



Keep kauri safe while horse riding

Key information for horse riding around kauri in Auckland's regional Parks

Having Auckland's rich and beautiful natural environment on our doorstep to be enjoyed is a privilege. Some of the trails that are popular amongst the equestrian community are under threat from kauri dieback and it is important that we take precautions when accessing these areas.



With kauri forests across the North Island being destroyed by kauri dieback we all share a responsibility to ensure that we are not contributing to spreading the disease.

Kauri dieback disease is easily transmitted, can remain viable without a host for at least 10 years on a horseshoe or anything else that can collect a speck of soil and the disease is incurable.

For equestrians who enjoy riding in Auckland's Regional Parks, there are some simple things you can do to help stop the spread of kauri dieback.

1% of New Zealand's original kauri forest remains today, Lets take care of it!

Plan your ride

The soil-borne pathogen that causes kauri dieback disease is particularly active during wet conditions. Because the pathogen is microscopic and even a speck of soil may contain thousands of spores, it is crucial to ensure that soil is not transported between kauri areas.

Muddy conditions are particularly high risk. When visiting the Hunua Ranges during wet conditions we recommend planning to avoid tracks that run over exposed earth and may be muddy.

Preparation for your ride

To mitigate the risk of introducing kauri dieback to an area it is important that you arrive on site completely soil free. To achieve this, you need to do the following **before** leaving home for the day:

- Thoroughly pick-out your horses' hooves
- Wash down your horse float and vehicle
- Clean your personal footwear with warm soapy water to remove any soil
- Brush your horses coat to remove any soil that may be attached
- Clean underside and surface of hooves and personal footwear with soapy water. Use Sterigene (2% dilution) when arriving onsite. Do not spray on animal skin.

Upon arrival

- Park your truck or horse float on a dry-gravel surface
- Tack-up your horse on a dry surface, either tied to your truck or using one of the yards that will be constructed onsite.

During your ride

- Keep a cleaning kit in your saddle bags that includes dandy brushes to remove soil from the legs and belly, a hoof pick and an adequate supply of Sterigene.
- **Stick to the tracks and follow the signs.** Tracks are designed to minimize risk to kauri by avoiding direct contact and/or high-risk environments such as muddy paths. Tracks may also be closed due to health and safety risks

Leaving for home

- Repeat the cleaning of hooves, footwear and your horses' coat before leaving for home. Avoid taking any soil from your ride with you.
- To avoid spreading contaminated soil inside your vehicle, pack a second pair of footwear for the drive home.
- Contain any items that may spread soil through your vehicle to avoid contamination. Ensure items that are likely to come into contact with soil, e.g. your girth, stirrup irons, bell boots and tendon boots are contained within a saddle bag or grooming kit, ready to be washed when you arrive home.

Sterigene disinfectant

There may be some concerns regarding the use of Sterigene on horses' hooves. This veterinary grade disinfectant is completely safe for use on hooves. When used as directed, Sterigene is diluted with water at 2% concentration. It is a microbial inhibitor with similarities to Koppertox which is commonly used to treat horse hooves for thrush.



Important facts to know about kauri dieback disease

- Kauri dieback disease is incurable once contracted by kauri
- Spores from the pathogen can remain dormant and viable without a host for at least 10 years which means your shoes or other items could spread kauri dieback 10 years after having contact with contaminated soil.
- Sterigene does not penetrate soil and only kills one of the 2 spore forms of the kauri dieback pathogen. Therefore, we must remove soil before spraying
- Any metal tools or implements can be disinfected with methylated spirits. This will kill the entire pathogen on contact but should not be used on hooves, footwear or anything else that is not metal
- A speck of soil the size of a pinhead can house 10,000 spores from the pathogen and it only takes one of these to infect kauri
- The pathogen will infect through kauri feeding roots. These are fine roots that extend to 3x the radius of the tree canopy and are on the surface of the soil bed
- kauri that appear healthy can be infected without exhibiting symptoms so it is key to treat all kauri as though they could be infected
- The best way we can protect kauri is to admire them from a distance

For how-to guides and further information on kauri dieback :

<https://www.kauridieback.co.nz/how-to-guides/>

