Australian Government
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

February 2026

Webinar: Information session: Draft pest risk analysis for khapra beetle Part 1 – 5 February 2026

Questions and answers

1) **Will methyl bromide remain the only treatment option?**

- Methyl bromide fumigation will remain as an accepted treatment option. However, it is not the only option available. Heat treatment and controlled atmosphere treatments will also remain as accepted treatments for khapra beetle associated with plant product hosts, noting that controlled atmosphere treatments are only accepted provisionally.

2) Didn't the last khapra beetle incident come from a product from Spain, yet Spain is currently free of khapra beetle, therefore is a low-risk country?

- The department has confirmed detections of khapra beetle on products (nappies) imported from Spain.
- As khapra beetle is also a hitchhiker pest, interception of khapra beetle on imported goods cannot be used as the only evidence that the pest is present in the exporting country. This is particularly important where detections occur on goods that are not known to be hosts of the beetle such as nappies in this case. When a detection like this occurs, we carefully re-examine all available information to determine whether there is any new information to suggest that khapra beetle is established in Spain.
- As there is no information to suggest that khapra beetle is present in Spain, and nappies are not a host of khapra beetle, the most likely explanation is that the nappies were contaminated with khapra beetle from the contaminated shipping container in-transit to Australia.
- Where possible, if the shipping container remains in Australia, the department undertakes inspection of the container to confirm if it is the likely source of contamination. However, this is not always possible, as containers may have already departed Australia by the time the detection has occurred.
- The department also seeks historical data (such as the goods the container carried and the countries in which it was packed with those goods) for containers suspected to be contaminated with khapra beetle. However, the historical data of sea containers is often unavailable, not accessible or incomplete.
- Given the absence of evidence of khapra beetle in Spain and the non-host nature of nappies, the container remains the most probable source of the contamination.

3) **Can you explain what is the significance of low value freight in the review as compared to the other pathways?**

- Low-value freight has a significant focus in the review because low-value freight often contains personal use items. These items may not have been subjected to commercial quality control processes to manage khapra beetle or other storage pests. They are not subjected to inspection and certification by the exporting country prior to export. And it is also not always possible or practical to verify the country from which the goods are imported. These increase uncertainty around risk and reduce the department's ability to rely on standard commercial assurances.
- Previous detections of khapra beetle in Australia have been traced to personal consignments containing stored food products that arrived in Australia as low-value freight. This demonstrates that low-value freight is a high-risk pathway for this pest.
- Because personal-use goods cannot always be identified through standard declarations, the department uses the low-value freight category as a practical indicator for consignments that:
    - are more likely to contain biosecurity-risk products
    - may not meet commercial import requirements
    - require targeted mitigation measures.