



19 February 2004

PLANT BIOSECURITY POLICY MEMORANDUM 2004/03

**REVISED DRAFT IMPORT RISK ANALYSIS REPORT FOR APPLES FROM
NEW ZEALAND**

This Plant Biosecurity Policy Memorandum is to notify stakeholders of the release of the revised draft import risk analysis (IRA) report for the importation of fresh apples from New Zealand.

Biosecurity Australia has completed a revised draft IRA report for apples from New Zealand. The revised draft IRA report recommends that the importation of apples from New Zealand be allowed subject to specific quarantine conditions.

The executive summary is attached and the complete report is available from the departmental website at www.daff.gov.au/plantbiosecurity. Copies in either hard copy or CD ROM format can also be requested from Technical and Administrative Services. Comments on the revised draft IRA report should be received by Technical and Administrative Services by 23 April 2004 at the following address:

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Confidentiality

Stakeholders are advised that, subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* and the *Privacy Act 1988*, all submissions received in response to Plant Biosecurity Policy Memoranda will be publicly available and may be listed or referred to in any papers or reports prepared on the subject matter of the memoranda.

The Commonwealth reserves the right to reveal the identity of a respondent unless a request for anonymity accompanies the submission. Where a request for anonymity does not accompany the submission the respondent will be taken to have consented to the disclosure of his or her identity for the purposes of Information Privacy Principle 11 of the *Privacy Act 1988*.

The contents of the submission will not be treated as confidential unless they are marked 'confidential' and they are capable of being classified as such in accordance with the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

Consultation

If you wish to suggest inclusion of an additional stakeholder in our distribution list, or if you wish to be removed from the distribution list, please provide details to Technical and Administrative Services.

Information on all IRAs and policy reviews being conducted by Plant Biosecurity is available on the Internet at www.daff.gov.au/plantbiosecurity.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – APPLE REVISED DRAFT IRA

In response to an application made by New Zealand in January 1999 seeking access for their apples into Australia, Biosecurity Australia (BA) released a draft import risk analysis (IRA) for public comment in October 2000. After evaluating the stakeholder comments received on this draft and on the recommendation of a Senate Committee established to look into this IRA, BA established an import risk analysis panel in October 2001 to progress this IRA. The appointment of seven panel members was confirmed on 10 January 2002. The panel comprised the following people:

Dr Bill Roberts (Chairman) ¹	Australia's Chief Plant Protection Officer, Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.
Mr Bill Hatton	A specialist in fruit production with expertise in growing, packing and shipping.
Mr David Cartwright	A plant pathologist and Manager Plant Health, Department of Primary Industries and Resources, South Australia.
Dr Kent Williams	Principal Research Scientist, CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems.
Mr Mike Kinsella ²	A consultant horticulturalist and a former Director of Quarantine and Inspection Services, Victoria.
Mr Ian Armour	An owner and manager of an apple production business.
Dr Brian Stynes	A plant pathologist and General Manager, Plant Biosecurity, Biosecurity Australia.

The panel was initially known as a Risk Analysis Panel (RAP). However, its title was changed to an Import Risk Analysis Team (IRAT) coinciding with the release of Biosecurity Australia's *Import Risk Analysis Handbook* (2003). The IRAT established two provisional technical working groups to assist it in the pest categorisation of arthropod and pathogen pests.

¹ Dr Bill Roberts took up a secondment with the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) in Rome for nine months. Mr David Cartwright was appointed acting chair during Dr Robert's secondment.

² On 22 January 2002, BA was informed that Mr Mike Kinsella had passed away. No replacement was sought for this position.

These groups had the following members:

Provisional technical working group for Arthropods:

Dr Kent Williams (Chair)

Mrs Margaret Williams Entomologist, Department of Primary Industries,
Water and Environment, Tasmania.

Mr Bill Woods Entomologist, Department of Agriculture, Western
Australia.

Mr David Williams Entomologist, Department of Primary Industries,
Victoria.

Provisional technical working group for Pathogens:

Mr David Cartwright (Chair)

Mr Bill Washington Plant Pathologist, Department of Primary
Industries, Victoria.

Dr Satendra Kumar Quarantine Plant Pathologist, Department of
Agriculture, Western Australia.

Dr Trevor Wicks Plant Pathologist, South Australian Research
Institute.

CONSULTATION

The IRAT undertook a series of face-to-face meetings and teleconferences. Reports of these meetings were made available to stakeholders.

A two-day workshop was conducted in Melbourne in July 2002. Participants included Australian and New Zealand representatives from State governments, national governments, apple growers and related industries. They provided valuable input to Biosecurity Australia's staff and the IRAT, particularly in defining the proportions and distribution points for apples, waste generation at distribution points and exposure scenarios for susceptible host plants. The information provided at this workshop was incorporated into the methodology used to undertake the individual risk assessments.

Biosecurity Australia staff consulted extensively with their counterparts in the New Zealand Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAFNZ) about research trials relevant to the risk assessment and the production and distribution methods of New Zealand apples. In addition, DAFF provided updates on the progress of the IRA to representatives from the Australian and New Zealand apple industries as part of its broader consultative process.

AUSTRALIA'S CURRENT POLICY ON APPLES

The only fresh apples currently permitted into Australia are Fuji apples from Japan. Pre-inspection by the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) inspectors is a requirement, and a phytosanitary certificate must accompany each shipment with details of the source orchards, dates of packing, fumigation and cold disinfestation treatment amongst other details. Joint monitoring by AQIS and Japanese quarantine officers of the effectiveness of the treatments is required. However, as of February 2004, no trade has taken place.

IMPORT RISK ANALYSIS

The technical component of an IRA for plants or plant products is termed a ‘pest risk analysis’, or PRA.

A PRA is carried out in three discrete stages:

- Stage 1: Initiation of the PRA;
- Stage 2: Pest Risk Assessment; and,
- Stage 3: Pest Risk Management.

INITIATION OF THIS IRA

This PRA was initiated by a request from New Zealand in January 1999 for Australia to review its policy for the importation of mature apple fruit (*Malus × domestica* Borkhausen). It also builds on an analysis completed in December 1998 of the risks associated with the ‘unrestricted’ importation of New Zealand apples, as well as a further analysis, completed and circulated in draft form in October 2000.

PEST RISK ASSESSMENT

Pest categorisation

In all, 442 species associated with New Zealand apples were categorised according to their presence or absence in Australia, including regulatory status where applicable, their potential for being on the pathway (association with apple fruit), their potential for establishment or spread in Australia, and the potential consequences of establishment or spread. From these, 21 pests were identified as requiring additional consideration for the whole of Australia or for Western Australia, and were the focus of individual risk assessments. For the whole of Australia, these included one bacterium, one fungus and nine insects. Western Australia has a different pest status for apples compared with the rest of Australia, and for this State seven additional pests were considered, one fungus, five insects and one mite. In addition, for the whole of Australia, three species of insects contaminating apple fruit or pallets were also assessed.

Assessment of risk

The risk assessment identified six insects, one bacterium and one fungus for the whole of Australia associated with the importation of apples from New Zealand that required management measures to reduce the risk to an acceptable level. In addition, one insect and one fungus required measures for importation into Western Australia because these pests, although present in the rest of Australia, are not present in Western Australia, where measures are in place to maintain area freedom.

Pest risk management

The biosecurity measures and phytosanitary procedures proposed to manage the identified risks for the above quarantine pests are summarised below. These measures were considered by the IRAT to be the least trade restrictive, and to manage risks to a level within Australia’s appropriate level of protection, which is very low.

Measures and phytosanitary procedures applied to all pests include:

- registration of export orchards, exporters and packing houses;
- packing, labelling and storage compliance;
- phytosanitary certification by MAFNZ;

- on-arrival verification procedures by AQIS for compliance with packaging requirements and import conditions; and,
- DAFF or MAFNZ may, by mutual agreement, audit the pathway of imported apple fruit at any time.

Pests for all of Australia

Fire blight

- MAFNZ to provide assurance that apples are sourced from areas free of disease symptoms determined, for example, by surveillance;
- chlorine treatment of fruit; and,
- cold storage treatment of fruit.

European canker

- MAFNZ to provide assurance that apples are sourced from areas free of disease symptoms determined, for example, by surveillance.

Apple leafcurling midge

- phytosanitary action when apple leafcurling midge is intercepted during verification inspection in New Zealand and in Australia.

Leafrollers (four species)

- phytosanitary action when brownheaded or greenheaded leafrollers are intercepted during verification inspection in New Zealand and in Australia.

Wheat bug

- sourcing apples from areas with low pest prevalence and preventing contamination during handling and processing;
- pre-harvest inspection or surveillance by MAFNZ to determine pest prevalence;
- the application of effective treatment(s) to reduce the pest in and around orchards and packing houses where inspection and surveillance have detected high populations; and,
- phytosanitary action when wheat bug is intercepted during verification inspection in New Zealand and in Australia.

Western Australia pests

Apple scab

- MAFNZ to provide assurance that apples are sourced from areas free of disease symptoms determined, for example, by surveillance.

Codling Moth

- phytosanitary action when codling moth is intercepted during verification inspection in New Zealand and in Australia.

QUARANTINE CONDITIONS

This revised draft IRA Report outlines a set of conditions for the importation of apples from New Zealand. The quarantine conditions described in this report are based on the risk assessment and risk management conclusions from the IRA. The conditions are predicated on the minimum standards achieved by orchard (including IFP), packing house and transport management, as currently practiced in New Zealand.

Biosecurity Australia considers that the quarantine conditions (risk management measures together with phytosanitary procedures) proposed in this report are the least trade restrictive means of ensuring that Australia's ALOP would be met, and are commensurate with the identified risks. Biosecurity Australia invites technical comments on the economic and practical feasibility of the risk management measures. Proposals for equivalent measures that meet Australia's ALOP will be considered. Those seeking to propose alternative risk management measures should provide a submission for consideration; such proposals should include supporting scientific data that explain the way in which alternative measures would meet Australia's ALOP.

CONCLUSION

This revised draft IRA Report recommends that importation of fresh apples from New Zealand be permitted subject to certain conditions.

In accordance with the process for conducting IRAs, as outlined in the *Import Risk Analysis Handbook*, published in 2003 by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry's Biosecurity Australia, comments are invited on this revised draft IRA Report. Submissions should reach Biosecurity Australia within 60 days of publication of this report. The final IRA Report will take into account any comments received on this revised draft, as well as any new information that may come to hand. The final IRA Report will be open to appeal for a period of 30 days after its release.