranti@oyster.net.ck](mailto:quaranti@oyster.net.ck)  
Website: [www.agriculture.gov.ck](http://www.agriculture.gov.ck)

**2.0 Overseas Inspection Requirements: Internal Conditions of Sea Containers**

- 2.1 Before loading, the exporter or packer must remove all materials, ensure the container is clean and check carefully for contaminants such as:
  - animals
  - insects or other invertebrates
  - insects egg casing
  - any material of animal origin including blood, bones, meat, hair, feathers
  - plants and plant products including fruit, seeds, leaves, twigs, roots, bark
  - water and/or soil.

During loading, ensure the container does not become contaminated by soil on forklift wheels or footwear.

Cook Islands Biosecurity  
Import Health Standards for Container  
Biosecurity Act 2008, part 4

- do not leave container doors open for long periods of time or overnight, as pests may enter
- no restricted packaging, such as straws, used tyres and moss
- if dunnage or wooden packaging is used (e.g. pallets, cases), the timber should be new, clean, dry, free of insects or signs of insects attack, bark, fungus, decay or rot
- treated timber is best. The treatment methods should be described on a accompanying container documentation
- preferential entry into Cook Islands is given for treated packaging
- ensure the container loading area is free of pests.

**3.0 Overseas Inspection Requirements: External Condition of Sea Containers**

Containers should be loaded on a hard, sealed surface to keep them clean and free as possible of contamination. The exterior of all sea containers should be clean and free of, pests such as

egg

grass

insects/pests

nests

seeds

snails

soil

webs

**4.0 Certification of Sea Containers**

- 4.1 A Quarantine Declaration form must be completed by the packer or exporter for all containers being shipped to the Cook Islands.

The exporter is responsible for providing the following information to the Cook Islands importer or their agent:

container number

origin (country where the container was packed)

Cook Islands Biosecurity  
Import Health Standards for Container  
Biosecurity Act 2008, part 4

the port at which the container was first loaded aboard a vessel for shipment to the Cook Islands

- exporter name and address
- importer name and address
- destination address in the Cook Islands for the container and contents (must be a Transitional Facility approved for the devanning or storage of containers)
- a complete and accurate description of the contents, including packaging
- treatment certification (if applicable)
- if the container or cargo has been fumigated then the fumigant, time, temperature and concentration must be supplied on an accompanying certificate.

Containers lacking this information may be considered high risk and may be subjected to delays and additional inspection and treatment cost.

**Sample Quarantine Declaration**

Quarantine Declaration to Accompany Containers to the Cook Islands

Packer or Exporter Letterhead

Quarantine Declaration for Containers

Vessels Name:

Voyage Number:

Container Number/s:

**Cleanliness and Restricted Packing and Packaging Declaration**

**1. Cleanliness**

At the time of packing, the container/s were inspected internally and externally, and are clean and free from contamination with live organisms, material of plant or animal origin, soil and water. Y \_ N \_ (place a tick in the appropriate box)

**2. Packaging Materials**

Has any soil, peat, raw green or contaminated moss, used sacking material, hay, straw, chaff or any packing material contaminated with the above been used within the container/s listed above? Y \_ N \_

Cook Islands Biosecurity  
Import Health Standards for Container  
Biosecurity Act 2008, part 4

**3. Wood Packaging**

Has any wood packaging been used within the container/s such as cases, pallets or wood used to separate, brace, protect or secure cargo in transit?

3a. If yes to 3 above, has the wood been treated? Y\_ N\_

3b. If yes to 3a above, how was the wood treated? Y\_ N\_

3c. Is a certificate for the treatment of this wood available? Y\_ N\_  
(attach a copy of the treatment certificate)

I certify that the above is true and correct.

Signed

Name

Designation

Date

If the information require above is not supplied or is found to be erroneous, it may result in significant delays and increase cost on arrival in the Cook Islands.

*Please produce this declaration on Packer or Exporter letterhead including address*

**Quarantine Declaration to Accompany Sea Containers to the Cook Islands**

Country of Origin:  
Vessel Name:  
Voyage Number:  
Container Number or Numbers:

Transitional Facility where container will be delivered to:

**Cleanliness and Restricted Packing and Packaging Declaration**

**1. Cleanliness**

At the time of packing, the container/s were inspected internally and externally, and are clean and free of contamination with live organisms, material of plant or animal origin, soil and water.....YES NO

**2. Restricted Packaging Materials**

Has any soil, peat, raw green or contaminated moss, used sacking material, used tyres , hay, straw, chaff or any packing material contaminated with the above been used within the container/s listed above .....YES NO

**3. Wood Packaging**

Has any wood packaging been used within the container/s such as cases, crates, pallets or wood used to separate, brace, protect or secure cargo in transit?  
YES NO

3a. If yes to 3 above, has the wood been ISPM 15 treated or marked...YES NO

3b. If no to 3a above, how was the wood treated .....

3c. Is a certificate for the treatment noted in 3b available?.....YES NO

*(If available please attach the original treatment certificate)*

**I certify that the above is true and correct.**

Signed:

Name:

Position held with company:

Date:

**FAILURE TO SUPPLY THIS INFORMATION, OR SUPPLYING ERRONEOUS INFORMATION, MAY RESULT IN SIGNIFICANT DELAYS AND INCREASED COSTS ON ARRIVAL INTO THE COOK ISLANDS**

