


## Potato Mop-Top Virus Potato Industry Stakeholder Update 18 October 2018 - 5:00pm

<p>For information about this update, contact <a href="mailto:PMTV2018.Liaison@mpi.govt.nz">PMTV2018 Liaison @mpi.govt.nz</a></p>	<p>This update includes key information about the PMTV 2018 response from Biosecurity New Zealand and Potatoes New Zealand.</p> <p><b>Red text indicates where new information has been added since the last update.</b></p>
<p><b>Background</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potato mop-top Virus (PMTV) <a href="#">was found in New Zealand in September 2018</a>.</li> <li>• Biosecurity New Zealand (part of MPI) and Potatoes New Zealand initiated a joint (GIA) response on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2018.</li> <li>• The first infected potato was found during routine sampling of material at a chip processing facility.</li> <li>• PMTV is a plant virus that largely affects potatoes and is a notifiable organism in New Zealand under the Biosecurity Act.</li> <li>• The virus is transmitted by the soil-borne fungus which causes Powdery scab (<i>Spongospora subterranean</i>), and can only survive long-term in the potato plant or in the fungus.</li> <li>• Once established in fields, the virus can survive for up to 20 years in soil in the absence of a potato crop. The infection of the potato plant can be either from the infected mother tuber, or through a current season transmission via a powdery scab infection of the roots.</li> <li>• If found to be established in New Zealand, PMTV is a manageable disease. The disease is established in North America and Europe where it is generally managed effectively without causing major production losses. However, where it is poorly managed, it can create a production problem for potato growers.</li> <li>• It is not a food safety issue.</li> <li>• Further surveillance has identified more farms which are suspected to be positive for PMTV.</li> <li>• For more information, please visit the <a href="#">Biosecurity New Zealand website</a>, <a href="#">Potatoes NZ website</a>, or the <a href="#">PMTV2018 Fact Sheet</a>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>How is potato mop top virus identified?</b></p> 	<p>Affected potatoes can display both foliar and tuber symptoms of varying severity. This depends on the sensitivity of the variety and the source of infection, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• distortions to the skin.</li> <li>• deep cracking, and rust-coloured arcs, streaks or flecks in the tuber flesh.</li> <li>• yellow colouration on the foliar (mother tuber infections only).</li> </ul> <p>While some varieties may show symptoms on the skin, PMTV may not be detected until the tuber is cut open. Some potatoes, while infected, may not show any symptoms at all.</p>
<p><b>Current situation and updates</b></p>	<p><b>Update:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>MPI's Chief Technical Officer has removed the Unwanted Organism status for the potato mop-top virus. This decision was informed by advice from MPI scientists and discussion and agreement between Biosecurity New Zealand and Potatoes New Zealand (PNZ).</b></li> <li>• <b>The removal of this status does not affect the obligation to report to MPI if you suspect that your crops may have the virus as currently it is still a Notifiable Organism.</b></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It has now been agreed that MPI will transition the current response into an Industry led management programme for PMTV, whilst still supporting the industry to achieve agreed outcomes.</li> <li>• Biosecurity New Zealand is continuing testing to identify how far spread potato mop top virus is. The number of farms under suspicion of having the virus changes regularly, as we rule properties out, or identify potential new properties.</li> <li>• To date, four properties have now been confirmed to have the virus.</li> <li>• Further testing, including soil testing is being undertaken to determine whether 10 additional farms are infected with the virus. (NB: not 18 properties as incorrectly stated last update). Soil testing takes a number of weeks to complete.</li> <li>• <b>Regions with confirmed infections:</b> Canterbury</li> <li>• <b>Potato cultivars (2017/2018 season)</b> on which PMTV has been detected:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Innovator (38 tubers)</li> <li>○ Russet Burbank (3 tubers)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 2018/2019 seedline testing all negative so far (Innovator, Russett Burbank and Agria testing complete).</li> </ul> <p><b>Response Objectives:</b></p> <p>The main focus at the current time is to understand the risks associated with the possible establishment of PMTV in NZ, and minimise its impact. We are undertaking investigative work to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand virus distribution and impacted crops to formulate options to manage, <b>and/or contain.</b></li> <li>• Delimit and contain infection on known paddocks and processing plants, particularly focusing on processing waste contamination.</li> <li>• Inform affected stakeholders of potential issues while maintaining minimal alarm within the industry and in the public.</li> <li>• Minimise impacts to exportable potatoes and potato products to relevant trade markets.</li> <li>• Determine if import pathway can be identified.</li> <li>• Engage with industry partners and stakeholders, and work with them to effectively manage the response.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Incident Control</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biosecurity New Zealand and Potatoes New Zealand are <b>currently</b> responding in partnership under the Government Industry Agreement (GIA).</li> <li>• Response costs are pre-agreed at 50%:50% along with a transitional discount of 60% for PNZ.</li> <li>• Response costs will therefore be split 20% (Potatoes New Zealand): 80% (Biosecurity New Zealand).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Industry Liaison</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An industry stakeholder meeting was held in the affected region on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> September. Over 60 representatives of the industry were present at this meeting.</li> <li>• A second stakeholder meeting was held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October with growers, exporters and processors in Pukekohe.</li> <li>• A third stakeholder meeting was held on Thursday the 4<sup>th</sup> of October with growers in Palmerston North.</li> <li>• <b>Details of technical workshops are still being finalised. We will advise as soon as those dates and venues are set. The workshops will cover which symptoms to look</b></li> </ul>

	<p>for, and how to submit symptomatic tubers for testing, as well as a current update on the response and plans going forward.</p>
<b>Operations</b>	<p><b>Response activities to date:</b></p> <p><i>Waste management:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solid potato processing waste from affected processing plants is being allowed to continue under permit.</li> <li>• Disposal of seed cutting by-product from affected processing plants is being allowed to resume to normal.</li> <li>• All processors complying with voluntary record-keeping process for disposal of solid processing waste.</li> </ul> <p><i>Surveillance and sampling:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial warehouses are continuing to voluntarily submit samples of any symptomatic tubers for testing.</li> <li>• Tracing continues to identify all infected farms. There are currently 4 properties confirmed infected and another 10 properties which are suspected of having PMTV are undergoing further testing.</li> <li>• Tubers tested for PMTV: 3593 tubers have been tested, with 41 testing positive for PMTV.</li> <li>• Innovator (2018/2019) seed lines have been tested – all negative.</li> <li>• Russet Burbank (2018/2019) seed lines have been tested – all negative.</li> <li>• Agria (2018/2019) seed lines have been tested – all negative.</li> <li>• Sampling for Nadine (2018/2019) seed lines and Moonlight seed lines is underway.</li> <li>• Testing of symptomatic tubers and foliage from suspect paddocks is ongoing.</li> <li>• A sampling and surveillance plan encompasses nationwide sampling, not just limited to the Canterbury region.</li> </ul>
<b>Intelligence / Planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigations continue to focus on commonalities between the infected properties. All possible pathways of introduction are under investigation.</li> <li>• Development of long term planning options for PMTV is underway.</li> </ul>
<b>Welfare support for affected individuals and businesses</b>	<p>We know that the impact of the potato mop-top virus response may stress both you and your business. If you need a chat or more support the following groups can help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural Support Trust: 0800-787-254 <a href="http://www.rural-support.org.nz/">http://www.rural-support.org.nz/</a></li> <li>• Healthline: 0800 611 116</li> <li>• Lifeline: 0800 111 757 (open 24/7)</li> <li>• Depression Helpline 0800 611 116 (open 24/7)</li> <li>• Biosecurity New Zealand PMTV Response Liaison/Welfare Team: <a href="mailto:PMTV2018_Liaison@mpi.govt.nz">PMTV2018_Liaison@mpi.govt.nz</a></li> <li>• Your GP or Practice Nurse</li> </ul>

<p><b>Information on detection</b></p>	<p>If you believe you have a symptomatic potato please call 0800 80 99 66 or email <a href="mailto:PMTV2018.Liaison@mpi.govt.nz">PMTV2018.Liaison@mpi.govt.nz</a>.</p> <p>Please refer to <a href="#">this factsheet</a> for symptoms to look out for.</p> <p>You have an important role to play in protecting your farm, your region and the potato industry from biosecurity threats.</p> <p>PMTV can be spread on seed tubers, in soil associated with boots, in machinery, and in waste from potatoes, so on-farm hygiene practices and developing a robust farm biosecurity plan are vital to try to minimise and help control the spread of potato mop-top virus.</p>
<p><b>Find out more about PMTV</b></p>	<p>PMTV web page on the <a href="#">Biosecurity New Zealand website</a></p> <p>PMTV web page on the <a href="#">Potatoes New Zealand website</a></p> <p>Download the <a href="#">PMTV fact sheet</a></p>
<p><b>Communication</b></p>	<p>The next update will be sent on Thursday 25 October or earlier if information changes significantly.</p>

## IF YOU SUSPECT PMTV:

You have an important role to play in protecting your farm, your region and the potato industry from biosecurity threats. If you suspect you have found PMTV on your property:



CALL the Biosecurity New Zealand Exotic Pest and Disease Hotline immediately on 0800 80 99 66



You can also help:

If you have a camera or phone camera, take clear photos, including the whole plant, the whole affected potato, and a close-up of the affected area of the plant.