



Capsicum spp. fruit from Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu **Biosecurity**

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Key facts

- The department is conducting a risk analysis of *Capsicum* spp. fruit (capsicums, chillies and peppers) from Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu (the Pacific Island countries).
- A draft report will be prepared for public consultation and is expected to be released in mid-2019.
- The final report will be published after consideration of comments on the draft report.

Risk analysis for *Capsicum* spp. fruit

The department has commenced this risk analysis in response to requests to reinstate market access for *Capsicum* spp. fruit (capsicum, chillies and peppers) from the Pacific Island countries. These countries previously had market access to Australia for *Capsicum* spp. fruit, but trade was suspended in 1997 when the chemical, ethylene dibromide, was removed from use as a phytosanitary treatment on fresh produce for human consumption. Due to the length of time that has passed since trade was suspended, the department is undertaking a full, non-regulated risk analysis for *Capsicum* spp. fruit from these Pacific Island countries, as opposed to a review of import conditions.

As a World Trade Organization member, Australia is required to facilitate trade by developing the least trade restrictive import conditions that are scientifically justified. The same scientific principles are used by our trading partners when assessing Australian goods.

Australia permits imports of fresh chillies and capsicums (also known as peppers) from New Zealand, and fresh capsicums from the Republic of Korea, provided they meet Australia's biosecurity requirements.

A preliminary assessment of the pests associated with *Capsicum* spp. fruit from the Pacific Island countries has identified that the potential quarantine pests are fruit flies, scale insects, mealybugs and thrips. Currently, no pathogen species have been identified as being of biosecurity concern.

The potential quarantine pests identified are the same, or of the same pest groups, as those associated with other horticultural goods that have been assessed previously by the department and for which risk management measures are established.

Given the pests of concern are similar to other horticultural goods, and that there are appropriate risk management measures in place for these pests, this risk analysis is being conducted as a review of biosecurity import requirements (a non-regulated risk analysis).

Process for a risk analysis

The objective of undertaking a risk analysis is to ensure that any fresh products imported into Australia are free from unwanted pests and diseases. The department initially identifies pests and diseases associated with fruit or vegetable production and export in the source country that are not present in Australia.

The assessment includes analysis of the pests of biosecurity concern and recommends risk management measures if required. If there are no available risk management measures to effectively manage particular biosecurity risks trade is not permitted until suitable measures are identified.

The department will verify commercial production, packing, and export practices in the source country before determining any phytosanitary measures to be applied to mitigate any potential biosecurity risks that do not achieve Australia's appropriate level of protection.

How stakeholders can contribute

The department invites stakeholders to contribute scientific information relevant to this risk analysis at any time.

Stakeholders will be invited to comment on a draft report during the 60 calendar day public consultation period. The final report will then be published after consideration of stakeholder comments and will complete the scientific risk analysis process.

Australia – Pacific Island trade

Boosting agricultural trade from and between Pacific Island countries has been identified by successive Australian governments as a priority to assist economic trade development in the region.

This risk analysis is supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's [Pacific Horticultural and Agricultural Market Access \(PHAMA\) program](#). PHAMA is a trade facilitation program funded by the Australian and New Zealand Governments that assists Pacific Island countries to achieve increased market access for agricultural and horticultural products.

Pacific Island countries *Capsicum* spp. fruit production

Commercial production of *Capsicum* spp. fruit in Pacific Island countries is mostly small scale, with the fruit being produced for sale in domestic markets or for processing (drying or freezing). The majority of current exports are in the form of processed products, particularly dried spices (chilli powder, chilli flakes, whole dried chillies, paprika) or frozen. Fiji and Tonga also currently export small volumes of fresh chillies to New Zealand.


Australian *Capsicum* spp. fruit production

Capsicums and chillies are grown across most states in Australia, with the majority (two thirds) grown in Queensland. The major growing regions include Bowen and Bundaberg in Queensland; and Carnarvon in Western Australia. Capsicums and chillies are grown year round in Australia.

In 2016-17, 73,488 tonnes of fresh capsicums and 2,213 tonnes of fresh chillies were produced. The main export markets for Australian capsicums and chillies are New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, New Caledonia, Fiji and Brunei.

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