



Importing bulk grain: Protecting Australia's biosecurity status

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The Australian Government and industry are responsible for managing Australia's biosecurity.

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry regulates the importation of goods into Australia through our legal powers under the *Biosecurity Act 2015* (the Biosecurity Act).

We focus on minimising risk rather than applying a zero-risk policy. This ensures we are balancing the need to protect Australia from exotic pests and diseases, while maintaining our ability to trade internationally.

The decision to import grain is a commercial decision by the importer.

Our responsibility is to ensure that any imports do not compromise Australia's biosecurity status.

Requirements for importing grain

To import bulk grain into Australia you must:

- source the grain from the approved area and country stated in the permit
- export the grain, from the farm to the point of loading on to the vessel using clean elevators and transport units
- source grain of a particular grade or class with low levels of foreign material including weed seeds and soil
- ensure the grain is free from animal material, and plant pests and diseases that are of biosecurity concern to Australia prior to export
- transport the grain securely when onshore in Australia to control leakage of grain or dust during transport from the point of discharge to the point of processing
- store and process the grain under biosecurity control at a facility that we authorise as an approved arrangement
- process the grain using a department-approved method to mitigate plant and animal biosecurity risks.

We need to be satisfied that the proposed importation meets all these requirements otherwise we will not issue a permit.

Assessing the risks

We consider applications to import grain on a case-by-case basis.

Before issuing a permit, we assess all biosecurity risks and verify the proposed systems and processes within the source country and Australia.

Pathway risk analysis

Our scientists assess the biosecurity risks of importing from the proposed source country. They verify the presence or absence of pests or diseases of biosecurity concern and pest control practices. They also check the systems in place for producing, harvesting, storing, transporting and processing grain destined for export. The scientists recommend ways for reducing the risks to provide the Appropriate Level of Protection (ALOP) for Australia.

If we are not satisfied that the management strategies applied can reduce the biosecurity risks to an acceptable level, we will not allow bulk grains to be imported into Australia. View reports of our completed analyses for importing bulk grain from various countries at agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity/risk-analysis/plant/grains-from-various-countries

Auditing the pathway

We undertake a desktop and onsite audit of the applicant's proposed onshore facilities, systems and processes as detailed in the Process Management System (PMS) document they have supplied.

We verify that the proposed strategies can manage the associated risks to a very low level and provide feedback to the applicant.

Issuing a permit

We will only issue a permit if we are confident that the applicant's proposed management strategies can reduce the biosecurity risks along the entire import pathway to a very low level.

The permit includes conditions the importer must meet to manage those risks. This includes the requirement to:

- source from low-risk countries
- ensure cleanliness and control any spillage and dust during transport, storage and processing.

Permit conditions are legally enforceable.

Regulating the import

Once a permit is issued, we will verify that the risks are being managed at each step of the import pathway.

We may intervene at any time to stop activity or require it to be done differently.

We can also suspend, vary or cancel the permit or approved arrangement.

Managing the grains pre-export

The importer is responsible for managing the risks associated with the sourcing, handling and transport of the grains from the farm to the point of loading at the port in the source country according to the conditions of the permit.

The importer must provide us relevant certification to show they have met these conditions.

Managing the grains in Australia

The importer is responsible for managing the biosecurity risks upon the grain's arrival in Australia according to the conditions of the permit and PMS document that was approved by us.

Prior to discharge of the grain from the ship, we will undertake an inspection to verify freedom from pests and diseases.

We also undertake verification inspections:

- during discharge at each port
- on completion of discharge at each port
- during receipt and outloading from each approved arrangement site
- following decontamination or decommissioning at each approved arrangement site.

More information

Learn more about importing bulk grain.

Web agriculture.gov.au/import/goods/plant-products/importing-bulk-grain

Infographic [Importing bulk grain to Australia: Assessing and managing the biosecurity risks \(PDF\)](#)

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