



AgVetLink

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NZFSA 2005

The New Zealand Food Safety Authority's review of its internal structure and processes to ensure it is 'fit for purpose' and properly positioned to meet the future requirements of consumers of New Zealand food, both domestically and internationally, is well underway.

Directors for the new functional rather than sector-based groups have been confirmed. All existing directors have been reconfirmed or reassigned within the new structure, reinforcing the emphasis that this change is 'evolution rather than revolution'.

Andrew McKenzie, NZFSA's Executive Director, has announced the following appointments:

- **Geoff Allen** as Director Compliance and Investigation
- **Carol Barnao** as Director Export Standards
- **Sandra Daly** as Director Communications and Infrastructure
- **Steve Gilbert** as Director Verification Agency (which remains entirely unchanged in focus and structure)
- **Steve Hathaway** as Director Science
- **Carole Inkster** as Director Policy and Director Joint Food Standards
- **Tim Knox** as Director New Zealand Standards
- **Debbie Morris** as Director Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines and Director Approvals
- **Tony Zohrab** as Director Market Access

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ACVM Group contact information

AgVetLink is produced at least six times annually by the New Zealand Food Safety Authority's Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines Group. The newsletter is of special relevance to those interested or involved in all aspects of agricultural compounds and veterinary medicines. It contains regular updates on implementation of legislation, notifications, new standards and policies, consultation, international agreements, and other information.

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Disclaimer: This publication is intended only as a guide. It is not a legal interpretation of the legislation discussed.

GENERAL INTEREST

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Andrew McKenzie

Andrew regards the appointments as “the first key step in our realignment process”. The next step will involve more detailed organisational design showing the functions of the groups in each of the above directorates. This will be announced in May.

NZFSA 2005

The restructure project, called NZFSA 2005, is focusing on the internal structure of the organisation and looking at how it fits with processes such as registrations and approvals, standards setting for the domestic and export markets, and market access.

Functional approach

“At present we have a number of groups whose work is centred on industry sectors and existing legislation,” says Andrew. “I believe that it is timely to evolve NZFSA in line with our risk

management framework, with a key change being to move those parts of NZFSA that are vertically or sector-based to a more horizontal or functional approach. This will allow us to work smarter and create an environment in which NZFSA is better able to operate from producer to consumer and about using the technology available to sophisticate processes and systems.”

Organisational design

During Andrew’s consultation with staff regarding plans for NZFSA organisational design, several ‘themes’ emerged. Some of these themes and Andrew’s responses follow.

1. The need to retain sectoral association within the functional groupings

AM: There is no intention to lose our focus on specific sectors and, in fact, I want to retain and build on the strong connections NZFSA and its people already have with industry sectors. Consultation (and the attendant relationship building) with the sectors will continue to be a crucial part of NZFSA’s modus operandi to better ensure that our strategies are aligned with industry needs and standards are appropriate. Our programmes must be designed with the necessary flexibility, be cognizant of the differences between sectors and be tailored accordingly.

I want to change the focus of the current groups from one based on the legislation

they administer into a more horizontal approach to the function, which will ensure consistency in application of the legislation and across the sectors.

There will be a continuing need to have sector-specific expertise and contact points within the new structure. We will have to work our way through the difficulties that will likely arise where the sector specific expertise is vested in more than one functional group.

The bottom line is that we must not lose sight of our linkages and relationship with the industry sectors.

2. The need to ensure that accountabilities are clear

AM: I will ensure accountabilities are clearly defined for the Directors of the functional groups and their components. They will, in turn, clearly define accountabilities of people reporting to them. This is a must.

3. Have we gone far enough in the changes for particular functional groupings?

AM: At present, I intend still having a Director for ‘Joint Food Standards’ (which are the standards produced under the Joint Food Standard Setting Treaty with Australia), and a Director for most of the aspects of the Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines Act. Both have a political element to them. In the latter case, the legislation is not only ‘complementary’ to the Food Act, Wine Act and Animal Products Act but also covers such issues as biosecurity and animal welfare and is, therefore, equally related to the work of Biosecurity New Zealand.

4. How will we do our work?

AM: I want to effect change to the modus operandi of Directors and their staff to ensure that all groups are talking to each other as necessary to provide a

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Update of Products to ACVM Act

Over 90% of products requiring updating to the ACVM Act have now been approved or completed. Delays in finalising the uncompleted updates have resulted primarily because registrants need to provide further information. In a number of cases a DAS assessment is necessary because of product changes that had not previously been notified to the ACVM Group.

GENERAL INTEREST

Antibiotic Resistance Expert Panel

The Antibiotic Resistance Expert Panel has now met four times in their consideration of the impact of antibiotic use in animals and horticulture on the development of antibiotic resistance in human pathogens.

Good progress is being made on the writing of the report and the Panel is on track to present a draft to the Steering Group at the beginning of June for their consideration and comment.



Expert Panel members (from left) Tim Blackmore, David Holland, Nigel French and Julian Waters on a field trip to a poultry farm north of Auckland

Some Panel members have been getting out of the meeting room and making trips to meet with industry to get a better understanding and appreciation of how antibiotic use works in industry and how sampling occurs. This information will be used mainly as background to the development of a surveillance programme. The

'field trips' have been invaluable, especially for the Panel members who work in a human health environment.

Annual Fees

The first part of the annual fee process has been completed – the majority of product lists, which were sent to registrants in March, have been checked, signed and returned promptly. We are currently updating our system to reflect any necessary amendments, changes or cancellations indicated on the returned product lists.

Next, the annual fee invoices for the period 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006 will be posted (mid May). **Please note that these invoices are due for payment by 1 July 2005.**

Late payment procedure

1. If payment is not received **prior** to 1 July 2005, you will receive a 10% penalty invoice under section 18 of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (Restructuring) Act 1995.
2. In addition to the 10% penalty invoice, your product(s) will be prohibited from importation and/or manufacture under section 82 of the Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines Act 1997. Removal of the prohibition notice will occur only once payment on all outstanding debts and any penalty fees has been received.

If you have any queries please contact:

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ACVM Regulations: Changes and what they mean for you

The Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines Amendment Regulations 2005 were approved by Cabinet on 11 April 2005 and come into force on 12 May 2005.

The key changes to the ACVM Regulations 2001 are technical in nature and likely to require updating less frequently in future. Changes include the following.

- Reporting requirements for certain kinds of products that are exempt from registration have been removed (Schedule 3 has been collapsed into Schedule 2).
- The most significant **deletions** to the schedules for exemptions are:
 - Exemptions for fertilisers and fertiliser additives that are raw or

composted biological wastes are subject to the Resource Management Act 1991;

- Removal of unqualified exemption for plant material, so that animal feed conditions (i.e. hay, silage, grain etc.) will be subject to the 'fit for purpose' requirements in Schedule 4 ;
- Removal of reference to GRAS substances in Part B of Schedule 7 (instead introducing an obligation to avoid violative residues caused by any ingredient listed in the compound products).

- The most significant **additions** to the schedules for exemptions are:
 - Homeopathic plant compounds
 - Plant tissue culture products
 - Plant graft protection products

- Semen extenders and media for animal ova.

The remaining changes are clarifications to existing exemptions from registration.

Copies of these Regulations may be purchased from Bennett's Government Bookshop. Alternatively, refer to the NZFSA website (www.nzfsa.govt.nz), which provides a link to New Zealand legislation if you go to the heading 'Policy and Law', click on 'Legislation' and then click on the ACVM Act.

The New Zealand legislation website is provided by Parliamentary Counsel Office and is sourced from Brookers. It provides unofficial versions of New Zealand Statutes and Regulations, and is free of charge.

ACVM Act Amendment Update

The papers proposing the ACVM Act amendments have been going through the process of consultation with other interested or affected Government Departments.

It is hoped to have them presented to Cabinet by early May.

If Cabinet approval is given, the drafting of the legislative changes will then begin.

Food Residues Surveillance Programme

This is a reminder about the NZFSA's Food Residues Surveillance Programme (FRSP). Every year NZFSA selects a small group of food/residue combinations to study. The selection is chosen on the basis of information about the consumption of the food, the toxicity of the chemical, the likelihood of residues, and the confidence NZFSA has in that information.

Sampling is now underway for this year's programme of lettuce, pears, strawberries, potatoes and oranges; and imported prawns, pork, peanuts and taro.

Although unexpected or non-compliant results would be investigated further, the main purpose of the FRSP is to help NZFSA understand what is happening in the 'real world'. This is complementary to the 'slice of life' reviews run by the ACVM Group.

Further information can be found on the NZFSA website, under Science and Technology, or contact Paul Dansted (paul.dansted@nzfsa.govt.nz).

GENERAL INTEREST

Staff update

It's been a busy couple of months within the Group. Firstly, congratulations to:

- **Paul and Sarah Dansted**, the very proud first-time parents of Hanne
- **Meg Davies** and husband John Moffit for the arrival of their third child, a boy, Rawrey Moffit.

All parents doing well!

Assessors

Sarah Lester, Technical Assessor-Plant Compounds, is back from maternity leave on a part-time basis. It is great to have Sarah's knowledge and skills in all aspects of application work.

Warren Hughes will be away at a pesticides conference in the Netherlands from 15 April - 2 May. **Bruce Nalder** is currently on annual leave in the Philippines and will also be returning 2 May.

Advisors

In the Advisor area, it is with sadness that we have farewelled **Rachel Green**. Rachel has taken up an opportunity to work for another organisation within an area of her interest. Her last day with the ACVM Group was 15 April. We wish you well, Rachel.

Claire Truscott will take the lead role in the Advisor's arena with the assistance of **Chris Scott** who has stepped up admirably to the challenge of registration work.

Linley Thorburn will be moving into a new position, Technical Advisor (ACVM Compliance and Verification), from 9 May. Linley's current key accounts will be allocated to either Chris or Claire, and these will be advised at a later date. Linley will provide backup support in the Advisor's area when and if the need arises.

Mary Alexander joined the team as Group Co-ordinator on 21 March. You will see her photo and profile at right. Mary is also being trained in some aspects of the Advisor's role for backup support when required.



Hine Van Leeuwen
Co-ordinator (Business Services)

"After being reared in the Wairarapa for the better part of my life, I spent three years of my adult existence in Palmerston North where I completed a Bachelor of Business Studies. Wanting to move into the work force as a full-time employee, I decided that Wellington was the place for me so packed my bags and moved to the windy capital. I entered the force working as a debt collector for

New Zealand Post until one and a half years later I was offered my current position within NZFSA. I began working with the joint support team in January as the Co-ordinator (Business Services). I was welcomed into the ACVM squad with keen enthusiasm, and my transition into the Group has been made easy because I am working with friendly and supportive people. I have thoroughly enjoyed these past few months and am excited about the future."



Mary Alexander
Group Co-ordinator

"After growing up on a vineyard in the Wairarapa, I moved to Wellington to begin my many years in the workforce. I was a courier with Pace Couriers for the majority of my working years to date, but had a year's break in the United States where I worked on an animal sanctuary in New Mexico. This involved the rescue, rehabilitation and adoption of abused or homeless animals.

I have a great passion for outdoor sports, mainly soccer and softball, with the occasional recreational cycling. I also spend a lot of time writing screen plays as I have an avid interest in film. Most of you will probably remember Deborah Alexander who used to work for the ACVM Group. She was referred to by all as 'Mother', and it just so happens she is my real mother! I look forward to working with you all."

REMINDER

Antibiotic Sales & Adverse Event Reports (AER)

One of the conditions of registration for antibiotics under the ACVM Act is the requirement to report annual sales figures. This is to advise all registrants that annual sales figures and AER reports must be submitted to the ACVM Group for the period **1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005**.

All registrants will receive by mail in the near future a brief letter and calculation table to record sales figures. We expect all companies to provide the ACVM Group with their annual AER reports as required under the ACVM Act.

GENERAL INTEREST

Modification of conditions of registration

In most cases conditions of registration are modified in response to an application to vary an existing registration. However, there are times when the need to change conditions of registration (usually for a group of products) is initiated by the ACVM Group because of some new information that requires a reassessment.

The ACVM Act provides for reassessments under section 29 if:

- significant new information on a matter related to the use of a registered trade name product has become available; or

- there has been a significant change in the use of any or all of the registered trade name products.

New information includes, but is not limited to, information not previously considered during an assessment of the registered trade name product and the information indicates that the conditions placed on the registration do not adequately manage the risks associated with the product. For example, it has become apparent during the review of prudent use of antibiotics that advertising prescription antibiotics directly to end-users diminishes the

effectiveness of the prescription condition. Consequently, the ACVM Group has reassessed the registrations of all such products and intends to impose a prohibition on advertising them directly to end-users.

From time to time the ACVM Group will carry out reassessments and, consequently, change conditions of registration. The Group's policy *Modification of Conditions of Registration, 174 ACVM 02/05* governs the way this is done and puts it into the context of a reassessment under sections 29-33 of the ACVM Act.

MRL update

Currently the annual MRL process has one amendment round containing five MRLs to be set and three MRL exemptions out for public consultation. The duration of the consultation has been extended to six weeks because of SPS reporting requirements.

We are nearing the time to consult upon a second amendment to the MRL standards. This amendment is considerably larger than any other put forward before and contains several changes to the standard including:

- a reformatting of the MRL table,
- a proposal to include limit of quantification MRLs for 40 plant compound active ingredients, and
- removal of three obsolete plant compounds and their MRLs from the standard.

We hope the proposed changes will aid in updating the standard to meet every requirement of it within the food industry. As well as the above changes, this amendment will also propose to set one MRL and one MRL exemption.

DAS Reports

We remind applicants again that they should review DAS reports done on their behalf by the ACVM Group's Data Assessment Service (or any other DAS provider) *before* requesting the application proceed into the Review and Evaluation (R&E) system. The DAS reports may raise issues or recommend label amendments that the applicant may need to address/clarify before submitting the application into R&E.

While the ACVM Group endeavours to signal to applicants any issues over an application in the DAS assessment service before finalising the DAS reports, it is the responsibility of the applicant to review the DAS reports prior to submitting them with the application into the R&E system. If the applicant disagrees with any of the recommendations in the final DAS report(s), then he/she should consult first with the DAS provider (which may or may not be the ACVM Group) before proceeding to the R&E system.

Furthermore, once the application is in the R&E system, the ACVM Group will not enter into discussions over issues raised or label amendments suggested in DAS reports, bearing in mind the tight regulatory timeframes operating under the ACVM Act for making a decision on an application. In such cases, the applicant has the option of either withdrawing the application and resubmitting it with appropriate changes, or proceeding with the application based on the DAS report's original recommendations.

GENERAL INTEREST

AVMAC/ILG meetings

The most recent AVMAC and Industry Liaison Group (ILG) meetings were held on 10 March 2005.

Chris Boland gave an update on ACVM standards/operational policy. These documents are available on our website (www.maf.govt.nz/acvm).

- *Labelling Guide for Veterinary Medicines Requiring Registration*
- *Labelling Guide for Plant Compounds Requiring Registration*
- Operational policy on feed commodities
- Operational policy, registration and labelling information for vertebrate toxic agents
- *Specified Requirements Products: Standard and Guideline for Veterinary Medicines Containing Pheromones*
- *Specified Requirements Products: Standard and Guideline for Oral Nutritional Compounds with Known Therapeutic Uses (functional ingredients) and Non GRAS Ingredients*

Jack Richardson, representative for Agcarm, gave a brief overview on Agcarm's work on HSNO labels. They now have a labelling guide but have not been able to resolve the stock in trade issue as yet.

New member Douglas Birnie, Biosecurity NZ representative, gave a presentation on Biosecurity NZ.

The next AVMAC/ILG meetings will be held on 18 August 2005.

Compliance

The ACVM Group has been busy with a large number of non-compliant products that are being advertised on the Trade Me website. We have contacted the advertisers with the cooperation of Trade Me Limited. Many of the products are just 'one off's' but we are keeping a watching brief on this to ensure that products are registered and meet the ACVM advertising requirements.

In addition to these concerns, we are still having problems with a number of oral nutritional compounds that are being offered for sale and marketed within the equine industry without registration. We are investigating one particular product that has been widely advertised (with unapproved claims) in monthly horse magazines.

Two investigations (one veterinary medicine and one plant compound) with the NZFSA Compliance and Investigation Group are currently going through prosecution. We should have more to report in the next issue of *AgVetLink*.

New GRAS application form

Over the last six months we have been updating the Oral Nutritional Compound GRAS Register on the website to make it more informative and to allow ease of access to a single compound.

As part of this update we have reformatted the GRAS application form for oral nutritional compounds and veterinary medicine excipients. The new form, although longer than previous versions, should allow application time to be reduced.

From 1 May 2005 we will no longer accept applications made with older versions of the application form, so please ensure you update to the current version.

Please note that we have attempted to make the GRAS process completely electronic-based and all applications should be submitted by email. Although we will accept applications submitted by post or fax, these methods may add unnecessary delay to the application turnaround time.

Review of Provisional Registrations

In December 2004 the ACVM Group wrote to all companies advising them that we had undertaken an audit of all conditions of registration for Provisional Registrations. In particular, the condition of providing trial site information had not been met in many cases. Most companies have now provided the requested information, but if you have overlooked this requirement in the registration of products since our letter of December 2004, then please advise the ACVM Group as soon as possible.

PAR trader approvals update

The ACVM Group is completing the approvals of prescription animal remedy (PAR) traders. The recent series of workshops (see page 9) for veterinarians and stakeholders around the country indicated we have not communicated our process and time frames sufficiently well. This is a summary of progress so far.

The key guiding principle we have adopted in defining what constitutes trading under this programme is the activity of selling a PAR to an end-user. Although three distinct groups of traders have been identified, the requirements covering their activities are common to all groups.

Registered veterinary practices

Registered veterinary practices have been approved as traders, and we will send letters and a certificate to the approved practices as soon as possible. We are aware that in some cases practices have listed a number of veterinarians having overall responsibility for the PAR trading system and our certificate will reflect that situation. However, we are particularly interested in the person responsible for the retailing activity (i.e. the person who manages PAR stocks, specifies the lay staff who can dispense PAR products,

trains those staff and carries out the internal audits to confirm compliance to the ACVM Standard for Prescription Animal Remedy Veterinary Medicines).

We consider that, in most administrative systems, overall responsibility will be placed with one or two people who may or may not be veterinarians. As discussed in previous *AgVetLink* articles, the requirements of the Veterinary Council of New Zealand for maintenance of the registration of a veterinarian obviate the need for a 'fit and proper person' assessment of veterinarians. If the responsible person is a non-veterinarian, fit and proper person assessment is required.

Spot checks for compliance with the ACVM Standard for PAR Veterinary Medicines by traders will be made under an inspection sample plan to be implemented during 2005. During these checks the actual arrangements in regard to the overall responsibility for the trading activity will be clarified.

Registrants of PAR products

Registrants of PAR products are traders under this programme if they sell products directly to end users under a veterinary prescription or authorisation. If registrant traders are also

manufacturers subject to regular GMP inspection, they will be approved as traders automatically, and the GMP inspections will be modified to include stock management to review trading practices. Registrants who are traders of PARs and who are manufacturing will also receive a certificate and letter confirming approval in the near future.

Some registrants who are neither veterinarians nor manufacturers have applied for approval as traders of PARs for sale directly to end users. These applicants will be required to assign a responsible person who will be assessed as fit and proper, and their sites and operating systems will be inspected for compliance with the trading requirements in the ACVM Standard for PAR Veterinary Medicines. The ACVM Group is in the process of contacting these applicants.

Veterinary wholesalers

Some veterinary wholesaler organisations and sites have been inspected for a number of years and approved by the ACVM Group for participation in the rigidly controlled hormonal growth promotant (HGP) distribution process. These organisations, which have been found to comply with the trading requirements in the ACVM Standard for PAR Veterinary Medicines and have been approved as PAR traders, will receive a certificate and letter confirming approval as soon as possible.

Some wholesales have applied for approval as new traders of PARs. These applicants have been contacted and their sites and operational systems are being inspected for compliance with the trading requirements in the ACVM Standard for PAR Veterinary Medicines. On completion of the inspection and fit and proper assessment of the responsible person, approval will be confirmed by letter and by ACVM certificate.

Once approved, traders will be placed on a public register, which will be posted on the ACVM website.

Notify Manufacturing Changes

Approved manufacturers of veterinary medicines must be aware of the requirement to notify the ACVM Group of any changes to their premises, plant or processes that may affect the information provided for the registration of the products being manufactured. The notification should be made *before* changes are implemented.

Manufacturers are reminded that a manufacturer approval links an organisation with a specific site for the manufacture of specific products. If a manufacturer vacates a site, the approval automatically lapses. Another manufacturer cannot move into a vacated site and assume GMP compliance because the previous tenant had approval.

Default in-use period statements for multi-use vaccine vials

In the October 2004 issue of *AgVetLink*, industry was requested to consider and comment upon the advisability of adopting the APVMA default label statement requirements for the in-use period of multi-use vaccines.

Four submissions were received – all supportive of the proposed change. The ACVM Group has considered the submissions and the following amendment to ACVM policy and the *ACVM Labelling Guide for Veterinary Medicines* has been approved:

Where no in-use stability data is or has been supplied at the time of registration for non-Clostridial multi-use vaccines, where appropriate the following statement will be required:

“Unused vaccine must be discarded within 12 hours of opening”.

For Clostridial vaccines, a similar statement limiting the period of use to the next day (maximum 36 hours) may be included instead. Advice regarding appropriate resealing practices including, at minimum, the removal of the delivery tube, disinfection of the stopper and storage of the vaccine in the refrigerator must also be stated on the label.

The *ACVM Labelling Guide for Veterinary Medicines* has been altered to reflect this change in policy.

CFIA visit for inspections

Dr Denis Anderchek, who is an inspector with the Canadian Food Inspection Authority (CFIA), visited New Zealand for two weeks in April to carry out inspections of the manufacture of two products for their continued approval in Canada.

One inspection was of the farm-to-production processes for the manufacture of the product Colostryx by Fonterra. Prepared from whey concentrate, the product is registered in Canada and the USA as a veterinary medicine.

The other inspection was of Schering-Plough for compliance with good manufacturing practice for veterinary biologicals. Schering-Plough is a manufacturer of veterinary vaccines and supplies products into the world market.

Dr Anderchek visited NZFSA on 15 April for discussions on matters of regulatory interest with staff from the ACVM Group and the Dairy Group. Another meeting, the Veterinary International Conference on Harmonisation in May 2005 in Washington DC, will provide the opportunity for talks with Canadian and other regulators on the management of GMP for veterinary products.

Veterinary Workshops

The ACVM Group completed this year's series of workshops for veterinarians in the first two weeks of April. **Chris Boland, Neil Kennington** and **Jennie Moran** jointly presented and discussed a variety of issues at locations in both the North and South Islands. Most sessions were well attended by a mix of veterinarians, product registrants, registration consultants and other interested parties.

Issues on the agenda included a discussion of the ACVM Regulations and product groups exempt from the requirement for registration as well as current issues like selenium, induction drugs and velvet residues. An update regarding approved traders and the ACVM Group's position on advertising and promotion of PARs was also presented.

Issues of most interest varied from location to location (and even island to island), and it was obvious that the opinions of individual veterinarians varied significantly on some issues.

The Dunedin workshop was cancelled as a result of lack of numbers, so Chris, Neil and Jennie took the opportunity to view Invermay and the Otago University Laboratory Animal Facilities. In addition, John Schofield and his team presented an overview of the PAR management system they have developed to control the use of veterinary medicines by non-veterinarians within the university. A significant amount of work has gone in to producing the very robust system and a more in-depth article is planned for the next *AgVetLink*.

Update on products

The ACVM Group has finalised the registration conditions for vertebrate toxic agent (VTA) products. Registrants have been notified of the conditions of registration required for their VTA products. Over the next few months, the ACVM Group will update the majority of VTA products with respect to these conditions of registration and labelling changes.

Where a condition of registration requires a 'Controlled Substances Licence' to purchase and/or an 'Approved Trader' to sell, then these will be phased in over time.

Controlled Substances Licence

The ACVM Group will align its phase in period with that of ERMA New Zealand. Therefore, for registered

trade name products that currently can be purchased only by a person holding a Vertebrate Pest Control (VPC) licence, this arrangement will continue. If a registered trade name product previously had no VPC licence requirement and is now subject to a 'Controlled Substances Licence', then this requirement will not be enforced until the new 'Controlled Substances Licence' scheme (both ERMA New Zealand and ACVM Group) is in operation. The implementation date for the new system is 1 November 2005.

Approved traders

A 12-month phase in period will commence from 1 April 2005 for traders to become approved. To assist in the implementation of the approved trader system, the ACVM Group would

appreciate registrants submitting updated lists of their distributors.

Registration expiry date

The registration expiry date for VTA products will be set at 18 months initially, rather than three years. This shorter period will allow the ACVM Group to monitor and review the conditions to ensure they are working as intended, and to modify conditions should this be necessary.

Documentation

The VTA registration requirement documents have been finalised and are available on the ACVM Group website. Applicants submitting applications for registration of and variations to VTA products should use these forms.

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seamless interface between the functional groups. It is important that we harmonise across the legislation and with our stakeholders as much as possible. This will involve people understanding where they fit into the organisation and who might also be interested in or be affected by work/decisions they might take. The ethos of asking, "Who else might be interested in the information that I have?" must become part of our working environment.

I will be using two methods to address this issue:

- Job descriptions will include the requirement to work appropriately with colleagues so that we get a

'through food chain' and seamless approach to our work

- Governance arrangements that require Directors to work together and provide cross-cutting strategies and work plans that are signed off by the NZFSA Board will be set up.

I would expect the 'lead' Director to report monthly to the Board on progress against the agreed work plan. The latter is a substantial shift in approach to the Board's shared accountabilities and how I expect to manage NZFSA business.

Internal interfaces are a critical component of any organisation and there is a need to 'get this right'. We must ensure there is an awareness of the

need to think of others' needs/roles, communicate fully and work appropriately with others towards meeting NZFSA's goals and outcomes.

Constant review needed

Protecting and promoting public health and safety, and facilitating market access for New Zealand's food and food-related products are the two key roles of NZFSA.

Says Andrew: "The world is continually evolving in the area of food administration and it is important that NZFSA evolves appropriately with it. I believe that we need to constantly review ourselves to ensure the existing and future needs and expectations of stakeholders and consumers are met."

It is intended that Project NZFSA 2005 will be completed by August this year and that there will be a 'settling in period' following this. NZFSA will make further announcements as the project progresses.

ELECTRONIC LABELS

Please send labels directly to your Advisor via email instead of including them in datasheet information. If you are not sure who your Advisor is, email labels to Claire Truscott (claire.truscott@nzfsa.govt.nz).