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Commencement of a review of biosecurity import requirements for Tahitian limes from the Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu

This Biosecurity Advice announces the formal commencement of a policy review for the importation of fresh Tahitian limes from the Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu.

The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources will prepare a draft report to be circulated to stakeholders for comment in due course.

This Biosecurity Advice notifies stakeholders of the formal commencement of a policy review for the importation of fresh Tahitian lime fruit from the Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu.

The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources received formal requests from Samoa and Vanuatu, through their National Plant Protection Organisations, for market access for Tahitian limes (*Citrus latifolia*) in 2007. The Cook Islands, Niue and Tonga subsequently registered an interest in exporting limes to Australia.

A preliminary assessment of the pests associated with Tahitian limes in the Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu has been undertaken. Most of the potential quarantine pests of concern identified are the same as, or similar to, quarantine pest species for limes from New Caledonia, New Zealand, Egypt, Spain and the United States for which import policy already exists. Given the similarity of pests of concern, and the potential mitigation measures available, this market access request will be progressed as a review of biosecurity import requirements, previously referred to as a non-regulated analysis of existing policy, consistent with the *Import Risk Analysis Handbook 2011*.

The next step is to prepare and issue a draft report to give stakeholders the opportunity to comment on the analysis. A Biosecurity Advice will be issued to announce that the draft report has been placed on the department's website, and to invite comments from stakeholders. Following the consultation period, the department will consider all comments and publish a final report.

Additional information about the review can be found in the background information paper released with this advice notice and available at www.agriculture.gov.au. Stakeholders who would like further information about the review process can contact the department at plant@agriculture.gov.au.

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