



Wellington **METSERVICE** Disclaimer

<b>Today</b> 19 Feb	<b>MAX 23°C</b> <b>MIN 15°C</b>		Fine. Light winds and sea breezes.
<b>Wed</b> 20 Feb	<b>MAX 23°C</b> <b>MIN 15°C</b>		Fine. Northerlies, fresh for a time.
<b>Thu</b> 21 Feb	<b>MAX 22°C</b> <b>MIN 14°C</b>		Fine, though cloudy evening. Southerlies developing.

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# Trade with Mars

Tuesday 19 Feb, 2013

Could we reach our Export Double goal through trade with Mars?

In 2013 MPI staff again took part in Mars Research. Melanie Newfield, Manager Plants and Pathways, Standards Branch, was one of an international crew of four that went to Mars in January.



That's Mars-Utah in the United States, where the mission simulates manned expeditions on the surface on planet Mars. The crew lived and worked at the Mars Desert Research Station for a period of two weeks, from 27 January to 10 February 2013 (NZST).

They strictly follow site protocols which help emulate the working and living conditions of a real Mars base, as they perform science, research and exploration tasks; and communicate with educators and students 'back on Earth'.

One of the highlights of Melanie's trip was talking with NASA scientists about how the biosecurity risk analysis work she did could contribute to future Mars Missions:

"While the connection between Mars and MPI may seem tenuous, NASA is interested in managing biological contamination on Rovers such as Curiosity which are exploring Mars.

"Mars gives us an opportunity to get our biosecurity right from the start, which would mean an enviable pest and disease-free status for Martian produce!"

This is the third mission MPI staff have been involved in. In 2011 and 2012 Haritina Mogosanu, Senior Adviser Information, Science and Risk Assessment Directorate (Standards), was first officer in the 2011 RoMars and commander of KiwiMars 2012.

Haritina is interested in finding out about the biosecurity risks of terraforming the Red Planet. Terraforming involves introducing species from Earth to Mars so as to create a liveable world for humans. She is also passionate about inspiring students to take science using space sciences as a hook. Her experience provided a great opportunity to discuss biosecurity in schools, which she did subsequent to the missions.

So, fast forward and with some innovative thinking, we really could be trading with Mars in the future.

Roger Smith, who gave permission for our biosecurity suits to be worn on the mission, is enthusiastic about the possibilities:

"If we can get the biosecurity issues sorted we can then get an irrigation scheme up and running. There could be great dairying conversion opportunities with the added benefit that meat and dairy products from Mars enjoy duty and quota free access in all key markets."

Haritana and Melanie took part in these missions in their own time and at their own expense.

Photos:  
Carousel - TasMars Crew, left to right: Emma Braegen (BAE Systems Australia), Melanie Newfield (MPI), David Willson (NASA AMES) Jen Blank (NASA AMES).

Photo 2: TasMars Crew on 'Mars'

Photo 3: Melanie repotting plants

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