

Technical & Administration Services

Plant Biosecurity

Biosecurity Australia

Dear Sirs,

I am an apple orchardist and stakeholder and I would like you to consider my comments on the draft IRA for the importation of apples from New Zealand.

The apple industry is facing many difficulties in maintaining profit margins and eventually may reach the stage when another pest or disease infestation, and the inevitable extra cost of control, will be the final nail in the coffin of orchardists' businesses.

One of my concerns is the possible introduction of apple leafcurling midge from New Zealand.

I note that the protocol relies on the inspection of fruit, the sample size depending on the option adopted, and that fumigation would take place if the midge were detected in the sample.

I know as a practicing orchardist how patchy insect infestation can be and also how hard it is to detect low levels of insects in a crop. It seems to me that the only sure way of protecting us of exotic insects and mites on imported apples is to fumigate the whole consignment regardless of inspections.

The inconvenience and cost to the New Zealand producers should not be a consideration in the protection of our own industry.

Yours faithfully

R&S McLeod

Batlow NSW