



**Submission by the
Royal New Zealand Society for the
Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Inc.**

on

**Proposed Amendments to Agricultural Compounds
and Veterinary Medicines (Exemptions and
Prohibited Substances) Regulations 2011**

3 August 2025



Executive Summary

- Section 6: SPCA does not agree with the current Criteria for assessing the proposed amendments and recommends that criteria are assessed for risks to both animal health and welfare.
- Section 7: SPCA notes the strict definition of caged facilities has the potential to exemption pastoral animals used in research and testing but not housed in cages.
- Section 8.1: SPCA recommends linking the definition of caged facilities to the Animal Welfare Act, for example by specifying that Caged Animal Facilities are operating under a Code of Ethical Conduct as per Part 6 of the Animal Welfare Act 1999.
- Section 8.1: SPCA strongly supports the amendment to Regulation 5 that the responsible entity (for example, importer, manufacturer, transporter or seller) must report their non-complying products, recalls and adverse events to MPI in the format and time frames specified.
- Section 8.1: SPCA supports the changes to Regulation 15 – Records, that will require importers to keep detailed information about customer complaints, non-complying products, recalls, and corrective actions.
- Section 8.2 and 8.4: SPCA has provided responses to the proposed amendments in these sections. In principle, we support amendments that clarify the scope and intention of the exemption criteria.
- Section 8.3: SPCA advocates that a thorough animal welfare impact assessment is performed before awarding an exemption to new products.



- Section 8.3: SPCA is concerned that allowing biologically active compounds such as methane inhibitors to bypass full registration undermines the regulatory system's ability to ensure animal safety, efficacy, and well-being may have unintended effects animal health and welfare if used at scale without thorough oversight.
- Section 8.4: Despite this section not including repellents in the current consultation, SPCA advocates for bird gel repellents to be removed from Schedule 2 as being exempt for registration. Bird gel repellents are not fit for purpose because they cause unnecessary or unreasonable pain or distress to wildlife.
- Section 9: SPCA supports the reasoning given in terms of proposed transition periods, including that a two-year period may be required to register previously exempted products in order to generate the required efficacy and safety data. SPCA agrees that no products should be 'grandfathered' into the new regime.



Contents

Executive Summary	1
Introduction	4
Submission	4
Section 6: Criteria for assessing the proposed amendments	4
Section 7: Potential Impacts of Proposed Changes	5
Section 8.1: Amendments to ACVM Regulations 3 – 15	5
Section 8.2: Amendments to Schedule 1 – Prohibited Substances	6
Section 8.3: Amendments to Schedule 2 – Agricultural compounds exempt from registration – new compounds to be added.....	7
Section 8.4: Amendments to Schedule 2 – Agricultural compounds exempt from registration – changes to existing compounds and/or their conditions	8
SPCA advocates for bird gel repellents to not be exempt from registration under Schedule 2 (no. 4) of the ACVM Regulations 2011.	10
Bird gel repellents	10
Welfare impacts of bird gel repellents	11
Examples of unnecessary or unreasonable pain or distress from using bird gel repellents ...	12
Why an exemption for registration is not needed for bird gel repellents	13
Section 9: Proposed transition period.....	14
Conclusion.....	14
References	15
Appendix 1: Bird gel repellents currently available in New Zealand	17
Appendix 2: Letter from SPCA veterinarian who treated birds impacted by bird gel repellents	18



Introduction

The following submission is made on behalf of The Royal New Zealand Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (trading as SPCA).

SPCA is the preeminent animal welfare and advocacy organisation in New Zealand. The Society has been in existence for over 150 years with a supporter base representing more than 100,000 New Zealanders across the nation.

The organisation includes 28 Animal Welfare Centres across New Zealand and approximately 60 inspectors appointed under the Animal Welfare Act 1999.

SPCA welcomes the opportunity to submit on the consultation for the Proposed Amendments Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines (Exemptions and Prohibited Substances) Regulations 2011.

Submission

We have provided our responses to specific sections from the consultation document below.

Section 6: Criteria for assessing the proposed amendments

Do you agree with the proposed criteria? Would you propose any other criteria not covered?

SPCA does not agree with the proposed criteria, as they do not name animal welfare as a risk that needs to be managed. The Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicine (ACVM) system as a whole is intended to protect animal welfare, and the discussion document covers animal welfare in other places, for example asking for submissions on the conditions that would be appropriate to manage animal welfare. The reference to 'animal health' may have been intended to capture the full risks to animals. We acknowledge that health and welfare are related - but health is just one aspect of an animals' welfare (for example, refer to the definition of animal welfare [in Chapter 7.1 of the World Organisation for Animal Health Terrestrial Animal](#)



[Health Code](#)). SPCA recommends that the criteria for assessing proposed amendments include the risks to both animal health and welfare.

Aside from lacking an explicit reference to animal welfare, we note that criteria 6 (good regulatory practice) appears to be a duplication of criteria 1 and 2 (reducing regulatory burden & cost effectiveness), as it only discusses ease of use and reducing cost.

Section 7: Potential Impacts of Proposed Changes

What other issues would you like to see resolved as part of this update?

SPCA has an increasing concern regarding the use of bird gel repellents. There have been multiple reports of birds found covered in bird gel repellents that were dying or already dead. Birds have been brought into veterinary clinics in distress with wounds from the gel or injuries from trying to extract themselves; we are concerned these are rarely reported as adverse events, and we are encouraging inspectors and people who see these impacts to report it to the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI). We have covered this issue in more detail below.

Section 8.1: Amendments to ACVM Regulations 3 – 15

Do you agree with the proposed changes? If No, which proposed amendments would you like to see removed?

SPCA has some questions regarding the definition of “Caged Animal Facility” for Regulation 3. This “means a place at which animals are used or held in the charge of any person, and which has, as its principal purpose, the using or holding of animals for scientific study or other related activities.”

We note that the majority of animals used in Research, Testing and Teaching (RTT) in New Zealand are cattle and sheep (MPI, 2024), and these animals are not caged (e.g. University teaching and research farms). The strict definition in the proposed amendment appears to apply to any animal held for study, so does the potential exemption impact pastoral animals? Should



the definition itself include the specification that the animals are housed in a cage, as per the title – is it meant to primarily apply to rats and mice? This isn't clear on first reading.

Secondly, there is no reference to minimum animal welfare requirements in these facilities, despite the known welfare concerns in scientific caging environments (e.g. restricted movement, lack of enrichment). This could be addressed by linking the definition to the Animal Welfare Act, for example by specifying that Caged Animal Facilities are operating under a Code of Ethical Conduct as per Part 6 of the Animal Welfare Act 1999.

SPCA strongly supports the amendment to Regulation 5 that the responsible entity (for example, importer, manufacturer, transporter or seller) must report their non-complying products, recalls and adverse events to MPI in the format and time frames specified. Currently, if products such as veterinary medicines or feed additives cause harm, there is no consistent obligation to report and respond. Mandating adverse event reporting would create a feedback loop that helps identify risks early, prevents repeated harm, and builds an evidence base for future regulatory decisions. It also aligns with ethical responsibilities of the people in charge of animals.

SPCA supports the changes to Regulation 15 – Records, that will require importers to keep detailed information about customer complaints, non-complying products, recalls, and corrective actions. A scan of customer reviews on websites selling products such as bird gel repellents indicates these reviews capture serious harm and death to target and non-target animals. This information provides important feedback on whether a product exempt from registration should be reviewed as no longer fit for purpose because it causes unnecessary harm or pain. We also have experienced pest management professionals having no idea of the potential harm bird gel repellents can cause, indicating a need to improve information sharing about these types of products. We further discuss this topic in Section 8.4.

Section 8.2: Amendments to Schedule 1 – Prohibited Substances

Do you agree? Yes/No

SPCA has no objections to deleting “lindane” and inserting the chemical name “gamma-HCH”.



Section 8.3: Amendments to Schedule 2 – Agricultural compounds exempt from registration – new compounds to be added

Do you agree with the addition of these new classes to Schedule 2? Yes/No

SPCA advocates that a thorough animal welfare impact assessment is performed before awarding an exemption to new products.

Welfare impact assessments can be useful for mapping out the direct and indirect negative impacts on animal welfare (Sandøe & Gamborg, 2017). Numerous examples are available of an animal welfare assessment framework using The Five Domains Model to help identify the impact of a course of action on key factors for animal welfare (e.g., how nutritional, environmental, health and behavioural interactions (with environment and people) factors impact an animal's mental experiences) (Harvey et al., 2023; Joseph et al., 2023; Rae et al., 2023).

Any other comments on exemption or registration of inhibitors?

SPCA's understanding is that MPI is proposing extending the exemption for certain inhibitor substances used to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from registration under the ACVM Act. This exemption was originally established in 2022 and extended via the 2024 Regulatory Systems (Primary Industries Amendment Bill).

While we understand the rationale for a transitional exemption, we are concerned that allowing biologically active compounds to bypass full registration undermines the regulatory system's ability to ensure animal safety, efficacy, and well-being. SPCA is concerned this may have unintended effects on gut health, nutrient absorption, behaviour, or long-term welfare, particularly if used at scale without thorough oversight. On the other hand, monitoring the use of dietary inhibitors may find that they can effectively reduce GHG emissions without negatively affecting animal welfare, or even improve welfare (Llonch et al. 2017), which could address consumer concerns around the use of inhibitors as they become more widespread.



We recommend that an animal welfare impact assessment is performed. SPCA also calls for surveillance, including animal welfare impact reporting, to be conducted during the exemption period, and that MPI clearly signal that full registration will be required by a certain date.

Section 8.4: Amendments to Schedule 2 – Agricultural compounds exempt from registration – changes to existing compounds and/or their conditions

Do you agree with the proposed changes that are intended to provide clarification? Yes/No. If no, why not?

- **For Entry 3 Agricultural compounds used for research, testing, and teaching, including...**
In principle, SPCA supports increased transparency that involves the use of animals in research, testing, and teaching. However, the rationale for change intended to improve transparency and fairness is vague. Without more information and analysis on what is unfair about the current wording, it is difficult to understand the benefits of harms of this proposed change.
- **Entry 6 Agricultural compounds used to control the characteristics of water where...**
SPCA supports this proposed change to require label directions to manage applicable safety and residue concerns for animals and plants. SPCA further supports labels with this information be required for use for secondary receptacles such as those used for a diluted solution of the compound.
- **Entry 7 Sterilisers, sanitisers, and disinfectants used to maintain hygienic conditions in places where animals and plants are cultivated.**
SPCA supports this proposed change to require label directions to manage applicable safety and residue concerns for animals and plants. SPCA further supports labels with this information be required for use for secondary receptacles such as those used for a diluted solution of the compound.
- **Entry 9 Preparations scheduled as medicines under the Medicines Act 1981 and used by veterinary medicines.**
In principle, SPCA supports improved reporting of medicines used on animals.



- **Entry 10 Compounded veterinary preparations**
In principle, SPCA supports improved reporting of medicines used on animals.
- **Entry 12 Topical veterinary preparations**
In principle, SPCA supports improved clarity of the scope of veterinary preparations that are exempt.
- **Entry 13 Oral, topical, and inhalation preparations for animals**
In principle, SPCA supports improved clarity of the scope of preparations that are exempt.
- **Entry 14 Markers, paints, and dyes used as pigments or colourants for topical application to identify animals temporarily.**
In principle, SPCA supports this measure to clarify the permitted use of these compounds.
- **Entry 15 Preparations for the treatment of minor cases of diarrhoea**
In principle, SPCA supports this measure to clarify the permitted use of these compounds.
- **Entry 17 Topical preparations used on animals.**
In principle, SPCA supports improved clarity of the scope of preparations that are exempt.
- **Entry 18 Cauterising preparations**
In principle, SPCA supports improved clarity of the scope of preparations that are exempt.
- **Entry 19 Oral urinary tract modifiers**
The rationale for this change is vague, therefore, we do not support this change.
- **Entry 20 Respiratory tract modifiers**
The rationale for this change is vague, therefore, we do not support this change.
- **Entry 21 Agricultural compounds used to extend animal semen or to be used as media for animal sperm, cells, ova, and embryos**
In principle, SPCA supports improved clarity of the scope of compounds that are exempt.
- **Entry 22 Oral nutritional compounds**
In principle, SPCA supports this measure to clarify the permitted use of these compounds.
- **Entry 23 Oral gastrointestinal-acting microflora-enhancing compound**
In principle, SPCA supports improved clarity of the scope of compounds that are exempt.
- **Entry 24 Semi chemical preparations that modify an animal's behaviour**
In principle, SPCA supports this measure to clarify the scope of compounds that are exempt.
- **Entry 26 Topically absorbable animal nutrients**



In principle, SPCA supports this measure to clarify the scope of compounds that are exempt.

- **Entry 35 Agricultural chemical compounds used to protect plants from climatological conditions**

In principle, SPCA supports this measure to clarify the scope of compounds that are exempt.

- **Entry 36 Agricultural chemical compounds used solely**

In principle, SPCA supports this measure to clarify the scope of compounds that are exempt.

- **Entry 42 Fertilisers**

In principle, SPCA recommends these compounds are reviewed for impacts to animal welfare but supports this measure to clarify the scope of compounds that are exempt.

SPCA advocates for bird gel repellents to not be exempt from registration under Schedule 2 (no. 4) of the ACVM Regulations 2011.

Bird gel repellents are currently exempt from registration under Schedule 2 (no 4.) of the [Agriculture Compounds and Veterinary Medicines \(Exemptions and Prohibited Substances\) Regulations 2011](#). Bird gel repellents are exempt from registration because they are not “toxic to animals treated with or exposed to the compound to an extent that causes unnecessary or unreasonable pain or distress” under [s7\(d\) Fitness for Purpose: importation, manufacture, or sale of exempt compounds](#).

However, despite this section not being included in the current consultation, SPCA advocates for bird gel repellents to be removed from Schedule 2 as being exempt for registration.

Bird gel repellents

Bird gel repellents (also known as avian adhesive gel repellents) are used in New Zealand to deter birds from roosting, perching, and nesting on surfaces in parking lots, buildings, sports arenas, and parks (Klug et al., 2023; Stock & Haag-Wackernagel, 2014). Different bird gel repellent products are readily available in New Zealand (please see Appendix 1) for a list of some of the products). These products are designed to be applied in a thin strip or in small plastic dishes in locations where a bird’s presence causes nuisance or health concerns, mostly from excrement (DeLiberto et al., 2020).



Most bird gel repellents work by sticking to a bird's foot after coming into contact with the gel (Klug et al., 2023). The bird should be able to remove their foot after contact yet, still find the gel aversive enough to deter the bird from returning to the area where the gel is present. Bird gel repellents may contain aversive chemicals that cause irritation when smelled, ingested, or come in contact with skin (Klug et al., 2023). Some repellents visually deter birds from a surface by creating an optical illusion of fire.¹

Welfare impacts of bird gel repellents

These products are marketed as safe to use. Bird gel repellents are not intended to trap or hold the birds, impede their ability to fly, hop, eat, or drink, or compromise their feather condition. Therefore, bird gel repellents are not regulated as traps under the [Animal Welfare Act 1999](#).² However, there is a growing body of evidence that bird gel repellents are causing serious harm and death to birds.

Birds exposed to bird gel repellents are at risk of experiencing serious welfare harm including pain, frustration, and distress related to:

- Injuries from attempts to remove themselves from the gel, such as skin abrasions, feather removal, pecking at limbs, and eyeball attachment to glue.
- Exposure to predators.
- Being immobilised in the glue.
- Inability to groom the product from their feathers or skin, including prolonged exposure from skin irritants.
- Inability to hop or fly, thermoregulate, or keep dry from feather damage.
- Impeded breathing leading to breathlessness or death.
- Hunger and dehydration from an inability to consume food or water.

¹ <https://www.keyindustries.co.nz/product/1659-bird-free-cartridge-250g>

² It should be noted that the problems with bird gel repellents are similar to glueboard traps for rodents. [Animal Welfare \(Glueboard Traps\) Order 2009](#) restricts the use of traps that use an adhesive to entrap rodents because of the severe harm these types of traps cause animals.



Smaller species and fledglings are at increased risk of harm from bird gel repellents because they are less capable of extracting themselves from the gel (Stock & Haag-Wackernagel, 2014).

Examples of unnecessary or unreasonable pain or distress from using bird gel repellents

SPCA is concerned that the bird gel repellents are in effect, glue traps for vulnerable smaller birds. It should be noted that some product safety sheets acknowledge the hazard of small birds getting trapped in the gel.³

Unfortunately, despite bird gel repellents marketed as safe to use for birds, there have been ongoing incidents of birds captured, injured, and killed after coming into contact with the products. Even with veterinary intervention, most birds were either euthanased or died.

As further evidence of the welfare harms related to these products, please see the letter in Appendix 2 from one of our veterinarians who treated birds trapped in bird gel repellent.

Table 1: Reported incidents of harm to wildlife from bird gel repellents

Year	Species	Number of birds	Location
2009	Welcome swallow warou	94 (70 euthanased)	Hamilton
2011	Welcome swallow warou	45-50	Nelson
2021	Welcome swallow warou	27	Auckland
2023	Welcome swallow warou	17	Lower Hutt
2024	Welcome swallow warou	Several	Amberely
2025 ⁴	Silvereye tauhou	3	Wellington

Our Inspectorate has investigated some me of these incidents or fielded complaints to others not listed. These incidents involved bird gel repellents either used according to label, and some used not according to the label. In the cases above, birds were found by members of the public

³ <https://www.hotfoot.com/labels/gel-label.pdf>; <https://jjbious.com/52>

⁴ SPCA data.



covered in gel and unable to extract themselves from either the surface or the plastic dish onto which the gel was applied. There are also reports of witnesses observing the birds on the ground struggling to fly due to their wings being covered in the gel. In some instances, members of the public attempted to help birds. In all instances, the birds experienced prolonged welfare harm from injury and stress and for many a prolonged time to death.

Why an exemption for registration is not needed for bird gel repellents

We anticipate there are more stories of harm from bird gel repellents of which we are not currently aware. It is possible people report problems with bird gel repellents to MPI. We have recently developed a [webpage](#) to encourage members of the public to report harm from bird gel repellents to MPI. However, SPCA advocates that the degree of welfare harm that birds have experienced from coming into contact with bird gel repellents requires further action by way of stronger regulation of these products based on the following:

- **Bird gel repellents have caused unnecessary or unreasonable pain or distress to wildlife, making this inconsistent with the fit for purpose criteria for an exemption from registration.**

SPCA is troubled by the reports of birds that were seriously injured or died after being coated in bird gel repellents. SPCA opposes the use of methods of population control or management of wild animals that lead to prolonged death and suffering of target or non-target animals. The risks of welfare harm from bird gel repellents are severe and there are alternatives to addressing nuisance from birds (Klug et al., 2023; Seamans et al., 2013).

- **The current use of bird gel repellents indiscriminately targets animals.**

Bird gel repellents are not dispensed in a device that would exclude non-target animals. Bird gel repellents can be effective when used for birds such as pigeons (Stock & Haag-Wackernagel, 2014). However, any animal that would use a surface treated with bird gel repellent is at risk of harm after coming in contact with the product. Excluding non-target animals is best practice for many pest control methods. The British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BCSPCA) prohibits using bird gel repellents in their wildlife



and rodent control standards because of the harm these products cause to target and non-target species (British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, 2014).

- **There is little to no oversight of these products to due to the perceived safety.**

We are concerned that it took members of the public finding these birds in such a poor state, which many found distressing.⁵ We think the marketing of these products as safe has led to an information asymmetry between those who sell these products and the purchaser. In many cases where birds were harmed, the people who used the repellent were surprised and upset after the injured or dead birds were found and discontinued using the product. It was related to us that at least one property management company felt these products should be prohibited from being used (SPCA personal communication, 2024).

Therefore, we urge MPI to consider bird gel repellents as not fit for purpose for exemption from registration because they cause unnecessary or unreasonable pain or distress.

Section 9: Proposed transition period

SPCA supports the reasoning given in terms of proposed transition periods, including that a two-year period may be required to register previously exempted products in order to generate the required efficacy and safety data. SPCA agrees that no products should be 'grandfathered' into the new regime.

Conclusion

SPCA appreciates the opportunity to contribute to the Proposed Amendments Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines (Exemptions and Prohibited Substances) Regulations 2011. Our organisation is happy to discuss this matter if further information is required.

⁵ <https://www.chrislynchmedia.com/news-items/retailers-shocked-after-inhumane-repellent-kills-birds-at-shopping-centre>



References

- Beausoleil, N. J., & Baker, S. E., & Sharp, T. (2022). Scientific assessment of the welfare of trapped mammals- Key considerations for the use of the Sharp and Saunders Humaneness Assessment Model. *Animals*, 12, Article 402. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ani12030402>
- British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. (2022). *Wildlife and rodent control standards*. <https://spca.bc.ca/programs-services/animalkind/>
- DeLiberto, S. T., Carlson, J. C., McLean, H. E., Olson, C. S., & Werner, S. J. (2020). Repellent surface applications for pest birds. *Human-Wildlife Interactions*, 14(3), 409-418. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27316219>
- Dubois, S., Fenwick, N., Ryan, E. A., Baker, L., Baker, S. E., Beausoleil, N. J., Carter, S., Cartwright, B., Costa, F., Draper, C., Griffin, J., Grogan, A., Howald, G., Jones, B., Littin, K. E., Lombard, A. T., Mellor, D. J., Ramp, D., Schuppli, C. A., & Fraser, D. (2017). International consensus principles for ethical wildlife control. *Conservation Biology*, 31(4), 753-760. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1111/cobi.12896>
- Harvey, A. M., Beausoleil, N. J., Ramp, D., & Mellor, D. J. (2023). Mental experiences in wild animals: Scientifically validating measurable welfare indicators in free-roaming horses. *Animals*, 13(9), Article 1507. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ani13091507>
- Joseph, J., Charalambous, R., Pahuja, H., Fox, D., Jeon, J., Ko, N., Rao, N., Wang, Z., Nerurkar, S. K., Sherekar, S. A., Yang, Y., Dutton-Regester, K., & Narayan, E. (2023). Impacts of climate change on animal welfare. *CABI Reviews*, 19(1). <https://doi.org/10.1079/cabireviews.2023.0020>
- Klug, P. E., Shiels, A. B., Kluever, B. M., Anderson, C. J., Hess, S. C., Ruell, E. W., Bukoski, W. P., & Siers, S. R. (2023). A review of nonlethal and lethal control tools for managing the damage of invasive birds to human assets and economic activities. *Management of Biological Invasions*, 14(1), 1-44. <https://doi.org/10.3391/mbi.2023.14.1.01>



- Llonch, P., Haskell, M. J., Dewhurst, R. J., & Turner, S. P. (2017). Current available strategies to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions in livestock systems: An animal welfare perspective. *Animal*, 11(2), 274-284. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1751731116001440>
- Ministry for Primary Industries. (2024, April 30). *Statistics on the use of animals in research, testing and teaching in New Zealand in 2022* (Report No. 61888). <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/61888>
- Rae, F., Nicol, C., & Simmonds, M. P. (2023). Expert assessment of the impact of ship-strikes on cetacean welfare using the Welfare Assessment Tool for Wild Cetaceans. *Animal Welfare*, 32(e18), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.1017/awf/2023.7>
- Sandøe, P. & Gamborg, C. (2017). Animal welfare impact assessments: A good way of giving the affected animals a voice when trying to tackle wild animal controversies? *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics*, 30, 571-578. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10806-017-9678-3>
- Seamans, T., Martin, J. A., & Belant, J. L. (2013). *Tactile and auditory repellents to reduce wildlife hazards to aircraft*. USDA National Wildlife Research Center - Staff Publications. 1542. https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/icwdm_usdanwrc/1542
- Stock, B., & Haag-Wackernagel, D. (2014). Effectiveness of gel repellents on feral pigeons. *Animals*, 4, 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ani4010001>



Appendix 1: Bird gel repellents currently available in New Zealand

1. 4 the Birds:
Retailer: <https://www.sprayshop.co.nz/products/chem-hot-foot-bird-gel-300g>
2. No More Birds:
Manufacturer: <https://jjbious.com/52>
Retailer: <https://www.nomorebirds.co.nz/bird-deterrent-solutions/bird-free-gel/>
3. Bird X Bird Proof: <https://www.easytek.co.nz/birdproofgel>
Info: <https://www.easytek.co.nz/downloads/birdproofgel.pdf>
4. Wingo:
Wholesaler and Retailer: <https://www.peskyideas.co.nz/wingo-bird-repellent/>
5. Hot Foot:
Retailer: <https://store.nzfarmsource.co.nz/catalog/hot-foot-bird-repellent-gel-300g/205268>
6. To Nature:
Wholesaler and Retailer: <https://www.keyindustries.co.nz/product/1659-bird-free-cartridge-250g?categoryId=171>
7. Birdzout:
Wholesaler and Retailer: <https://www.maintracgroup.com/products/birdzout-gel?shpxid=d03c3979-6b30-4118-9729-c9ba7a52dc17>



Appendix 2: Letter from SPCA veterinarian who treated birds impacted by bird gel repellents

RNZSPCA Christchurch Branch
Laurie Butler Memorial Veterinary Hospital
14 Wilmers Road
Hornby, Christchurch
23 April 2024

RNZSPCA Science Team

Regarding: Sticky Bird Gel bird deterrent (Bird-Proof gel, Bird-Free gel, and others)

Dear Science Team members:

I would like to call your attention to a product I was not aware of until now; I suspect many of you will also be unfamiliar with this product. It is a sticky gel that is being used as a wild bird deterrent. The instructions for usage included for Bird-Proof gel indicate that it should be applied thinly to surfaces you do not want birds perching, stating that the birds won't like the feel of the sticky surface and will perch elsewhere. The webpage for Bird-Free gel describes their gel being put out in small dishes (like a small Petri dish) in the areas you want birds to avoid.

The product we encountered was laid out as the Bird-Free page describes. That webpage also indicates that the birds won't go near the stuff because they object to the smell and the colour is repulsive to them. At this time we are not sure which product was actually used, but the results were devastating for the birds who came into contact with it.

I was presented with a mass of over a dozen dead swallows. They were glued together. I could not separate them. There were multiple of the petri-style open plastic dishes stuck into the mass along with the birds, all filled with this incredibly sticky substance. I had to be quite careful while handling this, as the chemical substance attached itself to everything it came into contact with.

I cannot imagine the pain, distress, and suffering these birds experienced. I suspect it started off with them landing and then needing to forcefully pull their feet/legs away from the adhesive. Some of these birds would not be able to pull themselves loose, resulting in panicked attempts to fly away. This would have resulted in their wings and feathers coming into contact with the gel, and other flock members. If they tried to clean themselves, the material would have spread to the beak and potentially the nostrils (ceres) which could have become obstructed. Ultimately, these birds fell from their perching spot adhered to the dishes, themselves, and their fellow flock members. The ensuing struggles resulted in feathers being



torn out, skin lacerations, and wing fractures. It was impossible to tell if any of the birds had suffocated, but facial contamination with the material was noted.

Since January 2015, glueboard traps have been banned in New Zealand for welfare reasons. It has been demonstrated that animals adhered to such devices experience pain, distress, injury, and suffering. Recently (2024) the USA has also proposed banning of glue traps as *“animals are unable to free themselves, becoming more stuck to the trap, dying from starvation, dehydration, or suffocation after several days. The process is extremely cruel and painful, and it subjects animals, whether the intended target or not, to a slow and inhumane death.”* In addition, *“Glue traps may also trap....other species including household pets who may subsequently require veterinary assistance and examination.”*

I cannot see a reasonable difference between a glueboard trap and this sticky gel product, at least from the animal’s perspective. The results, for them, are the same. As a veterinarian, I hope I never have a dog or cat present that has managed to encounter this product as I don’t know how I would even start to remove it. Even a bird who contacted a thin layer of this adhesive gel would be endangered, as birds are fastidious groomers and would use their beak to try and remove the adhesive from their feet. The bird would also preen their feathers, with the adhesive destroying the feathers and the bird’s ability to stay warm, dry, and fly.

I believe this type of product needs to be removed from New Zealand for all the same reasons we no longer allow glueboard traps to be used here. New Zealand has been a world leader in promoting animal welfare and well-being, and should continue to do so. There are many bird deterrents on the market that do not kill the birds, nor contribute to ongoing pain, suffering, and distress of the birds.

Thank you for your consideration,

Linda Sorensen, DVM
Veterinarian

Links and resources:

<https://www.easytek.co.nz/downloads/birdproofgel.pdf>

<https://www.nomorebirds.co.nz/bird-deterrent-solutions/bird-free-gel/>

New Zealand ban on glueboard traps:

<https://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2009/0316/latest/DLM2439749.html>

USA ban on glueboard traps:

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/7018/text>