New phytosanitary security policy for horticulture exports

Information for Industry

**Purpose**

This factsheet explains how changes to the horticulture exports phytosanitary security policy affects exporters (and their agents), Accredited Properties and Registered Establishments.

**Overview**

The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment is working to develop new and improved market access for Australian producers and exporters.

We are ensuring Australia’s agriculture industry remains globally competitive and is a leader in innovative trade policy.

The new phytosanitary security policy, ensures Australian produce maintains a high level of protection during movements from farm to export. It will maintain our strong, consistent and strategic platform to negotiate new or expanded market access opportunities for Australian horticulture producers and exporters.

**What is changing?**

**Instructional material**

- New instructional material for the phytosanitary security of horticulture exports has replaced Volume 14: Product security.

**Security of goods**

- Phytosanitary security must be maintained for all goods intended for export, from the time the goods attain a phytosanitary status.

- Goods are considered to have a phytosanitary status where in-field controls are applied, they are grown in a Pest Free Area (PFA) or Pest Free Place of Production (PFPP), post-treatment, or post-inspection, before authorisation.

**Movement of goods**

- Goods with a phytosanitary status must only be transported to either an accredited property or a registered establishment, except for PFA product moving within the PFA.

- Transfer certificates that were previously issued for goods moving from one premises to another, will be replaced with transfer records (see Figure 1).

**Key points**

- The new policy covers requirements for horticulture accredited properties and registered establishments regarding phytosanitary security, including the transfer of goods.

- The new policy was published on 16 September 2019 and became enforceable from 16 December 2019.

- Transfer certificates will not be issued from 16 December 2019 (except where required by an importing country).

- AOs must validate transfer records for goods that were moved with a phytosanitary status at the time of inspection.
Movement of goods (continued)

- The only circumstance where a transfer certificate will still be issued, is when it is required by the importing country authority (currently only USA protocol markets) and will be based on the information in the transfer record.

- A transfer record must be jointly completed by the dispatching and receiving entities, each time goods with a phytosanitary status are transferred from one premises to another (regardless of distance).

- Transfer records are required post-inspection if a treatment is still to occur at a different location. They are not required for movements from an accredited farm to accredited packhouse/registered establishment unless already commercially packed, or when PFA product moves within the PFA.

Inspections

- AOs must validate the transfer record for the last movement that occurred before the inspection, then upload it to the Plant Exports Management System.

When did the changes come into effect?

- There was a 3 month transition period where industry could choose to start complying with the new policy from 16 September 2019.

- From 16 December 2019, the policy became enforceable and industry must now comply with the new instructional material for any goods that move with a phytosanitary status prior to inspection.

What do the changes mean for industry?

Accredited Properties and Registered Establishments

- For goods with a phytosanitary status entities will need to:
  - initiate a transfer record for the movement of goods from one premises to another
  - secure the goods and ensure that security can be maintained for the duration of the journey
  - ensure security has been maintained during transport and complete the accompanying transfer record for any goods received
  - provide the exporter (or their agent) or the Authorised Officer with a copy of the transfer record, for the last movement of the goods prior to inspection.

- For irradiated goods and goods from a defined fruit fly PFA only secure packaging, that is carton or pallet level security, is acceptable during transport. Tautliners or Pantech trucks as the security measure will not be acceptable.

- A departmental transfer record template is available, however industry can develop their own version of the transfer record template as long as it meets the minimum information requirements.

- Premises will be audited against the new policy from 16 December 2019.

Exporters

- Exporters must ensure the AO is provided with a copy of the transfer record for the last movement of the goods with a phytosanitary status. The receiving establishment may also provide this depending on your arrangement with them.
**Will this cost industry more?**

- Transfer records are managed and issued by accredited properties and registered establishments, so there will be no charge for these documents from the department.
- The current fee remains for transfer certificates issued by the department under the circumstances outlined in this factsheet.
- There may be a small increase in fees for audits as it could take up to 15 minutes longer to ensure compliance with the policy and to check transfer records.

**What instructional material is available?**

- The following documents have been created or updated as part of the phytosanitary security package:
  - Guideline: *Maintenance of phytosanitary security for horticulture exports* (new)
  - Work instruction: *Completing a transfer record for horticulture exports* (new)
  - Reference: *Transfer record for horticulture exports* (new)
  - Work instruction: *Validating supporting documents for plant exports* (updated)
  - Work instruction: *Inspecting horticulture exports using end-point sampling* (updated)
  - Work instruction: *Inspecting horticulture exports using in-line sampling* (updated)

- The instructional material can be found on the [Plant Export Operations Manual](#) on the department’s website.

**Figure 1:** Transfer record template for horticulture exports.

**Contact**

- For questions about the new policy, contact the [Horticulture Exports Program](#).
- For questions about audits, contact the [Audit and Assurance Group](#).
- For questions about certification, contact the [Assessment Services Group](#).