TESTING SAMPLES OF PRAWNS AND PRAWN PRODUCTS

CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Biosecurity Australia has announced details of revised interim quarantine measures for importing prawns and prawn products for human consumption. These measures include requirements for testing samples of imported prawns and prawn products for freedom from white spot syndrome virus (WSSV), infectious hypodermal and haematopoietic necrosis virus (IHHNV), and yellowhead virus (YHV).

Biosecurity Australia welcomes all expressions of interest from Australian laboratories in providing a testing service to the import industry. Testing must be based on the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests in the current version of the World Organisation for Animal Health OIE Manual of Diagnostic Tests for Aquatic Animals or equivalent. In considering submitting an expression of interest, you should ensure that your laboratory has:

- approval from the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) as a Quarantine Approved Place; and
- approval from the National Association of Testing Authorities for virological identification tests including molecular techniques such as PCR.

For a laboratory to be approved to undertake the testing, you will need to provide documented evidence that the laboratory meets these requirements. In addition, you will need to provide:

- detailed information on the testing procedures you intend to use, based on the PCR tests in the current version of the World Organisation for Animal Health OIE Manual of Diagnostic Tests for Aquatic Animals or equivalent; and
- any additional information you believe necessary to support your application.

Any information you provide to Biosecurity Australia will be treated as strictly confidential. Biosecurity Australia and AQIS will assess the information provided to determine if you have met all of the necessary requirements. An inspection of your laboratory in relation to the requirements will be carried out as part of the assessment process. If you are successful in meeting all requirements, contact details for your laboratory will be added to the list of approved testing facilities on the AQIS Import Conditions Database (ICON). Only facilities listed on ICON are available to importers as AQIS-approved laboratories to receive sample material for testing. A report will be provided to approved laboratories detailing the testing protocol, reporting procedure and contacts.

Each individual laboratory (not a company or organisation that operates more than one laboratory) is assessed for its acceptability as a facility for testing samples of imported...
prawns and prawn products. Thus if a company intends to put forward a number of its laboratories for approval, each laboratory will be considered separately for approval.

Please send your formal expression of interest to Dr Geoff Grossel, Biosecurity Australia, GPO Box 858, Canberra ACT 2601; e-mail Geoff.Grossel@biosecurity.gov.au. If you have any queries please contact Dr Geoff Grossel by e-mail or by telephone on (02) 6271 6539.

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