Volume 1: Introduction to Plant Export Operations Manual

Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review and Amendments</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossary</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Export Legislation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eLearning Training Modules</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Management System (LMS)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roles and Responsibilities</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AQIS</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AQIS Authorised Officers (AAO)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant eLearning Module</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

This manual has been prepared by the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) and is intended to be used for the purpose of training AQIS officers in the inspection of plants and plant products from Australia.

The purpose of this manual is to be a reference manual providing detailed information to support the Plant Export Training e-learning modules.

Industry, through the AQIS Grains Industry Consultative Committee and the Horticulture Export Consultative Committee has contributed to the content, and supported the publication of this manual.

This manual supplements the Export Control Act 1982 and subordinate legislation. It also underpins the Plant Export Training e-learning modules and is to be used as an aid in interpreting the legislation.

It is intended that the manual be used as a detailed reference to support the introductory concepts within the e-learning modules and has been constructed to be easy to use with headings that align to the e-learning modules.

Review and Amendments

AQIS will periodically review this manual and will present the revised version to both industry consultative committees for agreement to publish the updated version.

Amendments and updates to the manual will be recorded in the Amendment Record, detailing the updated version, who made the amendment, date of approval of the amendment and a short summary of the amendment.

An Industry Advice Notice will also be published advising of the publication of an updated version on the DAFF website. Should users identify the need for correction or amendments to the manual the Plant Export Operations Branch may be contacted by phoning 02 6727 3229 or emailing plantexporttraining@daff.gov.au

Amendment Record

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Summary of Amendment</th>
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</thead>
</table>

Distribution

AQIS will maintain and publish this manual externally on the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) website.
Where required, hard copies of the document can be downloaded and printed directly from the website; however the manual has been designed for use electronically to facilitate quick and easy referencing.

Users who download copies from the website are advised to periodically check the electronic version on the website specifically to check the version history to ensure they have the latest version.

**Glossary**

A comprehensive set of definitions for terms used in the manual can be found on the AQIS website in the same section as this manual.

**Introduction to Export Legislation**

AQIS administers export legislation to ensure that exported product meets all Australian export requirements and the requirements of importing countries where these are known.

AQIS ensures that its inspection and certification criteria conform to an importing country’s requirements through government-to-government negotiations. This maintains the integrity of the product and Australia’s reputation as a reliable exporter. More information is available within *Volume 2: Export Legislation*.

**eLearning Training Modules**

These modules provide basic but important introductory concepts that an AQIS authorised officer will need to understand to perform their duties.

Together they form the necessary underpinning knowledge that an AQIS authorised officer will require to effectively and efficiently perform their duties.

Plant Export eLearning Training modules include:

- Export Inspections: Importing Country Requirements
- Export Inspections: Using PHYTO
- Export Inspections: Product Identification, Pest & Diseases
- Export Inspections: Export Registered Establishments
- Export Inspections: Commodity Inspection – Grain (Part A)
- Export Inspections: Commodity Inspection – Grain (Part B)
- Export Inspections: Commodity Inspection – Grain (Part C)
- Export Inspections: Commodity Inspection - Horticulture
- Export Inspections: Ship Inspection
- Export Inspections: Treatments
- Export OH&S
- Export Communications: Governance
- Export Communications: Techniques
Learning Management System (LMS)

The AQIS learning management system (LMS) hosts these e-learning materials and allows for the administration, documentation, tracking and reporting of users accessing the system.

Users of the LMS will be provided discreet login and password details to access the e-learning modules upon successful application to become an AQIS Authorised Officer. The LMS is web-based to facilitate "anytime, anywhere" access to learning content by AQIS authorised officers. The LMS allows for user registration, the delivery and tracking of e-learning courses and content, and testing.

Roles and Responsibilities

AQIS and the exporter share the responsibility for ascertaining and complying with an overseas country’s requirements and Australian export legislation obligations.

However, ultimately, it is the responsibility of the exporter to comply with and meet the importing country’s import conditions.

AQIS

AQIS is the regulatory body that verifies, authorises and certifies documentation presented by exporters to ensure compliance with the Export Control Act 1982, subordinate legislation, importing country requirements and Australia’s obligations under the IPPC.


In terms of meeting importing country requirements, the Australian Government is a signatory to the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), and strongly supports international cooperation in controlling pests of plants and plant products.
through science based quarantine measures that will prevent the unintended spread of pests to other countries through imported products.

AQIS provides independent export inspection and certification services to enable the export of plants and plant products from Australia.

The AQIS Plant Export Operations Branch works with goods including a diverse range of horticultural commodities, bulk grain in ships holds and containers through to providing inspection and certification for hay and annual rye grass toxicity, the inspection of timber, logs, wood chip, bark, seeds for sowing and small seed lots for research.

AQIS operates three levels of inspection for the certification of commodities for export:

- inspection of the loaded sample at a legislated rate of 2.25 litres per 33.33 tonne for grains and 600 units or 2% for horticulture
- inspection of cleanliness of the transport unit (containers and vessel inspection)
- inspection of registered premises where the goods are prepared for export (mandatory hygiene and pest control).

AQIS also assists with maintaining market access and market advantage for Australian grain and plant product exports by ensuring that Australian plant products for export meet the requirements of the importing country.

AQIS does this by:

- inspecting plant products, transport units and premises to ensure goods are exported in accordance with Australia’s export legislation
- maintaining the Manual of Importing Country Requirements (MICoR) database as importing country requirements are made available
- inspecting premises that apply to become Registered Establishments and granting registration
- conducting audits to ensure premises continue to operate in an effective and hygienic manner throughout the life of the registration
- ensuring AQIS inspectors conduct inspections of prescribed goods at Registered Establishments
- verifying that export documentation presented by exporters is completed accurately and in accordance with the importing countries requirements and Australia’s obligations under the International Plant Protection convention (IPPC).

Industry

Industry has an obligation to present product for export which conforms to the importing country’s requirements and meets Australian export legislation obligations.

The Export Control Act 1982 provides penalties for contraventions of export provisions.
The onus is on the exporter signing the Notice of Intention to Export, to ensure the accuracy of all matters attested to in that notice. However, while authorised officers are in a position to exercise authority in administering the Export Control Act 1982, every endeavour must be made to engage the co-operation of the individuals they are dealing with. Exporters should seek information regarding any specific quarantine requirements of the importing country from their importer or directly from the importing country’s plant protection authority.

For preliminary information, AQIS provides an overview of importing country quarantine requirements in its MICO database.

Please note that exporters must also fulfil Australian Customs requirements. For further information, the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service or a freight forwarder can advise these requirements.

AQIS Authorised Officers (AAO)

AAO’s will have delegations under the Export Control Act 1982 and the Export Control (Plant and Plant Products) Orders 2011. The instrument of appointment will detail an AAO’s specific delegations under the legislation which must not be exceeded.

An AAO, depending on powers under the legislation, will be legally required to make sure that:

- empty containers and/or vessels’ holds meet required standards

Responsibilities of an AAO may include:

- taking appropriate action where plants and plant products are presented for export inspection
- taking appropriate action where plants and plant products are not correctly identified and labelled
- taking appropriate action where plants and plant products are not correctly presented for export inspection
- completing export inspections for plants and plant products, empty containers or vessels’ holds and make decisions in a professional and effective manner, and in accordance with the relevant AQIS work instructions
- notifying AQIS when advice is needed for the AAO to make a decision and,
- following directions from AQIS for further duties relating to the inspection of plants and plant products, including the collection of samples.

Relevant eLearning Module

- Plant Export Induction
Questions

- You can contact your Regional Plant Exports Program Manager to clarify any aspects of this volume in the first instance.
- You can also direct a specific question or provide feedback to plantexporttraining@daff.gov.au