

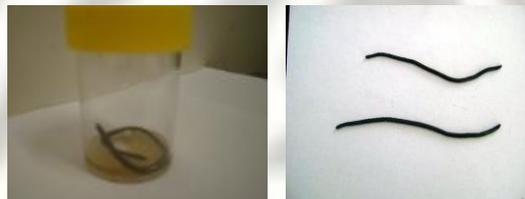
Quarantine E-Newsletter

The Quarantine Division received a phone call from the Meteorology Division of an unfamiliar citing of a type of insect located on their compound. It is these responses that show the public's interest and awareness in contacting the appropriate division to handle and identify whether it was an introduced or invasive species. The elongated insect-like species was taken for laboratory analysis to be identified by a Quarantine officer for confirmation as part of the training and experience in carrying out practical solutions assisted by the NZ aid funded project of pest diagnostic. It is important to determine unfamiliar looking species so that we could gather information that they are not invasive species that could be harmful to health and the environment.



There had been reported cases of the Blind snake, commonly known as the flowerpot snake or Brahminy blind snake (*Ramphotyphlops braminus*). This species may have been introduced into Samoa more than 20 years ago, and can be mistaken for an earthworm. Unlike any other snake species, it is parthenogenetic, it exists as females only, there are no males, hence an arriving female can start a new colony without a mate, all the offspring being clones. It feeds on termites and possibly ant pupae and lives under paving slabs, oil drums, garden rubbish, etc., and cannot bite a human, its' mouth is too small and its teeth are limited to three tiny teeth in one jaw only. It has no fangs and no venom. It has a spine on the tail which will stick in the hand if it is picked up but this is not a sting, it is a harmless device used for pushing the snake along smooth-walled termite burrows in search of prey. Although the snake is called

'blind' it does have photo-sensitive pigments, rudimentary eyes, under the large head scales.



The Pesticide unit is undergoing many non-compliance issues with unregistered pesticides still sold in many outlets. There exists a Pesticide committee and Pesticide Registrar where one of their roles are to ensure that all pesticides being brought into Samoa, are compliant and of an advantage to the economy and environment. The pesticide undergoes further analysis and research to determine its use and a certifying certificate from the manufacturing country must be presented for confirmation of its type, instructions for use, economical and environmental advantage. The pesticide must be registered in accordance to the standards permitted by Quarantine of the Ministry of Agriculture, if they are not, then they will be removed and seized by Samoa Quarantine.

Pictures showing some of the seized unregistered pesticides



Quarantine E-Newsletter

Non Compliance an Ongoing challenge

There are still a number of people travelling in and out of Samoa who are not aware of the penalties that are imposed when prohibited goods are imported as well as when importers do not possess an import permit for goods that require permits. There is an enforcement of a penalty fine in Samoan tala if you are caught without a permit for the goods you are bringing into Samoa.

The Border Quarantine services have noted that there still exists a need for awareness and information distribution to members of the travelling public concerning the importance to obtain an import permit especially on the items specified for Quarantine control measures.



Prior to issuing an import permit, an application form needs to be filled out to ensure that the goods have undergone an Import Risk Analysis. It is an offence if you do not declare your goods and if you do not honestly fill out the Declaration form given out to you during inbound flights and vessels into Samoa. It is noted that there is an increasing number of fine mats or ie toga that are imported or exported, hence preventative measures by the Quarantine division must be carried out to prevent pest and disease introduction. It is strongly advised that fumigation be carried out for these mats as they may harbour pests.



In relation to prohibited goods, the channel from the American Samoa route into Samoan territory, there are still a number of people who are bringing in the prohibited turkey tails. The importation of turkey tails is

still listed as a prohibited good, but there is still a number of non compliance with this particular commodity. If you are caught bringing in a prohibited good, not only will you be charged a penalty fee, but you would also be faced with the decision whether to return the good to its country of origin at your own cost, or for the responsible quarantine official to subject the good for incineration.

If you are unsure of the goods that you are bringing into the country, ask the Samoa Quarantine services for advice, or take the risk of your goods being seized and condemned



Be a responsible citizen; protect Samoa from pests and diseases for us, the future generation



LET US WORK TOGETHER TO PROTECT SAMOA