

## **MPI in Response**

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A globally transient human population can result in the displacement of small invertebrates and plants. Away from their natural predators these organisms may multiply in numbers difficult to control. The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) is tasked with developing and implementing strategies that keep New Zealand free of unwanted pest organisms. Key components to achieving that goal include early detection of a pest organism achieved by community surveillance, vigilant stakeholders and urgent response to detections by highly trained MPI staff. MPI has an Exotic Pest and Diseases hotline (0800 80 99 66) and email channels monitored 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to report suspected exotic pests and diseases. The report is investigated and depending on the degree of risk identified a response can be initiated to mitigate or eradicate a risk organism. In November, 2014 one suspected Yellow Spotted Stink Bug (YSSB) was found in Temuka, South Canterbury. The YSSB is one of MPI's unwanted pests because of the physical and economic impact its establishment would have to New Zealand. A Response was initiated to provide effective and efficient decision-making and to ensure sufficient measures were in place to assess and mitigate the risk. Response teams work in conjunction with staff from MPI's Investigation and Diagnostic Centres (IDC). These Centres assist with field investigation, laboratory screening and diagnosis of suspect exotic pests and diseases.

