23 August 2017

**Announcement Information Paper – Commencement of a review of biosecurity import requirements for fresh decrowned pineapple from Taiwan**

The commencement of this analysis is in response to a request for market access for fresh pineapple fruit (*Ananas comosus*) from Taiwan into Australia. Taiwan advised Australia in April 2015 that its highest priority request for horticultural market access was for fresh pineapple and in late June 2015 revised the request to fresh decrowned pineapple.

There are two main types of risk analyses used by the department:

* a Biosecurity Import Risk Analysis (BIRA) which is conducted through a regulated process provided for in the [Biosecurity Act 2015](http://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity/legislation/new-biosecurity-legislation/understand-biosecurity-act/bio-legislation) and the [Biosecurity Regulation 2016](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2016L00756)
* a non-regulated risk analysis, such as a review of biosecurity import requirements.

Australia has existing import policy for fresh decrowned pineapple from the Philippines, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Solomon Islands and Malaysia. A preliminary pest categorisation for decrowned pineapple from Taiwan has been undertaken and the potential pests of quarantine concern identified are the same as, or similar to, quarantine pests of pineapple from Malaysia for which import conditions exist.

Given the similarity of pests of concern, and that there are appropriate risk management measures for these pests, the risk analysis for decrowned pineapple from Taiwan is being progressed as a review of biosecurity import requirements (a non-regulated risk analysis), consistent with Biosecurity Import Risk Analysis Guidelines 2016.

**Pineapple industry in Taiwan**

Pineapples are produced in the central and southern regions of Taiwan where a subtropical or tropical climate predominates. Thirty eight per cent of pineapples are produced in Pingtung, followed by 21 per cent in Nantou and 14 per cent each in Chiayi and Kaoshiung, with the remaining 13 per cent produced in Tainan. The total pineapple production for 2013 was approximately 385,000 tonnes.

The main Taiwanese pineapple cultivar is Tai-nung No. 17, which was bred by the Taiwan Agriculture Research Institute and accounts for 85 per cent of production in Taiwan. Tai-nung No. 17 is the main cultivar for export. All Taiwanese pineapple varieties will be considered in the risk analysis.

In Taiwan, pineapples are cultivated over a period of three years, during which they are harvested twice. Planting dates range from September to November every year, and the fruit can be produced year-round through adjustment of the planting varieties, areas and technologies. The main production and export season ranges from February to September.

Taiwan currently exports pineapples to China, Japan, Korea, Canada, Singapore and Hong Kong. In 2015, Taiwan exported approximately 10,000 tonnes of pineapples.

**Australian pineapple imports**

Importing fresh pineapples into Australia has been possible since 2004, but only low volumes of fresh pineapples have been imported. For example, during the period from January 2013 – June 2015 just over 11.3 tonnes of fresh pineapples were imported from the Philippines (66%), Thailand (32%) and Sri Lanka (2%). Since July 2015 there have been no fresh pineapple imports.

With regards to processed pineapple and juice, for the year ending June 2016, 21,684 tonnes of preserved pineapples were imported, along with 5,035 kilolitres of pineapple juice.

**Pineapple industry in Australia**

Australian pineapples are available year round with the major harvesting season between November and February. Pineapples are grown predominantly in Queensland with the major growing regions in Mareeba (North Queensland), Yeppoon and Bundaberg (Central Queensland). The Northern Territory also produces pineapples, but in relatively low volumes at this stage.

There are approximately 80 commercial pineapple growing enterprises in Queensland. Of the varieties grown, 55 per cent are Smooth Cayenne and Queen (rough leaf). The remaining 45 per cent are hybrid varieties, which are becoming more popular with consumers.

The Australian pineapple industry comprises growers who have been in the industry for many generations and who supply the domestic market. There are three major pack houses/marketing groups, each with a number of growers supplying them directly.

The industry has moved from growing pineapple fruit mainly for processing purposes towards growing pineapple fruit for fresh supply. This is due to the increased competition from cheaper imports of processed fruit. Australia is not a major exporter with annual exports of up to 50 tonnes of pineapples valued at over $100,000.

**Trade between Australia and Taiwan**

In 2016, the total value of Australia’s agricultural exports to Taiwan was approximately $960 million. The main exports were beef and veal, dairy products including cheese and butter, wheat and woodchips. Horticultural crops included cherries, mandarins and oranges, macadamia nuts and grapes. Australia’s imports from Taiwan over the same timeframe were approximately $190 million in total value.

**Preliminary assessment of pests on fresh decrowned pineapple from Taiwan**

A preliminary assessment has identified that the pests potentially associated with fresh decrowned pineapples from Taiwan do not pose different biosecurity risks to those associated with fresh decrowned pineapple from Malaysia. The final import risk analysis report for the importation of fresh decrowned pineapple fruit from Malaysia was published on 14 December 2012.

A preliminary assessment of the pests associated with Taiwanese decrowned pineapples indicates that potential arthropod pests of quarantine concern are mealybugs, armoured scales and thrips. It is likely that risk management measures will be required for mealybugs and thrips, as it is the case for Malaysian pineapples.

There is only one pathogen of quarantine concern for Taiwan: *Phytophthora meadii*, which causes the rubber leaf drop disease, and is present in both Malaysia and Taiwan.

It is worth noting that:

* The bacteria *Dickeya* sp. (pineapple strain—formerly known as *Erwinia chrysanthemi*) causing bacterial fruit collapse and heart rot in Malaysia, has not been recorded in Taiwan.
* The disease fusariosis has also not been recorded in Taiwan.

The quarantine pests potentially associated with fresh decrowned pineapple from Taiwan (as assessed to date) will not require different risk management measures to those for fresh decrowned pineapples from Malaysia.

**Next steps**

A draft report is currently scheduled to be published in mid 2018. Stakeholders will have an opportunity to submit comments on the draft report for a period of 60 days.

All comments will be assessed and, where relevant, changes will be incorporated into the final report.

The recommendations in the final report will be an administrative step and will reflect the completion of the risk analysis for fresh decrowned pineapple fruit from the Taiwan. There will be a number of other steps to be completed before imports can commence:

* The department will verify that Taiwan can action the recommended risk management measures.
* Import conditions will be published on the department’s Biosecurity Import Conditions System (BICON). Interested stakeholders can register in the BICON system and receive an alert when the case is updated.
* Import permits would need to be issued for trade to commence. A decision to import fresh decrowned pineapple fruit from Taiwan into Australia is a commercial decision between an importer in Australia and a supplier in Taiwan who can meet the import conditions.

The Biosecurity Liaison Officer will be the first point of contact for risk assessment enquiries and is an initiative the department is trialling to assist stakeholders.

The Biosecurity Liaison Officer’s contact information is as follows:

Pineapple Liaison Officer

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