



13 March 2000

PLANT QUARANTINE POLICY MEMORANDUM 2000/02

IMPORT RISK ANALYSIS - FRESH APPLES FROM NEW ZEALAND

This Plant Quarantine Policy Memorandum (PQPM) advises stakeholders of the current status of the Import Risk Analysis (IRA) for apples from New Zealand

In our letter of 28 June 1999, the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) advised stakeholders that the import risk analysis (IRA) for fresh apple fruit from New Zealand would be undertaken using the routine process outlined in the *AQIS Import Risk Analysis Process Handbook*. Stakeholders were also advised that the draft IRA paper was expected to be released in November 1999.

The deadline AQIS set was dependent on the receipt of additional technical information. Unfortunately, this information was not received in time to meet the November deadline and the process has been delayed. AQIS has rescheduled this risk analysis to allow it to progress in its normal rigorous scientific way and I expect that the draft IRA will now be released in late May 2000. Any future variations to this time frame will be posted on the AQIS web page {<http://www.aqis.gov.au/docs/plpolicy/plhome1.htm>}.

I have been advised by Minister Truss that over recent weeks a number of stakeholders, and other interested parties, have written to him raising concerns relating to this IRA. These concerns have included the scope of New Zealand's current import access application. The current proposal is much broader than the one AQIS rejected in 1998. The principal difference being that had AQIS accepted the previous proposal New Zealand apples would now be arriving in Australia without any specific pest management practices to address the risks posed by fire blight.

Stakeholders should also be aware that the IRA process considers only quarantine risks associated with the importation of apples from New Zealand. Issues such as food safety, and any other impacts should the importation of apples be permitted, are considered by other agencies, such as the Australia New Zealand Food Authority (ANZFA) and Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry – Australia (AFFA).

In the near future, I intend to provide as much detailed information as possible to stakeholders on these and other issues of concern. As not all interested parties are registered stakeholders, I will be looking to alternative communication opportunities such as use of the internet and other media to complement the information provided in the Plant Quarantine Policy Memorandum's (PQPMs). This will ensure that information on the IRA process is readily accessible to all interested parties.

If you wish to suggest inclusion of an additional stakeholder in our distribution list for this IRA, or if you wish to be removed from the distribution list, please provide details to the Import Risk Analysis Secretariat whose details appear below

Information on all IRAs being conducted by the Plant Quarantine Policy Branch is available on the AQIS Homepage at <http://www.aqis.gov.au/docs/plpolicy/plhome1.htm>

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